Exploring Educational Stability and Youth Justice Involvement in California

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Research Question

How does educational stability (measured by school enrollment and dropouts) relate to arrests for youth of color in California?
How Educational Stability Affects Youth Justice Involvement

- We identified 10 California counties with particularly significant relationships between youth arrests and school enrollment and dropouts

- Inconsistent school attendance, high dropout rates, and low graduation rates are risk factors for juvenile justice system involvement—particularly for youth of color

- In California, school responses to student behavior can serve as non-judicial drivers of higher rates of incarceration among youth of color

- Different communities have different relationships between educational stability and youth justice involvement

Source: Californians for Justice.
How Philanthropy Can Take Action in California Communities

- Community-specific investment is key
- Supporting educational stability is critical to addressing youth justice involvement and racial and ethnic disparities
- Philanthropy can invest in and advocate for policies and programs focused on strengthening educational stability and reducing youth justice involvement

Sonoma Valley High School in Sonoma County, CA—one of the 10 counties identified. Source: The Press Democrat.
Next Steps and Closing Question

- Focus on opportunities to identify and address local, structural issues and inequities
  - School suspensions – Senate Bill 419
  - Police presence in schools
- Invest in county-level, community-specific supports that serve as protective factors from youth justice involvement
- Promote educational stability and wellbeing among youth of color in California
- How can philanthropy help develop and invest in localized strategies?