

## Education Minnesota

# Educators: Replace suspensions and expulsions with more effective ‘restorative practices’

For more information, contact:

[Chris Williams](#)

651-292-4816 (work)

651-247-5539 (cell)

[Megan Boldt](#)

651-292-4818 (work)

651-245-9163 (cell)

ST. PAUL, Minn. March 28, 2017 – A group of Minnesota educators say their research shows the need to replace discipline policies that lead to excessive suspensions and expulsions in all Minnesota schools with a more effective, community-building approach known as restorative practices.

These educators will present their report at a news conference at 9:30 a.m. Thursday, March 30, in room B971 in the basement of the State Capitol. The educators worked through the Education Policy Innovation Center, or EPIC, which is Education Minnesota’s think tank for education policy.

“Zero tolerance policies and mass suspensions haven’t made schools safer and they haven’t raised student achievement, but they have led to glaringly inequitable outcomes by race,” said Denise Specht, president of Education Minnesota. “Fortunately, neuroscience has given us new insights into ‘toxic stress,’ which can influence why many students act out. Those findings inform how educators can react more productively, for both the student and the whole school.”

Some documented benefits of restorative practices:

- Dramatic reductions in suspensions and expulsions.
- Reductions in behavior that is disruptive or violent.
- Decreased absenteeism.
- Significantly improved grades and graduation rates.
- Increased rates of teacher retention.

The news conference details:

**What:** News conference on bringing restorative practices to more Minnesota schools.

**Why:** Mass suspensions and zero-tolerance policies have failed, especially for students of color.

**Who:** Education Minnesota President Denise Specht and five practicing educators who worked on the report.

**When:** 9:30 a.m. to 10 a.m., Thursday, March 30

**Where:** Room B971, basement of the state Capitol.

An electronic copy of the executive summary of the report is included with this news release. Education Minnesota will release the full report Thursday morning.

**About Education Minnesota**

Education Minnesota is the voice for professional educators and students. Education Minnesota's members include teachers and education support professionals in Minnesota's public school districts, faculty members at Minnesota's community and technical colleges and University of Minnesota campuses in Duluth and Crookston, retired educators and student teachers. Education Minnesota is affiliated with the American Federation of Teachers, National Education Association and AFL-CIO.

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