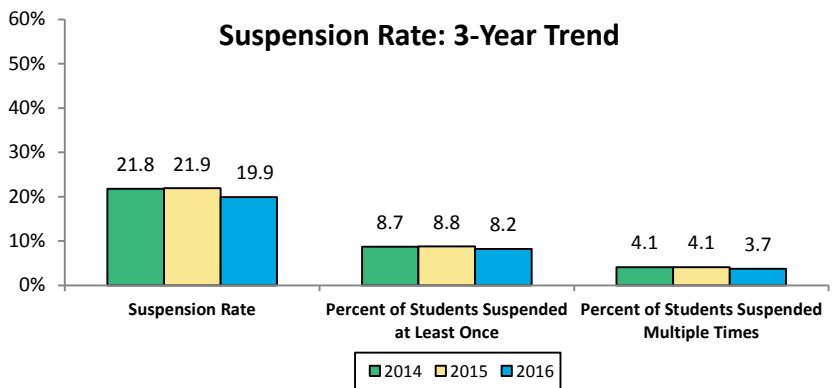
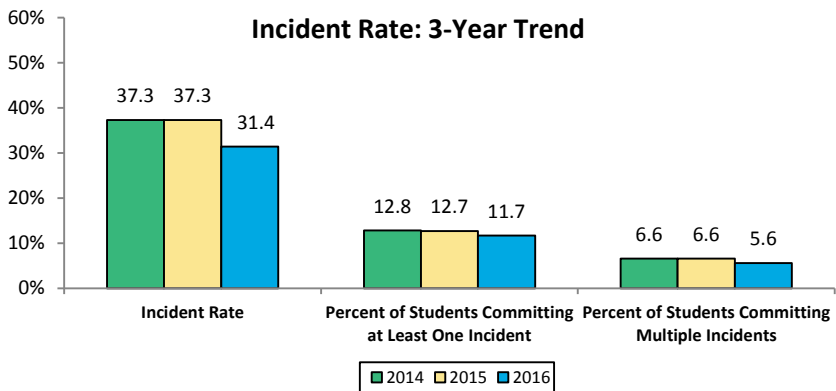
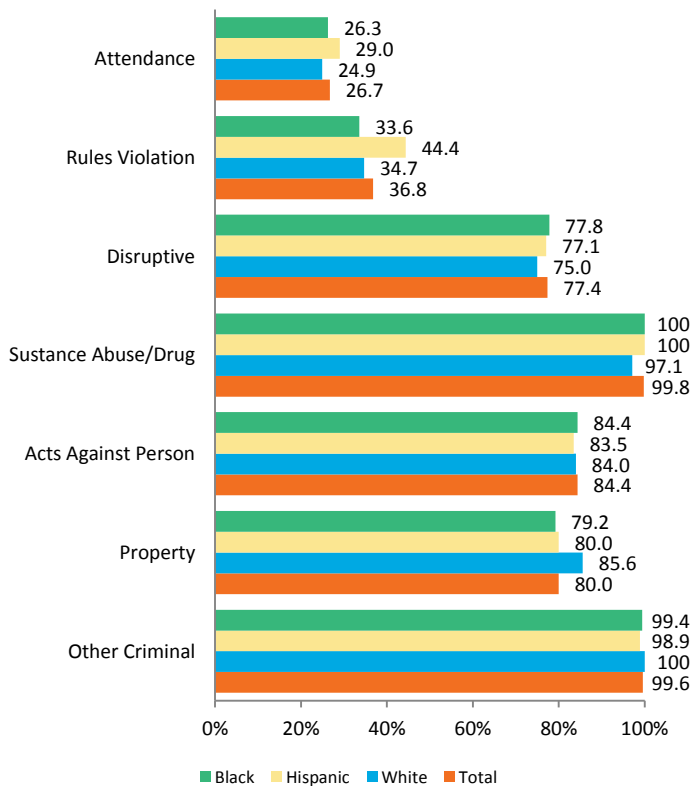


From 2013-14 to 2015-16,
the **Incident Rate** decreased by
6 percentage points
and the **Suspension Rate** decreased by
2 Percentage points

- The Incident Rate decreased from 37% to 31% between 2013-14 and 2015-16. The percent of students committing incidents decreased from 13% to 12% in the same time period, with the percent of students committing multiple incidents decreasing from 7% to 6%.
- The Suspension Rate decreased from 22% to 20% between 2013-14 and 2015-16. The percent of students suspended in the same time period decreased from 9% to 8%. The percent of students suspended multiple times remained stable at around 4%.



Incidents Resulting in Suspensions by Race/Ethnicity



- The largest drop in incidents occurred at the middle school level, which moved from a 71% incident rate in 2013-14 (with 43,784 incidents) to a 57% incident rate in 2015-16 (with 34,554 incidents).
- The majority of suspensions (87%) did not remove students from an academic environment (In-school 67%, AES 20%, and External 13%).
- A greater percent of Black students committed incidents (18%) and received suspensions (13%) than did Hispanic (8% and 6%) and White (7% and 4%) students.
- Students from different ethnic groups were suspended at similar rates for the same incident.

Additional Resources


- Detailed school-by-school results:
<http://www.broward.k12.fl.us/sar/Releases.htm>
- Information on intervention programs:
<http://www.browardprevention.org>

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA

**DANIEL GOHL
CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER**

DATE: November 7, 2016

TO: All Principals

FROM: Daniel F. Gohl 
Chief Academic Officer

VIA: Valerie S. Wanza, Ph.D.
Chief School Performance & Accountability Officer

SUBJECT: **Incidents and Suspensions in Broward County Public Schools, 2013-14 through 2015-16**

Incident and suspension rates decreased over the three year period between 2013-14 and 2015-16. The incident rate decreased by six percentage points (from 37% to 31%), and suspension rate decreased by two percentage points (from 22% to 20%). The percent of students committing incidents and receiving suspensions both decreased by one percentage point.

The incident rate decreased for each of the three major racial/ethnic groups over the three-year period, with the overall pattern remaining the same. Black students registered the greatest incident rate (54%; down from 62% in 2013-14) with 18% committing at least one incident (down from 19% in 2013-14). Hispanic students followed, with an incident rate of 19% (down from 23% in 2013-14), with 8% of Hispanic students committing at least one incident. The incident rate for White students was 15% (down from 20% in 2013-14), with 7% of all White students committing an incident.

This report presents Districtwide incident and suspension data overall and by school level. Incidents are further broken out into categories that appear on the discipline matrix in order to provide information to support schools in selecting interventions and creating positive behavior plans.

Questions regarding this report should be addressed to **Richard Baum, Director of Student Assessment & Research at 754-321-2500**. This report may also be accessed on the Student Assessment & Research website at: <http://www.broward.k12.fl.us/sar/index.htm>.

VSW/DG/RGB/SLS/JAC:rs
Attachments

cc: School Board Members
Senior Leadership Team
Directors, Office of School Performance & Accountability
Jody Perry, Director, Charter Schools Support



Research Brief

BEHAVIOR INCIDENTS AND SUSPENSIONS IN BROWARD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS, 2013-14 THROUGH 2015-16

This brief summarizes student behavioral incident and suspension data in Broward County Public Schools (BCPS) for the three school year period from 2013-14 to 2015-16 at both non-charter and charter schools.

BACKGROUND

The District's Code of Student Conduct Policy (School Board Policy 5.8) provides policies, rules, and laws designed to create a positive school culture and safe environment that is conducive to learning. Behavioral incidents occur when a student's actions are not in accordance with the District's Code of Student Conduct. The majority of disciplinary issues are expected to be addressed by teachers. If the issue is not resolved at the classroom level, it then gets referred to the school's Collaborative Problem Solving Team for a multi-tiered intervention to be developed and monitored (School Board of Broward County, 2013a).

Some incidents are severe enough to warrant mandatory disciplinary action. Consequences to incidents are intended to match the severity of the misbehavior. Major violations and repeat offences are met with stronger consequences. In all circumstances, exclusion from school is reserved for situations in which all other disciplinary means have been exhausted.

The District's Code of Student Conduct contains a discipline matrix which offers guidelines for assigning consequences to violations of school board policies. In school year 2013-14, Policy 6005 afforded principals more flexibility, offering the matrix as a guideline for assigning consequences, but allowing principals to use their own discretion to accommodate any mitigating or aggravating circumstances (Broward County Public Schools, 2013b).

I. METHOD

Incident and suspension data for both traditional and charter schools were retrieved from the District's data warehouse for the past three school years (2013-14, 2014-15, and 2015-16). Data are presented overall as well as by school level (elementary, middle, high, and center) and by racial group. Incidents are further broken out into categories that appear on the discipline matrix (attendance, rules violation, disruptive, substance abuse/drugs, acts against persons, property,

bus, and other criminal). Suspensions are further classified into three categories: internal suspension, external suspension, and alternative to external suspension (AES).

II. DEFINITIONS AND FORMULAS

- **Incident Rate** is the rate of incidents occurring at schools and is calculated by dividing the total number of incidents by the total number of students enrolled in school.
- **Percent of Students Committing at Least One Incident** is calculated by taking the number of students who have committed at least one incident and dividing it by the total number of students enrolled in school.
- **Percent of Students Committing Multiple Incidents** is calculated by dividing the number of students with more than one incident by the total number of students enrolled in school.
- **Change (increase/decrease) in Incident Rate** is calculated by subtracting the initial incident rate from the new incident rate and then dividing by the initial incident rate.
- **Suspension Rate** is the overall rate of suspensions for schools and is calculated by dividing the total number of suspensions by the total number of students enrolled in school.
- **Percent of Students Suspended** is calculated by dividing the number of students receiving at least one suspension by the total number of students enrolled in school.
- **Percent of Students with Multiple Suspensions** is calculated by dividing the number of students that have received more than one suspension by the total number of students enrolled in school.
- **Suspension Rate by Suspension Type** is the rate at which a specific type of suspension (internal, external, or AES) occurs at schools and is calculated by dividing the number of suspensions of a specific type by the total number of students enrolled in school.
- **Internal Suspension** is a suspension where the student remains on campus but is not allowed to attend regularly scheduled classes for a determined period of time.
- **External Suspension** is a suspension where the student is not allowed to attend classes on any BCPS campus for a determined period of time.
- **AES** is a suspension where the child is removed from their own school campus but attends another BCPS site for a determined period of time.
- **Rate of Incidents Resulting in Suspension** shows how often students who commit a specific incident type are suspended for committing that incident and thus is a measure of how equitably suspensions are issued. This rate is calculated by dividing the number of suspensions issued for a specific type of incident by the total number of incidents of that same specific type.
- **Change (increase/decrease) in Suspension Rate** is calculated by subtracting the initial suspension rate from the new suspension rate and then dividing by the initial suspension rate.

III. DISTRICT TOTALS

Incident Rate and Percent of Students with Incidents. The number of incidents in 2015-16 decreased by 14% over the three years (from 100,171 to 86,436). This resulted in a corresponding decrease in the incident rate of 5.9 percentage points (from 37.3% to 31.4%). The percent of students involved in incidents also decreased by 1 percentage point to 11.7%. The percent of students involved in incidents is lower than the incident rate due to some of the students (5.6%) being involved in multiple incidents.

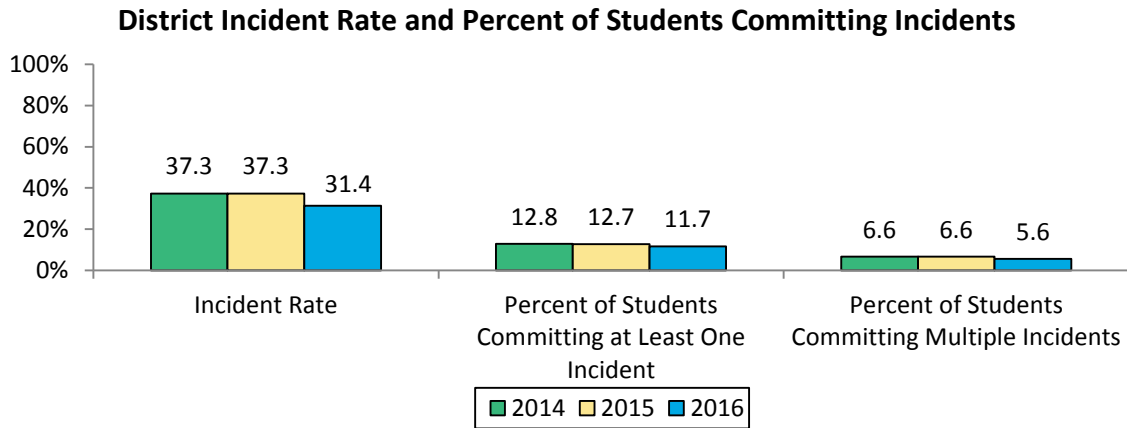


Figure 1. Incident rate and percent of students committing incidents Districtwide for the 2013-14, 2014-15, and 2015-16 school years.

Incidents by Type. Figure 2 shows the percent of students overall who committed specific types of incidents over the past three years. Disruptive incidents were registered by the largest percent of students across the District, followed by attendance, acts against person, and rules violation for the 2015-16 school year. For all three school years, disruptive incidents were the most reported incident type.

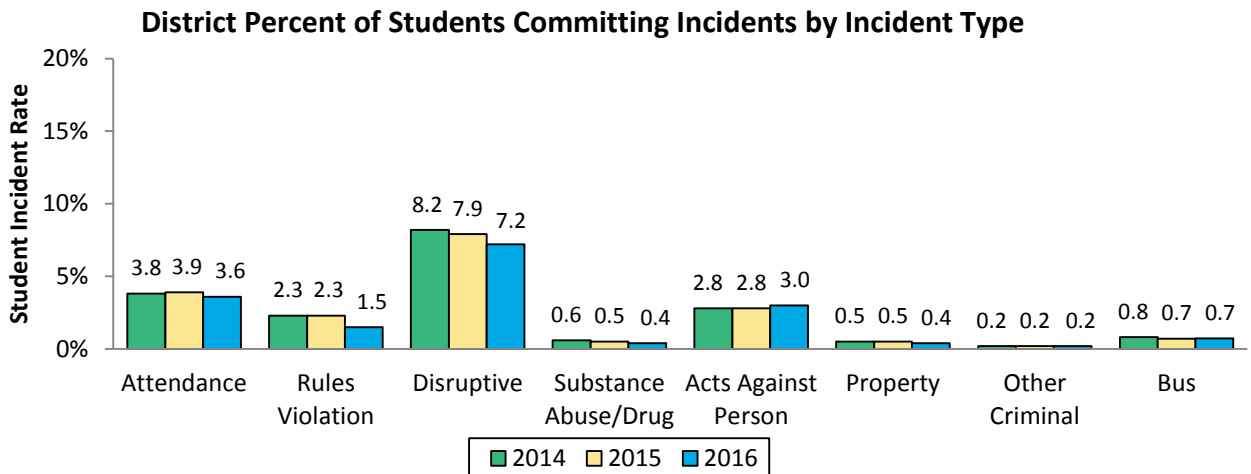


Figure 2. Percent of students with incidents by incident type Districtwide for the 2013-14, 2014-15, and 2015-16 school years.

Suspension Rate and Percent of Students with Suspensions. The suspension rate across the three year period decreased two percentage points (from 21.8% to 19.9%). The corresponding number of suspensions decreased by 6.3% (from 58,536 to 54,876). The percent of students suspended (8.2%) was lower than the suspension rate due to some of the students (3.7%) receiving multiple suspensions.

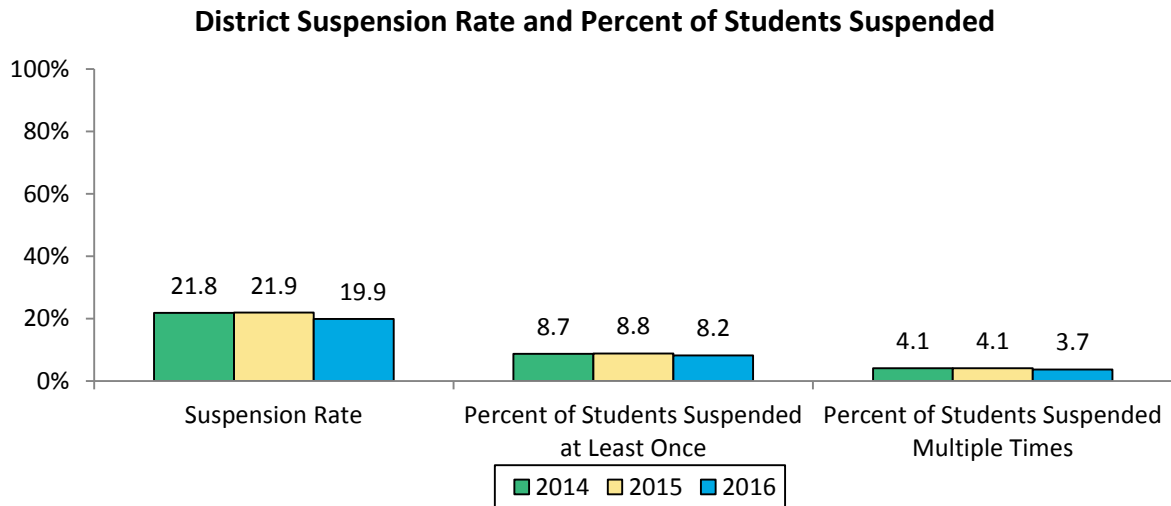


Figure 3. Suspension Rate and percent of students suspended Districtwide for the 2013-14, 2014-15, and 2015-16 school years.

Suspensions by Type. Less than 2% of students received external suspensions during the 2015-16 school year. Internal suspensions were the most common type issued, with 6.4% of students receiving an internal suspension, followed by AES, with 2.4% of students receiving an AES.

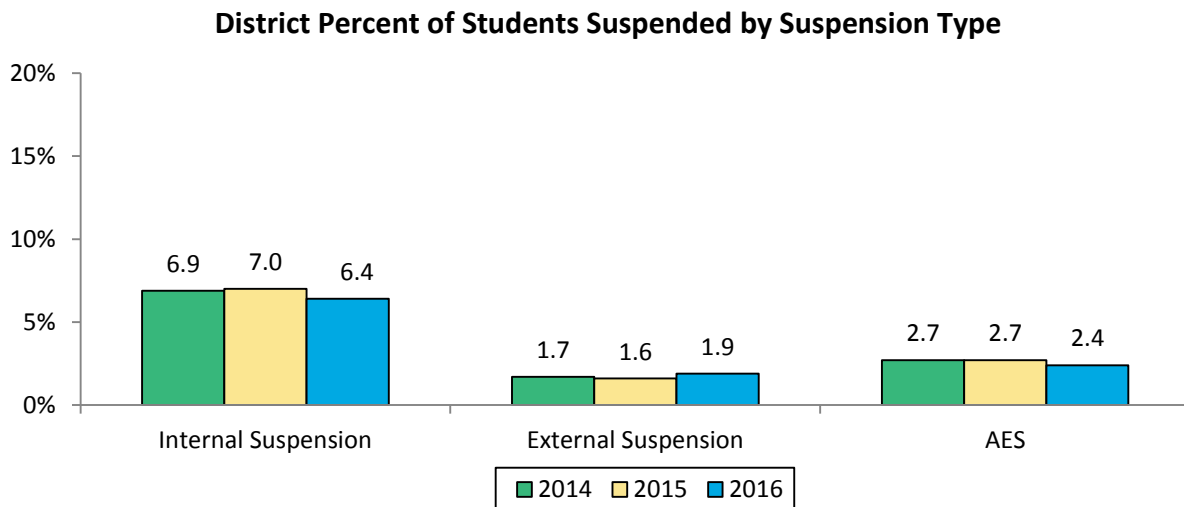


Figure 4. Percent of students receiving specific types of suspensions Districtwide for the 2013-14, 2014-15, and 2015-16 school years.

Distribution of Suspension by Suspension Type

The distribution of suspensions by type remained stable across the three years with students most frequently being issued an internal suspension.

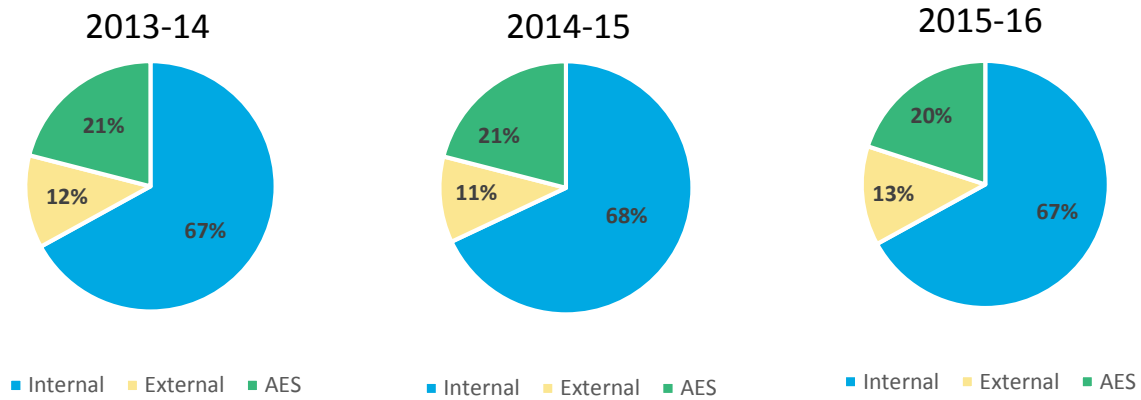


Figure 5. Distribution of suspensions by suspension type for school years 2013-14, 2014-15, and 2015-16.

IV. District Totals by Student Race/Ethnicity

Incident Rate and Percent of Students with Incidents by Race/Ethnicity. Black students registered the highest incident rate for the all three school years, with their incident rate being approximately three times that of Hispanic and White students (Figure 6). The percent of Black students involved in incidents was double that of Hispanic and White students. In all three groups, the incident rate remained relatively stable between 2013-14 and 2014-15 and then dropped between 2014-15 and 2015-16.

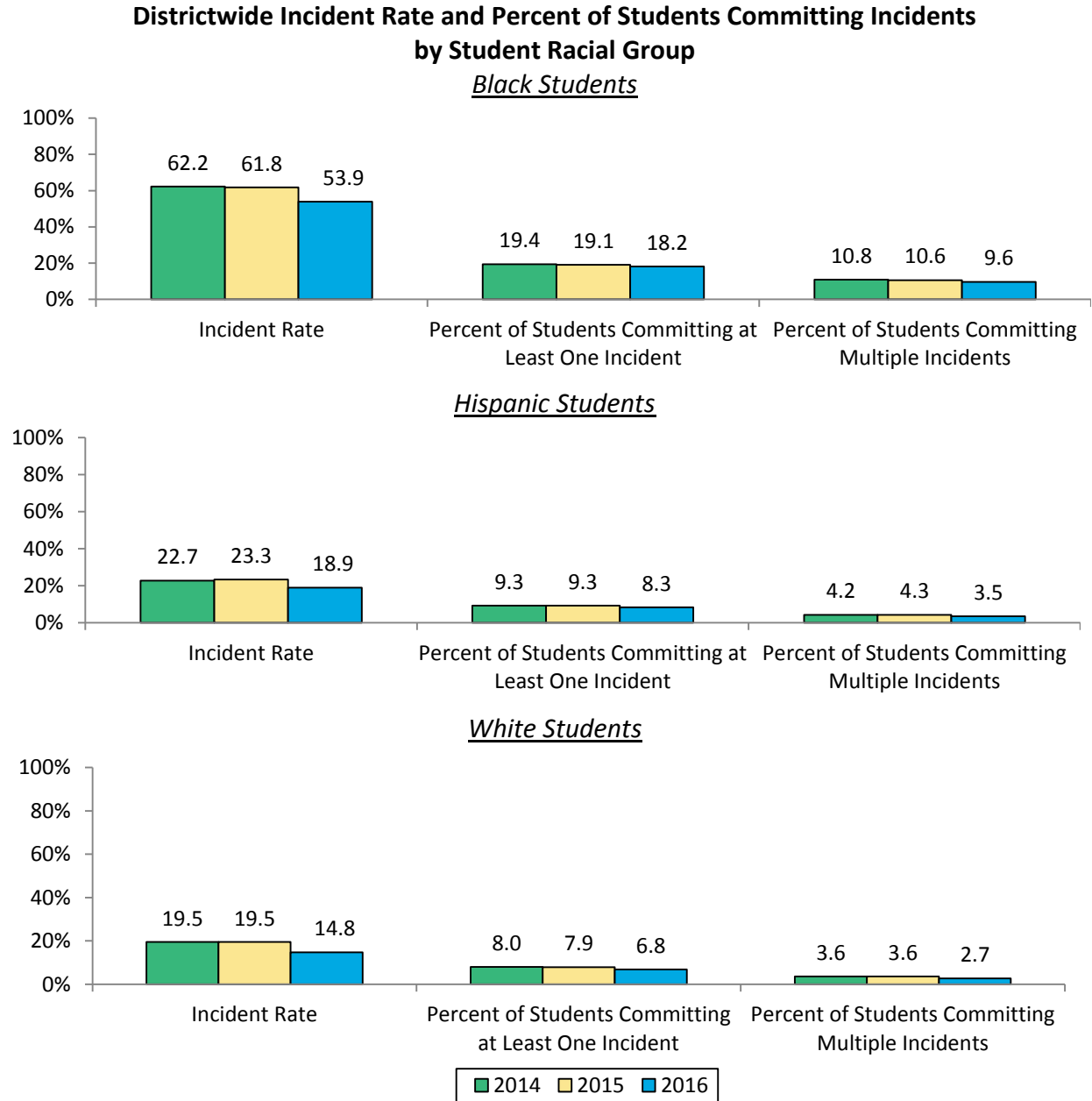


Figure 6. Incident rate and percent of students committing incidents Districtwide by race/ethnicity for the 2013-14, 2014-15, and 2015-16 school years.

Percent of Students Committing Incidents Districtwide by Race/Ethnicity by Incident Type

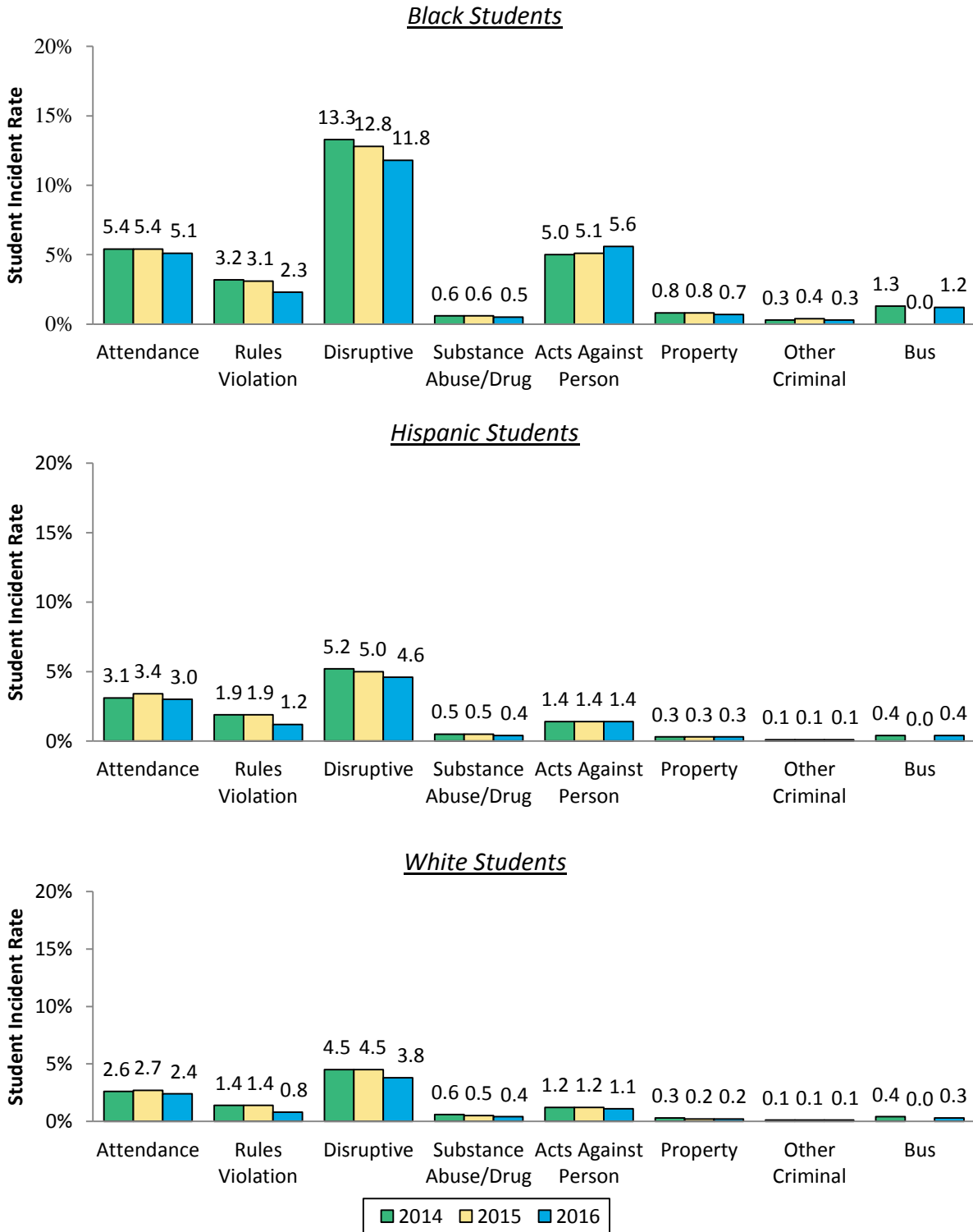


Figure 7. Districtwide percent of students with incidents by incident type by race/ethnicity for the 2013-14, 2014-15, and 2015-16 school years.

Suspension Rate and Percent of Students with Suspensions by Race/Ethnicity. Suspension rates among the District’s three largest racial/ethnic groups are displayed in Figure 8. As with incidents, the suspension rate was higher for Black students compared to Hispanic and White students. During the most recently completed school year, 2015-16, the overall suspension rate for Black students was 13%, compared to 6% and 4% for Hispanic and White students, respectively. This pattern mirrors that of the rate of incidents by racial/ethnic group for the same year (18%, 8%, and 7% for Black, Hispanic, and White students respectively). For all three groups, the suspension rate decreased across the three school years.

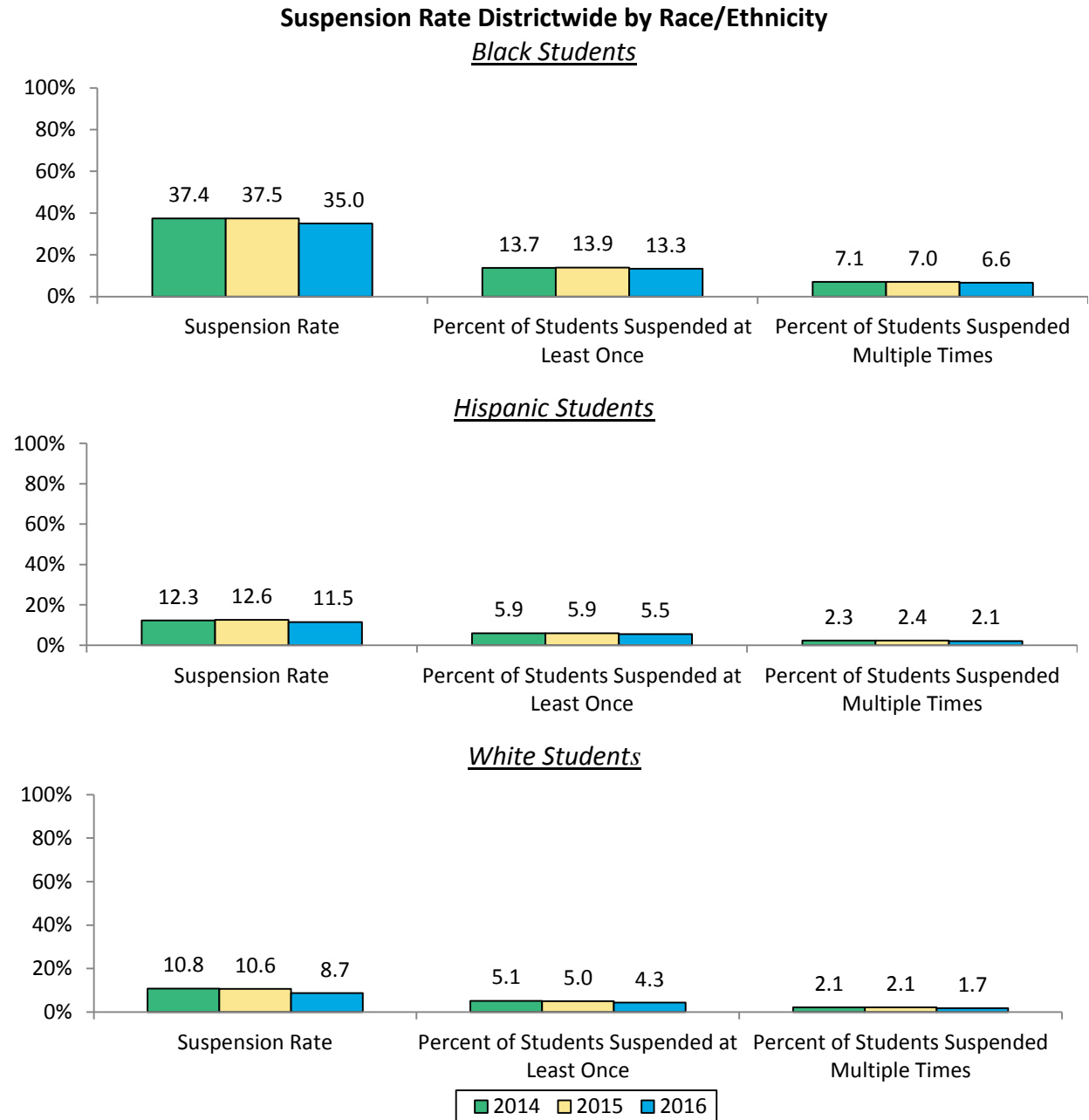


Figure 8. Suspension Rate and percent of students suspended Districtwide by race/ethnicity for the 2013-14, 2014-15, and 2015-16 school years.

Suspensions by Type by Race/Ethnicity. Internal suspensions were the most frequent type of suspension issued and external suspensions were the least frequent type issued. Less than 4% of Black students and 1% of Hispanic and White students were suspended externally during the 2015-16 school year.



Figure 9. Percent students Districtwide with internal, external, and AES suspensions by race/ethnicity for the 2013-14, 2014-15, and 2015-16 school years.

Rate of Incidents Resulting in Suspension. Behavior violations resulted, for the most part, in suspensions at similar rates for all racial/ethnic groups. Black and Hispanic students registered somewhat higher suspension rates than White (3% higher) for substance abuse/drugs. However, Black and Hispanic students registered lower suspension rates (7% & 6% lower) than White students for property incidents. The largest discrepancy occurred for rules violations. The suspension rate for Hispanic students was 11% higher than for Black students and 10% higher than for White students for this incident type.

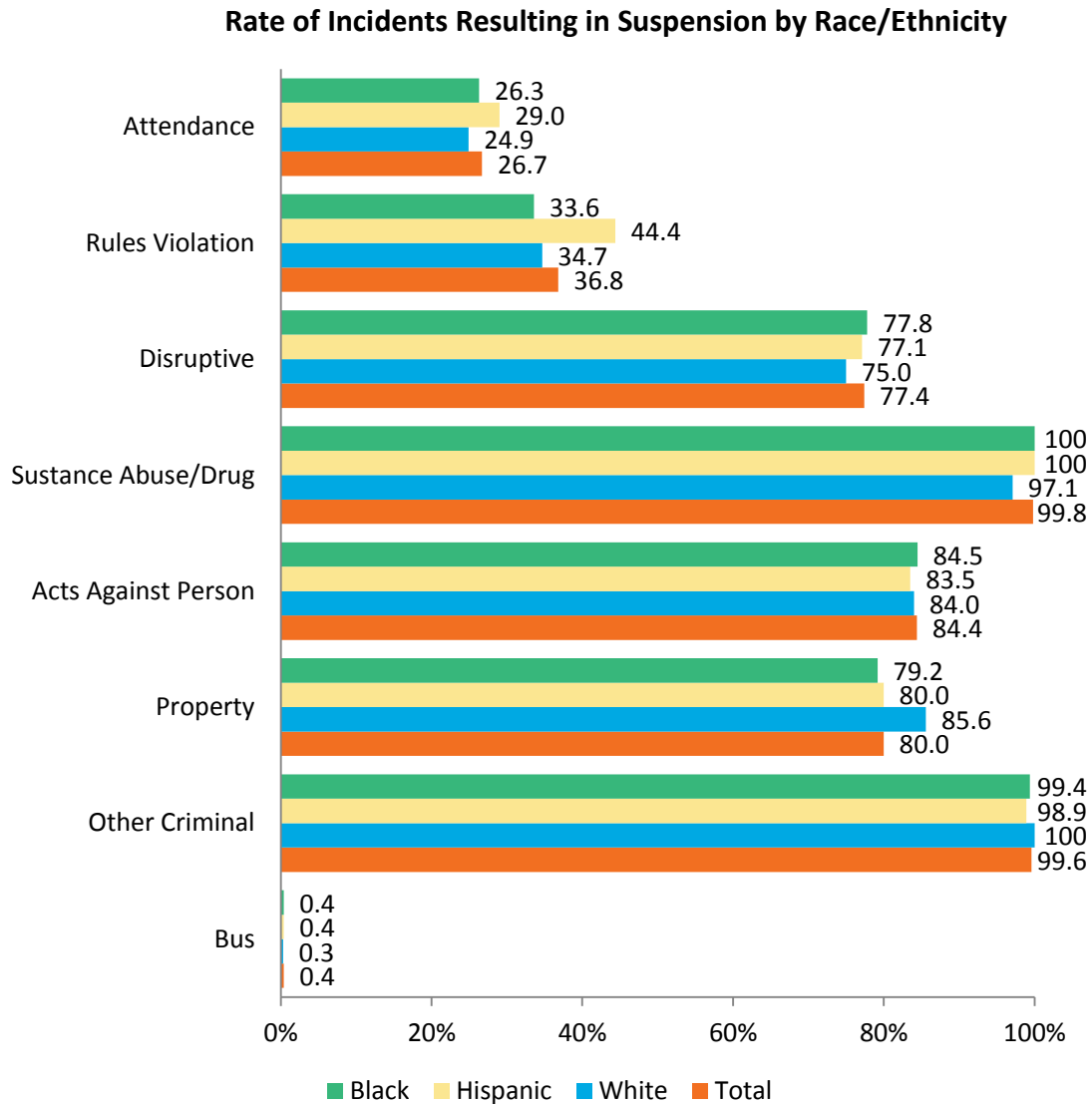


Figure 10. Rate of incidents resulting in a suspension by race/ethnicity by specific incident type for the 2015-16 school year.

V. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TOTALS

Incident Rate and Percent of Students Committing Incidents.

The incident rate and percent of students committing incidents at elementary schools for the 2013-14 through the 2015-16 school years are displayed in Figures 11 and 12. Over the three-year period, the number and rate of incidents decreased at elementary schools from 18,933 incidents (15.4% incident rate) in 2013-14 to 15,372 incidents (12.1% incident rate) in 2015-16. The percent of students committing incidents in this time period also went down (from 5.3% to 4.7%) in elementary schools. Less than 3% of elementary school students committed multiple offences for all three school years. Disruptive incidents were the most prevalent, with 3.4% of all elementary school students registering at least one disruptive incident in the 2015-16 school year. See also Appendices A1 and A2.

Suspension Rate and Percent of Students with Suspensions.

Suspension rates and the percent of students suspended are displayed in Figures 13 and 14. As with incidents, the suspension rate declined across the three years from 5.7% in 2013-14 to 4.9% in 2015-16. The rates for all types of suspensions were stable. During the most recently completed school year, 2015-16, the percent of students receiving at least one suspension of any type (internal, external, or AES) was 2.0%. Less than 1% of all elementary school students received an external suspension during the 2015-16 school year. About 1% of all elementary students were suspended multiple times (See also Appendix C).

Figure 11. Elementary School Incident Rate and Percent of Students Committing Incidents

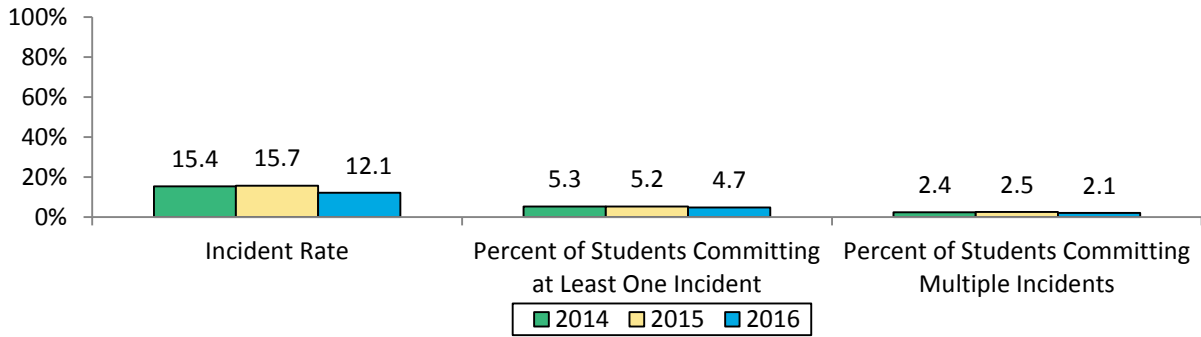


Figure 12. Elementary School Percent of Students Committing Incidents by Incident Type

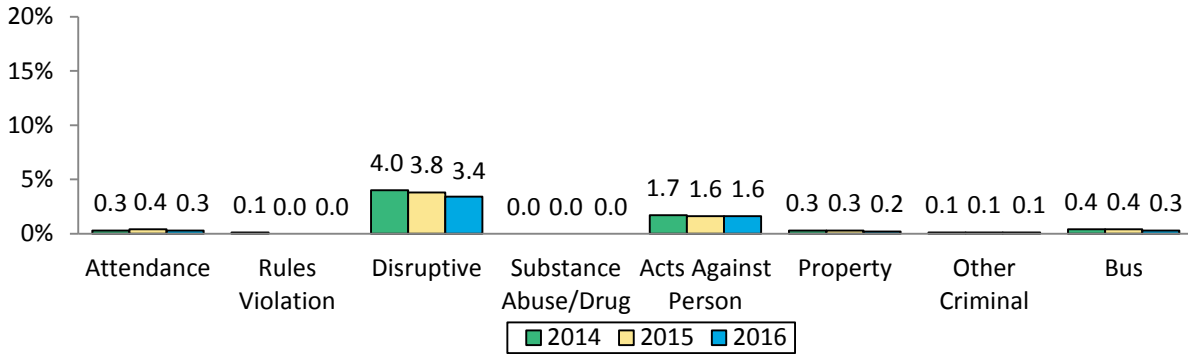


Figure 13. Elementary School Suspension Rate and Percent of Students Suspended

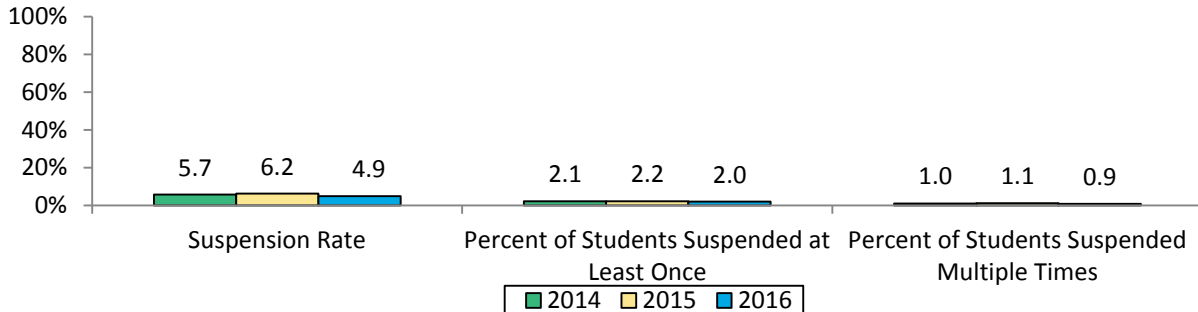
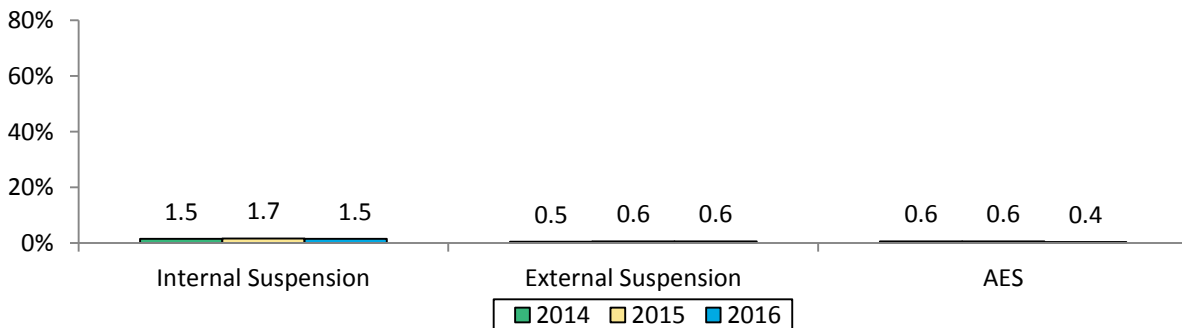


Figure 14. Elementary School Suspension Rate by Suspension Type



Figures 11, 12, 13, and 14. Elementary school incident rate and percent of students committing incidents, percent of elementary students committing incidents by incident type, suspension rate and percent of students suspended, and percent of students with suspensions by suspension type for the 2013-14, 2014-15, and 2015-16 school years.

VI. MIDDLE SCHOOL TOTALS

Incident Rate and Percent of Students Committing Incidents.

The incident rate and percent of students committing incidents at middle schools for the 2013-14 through the 2015-16 school years are displayed in Figures 15 and 16. Over the three-year period, the number and rate of incidents decreased at middle schools from 43,784 incidents (71.0% incident rate) in 2013-14, to 34,554 incidents (56.9% incident rate) in 2015-16. The percent of students committing incidents in this time period also went down (from 21.1% to 19%) in middle schools. Less than 10% of middle school students committed multiple offences in 2015-16. Disruptive incidents were the most prevalent, with 13% of all elementary school students registering at least one disruptive incident in the 2015-16 school year. See also Appendices A1 and A2.

Suspension Rate and Percent of Students with Suspensions.

Suspension rates and the percent of students suspended are illustrated in Figures 17 and 18. The suspension rate decreased by more than six percentage points across the three year period from 47.4% in 2013-14 to 41.0% in 2015-16. During the most recently completed school year, 2015-16, the percent of students receiving at least one suspension of any type (Internal, External, or AES) was 15.3%. Almost 4% of all middle school students received an external suspension during the 2015-16 school year, and less than 8% of all students were suspended multiple times (See also Appendix C).

Figure 15. Middle School Incident Rate and Percent of Students Committing Incidents

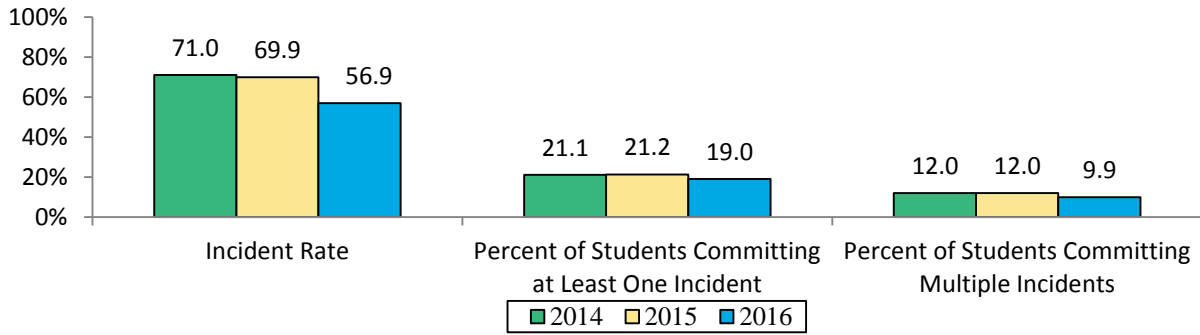


Figure 16. Middle School Percent of Students Committing Incidents by Type of Incident

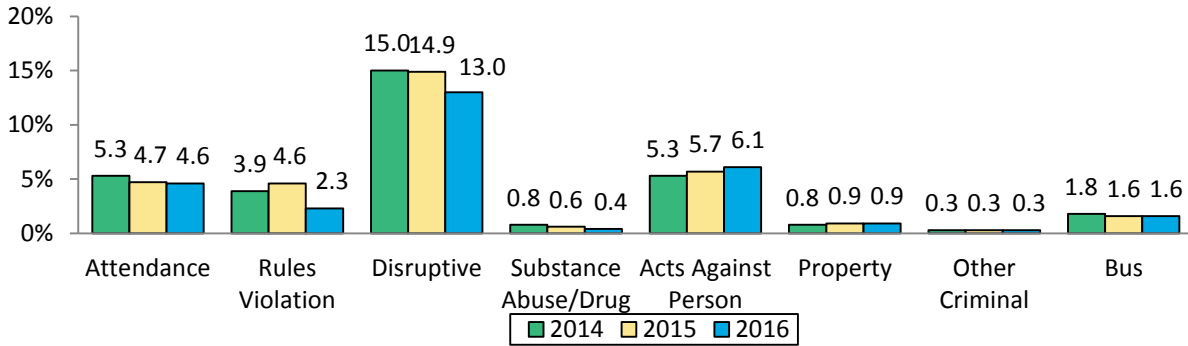


Figure 17. Middle School Suspension Rate and Percent of Students Suspended

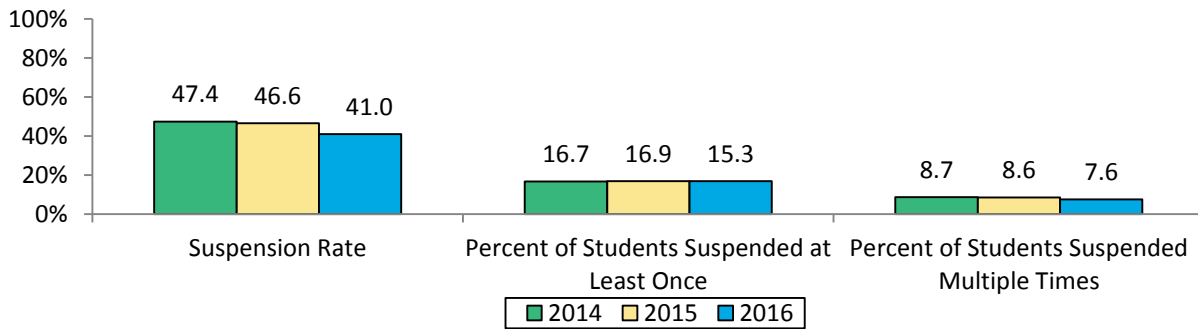
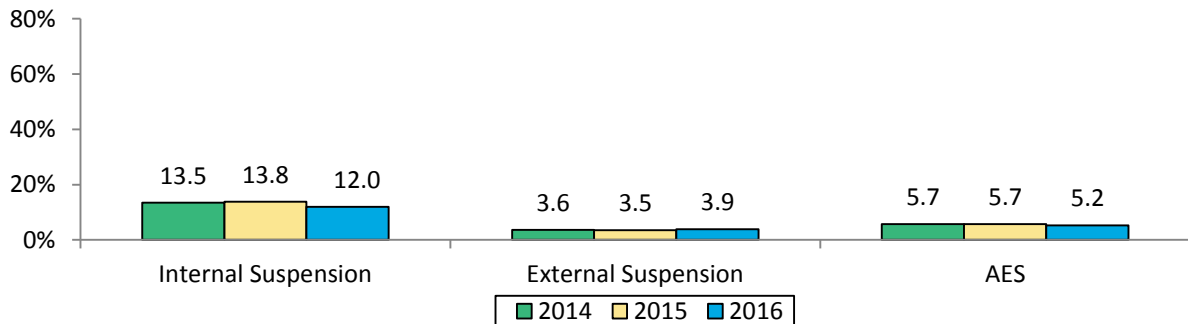


Figure 18. Middle School Suspension Rate by Suspension Type



Figures 15, 16, 17 and 18. Middle School incident rate and percent of students committing incidents, percent of students committing incidents by incident type, suspension rate and percent of students suspended, and percent of students with suspensions by suspension type for the 2013-14, 2014-15, and 2015-16 school years.

VII. HIGH SCHOOL TOTALS

Incident Rate and Percent of Students Committing Incidents.

The incident rate and percent of students committing incidents at high schools for the 2013-14 through the 2015-16 school years are displayed in Figures 19 and 20. Over the three-year period the number and rate of incidents decreased at high schools from 33,076 incidents (42.4% incident rate) in 2013-14 to 29,685 incidents (36.5% incident rate) in 2015-16. The percent of students committing incidents in this time period also went down (from 17.7% to 16.3%) in high schools. Less than 8% of high school students committed multiple offences in 2015-16. Disruptive incidents were the most prevalent, with 8% of all high school students registering at least one disruptive incident in the 2015-16 school year. See also Appendices A1 and A2.

Suspension Rate and Percent of Students with Suspensions.

Suspension rates and the percent of students suspended are illustrated in Figures 21 and 22. The suspension rate decreased from 24.7% in 2013-14 to 23.7% during the 2015-16 school year. During the 2015-16 school year, the percent of students receiving at least one suspension of any type (Internal, External, or AES) was 11.8%. Two percent of all high school students received an external suspension during this year, and less than 5% of all students were suspended multiple times (See also Appendix C).

Figure 19. High School Incident Rate and Percent of Students Committing Incidents

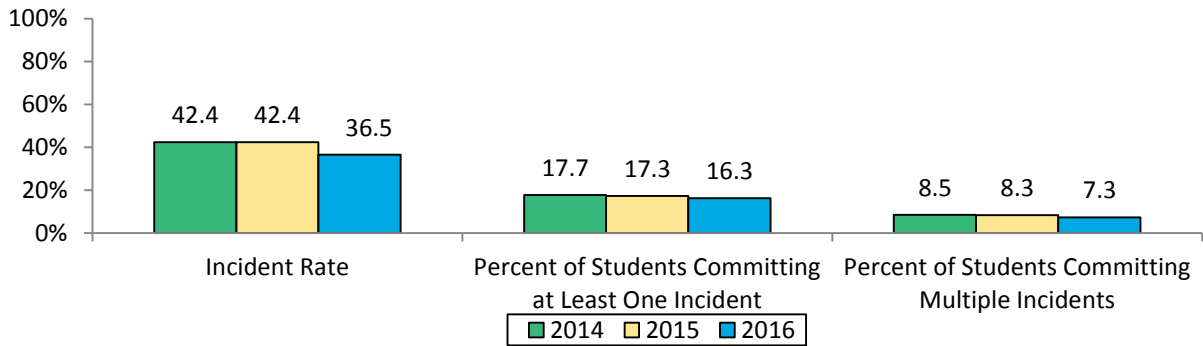


Figure 20. High Schools Percent of Students Committing Incidents by Incident Type

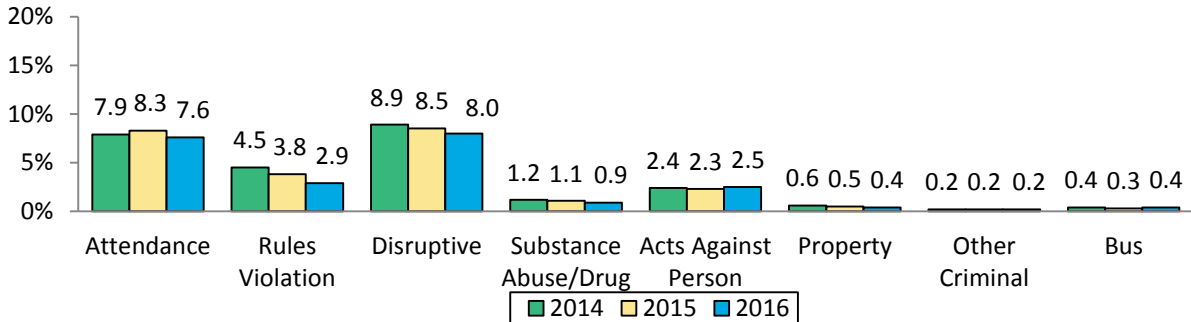


Figure 21. High Schools Suspension Rate and Percent of Students Suspended

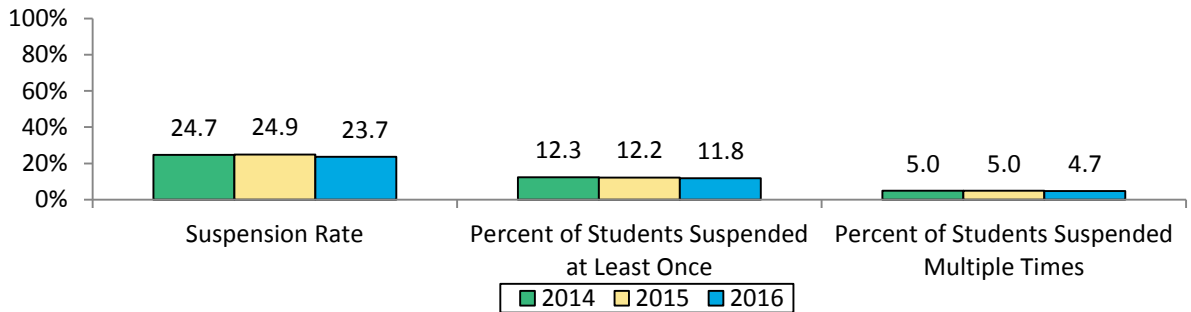


Figure 22. High Schools Suspension Rate by Suspension Type

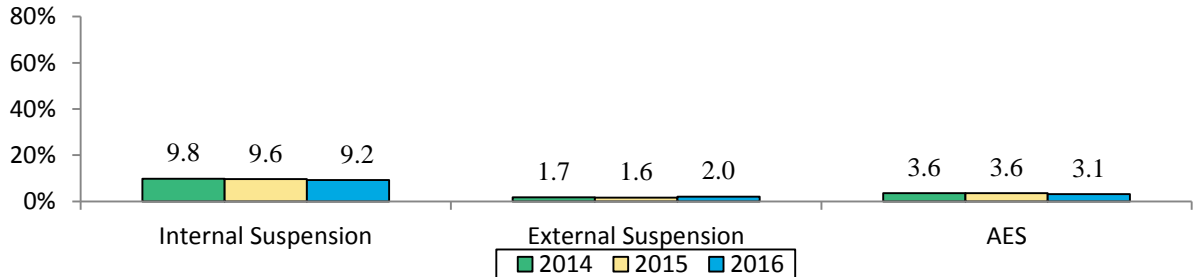


Figure 19, 20, 21 and 22. High School incident rate and percent of students committing incidents, percent of students committing incidents by incident type, suspension rate and percent of students suspended, and percent of students with suspensions by suspension type for the 2013-14, 2014-15, and 2015-16 school years.

VIII. CENTER SCHOOLS TOTALS

Incident Rate and Percent of Students Committing Incidents.

Figures 23 and 24 illustrate the incident rate and percent of students committing incidents at center schools for the 2013-14 through the 2015-16 school years. Over the three-year period, the number and rate of incidents increased at center schools from 4,378 incidents (73.1% incident rate) in 2013-14, to 6,825 incidents (111.5% incident rate) in 2015-16. The percent of students committing incidents in this time period also went up (from 20% to 25.2%) in center schools. Sixteen percent of center students committed multiple offences in 2015-16. Disruptive incidents were the most prevalent, with 17% of all center students registering at least one disruptive incident in the 2015-16 school year. See also Appendices A1 and A2.

Suspension Rate and Percent of Students with Suspensions.

Suspension rates and the percent of students suspended are displayed in Figures 25 and 26. The rates for all types of suspensions increased from 2013-14 (49.5%) to 2015-16 (73.4%). During the 2015-16 school year, the percent of students receiving at least one suspension of any type (Internal, External, or AES) was 20.6%. Nine percent of all center school students received an external suspension during the same year. Almost 12% of all center students were suspended multiple times (See Appendix C).

Figure 23. Center Schools Incident Rate and Percent of Students Committing Incidents

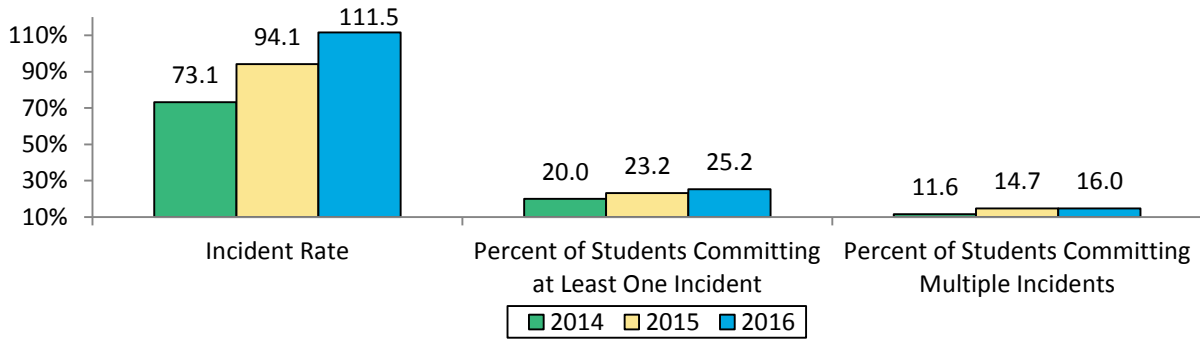


Figure 24. Center Schools Percent of Students Committing Incidents by Incident Type

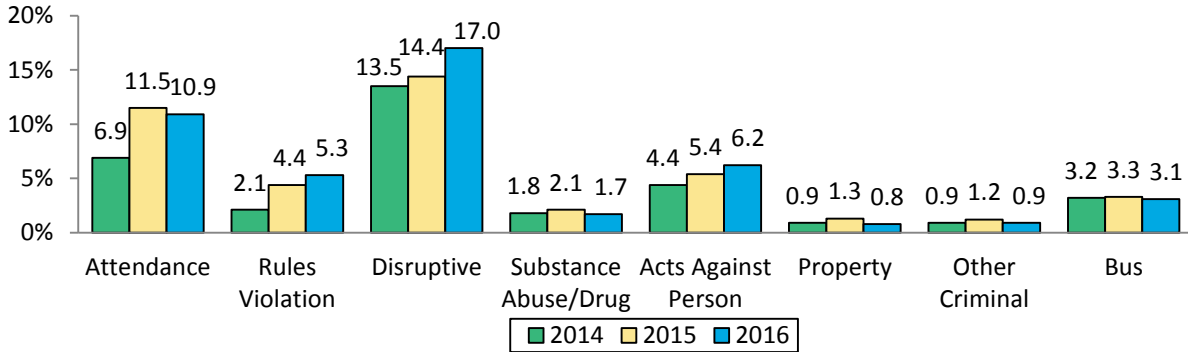


Figure 25. Center Schools Suspension Rate and Percent of Students Suspended

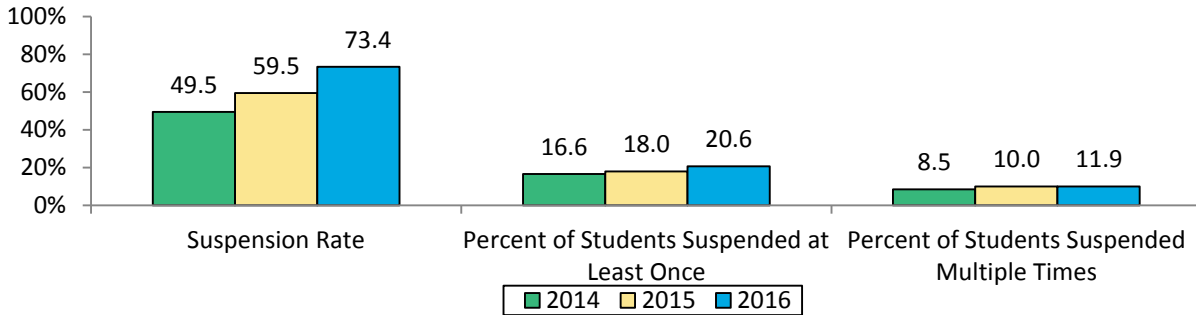


Figure 26. Center Schools Suspension Rate by Suspension Type

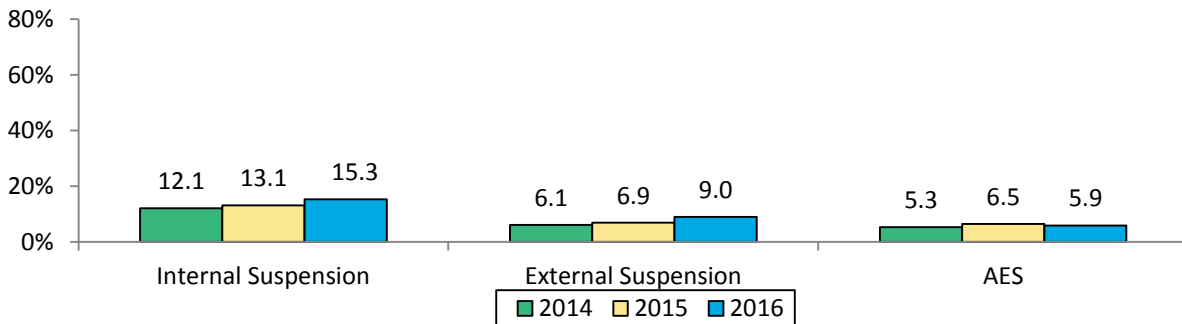


Figure 22, 23, 24 and 25. Center School incident rate and percent of students committing incidents, percent of students committing incidents by incident type, suspension rate and percent of students suspended, and percent of students with suspensions by suspension type for the 2013-14, 2014-15, and 2015-16 school years.

IX. SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

Districtwide data on incidents and suspensions for students enrolled in district-run and charter schools for the 2013-2014 through 2015-2016 school years were presented in this report. Overall, there was a 14% decrease in the number of incidents between 2013-14 and 2015-16 (from 100,171 to 86,436), which corresponds to a 5.9 percentage point decrease in the incident rate (from 37.3% to 31.4%). The percent of students committing incidents decreased from 12.8% to 11.7% in the same time period, and the percent of students committing multiple incidents decreased from 6.6% to 5.6%.

For the same three-year period, the number of suspensions decreased by 6.3% (from 58,536 to 54,876), which corresponds with a two percentage point decrease in the suspension rate. The percent of students suspended decreased from 8.7% to 8.2%, and the percent of students suspended multiple times decreased from 4.1% to 3.7%.

Centers had the highest incident rate (111.5%), followed by middle schools (56.9%), high schools (36.5%) and elementary schools (12.1%). The pattern of suspensions followed that of incidents, with the highest suspension rate occurring in centers (73.4%), followed by middle schools, (41.0%) high schools (23.7%), and elementary schools (4.9%).

During each of the three years, in-school suspensions and AES assignments constituted more than 87% of all suspensions assigned. Thirteen percent of all suspensions removed the students from an academic environment.

At all school levels, disruptive behavior was the number most prevalent incident type committed. Incident and suspension rates decreased for each of the major racial groups over the three year period, while maintaining the same pattern as previous years. Black students registered a higher incident rate (53.9% in 2015-16, down from 62.2% in 2013-14) than Hispanic (18.9%, down from 22.7%) and White (14.8%, down from 19.5%) students. The pattern of suspensions across racial/ethnic groups remained similar to the pattern of incidents across racial/ethnic groups, suggesting that students are suspended based on the infraction incurred.

The District has taken steps to ensure objectivity when determining disciplinary actions for students. The Discipline Matrix, which was introduced during the 2004-05 school year, was developed to assist school staff in making fair and equitable decisions related to the assignment and reporting of punitive actions. Schools are required by School Board Policy 5006: Suspension and Expulsion, and Policy 5.8: The Code of Student Conduct, to use the Discipline Matrix as their guide in determining appropriate consequences for student infractions (School Board of Broward County, 2013b). In an effort to continuously support the school community, the District implemented the intervention program Preventing Recidivism through Opportunities, Mentoring, Interventions, Supports, and Education (PROMISE), which provides alternatives to students who have committed infractions that would typically lead to arrest and entry into the juvenile justice system.

The Diversity, Prevention, and Intervention department received a five-year School Climate Transformation Grant from the U.S. Department of Education in 2014 which allows the District to support select schools, many of them middle schools, in enhancing school climate, including school-wide positive behavior. The District has also embraced the Multi-tiered System of Support/Response to Intervention (MTSS/RtI) model to address behavior. MTSS/RtI Coaches were hired to support schools in addressing their overall school climate and to facilitate meeting the academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs of their students. The coaches teach strategies designed to build stronger relationships within the school and to develop protocols to follow in order to collectively address student concerns prior to having the behavior rise to the level of requiring an office disciplinary referral. Coaches also provide ongoing assistance to schools as they develop their school-wide positive behavior plans and review them quarterly, in order to identify and address any potential areas of concern.

In addition to these direct supports being provided to schools, administrators receive ongoing annual training on current discipline legislation and policy.

In the beginning of school year 2014-15, Student Assessment and Research began providing data dashboards to school principals. These reports show the percent of students without behavior incidents and the number of incidents that occurred each month by student sub-groups. Incident and suspension data are also available for teachers and administrators in the Behavioral and Academic Support Information System (BASIS).

The Diversity, Prevention and Intervention department handles all matters concerning student discipline. For further information regarding disciplinary policies and/or initiatives please contact the department at (754) 321-1655.

X. APPENDICES

Detailed data summaries are provided in the appendices:

Appendix A:

Table A-1: Total number and rate of incident occurrences by incident type by school level, 2013-14 through 2015-16

Table A-2: Total number and rate of students who committed incidents by school level, 2013-14 through 2015-16

Appendix B:

Table B-1: Total number and rate of incidents by student race/ethnicity, 2013-14 through 2015-16

Table B-2: Total number and rate of students who committed incidents by student race/ethnicity, 2013-14 through 2015-16

Appendix C: Total number and rate of suspensions and students suspended by school level, 2013-14 through 2015-16

Appendix D: Total number of suspensions by student race/ethnicity and special populations, 2013-14 through 2015-16

Appendix E: Total number and rate incidents assigned a suspension by student race/ethnicity, 2015-16

Appendix F: Total number of incidents by school, 2013-14 through 2015-16

Appendix G: Total number of suspensions by school, 2013-14 through 2015-16

Appendix H: Incidents categories specifics

XII. REFERENCES

- School Board of Broward County, Florida, The. (2013a). Code of Student Conduct. Fort Lauderdale, FL: Author. Retrieved March 21, 2016, <http://www.broward.k12.fl.us/sbbcpolicies/docs/P5.8.000.pdf>
- School Board of Broward County, Florida, The. (2013b). School Board Policy 5006: Suspension and Expulsion. Fort Lauderdale, FL: Author. Retrieved March 21, 2016, from <http://www.broward.k12.fl.us/sbbcpolicies/docs/P5006.000.pdf>

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