

The School-to- Prison Pipeline in Stockton

By Natalie Keller

Advisor: Herman Gray

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Since the prison boom the United States has experienced a shift from rehabilitation to criminalization. This shift has impacted children in various ways, whether through decreasing funding for education or in more direct ways like an increase in juvenile arrests. This criminalization of children has resulted in what various sociological theorists call the school-to-prison pipeline. This pipeline is a combination of laws, policies, and budgeting which results in schools having a relationship to prisons. This pipeline disproportionately affects lower-income and ethnically marginalized students. My study examines schools in Stockton, California through school-to-prison pipeline theories to answer the question, what is the extent of the relationship between schools in Stockton and prisons?

Michelle Alexander found that in order to fund the War on Drugs funding has been taken out of the education budget (2011). This is reflected in schools when schools budget more for policing than for other resources such as counselors (Mallett 2015). The “tough on crime” approach to drugs in the War on Drugs has influenced school policies such as zero-tolerance policies which have pre-determined consequences and therefore prevent context from being taken into consideration when punishing students (Alexander 2011; Mallett 2015). Wald and Losen found that schools create prison-like environments for their students through police presence, metal detectors, and surveillance cameras (2003). Additionally, Mallett found that policies are applied differently to White students and students of color and therefore Black and Latinx students are overrepresented in suspensions and expulsions (2015). These various theories have found that in schools there has been a shift in focus from teaching students to simply disciplining them.

This study combines these theories from previous studies in order to understand if there is a relationship between schools and prisons in Stockton, California. My study compared two districts in Stockton. Stockton Unified School District (SUSD) which has a majority Latinx student population and serves areas of the city that are not affluent. The other district is Lincoln Unified School District (LUSD) which was chosen because it has a higher White student population than SUSD and serves areas of the city that are more affluent than SUSD. Based on Mallett's research schools that are in more affluent areas are less likely to have a school-to-prison pipeline (2015). I examined suspension and expulsion rates from both districts for overrepresentation of White, Latinx, and African American students. I analyzed the districts' budgets and compared how much they budgeted for policing in comparison to counseling. Lastly, I examined policies for one high school from each district and looked for zero-tolerance policies and policies related to searches and drug testing.

My study found that African American students are overrepresented in suspensions and expulsions in both districts even though they make up 11-12% of the student population. While White and Latinx students were also overrepresented in both districts it was not as consistent as African American students. SUSD budgeted more for counseling than policing while LUSD budgeted more for counseling than policing. Handbooks from both districts included zero-tolerance policies and other policies with predetermined consequences. They also stated that students could be subjected to being searched any time once on campus. My findings suggest that there is a possible relationship between Stockton schools and the judicial system.

First, I will examine existing literature to create a foundation for understanding how the school-to-prison pipeline came to be. Then I will delve into the actual pipeline and look at various theories which explain what the pipeline is and how it operates. I will then explain my

methodology while also contextualizing and describing the city of Stockton. Following my methodology I will go through my data and explain it by each indicator, suspensions and expulsions, budgeting, and policies. The findings section will be followed by the analysis section which aims to contextualize my data through the existing theories. Lastly, I will conclude my study by explaining its limitations, implications, and recommendations for further research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In 2000 California passed proposition 21, a law which allowed juveniles (ages 14-17) to be tried and sentenced as adults for violent offenses. Additionally, during the 2010-2011 school year alone 700,000 students were suspended in California, many as a result of zero-tolerance policies. Of these students, African American students were suspended at a rate of 171 for every 1,000 students (De La Cruz 2014). The school-to-prison pipeline is understood to be a combination of laws, policies, and funding which create a direct path for children from school to prison. These practices tend to have their greatest effect on children who are racial minorities of lower socioeconomic status. This pipeline reflects the country's shift from prioritizing education to now prioritizing incarceration. According to various theories this pipeline's roots can be found in the war on drugs launched in the 1980s, the era of mass incarceration, and the overall system of control referred to as the New Jim Crow by Michelle Alexander (2011). While the interconnectedness of the pipeline to these systems of control is complex this study aims to find if there is a path from school to prison for minority students.

In order to understand the new systems of control we must understand the forms that these systems have taken historically. The end of constitutional slavery did not mean the end of the control and surveillance of Black people; it just took on a new form. Laws known as Jim Crow existed in the post-reconstruction era through 1965. These were state and local laws which were created to control and segregate the, now free, slaves from White people. These included vagrancy laws, which made it a criminal offense to be unemployed and were selectively applied to Black people and convict laws, which allowed prisoners to work on plantations and for other private companies for little to no pay. The reason why this new system of slavery was legal was because the Thirteenth Amendment outlaws all forms of slavery *except* as punishment for crime.

Additionally, as this clause was being exploited, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was starting to seem mostly symbolic. For example, the Fifteenth Amendment was missing language that protected people's voting rights and thus Black people experienced legal voter discrimination through poll taxes, literacy tests, or property owning qualifications. In the case of other civil rights laws they were not enforced because that would have required African Americans to take their cases to federal courts, something most African Americans could not afford financially, and physically as a result of also receiving violent threats. The complexity of the language in these laws and the lack of enforcement of those laws which African Americans would have benefitted from meant that this post-slavery period was in fact largely symbolic (Alexander 2011).

As a consequence of prisoners not being able to pay off their debts their labor and debt were sold to work on plantations, railroads, lumber camps, etc. in the South. As a result of the owners of these laborers not having any financial interest in protecting the wellbeing of the laborers the death rates were significantly high. During the decade following redemption the United States experienced its first prison boom. The convict population grew at a rate ten times faster than that of the general population. The prisoners, which were disproportionately Black, experienced soaring prison sentences. Thus, the beginning of the criminal justice system as we now know it is rooted in a system of control for previously enslaved African Americans (Alexander 2011).

Forms of Social Control

In 2011 Michelle Alexander described the system of mass incarceration as the New Jim Crow. Alexander argues that after the original Jim Crow laws were outlawed the system of control took on a new form through mass incarceration in the era of "law and order" which was catalyzed by the War on Drugs. While civil rights were being considered as a threat to "law and

order” the FBI was also reporting an increase in the national crime rate which amplified the belief that we were now living in an era of lawlessness and social instability. In the 1970’s President Nixon declared the War on Drugs and thus began the new systematic criminalization of Black people. Nixon was succeeded by Regan who continued the War on Drugs and advocated for more militant policies. In these policies he created mandatory minimums for drug offenses which were criticized for being racially biased while also making only a small impact on decreasing drug availability. During his presidency the budget for the FBI antidrug funding increased from \$8 million to \$95 million meanwhile the funding for the National Institute on Drug Abuse was cut from \$274 million to \$57 million (Alexander 2011). Therefore, increasing funding to criminalize drug users while simultaneously decreasing the support that could help them stop using drugs. After George H. W. Bush served as Reagan's vice president he then succeeded him as president and also continued the War on Drugs. Bush increased the budget for this war from \$2.2 billion to \$7.9 billion with 70% of the budget reserved for law enforcement and only 30% for prevention, education, and treatment (Alexander 2011).

While the aforementioned presidents created the foundation for the War on Drugs it was Bill Clinton who vowed to be tougher on crime than any republican and Alexander argues that he was. During his presidency the Violent Crime and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 was created. According to Alexander “the bill created dozens of new federal capital crimes, mandated life sentences for some three-time offenders, and authorized more than \$16 billion for state prison grants and expansion of state and local police forces” (Alexander 2011). In order to fund this war money was removed from educational and public aid which included health care and welfare. A five year lifetime limit was imposed on Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) and a lifetime ban on welfare and food stamps for anyone with a felony conviction. Thus, this War on

Drugs not only affected people who engaged in criminal activity but it also took a toll on anyone of lower socioeconomic status who depended on public assistance or attended a public school. Additionally, by imposing a lifetime ban on basic necessities like welfare, food stamps, and public housing for anyone with a felony conviction it can be extremely difficult for someone to survive once they are released from prison. Therefore, creating the cycle that is this era of mass incarceration (Alexander 2011).

As Alexander puts it, the stigma of race is now the stigma of criminality, therefore being a young black male “is equated with reasonable suspicion, justifying the arrest, interrogation, search, and detention of thousands of African Americans every year, as well as their exclusion from employment and housing and the denial of educational opportunity” (2011). In 1980 at the beginning of the War on Drugs there were 1.8 million Americans living under penal authority and by 2002 there were 6.5 million. At this time one out of every ten Black men and one young Black man out of every three in the country was under penal authority (Wacquant 2002). In 2004 Black women were three times more likely than Latinas and six times more likely than white women to be in prison. At this time over 60 percent of women in prison were there for a nonviolent offense, mostly drug related. There has been an increase of 1,100 percent for people in prisons or jail for drug offenses between 1980 and 2010. The most startling fact is not that the prison population has boomed it is that it has boomed despite stable crime rates. The majority of those arrested for drugs are not charged with serious offenses, as an example, in 2005 four out of every five drug arrests were for possession and one out of five was for sales. Additionally, the majority of those in prison for drug offenses have no prior history of violence or significant drug sales. Secondly, while the War on Drugs was originally advertised as fighting hard drugs,

especially crack cocaine, the majority of 80 percent of the growth in drug arrests in the 1990s were for marijuana (Alexander 2011).

Loïc Wacquant's study after gaining access to a Los Angeles prison gives us insight into the conditions of life inside. Wacquant found that crime still happens inside prisons and while the correctional officers are aware of it they pick and choose when to press charges against inmates depending on how long their "rap sheet" is and the severity of their crimes if they are awaiting sentencing. Another finding was that in prison the correctional officers are succeeding social workers. These findings in addition to public aid budget cuts and rules in terms of access to public aid show a connection. Like Alexander argues, the system of mass incarceration is a form of social control of racial minorities and those of lower socioeconomic status. Wacquant argues that "the US carceral system has become a perverse agency for the delivery of human services to the social refuse of the market society, a function that the imagery of 'collateral damage' can neither admit nor display" (2002).

Douglas Savitsky studies another aspect that plays a role in mass incarceration; plea bargaining. Plea bargains are used often as a result of a lack of existing resources to take every case to trial. If defendants were to no longer plea bargain Savitsky believes prosecutors would have to choose which cases to take to trial. Plea bargaining very efficiently funnels many people through the criminal justice system and to prison as a macro-level institutional structure. Additionally, Savitsky believes its efficiency can be attributed to the multiplayer Prisoner's Dilemma. This dilemma is based on the idea that the prosecutor can either present a plea bargain on a high charge and lose a certain amount of resources or take a case to trial on a lower charge and risk losing significantly more resources and therefore have to take less cases to trial. For the defendant, however, the high plea bargain charge will almost always look better in comparison to

the most extreme charge they can be tried for because they do not know that the prosecutor would most likely use a lower charge if the case actually went to trial. Savitsky argues that plea bargaining plays a central role in the systematic process of mass incarceration. This fosters inequality within the prison system, for example, black defendants are more likely to get worse bargains than white defendants in similar situations (Savitsky 2012).

Race

In order to understand the racial inequalities in mass incarceration we must understand the role that race plays in American society. Tahseen Shams (2015) found that there are noticeable differences between the Black and the White middle class even if they technically should have the same socioeconomic status. Some of these findings include that while White middle class neighborhoods are mostly made up of high paid professionals this is not true for Black middle class neighborhoods. Secondly, Black middle class neighborhoods have higher crime rates. Lastly, homes in Black neighborhoods are valued less than similar homes in White neighborhoods. These characteristics shape the Black community and their class status in a way that makes it more difficult, in comparison to the White community, for them to move up to a higher-status class even if those in the Black community have similar “class” qualities. In regards to school Shams found that teachers, without realizing they are being racist, perpetuate racial inequalities by rewarding the already privileged White students while penalizing the students who are already experiencing unequal treatment because of their race as a result of schools’ meritocratic structure. Repeated racialized moments like these lead to internalized racism and racial patterns of unequal treatment. This internalization of negative stereotypes has the power to affect students’ of color “identities, classroom experiences, attendance, and dropout rates at different levels of education” (Shams 2015). Shams argues that the idea that we are

“colorblind” perpetuates systematic oppression of minorities and reinforces White privilege because it assumes that people of all races are treated equally by a system which in reality actively works against non-White people. Andrew M. Penner and Aliya Saperstein’s (2013) research shows similar results in that the perpetuation of stereotypes such as Black men being “irresponsible fathers (Glauber 2008) and prone to violence and criminal behavior (Eberhardt et al. 2004). Black women, on the other hand, are widely perceived as single mothers (Kennelly 1999), loud and confrontational (Weitz and Gordon 1993), and undeserving of government benefits (Gilens 1999)”are used to maintain perceived differences between groups. When a shift that is different from the stereotype occurs the overall system of inequality readjusts individuals to maintain the stereotype instead of adjusting to a new stereotype (Penner and Saperstein 2013).

Policies

The school-to-prison pipeline plays a significant role in tracking minorities into the pipeline through policies and practices in schools which make it more likely that a student will go to juvenile court for criminal involvement than to receive a quality education. These micro aggressions can be found systematically in the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Zero Tolerance policies and the disproportionate criminalization of children of color. Christopher Mallett (2015) argues that the pipeline was created in response to school incidents of extreme violence. Thus there was a shift from education to increasing discipline in schools and a shift from rehabilitation to a “tough on crime” approach in juvenile courts. Mallett attributes this criminalization to zero tolerance policies and significant expansion of police in schools. When the first action in disciplining a child is to involve the police students are being thrown into the prison system. If this pipeline is not disrupted and the student is not successful while on probation the student will likely end up being incarcerated. Even if the time spent in juvenile

facilities is short it can still have a significantly harmful effect on adolescents by impeding development and worsening social, mental health, and educational problems. After being released from these institutions there are limited options for completing their education and thus the risk of mental health problems and homelessness increases (Mallett 2015). Over half of juveniles released from prisons end up returning to juvenile and adult prisons within three years, therefore creating a cycle (Mallett 2015).

This pipeline is rooted in the criminalization of young people of color which began in the 1980s, when the War on Drugs was also starting. During this time there were abundant media reports about young people, usually minorities, participating in gang violence and horrifying crimes and thus the fear of the “superpredator”, a term used to criminalize juvenile racial minorities, was created (Mallett 2015). As a result the Safe Schools Act of 1994 was created which funded and promoted school police officers, therefore normalizing the policing of children. According to Mallett since this normalization student arrests on school grounds have increased from 300 percent to 500 percent annually since zero tolerance policies were established (2015). Students have decreased in academic achievement, their unity has weakened, and school satisfaction has decreased.

The term “zero tolerance” was popularized during the Reagan Administration’s War on Drugs and by 1986 became a part of school policy through the implementation of the Drug-Free Schools Act which strictly prohibited drugs and alcohol. This act catalyzed strict discipline and punishment in education policies. By 1993 a lot of schools began enacting zero-tolerance policies which included severe pre-determined punishments for behavior the school deemed “unacceptable”, which included anything from “gang-related activity” to “disruptive behavior”. This act was followed by the Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994 which prohibited weapons and made

zero-tolerance policies the norm in school discipline policies. According to Mallett, the expansion of zero-tolerance policies in schools has never fallen below 75% since 1996. These policies included suspensions and expulsions for the following offenses:

“Violent behavior, fighting, assault, harassment, indecent exposure, vandalism, and destruction of school property, among others (Kupchik & Monahan, 2006; Verdugo, 2002). However, zero-tolerance policies also include nonviolent student behaviors, such as verbal harassment, disobedience, obscene language, and truancy.” (Mallett 2015)

The purpose of zero tolerance is to send the message that no form of unacceptable behavior will be tolerated and therefore prevent a repetition of this behavior.

While this is only a general list zero tolerance policies can be enforced in just about any situation in which a student is considered to be misbehaving if it can be described as a “disruption”. Because a disruption is hard to define in a standard way it can be easily applicable to a variety of situations. Several studies have found that students are being referred to law enforcement and suspended for statutes like “disrupting schools”, “being beyond the control of the school”, and “safe school ordinances” for behaviors like shouting and refusing to cooperate (Wald and Losen 2003). These referrals disproportionately affect minorities, especially Black males (Wald and Losen 2003). Even though the penalty for these offenses is usually “a slap on the wrist”, these students have criminal records after these instances which can have serious effects on their futures. Additionally, even if the cases end up being dismissed, the students have to miss class for court appearances.

The referral of students to law enforcement for “disruptive” incidents can be traced back to the implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001. Its intended purpose was to create educational standards in order to hold schools accountable, especially with students

who had performed poorly historically. This included students with disabilities, those in a lower socioeconomic class, students belonging to racial minorities, and those who have a first language which is not English. Unfortunately, the schools which already had low standardized scores had limited educational instruction, therefore they taught to the test. In order to improve scores these schools referred low-performing students to General Education Programs (GED) and alternative schools or used zero-tolerance policies to push out students through arrests and expulsions. Those students that do stay tend to become disengaged and disconnected from their schools, therefore increasing behavior which could be considered disruptive. An issue which Mallett points out is that NCLB failed to provide the funding necessary to bridge the gap in schools with resource disparities (2015). However, additional funding was provided for school-based police officers which also encourages their involvement in cases with “disruptive” students.

NCLB and zero-tolerance policies are reinforced throughout schools through metal detectors, school and public police officers, and surveillance cameras. According to Mallett while schools have always enforced security practices, this era of new, stricter practices depicts a change from “property crime and thefts to a concern about individual victimizations and toward today’s broad security operations” (Mallett 2015). These practices have become increasingly common, especially in schools in urban areas in which the majority of students are members of racial minorities. For example, 26% of African American students report going through metal detectors upon entering their school while only 5.4% of Caucasian students do (Mallett 2015). These security practices often tend to produce a prison-like environment. As a result of the increase in zero-tolerance policies, metal detectors, police presence, and search and seizure procedures suspensions increased from 1.7 million in 1974 to 3.1 million in 2003 (Wald and Losen 2003). Wald and Losen found that states that have high rates of out-of-school suspensions

also have high rates of juvenile incarceration, racially disproportionate out-of-school suspensions are related to similar racially disproportionate rates in juvenile prisons, and that these high rates are also related to low achievement rates in reading, math, and writing (2003). In 1997 about 68% of inmates had not completed high school, while the same study found that the highest indicator of arrest among adolescent females is being suspended, expelled, or held back during middle school (Wald and Losen 2003).

These policies have eliminated the possibility for school administrators to take into consideration the circumstances which could explain a student's behavior and help identify additional support they could benefit from. With predetermined punishments schools make a lot of assumptions about students, including that they all come from similar circumstances. According to Mallett's study zero-tolerance policies tend to be applied to first time offenders, which are automatically handled with suspensions and expulsions (2015). However, NCLB policies also play a role in eliminating "at risk" students as a result of the pressure it puts on schools to "maintain order, increase focus on increasing their test scores, and fill up 'outplacement programs'" (Wald and Losen 2003). However, students that have been labeled as "at risk" have not necessarily committed a crime but they are nonetheless sent to outplacement programs. De La Cruz believes that these policies are a form of social control which encourage schools to push out students who are considered to be "low-performing" in order to improve the school's test scores to increase their funding (2014). Mah argues that this increased accountability has encouraged schools to invest more time and money into academic achievement instead of programs which help achieve healthy social development and prevent problem behaviors (2009).

The combination of these various theories helps us historicize and provide context in order to understand how the school-to-prison pipeline came to be. Michelle Alexander's New Jim Crow theory explains the interconnectedness of the prison industrial complex and provides a foundation for understanding the pipeline. The War on Drugs, which Alexander argues is how the current era of mass incarceration started, led to several education policies and budget changes which have become the basis of the school-to-prison pipeline. This "tough on crime" approach to drugs has appeared in schools through zero-tolerance policies and the significant increase of police in schools as a result of the Safe Schools Act of 1994. However, in a more direct sense, in order to fund the War on Drugs money was removed from the education budget to the War on Drugs budget. Mallett emphasizes that schools overuse "disruption" as a reason for punishing students, which sometimes includes law enforcement which can result in a child having a criminal record. Additionally, Wald and Losen point out that students do not have to go to prison in order to experience a prison-like environment considering that schools have metal detectors, surveillance cameras, and police officers, and these are found more often in schools with higher populations of minority students. The combination of these practices criminalizes children, especially children of color, and shifts the schools' purpose from teaching to disciplining. Based on these theories both the micro and the macro elements of a school must be studied in order to understand how a school-to-prison pipeline could be functioning in a certain school. This includes but is not limited to policies which criminalize students, funding for counselors in comparison to police, suspension and expulsion rates compared by ethnicity, and county redistricting. This study will apply these theories in Stockton, California in order to study which aspects of the school-to-prison pipeline exist in this city.

Chapter 3: Methodology

My Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the extent of the school-to-prison pipeline in Stockton, California. Based on the findings from the literature review the most influential elements of the pipeline are zero-tolerance policies, suspensions and expulsions for “defiance”, and the shift from rehabilitation to incarceration which can be seen in the use of funding for police over counselors or after-school programs. This deductive study will consist of quantitative content analysis of public records and school policies. The public data consists of suspension and expulsion records, district funding disbursement records known as Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) and Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP), and school policies. Stockton Unified School District (SUSD) has 51 schools, 46 of which qualify as Title 1 schools which means that a high percent of students are low-income. In order to understand whether or not there are disparities at SUSD, this data will be compared to the more affluent Lincoln Unified School District (LUSD), which is also in Stockton.

Since the War on Drugs zero-tolerance policies have been applied to various forms of social control. Whether through drug laws or school rules, they have been implemented as a way to show any other possible perpetrators that certain behaviors will not be tolerated whatsoever. In schools zero-tolerance policies are applied to minor and serious infractions and therefore prevent the possibility of leniency based on circumstance. Additionally, some standard consequences are seen as too severe for the infraction. These policies contribute to a prison-like environment which criminalizes children. Therefore, school policies, which are found in student handbooks and posted on the schools’ websites, will be examined. These policies include zero-tolerance policies, infractions which justify automatically being handled by law enforcement, policies

about “defiant” infractions, and policies about searches and drug tests. SUSD and LUSD policies will be examined for these rules and then compared to determine how many rules in each district are contributing to prison like environment and whether there is a difference between districts. Historically we have seen a societal shift from rehabilitation to incarceration. This is reflected in schools through the increased presence and authority of police officers in schools. In order to achieve this shift in schools funds have had to be reallocated from counselors and after-school programs to pay for police and security. Stockton has one of the highest juvenile arrest rates in California and is also one of two cities in the state whose campus police officers are allowed to arrest students. SUSD’s and LUSD’s Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) and Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) from the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 school years will be statistically analyzed. While SUSD has made these records publicly available since 2014 LUSD has only made them available since 2015 which is why data from 2015 to 2017 will be used. The ratio per student for funding for law enforcement in comparison to counselors and after school programs will be determined for each district. Once the ratio has been found for each district the districts will be compared.

Theories about the pipeline argue that it has disproportionate effects on ethnically marginalized groups in comparison to white students. For this reason, the suspension and expulsion records for SUSD and LUSD will be analyzed statistically and organized by school year, ethnicity, and district. Records are available for school years from 2011-2015, for a total of four years which will all be analyzed. This data can be found online through the California Department of Education Data Reporting Office. Once organized, statistics for students from ethnically marginalized groups will be compared to the statistics for White students to determine

if the effects are disproportionate. Then these numbers will be compared between districts to determine whether or not this effect, or lack of it, is present across all public schools in Stockton.

California

Between 1852 and 1965 California opened 12 penitentiaries, none between 1965 and 1984, but since 1984 21 penitentiaries have been opened. Wacquant carried out an ethnography of a California Department of Corrections (CDC) facility; the Los Angeles County Jail, which is the “largest detention facility in the ‘Free World’” (2002). Wacquant found that in 2002 the cost per resident, per year, in a CDC facility was \$21,470 (2002). Half of it pays for security and ¼ of it pays for basic inmate needs while less than five percent of it goes towards activities related to education, training, rehabilitation, and work. In comparison, through the main public assistance program, Aid to Families with Dependent Children, a single mother with three children received \$555 per month in 1995. With the addition of administrative services “the cost to the public aid budget of a family of four rises to \$7229 per year, one-third of the monies devoted to locking up a single inmate” (Wacquant 2002). In addition to the cost of running a facility, the cost to build a new facility for 4,000 inmates costs \$200 million and requires hiring 1,000 guards. As if the cost of building facilities was not already high enough, in ten years California spent \$5.3 billion renovating cells in their facilities and creating \$10 billion in debt in the form of bonds (Wacquant 2002).

The state of California has spent more on prisons than its four year universities every year since 1994. Additionally, California employs more correctional officers than social workers (Wacquant 2002). Since California began investing more in prisons than education it has also become all around stricter with juveniles. In 2000 California passed proposition 21, a law which allowed juveniles (ages 14-17) to be tried and sentenced as adults for violent offenses.

Additionally, during the 2010-2011 school year alone 700,000 students were suspended in California, many as a result of zero-tolerance policies. Of these students, African American students were suspended at a rate of 171 for every 1,000 students (De La Cruz 2014). Krisberg et al found that a system of youth correctional facilities was created in California in 1941 which by 1971 never had a population which exceeded 7,000. However, by the late 1970s and early 1980s, which is also around the beginning of the War on Drugs, the population in the youth correctional facilities began to increase. By 1996 this population had grown to over 10,000. In that same year California passed legislation which required counties to pay more to send juveniles to these facilities.

Stockton, California

Stockton is a city in California and is a member of the San Joaquin County. According to US Census data in 2010 Stockton had an estimated population of 291,731 which was 40.3% Latinx, 37% White, 21.5% Asian, and 12.2% Black (US Census 2010). Stockton became the second largest city in United States history to file for bankruptcy as a result of the 2008 financial crisis. It is also known for having some of the highest crime rates in the state of California and being one of the cities in the country with the highest rates of illiteracy. Overall, Stockton has a mostly negative reputation.

According to a study conducted by Arnold Lewis in 1981, historically, Stockton has always had unequal racial power relations, especially within education. Lewis found that at this time minority students in Stockton schools had different experiences than their white peers. He found that these schools were created by and in order to serve the White community. The parents of minority students had little say as to who was hired to teach their children and which programs, such as tracking and Headstart, were implemented into their children's' schools. The

teachers were typically not members of the Stockton community and adapted to the interests of their Anglo employers instead of the community members. This left minority students having to compete with dominant group members for scarce resources. These students were unsuccessful because they were relatively powerless in a system that was not created for them. Additionally, Lewis found that in contrast to teachers in higher-status communities, who were concerned with academic achievement, teachers in Stockton were most often concerned with maintaining discipline (Lewis 1981).

De La Cruz's findings show that Stockton Unified School District (SUSD) is not all that different from when Lewis studied it 30 years ago. In the 2010-2011 school year SUSD had 38,803 students enrolled in their K-12 schools, 42 campus safety assistants in K-8, an average of 25 campus safety assistants throughout their four high schools, and 22 SUSD police officers. In comparison, the Lincoln Unified School District (LUSD), which is in a more affluent area of Stockton, has 8,981 students and only three high school campus monitors, one Stockton Police Department officer, and six LUSD Police Officers. Mah found that all the SUSD elementary schools are Title 1 schools as a result of about 70% of SUSD students qualifying for the federal free and reduced lunch program (2004). De La Cruz believes that students that are affected by policies like NCLB and zero-tolerance are ones that already have learning disabilities, live in poverty, suffer from abuse (PTSD), and would in fact benefit more from additional support instead of getting punished, isolated, and pushed out for, what is often, minor behavioral problems (De La Cruz 2014). De La Cruz compares inner city children with PTSD to soldiers with PTSD, he points out that a major difference between these two groups is that children in inner cities never leave the combat zone, thus they are repeatedly experiencing trauma and often do not have a safe place in either their home or their school. Like De La Cruz puts it, when a

child is experiencing PTSD “the things we are currently emphasizing in school will fall off their radar. Because frankly it does not matter in our biology if we don’t survive the walk home” (2014). Nonetheless, there are students that are able to overcome all of these challenges and stay focused on school. Unfortunately, that gets more difficult as students get older because when a student spends their entire life being told that they are a criminal despite all their efforts to prove that stereotype wrong they are likely to eventually start believing in it and manifesting that stereotype in their actions (De La Cruz 2014).

This stereotype is worsened by the criminalization of juveniles in their own schools. Stockton is one of two major California cities, the other being San Bernardino, whose campus officers are allowed to arrest students. In 2015 the Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice conducted a study on these two cities and found that between 2013 and 2015 SUSD officers have arrested 34,368 students under 18 and of those 1,590 were under the age of 10. Only one percent of California’s youth under age 10 lives in Stockton and yet it accounts for 26% of arrests for that demographic. SUSD is responsible for 89% of all arrest of children under 10 in the city of Stockton. Additionally, at the time of this study arrest rates for children under 10 in the state of California decreased by 96% and in San Bernardino they decreased by 73%, however in Stockton they increased by 29%. These school-arrest policies which were originally adopted to protect children from intruders have now been turned around and used against the students they were meant to protect. Males notes that it is alarming that the two cities in California which are allowed to arrest students also have some of the highest arrest rates. The fact that these arrests have not led to a significant improvement over time in student behaviors suggests that not only are they not successful policies but they may in fact be achieving the opposite effect. This can

be considered as an indicator that school district officer arrest policies should be reevaluated (Males 2015).

Chapter 4: Findings

Through the data I gathered I found limited evidence that suggests the presence of factors that might contribute to the school-prison pipeline in Stockton. Based on suspension and expulsion rates and school policies SUSD and LUSD may both be sending their students into the school-to-prison pipeline. Suspension and expulsion records were examined because research (Mallett 2015; Wald and Losen 2003) indicates that these disproportionately affect ethnically marginalized communities.

School policies related to zero-tolerance policies, infractions which justify automatically being handled by law enforcement, policies about “defiant” infractions, and policies about searches and drug tests were analyzed, given that they are similar to those used in the War on Drugs as research shows that the school-to-prison pipeline stems from the war-like approach to criminalizing drugs (Alexander 2011; Mallett 2015). There is an even higher correlation for LUSD based on their spending on policing students, which includes school and public police officers, surveillance cameras, and metal detectors, in comparison to spending on counseling, which includes academic and mental health counselors. Research also shows that in order to fund the war on drugs funding has been taken out of education and that the funding that does go towards education is often used for policing instead of counseling. For example, Wacquant’s research shows that California has spent more on prisons than universities since 1994. Additionally, his research also found that California employs more corrections officers than social workers (2002). Thus, if this is mirrored in schools then they will spend more on policing than counselors. This is important because resources like counselors have been shown to function as a preventative measure to maintain students out of the pipeline. The shift in funding from counselors to police reflects the country’s shift from rehabilitation to incarceration

(Wacquant 2002).

Based on Mallett’s research the main indicators of the pipeline, which were examined in this study, are suspension and expulsion records in Stockton, especially in comparison to California suspension and expulsions records and California Juvenile arrest records (2015). Arrest records were also used as a basis of comparison because research shows that often when disciplining students police are the first call (Mallett 2015). Thus, if there is a correlation suspension and expulsion records should mirror juvenile arrest records to a certain extent.

Expulsion and Suspension Rates

Table 1: LUSD Population (in percentage)

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Latinx	39	41	42.7	44.3
Native American	0.84	0.76	0.77	0.68
Asian	10.1	9.9	9.9	9.9
Pacific Islander	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2
Filipino	4.6	4.5	4.3	4.4
African American	12.3	11.9	11.9	12.2
White	30.1	28.7	27.3	25
2+(not Latinx)	1.8	1.9	1.9	2.2

Table 1.1: SUSD Population (in percentage)

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Latinx	60	61.7	62.6	63.2
Native American	3.2	2.9	2.7	2.5
Asian	8.9	10	9.6	9.3
Pacific Islander	0.59	0.58	0.53	0.52
Filipino	4.9	4.7	4.4	4.3
African American	11.9	11.4	11	11
White	8.6	7.5	7.1	6.8
2+(not Latinx)	0.53	1.8	1.9	2.2

Table 2: LUSD and SUSD Suspensions (in percentage)

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
LUSD:				
Latinx	39.9	39	37.5	38.5
Native American	1.1	0.98	0.78	0.74
Asian	4.6	3.6	4.9	4.1
Pacific Islander	0.97	1.1	1.4	1.4
Filipino	3.1	1.8	2.1	1.9
African American	24.3	27.4	28.5	28.9
White	23.6	23.8	22.8	21.4
2+(not Latinx)	2.4	2.3	1.9	2.7
SUSD:				
Latinx	44.2	48.3	50.7	48.4
Native American	6.8	5.9	4.4	3.4
Asian	2.6	3.9	3.4	4.2
Pacific Islander	0.31	0.55	0.41	0.5
Filipino	1.6	1.8	1.4	1.3
African American	33.3	29.2	27.8	29.7
White	10	8.9	9.8	9.3
2+(not Latinx)	0.99	1.3	2	3.1

The data indicates that African American students were overrepresented in the suspension category at both districts. At LUSD there were twice as many suspensions as the African American population every year except 2011-12, and the suspension rate for this group consistently increased each year that was examined. For SUSD, suspensions of African American students were almost triple the population 2011-12 and more than doubled the following three years. The suspension rate for African American students decreased the first three school years, starting at 33.3% and decreasing to 27.8%, that were examined but they were still more than double the population. In comparison to California, suspension rates for African American students from 2011-15 were as follows, respectively; 18.9%, 19.2%, 19.6%, and 19.2%.

Latinx students were overrepresented at LUSD during the 2011-12 school year when

Latinx suspensions were higher than the population by 0.9%. The rate was almost as high as their population 2012-13 when it was under by 2%. However, this rate has decreased each year that was studied except 2014-15. Meanwhile, at SUSD Latinx suspensions each year were somewhere between 15.8-11.9% under the population. Suspensions of White students at LUSD decreased each school year that was examined except 2012-13 when it increased 0.2% from the year before. At SUSD suspensions of White students ranged from 1.4-2.7% over the population each year. In comparison to California juvenile arrest records suspensions are lower than the arrest rates for Latinx students at both districts. However, for suspensions the rates for White students are lower at SUSD than the California juvenile arrest records.

Table 3: LUSD and SUSD Expulsions (in percentage)

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
LUSD:				
Latinx	34.6	24.5	0	35.7
Native American	2.6	0	0	1.8
Asian	3.8	2	0	5.4
Pacific Islander	0	4.1	0	0
Filipino	3.8	8.2	0	0
African American	30.8	26.5	0	35.7
White	23.1	28.6	0	17.9
2+(not Latinx)	1.3	6.1	0	3.6
SUSD:				
Latinx	37.7	0.5	0.5	42.4
Native American	4.9	0	5.9	3
Asian	9.8	0	5.9	12.1
Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0
Filipino	0	0	0	0
African American	36.1	0.4	29.4	36.4
White	9.8	0.1	8.8	3
2+(not Latinx)	1.6	0	0	3

For LUSD expulsion rates for African American students were more than double the population each year except 2013-14 when there was zero. For SUSD during the 2011-12 school year the expulsions for African American students were more than triple the population. During the 2012-13 school year the expulsion rates decreased immensely from 36.1% the year before to 0.4%. However, the rate dramatically increased to 29.4% 2013-14, which was more than double the population that year. The expulsion rate for African American students increased again the following year, 2014-15, to 36.4% which was more than triple the population. California expulsions for African American students which were 13.7%, 13.5%, 15.1%, and 14.5%. For the 2011-12 school year LUSD and SUSD rates were more than double the California rates. During the 2012-13 school year LUSD's rate was 0.5% lower than double the California rate and

SUSD's was 13.1% lower. In comparison to the 2013-14 LUSD had 0 expulsions and SUSD was 0.8% lower than double the California expulsion rate for African American students. In comparison to the California rates for the 2014-15 school year both districts were around 5% higher than double the state's rate. Even when the population of African American students in the state decreased expulsion rates still remained just as high, if not higher, than the year before. In comparison to California arrest records expulsions at both districts are higher for African American students than the arrest rates.

At LUSD expulsion rates for the Latinx population was consistently lower than the Latinx population. For SUSD expulsion rates for Latinx students had a drastic decrease from 37.7% in 2011-12 to 0.5% in 2012-13 which continued in 2013-14 but drastically increased in 2014-15 to 42.4%. For White students at LUSD expulsion rates were similarly under the White population each year. However, at SUSD expulsions rates for White students were higher than the population during the 2011-12 and 2013-14 school years. In comparison to California juvenile arrest records Latinx expulsion rates at both districts are lower. However, for White students expulsion rates at LUSD are higher than arrest rates.

Table 4: LUSD and SUSD Defiance Suspensions (in percentage)

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
LUSD:				
Latinx	40.6	40.4	39.7	38.2
Native American	1	0.87	1	0
Asian	3.8	2.6	4.8	4.9
Pacific Islander	0.58	1.3	2.2	1.5
Filipino	3.1	1.5	2.1	1.2
African American	27.7	26.8	27.7	31.6
White	21	24.6	20.4	19.4
2+(not Latinx)	2.2	1.9	2.1	2.7
SUSD:				
Latinx	47.6	50.4	52.2	48.5
Native American	7.6	6.3	4.9	4.4
Asian	1.9	3.8	2.8	3.5
Pacific Islander	0.15	0.48	0.31	5.7
Filipino	1.7	1.7	0.94	1.4
African American	31.9	28.5	27.8	29.8
White	8.8	7.9	9.3	8.9
2+(not Latinx)	0.39	0.95	1.7	2.9

In the category of defiance suspensions the rate was more than double the African American population each year that was analyzed at both districts. At LUSD the suspension rate for defiance consistently decreased each year and was lower than the Latinx population every year except 2011-12 when it was slightly above the population. At SUSD the suspension rate for defiance for Latinx students increased each year except 2014-15 when it decreased by 3.7%. The suspension rate for defiance for White students at LUSD was lower than the population every year examined except for 2012-13. Nonetheless, it was consistently lower than the White population. For SUSD the rate for the White population decreased each year except when it increased 2012-13. It was however consistently less than the White population even when the population consistently decreased.

Table 5: LUSD and SUSD Defiance Expulsions (in percentage)

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
LUSD:				
Latinx	41.7	33.3	0	37.5
Native American	0	0	0	0
Asian	0	0	0	12.5
Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0
Filipino	8.3	0	0	0
African American	33.3	33.3	0	25
White	16.7	33.3	0	25
2+(not Latinx)	0	0	0	0
SUSD:				
Latinx	83.3	0	0	0
Native American	0	0	0	0
Asian	0	0	0	0
Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0
Filipino	0	0	0	0
African American	0	0	0	0
White	16.7	0	0	0
2+(not Latinx)	0	0	0	0

At LUSD the defiance expulsion rate for African American students was more than double the population 2011-12, 2012-13, and 2014-15. During the 2011-12 school year at LUSD Latinx students made up 83.3% of defiance expulsions while White students made up 16.7%. This was 23.3% more than the overall Latinx population meanwhile it was almost double the White population. At SUSD there were almost no expulsions for defiance for all ethnicities. From the years that were analyzed 2011-12 was the only one during which there were expulsions under this category, 83.3% were Latinx and 16.7% of them were African American. This was 23.3% more than the overall Latinx population meanwhile it was almost double the White population.

Spending

In the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) for the 2015-16 school year SUSD budgeted (actual spending not available) \$4,490,792 for counselors and mental health services. For security, police, and surveillance the district budgeted \$4,362,632. For this school year the district budgeted \$3.18 more, per student, for counseling than for policing. During the 2016-17 school year SUSD spent \$3,283,468 for counseling and \$2,097,014 for policing. That year the district spent \$28.95 more, per student, for counseling than for policing. That is an increase of over nine times more of a difference than the difference in the 2015-16 school year.

For the 2015-16 school year LUSD budgeted \$276,000 for counselors and mental health services. Meanwhile, for security, police, and surveillance the district budgeted \$903,895. This resulted in a difference of \$67.53 more, per student, on policing than counseling. This year the district budgeted over three times as much for policing than for counseling. During the 2016-17 the district spent \$270,449 for counseling and \$784,869 for policing. LUSD spent \$54.50 more, per student, on policing than on counseling. Similarly, to the previous year, the district spent almost three times as much on policing than on counseling.

Policies

Policies for one high school per district were examined for elements of zero-tolerance, drug tests and searches, and “defiance” policies. These elements were found in the handbooks for both of the high schools examined in this study.

The handbook from Edison High School was studied in order to try to understand SUSD’s policies pertaining to zero-tolerance, “defiance”, and drug tests and searches. These policies were singled out based on research (Mallett 2015; Wald and Losen 2003) which has found them to indicate a school-to-prison pipeline. Edison High School has a zero-tolerance policy specifically for students involved in physical fights, which will result in a suspension. In regard to drugs and alcohol they have an alcohol and drug free policy which is as follows:

“School Policies & Safety Regulations Alcohol/Drug Free Policy; (page 8, ed. code #11-13) ed. code 48900(c), 48915(a) (3)* 48900(j) Students using, possessing, distributing, selling, or being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, controlled substances, “look-alike” drugs, steroids or possessing drug paraphernalia on any school premise or at any school function (home or away) is strictly prohibited. Minimum penalty for violation of this policy will be suspension from school: however, violation of this policy could result in permanent exclusion from school and/or arrest. No Smoking Policy; (page 10 ed. code # 17) 48900(h), 48901 SUSD has a no smoking policy. Individuals are not allowed to smoke or have tobacco in their possessions on campus or during school sponsored activities. This refers to all supervised school activities, athletic events, field trips, etc., both on campus and away from school.”

<https://www.stocktonusd.net/cms/lib010/CA01902791/Centricity/Domain/668/student%20handbook.pdf> 6/1/2017)

While it is not labeled a “zero-tolerance” policy it nonetheless reflects on in that any student will be punished by this policy with pre-determined consequences. The minimal penalty for violation of this policy is suspension but can also result in expulsion and/or an arrest if the event occurs at any school event whether it is on or off campus.

The handbook additionally states that students can be submitted to random searches. The full policy and list of “contraband” which could be confiscated is as follows:

“An administrator and campus security will conduct random searches of students in selected classrooms. The purpose of the search is to ensure a safe and secure campus for all students and staff. The following contraband will be confiscated if found: any electronic devices, wallet/pocket chains, shaving cream, water balloons, permanent markers, correction fluid, spiked jewelry, dice, cards, weapons or dangerous objects, alcohol/drugs, spray paint, tobacco products, matches/lighters, any article determined to be gang/drug related, head coverings of any kind. The school and its personnel are not responsible for any confiscated items. It will be at the discretion of the administration as to the length of holding prohibited items for repeat offenders.”

(<https://www.stocktonusd.net/cms/lib010/CA01902791/Centricity/Domain/668/student%20handbook.pdf> 6/1/2017)

Lastly, students are expected to wear their ID badges in a visible location at all times while at school, in order to “promote safety”.

Similar policies were found in the handbook for Lincoln High School which was used to understand LUSD’s policies. To begin, students and parents must consent to students being randomly drug tested or they cannot participate in athletic teams:

“Pursuant to Lincoln Unified School District’s Board Policy and Administrative

Regulation 5131.6, in order for a student to participate in a covered activity, as listed below, the student or his/her parent or guardian if the student is a minor (under the age of 18), must consent to the District's randomized drug testing policy. No student will be allowed to participate in practice or competition until the Informed Consent Agreement for the Random Drug Testing of Student Athletes document is completed, signed and filed with the District. By signing and dating this form, the student or the student's parent or guardian, if the student is a minor, acknowledges that by participating in a covered activity, the student willingly subjects himself/herself to the District's randomized drug testing policy, as described in BP/AR 5131.6. The extracurricular activities covered by the policy are: INFORMED CONSENT AGREEMENT FOR THE RANDOM DRUG TESTING OF STUDENT ATHLETES PURSUANT TO BP/AR 5131.6 A PARENT'S GUIDE TO DEALING WITH TEACHER-COACHES

What you deserve to hear from the teacher-coach:

- The basic requirements, such as equipment needed, fees, school and team rules, and off-season expectations
- When and where practices and games will take place
- The coach's expectation of our child and other players
- The coach's baseline policies, such as rules on who gets to play
- What the team will do if your child gets hurt

What the teacher-coach deserves to hear from you:

- Advance notice of any schedule conflicts
- Concerns about your child or the coach's philosophy expressed at the proper time and place

What concerns you can discuss with the coach:

- Any relevant topic that does not include playing time

What concerns you CAN'T discuss and must leave to the coach's discretion:

- Overall team strategy
- Individual play calling
- Each athlete's playing time
- Situations dealing with other student-athletes

To discuss a concern with the coach, follow these steps:

- Contact the coach and arrange an appointment
- If you

can't reach the coach, call the athletic director and ask him or her to set up a meeting with the coach • If you are not satisfied with your meeting with the athletic director, you may request a meeting with the principal • The final appeal on any matter rests with the superintendent (www.charactercounts.org ULTIMATE Sportsmanship Toolkit, Interscholastic Edition © 2005 Josephson Institute) x Football x Cheer x Cross Country Boys x Cross Country Girls x Tennis Boys x Tennis Girls x Swim/Dive Boys x Swim/Dive Girls x Water Polo Boys x Water Polo Girls x Volleyball x Basketball Boys x Basketball Girls x Softball x Baseball x Track & Field Boys x Track & Field Girls x Soccer Boys x Soccer Girls x Badminton Boys x Badminton Girls”

http://www.lincolnhigh.org/UserFiles/Servers/Server_5796227/Image/Final%20Student%20Handbook%20English%202016-2017.pdf 6/1/2017)

Additionally, LUSD has the following policy for contraband-sniffing dogs:

“Contraband-Sniffing Dogs Dogs trained in detecting contraband may be allowed on campus for the safety of students and staff. All classrooms, lockers, backpacks and vehicles on or within 1000 feet of the campus may be subject to search. Once a dog has alerted, the school has an obligation to investigate if there is a weapon, dangerous or unsafe object present. Students whose backpacks and/or lockers are searched and in which an illegal substance or weapon is discovered will be considered to be in possession of that item and will face disciplinary action as outlined in the Guidelines for Student Disciplinary Actions of this handbook. Students who drive a vehicle to school are fully responsible for the contents of that vehicle, even if the vehicle or its contents actually belong to someone else.”

http://www.lincolnhigh.org/UserFiles/Servers/Server_5796227/Image/Final%20Student

[%20Handbook%20English%202016-2017.pdf](#) 6/1/2017)

If contraband is found in a student's backpack, locker, or vehicle it is assumed the contraband is theirs. This means that even if the student claims the contraband is someone else's they will still be the ones punished for it. Their disruption/defiance policy has a sort of zero-tolerance approach, although it is not labeled as such, which indicates that any form of disruption or defiance will result in "Counseling/mediation through 5 days of suspension". In the handbook the school states that it is considered a "drug-free zone" which includes drugs, alcohol, and paraphernalia. The pre-determined consequences from the school are as follows:

"Use / Possession 1st offense 5 days suspension, possible recommendation for expulsion and referral to appropriate law enforcement agency Any felony possession will constitute immediate recommendation for expulsion. 6 weeks of mandated on-campus counseling Loss of extra-curricular eligibility for 30 days 2nd offense 5 days suspension, recommendation for expulsion, and possible referral to appropriate law enforcement agency Restriction from participation in all extra-curricular activities for the remainder of the school year Sales / Possession for Sale / Furnishing Any offense 5 days suspension, recommendation for expulsion and referral to appropriate law enforcement."

http://www.lincolnhigh.org/UserFiles/Servers/Server_5796227/Image/Final%20Student%20Handbook%20English%202016-2017.pdf 6/1/2017)

In addition to the school consequences the handbook also states that the consequences will be doubled by law enforcement. They also go as far to state that anyone in the presence of drugs or alcohol could face consequences even if they are not under the influence or in possession. Lastly the handbook states that a student facing expulsion will have due process in their case when the

school is deciding whether or not to recommend them for expulsion to the board of trustees. If they do face expulsion an administrative hearing panel will make a decision within 30 days of the recommendation.

Summary of Findings

Based on past research the factors which most often tend to indicate a possible relationship between schools and prisons are overrepresentation of ethnically marginalized communities in suspensions and expulsions, investing more funding into policing over counseling, zero-tolerance, drug tests and searches, and “defiance” policies in schools. LUSD was chosen as a comparison to SUSD because it is considered to be a more affluent district and, based on past research, affluent communities are less likely to participate in the school-to-prison pipeline than lower-income communities like SUSD.

However, this data shows that both districts have elements that indicate a possible school-to-prison pipeline. African American students were overrepresented in suspensions and expulsions at LUSD and SUSD. It is important to note too that while African American students had some of the highest suspension and expulsion rates they were also a small part of the student population in both districts. At LUSD the African American population range was 11.9-12.3% throughout the years examined. At SUSD the African American population range was 11-11.9%. However, while White and Latinx students were sometimes overrepresented it was not as consistent as African American students.

In regards to spending, SUSD seemed to prioritize counseling over policing in this category while LUSD spent more on policing than counseling both years. Lastly, it was found that both districts have zero-tolerance policies and policies about drugs and alcohol. While each district had a slightly different policy for each category they both stated that students give up their rights to being searched in one way or another once in school or at school-sanctioned events and that the context of these situations will not be considered when applying the pre-determined consequences.

Chapter 5: Analysis

Current research (Alexander 2011; Mallett 2015; Wald and Losen 2003) on the school-to-prison pipeline has found that the most important characteristics of this pipeline are overrepresentation of ethnically marginalized students in suspensions and expulsions, prioritizing funds for policing instead of counseling, and policies with pre-determined consequences. My study compared Black and Latinx students to White students in order to identify the rates of overrepresentation in each school district through suspensions and expulsions and analyzed policies and funding which could be playing a role in the overrepresentation. My study analyzed data from Stockton Unified School District (SUSD) and Lincoln Unified School District (LUSD) which are both in Stockton, a lower-income, mostly Latinx, city. However, LUSD is in a more affluent area of Stockton with a larger population of White students than SUSD. Based on research, (Mallett 2015) schools that are more affluent are less likely to have an overrepresentation of racial minorities in suspensions and expulsions based on budgeting and behavioral policies. My study suggests that on the basis of the overrepresentation of White, Black, and Latinx students in suspension and expulsion rates that there may be a strong relationship between representation, funding, and policies, and some relationship to the criminal justice system. In the sections that follow, I analyze the relationship of my findings to the existing research in the areas of expulsion and suspension rates, spending by school district on counseling and policing, and zero-tolerance policies.

Expulsion and Suspension Rates

The expulsion and suspension rates for African American students at both districts were consistent with research which has found that this group of students is overrepresented based on the indicators that were examined in this study. These are important indicators based on Wald and Losen's research which found that states with high rates of out-of-school suspensions also

have high rates of juvenile incarceration. (2003). This is important to note because suspensions and expulsions keep students out of schools and/or put them in riskier environments which could lead to more crime. It is especially ironic when students are punished for truancy by being suspended or expelled because the consequence is exactly what the students are being punished for. Additionally, both students and parents may have to face the criminal justice system if truancy escalates. Their study additionally found that this correlation is even higher for schools with racially disproportionate suspension rates. These high suspension rates are also correlated with low achievement rates in reading, math, and writing (Wald and Losen 2003). For both districts, African American students were consistently suspended and expelled more than double the population of African American students. Additionally, these rates were either similar to or higher than suspension and expulsion rates in the state of California. This is consistent with De La Cruz's research which found that during the 2010-11 school year 700,000 students were suspended in California and of those 171 out of every 1,000 suspended students were African American (2011). Since then, suspension rates for African American students in California have increased, even when the African American population in California decreased. Shams' research found that teachers tend to reward privileged White students while penalizing ethnically marginalized students, who are already being treated unequally in society as a result of their race (2015).

While the data for African American students at SUSD and LUSD is consistent with Shams' research it does not support the findings for suspensions and expulsions of White students as consistently. African American and Latinx students were overrepresented in suspensions and expulsions more often than White students. This could be a result of policies being applied differently to minority students in comparison to White students, as opposed to the

alternative explanation that minority students are misbehaving more than White students. For example, if a White student misbehaves they may be referred to a counselor while a Black or Latinx student may be suspended for the same infraction. There were some years at SUSD during which the amount of suspensions and expulsions for White students was higher than their population. For example, suspensions of White students ranged from 1.4-2.7% above the population all four years, 2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14, and 2014-15 which were examined. The expulsion rate for 2011-12 and 2013-14 and for defiance expulsions for 2011-12 were also higher than the White population. However, at LUSD suspensions and expulsions for White students were consistently lower than the White population, except for the 2012-13 school year in the category of defiance suspensions and 2011-12 for defiance expulsions. Suspensions for White students at SUSD are lower than California arrests. For LUSD expulsion rates for White students were similar to arrest rates and defiance suspensions were higher than arrest rates.

Latinx students were overrepresented under defiance expulsions at SUSD during the 2011-12 school year. Otherwise, for all other categories Latinx students were suspended and were expelled at rates less than their proportion of the population. During the 2011-12 school suspensions, defiance suspensions, and defiance expulsions were higher than the Latinx population but were under for all other years and categories analyzed. Suspensions and expulsions of Latinx students were lower at both districts than arrest records, however, they were similar for defiance suspensions.

The overrepresentation of African American students in suspensions and expulsions at both districts indicate that these forms of punishment could be playing a role in a school-to-prison pipeline at both districts. This is based on Wald and Losen's research which shows that states with high suspensions and expulsion rates have similar juvenile arrest rates, especially for

minorities, and even more specifically Black children, which are disproportionately punished by schools and the judicial system (2003). This indicates that there is a correlation between punishment in schools and in the judicial system, though this does not necessarily indicate a direct cause. However, as a result of the overrepresentation of White students in suspension and expulsion rates at SUSD this could mean that the pipeline is not solely affecting ethnically marginalized communities. Nonetheless, White students were only overrepresented at SUSD under the suspension category which allows students a second chance, which is less harsh than being expelled which is a final consequence. Additionally, the fact that suspensions and expulsions of White students at LUSD are consistently lower than their population is consistent with research which indicates that the effects of the school-to-prison pipeline do not directly affect White students, especially at more affluent schools (Mallett 2015). Lastly, the similarity between defiance suspensions and expulsions and California arrest rates are consistent with research which indicates that “defiance” is overused by teachers as a reason for suspensions and expulsions because it is difficult to define defiance and disruption. A possible explanation to the overrepresentation of minorities in comparison to White students is that White students may be referred to counseling to try to work on the student's behavior while for the same offence a minority student may simply be suspended or expelled to remove them from the school. This could be a result of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001 which Mallett explains provides funding to schools based on performance (2015). Therefore if a school or district is underperforming and receiving low funding they may try to get rid of underperforming students, usually minority students, through expulsions, arrests or by transferring to continuation schools, in order to improve their performance and therefore their funding (Mallett 2015).

Spending

Based on Alexander (2011) and Mallett's (2003) theories spending in schools is important to look at because they can indicate whether a school prioritizes rehabilitation or criminalization through their resources. In order to continue funding the War on Drugs Bill Clinton removed funding from the education and public aid budgets (Alexander 2011). Thus, the way that the limited education budget is spent has become even more important. Additionally, as a result of the Safe Schools Act of 1994 school police officers were funded and promoted. Therefore while funding for preventative programs, such as after school programs and counselors, decreased, funding for policing of students was increased. According to Mallett this increase of police on campus normalizes the policing of children. As a result of this normalization arrests of students at school has increased from 300% to 500% (Mallett 2015).

SUSD's and LUSD's budgets were analyzed to understand how much each district spent on counseling in comparison to policing. Mallett's research indicates that with more resources for students such as counseling, psychologists, after-school programs, students are less likely to be placed in the pipeline and more likely to do well in school. However, a higher police presence in schools is correlated with higher arrest rates (Mallett 2015). A possible explanation for this is that because schools are already funding, with their limited budgets, the presence of police they may feel encouraged to use the resource as to not waste it. SUSD spent more on counseling, which includes student counselors and mental health specialists, than policing both years. Meanwhile during the 2015-16 school year LUSD budgeted over three times more on policing than counseling. Similarly, during the 2016-17 school year LUSD spent almost three times as much on policing as they did on counseling. However, it is important to note that when districts receive government funding they have to spend it on specific resources and cannot decide to

allocate it elsewhere. This may be the case with LUSD and therefore it is possible that they are unable to use the funds for policing elsewhere.

This difference in spending on counseling versus policing indicates that SUSD is investing in programs which have been proven to decrease the chance of a student becoming a part of the pipeline (Mallett 2015). Students have been shown to misbehave because they may have other issues going on at home or with their mental health. Therefore a counselor could help in finding out what the underlying issue is and how to work on it as opposed to just assuming the child is a bad seed and using suspensions, expulsions, or arrests to deal with it (De La Cruz 2014; Mallett 2015). However, because African American students are so overrepresented in suspensions and expulsions this means that funding is not entirely preventing this population from entering the pipeline, though it is unknown how much this funding is decreasing the chance. However, for LUSD their spending records indicate that this district puts more of an emphasis on policing rather than prevention. In comparison to SUSD, LUSD's higher rate of spending can explain the overrepresentation of African American students in suspension and expulsion rates.

Policy

Zero-tolerance policies were popularized by the War on Drugs, which has been extended to schools at a national level. The United States' judicial system shifted from a rehabilitation approach to a criminalizing approach and schools across the country adopted that approach. In the most basic sense zero-tolerance means that there are pre-determined consequences for the violation of a policy, regardless of circumstance. By 1993, when the War on Drugs was in full swing, a lot of schools adopted zero-tolerance policies for everything from "gang-related activity" to "disruptive behavior". While some zero-tolerance policies are implemented on the

school or district level some are implemented on the state or federal level and therefore schools cannot change them.

Based on Mallett's research, zero-tolerance policies in schools have never fallen below 75% in schools since 1996 (2015). As previously mentioned in the literature review, disruption and defiance have been shown to be overused as reasons for suspensions, expulsions, and even arrests of students as a result of these terms being hard to define and therefore easily applicable to a variety of situations. Wald and Losen found that these policies are disproportionately applied to Black males, therefore being a characteristic of the school-to-prison pipeline (2003).

These policies are found in the SUSD handbook examined from SUSD's high school. The handbook states that there was a zero-tolerance policy for physical fights and the predetermined consequence is a suspension. While their alcohol and drug-free policy was not labeled as zero-tolerance it reflected zero-tolerance policies because the minimum consequence for a student being found in any situation related to drugs or alcohol is suspension. The handbook also stated that students can be submitted to random searches for "contraband" which includes anything from dice and cards to anything "gang/drug related" and head coverings. Another policy is that students are expected to wear their ID badges in a visible location at all times while on campus. The handbook stated that policies were in place to maintain safety and protect students and staff (Student/Parent Handbook 2015-16). However, these policies operate under the assumption that students could be threatening the safety of the school. How are these policies protecting the children when they are the ones being submitted to searches for "contraband" like playing cards? The combination of all of these policies, with pre-determined consequences leaves very little room for any student in violation of school rules to be given an opportunity to explain themselves. Mallett attributes this increase in criminalization to zero-

tolerance policies and the increased authority of police in schools (2015). The findings from this handbook are consistent with theories about the school-to-prison pipeline. The handbook includes zero-tolerance policies and allows students to be searched at any time they are on campus, providing police significant authority while on campus. Therefore, these policies could explain the overrepresentation of African American student suspensions and expulsions.

Similar policies were found in the LUSD high school handbook which was examined. Students and parents have to consent to students being submitted to random drug tests, if they do not consent then they will not be allowed to participate in athletic teams. LUSD's policy on contraband-sniffing dogs is that they will be allowed to examine "classrooms, lockers, backpacks and vehicles on or within 1000 feet of the campus". While this policy aimed to protect students and staff the majority of what would be sniffed by dogs belongs to students. This is another example of a policy claiming to protect students while criminalizing them. This policy is also very clear in that whatever contraband is found will be assumed to belong to the person whose locker, backpack, or car it was found in; no explanations will be taken into consideration. LUSD has a disruption/defiance policy which states that any form of this, which can be left up to interpretation, will result in a five day suspension to include counseling/mediation. Because the handbook does not define disruption/defiance it could be applied to any sort of harmless situation and nonetheless will still result in a suspension. Their drug and alcohol free policy has a predetermined minimum consequence of a five day suspension, possible recommendation for expulsion. In addition to the school's consequences the handbook states that any punishment will be double by law enforcement (Student Handbook 2016-16). This is the only mention of direct referral to law enforcement which makes the direction connection from school to prison.

Another layer of zero-tolerance policies is that they have been overused as a result of NCLB. After this act was enacted schools were funded based on their test scores. Therefore this encouraged schools to push out low-performing, typically Black and Latinx, students in order to get more funding. Zero-tolerance and disruption policies have been overused as a mechanism to push low-performing students out in order to improve test scores and receive more funding (Mallett 2015). The fact that the majority of punitive policies at both districts were either zero-tolerance policies or modeled after them in addition to the fact that SUSD has consistently had low test scores could explain the overrepresentation of African American students in suspensions and expulsions. It is possible that SUSD has used these policies to push out low-performing students in order to receive more funding. While NCLB was stripped away of its national features in 2015 the infrastructure that was created as a result of it being in place for 14 years is most likely still in place across the country.

Conclusion of Analysis

Based on the findings from my data and with the contextualization of existing theories related to the school-to-prison pipeline there is an indication that there may be a relationship between schools in Stockton, California and prisons. This is based on theories which point to suspensions and expulsions, the prioritization of funding police instead of counseling, and zero-tolerance policies and other policies which give police authority on campus. Budgets which prioritize policing over counseling create a prison-like environment and often make police the first call in disciplining students. Behavioral policies are then disproportionately over applied to Black and Latinx students in comparison to White students. This leads to an overrepresentation of minority students in suspension and expulsion rates, and sometimes arrest rates when police are the first call in disciplining students. LUSD and SUSD's indicated an overrepresentation of African

American students in suspension and expulsion rates. These rates were also similar to California's juvenile arrest rates for African Americans. LUSD prioritized policing over counseling when it came to spending while SUSD prioritized counseling over policing. However, the budgeting does not indicate that counseling was necessarily used more often as a resource. Lastly, both districts had zero-tolerance policies and gave police power on campus through searches for contraband and drug tests. This data is consistent with the theories found in the literature review which show that these three elements are correlated with the school-to-prison pipeline.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

While my study raises a lot of questions about the possibility of a relationship between schools in Stockton, California and prisons, my findings should not be taken at face value and should instead be studied alongside studies from other cities near Stockton, schools throughout all of California, and across the entire country. It is important to understand laws and policies at the country, state, and city wide levels in order to understand the interconnectedness of the school-to-prison pipeline. This understanding helps us contextualize the school-to-prison pipeline on a more individual level.

I believe that in order to further understand the pipeline there needs to be more studies like mine which focus on specific schools in a variety of communities. While my study provides some interesting insight into the connection between schools and prisons in Stockton there are limitations that should be taken into account when contextualizing this data. As a result of my study being based solely on public data I was not able to have a complete understanding of these districts. While the indicators I examined; suspensions and expulsion rates, policies, and budgeting, have been found to be some of the most important indicators of the pipeline they do not give us a complete understanding of these districts. If my study were to be replicated it should include interviews with teachers, counselors, and students to gain a more thorough understanding of the school's atmosphere, how policies are applied, and how students feel. These interviews could provide an explanation of the findings from public data. As a result of my study only including public data I can only make inferences based on theories from previous studies. Whereas if I had made direct observations of these school districts I could more confidently say whether there is or not a relationship between Stockton schools and prisons. I also think it would

be helpful to study schools where these indicators are either minimal or nonexistent and try to understand what those schools are doing differently.

Even though my study is not as in depth as it could be I feel that my data indicates a possible relationship between Stockton schools and the judicial system. I think my data should encourage SUSD and LUSD to reconsider their policies, how these policies are applied to students from different ethnicities, and how much they budget for policing in comparison to other student resources. I also encourage SUSD and LUSD to reconsider having police officers on campus in the first place. What kind of message does it send to children? Does seeing police officers make students feel safer or does it create unnecessary fear? Are police often the first call at these campuses because it is a resource that is already paid for? If schools find that police in fact make campuses safer then their role on campus should be previously discussed in order to assess at what point and under what situations they should become involved. Otherwise some students may be punished differently for committing the same infraction.

My study should also encourage government officials to reassess policies and budgeting on a state and country-wide level. Are we funding the right programs? Are we encouraging the school-to-prison pipeline on a district-wide level? The interconnectedness of this system is so complex that no subtlety should be overlooked. Similarly to districts there should be policies which establish the role of police in schools on a national-level. Otherwise it is possible that schools in certain communities could have police that are more of a primary resource than other schools. The government should also acknowledge the school-to-prison pipeline and create standards related to policies and budgeting to prevent this relationship. On an even larger level the prison-industrial complex and the War on Drugs need to be seriously reevaluated since, based on existing research, the school-to-prison pipeline is a result of these systems. When

funding is removed from the educational budget we need to seriously consider the possible consequences of this action and whether funding other programs is truly more important than funding education.

Historically, our country's systems of oppression have been subtle, complex, and interconnected. Claiming that we are in a post-race era only harms those that are racially marginalized. In order to fix our racism we need to start by acknowledging it and its presence in government systems, such as prisons and schools.

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