

GEORGIA APPLESEED™

Center for Law & Justice

Support HB 740: Limiting Out of School Suspension and Expulsion for K- 3rd Grade

HB 740 would prevent the suspension or expulsion of a student for five or more consecutive or cumulative days unless they have first received a vision, hearing, and speech-language assessment. We ask your support for this legislation for the following reasons:

This Bill Can Limit Suspensions That Have Negative Effects on School & Student Outcomes

- Several national studies have shown that schools with higher suspension rates tend to have lower academic performance, poorer school climate ratings, and lower graduation rates.¹
- In Georgia, research conducted by the GA DOE policy division found that missing school days, regardless of cause, negatively impacts graduation rates and performance on state test results.²

Vision, Language, and Speech Deficits Are at the Root of Many Behavioral Problems

- The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that all children who are expelled or are at risk for expulsion be assessed for developmental, behavioral, and medical problems to identify underlying concerns that might be addressed through intervention services.³
- It is estimated that 12 percent of children have some form of language deficit that impedes their cognitive and behavioral development.⁴
- Nearly 15 percent of children ages 6 to 19 struggle with hearing loss, putting them at risk of failing at least 1 grade level.⁵

This Bill May Keep Thousands of Children in School and On Track in Their Education

- The U.S. Department of Education published a report finding that nationally elementary school students who are expelled or suspended are 10 times more likely to drop out of high school, experience academic failure or grade retention, hold negative school attitudes, and face incarceration than those who are not expelled or suspended.⁶
- On average, 15,000 students in K-3rd grade are suspended each year in Georgia. In 2017, 1,619 students in grades K-3rd were suspended for 5 or more days in Georgia.⁷

¹ Shollenberger, T. L. (2015). Racial disparities in school suspension and subsequent outcomes. *Closing the school discipline gap: Equitable remedies for excessive exclusion*, 31-44.

² GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, POLICY DIVISION REPORT: 2004–2005 ANALYSIS OF STATEWIDE DISCIPLINARY DATA (2005)

³ American Academy of Pediatrics, Committee on School Health. (2003). American Academy of Pediatrics policy statement: Out-of-school suspension and expulsion. *Pediatrics*.

⁴ Rvachew, S. (2010). Language development and literacy. *Encyclopedia on Early Childhood Development*. Canada.

⁵ Martin, W.H., Sobel, J., Griest, S.E., Howarth, L., Yongbing, S. (2006). Noise Induced Hearing Loss in Children: Preventing the Silent Epidemic. *Journal of Otology*

⁶ U.S. DHHS, US DOE. *Policy Statement on Expulsion and Suspension Policies in Early Childhood Settings*. U.S.

⁷ GA Department of Education Statistics