



Coalition of
Communities of
Color



Portland State
UNIVERSITY



***The African American Community in
Multnomah County:
An Unsettling Profile...***

Special Thanks To:

Coalition of Communities of Color

Portland State University

Multnomah County

City of Portland

United Way

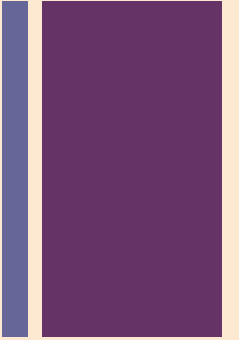
Northwest Health Foundation

Dr. Lisa K. Bates

Dr. Ann Curry-Stevens



And Thanks to These Community Groups



- **Portland African American Leadership Forum**

- **Urban League of Portland**

- **PCRI**

- **SEI**

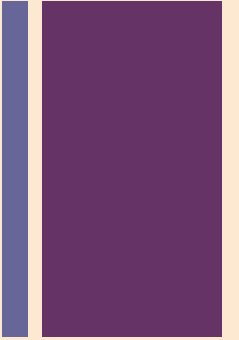
- **BPI**

- ***And to the dozens of others in our community, who have also***

signed onto our report letter...



The African American Community in Multnomah County: An Unsettling Profile...



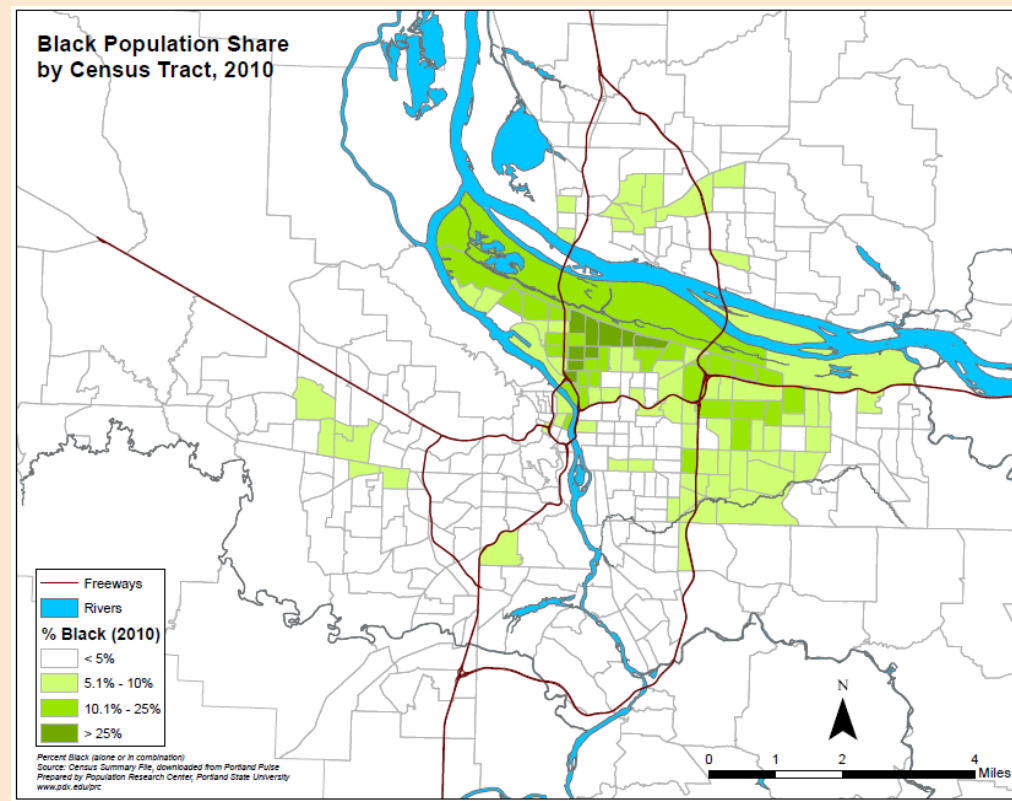
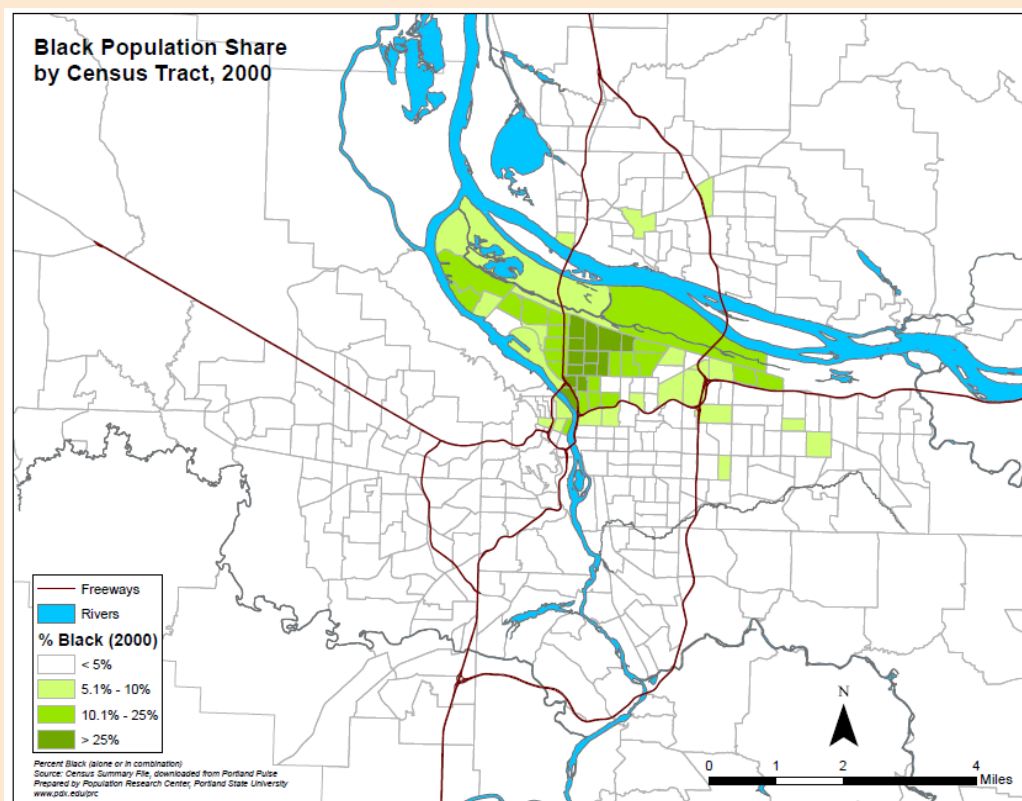
“It’s all right to tell a man to lift himself by his own bootstraps, but it is cruel just to say to a bootless man that he ought to lift himself by his own bootstraps.”

“We are now faced with the fact that tomorrow is today. We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now. In this unfolding conundrum of life and history, there "is" such a thing as being too late. This is no time for apathy or complacency. This is a time for vigorous and positive action.”

-Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



African-American Presence in Multnomah County: Remarks from Authors



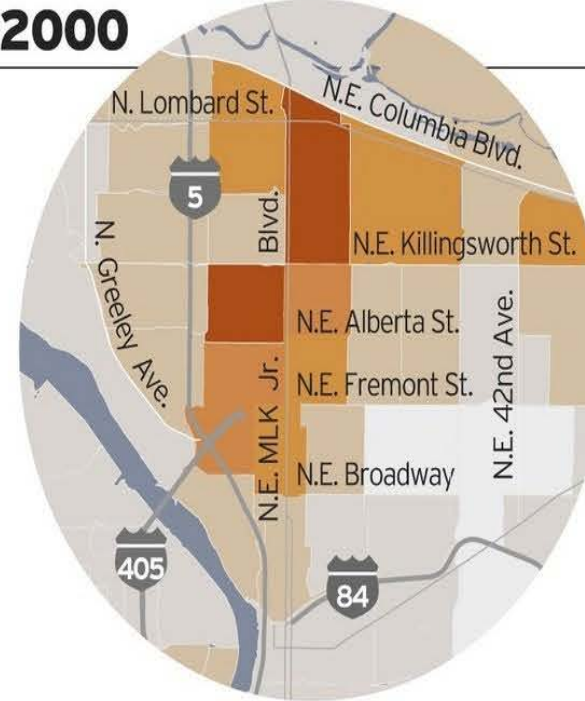
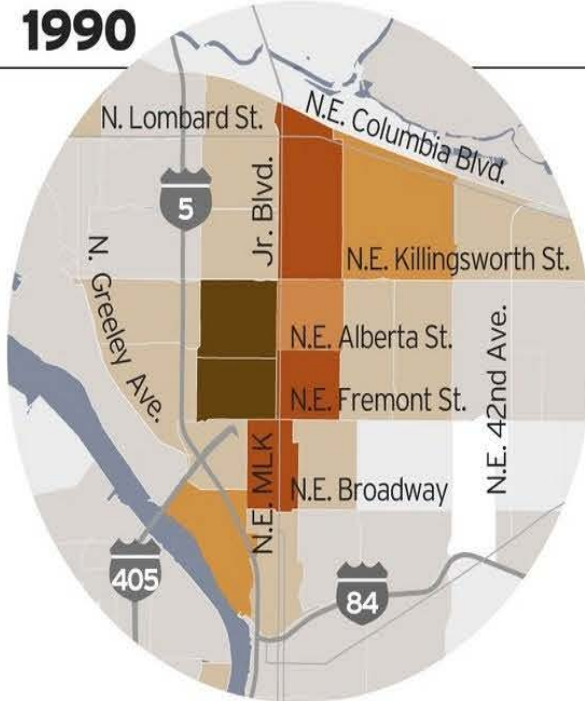
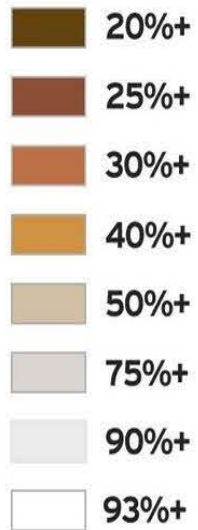
+ African-American Presence in Multnomah County

Percent white in
Northeast Portland

1990

2000

2010



Source: U.S. Census

DAN AGUAYO/THE OREGONIAN

No neighborhood in Northeast Portland remains majority Black as of 2010



African-American Economic Status

- Black family income is about $\frac{1}{2}$ of White family income
- Average unemployment rate for 2009-2011 was 17.5%



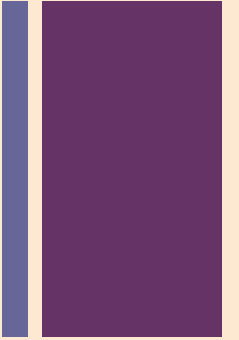


Housing

Maxine Fitzpatrick: Executive Director, PCRI



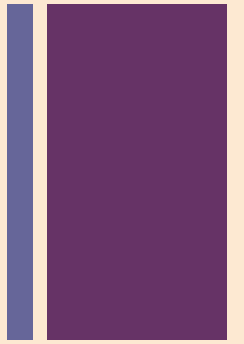
From the Report:



- *Despite over fifty years of Fair Housing law, African-Americans continue to face serious disparities as described here in terms of housing affordability, homeownership and access to mortgages, homelessness, and discrimination. In Portland, as in other cities, strong and cohesive Black neighborhoods were formed out of segregation, but were partially dismantled by highway and redevelopment construction and redlined, or systematically denied credit and investment, leading to decline. As policymakers targeted these neighborhoods in the Albina district, market pressures quickly escalated, causing another displacement for African-Americans from well-situated neighborhoods with new amenities to more distant, less accessible and amenity-rich neighborhoods in the mid-County.*

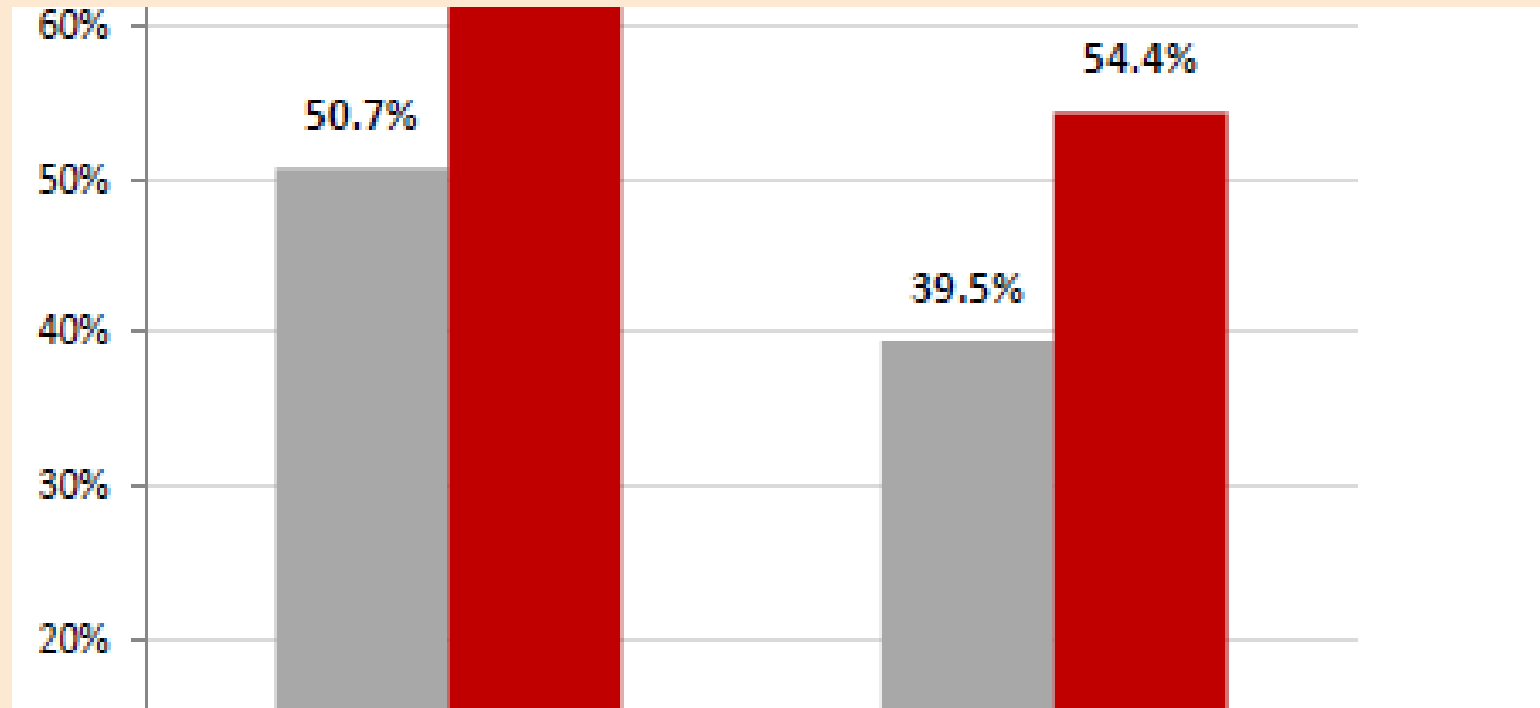


+ Housing: Affordability



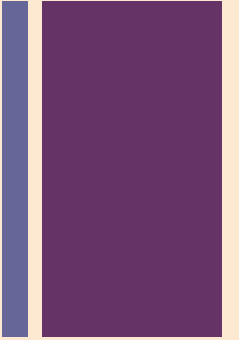
Households
spending
more than
30% of their
income on
housing

Source: ACS 2010





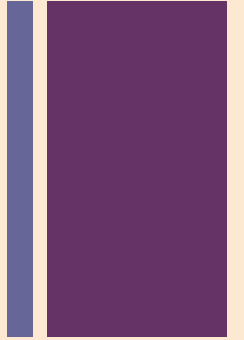
+ Housing: Homeownership



- Just 32% of Black households in Multnomah County are homeowners.
- Black-White homeownership gap for African Americans is 27 percentage points.



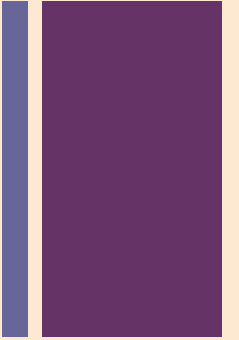
Housing: Policy Recommendations



- **Dedicate resources to research homelessness in the African-American community, and dedicate resources to the African American homeless, perhaps per the County's input into the 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness.**
- **Address the homeownership and stability of African-American seniors by funding projects that support homeownership retention and culturally specific rental housing such as the redevelopment of Kafoury Court which converts 4 units into 42 units.**
- **Support the full implementation of the City of Portland's homeownership program, *Operation HOME*, created to mitigate the minority homeownership gap by creating 3,500 new African-American homeowners over a 10 year period.**
- **Mitigate the displacement of African-Americans in accordance with the Interstate Urban Renewal Area Housing Strategy aimed at minimizing displacement per a commitment made by the City of Portland in 2002 and never honored.**



Housing: Policy Recommendations Cont'd.



- **Dedicate “watchdog” staff to legislated Section 8 Voucher non-discrimination, for African American clients specifically.**
- **Allocate direct County funds to The DDSD Housing Assistance Program, and allocate more County money to any rental assistance programs.**
- **Increase penalties for landlords that refuse to comply with the Healthy Homes Program, and find best ways to support staff to underline offenses as soon as they occur.**
- **Make a public statement outlining how county services are undermined by urban renewal and TIF, to underline the County’s perspective on the budget impact of urban renewal policies as presently implemented.**

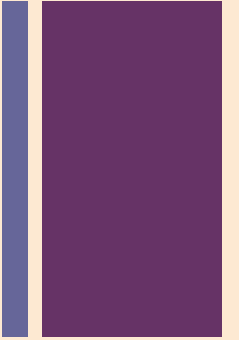


Child Welfare and Education

**Kali Thorne Ladd: Executive Director, KairosPdx
Board Member, Portland Community College**



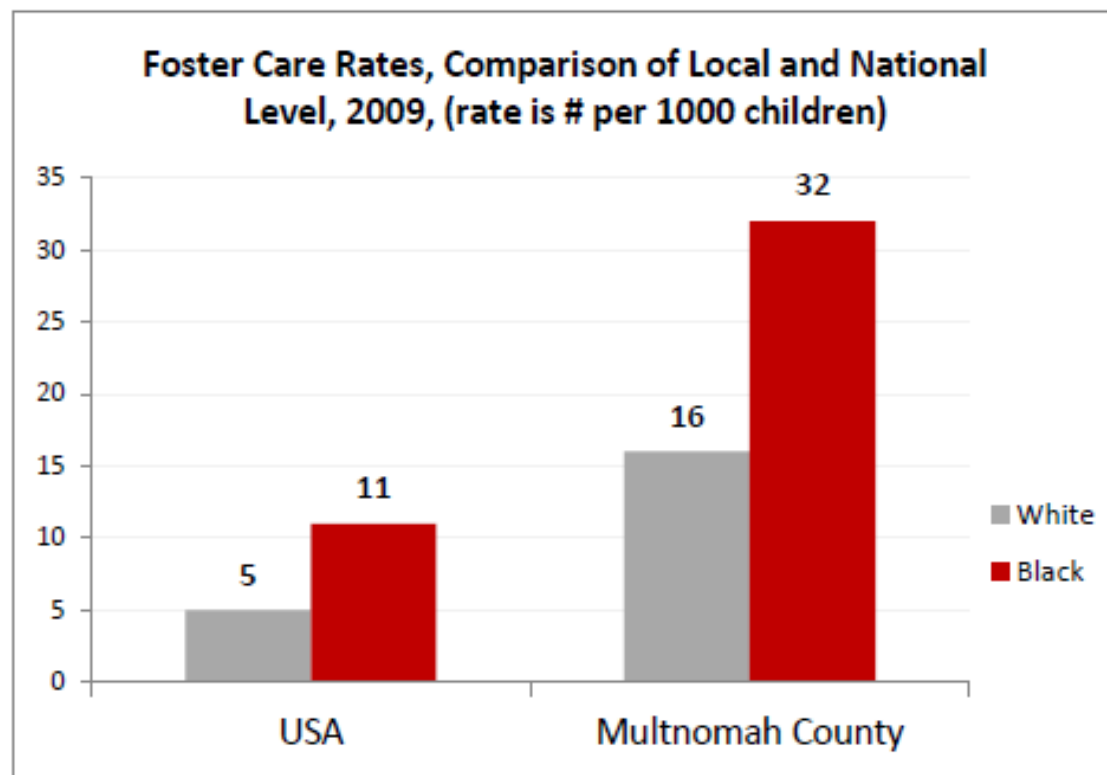
The Status of Children in Homes & Schools



- Racial disproportionality and disparity in state child welfare systems have been of growing concern in the state of Oregon. This issue rose to the level of an executive order from then-Governor Kulongoski in 2009 establishing a Child Welfare Equity Task Force charged with reducing racial disproportionality in the state system. Additionally, the Department of Human Services (DHS), Multnomah County Juvenile Courts, State and local Commission of Children, Families, and Community, and Casey Family Programs collaborated to safely and equitably reduce the numbers of children in foster care and to also lend support the Task Force. Oregon has taken the opportunity over the past three years to address the high numbers of children in the State's foster care system, with emphasis on targeting the disproportionate numbers of African American children.
- African-American educational attainment is often hampered by discriminatory policies that fail to acknowledge the limited access to early childhood programs, housing, health care, and economic opportunities that impact families over generations. The long standing problems for education in the African-American community are illustrated in the current profile of educational attainment for adults. In 2009, 15% of Black adults in Multnomah County have not completed high school, compared to only 6% of Whites. Multnomah County's White population is highly educated—42% have a post-secondary (college or graduate/professional) degree. Black adults are not nearly as likely to have a post-secondary degree: only 14% have a bachelor's degree, and in total, just 25% of Black adults have a college or graduate/professional degree.



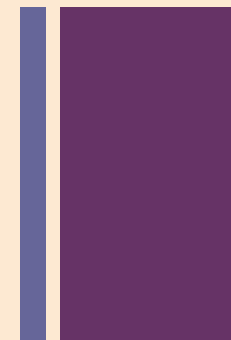
Child welfare: Foster Care Rates



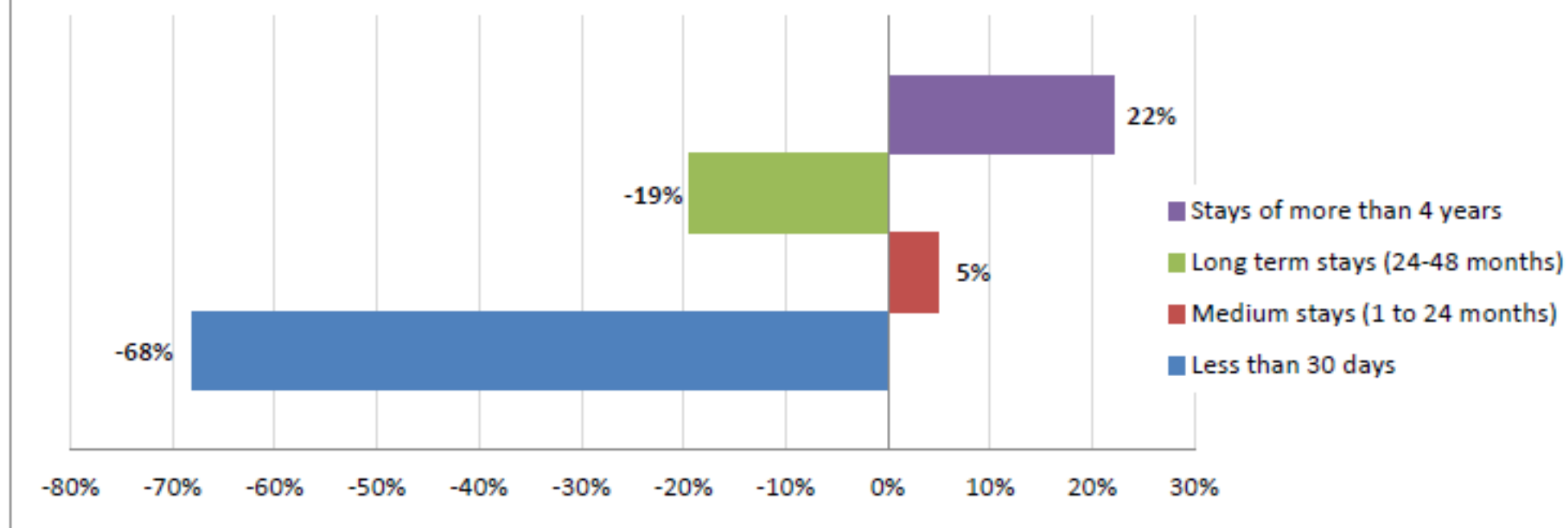
Source: Curry-Stevens' calculations for Multnomah County from data from Miller et al. (2009); for national data, see Child Welfare League of America (2008).



Child Welfare: Stays In Foster Care

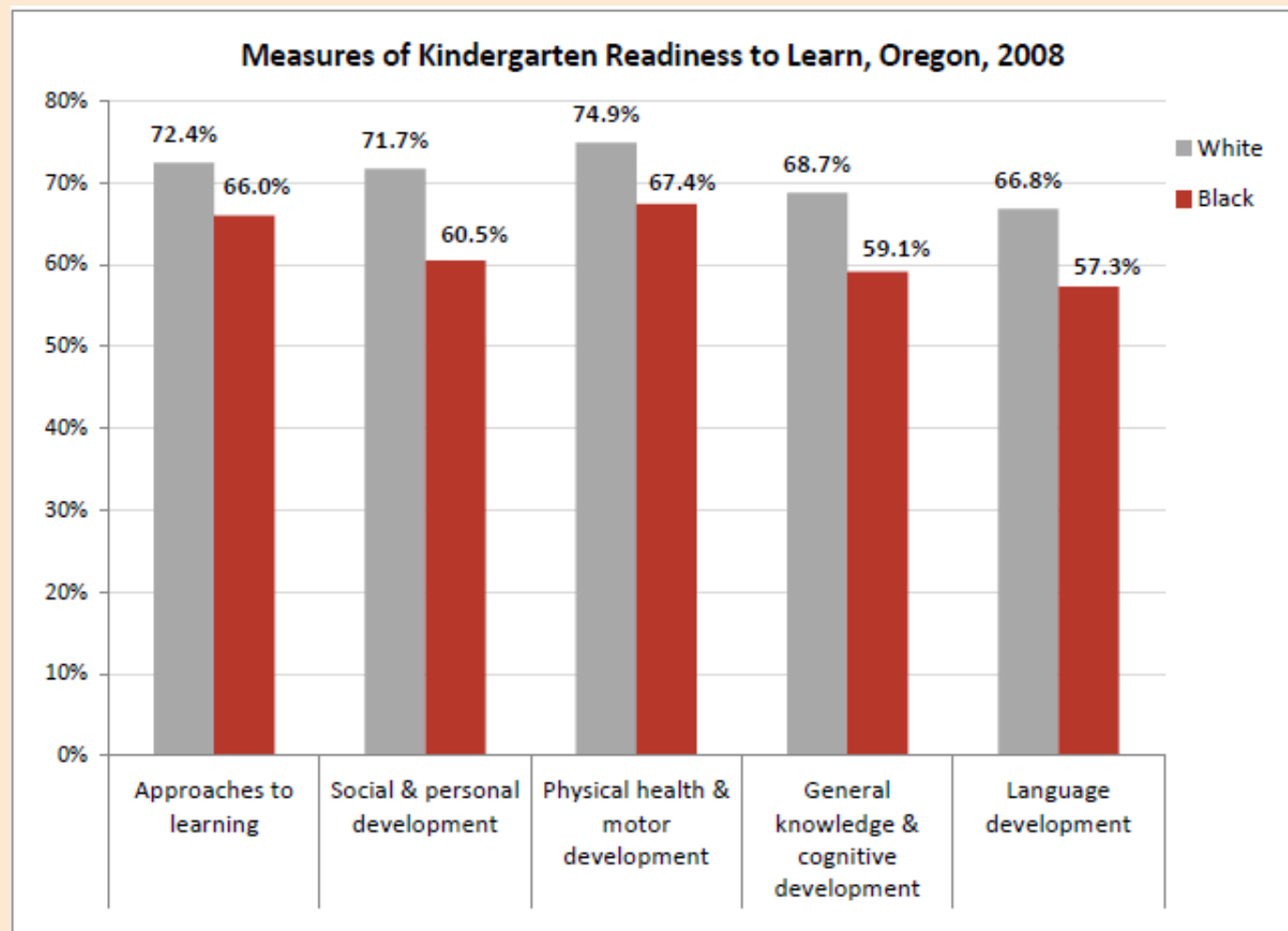
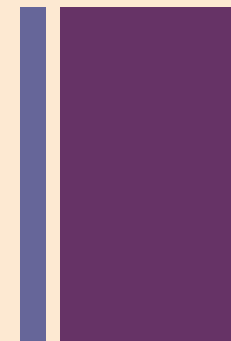


**Disproportionality in Foster Care Length of Stay,
Blacks in Multnomah County, 2008/09**





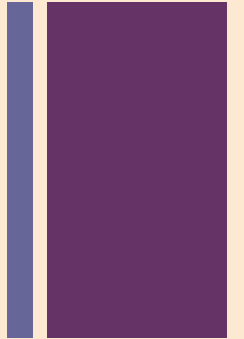
Education: Ready for Kindergarten



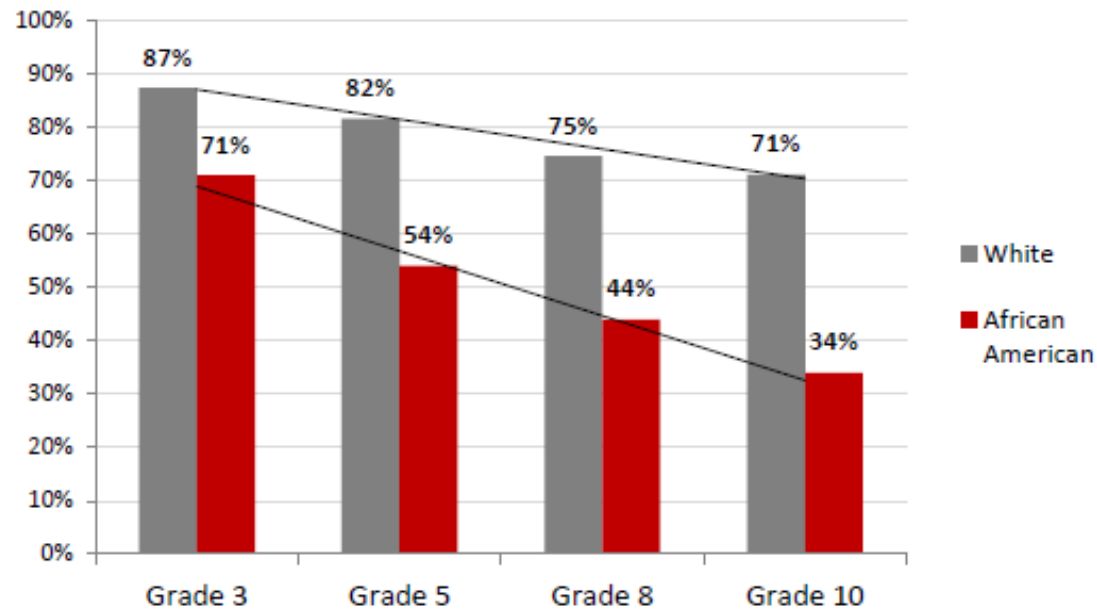
Source: Oregon Department of Education's Kindergarten Readiness Survey, 2008.



Education: Achievement Testing Gaps

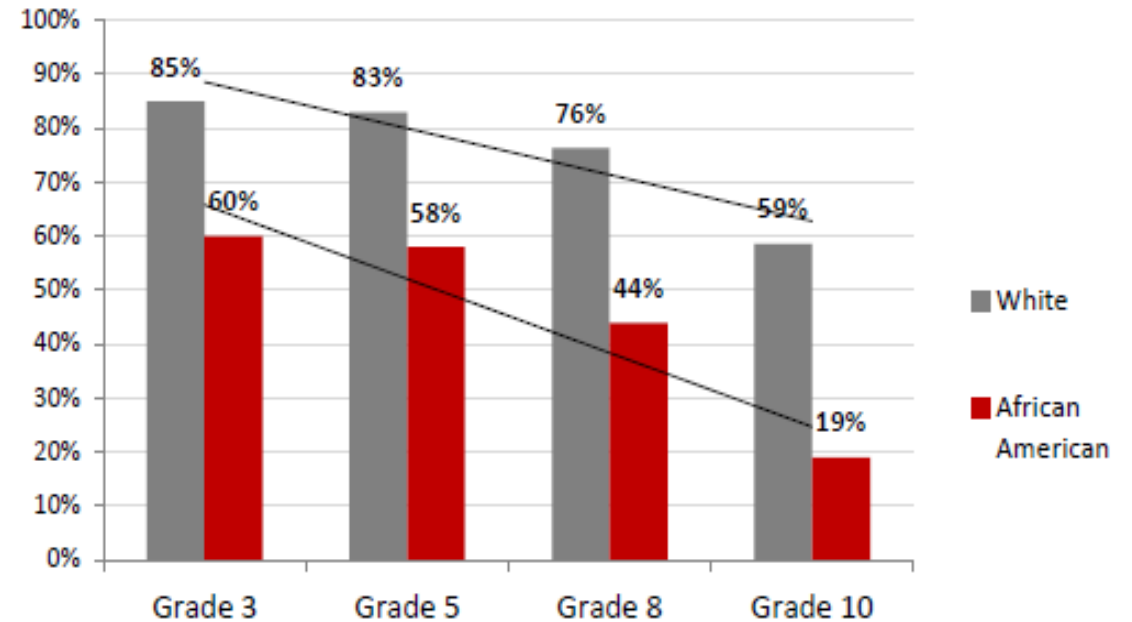


Reading/Literature Scores, Multnomah County, 2008
(% who meet/exceed benchmarks)



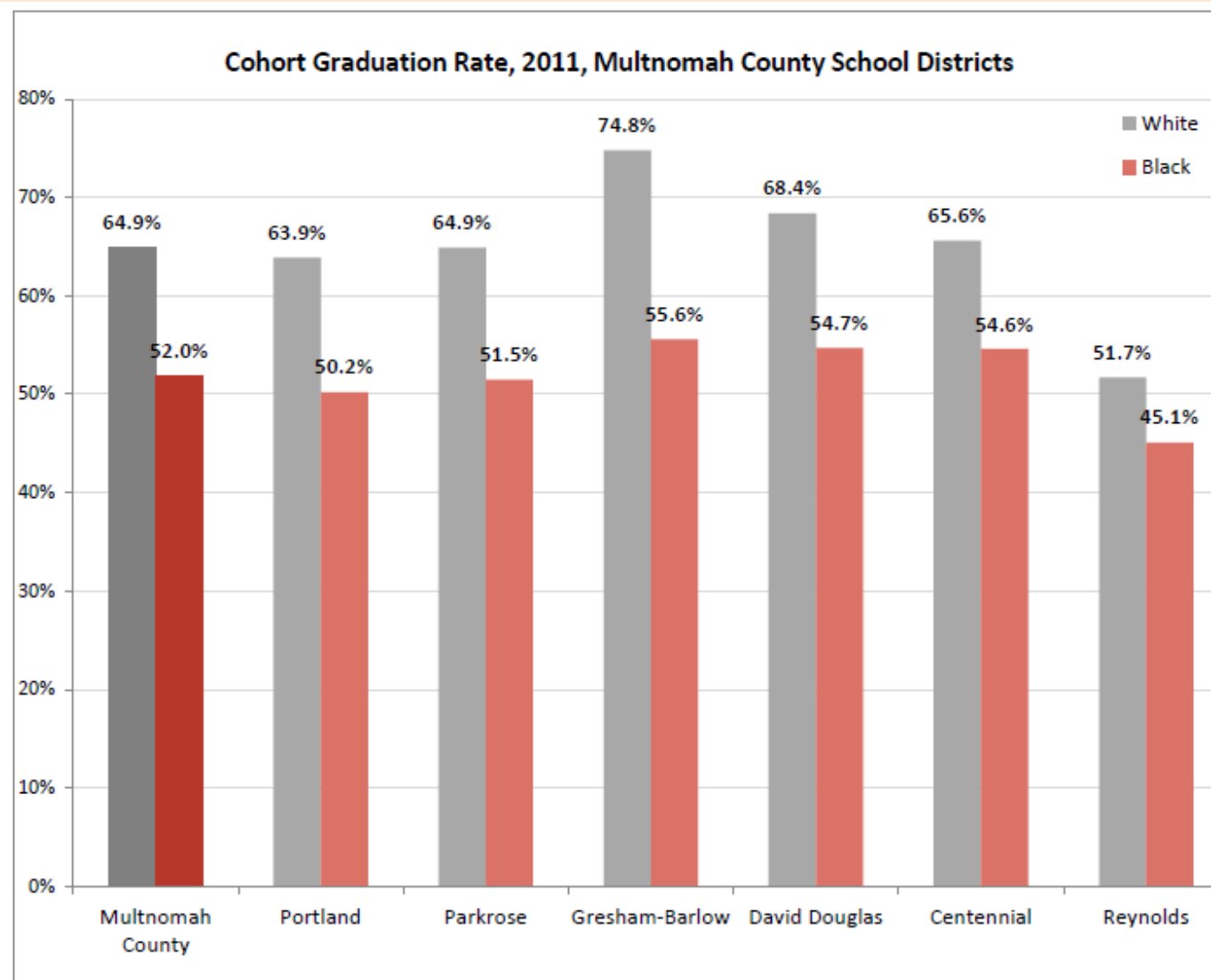
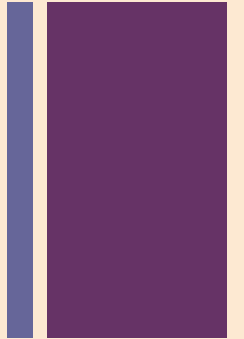
Source: Author's calculations from Oregon Department of Education data tallied by Pat Burk.

Mathematics Scores, Multnomah County, 2008
(% who meet/exceed adequacy)





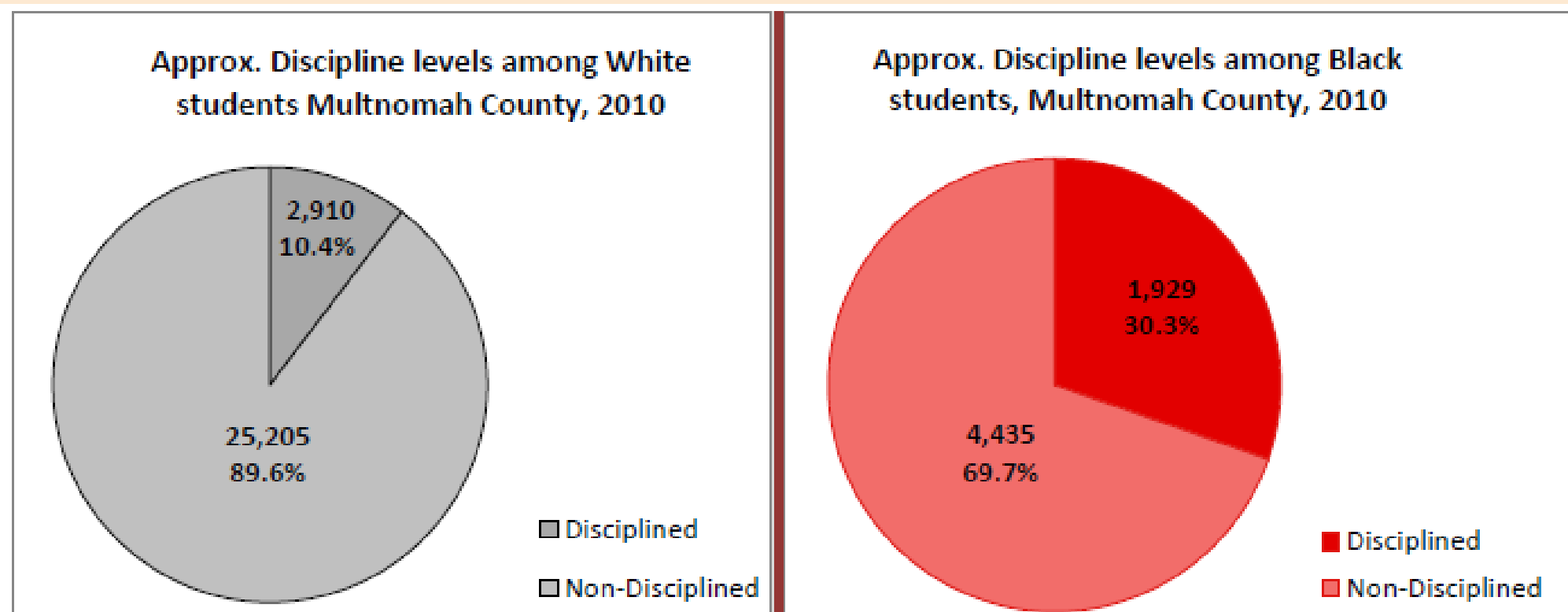
Education: High School Graduation



Source: Curry-Stevens' calculations of Oregon Department of Education's data on the Cohort Graduation Rate.



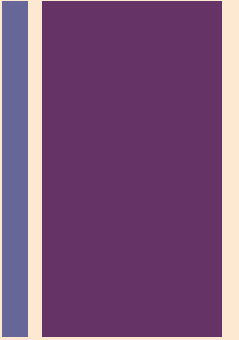
Education: Discipline Disparities



Source: Adapted from Multnomah County Commission on Children, Families and Communities, 2012.⁹² Levels have been adjusted by using approximate values for the number of discipline incidents per student who faces discipline.



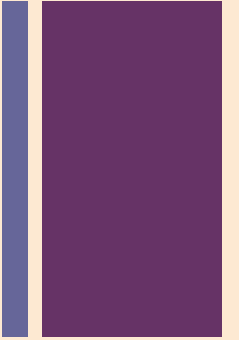
Child Welfare & Education: Policy Recommendations:



- Recruit African American foster and adoptive homes by implementing targeted recruitment and support strategies. Expand racially and culturally diverse pool of relative and non-relative foster and adoptive resources.
- Enhance equity through the adoption of specific practices such as community partnerships, family group decision-making and structured decision-making that can minimize bias where discretion exists.
- When the County reauthorizes its Schools Uniting Neighborhoods contracts and grant allocations, it prioritize investments in African-American CBOs who can work in schools with high Suspension/Expulsion track records to decrease that rate and decrease the prison pipeline.
- When SUN is making allocations, in addition to the Poverty Index, the County should apply an equity index that looks at the Racial Achievement Gap to determine where resources are invested.
- Have SUN Linkages program invests in strategic partnerships with more organizations that serve young African-American children in the region to provide training and resources for families and caregivers, such as foster parents and culturally specific Parent Coordinators.



Child Welfare & Education : Policy Recommendations Cont'd.



- The Early Learning HUB should invest in a Community Education Worker model that builds on the existing Community Health worker model and contracts with culturally specific organization to work with families with children 0-6.
- SUN schools consider partnership with Alternative and/or Charter schools that are serving a majority of underrepresented students.
- Fund an update to the report *Disproportionate Discipline Data* released in 2012.

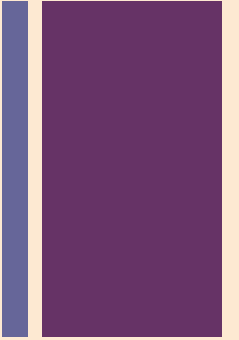


Health

**Ty Schwoeffermann: Health Equity Coordinator,
Urban League of Portland**



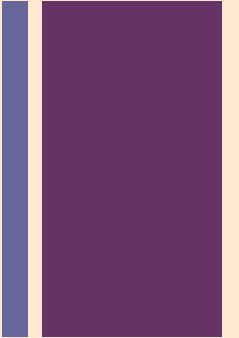
Health: Serious Outcomes Disparities



- From Report: *Health is determined not only by genes, personal behaviors, and access to medical technology, but by social and economic factors that significantly impact the individual. What are called “upstream” factors—jobs and wages, safe and healthy housing, food security, stress caused by racism, and neighborhood environmental quality—have real consequences for chronic disease and mental health. Current research demonstrates that nutrition, stress, and other social factors affect people of color from the womb with negative impacts that are difficult to overcome with behavioral and medical approaches. These social determinants are at the root of health disparities—preventable and avoidable differences in the health of racial minorities.*
- **Multnomah County Health Equity Initiative identified immediate intervention needs:**
 - Homicide mortality
 - Death from diabetes
 - Gonorrhea incidence



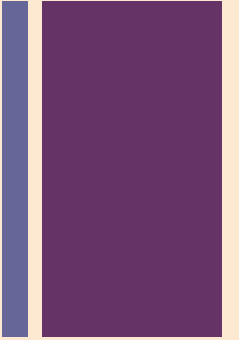
Existing Health Threats



- Health outcome disparities for African Americans in Multnomah County are severe for some indicators. African Americans have the highest rate of homicide mortality among all racial groups—a rate more than six times higher for African Americans than for Whites.
- In Multnomah County, African Americans are more than twice as likely as Whites to die of diabetes. This fits with national trends showing African Americans are diagnosed with diabetes at double the rate of Whites. Diabetes is associated with an increased risk for a number of serious, sometimes life-threatening complications. In general, African Americans are more likely to experience these complications: African Americans are almost 50% more likely to develop diabetic retinopathy (blindness) as Whites and almost three times as likely to suffer from lower-limb amputations.
- STD's, particularly gonorrhea remain a preventable disease that is chronic in African Americans.



In Multnomah County there are two other significant disparities:



■ **Low Birth Rates for African American Children:**

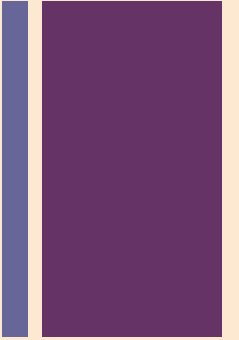
- In Multnomah county, African American mothers are almost twice more likely than Whites to give birth to low birth weight (LBW) babies.

■ **And access to Health Insurance:**

- With the Affordable Care Act there is a chance to ensure that African Americans with pre-existing conditions can have access to health insurance.
- For local children, it is noted that African-American children are not signed up for Healthy Kids. Black children represent 6.5% of poor children in Oregon, but only 4% of those covered under Healthy Kids.



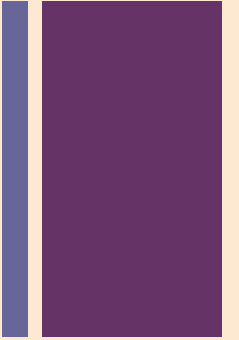
Health: Policy Recommendations



- Drill down to County & State service delivery, to underline gaps in the model.
- Work with the Oregon Health Authority on more streamlined service delivery to African Americans, particularly for HIV/STD programs and Maternal Child Health; to best coordinate with Oregon Health Authority's Public Health Division generally.
- Utilize Community Health Workers and create strategies for culturally specific Community Health Workers, doulas (traditional childbirth attendants), and chronic disease self-management programs for those with chronic diseases in community and county clinical settings.
- Increase County funding and support for community based, culturally specific community health workers to provide education and access to screening and treatment for sexually transmitted diseases, such as gonorrhea, chlamydia, and HIV.



Health: Policy Recommendations, Cont'd.



- Name racism as an underlining contributor to chronic disease.
- Continued, but increased support, County programs that have dedicated outcomes to ensuring the health of African Americans such as the Healthy Birth Initiative and the Health Equity Initiative.
- Reinforce policies that restrict disproportionate exposure to, and marketing of, tobacco products and poor food choices in low income communities and African American neighborhoods.
- Be a well rounded government that looks outside of just health programs and support housing and neighborhood stability for African American and black households, including supporting access to healthy housing, supporting environmental justice-oriented work to reduce disproportionate exposure to hazards, ensuring access to transit, and to parks and recreation opportunities.

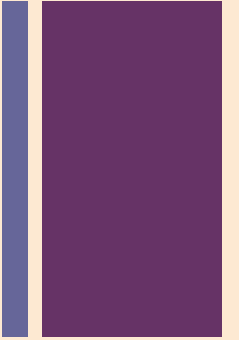


Criminal Justice

Midge Purcell: Director of Policy & Advocacy, Urban League of Portland



Overrepresentation in the System



- African-Americans have long been active on issues of bias in criminal justice, but the issue was raised to the level of statewide attention in the 1994 Supreme Court of Oregon's audit of racial bias. It concluded that "people of color are more likely to be arrested, charged, convicted and incarcerated, and less likely to be released on bail or put on probation."
- There is a lengthy history of policing practices in Multnomah County that treat people differently by race. Recently, Portland's controversial "drug-free zones" were used from 1992-1997 to ban people from neighborhoods based on suspicion—not conviction—of drug possession or sale. The exclusions were most likely to be enforced against African-Americans, representing nearly two-thirds of all violations and exclusions. In contrast, overwhelmingly White methamphetamine-related arrestees were rarely excluded. Due to this racial bias, the practice was terminated.



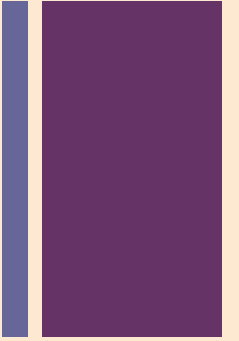
The County System



- A 2000 analysis of patterns of arrest, prosecution, sentencing and supervision in Multnomah County revealed over-representation of racial/ethnic minorities permeated most crime categories. Disparities exist at each stage of the criminal justice system: arrest, prosecution, verdicts, and sentencing.
- African Americans had the highest degree of over-representation in arrests for drug crimes, but were also disproportionately represented in other categories as well. While African Americans made up less than ten percent of the population of Multnomah County, they accounted for 21.7% of the Justice department's active adult caseload. At that time, African Americans in the County were over three times more likely to be represented in the Justice system than they were represented in the population as a whole.
- In addition, disparity existed in terms of supervision. In Multnomah County in 2009, Black, non-Hispanic adults made up 5.2% of the population and 24.11% of the population under supervision; White, non-Hispanic adults made up 73.35% of the population and 65.47% of the population under supervision. Additionally, African Americans were assessed at high risk to re-offend more often than Whites. Whites were more often assessed at limited risk to re-offend than other groups.



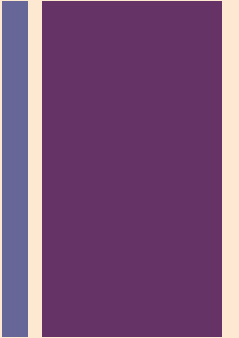
Criminal Justice: Adults



- Black adults make up 27% of the 'under supervision' population of Multnomah County, but only 5% of the population
- More likely to be policed, charged, and sentenced.



Criminal Justice: Juveniles and Measure 11

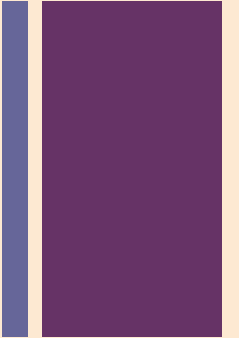


- Youth are over-represented in the juvenile justice system and more likely to be given custodial sentences.

- Youth charged under Measure 11 enter the adult system
 - African-Americans are 11% of the youth population, but 45% of the Measure 11 indictments
 - But Black youth are less likely to be convicted



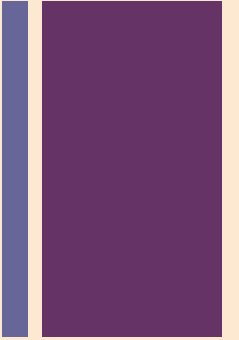
Criminal Justice: Policy Recommendations



- Prevent New Mandatory Minimum Sentences, which have a disproportionate impact on African Americans and other people of color.
- Remove the barriers to successful community re-entry faced by formerly incarcerated people. Strengthen investments in prison programs that reduce recidivism: programs that actually help prisoners succeed when they return to their communities, such as education, job training, mental health, and family support services. Release state prisoners back to the communities where they have the strongest support systems, rather than the county where they were convicted.
- Support legislation and programs that enable people to successfully transition from prison to the community. Enact antidiscrimination legislation that prevents employers from dismissing job applicants based solely on arrest and conviction history.
- Champion the County's decision to "ban the box" from its applications.
- Expand programs like "Project Clean Slate," which helps to navigate barriers by providing assistance with driver's licenses, job training, etc.



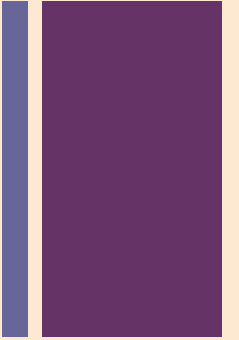
Criminal Justice: Policy Recommendations Cont'd.



- Invest in targeted, culturally specific and responsive programs, services and models that achieve measurable outcomes for African Americans—high-risk African American offenders specifically.
- Determine how African Americans focused and other culturally-specific organizations can best do business with the County, access county resources and be strong advocates and partners for systemically addressing disproportionality and over-representation in social services systems—criminal justice in particular (youth and adult).
- Name Racial Profiling as a tool to mark out African American citizens, and to namely label them as threats rather than citizens within the County.



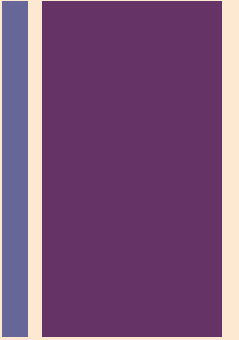
Our Other Asks Today: Opportunities with Multnomah County Government



- Continue to reinforce the importance of MWESB firms, and their ability to contract with the County as a business, and also within the County as small businesses.
- Develop and communicate strategies for hiring senior leaders and manager who are African American.
- Recognize and articulate County commitment to racial equity—through a policy or framework.
- Support National League of Cities “Portland Black Male Achievement” Initiative to improve outcomes for Black men and boys in our community.



Conclusive Points & Considerations



- Read the report in its entirety.
- Consider jurisdictional partnerships.
- Utilize the Budget as the best way to address disparities.
- Be innovative in government design by operating in ways that are efficient and prevent bureaucracy directly connecting with African American constituents.



THANK YOU!

