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**HB995/SB972 – Corporal Punishment Limits**

**The problem:**

* Corporal punishment is an ineffective and harmful tool for addressing unwanted behavior, particularly for students with disabilities
* Corporal punishment is banned for students with IEP’s and 504 plans unless their parent opts them in, but not all students with disabilities have an IEP or 504 plan
  + This is especially true for younger students who may not have been identified or evaluated for a disability
  + Not all students with disabilities need and IEP or 504 plan
  + Some students with disabilities fall through the cracks in Tennessee schools

**The details:**

* Research on corporal punishment shows that it **does not result in long-lasting positive changes in behavior**
  + Corporal punishment can exacerbate and entrench problem behavior
  + Students who have received corporal punishment feel less connection to the school and with peers, which is predictive of problem behavior and increased likelihood of dropping out
  + **Students with disabilities** showed developmental regressions, increased self-injurious behavior and increased violent outburst after being subjected to corporal punishment
* Research shows that students receiving corporal punishment have **worse academic outcomes**
  + States that used corporal punishment the most saw their students test scores increase the least over a 14-year study span
  + Students subject to corporal punishment achieve lower high school GPA’s than similar students who received other types of consequences
* Research shows that students who received corporal punishment have **higher rates of mental health conditions**
  + Students subject to corporal punishment have higher rates of depression and anxiety and are more likely to engage in physical violence and anti-social behavior as adults
* **Students with disabilities are more likely than students without disabilities** to be subject to corporal punishment
  + In 2020-21, Tennessee students with disabilities made up 13% of the state’s student body but made up 19% of Tennessee students who received corporal punishment

**The solution:**

* Ensure that parents understand the circumstances of a student’s behavior, the impacts of corporal punishment and that they approve of its use *prior* to administration
* Ensure that schools are attempting evidence-based behavioral interventions *prior* to the use of corporal punishment
* Ensure that students do not have undiagnosed disabilities AND provide parents with the opportunity to consent with this full knowledge *prior* to the use of corporal punishment