

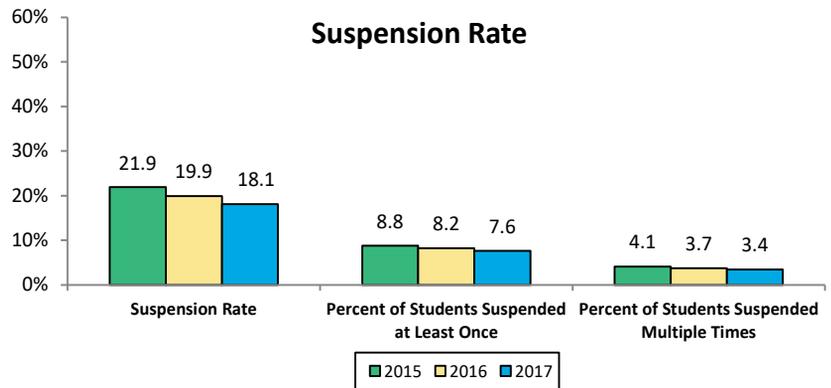
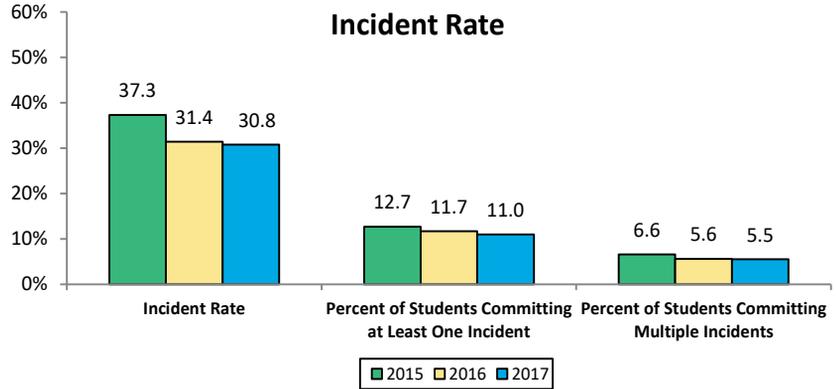
From 2014-15 to 2016-17,
the **Incident Rate** decreased by

 **6 percentage points**

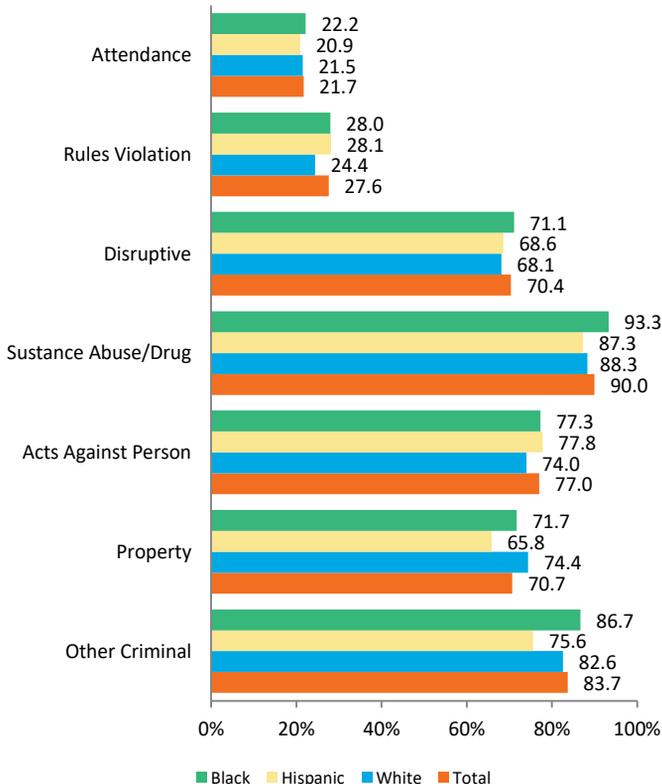
and the **Suspension Rate** decreased by

 **4 percentage points**

- The Incident Rate decreased from 37% to 31% between 2014-15 and 2016-17. The percent of students committing at least one incident decreased from 13% to 11% 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 18% between 2014-15 and 2016-17. The percent of students suspended at least once in the same time period decreased from 9% to 8%. The percent of students suspended multiple times decreased from 4% to 3%.



Incidents Resulting in Suspensions by Race/Ethnicity



- The incident rate dropped substantially at the middle (13 percentage points) and high (11 percentage points) school levels, decreased slightly at the elementary level (2 percentage points) and increased at the center level (28 percentage points).
- A larger percent of Black students committed incidents (17%) and received suspensions (12%) than did Hispanic (8% and 5%) and White (7% and 4%) students.
- Students from different racial/ethnic groups were suspended at relatively 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**

Signatures on File

DATE: October 31, 2017

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, 2014-15 through 2016-17**

Incident and suspension rates decreased over the three-year period between 2014-15 and 2016-17. The incident rate decreased by six percentage points (from 37% to 31%), and suspension rate decreased by four percentage points (from 22% to 18%). The percent of students committing incidents decreased by two percentage points (from 13% to 11%) and the percent of students receiving suspensions decreased by one percentage point (from 9% to 8%).

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 2014-15) with 17% committing at least one incident (down from 19% in 2014-15). Hispanic students followed, with an incident rate of 18% (down from 23% in 2014-15), with 8% of Hispanic students committing at least one incident (down from 9% in 2014-15). The incident rate for White students was 15% (down from 20% in 2014-15), with 7% of all White students committing an incident (down from 8% in 2014-15).

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, 2014-15 THROUGH 2016-17

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 schools 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 (School Board of Broward County, 2013b).

This report examines the past three years of student behavioral incident and suspension data in Broward County Public Schools (BCPS).

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 (2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17). 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 number of incidents by the total number of students enrolled at the school.
- **Percent of Students Committing at Least One Incident** is calculated by summing the number of students who have committed at least one incident and dividing the sum 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 original 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 campus for a determined period of time.
- **AES** is a suspension where the child is removed from campus but attends another BCPS site for a determined period of time.
- **Rate of Incidents Resulting in Suspension** shows how often a student who commits a specific incident type is suspended for committing that specific incident type 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 original suspension rate.

III. DISTRICT TOTALS

Incident Rate and Percent of Students with Incidents. The incident rate in 2016-17 decreased from the two prior school years from 37.3% to 30.8%. This change, from 101,993 incidents in 2014-15 to 85,472 incidents in 2016-17 represents a 6.5 percentage point decrease in the incident rate. In school year 2016-17, the percent of students involved in at least one incident (11.0%) was lower than the incident rate as some of the students (5.5%) were involved in multiple incidents (Appendix A).

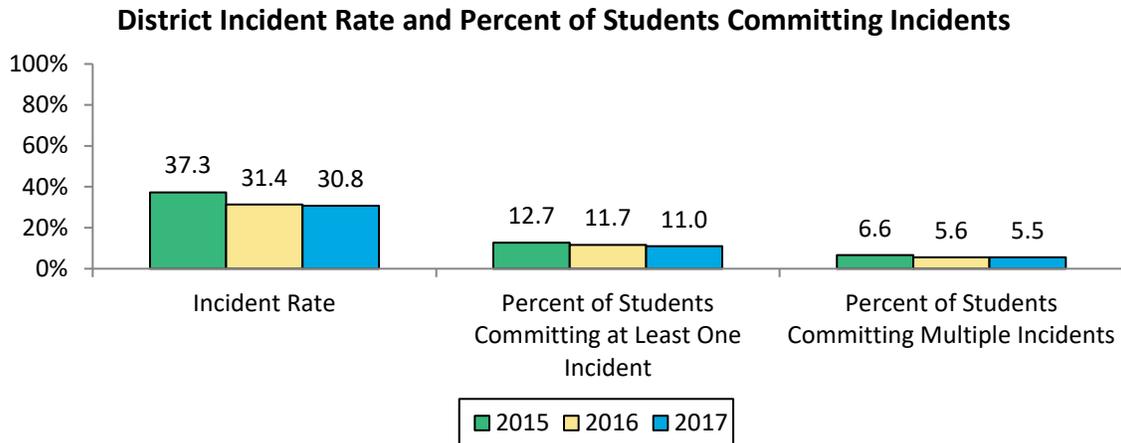


Figure 1. Incident rate and percent of students committing incidents Districtwide for the 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17 school years.

Incidents by Type. 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 2016-17 school year. For all three school years, disruptive incidents were the most reported incident type.

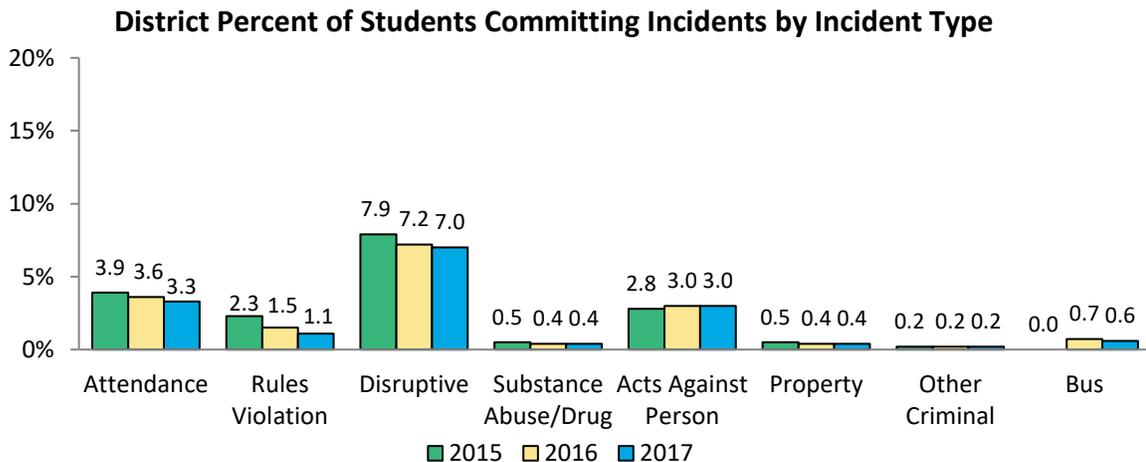


Figure 2. Percent of students with incidents by incident type Districtwide for the 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17 school years.

Suspension Rate and Percent of Students with Suspensions. The suspension rate across the three-year period decreased by almost 4 percentage points (from 21.9% to 18.1%). This change, from 59,728 suspensions in 2014-15 to 50,219 incidents in 2016-17 represents a 3.8 percentage point decrease in the suspension rate. The percent of students suspended (7.6%) was lower than the suspension rate as some of the students (3.4%) received multiple suspensions.

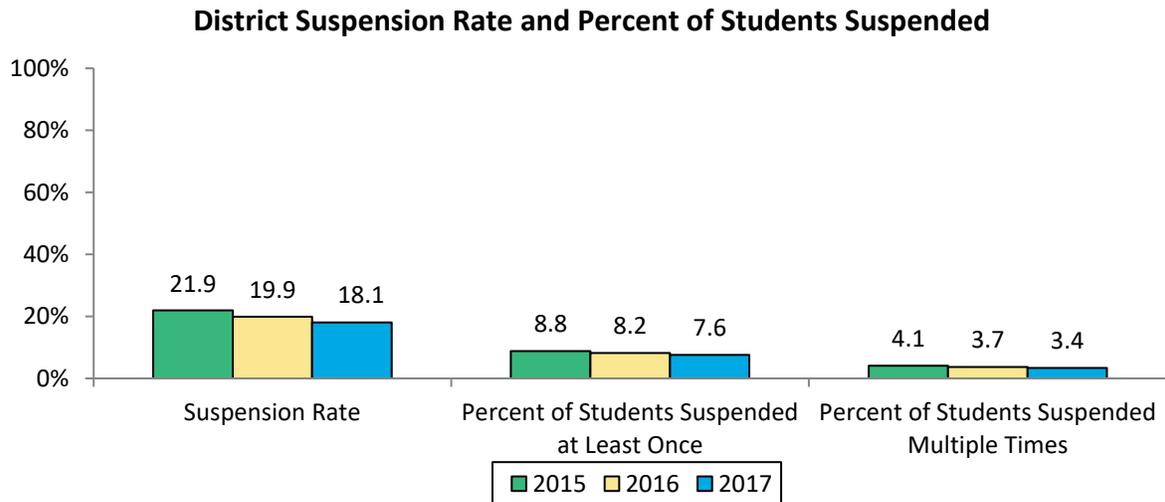


Figure 3. Suspension rate and percent of students suspended Districtwide for the 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17 school years.

Suspensions by Type. Less than 2% of students received external suspensions during the 2016-17 school year. Internal suspensions were the most common type issued, with 5.8% of students receiving an internal suspension, followed by AES, with 2.3% of students receiving an AES (Appendix B).

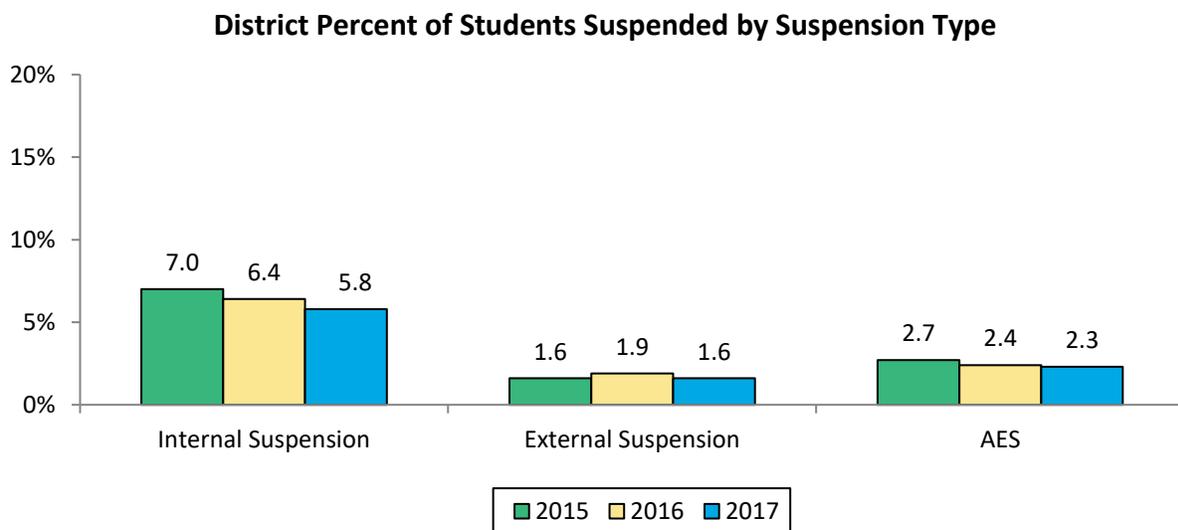


Figure 4. Percent of students receiving specific types of suspensions Districtwide for the 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17 school years.

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 approximately three times that of Hispanic and White students. The percent of Black students involved in incidents was double that of Hispanic and of White students. In all three groups, the incident rate dropped between 2014-15 and 2015-16 and remained relatively stable between 2015-16 and 2016-17. Across all racial/ethnic groups, disruptive incidents were the most prevalent (Appendix C).

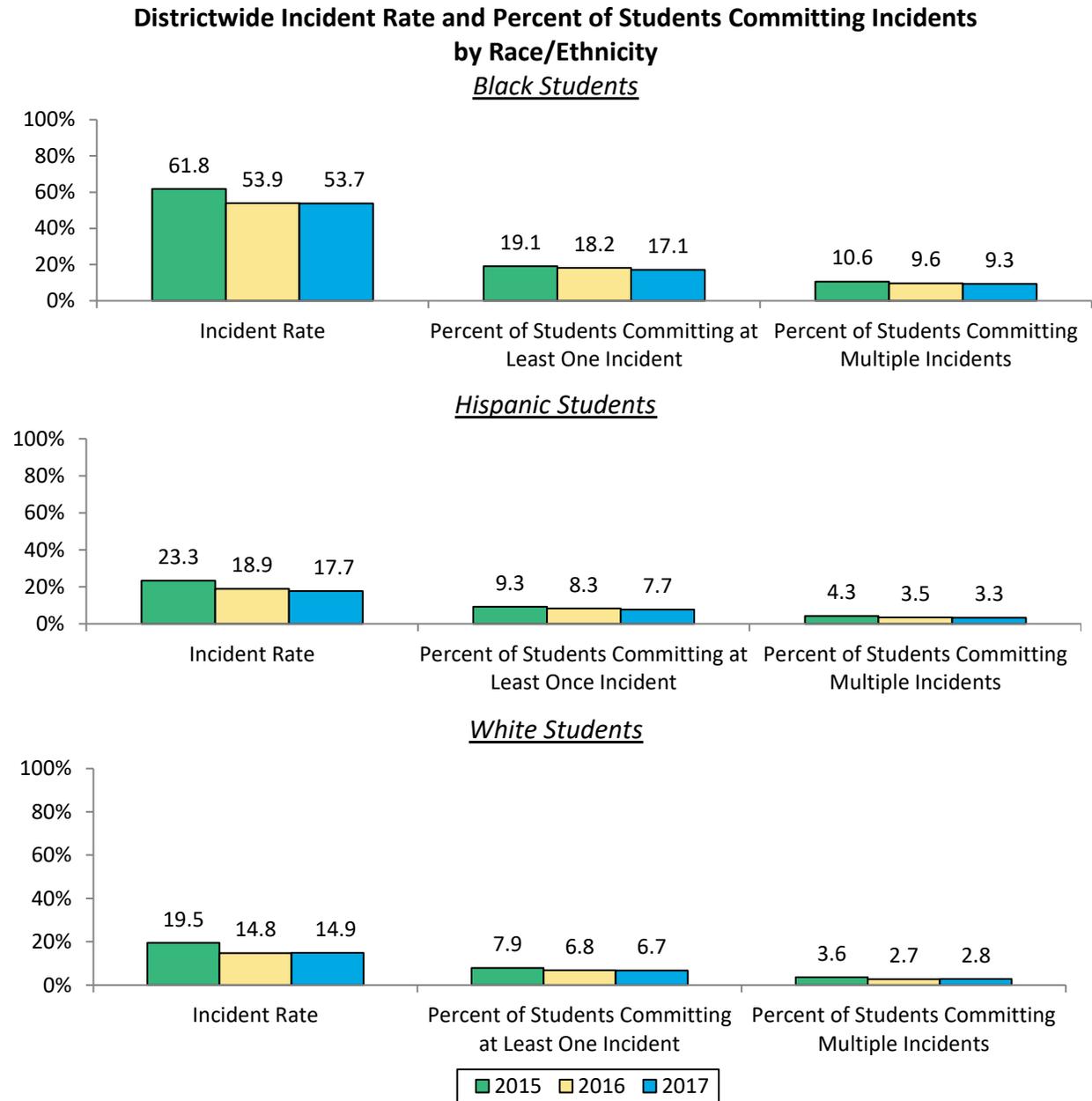


Figure 5. Incident rate and percent of students committing incidents Districtwide by race/ethnicity for the 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17 school years.

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

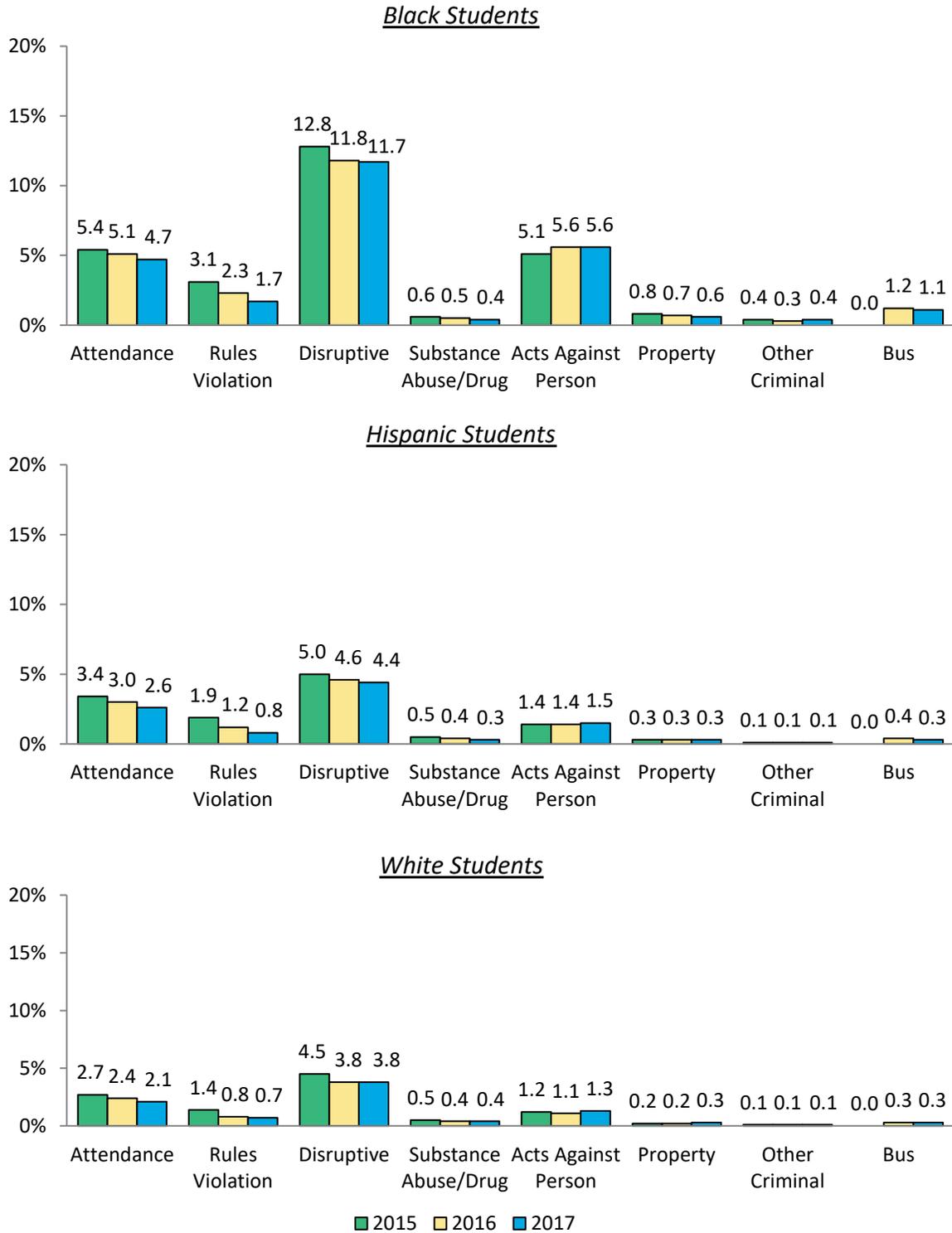
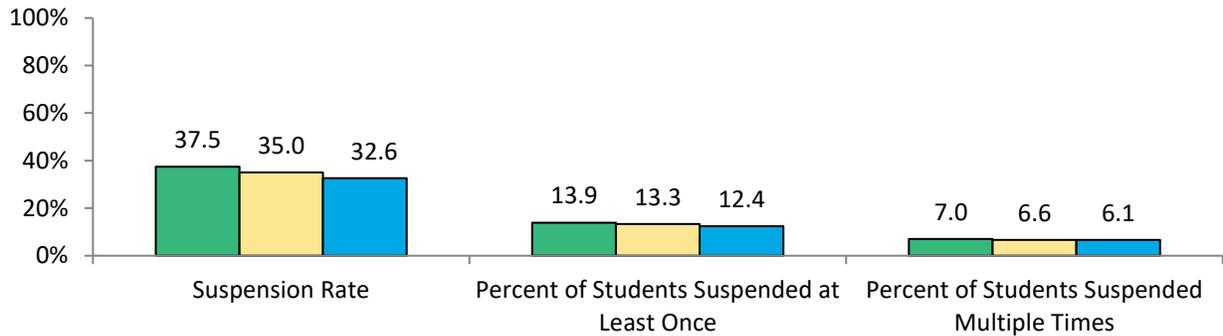


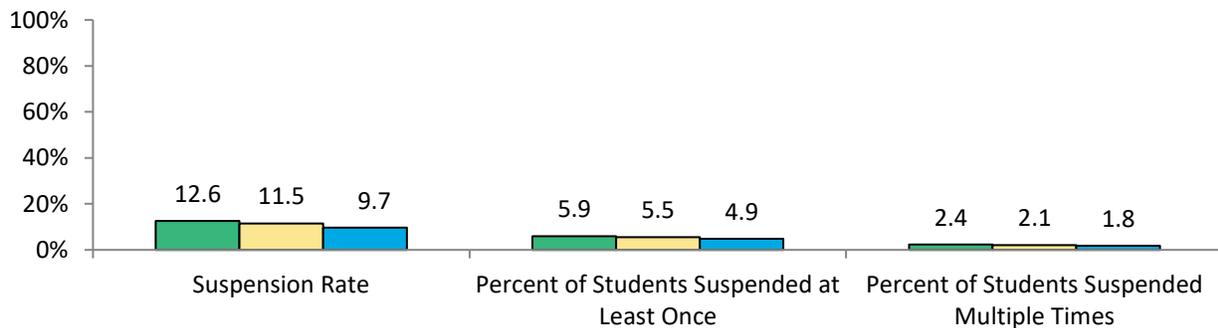
Figure 6. Districtwide percent of students with incidents by incident type by race/ethnicity for the 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17 school years.

Suspension Rate and Percent of Students with Suspensions by Race/Ethnicity. As with incidents, the suspension rate was higher for Black students compared to Hispanic and White students. During the most recently completed school year, 2016-17, the overall suspension rate for Black students was 12%, compared to 5% 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 (17%, 8%, and 7% for Black, Hispanic, and White students respectively; as previously shown in Figure 5). For all three groups, the suspension rate decreased across the three school years (Appendix D).

Districtwide Suspension Rate and Percent of Students Receiving Suspensions by Race/Ethnicity
Black Students



Hispanic Students



White Students

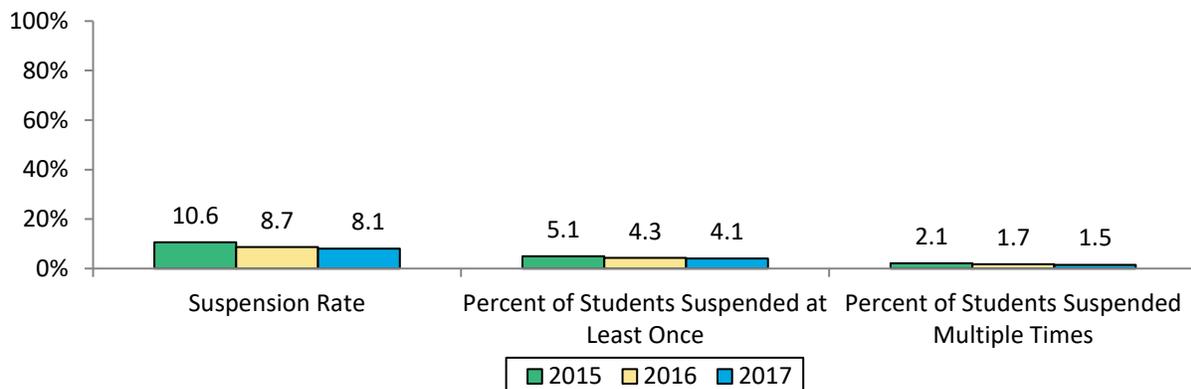


Figure 7. Suspension rate and percent of students suspended Districtwide by race/ethnicity for the 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17 school years.

Suspensions by Type by Race/Ethnicity. Internal suspensions were the most frequent type of suspension issued and external suspensions were the least frequently issued. Less than 4% of Black students and 1% of Hispanic and White students were suspended externally during the 2016-17 school year (Appendix D).

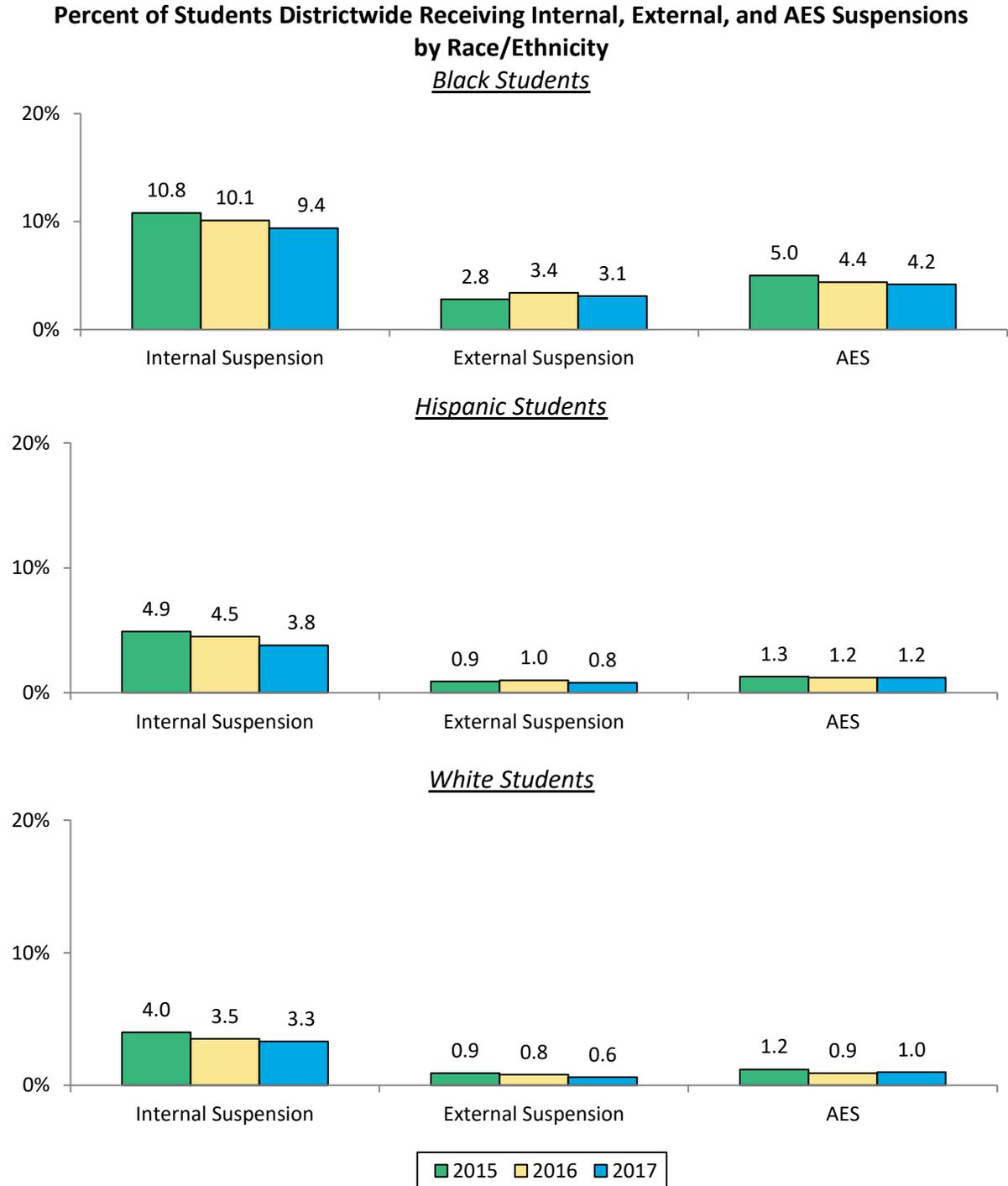


Figure 8. Percent students Districtwide with internal, external, and AES suspensions by race/ethnicity for the 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17 school years.

Rate of Incidents Resulting in Suspension. Students from different racial/ethnic groups were suspended at relatively similar rates for the same type of incident (Appendix E).

Rate of Incidents Resulting in Suspension by Race/Ethnicity

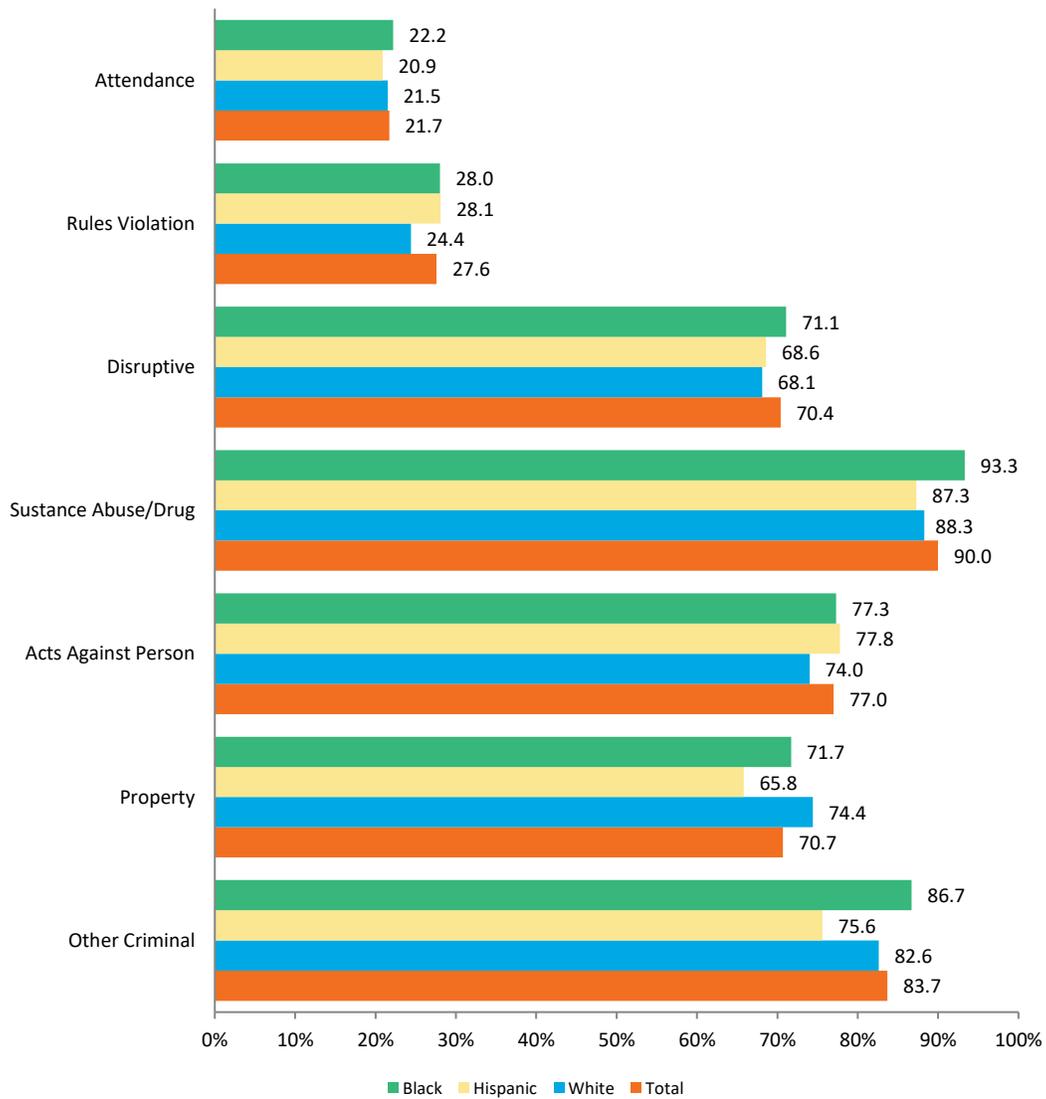


Figure 9. Rate of incidents resulting in a suspension by race/ethnicity by specific incident type for the 2016-17 school year.

V. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TOTALS

Incident Rate and Percent of Students Committing Incidents.

Figures 10 and 11 illustrate the incident rate and percent of students committing incidents at elementary schools for the 2014-15 through 2016-17 school years. Over the three-year period the number and rate of incidents decreased slightly from 19,841 incidents in 2014-15 (15.7% incident rate) to 18,513 incidents in 2016-17 (14.2% incident rate) at elementary schools. Disruptive incidents were the most prevalent for all three school years, with 3.8%, 3.4%, and 3.7%, of all elementary school students registering at least one disruptive incident type. Less than 3% of elementary school students committed multiple offences for all three school years. These data include all incidents (including those that did not result in suspensions; 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 12 and 13. As with incidents, these data indicate that, across all years, the rates for all types of suspensions were stable. During the most recently completed school year, 2016-17, the overall suspension rate was 5.6%, and the percent of students receiving at least one suspension of any type (internal, external, or AES) was 2.1%. Less than 1% of all elementary school students received an external suspension during the 2016-17 school year. Less than 1% of all elementary students were suspended multiple times (See also Appendix C).

Figure 10. Elementary School Incident Rate and Percent of Students Committing Incidents

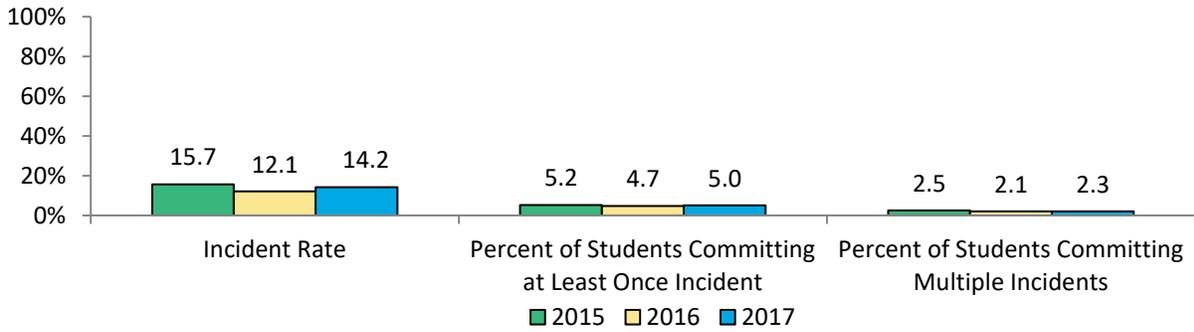


Figure 11. Elementary School Percent of Students Committing Incidents by Incident Type

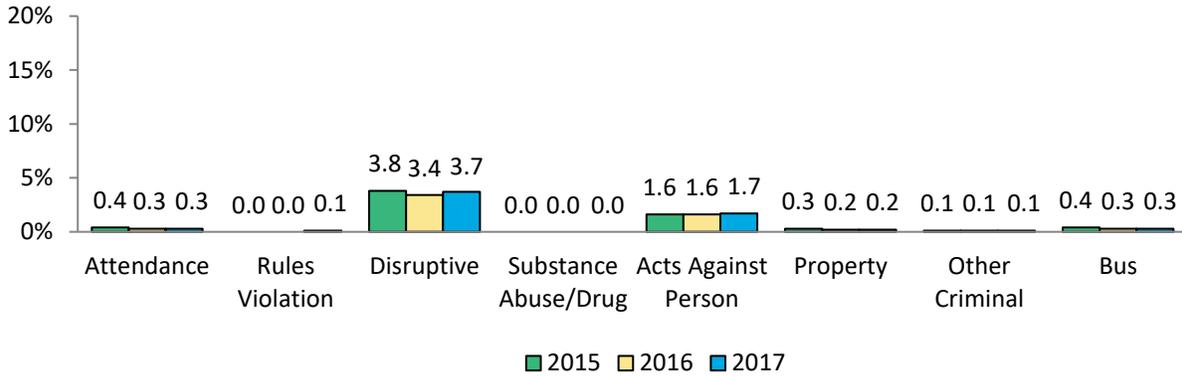


Figure 12. Elementary Schools Suspension Rate and Percent of Students Suspended

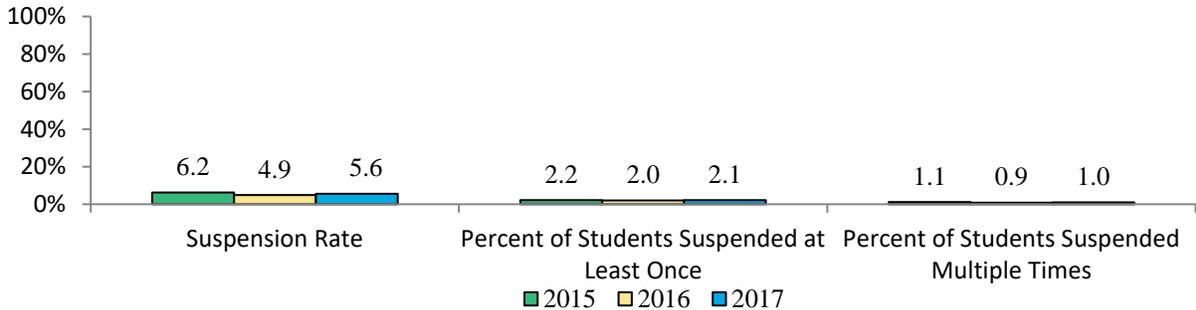
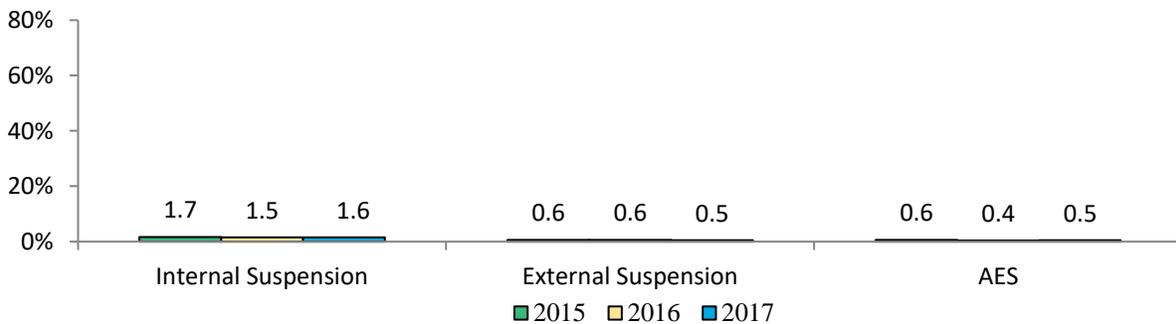


Figure 13. Elementary Schools Suspension Rate by Suspension Type



Figures 10, 11, 12, and 13. 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 suspension rate by suspension type for the 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17 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 2014-15 through the 2016-17 school years are displayed in Figures 14 and 15. Over the three-year period the number and rate of incidents decreased at middle schools from 41,739 incidents (69.9% incident rate) in 2014-15 to 34,672 incidents (56.9% incident rate) in 2016-17. During the most recent school year, disruptive incidents registered the largest percent of students, with 12.7% of all middle school students registering at least one disruptive incident type, followed by acts against person (6.2%), and attendance (4.4%). These data include all incidents (including those that did not result in suspensions; see also Appendices A1 and A2).

Rate of Suspensions and Percent of Students with Suspensions.

Suspension rates and the percent of students suspended are illustrated in Figures 16 and 17. These data indicate that, across all years, the rates for all types of suspensions decreased from 46.6% in 2014-15 to 38.1% during the 2016-17 school year. During the most recently completed school year, 2016-17, 14.4% of students received at least one suspension, while 7.2% received multiple suspensions. Almost 4% of all middle school students received an external suspension during the 2016-17 school year (see also Appendix C).

Figure 14. Middle School Incident Rate and Percent of Students Committing Incidents

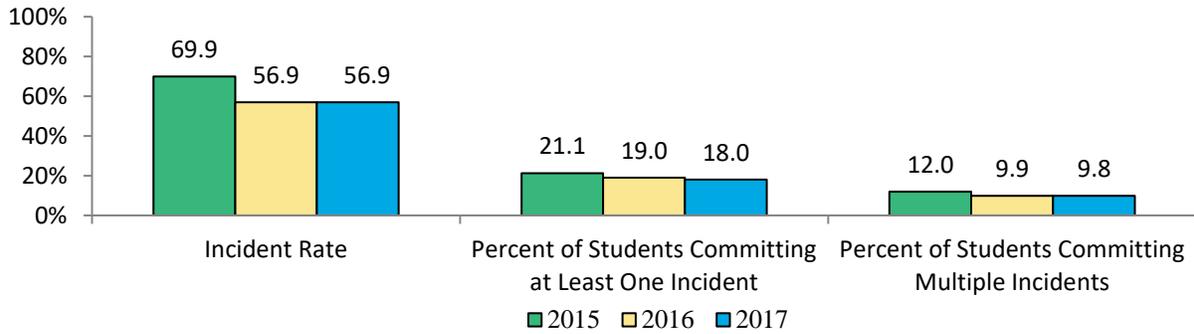


Figure 15. Middle School Percent of Students Committing Incidents by Type of Incident

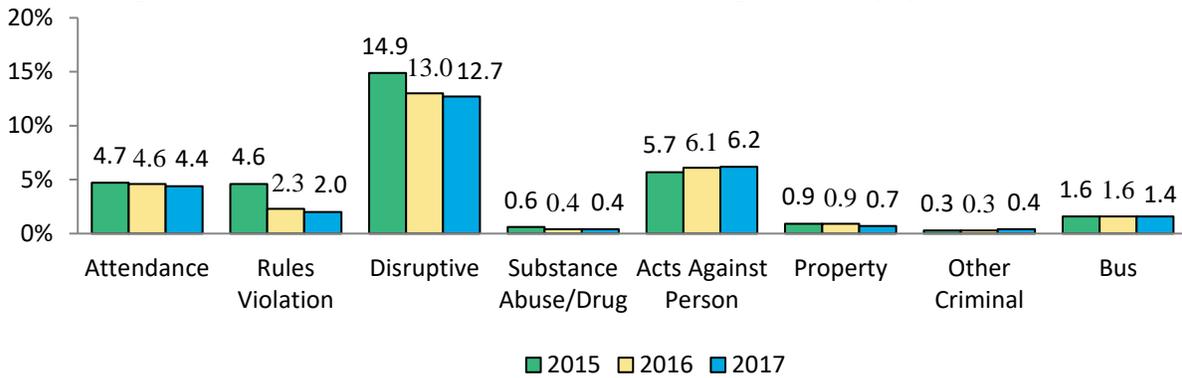


Figure 16. Middle School Suspension Rate and Percent of Students Suspended

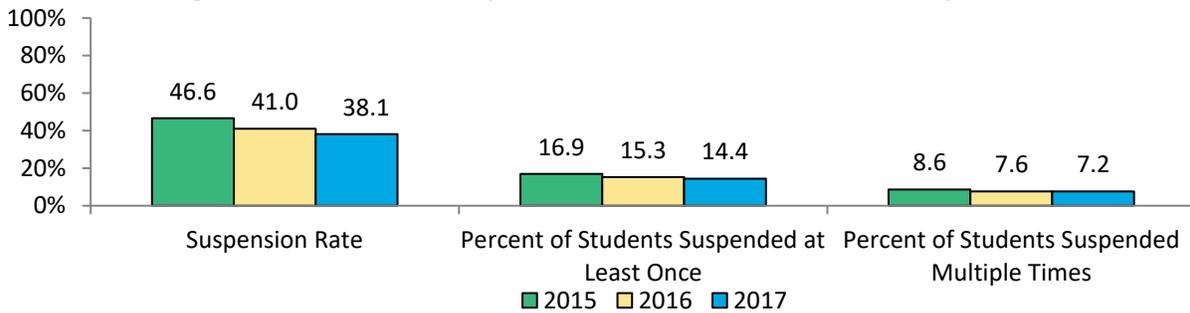
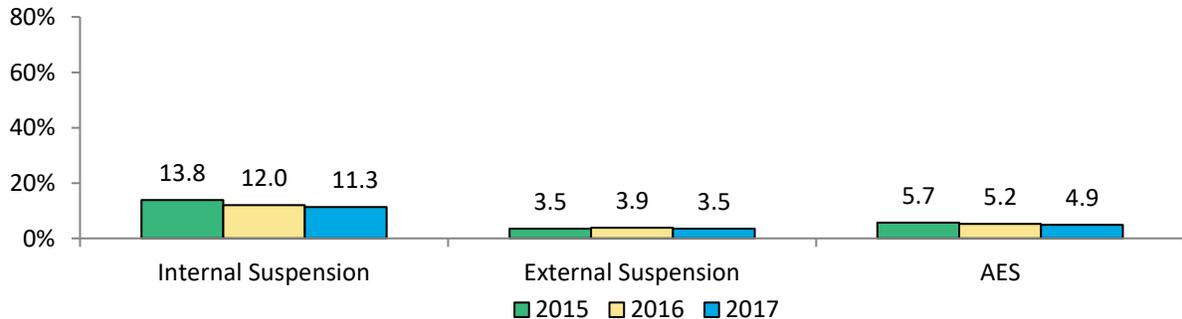


Figure 17. Middle School Suspension Rate by Suspension Type



Figures 14, 15, 16 and 17. 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 suspension rate by suspension type for the 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17 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 2014-15 through the 2016-17 school years are displayed in Figures 18 and 19. Over the three-year period the number and rate of incidents decreased at high schools from 34,099 incidents (42.4% incident rate) in 2014-15 to 25,293 incidents (31.0% incident rate) in 2016-17. During the most recent school year, disruptive incidents registered the largest percent of students, with 7.2% of all high school students registering at least one disruptive incident type, followed by attendance (6.4%), and Acts Against a Person (2.5%). These data include all incidents (including those that did not result in suspensions; see also Appendices A1 and A2).

Rate of Suspensions and Percent of Students with Suspensions.

Suspension rates and the percent of students suspended are illustrated in Figures 20 and 21. These data indicate that, across all years, the suspension rate decreased from 24.9% in 2014-15 to 18.8% during the 2016-17 school year. During the most recently completed school year, 2016-17, 10.1% of students received at least one suspension, while 3.8% received multiple suspensions. Almost 2% of all high school students received an external suspension during the 2016-17 school year (see also Appendix C).

Figure 18. High School Incident Rate and Percent of Students Committing Incidents

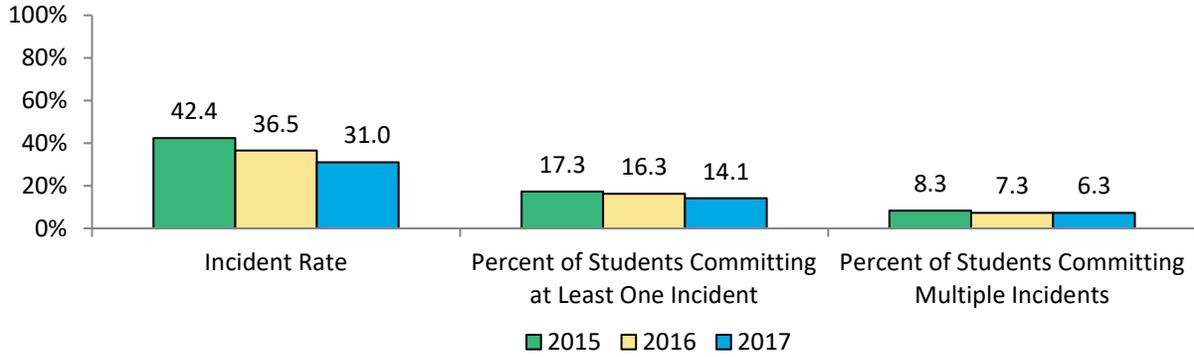


Figure 19. High Schools Percent of Students Committing Incidents by Incident Type

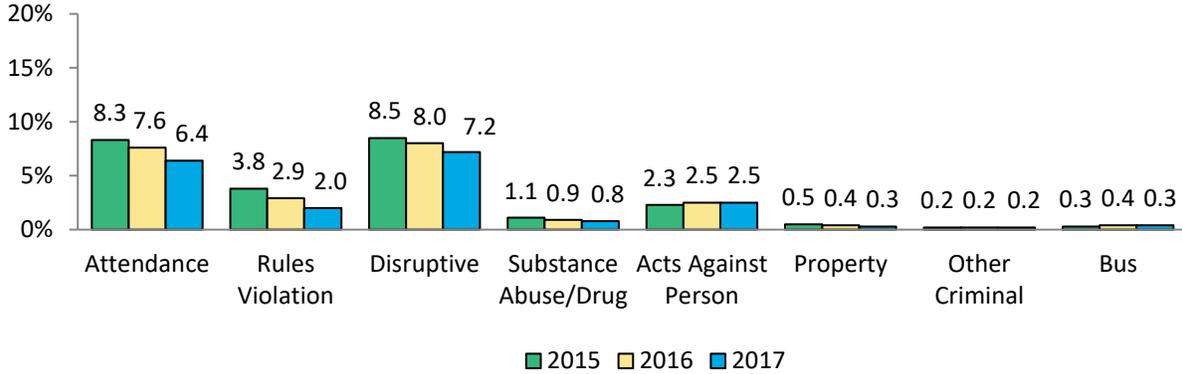


Figure 20. High Schools Suspension Rate and Percent of Students Suspended

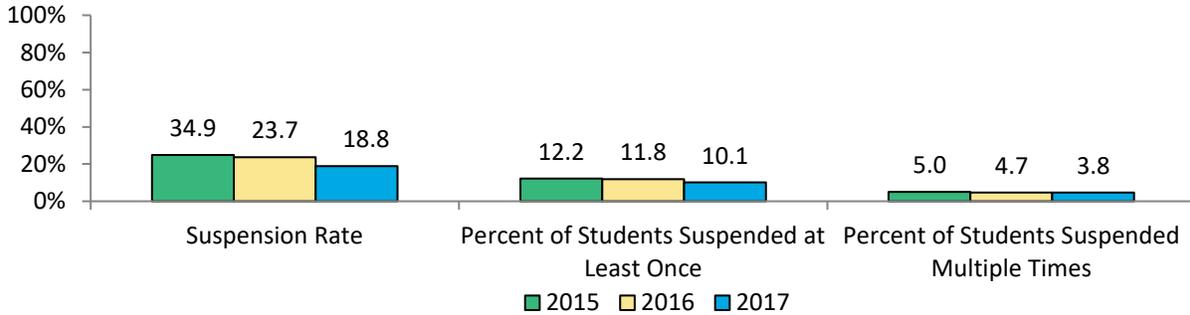


Figure 21. High Schools Suspension Rate by Suspension Type

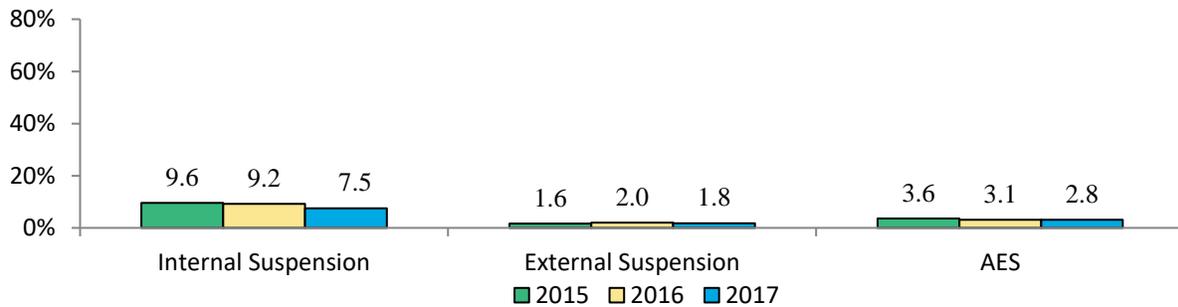


Figure 18, 19, 20 and 21. High School incident rate and percent of students committing incidents, percent of students committing incidents by incident type, suspension rate and percent of students suspended, and suspension rate by suspension type for the 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17 school years.

VIII. CENTER SCHOOLS TOTALS

Incident Rate and Percent of Students Committing Incidents.

Figures 22 and 23 illustrate the incident rate and percent of students committing incidents at center schools for the 2014-15 through the 2016-17 school years. Over the three-year period the number and rate of incidents increased at center schools from 6,314 incidents (94.1% incident rate) in 2014-15 to 6,994 incidents (121.6% incident rate) in 2016-17. During the most recent school year, disruptive incidents registered the largest percent of students, with 18.2% of all center school students registering at least one Disruptive incident type, followed by attendance (13.0%), and acts against person (6.3%). These data include all incidents (including those that did not result in suspensions; see also Appendices A1 and A2).

Rate of Suspensions and Percent of Students with Suspensions.

Suspension rates and the percent of students suspended are displayed in Figures 24 and 25. These data indicate that, across all years, the rates for all types of suspensions increased from 2014-15 (59.5%) to 2016-17 (75.1%). During the most recently completed school year, 2016-17, 21.6% of students received at least one suspension, while 12.4% received multiple suspensions. Almost 7% of all center school students received an external suspension during the 2016-17 school year (see also Appendix C).

Figure 22. Center Schools Incident Rate and Percent of Students Committing Incidents

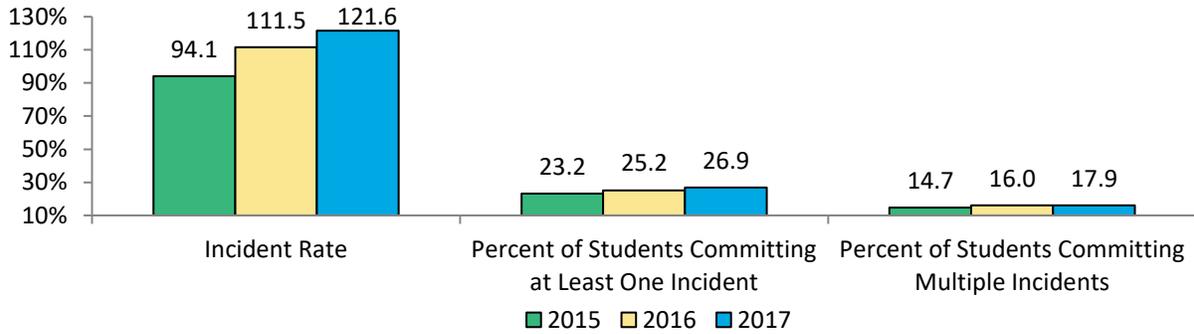


Figure 23. Center Schools Percent of Students Committing Incidents by Incident Type

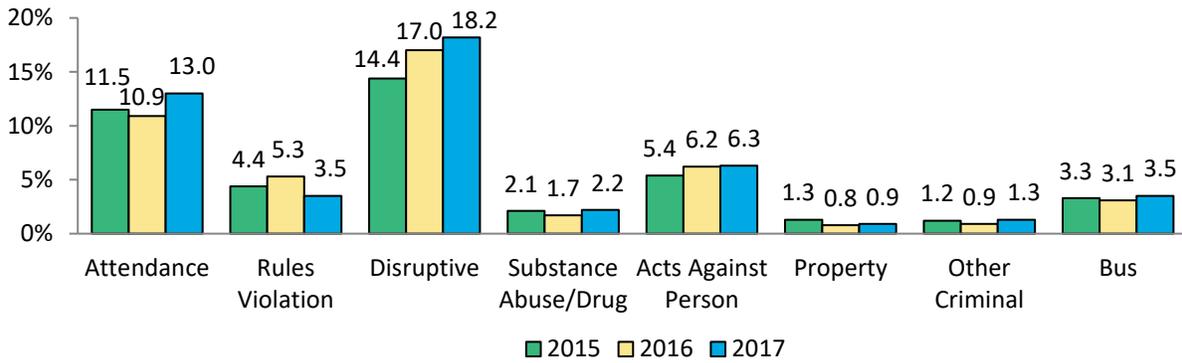


Figure 24. Center Schools Suspension Rate and Percent of Students Suspended

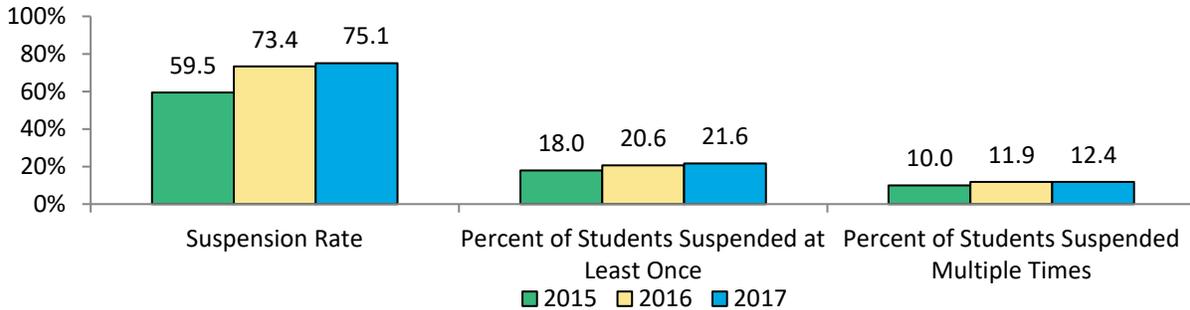


Figure 25. Center Schools Suspension Rate by Suspension Type

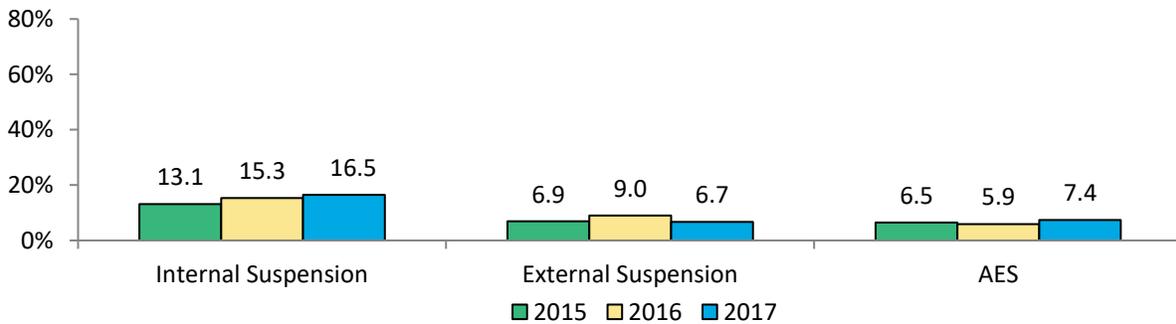


Figure 22, 23, 24 and 25. Center School incident rate and percent of students committing incidents, percent of students committing incidents by incident type, suspension rate and percent of students suspended, and suspension rate by suspension type for the 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17 school years.

IX. SCHOOL BY SCHOOL RESULTS

School level information for incidents and suspensions are available in the appendices. The number and rate of incidents by incident type are presented at the school level in Appendix F. Suspension information, including the number of suspensions and number of students suspended by suspension type and by race/ethnicity are presented in Appendix G.

X. SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

Districtwide data on incidents and suspensions for students enrolled in district-managed and charter schools for the 2014-15 through 2016-2017 school years were presented in this report. Overall, there was about a 16% decrease in the number of incidents between 2014-15 and 2016-17 (from 101,993 to 85,472), which corresponds to a 6.5% decrease in the incident rate (from 37.3% to 30.8%). The percent of students committing incidents decreased from 12.7% to 11.0% in the same time period, with the percent of students committing multiple incidents decreasing from 6.6% to 5.5%.

Disruptive incidents were the most common incident type, with 7% of students committing a disruptive incident. Attendance was the next most common (3.3%) followed by acts against person (3%) and rules violation (1.1%). Less than one percent of students were involved with substance abuse/drug, property, other criminal, and bus incidents.

For the same three-year period, the number of suspensions decreased by 15.9% (from 59,728 to 50,219), which corresponds to a 3.8 percentage point decrease in the suspension rate (from 21.9% to 18.1%). The percent of students suspended decreased from 8.8% to 7.6%. The percent of students suspended multiple times decreased from 4.1% to 3.4%.

Incident and suspension rates decreased for each of the major racial groups, while maintaining the same pattern as previous years. Black students registered a higher incident rate (53.7%; with 17.1% percent of students committing at least one incident) than Hispanic (17.7%, with 7.7% percent of students committing at least one incident) and White (14.9% with 6.7% of students committing at least one incident). Students from different racial/ethnic groups were suspended at relatively similar rates for the same type of incident.

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 (see Appendix H for a listing of incident categories and types of incidents that fall within them). Schools are required by School Board Policy 5006: Suspension and Expulsion and School Board Policy 5.8: 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). The District also uses the Preventing Recidivism through Opportunities, Mentoring, Interventions, Supports, and Education (PROMISE) program which

provides alternatives to students who have committed infractions that would typically lead to arrest and entry into the juvenile justice system.

Schools create school-wide positive behavior plans annually which specify the prevention and intervention strategies that they will be using. Additionally, schools are assigned a Multi-Tiered System of Supports/Response to Intervention (MTSS/RtI) Facilitator from the district to support them in addressing and meeting the needs of students. Furthermore, administrators are trained annually on current discipline legislation and policy, and are provided with data to monitor their school's incident and suspension rates. In school year 2017-18, a report of students who committed 5 or more incidents and/or were issued more than one suspension in the previous school year was posted in the DWH reports folder to assist schools in identifying students in need of extra support.

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.

XI. 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, 2014-15 through 2016-17

Table A-2: Total number and rate of students who committed incidents by school level, 2014-15 through 2016-17

Appendix B:

Total number of suspensions and number and percent of students suspended by school level and by suspension type, 2014-15 through 2016-17

Appendix C:

Table C-1: Total number and rate of incidents by student race/ethnicity, 2014-15 through 2016-17

Table C-2: Total number and percent of students who committed incidents by student race/ethnicity, 2014-15 through 2016-17

Appendix D:

Total number of suspensions by student race/ethnicity and special populations, 2014-15 through 2016-17

Appendix E:

Total number of incidents and percent of incidents assigned a suspension by student race/ethnicity, 2016-17

Appendix F:

Total number of incidents by school, 2014-15 through 2016-17

Appendix G:

Total number of suspensions by school, 2014-15 through 2016-17

Appendix H:

Incidents category details

XII. REFERENCES

School Board of Broward County, Florida, The. (2013a). Code of Student Conduct. Fort Lauderdale, FL: Author. Retrieved March 21, 2016, from <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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