Keeping Youth of Color Connected in Texas Public Schools

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Disconnected or opportunity youth — *young people between the ages of 16 and 24 who are not in school or working* — are *disproportionately youth of color*.

Disconnection leads to **negative outcomes** including greater risk of:

- economic instability
- mental health or substance use problems
- criminal justice involvement

Understanding the early indicators and drivers of **school dropouts**, such as **grade retention**, is key to youth disconnection.
Research Questions

- Where are students at greatest risk of disconnection? How does risk of disconnection vary amongst students of different racial/ethnic groups on the county level?

- How are philanthropic and public actors working on keeping students connected in public schools? Are public resources and/or nonprofit infrastructure targeted to support counties where students are at a higher risk for disconnection?
Texas Counties at Risk of Disconnection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Grade Retention Rate</th>
<th>Dropout Rate</th>
<th>Texas Counties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Risk of Disconnection</td>
<td>Above Average</td>
<td>Above Average</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Risk of Disconnection</td>
<td>Below Average</td>
<td>Below Average</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Dropout Rate Only</td>
<td>Below Average</td>
<td>Above Average</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Retention Rate Only</td>
<td>Above Average</td>
<td>Below Average</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>253</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Youth of Color Experience Higher Risk of Disconnection

Grade retention rate (%)

High risk
- All: 3.0
- Asian: 2.8
- Native American: 2.7
- Black: 1.9
- Latinx: 1.9
- Pacific Islander: 1.9

Low risk
- All: 1.5
- Asian: 1.5
- Native American: 1.4
- Black: 1.9
- Latinx: 1.9
- Pacific Islander: 1.3

Dropout rate (%)

High risk
- All: 2.8
- Asian: 2.7
- Native American: 2.6
- Black: 0.8
- Latinx: 0.6
- Pacific Islander: 0.4

Low risk
- All: 2.2
- Asian: 0.8
- Native American: 0.4
- Black: 0.7
- Latinx: 0.7
- Pacific Islander: 0.4
Youth of Color Experience Higher Risk of Disconnection

Grade retention rate (%)

High risk
- All: 3.8
- Asian: 3.3
- Native American: 3.6
- Black: 2.8
- Latinx: 1.9
- White: 1.9
- Pacific Islander: 1.4

Low risk
- All: 1.9
- Asian: 2.0
- Native American: 1.9
- Black: 2.0
- Latinx: 1.4
- White: 2.0
- Pacific Islander: 1.9

Dropout rate (%)

High risk
- All: 2.8
- Asian: 2.2
- Native American: 2.8
- Black: 2.7
- Latinx: 1.3
- White: 0.8
- Pacific Islander: 0.7

Low risk
- All: 0.8
- Asian: 0.4
- Native American: 0.8
- Black: 0.7
- Latinx: 0.7
- White: 0.4
- Pacific Islander: 0.4
### Public and Nonprofit Infrastructure Available to Support Disconnected Youth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number of TX Counties</th>
<th>Average Nonprofit Density</th>
<th>Average Per-Pupil Expenditures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Risk of Disconnection</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>91.48</td>
<td>$9,473.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Risk of Disconnection</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>96.08</td>
<td>$10,104.65</td>
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<tr>
<td>Higher Dropout Rate Only</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>110.14</td>
<td>$9,907.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Retention Rate Only</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>74.86</td>
<td>$10,526.85</td>
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<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>81.08</td>
<td>$11,881.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>253</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Opportunities for Philanthropic Action

Per-pupil expenditures could be increased in counties at greater risk for disconnection to support youth success.

The nonprofit infrastructure is less robust in counties at greater risk for disconnection, which means that there is an opportunity for more targeted nonprofit funding to support programs supporting youth and teachers in these counties.