



**ACLU** Missouri

# Hayti P.A.U.S.E.

REPORT OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

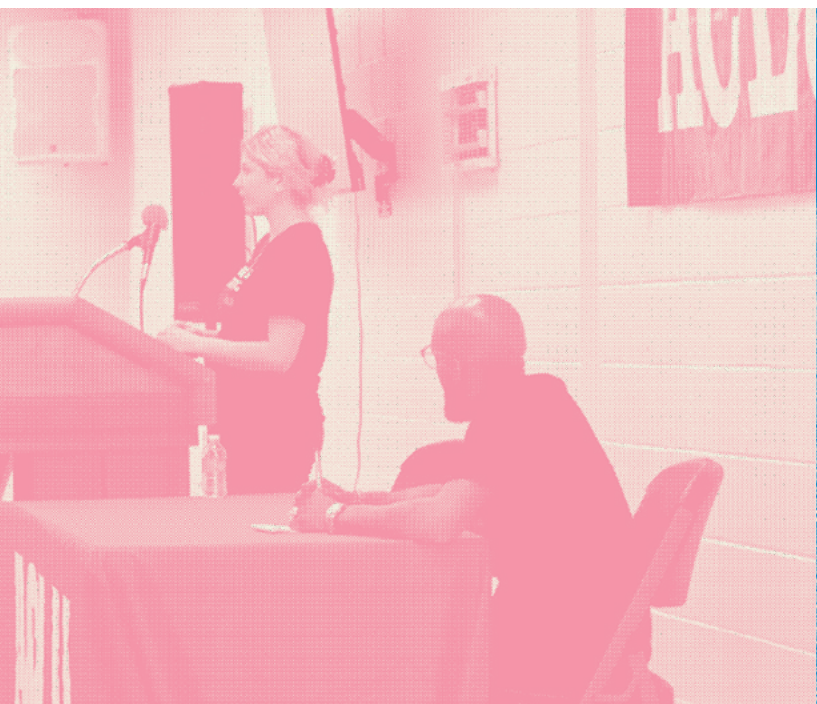






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# Meet the Team

## Full Time Staff



**Elaine Sutton**

Director of Organizing



**Krysten Vaughn**

Community Engagement  
Associate

July 2022 – January 2025



**Sydney Smith**

Community Engagement  
Restorative Justice Fellow  
June 2022 – August 2025



**Iyaun Bell**

Community Engagement  
Restorative Justice Fellow  
July 2022 – November 2024

## Fellows, Interns, and Volunteers

**Claire Comey**

School-to-Prison Pipeline Data Team Fellow  
WashU MSW Practicum Student  
September 2023 – December 2023

**Anni Dineen**

School-to-Prison Pipeline Data Team Fellow  
WashU MSW Practicum Student  
June 2023 – August 2023

**Emerald DuBose**

Organizing Intern  
June 2025 – August 2025

**Dr. Rubi Gonzales**

School-to-Prison Pipeline Expungement  
and Data Team Fellow  
WashU  
January 2024 – June 2024

**Karla McKinney**

Project Consultant and Data Team Volunteer  
June 2022 – August 2025

**Natalie Nusz**

School-to-Prison Pipeline Project Intern  
June 2024 – August 2024

**Pierce Rohman**

Data Team Intern  
February 2025 – April 2025

**Spencer Snipe**

Expungement Team Fellow  
WashU  
January 2024 – April 2024

**Conner Yamnitz**

Intake Complaint Unit and School-to-Prison  
Pipeline Project Fellow  
WashU  
June 2025 – August 2025

**Zoe Ziesmer**

Communications Intern  
June 2025 – August 2025



# Message to Our Benefactors

## Missouri Foundation For Health

The ACLU of Missouri team would like to extend our gratitude for your generous support of our school-to-prison pipeline project in Hayti, Missouri. Because of your investment, we had the opportunity to meaningfully engage educators, students, families, and community partners in pursuit of developing practices and policies that we believe will reduce disciplinary disparities and promote a narrative around student rights. The successes seen with this project would not have been possible without your partnership.



Elaine Sutton, Sydney Smith, Harold Jordan (ACLU Nationwide Education Equity Coordinator), Krysten Vaughn, Iyaun Bell, and Karla McKinney

## Executive Summary

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Missouri is committed to defending and extending civil liberties to achieve the promise of equality and liberty for all in Missouri through impact litigation and campaigns, narrative and legislative advocacy, and community education and engagement. Our work serves to protect the fundamental rights enshrined in both the Missouri and United States Constitution, ensuring that freedom is guaranteed for all. While the violations of to our constitutional rights that we fight against are vast, promoting education equity has demonstrated to be a specific challenge deeply rooted in many Missouri public school districts. Education equity demands that all students are provided with an equal education that prioritizes learning over discipline, fulfilling the promise that all Missouri students are set up for success in our classrooms.



When the ACLU of Missouri began to examine areas of education inequity throughout the state, two primary drivers of that inequity were identified: corporal punishment and unjust suspensions and expulsions. These inequities, which contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline, a cycle that leads students out of schools and into the criminal justice system, are realities experienced by students across the state. Not only have these inequitable discipline practices been relied upon in many Missouri school districts, but they are built on a foundation of disparity. Students of color and students with disabilities often experience these policies at a higher rate than their peers, creating a learning environment that places these students at an increased risk of unjust disciplinary action. With the goal of assessing the disparities produced by these disciplinary measures, the ACLU of Missouri team found that these trends were particularly troubling in the southeastern, rural Missouri community of Hayti.

The Hayti School District, located in Pemiscot County, serves the main population centers of Hayti and Hayti Heights. The 2020 Census reveals the demographic composition of the community:

HAYTI HIGH SCHOOL (GRADES 7-12)	HAYTI	HAYTI HEIGHTS
• TOTAL: 221	• TOTAL: 3,298	• TOTAL: 515
• 169 Black residents	• 1,785 Black residents	• 461 Black residents
• 45 white residents	• 1,332 white residents	• 30 white residents

Hayti is a town that, like many other Missouri communities, is marked by a striking racial divide. The train tracks that run through Hayti form not just a physical split, but also a racial one. This division manifests itself directly in its public schools, where local stories revealed to us the shared understanding among the community members: that everybody knew that students’ race determined how much discipline they received in school, and that nobody felt as though they had the power to stop it. Race, as well as disability status, play significant roles in disciplinary action distribution across all of Missouri, but Hayti presented itself as a town with severe education inequities, few resources to combat them, and a desire to collaborate with the Missouri ACLU in hopes of ending corporal punishment and other unjust disciplinary practices for all students. To achieve this, our staff dedicated to this project and Hayti residents sought to create systemic, long-term changes to the school district’s practices and policies. To execute this mission, the Project Against Unjust Suspensions and Expulsions (P.A.U.S.E.) was formed in 2022.

P.A.U.S.E. became a three-year program based in Hayti, Missouri, where our team worked alongside the community to develop engagement strategies and resilient partnerships. This project is ultimately driven by the aspirations and goals of Hayti residents, whose contributions can be analyzed and utilized as a guide to action for parents, students, and those within other Missouri school districts that experience these inequities.

With that goal of showcasing replicable courses of action, this report serves to provide an outline of P.A.U.S.E.’s model, successes, challenges, and recommendations for further work.



# Introduction to P.A.U.S.E. in Hayti

The ACLU of Missouri defines the school-to-prison pipeline as a vast system of structural inequalities that funnel children out of public schools and into the criminal justice system. As a product of education inequities, this pipeline reveals that many public schools are decreasing their prioritization of education for all and instead employing practices that exacerbate existing disparities and encourage a dependence on discipline. Through the reliance on zero-tolerance policies, unjust suspensions and expulsions, and corporal punishment, students are placed at a higher risk of future disengagement from school, dropping out, chronic unemployment, and contact with the criminal justice system. However, certain groups of students are disproportionately impacted by these disciplinary practices. Students of color, students with disabilities, and students who also reside in lower-income and rural areas, for example, are more likely to encounter those measures, ultimately highlighting the stark inequities saturated within many public schools.

To illustrate those disparities, we partnered with a team of researchers and published *Missouri's Pipeline of Injustice: From School to Prison*. This report delineates the ways in which disciplinary outcomes are present among various populations. The data in Missouri paints the picture:

- Black students are five times more likely than their white peers to receive an out-of-school suspension
- Black preschoolers are more than four times as likely to be suspended to white preschoolers
- Missouri's Black students with disabilities are eight times more likely to receive out-of-school suspension than their white peers.



- You can read more here or by scanning the QR code:

[https://www.aclu-mo.org/sites/default/files/stpp\\_report\\_new\\_brand\\_with\\_update\\_oct\\_2018\\_as\\_pages\\_with\\_blanks.pdf](https://www.aclu-mo.org/sites/default/files/stpp_report_new_brand_with_update_oct_2018_as_pages_with_blanks.pdf)

In consideration of these findings, the Project Against Unjust Suspensions and Expulsions (P.A.U.S.E.) sought to not only decrease the instances of unjust suspensions, expulsions, and corporal punishment, but to do so in a way that lessens their disproportionate impacts on students of color and students with disabilities. To initiate these efforts, however, what was first required were thorough conversations with Hayti residents to gain insight into what these disparities looked like within Hayti schools. Missouri ACLU staff were able to connect with community members, parents, and students who were willing to share their personal experiences and stories.

The discussions we had with parents and providers revealed shared experiences of unjust disciplinary practices, most disproportionately faced by Black students. It was these conversations that drove our team and the Hayti community to largely center the mission of P.A.U.S.E. around advocating for an equitable school system that grants an equal education to all students and rejects disproportionate discipline.

This mission was then outlined into short- and long-term goals, establishing numerous changes the Hayti community aspired to see. Namely, these short-term goals included:

- Change discipline policy in the Hayti School District.
- Eliminate corporal punishment.
- Increase voter knowledge, registration, and turnout.



With the aim to rectify the structural inequalities entrenched within the school district and improve the futures of students, the following long-term goals were determined:

- Reduce discipline disparity among students of color and students with disabilities.
- Improve educational outcomes for all students.
- Raise attendance and grades, which are indicators of graduation.
- Create more representative school boards.

To reach these goals, the ACLU of Missouri established these general strategies:

### **STRATEGY #1**

Introduce model package of educational reforms including de-escalation policies and practices.

#### **PURPOSE**

To initiate collaboration with the school district in pursuit of fostering changes to student discipline policies, specifically those that prioritize corporal punishment and zero-tolerance policies, and thus promote discipline disparities.

### **STRATEGY #2**

Facilitate storytelling and community organizing campaigns.

#### **PURPOSE**

In the effort of storytelling, community interviews work to highlight both the individual and shared experiences of Hayti parents and students, therefore allowing P.A.U.S.E. to begin with the guidance of community goals and needs. Following those interviews, the creation of a data project functions to further explore the prominent themes expressed by participants and to determine whether they are embedded within other Missouri school districts.

To introduce this project to those in Hayti and prioritize continued engagement with community members, hosting and attending events throughout all phases of P.A.U.S.E. allow for connections to be formed and for staff to support Hayti in a variety of ways.

### **STRATEGY #3**

Conduct region-wide Know Your Rights presentations.

#### **PURPOSE**

To meet with students, parents, and other community members to spread awareness of various Know Your Rights topics, including the rights of students and voters. This awareness promotes empowerment and a likelihood to advocate.

By hosting voter registration drives and encouraging the attendance of Know Your Voting Rights presentations, we strive to increase voter turnout, specifically in school board elections. By increasing turnout, it is more likely that those elected will be more representative of those in the community.

### **STRATEGY #4**

Build the narrative of students' rights.

#### **PURPOSE**

To use messaging such as personal stories to change the way communities think about school discipline and students' rights.

### **STRATEGY #5**

Pursue proactive litigation to end legal corporal punishment in Missouri's public schools.

#### **PURPOSE**

To systemically eliminate corporal punishment from Missouri's public schools.



## WHAT IS THE IMMEDIATE NEED?

### ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND REPRESENTATION

These goals outlined by Hayti P.A.U.S.E would lead to short-term and long-term changes in the community and school district.

## INPUTS

### INVESTMENTS

ACLU of Missouri – Resources and Support

- Policy Department
- Communications Department
- Community Engagement Department
- Legal Department
- Intake Complaint Unit
- Facilities/Space
- Equipment
- Technology (dedicated “Project” page our website)

Missouri Foundation for Health

University Interns

Community Engagement Restorative Justice Fellows

Community-Based Partners

School-to-Prison Pipeline Coalition

Parent-Teacher Organization Collaborator

Know Your Rights Presentations

Voting Registration Drives

## OUTPUTS

### TARGET AUDIENCE

[WHO WILL WE REACH?]

Parents/Guardians of K-12 Students of Color

Parents/Guardians of K-12 Students with Disabilities

K-12 Students of Color

K-12 Students with Disabilities

School Administrators

School District Officials

Juvenile Justice

School-based Parent or Family

Resource Centers

### ACTIVITIES

[WHAT WILL BE DONE?]

Document “Untold” personal account interviews with parents/guardians of students facing or impacted by suspension or expulsion.

## Logic Model

A logic model is a visual tool for understanding and organizing activities, goals, relationships, and resources necessary to operate a program. Logic models consist of the following factors:

- Inputs: What is invested?
- Outputs: What efforts can be made after receiving those investments, and who do the efforts reach?

- Outcomes: What short-, medium-, and long-term changes occur?

In the development of the Project Against Unjust Suspensions and Expulsions (P.A.U.S.E), the components of the logic model were clearly defined to ensure that the project can serve as a guide for other communities in the event of replication. While the needs of each community vary, the structure provided by the logic model can be employed and altered as needed for future projects.

## ACTIVITIES (CONT.)

Conduct training and technical assistance self-advocacy sessions with parents and/or guardians of students facing suspension or expulsion and how to file a formal suspension or expulsion-based complaint with the ACLU of Missouri.

Collaborate with Hayti School District to identify students at-risk of school resource officer interactions or suspension and expulsion to create constructive alternatives to out-of-school time.

## DELIVERABLES

[WHAT WILL BE CREATED?]

### Operations Deliverables

- Voter Registration Drives
- Souls to the Polls
- Bridging Gap Summit and \$500 donation to PTO
- Tabling and Community Events

### Communication Deliverables

- Kitchen Table Talk Interviews
- Know Your Rights Presentations
- Invited Know your Rights Talks
- Facebook Live Integrated Advocacy Seminar Series
- P.A.U.S.E. End-of-Project Impact Performance Report

### Resource Deliverables

- Advocacy for parents/ students on school board or other school related meetings
- Know Your Rights Trifolds

## OUTCOMES

[SHORT-TERM]

### OVERALL PROJECT IMPACT

Reduction in the over-reliance on suspension and expulsions by creating constructive alternatives to out-of-school time.

## OUTCOMES

1. Parents/Guardians are educated about the educational rights of their student(s).
2. Parents/Guardians are equipped to be effective advocates for their student(s).
3. Parents/Guardians are empowered with resources to access legal counsel for their student(s).
4. Parents/Guardians are adequately represented with effective legal counsel at discipline hearings.

This model delivers accountability and transparency of the teams contributions to P.A.U.S.E., allowing the public to examine the responsibilities of our team. Simultaneously, the model aided staff throughout the duration of the project with its visual representation of intended outcomes, in that we were able to assess our progress with clear, pre-defined checkpoints.



# A Look Back at Year One: The Community and P.A.U.S.E.

The first year in Hayti covered the span of July 2022 to July 2023. Our team had two objectives:

1. To learn more about the community members we would be working alongside.
2. To share the purpose of our collaboration.

To initiate this process, we formally introduced the Project Against Unjust Suspensions and Expulsions (P.A.U.S.E.) to the community at a Town Hall Forum at the Hayti Cafeteria Building on October 11th, 2022. For this first event, five community members attended, including Hayti Heights Mayor Catrina Robinson.

During the event, staff engaged with attendees, leading to residents sharing stories about their past experiences in the community and at the school. These interactions created a space for our team to begin to build relationships founded on trust, setting the stage for creating our storytelling campaign through Kitchen Table Talks.



Sydney Smith, Hayti Heights Mayor Catrina Robinson, and Elaine Sutton at Town Hall at Hayti High Cafeteria



Elaine Sutton, Sydney Smith, and Iyaun Bell presenting at first Hayti PAUSE event, the Town Hall

## Kitchen Table Talks

Kitchen Table Talks—the conversational interviews of past and current Hayti High School students—acted as the foundation of our knowledge of Hayti student experiences with the school and its discipline practices. In these interviews, we heard stories that displayed common themes among student experiences. These Kitchen Table Talks exposed the following themes:

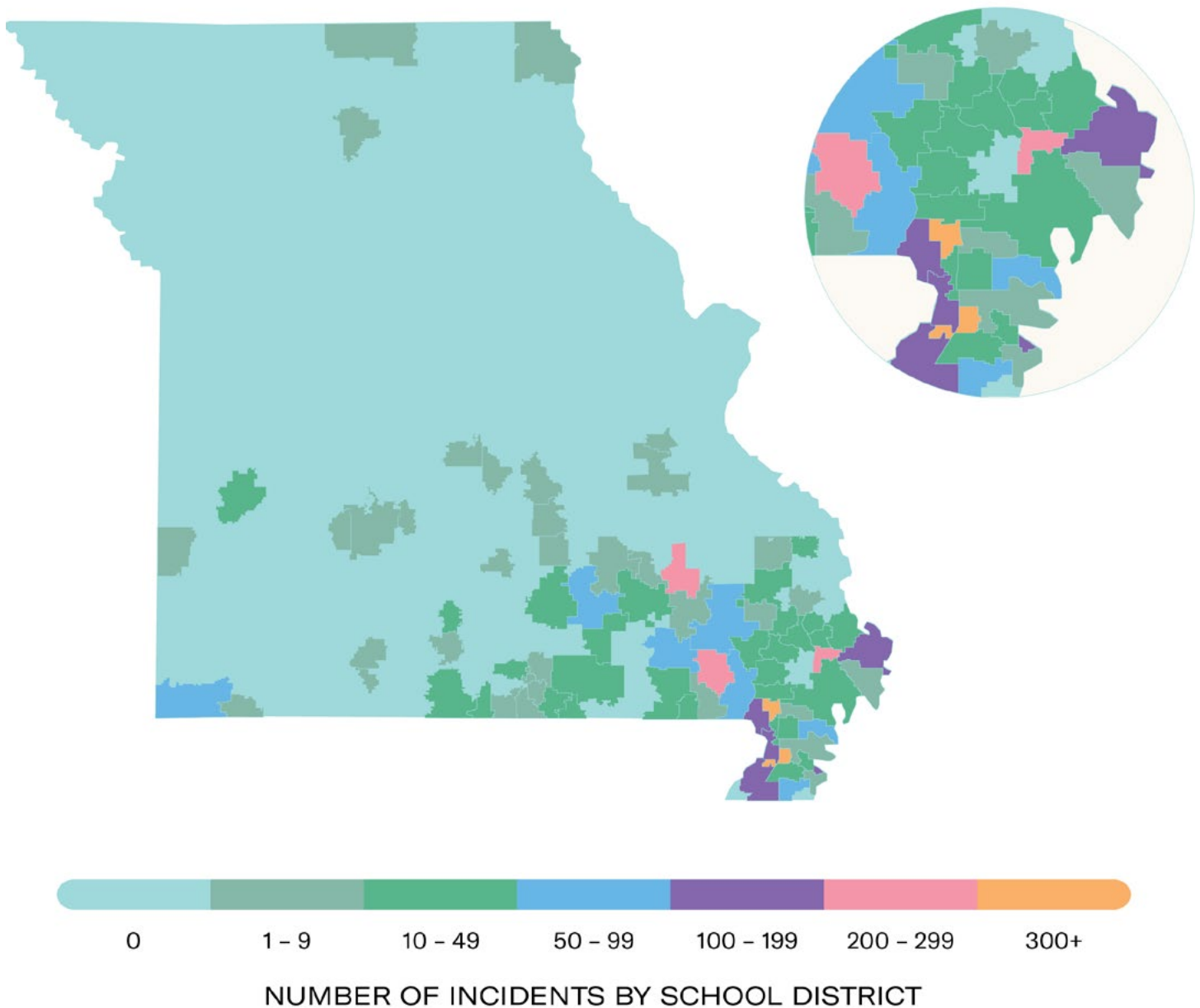
- Use of corporal punishment
- A lack of trust and relationship building between the teachers and students
- Unequal treatment and discipline disparities
- Bullying among students
- Distrust in the School Boards' involvement and intentions
- Lack of community involvement and resources
- Low voter engagement

To present the community with common findings found within those Kitchen Table Talks, our team hosted a series of Integrated Advocacy Seminar Series presentations on Facebook Live with the community.

These Kitchen Table Talk interviews also led to the establishment of various data projects. The Kitchen Table Talks raised awareness of the significance of high school parent-teacher organizations (PTOs) which assisted our team in determining which goals of P.A.U.S.E ought to be the highest priority. These Kitchen Table Talks highlighted narratives of corporal punishment. The practice, which remains legal in Missouri despite being banned in a majority of states, was used at the Hayti School District in the past and is still currently utilized there. The graphic on the following page shows which school districts in Missouri utilized corporal punishment in 2017-2018, where viewers can see the most utilization in the southeast region.



# Missouri Corporal Punishment Incident Data | 2017-2018



## HAYTI CORPORAL PUNISHMENT BREAKDOWN

### STUDENTS WITHOUT DISABILITIES

- Black Female Students – **4**
- Black Male Students – **19**
- White Female Students – **0**
- White Male Students – **4**

### STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

- Black Female Students – **1**
- Black Male Students – **7**
- White Female Students – **0**
- White Male Students – **0**

Our data collection also analyzed the prevalence of active PTOs and the influence these groups have on educational outcomes. Our staff learned that there was no active PTO at Hayti High School, but there was an active PTO at the elementary level. Research from the Washington State PTA has shown the importance of having a strong PTO within schools, specifically for the purpose of increasing graduation rates.

Average graduation rate for schools **with** a PTO:

- 86 percent for students without disabilities.
- 73 percent for students with disabilities.
- 86 percent for students of economically disadvantaged schools.

Average graduation rate for schools **without** a PTO:

- 76 percent for students without disabilities.
- 62 percent for students with disabilities.
- 78 percent for students of economically disadvantaged schools.

After learning there was no PTO at the high school level, our goals for the first year shifted as we implemented the additional objective of creating a PTO. We hosted several events aiming to engage families, including two PTO Spaghetti Dinner events where we invited students and parents to meet our team and enjoy dinner over a discussion of the potential development of a PTO chapter for Hayti High School. One event was particularly successful, with attendance and strong engagement from approximately ten students.

In the first year of the P.A.U.S.E. project, we accomplished the objectives of engaging with and sharing our mission to the Hayti community by hosting the Town Hall, Kitchen Table Talks, and Spaghetti Dinners. Through these events, we were able to connect with students and families, collect relevant data, and develop strong partnerships with stakeholders, parents, and students. In total, in 2022, we hosted 3 events, 2 Kitchen Table Talks, and 2 Integrated Advocacy Seminar Series presentations hosted on Facebook Live.





## Bridging the Gap: Engagement in Year Two

The second year in Hayti covered July 2023 to July 2024 and marked the rise of community engagement and collaboration with school administration. ACLU of Missouri staff hosted several events throughout the year, including the Bridging the Gap Summit, Know Your Rights presentations, and tabling events at the Back to School Bash and two Juneteenth events. Our team regularly attended school board meetings and met with Hayti High School administrators, specifically regarding potential revisions to the Hayti High Student Handbook. The P.A.U.S.E. Data Team finalized an analysis of the 2023 Summer Data Project and subsequently created a presentation sharing the results.



Iyaun Bell, Anni Dineen, Sydney Smith, and community member speaking

## Back to School Bash

One of the first events of the second year was the Back-to-School Bash held in the parking lot of the Caruthersville Recreation Center. Here, our team met more parents and students and introduced ourselves and the project.



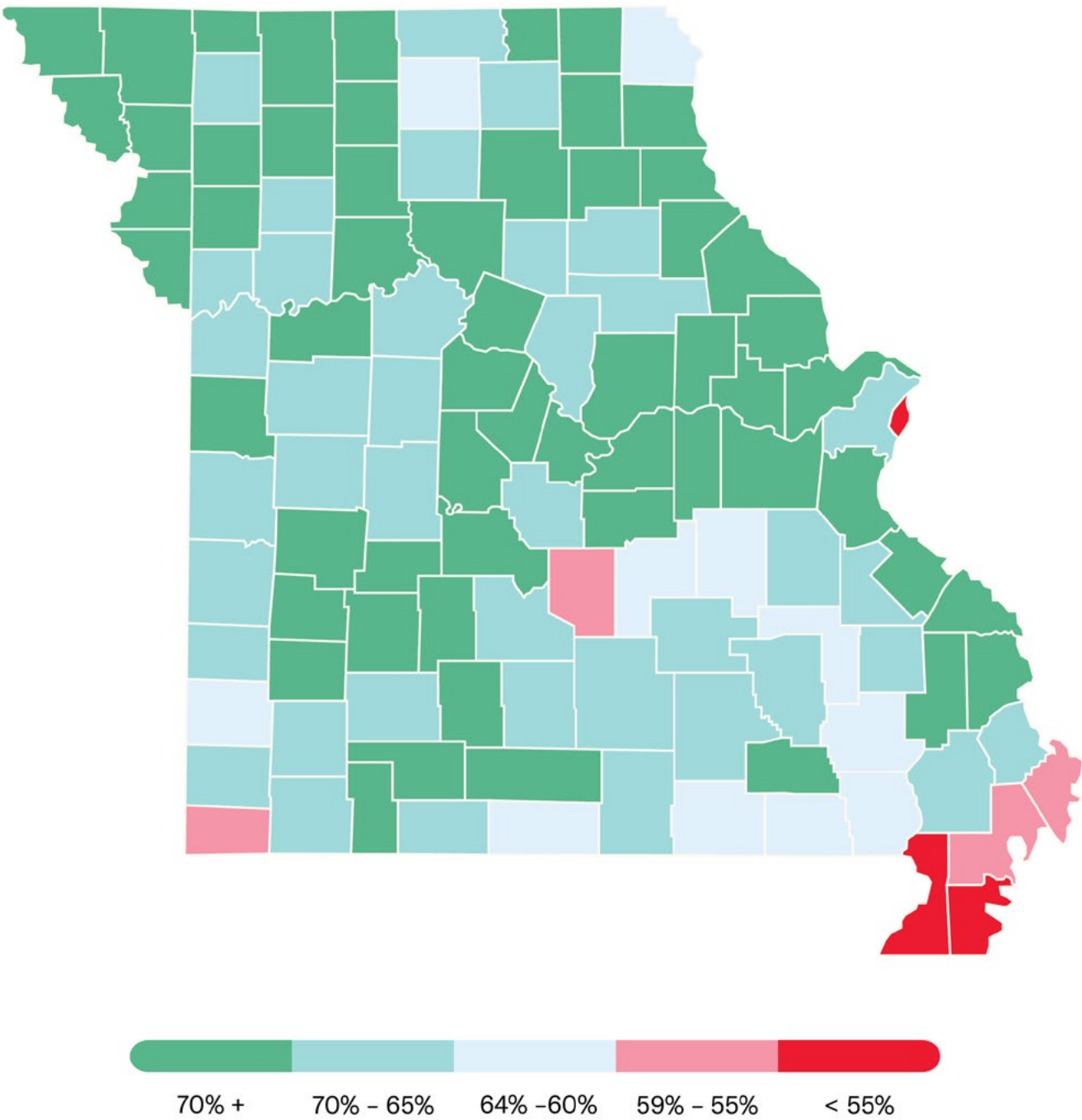
Sydney Smith, Elaine Sutton, and Anni Dineen



# Summer 2023 Data Project

We utilized interns and volunteers in the analysis of the Summer 2023 Data Project. In this work, we sought to explore the realities of the common narratives shared throughout the Kitchen Table Talk interviews. This project examined areas including election data, school enrollment data, state standardized testing results, and discipline infraction rates. Below are highlights from the results, specifically those from the election data. Readers can see the results from this presentation on the ACLU of Missouri Facebook page along with the Integrated Advocacy Seminar Series presentations.

## VOTER TURN OUT IN 2024 [BY COUNTY]



## Election Data Project

In the Election Data Project, the Data Team studied voter turnout rates throughout the state. Using data files from the Missouri Secretary of State website, data was pulled from the 2018, 2020, and 2022 November general elections and compared voter turnout rates from counties across the state to those specific to Pemiscot County, where Hayti is located. Among these different elections, Pemiscot County was found to have the lowest voter turnout in the state with rates 41.45% (2018), 56.77% (2020), and 32.5% (2022). After assessing data from other neighboring counties, it was clear that the counties in the lower southeast region and Bootheel area had the lowest levels of turnout in the state.

The Missouri map on the left examines voter turnout rates throughout the state in 2024.

From the onset, one of the goals for Project Against Unjust Suspensions and Expulsions (P.A.U.S.E.) was to increase voter engagement. The examination of the election data exemplified the need for engagement as the turnout rates were the lowest in four consecutive general elections. Our team used this information to strategically plan voter events, such as voter registration drives and voting rights presentations. Voter registration drives were conducted on Tuesdays and Thursdays throughout the month of September at Monument of Deliverance Outreach Church to target high school seniors. We also held registration drives at Garnett's store in Hayti and at the Caruthersville Library.



Sydney Smith with voter registration forms

# PTO Formation

In pursuit of establishing a Hayti High School PTO, we prioritized engagement with parents in the first year of P.A.U.S.E. Those efforts successfully led to the formation of a PTO in the following year. This body of parents illustrated the significance of their involvement in not just their children's school, but also in their community—as their work provided students with greater funding for activities and mobilized other Hayti parents. In support of the newfound PTO, we regularly attended their meetings and supplied input from various perspectives when requested.



PTO Meeting

Iyaun Bell, Sydney Smith, Elaine Sutton, and Hayti High PTO members

*“On behalf of our Hayti High School PTO, we would like to extend a THANK YOU to the Community Engagement Department of ACLU-MO for their \$500 donation. We appreciate the thoughtfulness & support you have given to help us in our efforts to continue to help our students during their time at Hayti High!”*

– Post from Hayti High School’s Facebook Page



# Bridging the Gap Summit

A major milestone in the second year was the Bridging the Gap Summit. In hosting this summit, we served to bring together school administration officials, school board members, and teachers at Hayti High School to meet with our team to discuss the project—such as its goals and what changes the Hayti community members aspired to see. The new superintendent attended the summit to share his vision for the school, including increasing engagement with the community and prioritizing student safety.

A final highlight of this summit was our opportunity to present a check of \$500 to the newly founded Hayti High School PTO.



Karla McKinney, Sydney Smith, Elaine Sutton, Superintendent Gerald Pickering, and Iyaun Bell



Sydney Smith and Elaine Sutton presenting a check representing a \$500 donation to the PTO

# Know Your Rights Sessions

The ACLU of Missouri hosted monthly Know Your Rights seminars throughout the first two years, with prominent presentations in the second year focusing on topics such as voting rights and students' rights.

Flyer for Know Your Rights Presentations in Fall 2023

## KNOW YOUR RIGHTS PRESENTATION

### PRESENTATION DATES

☀ <b>October 19<sup>th</sup></b> 4:30 PM – 5:30 PM	○ <b>September 30<sup>th</sup></b> 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM*
☀ <b>November 16<sup>th</sup></b> 4:30 PM – 5:30 PM	○ <b>October 21<sup>st</sup></b> 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM*
☀ <b>December 21<sup>st</sup></b> 4:30 PM – 5:30 PM	○ <b>November 18<sup>th</sup></b> 4:30 PM – 5:30 PM
☀ <b>CARUTHERSVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY</b> 707 West 13 <sup>th</sup> Street Caruthersville, MO 63830	○ <b>December 16<sup>th</sup></b> 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM*
	○ <b>MONUMENT OF DELIVERANCE CHURCH</b> 602 North 3 <sup>rd</sup> Street Hayti, MO 63851

\* (4) workshops at 1 hour each between 10:00 am and 3:00 pm (10 am, 11 am, 1 pm, and 2 pm). Select the timeslot most convenient for your availability.

**TOPICS INCLUDE:** STUDENT DISCIPLINE, STUDENT RIGHTS, SCHOOL BOARDS, VOTING, and more

**ACLU**  
Missouri

**P.A.U.S.E.** Project Against Unjust Suspensions and Expulsions  
 [www.aclu-mo.org/hayti](http://www.aclu-mo.org/hayti)



## Know Your Rights – Invited Talks

While the Missouri ACLU team hosted regular Know Your Rights presentations, we also participated in invited talks. During a tabling event, staff met with Bishop Braxton of New Prayer of Deliverance Ministries in New Madrid County. We were then invited to give a presentation on P.A.U.S.E. to their community, as they were experiencing similar education inequity and subsequent school-to-prison pipeline themes within their school district. We were also invited by the Pemiscot Initiative Network (PIN) to conduct a Know Your Rights presentation for one of their programming groups. PIN is an organization of human service professionals and other interested individuals bonded together for a common cause—to better serve the needs of the total community. They host monthly provider meetings to share information about relevant resources or events in the community with other organizations and partners. In this event, we discussed voting rights and distributed Know Your Rights packets to the attendees.



Pemiscot Initiative Network Office Know Your Rights Presentation | Robin Jackson and Marna Jones (Pemiscot Initiative Network)



New Madrid Know Your Rights Presentation | Iyaun Bell and New Madrid community members



# Tabling Events

Our team had the opportunity to table at several community events. These tabling events were a valuable tool for increasing engagement with new parents to share about our project and hear their experiences with their local school districts, as well as distributing Know Your Rights materials. That material consisted of several trifolds discussing topics such as voting rights, students' rights, rights for individuals incarcerated, student discipline for parents and legal guardians, and student discipline rights. These Know Your Rights brochures can also be found on the ACLU of Missouri webpage.



Sydney Smith  
and Iyaun Bell  
at Caruthersville  
Recreation Center



Iyaun Bell and Sydney  
Smith at Hayti Chili  
Cook-Off (Fall 2023)



Sydney Smith and students at Hayti School District's Back to School event in 2024

In 2023, we hosted 11 voter registration drives, eight Know Your Rights presentations, five Integrated Advocacy Seminar Series presentations hosted through Facebook lives focused on project updates, and three election events.

In 2024 alone, our team led 16 Know Your Rights presentations, 11 school-to-prison pipeline coalition meetings, eight tabling events, five Integrated Advocacy Presentations, and four speaking engagements, such as presenting at Empower Missouri's Annual Poverty Summit and the Deaconess Foundation in St. Louis.





## Sustaining a Movement: Year Three

The third year of the Project Against Unjust Suspensions and Expulsions (P.A.U.S.E.) covered the period of July 2024 to August 2025. While most of the year was dedicated to analyzing our experiences, successes, and challenges, we remained committed to engaging with the community. We attended tabling events at the Juneteenth celebration and Lincoln University Wellness Fair, empowered parents and students through Know Your Rights presentations, attended school board meetings to participate in discussions on policy including the use of corporal punishment, spoke at numerous community events, and worked to build a coalition so the community can continue to work towards a more just education system.



## Speaking Engagements

Our speaking engagements in the third year began at the Deaconess Foundation in St. Louis, where we shared the mission of P.A.U.S.E. and updates of its progress. We also hosted a virtual P.A.U.S.E. presentation with A Red Circle—a North St. Louis County based organization—which explored the topic of the school-to-prison pipeline.



Sydney Smith, Krysten Vaughn, Elaine Sutton and Iyaun Bell

## Empower-MO Anti-Poverty Summit

The Missouri ACLU team presented a breakout session on P.A.U.S.E. at Empower Missouri's annual Anti-Poverty Summit. There were approximately 30 people in attendance, including one Hayti High School graduate. This opportunity initiated discussions of how community engagement and advocacy work can be an essential tool in generating change throughout other Missouri school districts.

## Coalition

One vision for P.A.U.S.E. was to form a coalition in order to continue the advocacy for education equity following the conclusion of P.A.U.S.E. Our team continues to collaborate with several key stakeholders to try to make this happen. We encourage Hayti parents, students, educators, administration, and other community members to join this coalition, as they will bring diverse perspectives of how to improve their public schools and ensure equitable outcomes for all students.

# Project Recaps

The inception of P.A.U.S.E. in 2022 steered the ACLU of Missouri and the Hayti community through the following three years of learning, growth, and obstacles. While this project thrived from community engagement, widespread support, and the generous provision of resources, P.A.U.S.E. could not have achieved many of its goals without encountering and overcoming difficulties along the way. This next section will highlight many of our most significant successes, challenges, and recommendations for replications of this work.

Flyer for the Hayti  
School Board Candidate  
Forum and Voter  
Registration Drive in  
Spring 2023



## HAYTI SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATE FORUM MEET YOUR SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATES

**MODERATOR: Luz Henriquez, Executive Director (ACLU-MO)**

**March 31, 2023**  
5:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m

**Caruthersville Public Library**  
707 W 13th St.  
Caruthersville, MO 63830

The ACLU-MO invites the residents of the Hayti RII School District to join us for a Candidate Forum for the upcoming School Board Elections. The candidates will discuss their policies followed by an audience Q/A



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## VOTER REGISTRATION DRIVE

**Tuesday, March 7<sup>th</sup>**  
9:00 am – 12:00 pm  
Hayti Family Dollar and  
Cleveland Heights Apartments

**Wednesday, March 8<sup>th</sup>**  
1:00 pm – 4:00 pm  
Hayti Monument of  
Deliverance Church

**ALL RESIDENTS OF HAYTI AND HAYTI  
HEIGHTS CAN VOTE FOR SCHOOL BOARD**

**VOTER REGISTRATION DEADLINE: MARCH 8TH  
ELECTION DATE: APRIL 4TH**

**PRESENTED BY:**  
The Community Engagement  
Department of the ACLU-MO

**ACLU MO**

[www.aclu-mo.org/en/hayti](http://www.aclu-mo.org/en/hayti)

# Successes

## A More Representative School Board

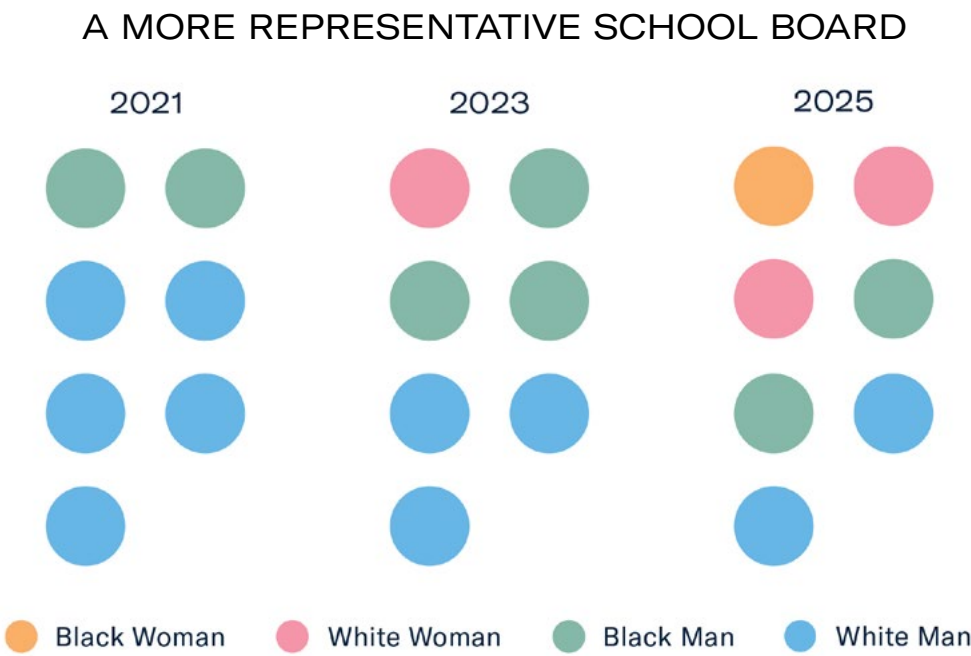
In the first year of the Project Against Unjust Suspensions and Expulsions (P.A.U.S.E.), our team worked diligently to empower voters to elect a school board that more accurately represents the needs and interests of all Hayti students and families. This was achieved through the execution of voter registration drives and voting rights presentations about voting rights to community members.

Our team planned a School Board Candidate Forum for the 2023 school board election. The intended purpose of the forum was to introduce the school board candidates to the community and to have residents ask questions about school policies and the candidates' visions for the school district. Several candidates showed interest in the forum, and three committed to participating. Two others were interested and indicated their participation was tentative. Unfortunately, the forum was canceled due to a thunderstorm that caused several power outages, and we were unable to reschedule.

The results of the 2023 school board election ultimately determined the makeup of the board to be a more accurate representation of the community, specifically in regard to factors of gender, race, and those who had ties to students in the district. This included the election of the following individuals:

- A white mother with children in the school district.
- A Black grandfather with grandchildren in the school district.
- A white father with children in the school district.

The recent 2025 school board election marked further gains in representation, with the election of two new members. In looking at the shifts in representation of the board's makeup over time, the graphic below showcases the exact breakdown of the school board from 2021-2025:



Alongside the rise in community representation, the school district began to prioritize public accessibility to school board information. With the recent commitment to advertise all school board meetings on social media and solicit community feedback through surveys, the district has allowed Hayti students and families to contribute to the decisions that govern education.



## **PTO Formation**

In Year Two of P.A.U.S.E., community members formed the first Hayti High School PTO. This was a milestone for the school's students and families and is one that could not have been met without the ceaseless efforts of Hayti parents, who took on the challenge of building the PTO from the ground up and continued the work of engaging parents.

Throughout the second year, the PTO was committed to supporting the activities of Hayti High School students and garnering the support of parents. They prioritized hosting fundraisers, (including 50/50 drawings at football games), donating to various activities, and tabling at school events to collect parent contact information. With that contact information, PTO members then assembled a mailing list for newsletters, which functioned to spread the message of the PTO and encourage community involvement.

This group ultimately paved the way for future Hayti PTOs: by showing initiative and aiming to support not only Hayti High School students, but also their parents, the strategies and accomplishments of these PTO members will serve as a guide for future members.

## **Know Your Rights Presentations**

The ACLU of Missouri conducted monthly Know Your Rights trainings in both Hayti and the neighboring community of Caruthersville. These presentations, which discussed voting rights, students' rights and discipline, and more, provided space for staff to disseminate relevant information to impacted groups. The events encouraged community members to present complaints in the school districts and served as a way for the community to voice feedback on school policy changes.

## **Integrated Advocacy Seminar Series**

In the effort to transparently share project updates and receive community feedback, the bi-monthly Facebook Live Integrated Advocacy Seminar Series were formed. This series provided insight into the work on the ground in Hayti and was a way to maintain accountability to the public, as they extended space for feedback. In these presentations, our team gave updates on upcoming events, data reports, and highlights within the community. In total, there were 12 presentations conducted.

## **Student Handbook Policy Changes**

To achieve the goals of reducing discipline disparities and unjust disciplinary practices, we collaborated with the school board members and Hayti High School principal to discuss and create discipline policy changes to the student handbook. During this meeting, we learned that school administration had already begun making changes to their discipline policies—which led us to provide further feedback on zero-tolerance and those relating to corporal punishment.

When looking at discipline policies, especially those concerning corporal punishment, it is imperative to note a significant law change that happened in 2022. Missouri law under RSMo Section 160.261 states that schools must receive written permission to use corporal punishment. While we began P.A.U.S.E. with the objective to remove corporal punishments in school, conversations with students, parents, administration, and the school board demonstrated there to be support for the practice. When asked about the use of corporal punishment, many parents stated that they would rather have their student receive corporal punishment for a discipline infraction than an in-school or out-of-school suspension. After these

conversations, our goal shifted to instead see reductions in the use of corporal punishment, and to promote narratives of student discipline that show there to be other disciplinary options that do not always include corporal punishment or unjust suspensions and expulsions.

Upon reviewing the new handbook, Hayti School District successfully eliminated several zero-tolerance policies, removed corporal punishment as a means of discipline for several infractions, and, at the elementary level, received a verbal commitment not to utilize the practice, even though it was still incorporated in the handbook. While we appreciate the strides taken through this verbal commitment, we do highly recommend the commitment be applied to written policies, as a means of ensuring that discipline policies are followed and to grant transparency to students, parents, and the public.

## HAYTI DISCIPLINE POLICY REVISIONS

	PRIOR	CURRENT
EXCESSIVE NOISE	ASD, Swats 1 Day ISS, Swats 2 Day ISS, Swats, OSS	ASD, Lunch Detention 1 Day ISS, Sat Detention 2 Day ISS
RUDE	3 Day ISS, Swats 5 Day OSS Alt School	ASD, Sat Detention, ISS 1-3 Day ISS 5-10 Day ISS
CELL	1 Day OSS 3 Day OSS 5 Day OSS	1 Day ISS 2 Day ISS 3 Day ISS
CHEATING	ASD, Swats 3 Day ISS, Swats Long-Term ISS; Alt School	Write Up, Sat Detention 4 Day ISS Hearing with Parent/Admin to Determine Outcome
PDA	Swats 2 Day OSS 5 Day OSS	ASD 2 Day ISS

For example, the policy changes of assigning 1-day in-school-suspension in replacement of 1-day out-of-school suspension for a cell phone infraction, and after-school detention for public displays of affection rather than corporal punishment, have led to a more positive learning environment—ultimately instilling a sense of reassurance and support within students.

To the left is a chart outlining some of the discipline policy revisions.

### KEY FOR GRAPHS/CHARTS

**ASD** – After School Detention

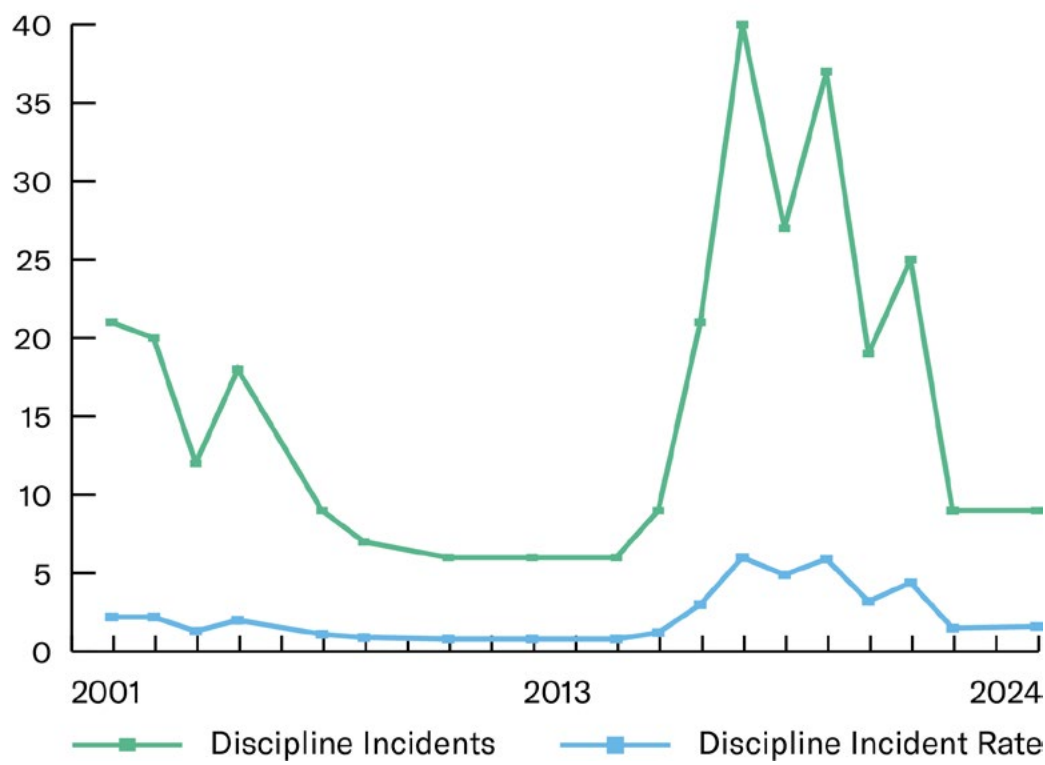
**ISS** – In School Suspension

**OSS** – Out of School Suspension

# Discipline Data Success

The next few graphs are data points collected from the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and show Hayti Discipline rates over time, looking at total incidents, in-school suspension rates, and out-of-school suspension rates. A \* in the graph or table means the data was suppressed. Hayti is a small school district, so to protect student privacy, sometimes data points will be suppressed. By suppressing certain data points, student privacy can be protected as this prevents re-identification and can support compliance with privacy laws, such as FERPA. While protecting student privacy is critical, data suppression should not come at the cost of transparency.

HAYTI DISCIPLINE INCIDENTS [2001 – 2024]



YEAR	INCIDENTS	RATE	YEAR	INCIDENTS	RATE
2001	*	*	2013	*	*
2002	21	2.2	2014	6	0.8
2003	20	2.2	2015	9	1.2
2004	12	1.3	2016	21	3
2005	18	2	2017	40	6
2006	*	*	2018	27	4.9
2007	9	1.1	2019	37	5.9
2008	7	0.9	2020	19	3.2
2009	*	*	2021	25	4.4
2010	6	0.8	2022	9	1.5
2011	*	*	2023	*	*
2012	6	0.8	2024	9	1.6

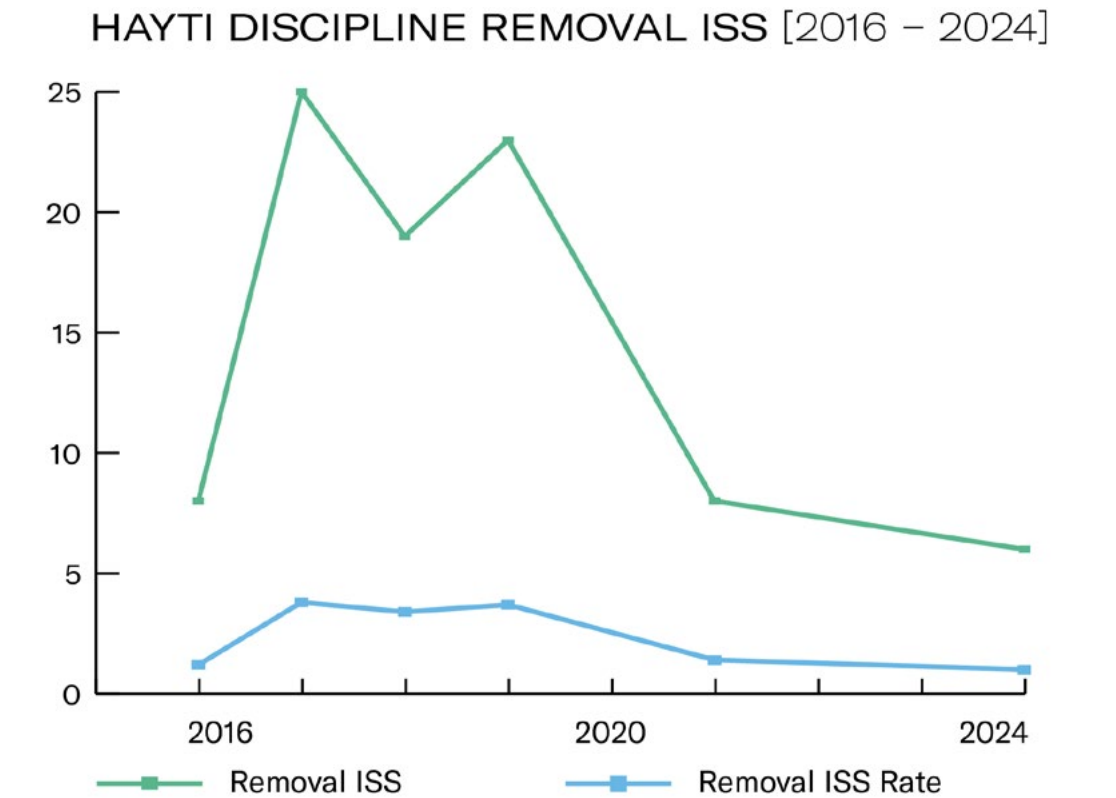
\*= data was suppressed due to low numbers for student privacy and is not reflected in this chart



To the left, this graph looks at the trends and total incidents from 2000 to 2023, while also highlighting projected incident rates for upcoming school years. These projected findings refer to the estimated trends based on prior and current data.

When looking at the following table, you can see there were 25 incidents in 2021, 9 incidents in 2022, data suppressed in 2023, and 9 incidents in 2024. It is important to note that data for 2020-2021 could be skewed due to the global pandemic and potential school closures.

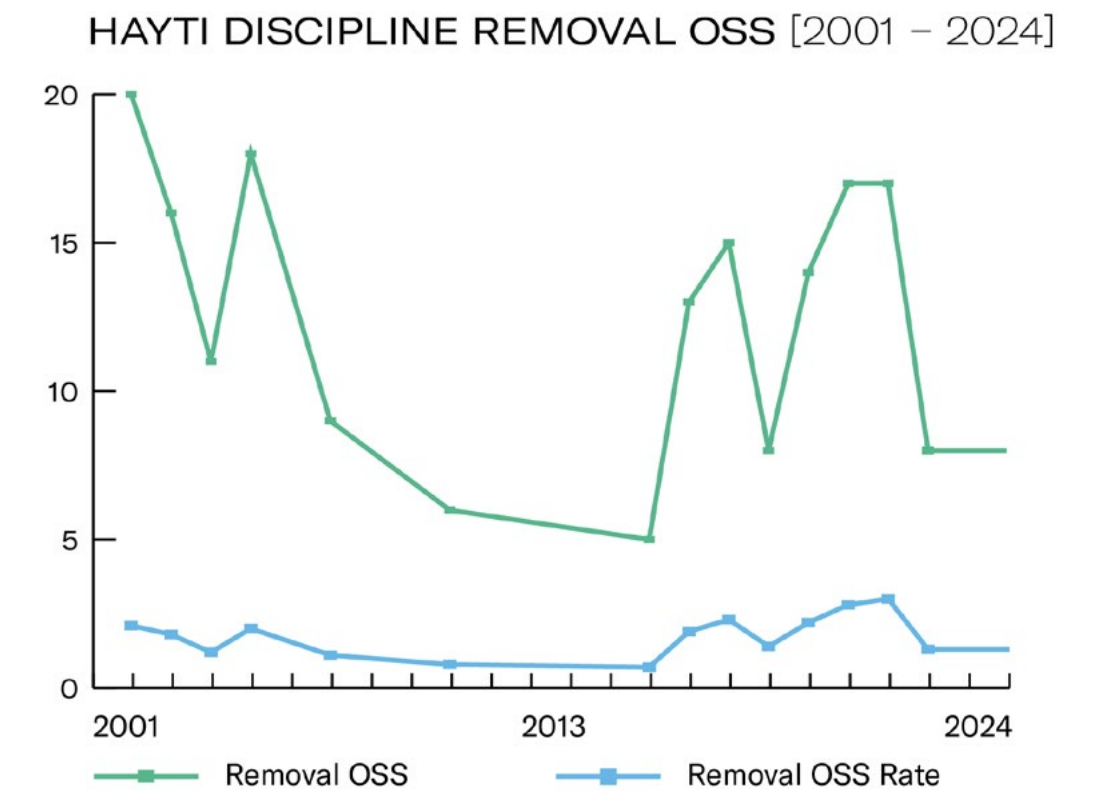
The next graph looks at in-school suspension from 2016 to 2024 and the table shows data from 2001 to 2024. Readers will see suppressed data for several years.



YEAR	ISS	ISS RATE	YEAR	ISS	ISS RATE
2001	*	*	2013	*	*
2002	*	*	2014	*	*
2003	*	*	2015	*	*
2004	*	*	2016	8	1.2
2005	*	*	2017	25	3.8
2006	*	*	2018	19	3.4
2007	*	*	2019	23	3.7
2008	*	*	2020	*	*
2009	*	*	2021	8	1.4
2010	*	*	2022	*	*
2011	*	*	2023	*	*
2012	*	*	2024	6	1

\*= data was suppressed due to low numbers for student privacy and is not reflected in this chart

These last sets of graphs and tables look at out-of-school suspensions within Hayti over time.



YEAR	OSS	OSS RATE	YEAR	OSS	OSS RATE
2001	*	*	2013	*	*
2002	20	2.1	2014	*	*
2003	16	1.8	2015	5	0.7
2004	11	1.2	2016	13	1.9
2005	18	2	2017	15	2.3
2006	*	*	2018	8	1.4
2007	9	1.1	2019	14	2.2
2008	*	*	2020	17	2.8
2009	*	*	2021	17	3
2010	6	0.8	2022	8	1.3
2011	*	*	2023	*	*
2012	*	*	2024	*	*

\*= data was suppressed due to low numbers for student privacy and  
is not reflected in this chart

Looking at the table, viewers can see a decrease in the use of out-of-school suspensions (OSS) starting in 2022, with suspension numbers so low in 2023 and 2024 that the data had to be suppressed.

This is a graph of the discipline incidents across Missouri and infraction type through the years from the DESE website. While you can collect data further back, this report will only include the years 2020-2024.

## DISCIPLINE INCIDENTS ACROSS MISSOURI SCHOOL DISTRICTS

CATEGORY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Enrollment	879699	859343	863270	861948	859345
Total Number of Incidents	8945	4349	13987	16037	14612
Incident Rate (per 100 students)	1.0	0.5	1.6	1.9	1.7
TYPE OF OFFENSE [NUMBER   RATE]					
Alcohol	340   0.0	204   0.0	425   0.0	460   0.1	391   0.0
Drug	1728   0.2	1101   0.1	2789   0.3	3839   0.4	3490   0.4
E-Cigarettes	85   0.0	73   0.0	211   0.0	202   0.0	285   0.0
Tobacco	99   0.0	77   0.0	140   0.0	153   0.0	123   0.0
Violent Act	452   0.1	175   0.0	715   0.1	837   0.1	708   0.1
Violent Act Without Injury	619   0.1	249   0.0	929   0.1	1034   0.1	1410   0.2
Weapon	378   0.0	239   0.0	774   0.1	779   0.1	656   0.1
Other	5244   0.6	2231   0.3	8004   0.9	8733   1.0	7549   0.9
TYPE OF REMOVAL [NUMBER   RATE]					
In-School Suspension	673   0.1	371   0.0	929   0.1	1062   0.1	1047   0.1
Out of School Suspension	8242   0.9	3966   0.5	13011   1.5	14907   1.7	13523   1.6
Expulsion	10   0.0	6   0.0	35   0.0	33   0.0	28   0.0
Unilateral Removal	20   0.0	6   0.0	12   0.0	35   0.0	14   0.0
LENGTH OF REMOVAL [NUMBER   RATE]					
10 Consecutive Days	7224   0.8	3585   0.4	11664   1.4	12690   1.5	11251   1.3
More than 10 Consecutive Days	1721   0.2	764   0.1	2323   0.3	3347   0.4	3361   0.4

Incidents – Each incident is to be reported in which a student is removed from the traditional classroom setting for ten or more consecutive days



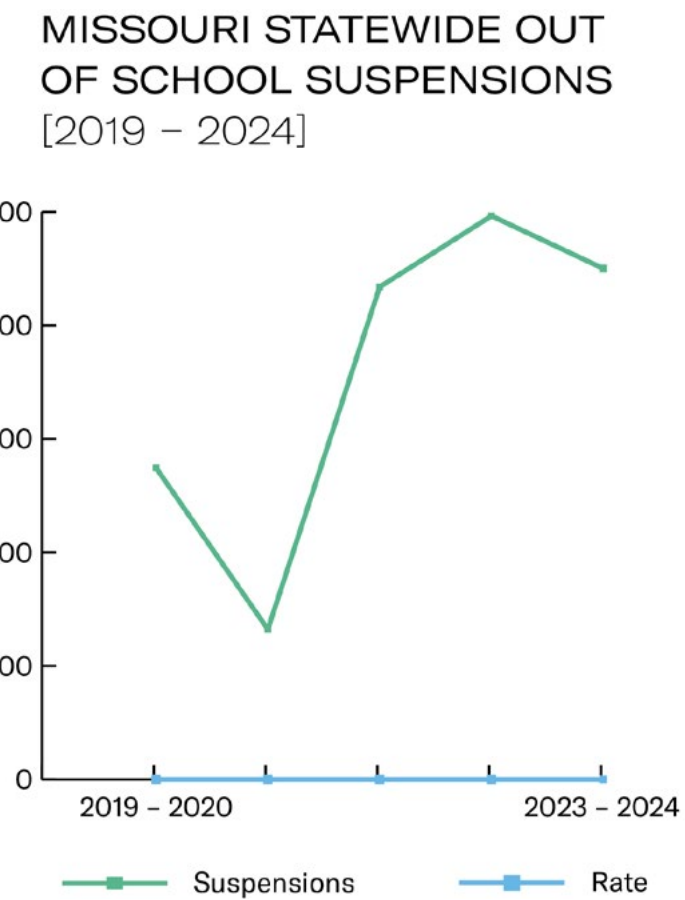
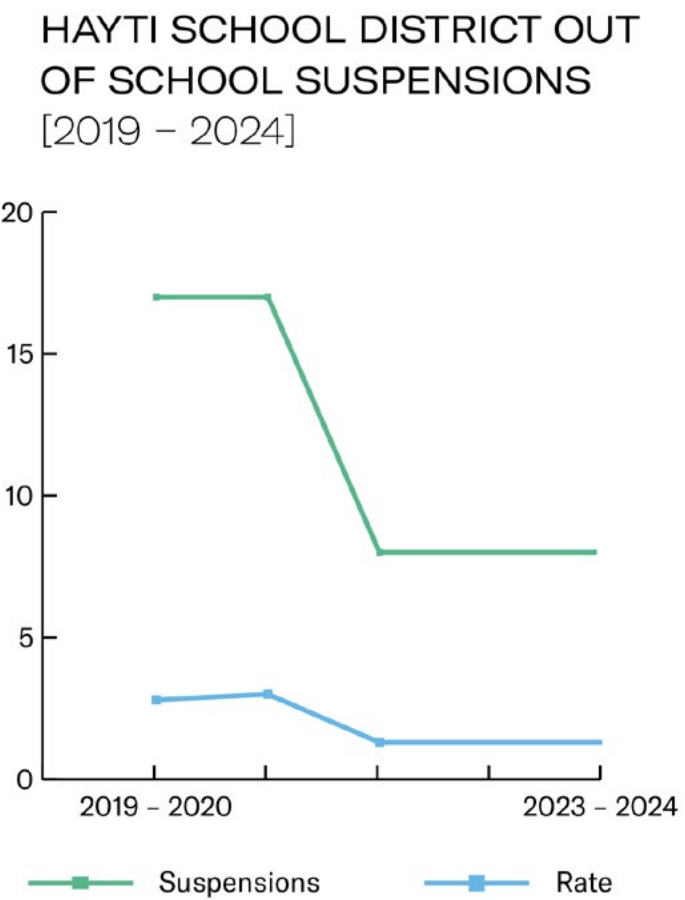
Below is a graph of the same information but condensed to only show Hayti specific data. For Hayti School District you will see \*|\* which means the data was suppressed.

## DISCIPLINE INCIDENTS IN HAYTI SCHOOL DISTRICT

CATEGORY	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Enrollment	597	570	615	573	573
Total Number of Incidents	19	25	9	*	9
Incident Rate (per 100 students)	3.2	4.4	1.5	*	1.6
TYPE OF OFFENSE [NUMBER   RATE]					
Alcohol	* *	* *	* *	* *	* *
Drug	* *	* *	* *	* *	* *
E-Cigarettes	* *	* *	* *	* *	* *
Tobacco	* *	* *	* *	* *	* *
Violent Act	* *	* *	* *	* *	* *
Violent Act Without Injury	* *	* *	* *	* *	* *
Weapon	* *	* *	* *	* *	* *
Other	19   3.2	24   4.2	8   1.3	* *	7   1.2
TYPE OF REMOVAL [NUMBER   RATE]					
In-School Suspension	* *	8   1.4	* *	* *	6   1.0
Out of School Suspension	17   2.8	17   3.0	8   1.3	* *	* *
Expulsion	* *	* *	* *	* *	* *
Unilateral Removal	* *	* *	* *	* *	* *
LENGTH OF REMOVAL [NUMBER   RATE]					
10 Consecutive Days	* *	* *	* *	* *	* *
More than 10 Consecutive Days	* *	* *	* *	* *	* *

Incidents – Each incident is to be reported in which a student is removed from the traditional classroom setting for ten or more consecutive days

Below is another graph from DESE comparing Hayti’s average OSS rates over time to the rates of other schools and school districts in Missouri. Viewers can see that in 2022-2023 and 2023-2024, Hayti had five or fewer out-of-school suspensions, which resulted in privacy policy being cited as the reason for suppressing the data.



SCHOOL YEAR	SUSPENSIONS	RATE
2019 – 2020	17	2.8
2020 – 2021	17	3.0
2021 – 2022	8	1.3
2022 – 2023	*	*
2023 – 2024	*	*

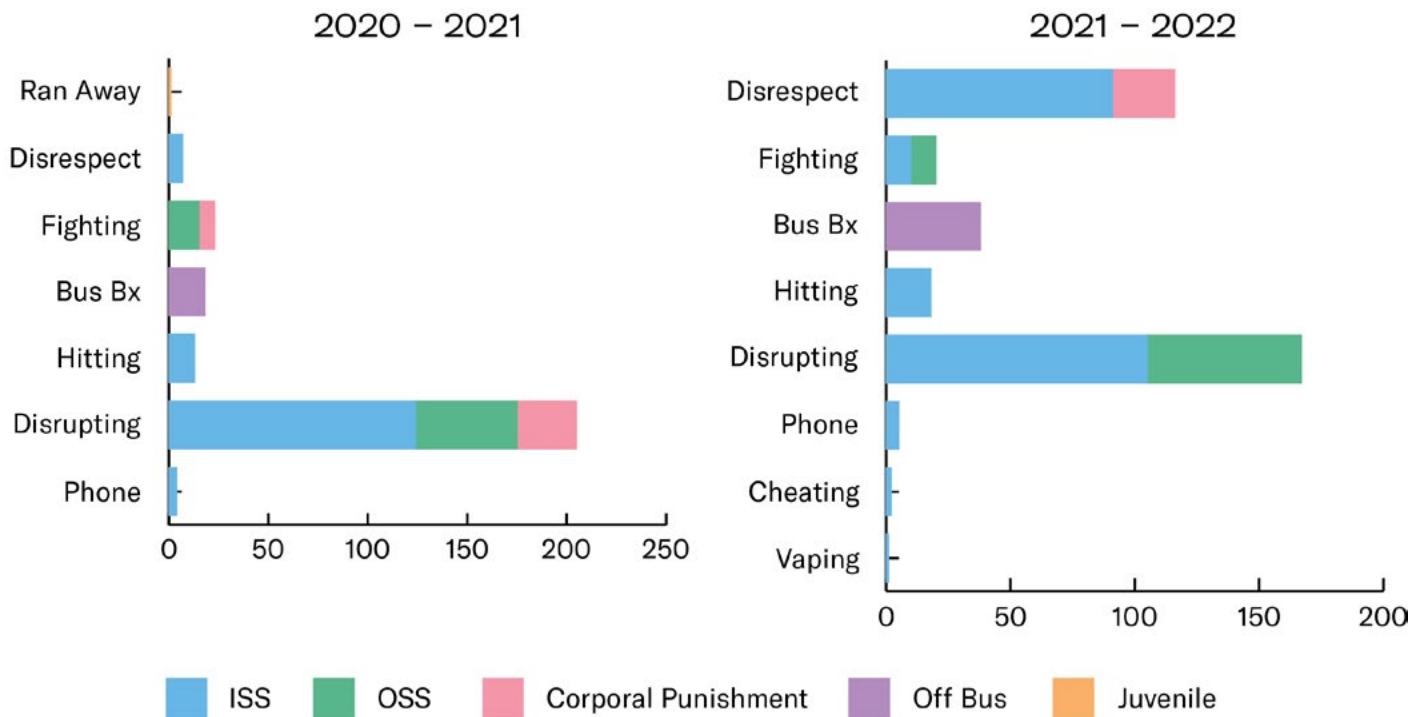
SCHOOL YEAR	SUSPENSIONS	RATE
2019 – 2020	8,236	0.9
2020 – 2021	3,966	0.5
2021 – 2022	13,013	1.5
2022 – 2023	14,890	1.7
2023 – 2024	13,499	1.6

\*= data was suppressed due to low numbers for student privacy and is not reflected in these charts

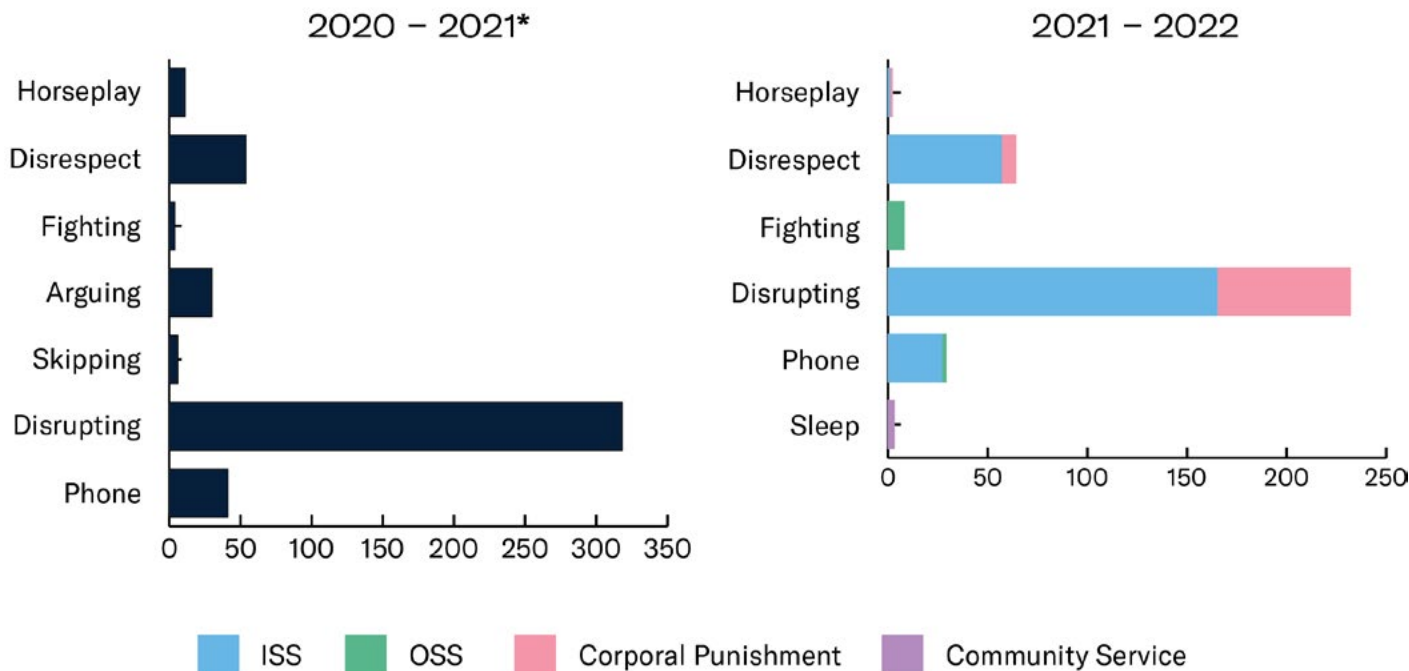
When examining the DESE discipline data, a noticeable decrease in incidents begins around 2021. This decline may be attributed to several factors, including the hiring of new administrative staff within the district. The leadership transition appears to have brought significant changes to discipline policies, as reflected in updated student handbooks and possibly a broader shift in school climate. These policy and cultural changes may be contributing to the reduction in OSS and other disciplinary actions. However, it will be essential to continue monitoring incident rates over time to determine whether these changes are leading to lasting improvements in equity, school culture, and student outcomes.

The next few graphs will show specific discipline infractions given to students attending Hayti at the elementary and high school level for 2020-2021 and 2021-2022. They were collected through sunshine law requests. Our team requested discipline data for the school year of 2022-2023, but due to a software system change from Hayti, accessing data would have been time-consuming and expensive.

### ELEMENTARY DISCIPLINE BY INFRACTION



### HIGH SCHOOL DISCIPLINE BY INFRACTION



\*Discipline categories were not provided for this data



# Civil Rights Data Collection 2020-2021 Data

The tables below represent data collected from the Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) for the 2020-2021 school year. Local Education Agency (LEA) references Hayti School District data that was reported. In the table, viewers can compare LEA (Hayti) to the state-reported data and national-reported data. “WO” in the table refers to students disciplined without having a reported disability, whereas “W” refers to discipline instances for students with disabilities.

The table below examines Hayti discipline data for “one or more ISS.”

## HAYTI DISCIPLINE DATA [FOR ONE OR MORE ISS]

DISCIPLINE	AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE	ASIAN	BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN	HISPANIC OR LATINO	NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER	TWO OR MORE RACES	WHITE	TOTAL
LEA – 1 or more ISS wo	0	0	141	0	0	0	16	157
LEA – 1 or more ISS w	0	0	7	0	0	0	1	8
State – 1 or more ISS wo	128	144	3,608	1,858	173	1,861	23,849	31,621
State – 1 or more ISS – w	23	21	924	439	18	489	6,532	8,446
National – 1 or more ISS wo	7,893	4,568	137,511	123,423	1,530	28,746	299,375	603,046
National – 1 or more ISS w	2,387	637	41,956	32,661	212	9,441	99,205	186,499
LEA – Female wo	0	0	46	0	0	0	3	49
LEA – Female w	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
LEA – Male wo	0	0	95	0	0	0	13	108
LEA – Male w	0	0	6	0	0	0	1	7
TOTALS	10,341	5,370	184,295	158,381	1,933	40,537	428,995	829,942

The table below refers to students receiving one or more OSS.

## HAYTI DISCIPLINE DATA [FOR MORE THAN ONE OSS]

DISCIPLINE	AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE	ASIAN	BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN	HISPANIC OR LATINO	NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER	TWO OR MORE RACES	WHITE	TOTAL
LEA – 1 or more OSS wo	0	0	45	0	0	0	5	50
LEA – 1 or more OSS w	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	6
State – 1 or more OSS wo	21	11	704	212	26	277	3,057	4,308
State – 1 or more OSS w	3	6	353	83	5	162	1,708	2,320
National – 1 or more OSS wo	1,693	667	34,932	17,543	261	6685	52,939	114,720
National – 1 or more OSS w	788	222	17,112	8,303	67	3934	33,677	64,103
LEA – Female wo	0	0	17	0	0	0	2	19
LEA – Female w	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
LEA – Male wo	0	0	28	0	0	0	3	31
LEA – Male w	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	5
TOTALS	2,505	906	53,203	26,141	359	11,058	91,391	185,563

The table below references students who received 1 OSS

## HAYTI DISCIPLINE DATA [FOR ONE OSS]

DISCIPLINE	AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE	ASIAN	BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN	HISPANIC OR LATINO	NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER	TWO OR MORE RACES	WHITE	TOTAL
LEA – 1 OSS wo	0	0	47	0	0	0	8	55
LEA – 1 OSS w	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
State – 1 OSS wo	57	49	1,941	589	53	658	7,596	10,943
State – 1 OSS w	13	10	609	179	7	228	2,516	3,562
National – 1 OSS wo	4,716	3,118	87,185	64,867	867	17,484	163,463	341,700
National – 1 OSS w	1,642	587	30,264	19,827	142	6,891	64,271	123,624
LEA – Female wo	0	0	17	0	0	0	2	19
LEA – Female w	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
LEA – Male wo	0	0	30	0	0	0	6	36
LEA – Male w	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
TOTALS	6,428	3,764	120,095	85,462	1,069	25,261	237,862	479,941



The following table presents data on students who received corporal punishment. For students with disabilities, although data was reported by some LEAs, CRDC indicates a value of 0. This likely reflects data suppression for student privacy reasons.

## HAYTI DISCIPLINE DATA

### [CORPORAL PUNISHMENT FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES]

DISCIPLINE	AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE	ASIAN	BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN	HISPANIC OR LATINO	NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER	TWO OR MORE RACES	WHITE	TOTAL
LEA – CP wo	0	0	37	0	0	0	3	40
LEA – CP w	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
State – CP wo	5	0	170	21	3	22	750	971
State – CP w	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
National – CP wo	390	36	3,923	1,954	22	477	9,379	16,181
National – CP w	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
LEA – CP Female wo	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	7
LEA – CP Female w	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
LEA – CP Male wo	0	0	30	0	0	0	3	33
LEA – CP Male w	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
TOTALS	395	36	4,167	1,975	25	499	10,135	17,232

\* = data was suppressed

The data to the left suggests a reduction in school discipline incidents within the Hayti School District, particularly in the use of OSS. This overall decline may reflect a more positive school climate, which is a critical factor in efforts to support education equity and dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline. Updated school policies, especially those outlined in the student handbook, appear to have played a role in this shift, signaling a move away from exclusionary discipline practices. Reducing the removal of students from their learning environment not only disrupts harmful disciplinary patterns, but also contributes to improved educational outcomes and higher graduation rates. Moving forward, it will be essential to continue monitoring both discipline trends and academic indicators to gain a clearer understanding of the long-term impact of these changes.

Due to the hard work of the Hayti school administration in revising their handbook policies, viewers can see how discipline—especially the use of OSS—has shifted within the district in these last few years. This is a success for the Hayti School District, community, and P.A.U.S.E..

## Challenges

### Discipline Data Access

One significant challenge was gathering and accessing accurate discipline data, especially concerning the use of corporal punishment. The Department of Education formed the Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) to compile data with a specific focus on education rights and discipline rates in our schools—but there are obstacles in obtaining consistent data. The COVID-19, pandemic, for example, resulted in the pause of collection for a few years. Frequent changes in data systems or software in school districts may also cause complications in accessing this data, which creates a more complex process in tracking trends over time. This is what drove the challenge in accessing Hayti’s discipline data for the 2022-2023 school year.

Ultimately, however, our team encountered a lack of transparency from the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), especially in the data concerning smaller school districts. In the event of low incident rates, those districts—including Hayti—are faced with suppressed numeric data due to privacy concerns.

While maintaining student privacy is essential, this practice inherently reduces transparency and hinders efforts to fully understand the use of certain disciplinary actions within districts. It thus becomes more difficult to identify and address potential disparities in discipline, specifically regarding race or disability status. To ensure accountability for both the state and school district, it is essential to have accurate, disaggregated discipline records. Without access to this data, it becomes nearly impossible to determine whether disproportionately applied discipline practices exist within a school district, as well as to hold schools accountable and proceed with necessary policy reforms.

Preserving community trust and support is an additional consequence of this lack of transparency—as parents may encounter difficulties when attempting to collect important information or may begin to feel distrustful of school practices.



The link below is a tool from DESE that underscores general discipline trends. However, especially in small and rural districts with suppressed data, it is difficult to understand the full picture of the types and rate of discipline incidents.

[https://apps.dese.mo.gov/MCDS/Reports/SSRS\\_Print.aspx?Reportid=7cacfcb5-6ef5-46d1-b85f-8be71442d4f4](https://apps.dese.mo.gov/MCDS/Reports/SSRS_Print.aspx?Reportid=7cacfcb5-6ef5-46d1-b85f-8be71442d4f4)

# **Engagement**

## **Student Engagement**

While many Hayti students were interested in the efforts and goals of P.A.U.S.E. and were eager to discuss the project with our team, those discussions highlighted a key challenge: awareness. Several students identified a lack of awareness of their rights as students, the role of the school board, or the decision-making processes and how to participate. Although this was not the case for all students, those conversations signaled an underlying challenge of reaching students and empowering them to exercise their rights.

## **Dissolution of the PTO**

This challenge of engagement ultimately was seen among Hayti parents, as well—specifically in the dissolution of the first high school PTO after its first year. While several parents were passionate about supporting their children’s school and encouraging others to get involved, a few potential causes for the PTO’s eventual disbandment were noted.

These barriers to long-lasting engagement are likely driven by economic and systemic constraints that create obstacles in accessibility. Many parents and caregivers work full-time, for example, leaving many with limited availability or the inability to alter their schedules. Similar systemic barriers include a lack of transportation or access to childcare, which are what make attendance of school functions possible. There are also communication gaps, including access to stable internet and digital literacy, especially among rural areas where certain modes of communication may not reach all parents and caregivers. What these restrictions signal, however, is not an unwillingness of parents to engage with the community or support their students’ school—but rather a reality that limits the events parents are capable of attending. While the availability of and resources possessed by community members varies among each school district, it is essential that accessibility is prioritized in the future establishment of PTOs.

Alongside the lack of accessibility, P.A.U.S.E.’s evolving priorities and scope throughout the second and third years contributed to the lessened support for collaboration between the PTO, school board, and administration, which challenged the longevity of the group and the capacity to re-engage the community following the PTO’s first year.

Those two overarching difficulties in sustaining the PTO underscore the imperative to sustainably and strategically plan the creation and structure of these groups. For a PTO to endure and thrive, it requires the support of and collaboration with school administration, as well as the adaptability and priority to meet parents where they are. These organizations will look different in each district—so it is the duty of each group to deliberate its structure, communication strategies, event planning, and plans for collaboration.

## **Community Engagement**

P.A.U.S.E. prioritized hosting voter registration drives and voting rights trainings, however, we did not see a significant increase in voter turnout. One of the key challenges we encountered was the widely shared perspective that voting is unimpactful. While it remains critical to educate communities about their rights as voters, it is equally important to address and shift the broader narrative of civic participation. Many individuals feel disconnected from the political process or doubt that their vote can make a difference—particularly in local elections.



# General Recommendations

## College/Career Readiness Recommendations

With the goal of improving student outcomes and student engagement, implementing college and career readiness programs may encourage students to continue their education or to provide them with an entry to their future career. These programs thus prevent and combat the formation of a school-to-prison pipeline, as they provide purpose and pathways for students.

When analyzing the current state of career and technical education programs in Missouri, there are over 322,294 students enrolled in these courses (Career and Technical Education Enrollment Data 2023-2024). In Missouri, there are 444 Comprehensive HS (57 with area Career Centers), 12 Community College Districts (4 with area career centers), 1 State Technical College, and robust 4-year institution networks. Career and technical education shows incredible promise, with post-graduation outcomes revealing that 92% of career and technical education concentrators were employed, in the military, or pursuing further education, and 64.5% were working in their field of study. When students participate in career and technical education in high school, their participation is associated with higher graduation rates and improved employment prospects: both factors being challengers to the school-to-prison pipeline.

It is important to note that while career and technical education quality has increased over the years, access remains limited for some student populations including those residing in rural areas, students with disabilities, girls, and students of color.

A recent executive order was signed by Governor Kehoe. While this is not an endorsement of the executive order, we aim to provide information about recent developments in this space.

Governor Kehoe signed Executive Order 25-16, which establishes the Governor's Workforce of the Future Challenge. This order instructs the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. (n.d.) to create a plan for more efficient coordination among K-12 schools, stakeholders, higher education, and local business and industries to improve Missouri's career and technical education infrastructure and programs (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. (n.d.). A few of the guiding principles include:

- Provide resources for parents of elementary and secondary students to increase awareness of emerging industries and associated job opportunities and counter outdated misconceptions surrounding various occupations.
- Enhance career advising efforts by expanding school counselor support systems.
- Strengthen career advising efforts at the elementary and middle school levels.
- Improve collaboration among regional job centers, registered youth apprenticeship consultants, and career advisors.
- Conduct a comprehensive review of career and technical education programs across the state to assess deficiencies and identify resources that could be better utilized toward modern programs. (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. (n.d.).

Local Education Agencies (LEAs) should consider early exposure to and exploration of diverse career paths. This exploration can begin in elementary school, for example, by implementing themed after-school programs that blend career exploration with extended day learning. Then, as students continue their education, school clubs--such as Phi Beta Lambda (formerly Future Business Leaders of America), Future Health Professionals, the community organization Junior Achievement, and other career-focused clubs

should be encouraged and supported by the LEA's. Organizations and clubs, such as these, provide hands-on, experiential learning opportunities that will grab the attention of students in our classrooms. When students reach their closing years of high school, they are ready for community collaboration.

This means to be paired with local businesses to further develop their skills and learning in their chosen trade or college focus field. In doing so, we intentionally assist in growing the soft skills needed for successful academic and professional development.

To implement these recommendations, what may be required is a revamping or an adjustment to current school curriculum—such as the restoration of full funding to high school courses of business, mechanics, and home economics, for example. LEAs must begin this shift in educational redevelopment.

College and career readiness programs play a vital role in dismantling the school-to-prison pipeline by providing education, skills, and support to succeed beyond high school. By equipping students with clear pathways to postsecondary education, vocational training, and meaningful careers, schools create environments where students are valued and empowered. School districts should prioritize building strong career and technical education programs to equip students with the experiences they need to succeed in both college and the workforce.

## **Hosting Community Events**

Hosting community events is an effective way to engage parents and students, as they spark meaningful conversations about personal experience, project goals, and one's rights. An important aspect of this event planning, however, is venue selection. The location sets the tone for the event, shapes the overall guest experience, and directly impacts logistics, accessibility, and participant engagement.

We strongly recommend selecting a neutral public space to host these events, especially when student participation is a priority. Holding events outside of school grounds can help students feel safer and more comfortable sharing honest feedback about their school experiences. A neutral venue minimizes the perception of institutional oversight, which can otherwise discourage open and vulnerable dialogue, particularly on sensitive topics such as school discipline, policy, and equity. Creating a welcoming, non-institutional space shows respect for students' voices and encourages more authentic and courageous conversations.

Additionally, using school facilities outside regular hours can present logistical challenges, including the need for special permissions, staff presence, custodial services, and building access coordination. These practical hurdles can complicate planning and strain both school and event resources.

Throughout the course of P.A.U.S.E., for example, while we deeply appreciate the Hayti School District's support in allowing us to use their facilities for our Welcome Town Hall, we did eventually move events to other settings, such as the Monument of Deliverance Outreach church.

We ultimately recommend using neutral, community-based venues for events to ensure broader accessibility, participant comfort, and more open, inclusive engagement.

## Voter Education and Engagement

Voting is one of the most powerful ways to influence government, make your voice heard, and shape the future of your community. Despite this, voter turnout in local elections—such as school board races—is often significantly lower than in November general elections, even though these local offices have a direct and lasting impact on schools and neighborhoods.

It is critical to participate in these elections to ensure your voice is represented in decisions that affect education, equity, and community resources. A well-informed and engaged electorate helps ensure school boards are representative of the districts they serve and can hold board members accountable and transparent in their decision-making.

We recommend actively educating yourself and your community about voting rights. This can include sharing nonpartisan voter guides or Know Your Rights materials and collaborating with community groups and organizations to spread awareness about upcoming elections. Provide key information such as how, when, and where to register and vote, hosting candidate forums, Q&A sessions, or debates can also empower voters to make informed choices.

Increasing civic participation at the local level strengthens democracy and ensures that our schools and communities reflect the values and needs of the people they serve.

## Educators and Administrators

Educators and administrators can also contribute to the dismantling of the school-to-prison pipeline in their respective districts. Educators and administrators have a duty to their students and district to ensure they are treating and providing equitable outcomes to their students. Recommendations include increasing inclusionary discipline with the employment of restorative justice practices, including those striving to reduce and eliminate the use of out of school suspensions and expulsions (*From school to prison: Missouri's pipeline of Injustice*).

School districts may also look at other districts' handbooks to see what their discipline policies look like and even connect and collaborate on what has worked well in the past and what has not.

Administration should also collaborate with students, parents, and community members when updating and creating disciplinary policies (*From school to prison: Missouri's pipeline of Injustice*). This can be done in several ways, such as by sending surveys to parents and students and requesting community feedback.

School districts can collaborate with their PTO, as well as gather feedback on proposed policy changes. School districts can create focus groups and thus have more comprehensive conversations about specific groups of students, such as students with Individual Education Plans.

Schools can also host community forums and listening sessions to allow for open dialogue and feedback. Parents may be encouraged to bring their children, as they are the students within the schools and can provide their own perspectives.

Educators and administrators should be held accountable in informing students of their rights, as well—which can be done by establishing clearly defined disciplinary procedures that students can easily access and having a clear and easily accessible appeals process.

While schools are required to collect and report certain discipline decisions to DESE, educators can and should manage discipline data in their own classrooms for self-study and implement corrections when needed. They should also work to ensure they are providing equitable access to students with disabilities.



In both preventing and remedying many of the disparities found within the practices of public schools, educators and administrators may fund mandatory teacher anti-bias training to ensure that educators are informed and educated about trauma-informed practices. It is also highly recommended that when able, schools prioritize hiring counselors to implement and improve trauma-informed practices. Having counselors on staff may prevent the necessity for discipline in many instances, as they serve to help de-escalate students in high-stress situations.

## Caregivers and Students

One of the most important recommendations is to increase awareness of education equity in schools and how it may be promoted. While school districts have a responsibility to ensure their policies are equitable, non-discriminatory, and just, in the case of inequity, it is crucial that parents and students understand their rights and how to hold those leaders accountable. Knowing how certain policies and processes should protect you is what can enable action—which calls for widespread awareness of what is included in student handbooks, how to file complaints and appeals, and how to recognize if and when one's rights have been violated. As an advocate, truly understanding how to navigate the school system can lead to the creation of sustainable changes and tangible impacts within a school district.

School districts should provide clearly defined and easy-to-understand disciplinary procedures in each of their policies, and caregivers and students should provide input and feedback on those decisions. Oftentimes, handbooks can be vague and misleading which can lead to discipline disparities. These discrepancies highlight the importance of making sure parents, guardians, and students are aware of how to appeal a disciplinary action. This process is often outlined in student handbooks and should be posted on school websites.

One should also learn their schools' policies on restraint and seclusion and know that the discipline hearing process is unique and different for students with disabilities and those who have Individual Education Plans (*From School to Prison: Missouri's Pipeline of Injustice*).

Lastly, caregivers and students should understand the role of a school resource officer within their district, as well as know what rights students have when interacting with law enforcement and school resource officers (*From school to prison: Missouri's pipeline of Injustice*). There should be clear policies on the responsibilities of a school resource officer, which may be presented as a Memorandum of Understanding. This document ought to be accessible for parents and students to view and question.

## Law Enforcement

If your school district has law enforcement or a school resource officer on grounds, they should have clear policies that determine when they should be involved in student discipline. It is best practice for school resource officers to solely be limited to real and immediate threats of injury and safety (*From school to prison: Missouri's pipeline of Injustice*). School resource officers should not be handing out discipline incidents; that should be the responsibility of the administration. School resource officers should also have and follow written policies to ensure that arrests and/or detainment of a student are ONLY used as a last resort, as the school resource officer should instead explore de-escalation and diversion practices (*From school to prison: Missouri's pipeline of Injustice*).

School resource officers should be trained in de-escalation and anti-bias training as well as in understanding policies, best practices and needs relevant to students with disabilities.

## Legislators

Legislators have a role and responsibility in dismantling education inequities and the school-to-prison pipeline. Recommendations for legislators include researching and introducing legislation to decrease the length of suspensions, specifically as, Missouri has exceptionally long limits for out-of-school suspensions compared to other states. These laws should also be specific about what behaviors fall into categories of “disruptive” and “disorderly,” and thus which ones necessitate suspensions or other disciplinary actions (*From school to prison: Missouri’s pipeline of Injustice*). When these laws or policies are vague, they are left to the interpretation of school administrators and often applied disproportionately, potentially creating disciplinary disparities.

Legislators may also look at establishing clear paths for students to be reinstated post-suspension and receive educational services while out of school (*From school to prison: Missouri’s pipeline of Injustice*). This is an especially powerful role of the legislature, as DESE does offer best practices and recommendations for transitions for students serving long-term suspensions, but they are not capable of mandating schools to adopt those measures. This can lead to students being inadequately prepared to return to their classroom setting and may therefore increase the risk of another suspension. While there is now an increase in virtual and home-bound learning in the case of suspension, there is little guidance provided regarding when, how, and the frequency in which students should be receiving one-on-one help from teachers during that period.

Finally, legislators ought to consider where they can identify and eliminate zero-tolerance policies across the state, as these policies often deprive students of the ability to remedy their infraction or to prevent their chance of receiving an unjust disciplinary practice (*From school to prison: Missouri’s pipeline of Injustice*).

## Data Transparency

This report included data from organizations such as DESE and highlighted how, in many cases, data is suppressed to protect student privacy. While safeguarding student privacy is essential, this practice can create significant challenges for transparency and accountability, particularly when attempting to accurately assess patterns of school discipline within a district. To address this, legislators should consider developing more effective reporting practices at the state level, coupled with strong enforcement mechanisms, to ensure both privacy and public accountability are upheld.

## Corporal Punishment

While the Missouri legislature introduced new provisions regarding corporal punishment in schools with the 2022 RSMO 160.261 law and now requires schools to obtain written permission before using corporal punishment (Missouri Legislature), more progress is crucial in order to prioritize education over discipline in each of Missouri’s schools. We recommend that legislators move to ban corporal punishment outright in the state’s public schools. Because corporal punishment can cause physical and emotional harm to students, undermine a positive and supportive learning environment, and has not been shown to effectively reduce problematic behaviors, these practices ultimately place students at risk and should be removed from school disciplinary policies. Instead, schools should adopt proven alternatives-- such as restorative justice practices--which foster accountability and promote healthier ways to manage student behavior.

# Conclusion

## Summary

The Project Against Unjust Suspension and Expulsions (P.A.U.S.E.) spanned from July 2022 to August 2025, and through this time, the ACLU of Missouri team hosted 24 Know Your Rights Trainings, attended 22 school board meetings, provided 12 Integrated Advocacy Seminars on Facebook Live, participated in six speaking engagements, held five Kitchen Table Talks, and tabled at several events each year. At these events, we were given the opportunity to hear community stories and experiences, distribute essential resources (including over 50 physical Know Your Rights packets), and foster long-lasting connections with community members and local leaders. In each of those efforts and successes, P.A.U.S.E. has proven to effectively challenge the education inequities and the systems that exacerbate them within the Hayti School District. Because the discipline disparities, reliance on corporal punishment, and unjust suspensions and expulsions embedded within Hayti School Handbook policies are key contributors to an eventual school-to-prison pipeline, this work was vital in that it not only improved the education and experiences of Hayti students, but also exists as a model for other Missouri public schools facing similar realities.

For other school districts to rectify their respective education inequities, they may choose to reference and adopt strategies outlined in the project model of P.A.U.S.E. Several strategies that were utilized in P.A.U.S.E. may not be best suited or feasible for other districts, but these strategies can be utilized as a guide to begin the work.

This project ultimately set out to dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline in Hayti, Missouri by implementing educational and organizing campaigns. Through collaboration with the community and school administration, numerous changes were made to the school's policies and commitments--and these changes will hopefully lead to long-lasting outcomes, including decreases in discipline disparities, improved educational outcomes, and increased trust among school districts and their communities. While P.A.U.S.E. encountered its share of challenges along the way, our team has created a replicable framework to empower districts across the state to foster community-led initiatives that work to ensure all students are provided with an equal education. Education and growth should be the priorities of each Missouri public school—and we must all work to ensure that every student is met with a positive, supportive, and equitable learning environment.



# Significant Contributions

## Hayti and Pemiscot Community

Community collaboration is at the heart of what we do, and this project is a reflection of what can be accomplished when working together. Thank you for stopping by our table at community events to learn more about what we do and for helping to spread resources such as our Know Your Rights folders to those in your networks. Thank you for participating in our Kitchen Table Talks and sharing your personal stories, experiences, and perspectives centering education equity. We thank you for taking the time to attend some of our Know Your Rights trainings. We are proud of what we were able to achieve, and this success is attributed to your contributions. Thank you!

## Sydney Young (Smith)

The execution of P.A.U.S.E. and the creation of the Report of Findings and Recommendations were driven by the work of Sydney Smith.

Having previously served as a Youth Leader and Deputy Juvenile Officer, Sydney began her career working directly with youth already in contact with the criminal justice system. While she knows that these services for Missouri youth are vital, the opening of the Community Engagement Restorative Justice Fellow position for the ACLU of Missouri called her to explore work that not only addressed many of the systemic issues she encountered in her previous roles, but also to prevent them. Her passion for combatting education inequities and the school-to-prison pipeline through the practice of proactive measures is what directed her to the ACLU, and ultimately to moving to Hayti and leading P.A.U.S.E.

Throughout her three years in Hayti, Sydney's contributions prioritized cultivating connections with Hayti residents and establishing effective community engagement and organization strategies. These efforts allowed her to form long-lasting relationships with families, teachers, and administrators, as well as a deep investment in the community. Sydney has since decided to remain in Hayti following the conclusion of P.A.U.S.E.

Looking forward, Sydney aspires to see P.A.U.S.E. and the collaboration of the Hayti community with the ACLU of Missouri encourage other Missouri public schools to implement similar goals and practices. To Sydney, Hayti School District's progress demonstrates that meaningful change is possible when administrators are willing to examine current practices, revise outdated, punitive, and unjust policies, and center student well-being. The impacts of P.A.U.S.E. are not limited to Hayti—rather, they inspire a ripple effect of improved learning environments for students across the state. This project stands as the blueprint: it reveals that the consequences of policy change aren't theoretical, but that they foster real, measurable results for student outcomes.

Sydney aims for Missouri public school leaders to read this report and address their communities with a renewed commitment to discipline data examination, establishing inclusive environments, and recognizing that change can only stem from the courage to do things differently.

## **Iyaun Bell**

Iyaun's insight extended far beyond being a native of Hayti and having deep, rich, personal as well as professional community ties. His insight as a "formerly justice-impacted" individual provided an additional level of keen awareness to community needs that cannot be taught. It is his lived-experience that made his contributions most valuable to this project.

## **Karla McKinney**

Karla holds a Master's in Education Policy from Fontbonne University and brought to this project extensive direct in-classroom teaching experience in a Kansas City based Charter School, DeLaselle which help to shape her significant leadership in the development of the college and career readiness section of this report.

## **Fellows, Interns, and Volunteers**

We thank the following volunteers, interns, and fellows for their valuable work in the implementation of P.A.U.S.E., as well as in the creation of the school-to-prison pipeline forum and the revision of this report.

- Claire Comey
- Dr. Rubi Gonzalez
- Spencer Snipe
- Anni Dineen
- Natalie Nusz
- Conner Yamnitz
- Emerald DuBose
- Pierce Rohman
- Zoe Ziesmer

## **Monument of Deliverance Outreach: Robert and Kathy Bell**

Our team wants to ensure we are properly thanking those who have made significant contributions to this project as their efforts and dedication have helped make this program the success it was. First, we would like to thank Robert and Kathy Bell from Monument of Deliverance Outreach Church in Hayti, Missouri. Both served as voter solicitors to help with voter registration efforts. Robert and Kathy Bell also graciously offered the use of their church building for a variety of events including the Kitchen Table Talks, Know Your Rights presentations, and the PTA Spaghetti Dinner event. They also provided our staff the opportunity to volunteer during their snack bag program, where every Tuesday and Thursday, Monument of Deliverance Outreach would pass out after school snacks to children. This gave staff the chance to meet children and parents, and to help build connections with the community. Again, we want to personally thank Robert and Kathy Bell for their contributions to the Hayti community and their gracious attitude and spirit in collaborating intensely with our efforts.

## **Caruthersville Public Library**

The Caruthersville Library does invaluable work for the community, such as hosting a summer reading program. Caruthersville Public Library provided the use of their building for events such as Know Your Rights presentations and the Bridging the Gap Summit. By allowing the use of the building, we were able to expand our reach in education efforts and meet more parents and students from Pemiscot County. We thank you and commend your efforts in helping promote awareness of education equity efforts.

## **Hayti School District**

We want to extend our sincere appreciation to Superintendent Gerald Pickering for attending the Bridging the Gap Summit. His presence and willingness to share his goals and vision for Hayti Public Schools demonstrated a strong commitment to collaboration and community progress. We are especially grateful for his engagement and openness as we shared our own goals and vision for equity and justice in education. His participation helped lay the groundwork for continued partnership and meaningful dialogue. Thank you for your time and effort.

We would like to recognize and thank Principal Dominique Robinson and Vice Principal Caitlin Fincher for their dedicated efforts in revising the student handbook and making critical adjustments to school discipline policies. Their leadership and commitment to fostering a more equitable and supportive school environment have been vital to the progress of this work. By taking intentional steps to reexamine and improve school practices, they have demonstrated a clear investment in the well-being and success of all students.

We also want to extend our acknowledgments to the Board of Education for their commitment to the school district and community.

## **Priscilla Rose**

We acknowledge the role and efforts of Priscilla Rose. Priscilla served as an educator and advocate within the Pemiscot County area. She has been a tremendous source of information on the inner workings of school administration as well as being a strong advocate for students facing unjust discipline. She helped inform students and parents of their rights within the school. Priscilla was a tremendous help with creating the foundation documents for a coalition that will advocate for education equity within this area.

## **Dr. Sharletta Jackson**

Thank you to Dr. Sharletta Jackson, a Hayti parent, for her support of this project. Dr. Jackson was a driving force in P.A.U.S.E by helping bring more students and families to the table. She was incredible at using her connections with the community to help inform residents about when Know Your Rights presentations would be held and who to contact if they needed additional advocacy services and educational resources. She also was a wonderful asset in helping to distribute Know Your Rights brochures.

## **Diane Sayre Recreation Center: Lamonte Bell**

Thank you to the Caruthersville Rec Center and their Director Lamonte Bell as they have allowed us to table at several events throughout this project including the Summer Back to School Bash and the Employee Appreciation Event. We were graciously allowed to post Know Your Rights packets in the building for community members to take. Thank you for allowing us to set up and share information as this directly helped us reach our goal of community education awareness.

## **Hayti High PTO**

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the members of the Hayti High PTO for their dedication and support of the Hayti school community. Their tireless efforts in organizing events, fundraising, and creating meaningful opportunities for students and families have not gone unnoticed. The PTO's commitment to building a strong, connected, and vibrant school environment plays an essential role in the success and spirit of Hayti. We are truly grateful for all that you have contributed.

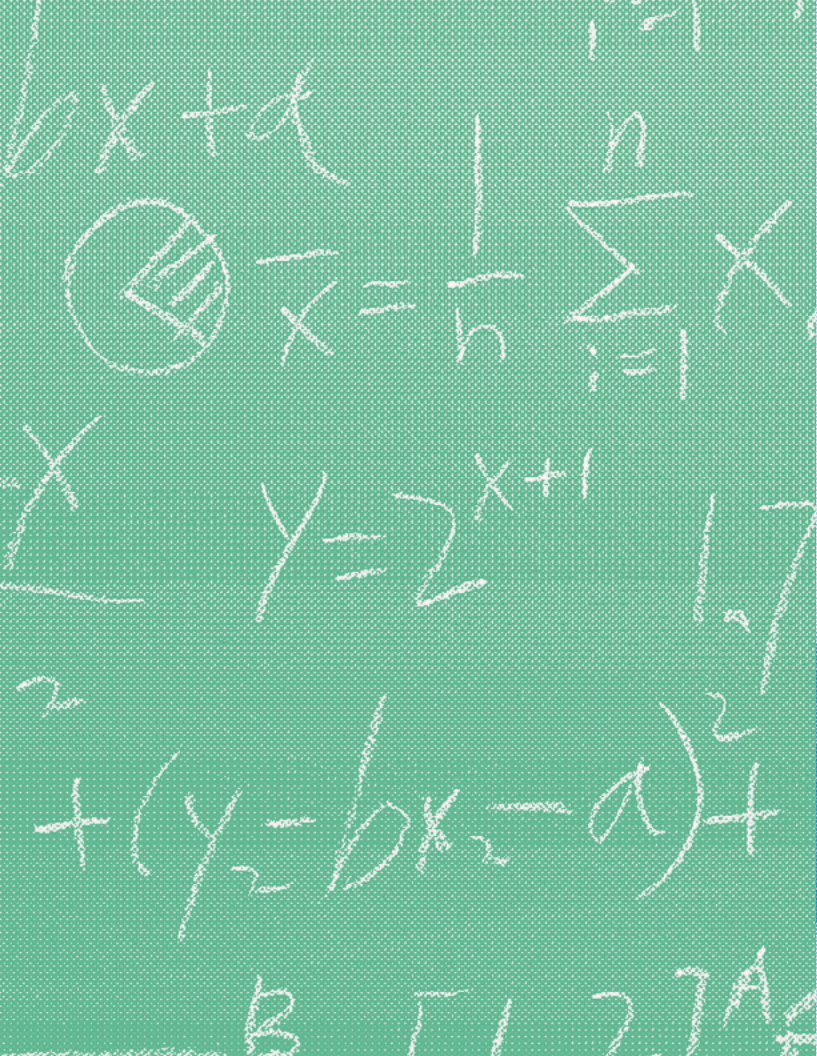




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# ACLU Missouri

## Our Vision

The ACLU of Missouri envisions a fair and just state where everyone has equal access to civil rights and liberties, and the government is accountable to and representative of all people.

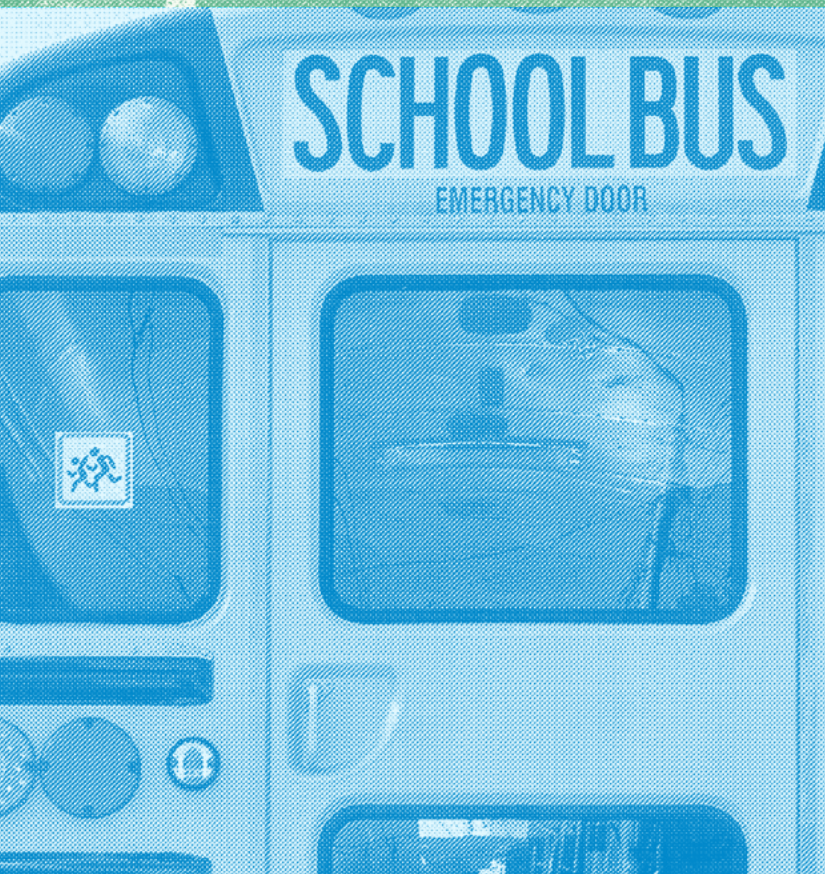
## Our Mission

Our non-profit, non-partisan law firm's mission is to defend and extend civil liberties, to achieve the promise of equality and liberty for all in Missouri, through impact litigation and campaigns, narrative and legislative advocacy, and community education and engagement.



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