

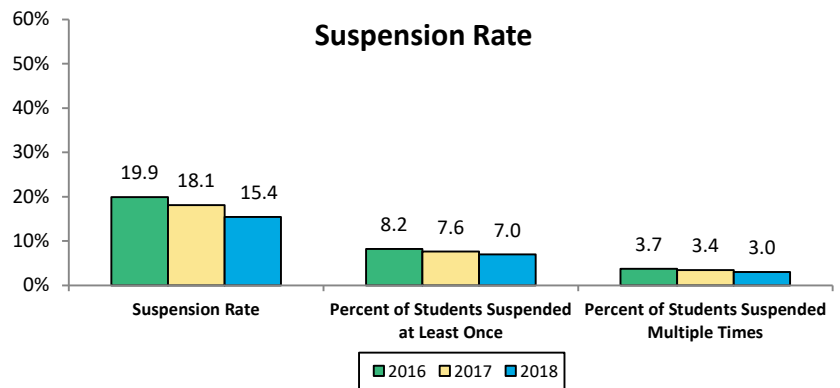
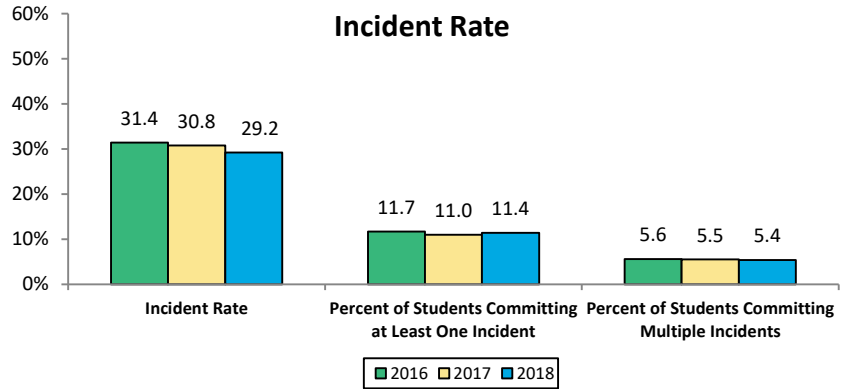
From 2015-16 to 2017-18,
the **Incident Rate** decreased by

2 percentage points

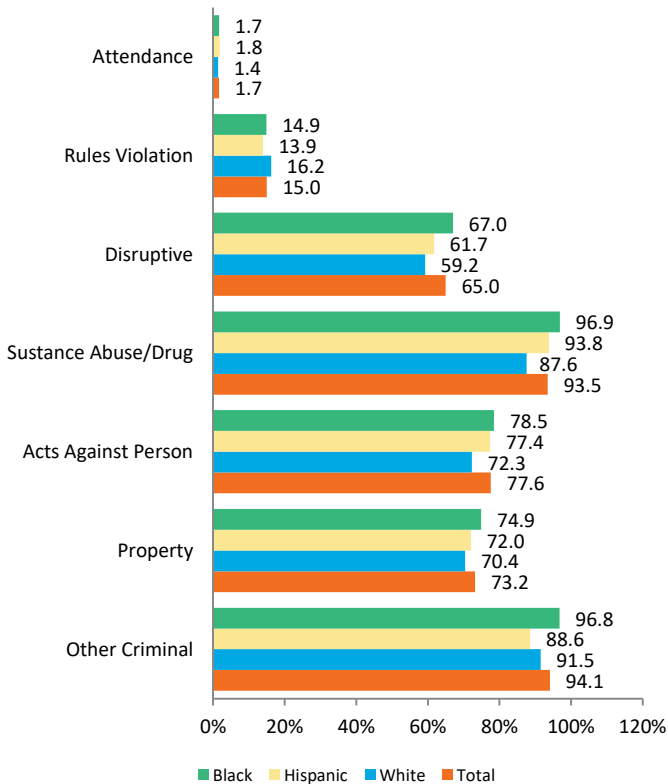
and the **Suspension Rate** decreased by

5 percentage points

- The Incident Rate decreased from 31% to 29% between 2015-16 and 2017-18. The percent of students committing at least one incident decreased from 12% to 11% in the same time period, with the percent of students committing multiple incidents decreasing from 6% to 5%.
- The Suspension Rate decreased from 20% to 15% between 2015-16 and 2017-18. The percent of students suspended at least once in the same time period decreased from 8% to 7%. The percent of students suspended multiple times decreased from 4% to 3%.



Incidents Resulting in Suspensions by Race/Ethnicity



- The incident rate dropped at the centers (10.4 percentage points), high (6 percentage points), and middle (5.1 percentage points) school levels, at the elementary level the rate increased (2.2 percentage points).
- A larger percent of Black students committed incidents (18%) and received suspensions (11%) than did Hispanic (8% and 4%) and White (7% and 4%) students.
- Black students were somewhat more likely to be suspended than White students for incidents in the same category. These differences are at least partially accounted for when controlling for students with multiple incidents and the differences in severity of incidents within the same category.

Additional Resources

- Detailed school-by-school results: <http://www.browardschools.com/sar>
- Information on intervention programs: <http://www.browardprevention.org>

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA

**DANIEL GOHL
CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER**

Signatures on File

DATE: December 3, 2018

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, 2015-16 through 2017-18**

Incident and suspension rates decreased over the three-year period between 2015-16 and 2017-18. The incident rate decreased by two percentage points (from 31% to 29%), and suspension rate decreased by five percentage points (from 20% to 15%). The percent of students committing incidents decreased by one percentage point (from 12% to 11%) and the percent of students receiving suspensions decreased by one percentage point (from 8% to 7%).

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 (49%; down from 54% in 2015-16) with 18% committing at least one incident. Hispanic students followed, with an incident rate of 17% (down from 19% in 2015-16), with 8% of Hispanic students committing at least one incident. The incident rate for White students was 16% (up from 15% in 2015-16), 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://bowardschools.com/sar>.

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

cc: School Board Members
Senior Leadership Team
Directors, Office of School Performance & Accountability



Research Brief

BEHAVIOR INCIDENTS AND SUSPENSIONS IN BROWARD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS, 2015-16 THROUGH 2017-18

The District's Code of Student Conduct Handbook 2017-2020 (School Board Policy 5.8a) 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 Code of Student Conduct Handbook 2017-2020. 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, 2017).

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 Handbook 2017-2020 contains a discipline matrix which offers guidelines for assigning consequences to violations of school board policies. In school year 2013-14, policy 5006 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, 2017).

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 (2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18). 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. This rate may exceed 100% when the number of incidents is greater than the number of students enrolled.
- **Percent of Students Committing at Least One Incident** is calculated dividing the number of students who have committed at least one incident 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.
- **Suspension Rate** the rate of suspensions occurring at schools 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.
- **Percent of Students with Suspensions by Suspension Type** is calculated by dividing the number of students with a specific type of suspension (internal, external, or AES) by the total number of students enrolled at the 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.

III. DISTRICT TOTALS

Incident Rate and Percent of Students with Incidents. The incident rate in 2017-18 decreased from the two prior school years from 31.4% to 29.2%. This change, from 86,436 incidents in 2015-16 to 80,918 incidents in 2017-18 represents a 2.2 percentage point decrease in the incident rate. In school year 2017-18, the percent of students involved in at least one incident (11.4%) was lower than the incident rate as some of the students (5.4%) were involved in multiple incidents (Figure 1 and Appendix A).

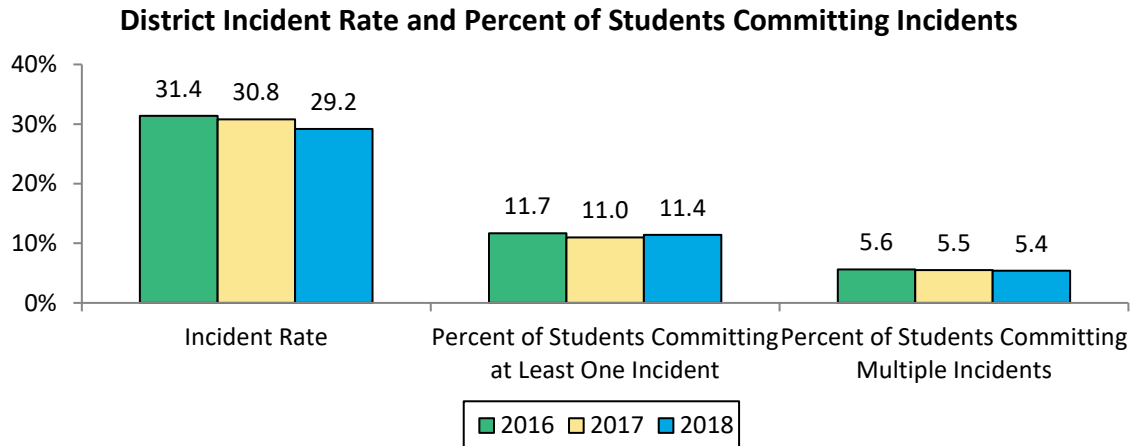


Figure 1. Incident rate and percent of students committing incidents Districtwide for the 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18 school years.

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 2017-18 school year. For all three school years, disruptive incidents were the most reported incident type (Figure 2 and Appendix A).

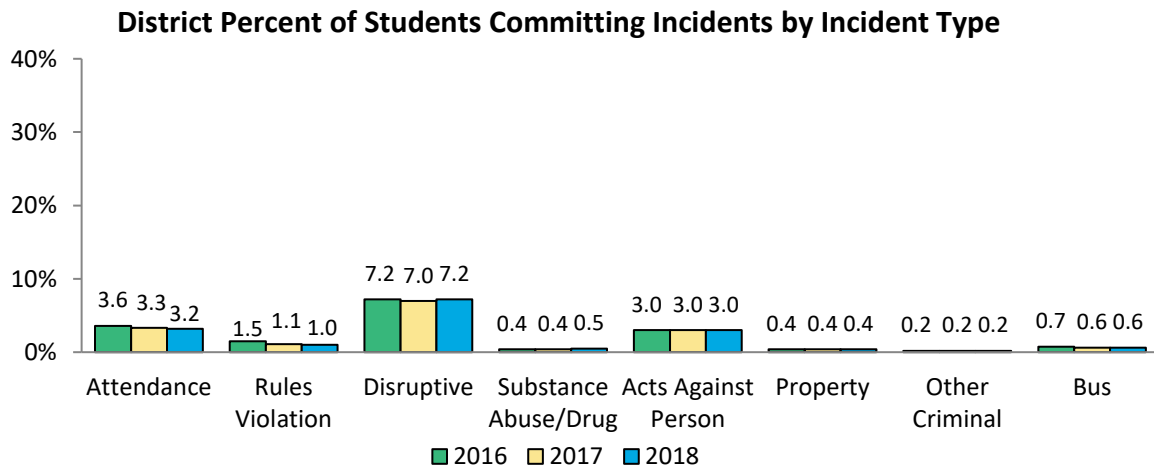


Figure 2. Percent of students with incidents by incident type Districtwide for the 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18 school years.

Suspension Rate and Percent of Students with Suspensions. The number of suspensions dropped from 54,876 in 2015-16 to 42,708 in 2017-18, representing a 4.5 percentage point decrease in the suspension rate (from 19.9% to 15.4%) over the three-year period. The percent of students suspended (7.0%) was lower than the suspension rate as some of the students (3.0%) received multiple suspensions (Figure 3 and Appendix B).

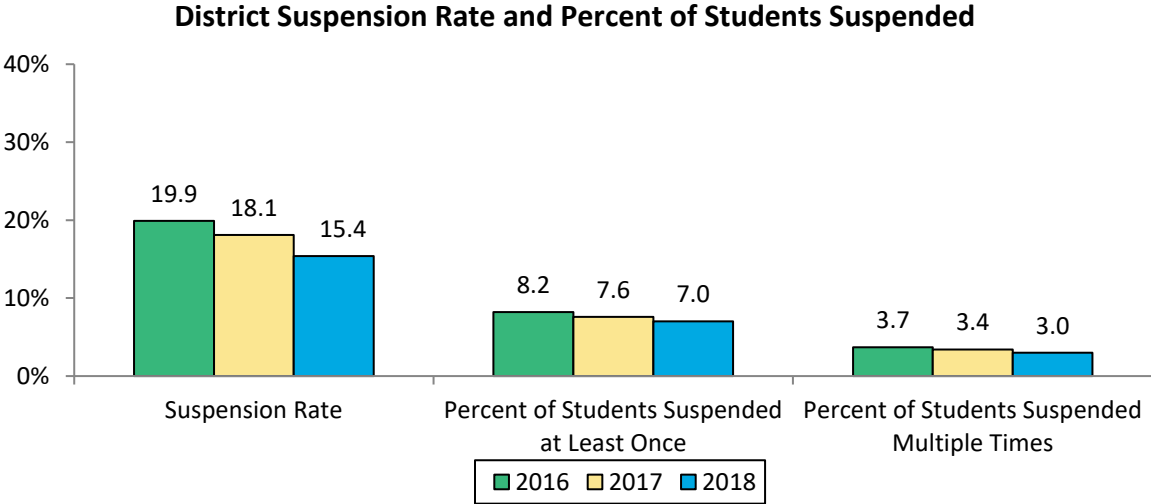


Figure 3. Suspension rate and percent of students suspended Districtwide for the 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18 school years.

Suspensions by Type. Less than 2% of students received external suspensions during the 2017-18 school year. Internal suspensions were the most common type issued, with 5.0% of students receiving an internal suspension, followed by AES, with 2.2% of students receiving an AES (Figure 4 and Appendix B).

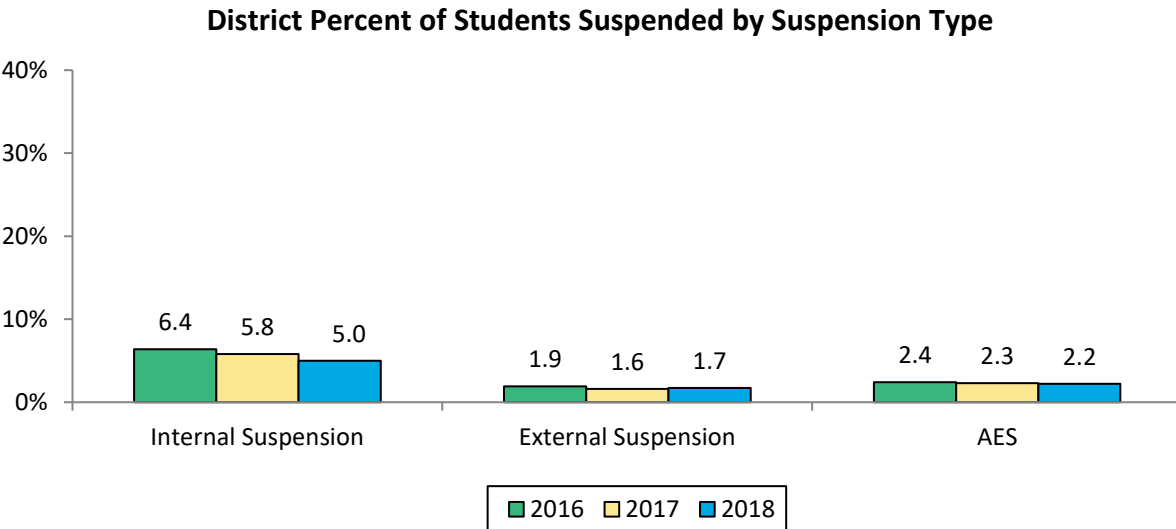


Figure 4. Percent of students receiving specific types of suspensions Districtwide for the 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18 school years.

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 all three school years, with their incident rate between two and three times higher than that of Hispanic and White students. The percent of Black students involved in incidents was slightly more than double that of Hispanic and of White students. Black students experienced the largest drop in incident rate over the three-year period (4.8 percentage points), followed by Hispanic students (1.5 percentage points). The incident rate for White students increased by 1.3 percentage points over the same time-period (Figure 5 and Appendix C). Across all racial/ethnic groups, disruptive incidents were the most prevalent (Figure 6 and Appendix C).

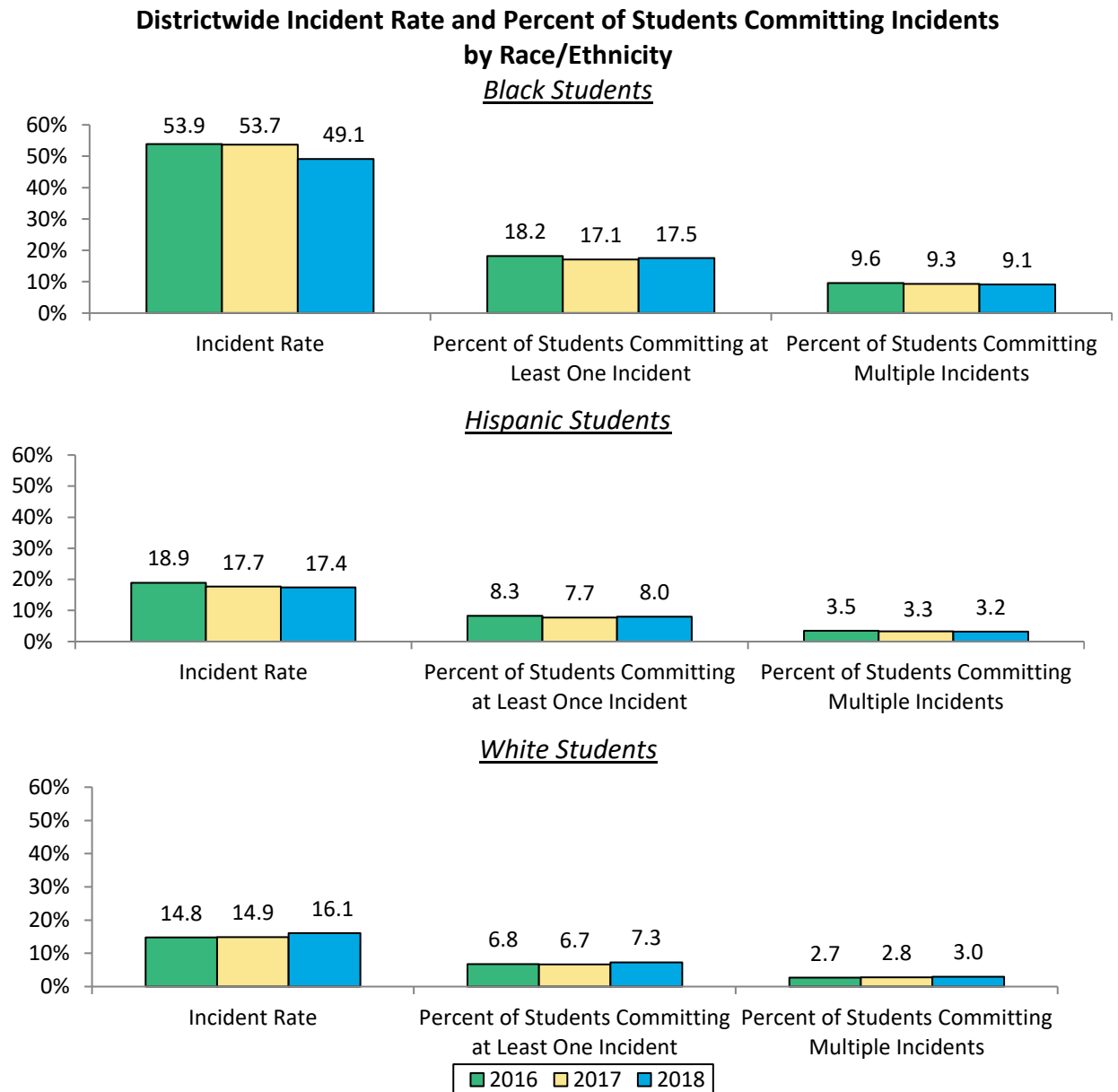


Figure 5. Incident rate and percent of students committing incidents Districtwide by race/ethnicity for the 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18 school years.

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

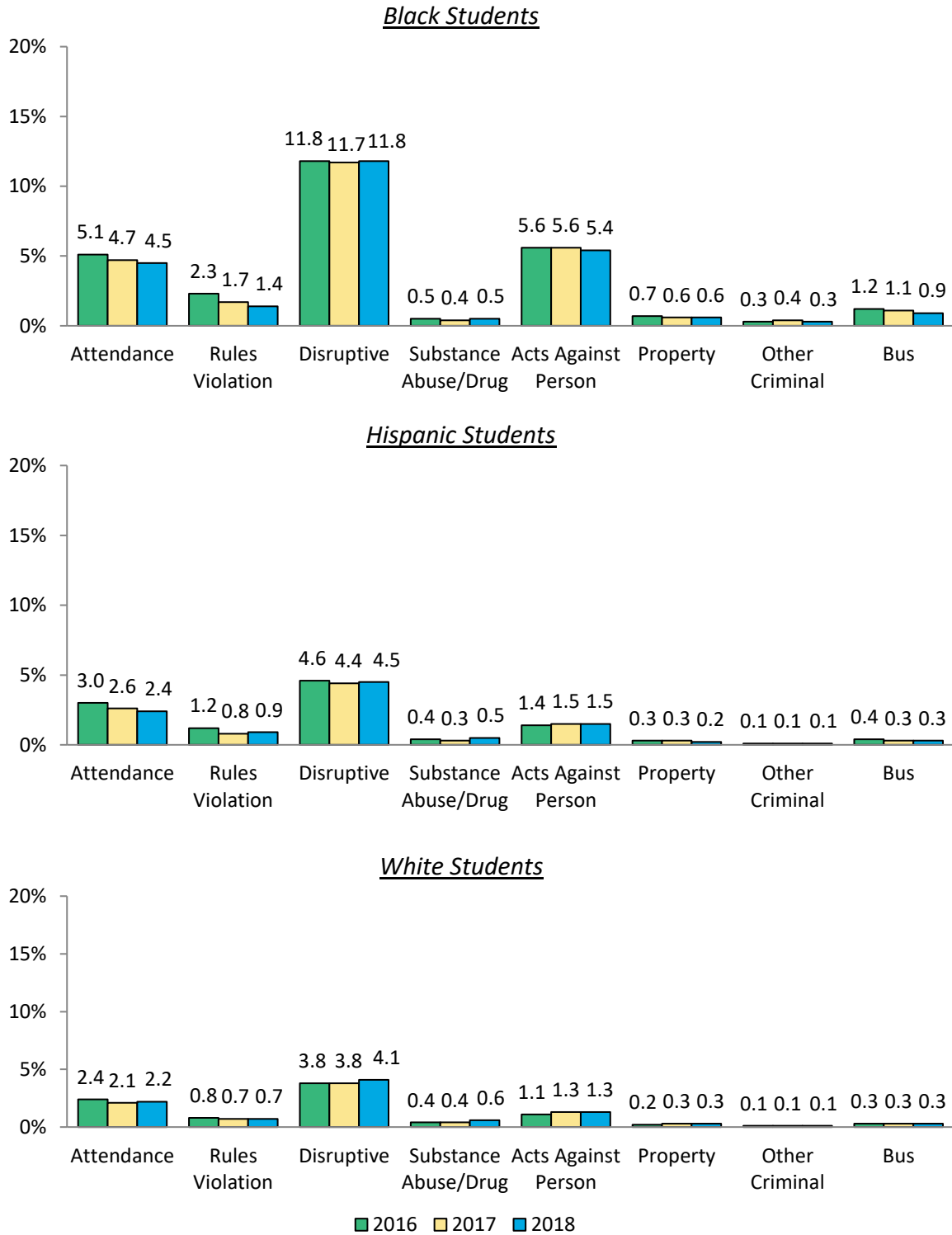


Figure 6. Districtwide percent of students with incidents by incident type by race/ethnicity for the 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18 school years.

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, 2017-18, the overall suspension rate for Black students was 11%, compared to 4% for Hispanic and White students. 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; as previously shown in Figure 5). For all three groups, the suspension rate decreased across the three school years (Appendix D).

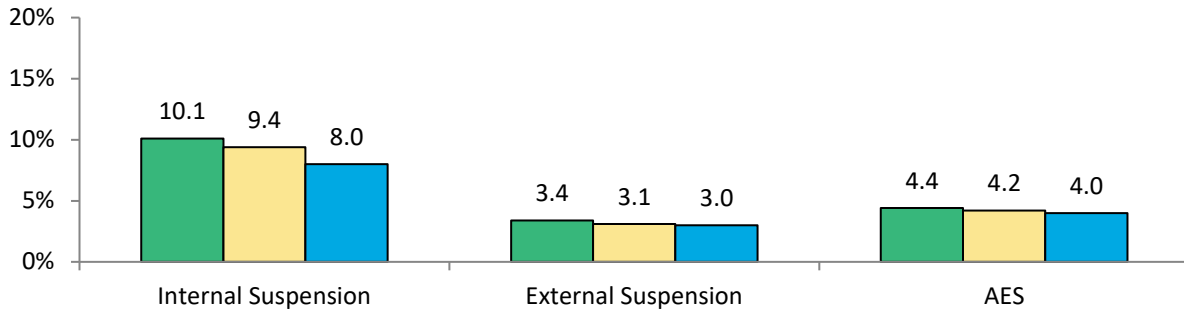
Districtwide Suspension Rate and Percent of Students Receiving Suspensions by Race/Ethnicity



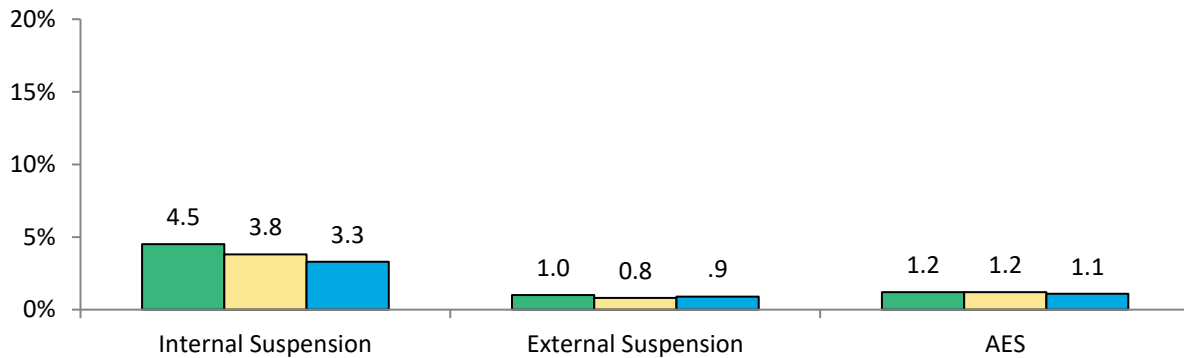
Figure 7. Suspension rate and percent of students suspended Districtwide by race/ethnicity for the 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18 school years.

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 2017-18 school year (Figure 8 and Appendix D).

**Districtwide Percent of Students Receiving Suspensions by Suspension Type
by Race/Ethnicity**
Black Students



Hispanic Students



White Students

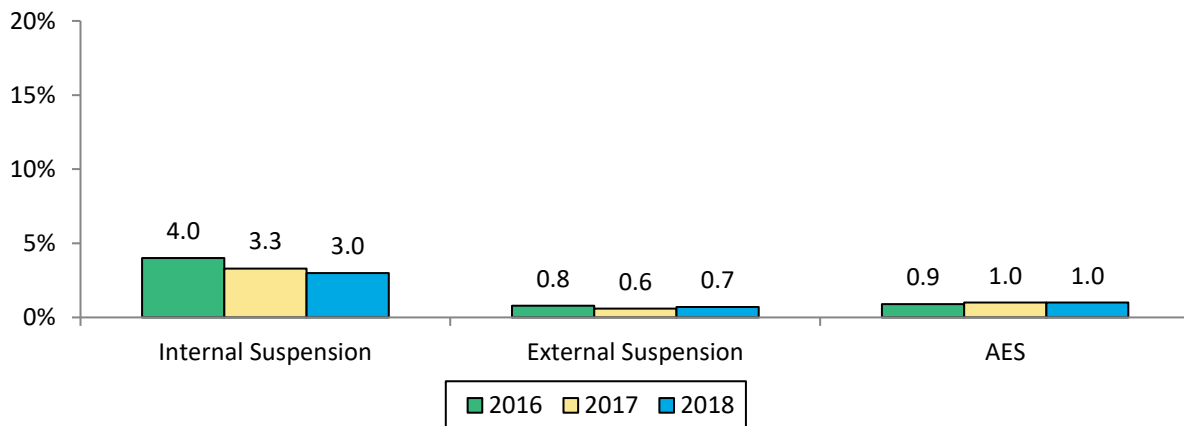


Figure 8. Percent students Districtwide with internal, external, and AES suspensions by race/ethnicity for the 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18 school years.

Rate of Incidents Resulting in Suspension. In order to determine if suspensions were issued equitably among the three most prominent racial/ethnic groups, the rate of incidents resulting in suspension by incident type was calculated for Black, Hispanic, and White students. Figure 9 shows Black students were more frequently suspended than White students for disruptive (7.8 percentage points more), substance abuse/drug (9.3 percentage points more), acts against person (6.2 percentage points more), property (4.5 percentage points more), and other criminal (5.3 percentage points more) incidents (see also Appendix E).

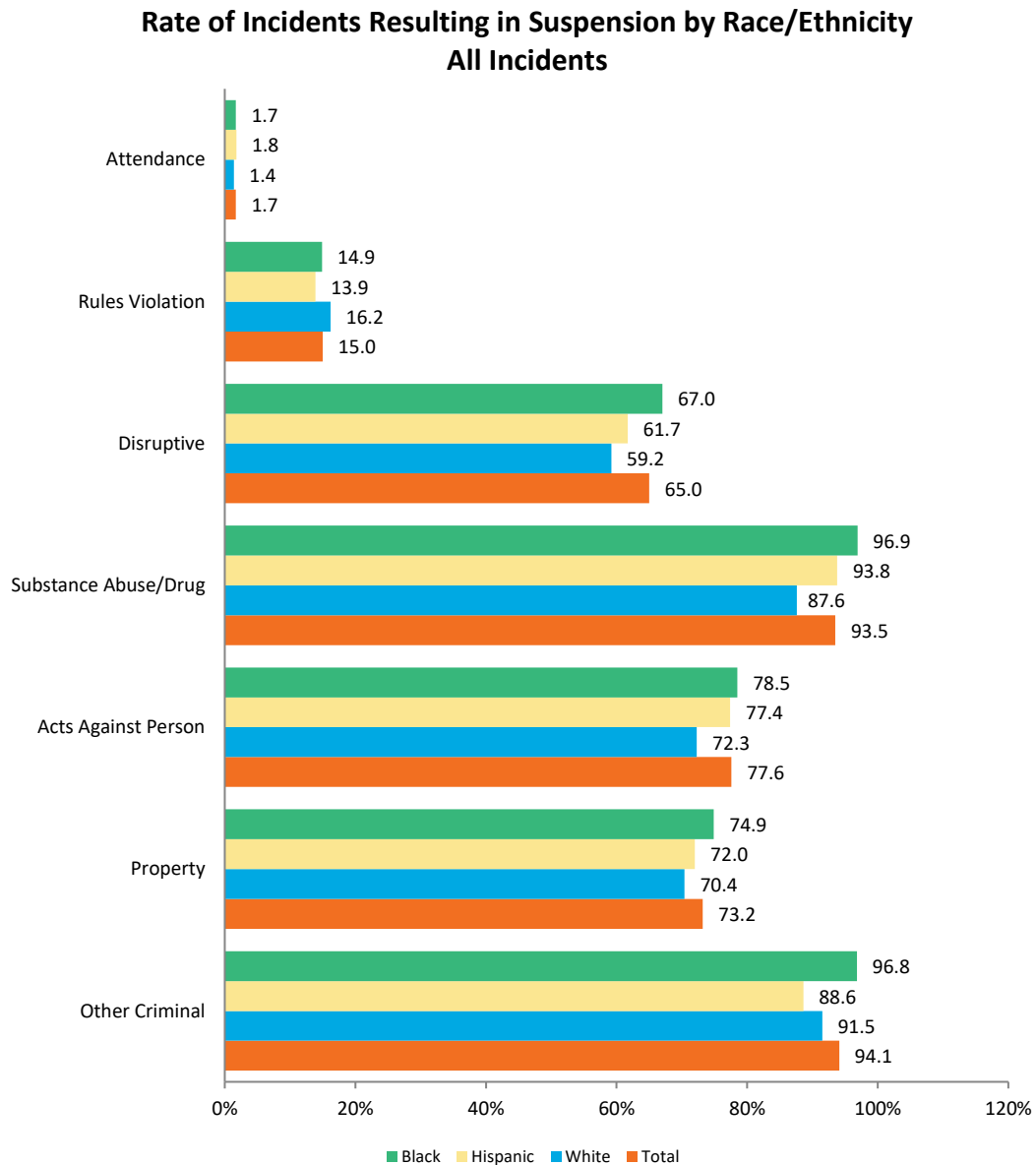


Figure 9. Rate of all incidents resulting in a suspension by race/ethnicity by specific incident type for the 2017-18 school year.

Because differences were found in the rate of incidents resulting in suspension, a one-way analysis of variance was conducted to determine if these differences were statistically significant. Four of the five differences (all except for other criminal) were statistically significant. One potential explanation for these differences could be racial bias. Further analyses were conducted to test whether there could be alternative explanations.

The first analysis explored the same comparison of suspension rate per incident type but with students who committed an incident for the first time in school year 2017-18. For many incidents the BCPS discipline matrix does not call for a suspension the first time a student commits an incident but does call for a suspension subsequent times the incident is committed. Therefore, looking at students' first incident will control for the effect of students with multiple incidents (and therefore with more severe consequences). If findings from this analysis show a decrease in the disparity between the rate of suspensions per incident type between Black and White students, this would attribute at least part of the disparity to a greater percent of incidents committed by Black students being second or more offenses.

The second analysis looked at differences in the level of severity of specific incidents within a category. Within any category, there are a number of incidents; some of which are severe enough according to BCPS's discipline matrix to call for a suspension, and others which are not. If, for example, a greater number of Black students had more severe incidents and a greater number of White students had less severe incidents, that could be an additional alternative explanation to bias driving the difference in suspension rate.

Rate of Incidents Resulting in Suspensions for First Offenses. For this analysis students' first incidents for the 2017-18 school year were examined. The data indicate that some of the differences in the rate of incidents leading to a suspension can be accounted for when controlling for students with multiple incidents. Looking at the first incident narrowed the gap in all five categories that had a discrepancy, and in some cases changed the direction of the difference. The discrepancy in the percent of disruptive incidents resulting in suspension went from 7.8 to 6.6, substance abuse/drug from 9.3 to 5.8, and acts against person from 6.2 to 4.4. Property incidents and other criminal incidents reversed the direction of the difference. In the original analysis, Black students were suspended at a rate 4.5 percentage points higher than White students for property incidents. This difference was reversed when examining only students' first incident, with White students being suspended at a rate 2.1 percentage points higher than Black students for this category of incident. Similarly, the other criminal category changed from Black students being suspended 5.3 percent more than White students to White students being suspended at a rate 2 percent more than Black students (see Table 1).

Table 1

Percent of Black and White students suspended after committing incidents by incident type.

	% Total	% Total First	% White	% White First	% Hispanic	% Hispanic First	% Black	% Black First	Difference	
									% Black/White All	% Black/White First
Other Criminal	94.1	93.3	91.5	96.9	88.6	91.5	96.8	94.9	5.3	-2
Property	73.2	67.2	70.4	69	72	67.5	74.9	66.9	4.5	-2.1
Acts Against Person	77.6	75.9	72.3	72.5	77.4	75.4	78.5	76.9	6.2	4.4
Substance Abuse/Drug	93.5	92.9	87.6	89.4	93.8	93.2	96.9	95.2	9.3	5.8
Disruptive	65	61.4	59.2	56.3	61.7	60.7	67	62.9	7.8	6.6
Rules Violation	15	11.3	16.2	11.7	13.9	10.2	14.9	11.6	-1.3	-0.1
Attendance	1.7	1.9	1.4	1.6	1.8	2	1.7	2.1	0.3	0.5

Note. Percentages are shown for all incidents committed and also for the first incident committed by a student for school year 2017-18. The difference columns show the disparity in how often an incident of a specific type results in a suspension for Black students compared to White students for all incidents and for first-time incidents.

Differences in Severity of Incidents by Race/Ethnicity

Table 2 shows the percent of time that Black and White students were suspended for committing a specific incident under the substance abuse/drug incident category. The data suggest that some of the difference in the rate of incidents leading to a suspension can be accounted for by the severity of the incident. For example, while both drug use/possession/influence and tobacco possession/use/sale/transmittal are classified as substance abuse/drug incidents, students are more likely to be suspended for the incidents involving drugs than incidents involving tobacco. As seen in Table 2 Black students had 181 incidents of drug use/possession/Influence compared to 46 offenses committed by White students in this category while White students had 126 incidents of tobacco possession/use/sale/transmittal compared to 38 incidents committed by Black students. Within each specific category, the difference in suspension rate between Black and White students is less than two percentage points. This supports the idea that at least some of the discrepancy can be accounted for by the severity of the incident committed. However, it should be noted that this analysis is not a comprehensive comparison of the severity of incidents committed by students by race/ethnicity within each category.

Table 2

Rate of first incidents resulting in a suspension by race/ethnicity by specific incident type for the substance abuse/drug category during the 2017-18 school year.

Specific Incident in Substance Abuse/Drug Category	Black			White		
	Incidents	Suspensions	% Suspended	Incidents	Suspensions	% Suspended
Drug Use/Possession/Influence	181	180	99.4	46	45	97.8
Tobacco Possession/Use/Sale	38	32	84.2	126	104	82.5

Both analyses provide strong support to suggest that the difference in the percent of incidents resulting in suspension between Black and White students is at least partially a result of factors other than bias. However, these analyses are not meant to be comprehensive, and thus do not completely rule out the possibility that bias exists.

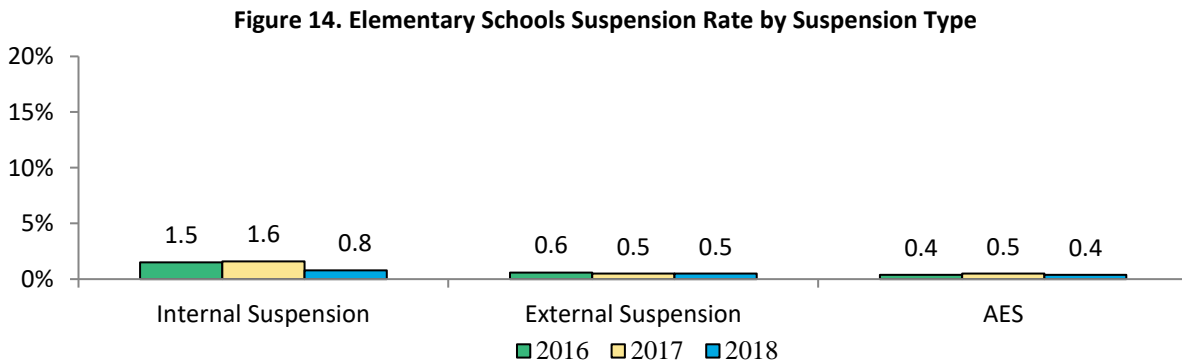
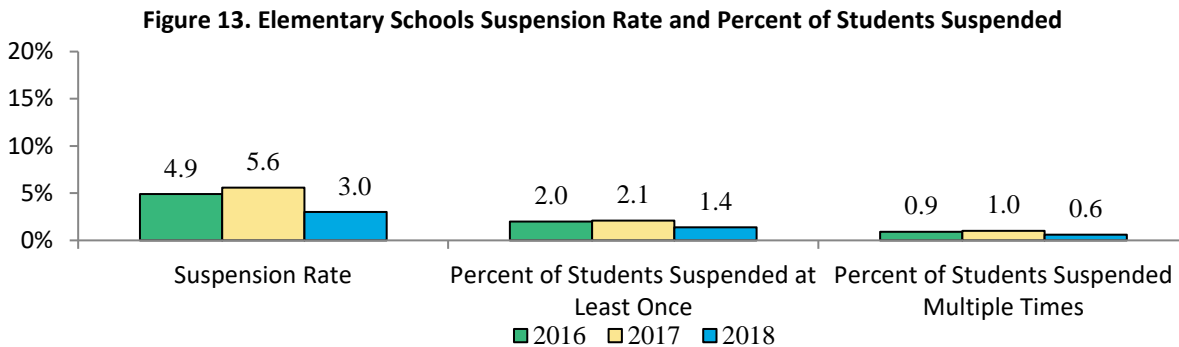
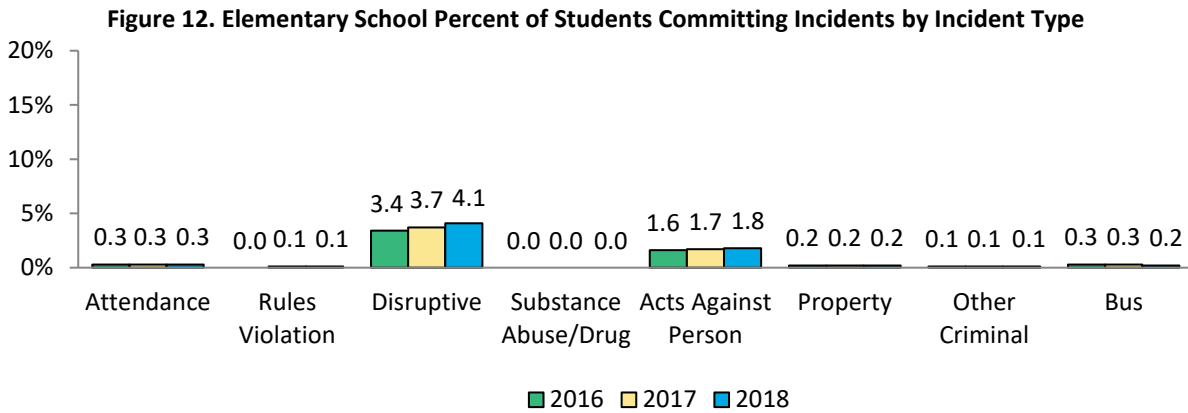
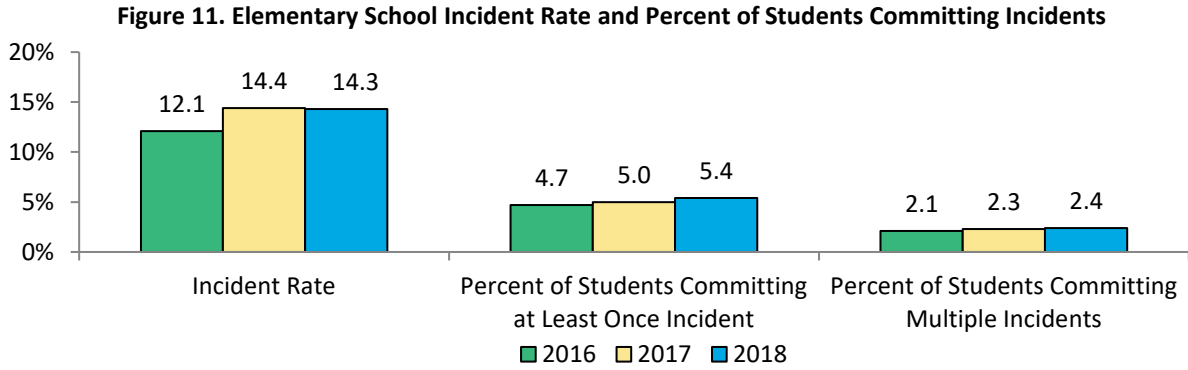
V. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TOTALS

Incident Rate and Percent of Students Committing Incidents.

Figures 11 and 12 illustrate the incident rate and percent of students committing incidents at elementary schools for the 2015-16 through 2017-18 school years. Over the three-year period the number and rate of incidents increased from 15,372 incidents in 2015-16 (12.1% incident rate) to 18,228 incidents in 2017-18 (14.3% incident rate) at elementary schools. Disruptive incidents were the most prevalent for all three school years, with 3.4%, 3.7%, and 4.1%, of all elementary school students registering at least one disruptive incident type. Less than 3% of elementary school students committed multiple incidents 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 13 and 14. 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, 2017-18, the overall suspension rate was 3.0%, and the percent of students receiving at least one suspension of any type (internal, external, or AES) was 1.4%. Less than 1% of all elementary school students received an external suspension during the 2017-18 school year. Less than 1% of all elementary students were suspended multiple times (see also Appendix B).



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 suspension rate by suspension type for the 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18 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 2015-16 through the 2017-18 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 34,554 incidents (56.9% incident rate) in 2015-16 to 32,447 incidents (51.8% incident rate) in 2017-18. During the most recent school year, disruptive incidents registered the largest percent of students, with 12.1% of all middle school students registering at least one disruptive incident type, followed by acts against person (6.2%), and attendance (3.7%). 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 17 and 18. These data indicate that, across all years, the rates for all types of suspensions decreased from 41.0% in 2015-16 to 35.3% in 2017-18. During the most recently completed school year, 2017-18, 14.1% of students received at least one suspension, while 6.8% received multiple suspensions. Approximately 3% of all middle school students received an external suspension during the 2017-18 school year (see also Appendix B).

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

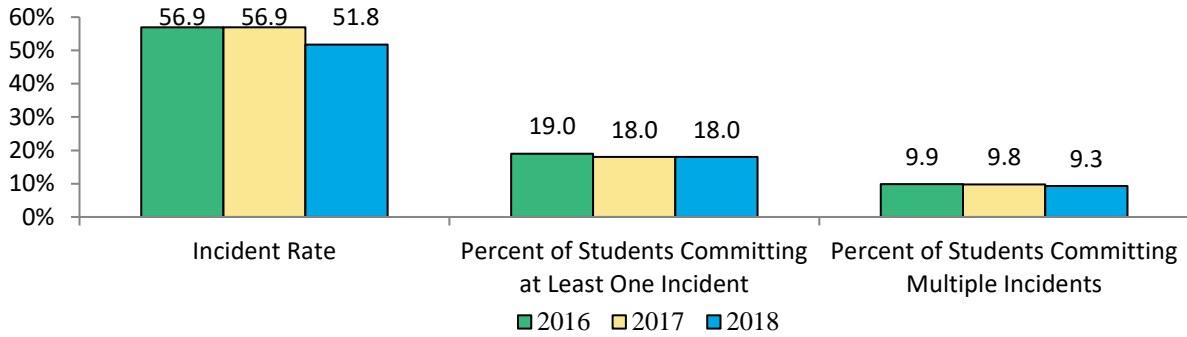


Figure 16. Middle School Percent of Students Committing Incidents by Type of Incident

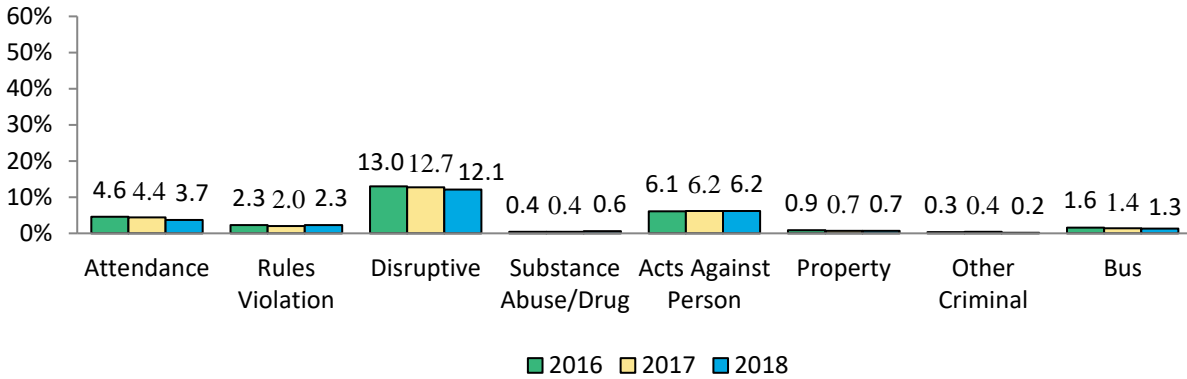


Figure 17. Middle School Suspension Rate and Percent of Students Suspended

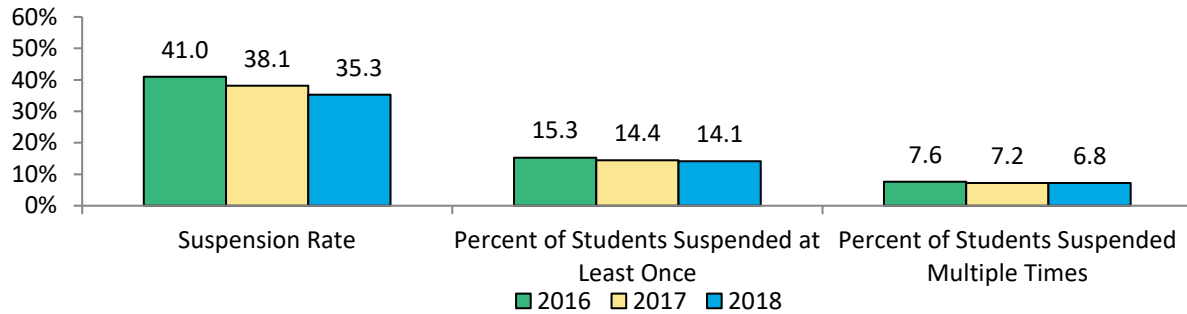
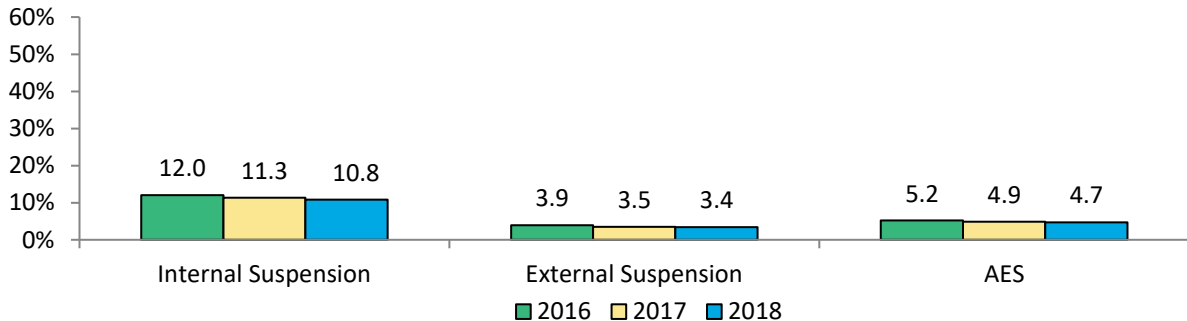


Figure 18. Middle School Suspension Rate by Suspension Type



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 suspension rate by suspension type for the 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18 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 2015-16 through the 2017-18 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 29,685 incidents (36.5% incident rate) in 2015-16 to 24,950 incidents (30.5% incident rate) in 2017-18. During the most recent school year, disruptive incidents registered the largest percent of students, with 7.6% of all high school students registering at least one disruptive incident type, followed by attendance (6.6%), and acts against a person (2.2%). 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 21 and 22. These data indicate that, across all years, the suspension rate decreased from 23.7% in 2015-16 to 16.6% in 2017-18. During the most recently completed school year, 2017-18, 9.3% of students received at least one suspension, while 3.3% received multiple suspensions. Almost 2% of all high school students received an external suspension during the 2017-18 school year (see also Appendix B).

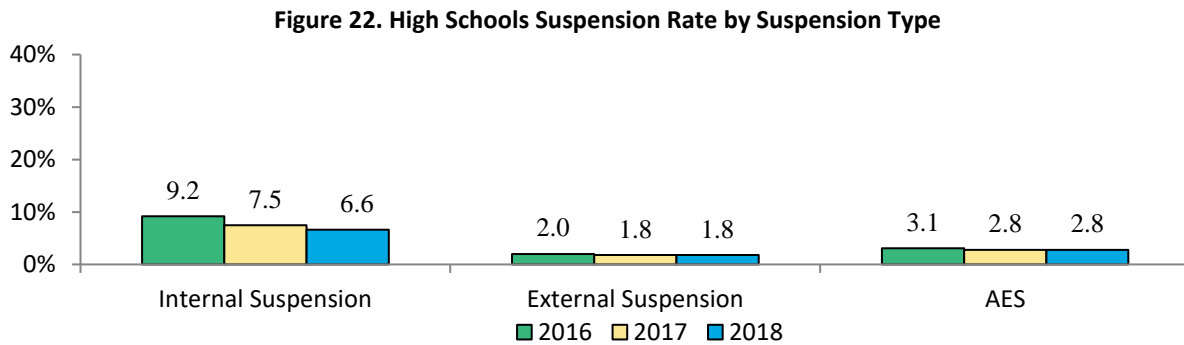
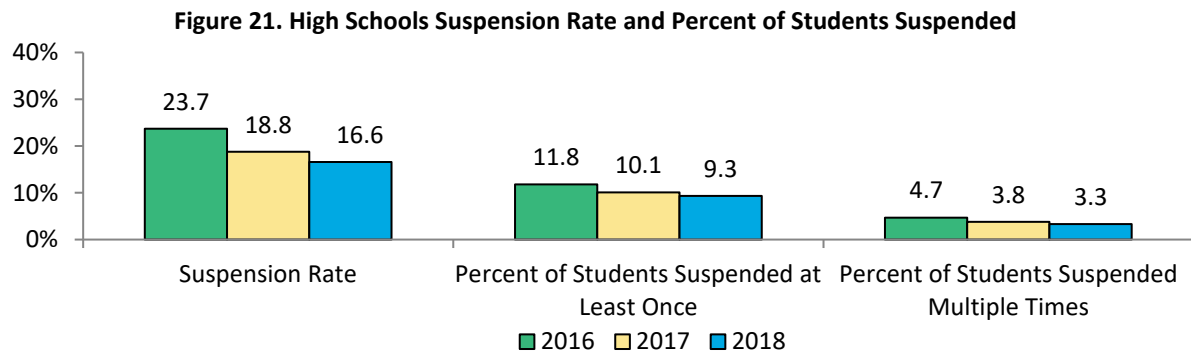
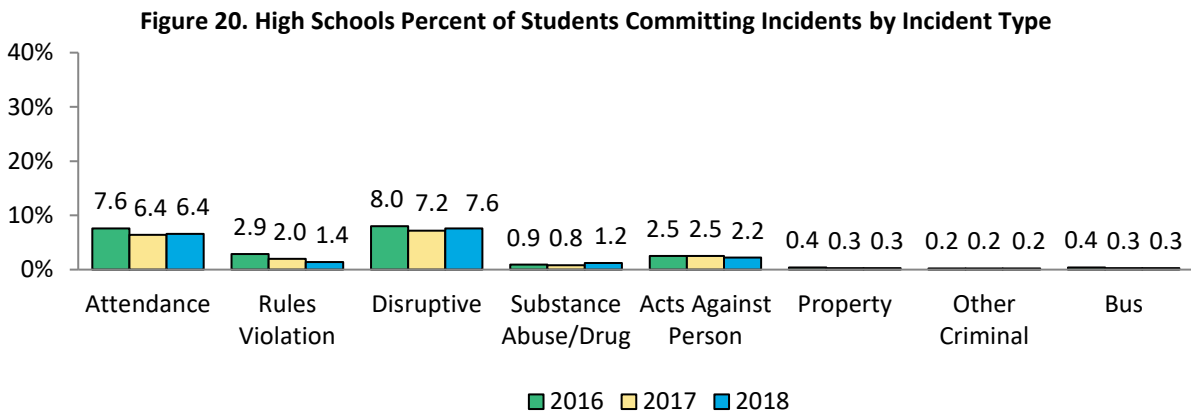
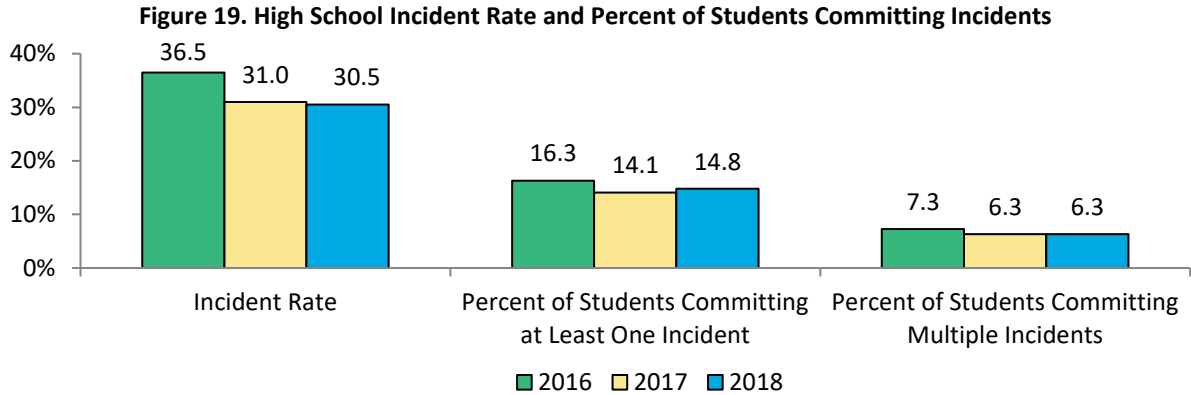


Figure 19, 20, 21 and 22. High School incident rate and percent of students committing incidents, percent of students committing incidents by incident type, suspension rate and percent of students suspended, and suspension rate by suspension type for the 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18 school years.

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 2015-16 through the 2017-18 school years. Over the three-year period the number and rate of incidents decreased at center schools from 6,825 incidents (111.5% incident rate) in 2015-16 to 5,293 incidents (101.1% incident rate) in 2017-18. During the most recent school year, disruptive incidents registered the largest percent of students, with 18.1% of all center school students registering at least one disruptive incident type, followed by attendance (12.1%), and acts against person (5.9%). These data include all incidents (including those that did not result in suspensions; see also Appendices A1 and A2). *Note, incident rate may exceed 100% when the number of incidents is greater than the number of students enrolled.*

Rate of Suspensions and Percent of Students with Suspensions.

Suspension rates and the percent of students suspended are displayed in Figures 25 and 26. These data indicate that, across all years, the rates for all types of suspensions decreased from 2015-16 (73.4%) to 2017-18 (61.8%). During the most recently completed school year, 2017-18, 20.6% of students received at least one suspension, while 10.8% received multiple suspensions. Seven percent of all center school students received an external suspension during the 2017-18 school year (see also Appendix B).

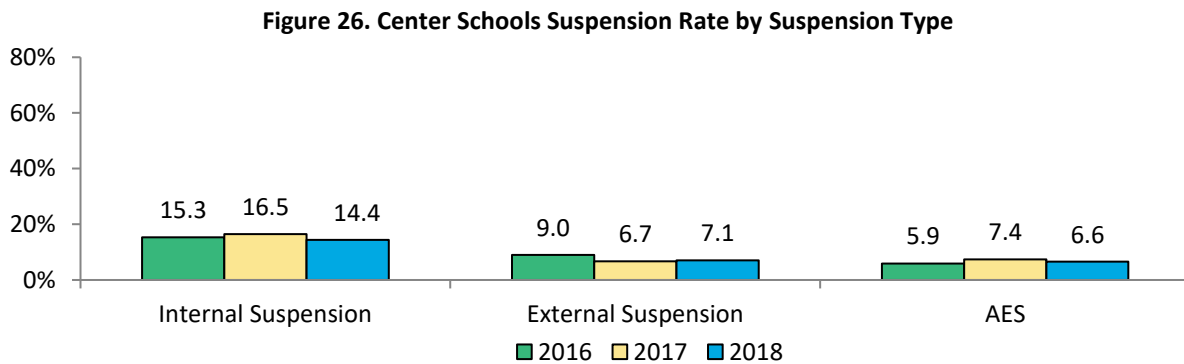
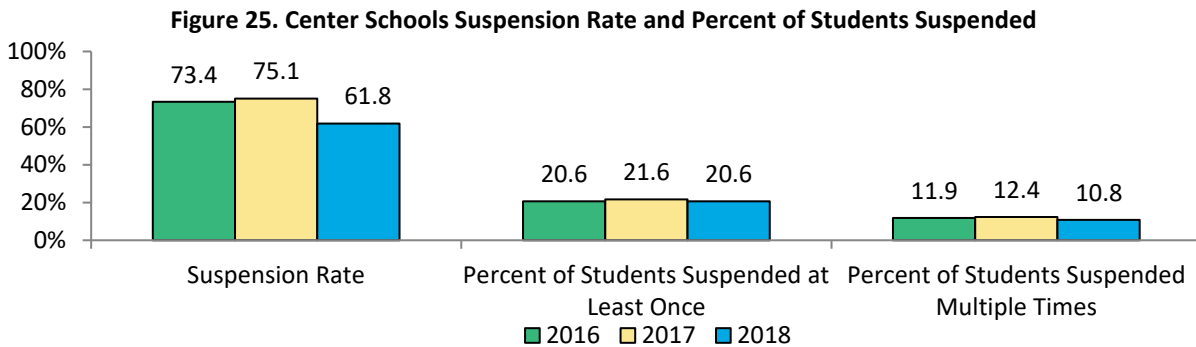
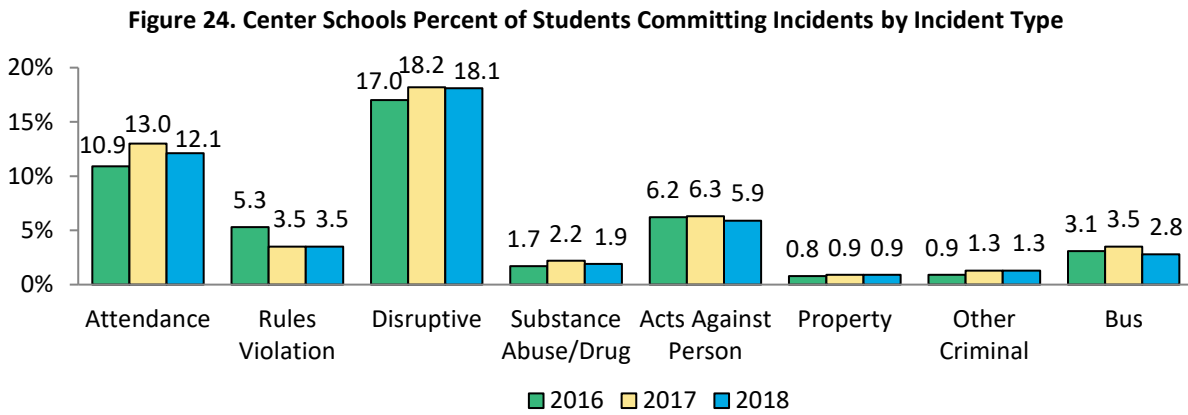
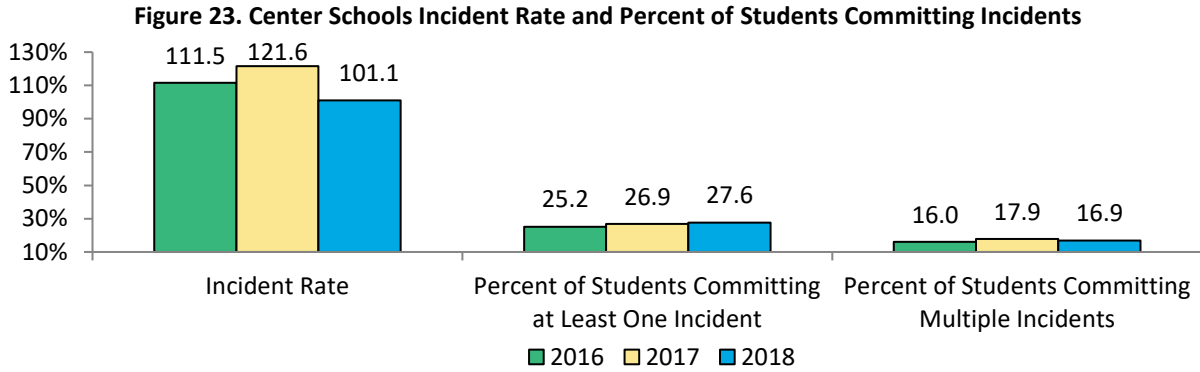


Figure 23, 24, 25 and 26. Center School incident rate and percent of students committing incidents, percent of students committing incidents by incident type, suspension rate and percent of students suspended, and suspension rate by suspension type for the 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18 school years.

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

Districtwide data on incidents and suspensions for students enrolled in district-managed and charter schools for the 2015-16 through 2017-2018 school years were presented in this report. Overall, there was a 2.2% decrease in the incident rate (from 31.4% to 29.2%). The percent of students committing incidents decreased slightly from 11.7% to 11.4% in the same time-period, with the percent of students committing multiple incidents also decreasing slightly (from 5.6% to 5.4%).

Disruptive incidents were the most common incident type, with 7.2% of students committing a disruptive incident. Attendance was the next most common (3.2%) followed by acts against person (3.0%) and rules violation (1.0%). 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 suspension rate decreased by 4.5 percentage points (from 19.9% to 15.4%). The percent of students suspended decreased from 8.2% to 7.0%. The percent of students suspended multiple times decreased from 3.7% to 3.0%.

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 (49.1%; with 17.5% percent of students committing at least one incident) than Hispanic (17.4%, with 8.0% percent of students committing at least one incident) and White (16.1% with 7.3% of students committing at least one incident). A difference was found between Black and White students in the rate of suspension for incidents in the same category. Black students were more likely to be suspended than White students for 5 of the 8 incident categories. The largest difference was for the substance abuse/drugs category (9.3 percentage point difference). Further analysis reveals at least part of this difference can be accounted for by controlling for the effect of students with multiple incidents, incident severity, and the variation in suspension rate between schools with predominantly Black students, suggesting that this difference is not necessarily a reflection of bias.

XI. DISCUSSION

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 5.8a: Code of Student Conduct Handbook 2017-2020 to use the Discipline Matrix as their guide in determining appropriate consequences for student infractions (School Board of Broward County, 2017). 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 a juvenile delinquency arrest and therefore 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 to support their climate and culture. Additionally, schools are assigned a Multi-Tiered System of Supports/Response to Intervention (MTSS/RtI) Instructional Facilitator from the district to support them in addressing and meeting the behavioral, academic and social-emotional needs of students.

Through the Climate Transformation grant, the district secured permission to expand some of the grant activities to all Broward Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) schools in an effort to build capacity and support positive school culture. As a result of this effort, 53 schools within the district were recognized as Tier 1 PBIS schools and 12 schools were recognized for achieving the Gold level model PBIS school designation status.

Administrators are trained annually on current discipline legislation and policy and are provided with data to monitor their school's incident and suspension rates. Schools can utilize the Behavior Dashboard in the District's Behavioral and Academic Support Information System (BASIS) to see current trends such as the number of referrals by grade level, race/ethnicity, time of day, month (see Appendix I for an example), and staff member making referrals. Current student level information can be found on the risk factors tab on BASIS (for number of suspensions) and the PASL tab (for number of referrals). A list of students from the prior year with 5 or more incidents is also posted on the DWH reports folder.

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, 2015-16 through 2017-18

Table A-2: Total number and percent of students who committed incidents by school level, 2015-16 through 2017-18

Appendix B:

Number and percent of students suspended overall and by suspension type, and suspension rate, by school level, 2015-16 through 2017-18

Appendix C:

Table C-1: Total number and rate of incidents by incident type by student race/ethnicity, 2015-16 through 2017-18

Table C-2: Total number and percent of students who committed incidents by incident type by student race/ethnicity, 2015-16 through 2017-18

Appendix D:

Total number of suspensions by student race/ethnicity and special populations, 2015-16 through 2017-18

Appendix E:

Total number of incidents and rate of incidents assigned a suspension by student race/ethnicity, 2017-18

Appendix F:

Total number of incidents by school, 2015-16 through 2017-18

Appendix G:

Total number of suspensions by school, 2015-16 through 2017-18

Appendix H:

Incidents category details

Appendix I:

Example of BASIS behavioral dashboard data, incidents and suspensions by month, 2017-18

XII. REFERENCES

School Board of Broward County, Florida, The. (2017). Code of Student Conduct Handbook 2017-2020. Fort Lauderdale, FL. Retrieved September 26, 2018 from <http://www.broward.k12.fl.us/sbbcpolicies/docs/Code%20of%20Student%20Conduct%20Handbook%202017-2020.pdf>

School Board of Broward County, Florida, The. (2017). School Board Policy 5006: Suspension and Expulsion 2017-2020. Fort Lauderdale, FL. Retrieved September 26, 2018, from <http://www.broward.k12.fl.us/sbbcpolicies/docs/Policy%205006.pdf>

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