



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Contact: Peri Stone-Palmquist, 734-730-4347

PRESS RELEASE

Students Organize Zero Tolerance “Game of Life” Demonstration

JACKSON AND YPSILANTI, MICHIGAN - Students from Ypsilanti and Jackson are organizing two events to engage school administrators, educators and community members around school discipline through a life size and interactive Game of Life board game. The Zero Tolerance “Game of Life” demonstration is in Jackson on October 6th and in Ypsilanti on October 7th are part of the 6th Annual National Week of Action Against School Pushout, which highlights the school push-out crisis in our nation’s schools. Students are part of Student Advocacy Center’s Youth Action Michigan program, which meets weekly at Ypsilanti Community High School and T.A. Wilson Academy in Jackson.

The life-size board game, which includes a jail cell, costumes and stations such as a board room and restorative circle, show how easily students are removed from school, and the subsequent barriers they face to receiving an education.

“The game of life to us is more than a game,” said Givante Henderson, a senior at T.A. Wilson Academy in Jackson. “It’s like a horror show of what we go through in school after being suspended. It’s time for a change. The students can’t grow if they are not in school. Suspending me is ending me!”

Students, teachers, administrators and community members are invited to attend at the Jackson Public Library from 6-8 p.m. Tuesday, October 6 and at the Ypsilanti Community Middle School from 3:30-5:30 p.m. Wednesday, October 7th to hear the stories that explore the ways school discipline has impacted students around the state. These events will provide the opportunity to learn more about the ways school discipline has impacted students around the state and as well as ways that we can improve our schools.

“Kids need to be in school. When kids are out of school they're more likely to get in trouble with the law,” said Youth Action Michigan member, DaQuann Harrison. “When allowed to stay in school there is a better chance of success for everyone.”

Nationally, the Dignity in Schools Campaign are calling on their governments, districts and schools to:

- Use positive interventions instead of suspensions, expulsions and arrests, and end racial disparities in discipline.
- Shift funding from school police to counselors and positive discipline.
- Fully implement positive alternatives such as Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports, and Restorative Practices.
- Engage students and parents in decision-making about discipline policies.

Next week’s Game of Life demonstrations are local versions of a statewide demonstration in June in Lansing, intended to urge legislators to revise the state’s discipline code, one of the harshest and overly broad in the country. On June 10, 2015, students from Ypsilanti, Detroit and Jackson, donning



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“Education is the Key” T-shirts, staged a “Zero Tolerance Game of Life” demonstration on the Capitol Lawn. Media coverage, including a video, can be found here: <http://on.freep.com/1JG91ai> .

SAC’s Youth Action Michigan is a student-led, youth organizing, social justice initiative that builds self and collective power to create positive change in schools and communities with the support of caring adult allies. To learn more, see: <http://www.studentadvocacycenter.org/programs/youthactionmichigan>.



WHAT: *Zero Tolerance “Game of Life” Demonstration*
WHEN: *Tuesday, October 6th from 6:00p.m. to 8:00p.m*
WHERE: *Jackson District Library, 244 Michigan Ave. Jackson, MI 49201*

And

WHAT: *Zero Tolerance “Game of Life” Demonstration*
WHEN: *Wednesday, October 7th from 3:30p.m. to 5:00p.m*
WHERE: *Ypsilanti Community Middle School, 235 Spencer Ln. Ypsilanti, MI 48198*

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