

Are Lax School Discipline Policies Hurting Good Students?

“Mom, I have to get out of my history class and transfer to another. I’m never going to learn anything because the kids are so disruptive.”

That’s what an acquaintance’s son recently said about his high school. Because his parents were unable to afford private school, this young man transferred to a local public school which has adopted a looser discipline policy.

Judging by [an article](#) in this weekend’s *New York Post*, this student’s experience is not an anomaly. As Michael Petrilli of the Fordham Institute writes:

“Recently, many cities – including Chicago, Philadelphia and Syracuse – have made a goal of reducing school suspensions and other tough-love approaches to school discipline, with little concern for the impact on the kids who come to school ready to follow the rules.

These efforts have received vocal support from the federal Department of Education. Policymakers and educators say they are doing this in the name of equity. But when everyone in a school is harmed by some students’ unruly behavior, it’s a strange notion of fairness indeed.”

The “equitable” discipline policies are aimed at decreasing the suspensions of certain racial groups or students with behavioral issues. Yet these measures often cause scores of other children – who have a genuine desire to learn – to fall behind in their studies.

Could it be that our quest to be sensitive to the needs and

feelings of a few is causing the majority to suffer?