

Hi, my name is Mina. I'm a 2nd year Special Education Teacher working in the Minneapolis Public School district as a teacher and case manager in a classroom for students with developmental disabilities and Autism at Henry High School in North Minneapolis. My first year at Henry High was spent in an EBD classroom. For those unfamiliar with the term, EBD is an acronym for students labeled with emotional behavioral disorders. An EBD label has historically and disproportionately affected and negatively impacted Black and Brown students and has also perpetuated the cycle that is School to Prison- Pipeline. I don't have time to speak on all that I have ALREADY witnessed and experienced during my short time as an educator , but my biggest takeaway is that punitive frameworks do not work, and rely on only punishment to maintain order. Punishment, whether it's suspension or expulsion, is not an effective framework in schools– it's harmful to a child's mental, emotional, and social development. It affects their self-esteem and their relationships with others, specifically with adults. Punitive frameworks do not foster reflection, growth, or change in behavior, and I believe that by eliminating punitive discipline frameworks in K-3 grades– our young people, specifically, our young students of color, we can improve lifelong outcomes and take daily action to create a world and space for ALL of our students to thrive in.