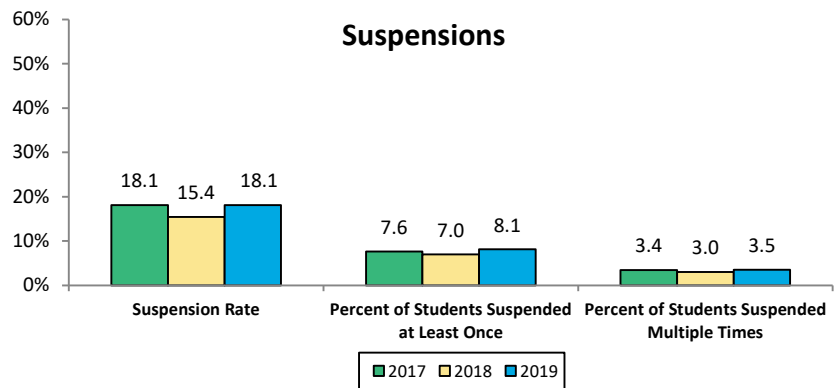
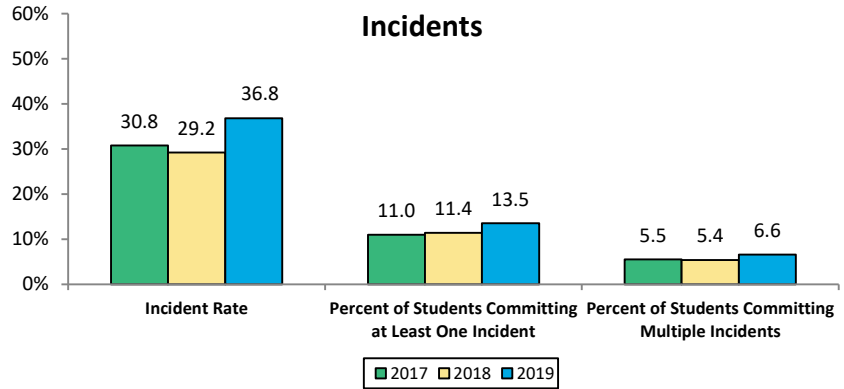
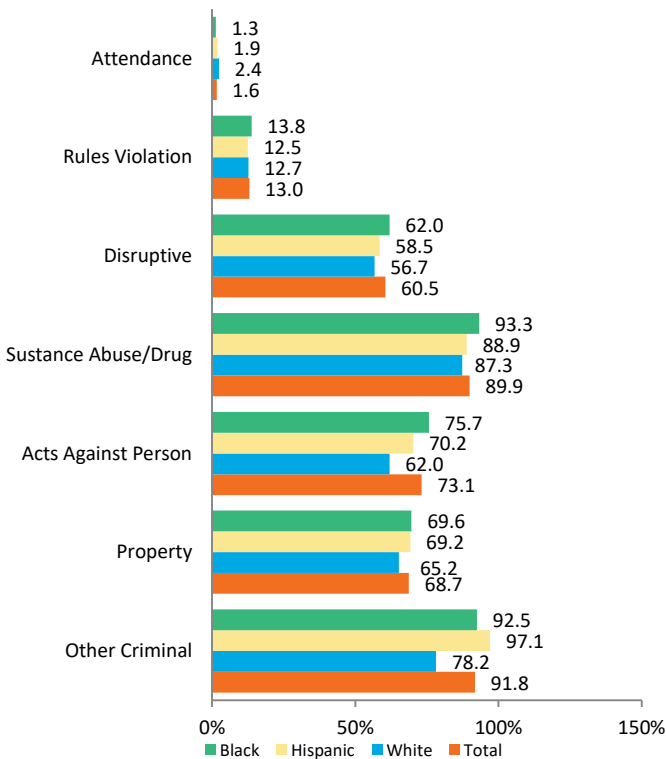


From 2017-18 to 2018-19
the incident rate increased by
8 percentage points ↑
and the Suspension Rate
increased by
3 percentage points ↑

- The incident rate decreased from 31% to 29% between 2016-17 and 2017-18 and increased from 29% to 37% between 2017-18 to 2018-19. The percent of students committing at least one incident stayed consistent at 11% from 2016-17 to 2017-18 and increased to 14% in 2018-19, with the percent of students committing multiple incidents first decreasing from 6% to 5% and then increasing from 5% to 7%.
- The suspension rate decreased from 18% to 15% between 2016-17 and 2017-18 and increased from 15% to 18% between 2017-18 and 2018-19. The percent of students suspended at least once from 2016-17 to 2017-18 decreased from 8% to 7% and then increased back to 8%. The percent of students suspended multiple times stayed consistent at 3% between 2016-17 and 2017-18 and rose to 4% between 2017-18 and 2018-19.



Incidents Resulting in Suspensions by Race/Ethnicity



- The incident rate *dropped* at the centers (39.3 percentage points), while the incident rate *increased* at the high school level (8.3 percentage points), at the middle school level (4.7 percentage points), and at the elementary school level (5.5 percentage points) between 2016-17 and 2018-19.
- A larger percentage of Black students committed incidents (20%) and received suspensions (13%) than did Hispanic (10% and 5%) and White (9% and 5%) 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 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 2, 2019

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, 2016-17 through 2018-19**

The incident rate decreased from 31% to 29% between 2016-17 and 2017-18 and increased from 29% to 37% between 2017-18 to 2018-19. The percent of students committing at least one incident stayed consistent at 11% from 2016-17 to 2017-18 and increased to 14% in 2018-19, with the percent of students committing multiple incidents first decreasing from 6% to 5% and then increasing from 5% to 7%. The Suspension Rate decreased from 18% to 15% between 2016-17 and 2017-18 and increased from 15% to 18% between 2017-18 and 2018-19. The percent of students suspended at least once from 2016-17 to 2017-18 decreased from 8% to 7% and then increased back to 8%. The percent of students suspended multiple times stayed consistent at 3% between 2016-17 and 2017-18 and rose to 4% between 2017-18 and 2018-19.

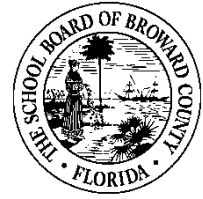
The incident rate increased for each of the three major racial/ethnic groups over the three-year period, with the overall pattern remaining the same. Black students registered the greatest incident rate at 61% (up from 54% in 2016-17) with 20% committing at least one incident. Hispanic students followed, with an incident rate of 23% (up from 18% in 2016-17), with 10% of Hispanic students committing at least one incident. The incident rate for White students was 21% (up from 15% in 2016-17), with 9% of all White students committing at least one 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://browardschools.com/sar>.

VSW/DG/RGB/RAA/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, 2016-17 THROUGH 2018-19

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, 2017a).

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 (School Board of Broward County 2017b).

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. A full list of incidents and how they are classified in the Handbook appears in Appendix H. 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, 2017a).

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 (2016-17, 2017-18, and 2018-19). 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 by 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** is the rate of suspensions occurring at 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.
- **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.
- **Alternative to External Suspension (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 2018-19 increased from the two prior school years from 30.8% to 36.8%. This change, from 85,472 incidents in 2016-17 to 101,364 incidents in 2018-19, represents a 6-percentage-point increase in the incident rate. In school year 2018-19, the percent of students involved in at least one incident (13.4%) and percent of students involved in multiple incidents (6.6%) were slightly higher than the previous 2 years. (see Figure 1 and Appendix A-1).

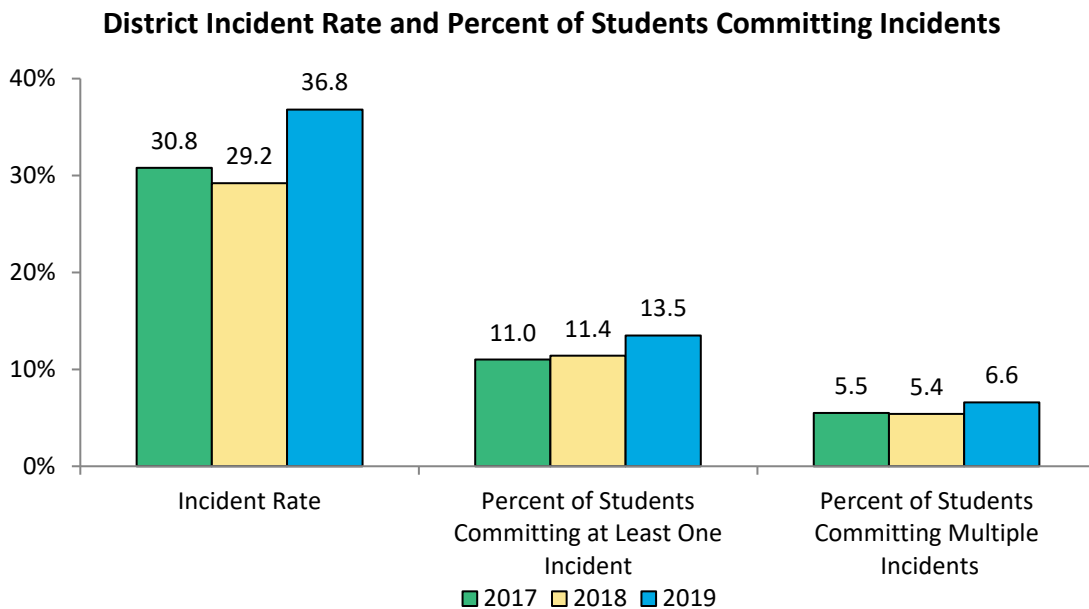


Figure 1. Incident rate and percent of students committing incidents Districtwide for the 2016-17, 2017-18, and 2018-19 school years.

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 acts against persons, attendance, and rules violation for the 2018-19 school year. For all three school years, disruptive incidents were the most reported incident type (see Figure 2 and Appendix A-2) The percent of students committing all types of incidents, with the exception of other criminal incidents which remained constant at 0.2%, went up from 2016-17 to 2018-19.

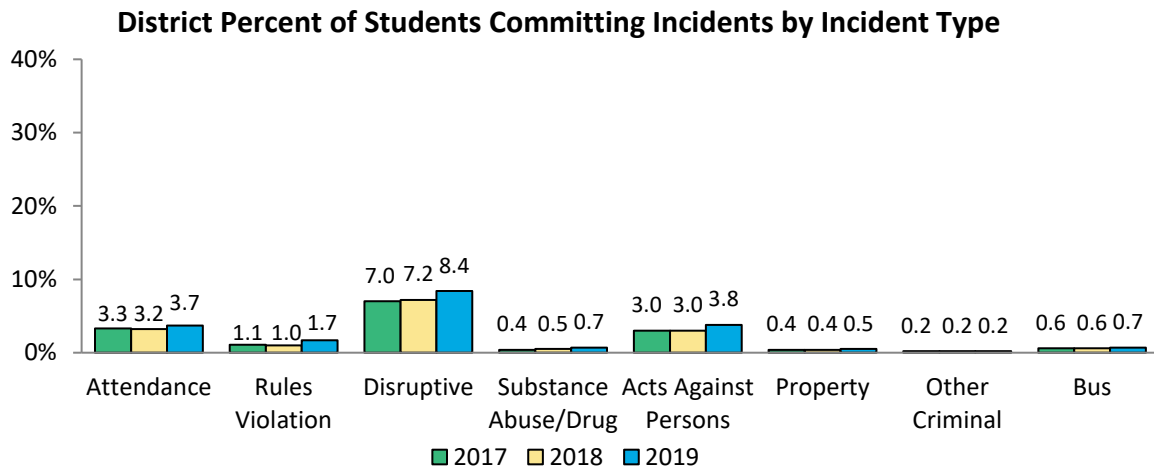


Figure 2. Percent of students with incidents by incident type Districtwide for the 2016-17, 2017-18, and 2018-19 school years.

Suspension Rate and Percent of Students with Suspensions. The number of suspensions dropped from 50,219 in 2016-17 to 49,842 in 2018-19. However, the suspension rate remained consistent at 18.1% in 2016-17 and 2018-19. The percent of students suspended in 2018-19 (8.1%) was slightly higher than the 2016-17 suspension rate (7.6%) and the percent of students that received multiple suspensions (3.5%) also increased by 0.1 percent points (see Figure 3 and Appendix B).

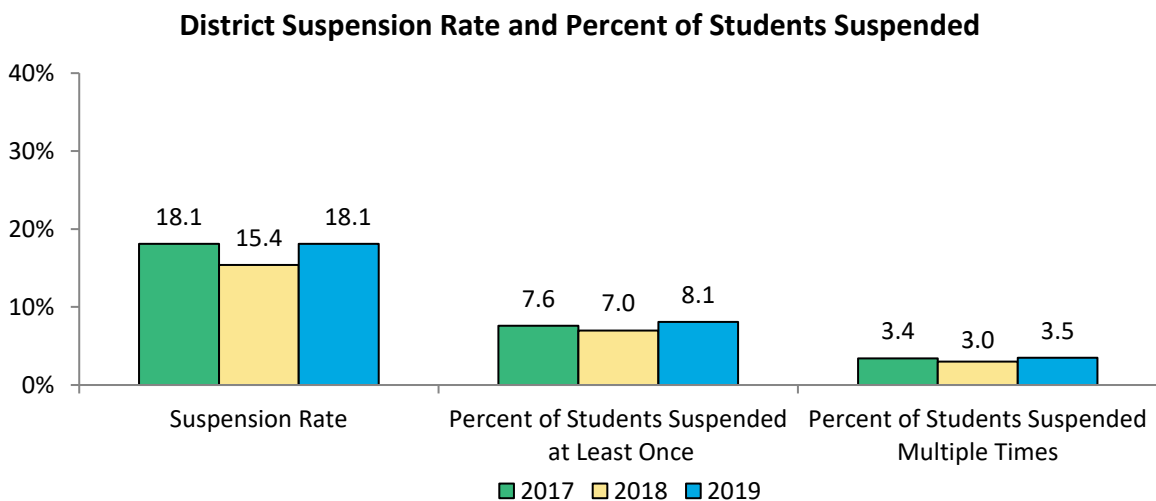


Figure 3. Suspension rate and percent of students suspended Districtwide for the 2016-17, 2017-18, and 2018-19 school years.

Suspensions by Type. Less than 2% of students received external suspensions during the 2018-19 school year. Internal suspensions were the most common type issued, with 5.9% of students receiving an internal suspension, followed by AES, with 2.7% of students receiving an AES (see Figure 4 and Appendix B). The percent of students receiving each type of suspension increased slightly from 2016-17 to 2018-19.

District Percent of Students Suspended by Suspension Type

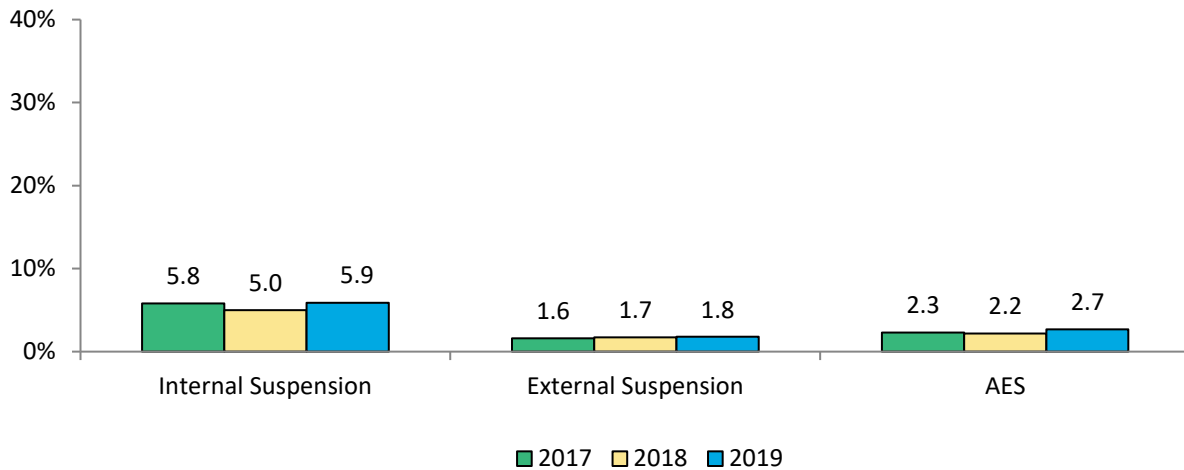


Figure 4. Percent of students receiving specific types of suspensions Districtwide for the 2016-17, 2018-18, and 2018-19 school years.

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 four times higher than that of Hispanic and White students (see Figure 5 and Appendix C-1). The percent of Black students involved in incidents was slightly more than double that of Hispanic and of White students (see Figure 5 and Appendix C-2). Black students experienced the largest increase in incident rate over the three-year period (7.6 percentage points), followed by White students (6 percentage points). The incident rate for Hispanic students increased by 4.8 percentage points over the same time-period (see Figure 5 and Appendix C-1). Across all racial/ethnic groups, disruptive incidents were the most prevalent across all three school years (see Figure 6 and Appendices C-1 and C-2).

**Districtwide Incident Rate and Percent of Students Committing Incidents
by Race/Ethnicity**

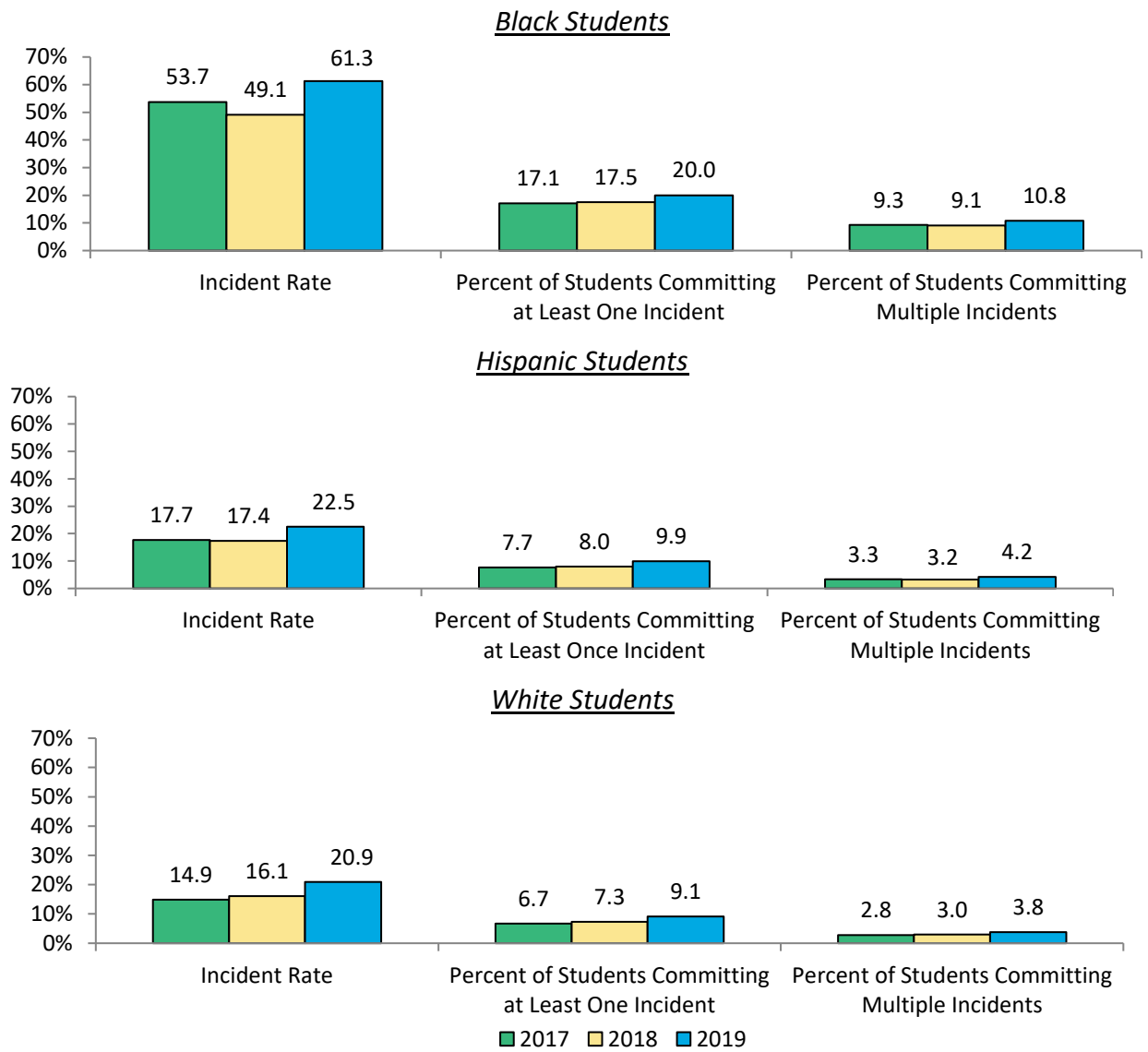


Figure 5. Incident rate and percent of students committing incidents Districtwide by race/ethnicity for the 2016-17, 2017-18, and 2018-19 school years.

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

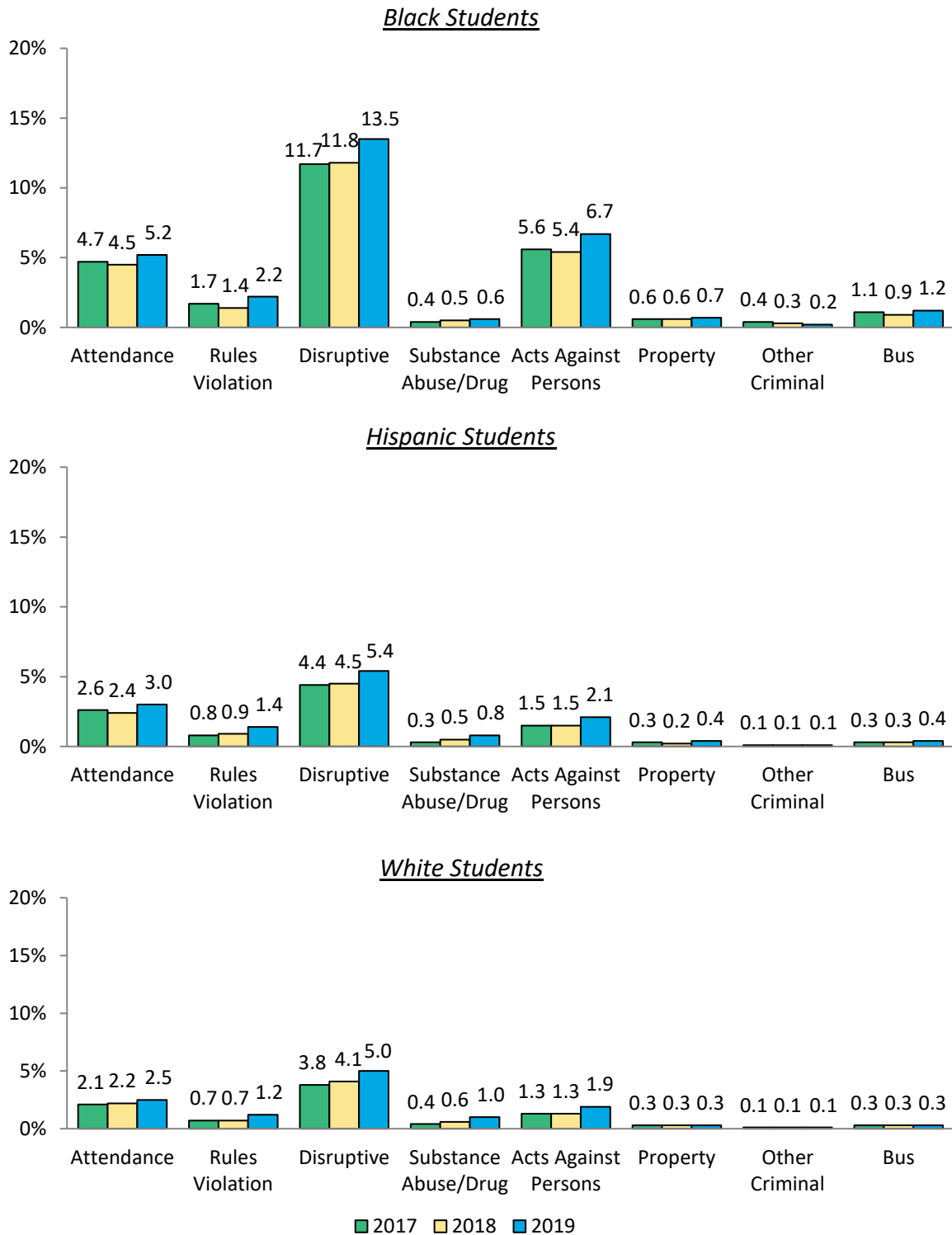


Figure 6. Districtwide percent of students with incidents by incident type by race/ethnicity for the 2016-17, 2017-18, and 2018-19 school years.

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, 2018-19, the overall percent of Black students suspended was 13%, compared to 5% for Hispanic and White students. This pattern mirrors that of the percent of students with one or more incident(s) by racial/ethnic group for the same year (20%, 10%, and 9% for Black, Hispanic, and White students respectively; as previously shown in Figure 5). The suspension rate decreased slightly from 2016-17 to 2018-19 for Black students but increased slightly for Hispanic and White students (see Figure 7 and Appendix D).

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

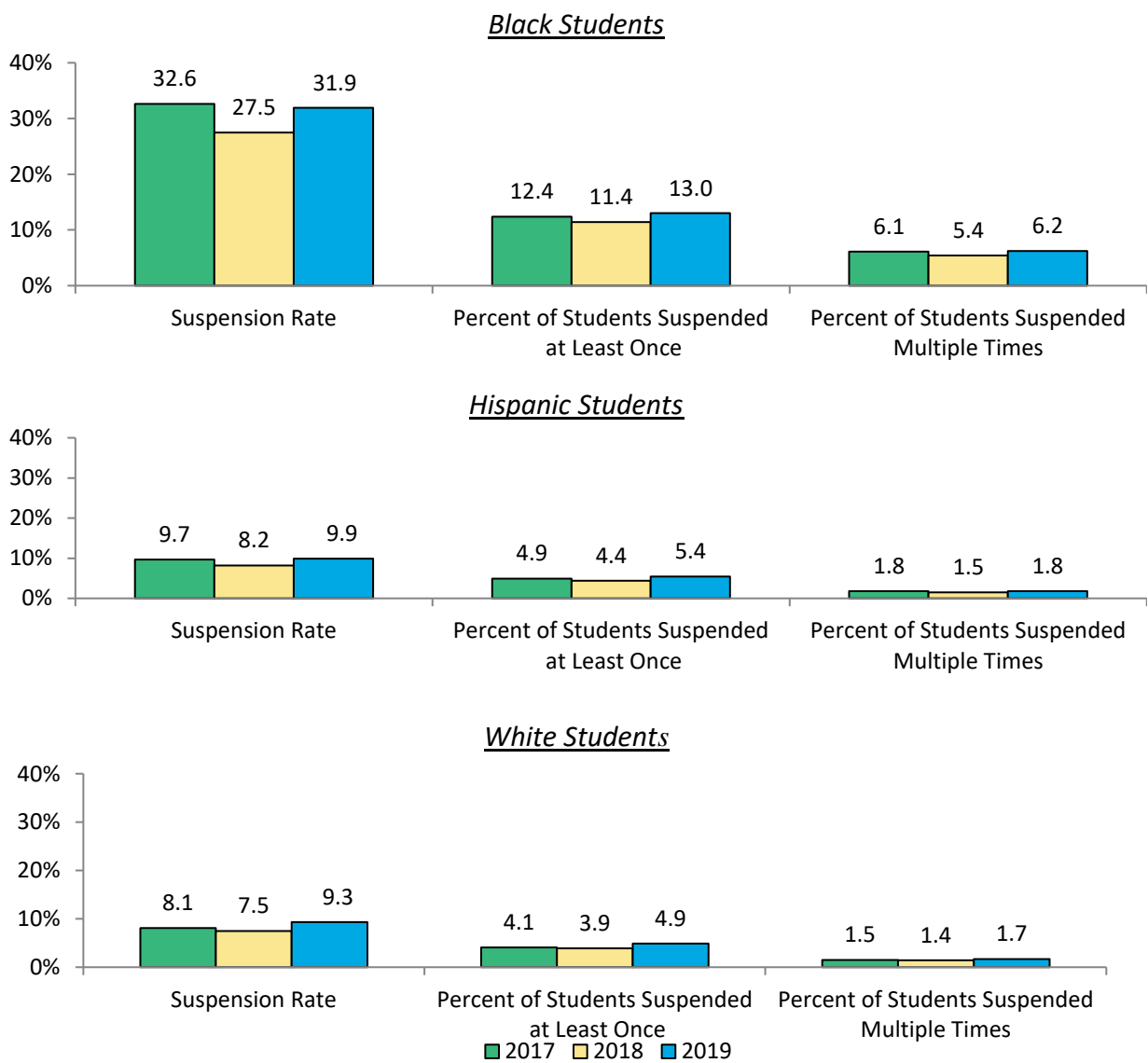
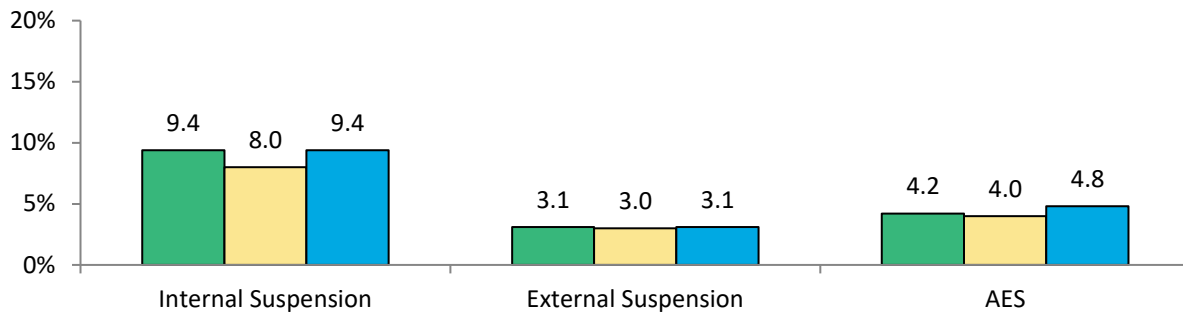


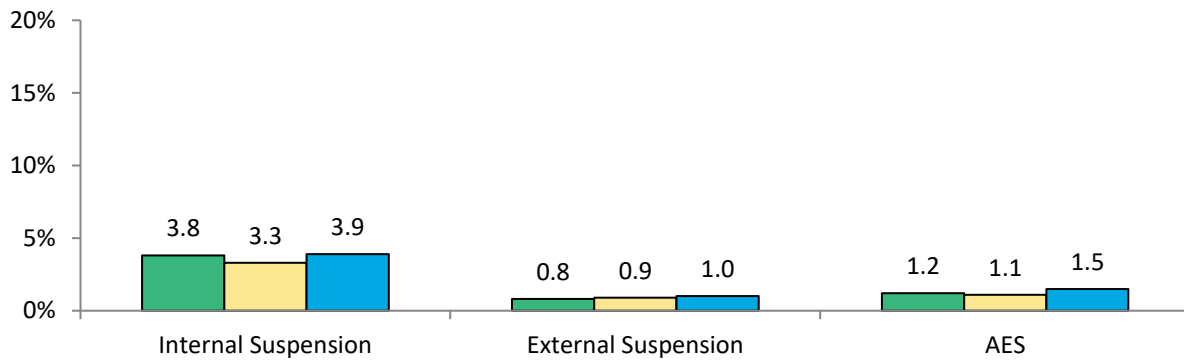
Figure 7. Suspension rate and percent of students suspended Districtwide by race/ethnicity for the 2016-17, 2017-18, and 2018-19 school years.

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 less than 2% of Hispanic and White students were suspended externally during the 2018-19 school year (see Figure 8 and Appendix D).

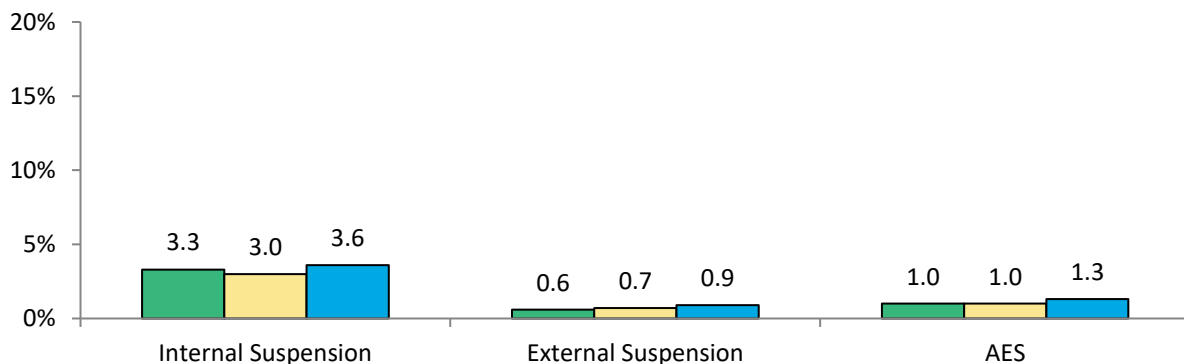
**Districtwide Percent of Students Receiving Suspensions by Suspension Type
by Race/Ethnicity**
Black Students



Hispanic Students



White Students



■ 2017 ■ 2018 ■ 2019

Figure 8. Percent students Districtwide with internal, external, and AES suspensions by race/ethnicity for the 2016-17, 2017-18, and 2018-19 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 incidents (5.3 percentage points more), substance abuse/drug incidents (6.0 percentage points more), acts against persons (13.7 percentage points more), property incidents (4.4 percentage points more), and other criminal (14.3 percentage points more) incidents (see also Appendix E).

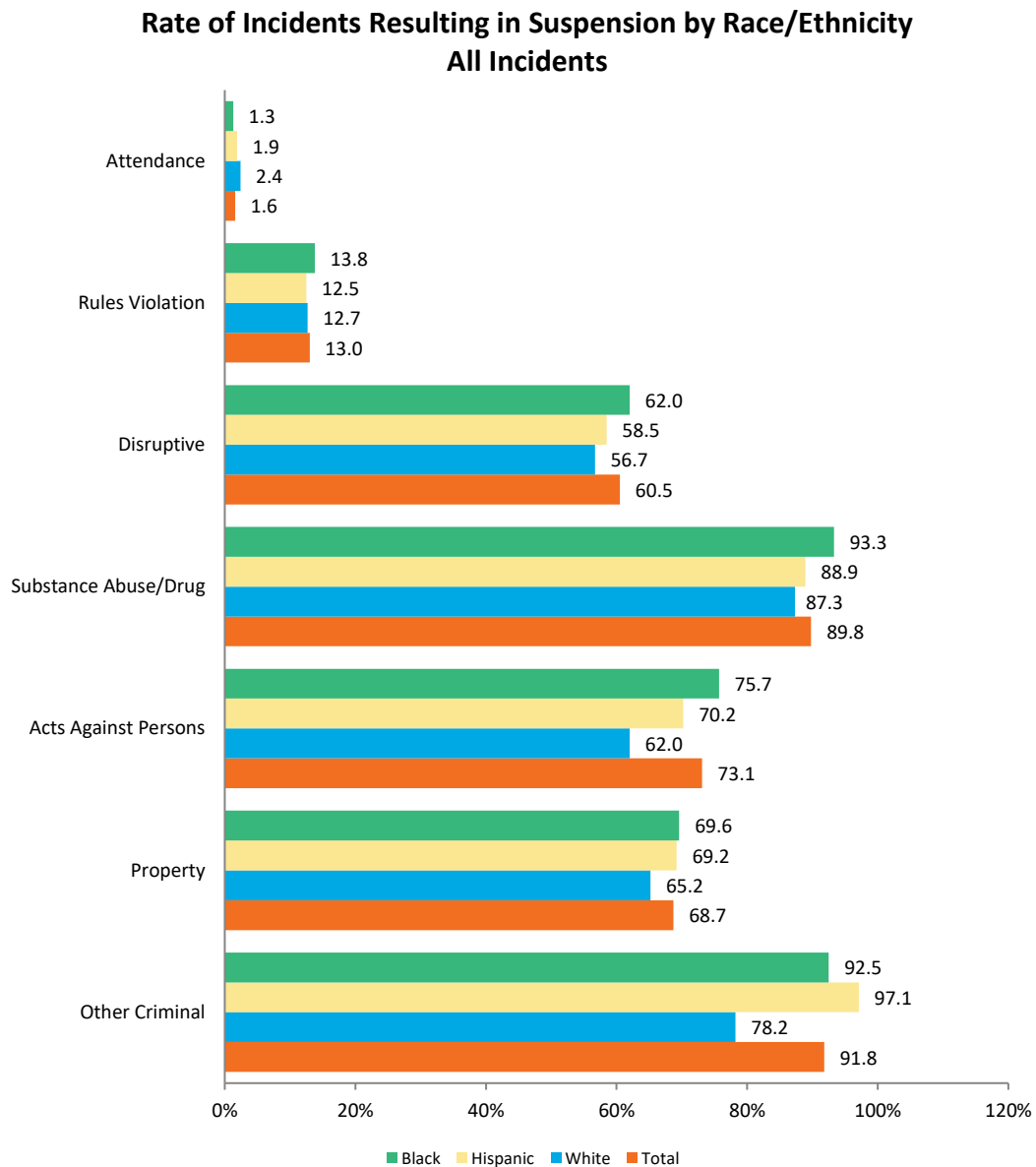


Figure 9. Rate of all incidents resulting in a suspension by race/ethnicity by specific incident type for the 2018-19 school year.

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. Disruptive, Substance Abuse/Drugs, Acts Against Persons and Property were statistically significant. There were no statistical differences between the racial groups for Attendance, Rules Violation, and Other Criminal. The number of incidents broken down by race for Other Criminal was too small to yield a significant difference between the groups. One potential explanation for the differences in Disruptive, Substance Abuse/Drugs, Acts Against Persons, and Property could be racial bias. Further analyses were conducted to test whether there could be alternative explanations.

Further analyses 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. For example, Substance Abuse and Drug incidents overall indicated a difference of 6 percentage points in the rate of suspensions for Black and White students, with Black students suspended more often than White students. However, a greater percentage of Substance Abuse and Drug incidents for Black students was for illegal drugs compared to White and Hispanic students. Conversely, a greater percentage of Substance Abuse and Drug incidents for White students and Hispanic students was for tobacco compared to Black students (see Table 1). Thus, the level of severity of the class of substances was more severe for Black students compared to their White and Hispanic counterparts. That said, the Discipline Matrix recommends a 1-2 day internal suspension for a first-time tobacco incident. Thus, school principals are likely using their discretion to sometimes deviate from the Matrix guidelines in the case of Substance Abuse/Drug incidents.

Table 1: Specific Incidents of Substance Abuse/Drugs by Race/Ethnicity, 2018-19

Race/ Ethnicity	Total Substance Abuse/Drugs Incidents	Alcohol		Illegal Drugs		OTC Medication		Tobacco	
	N	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Black	697	28	4.0	507	72.7	5	0.7	157	22.5
Hispanic	871	36	4.1	430	49.4	10	1.1	395	45.4
White	615	28	4.6	233	37.9	3	0.5	351	57.1

In the case of Acts Against Persons incidents, there was a difference of 13.7 percentage points in the rate of suspensions for Black and White students, with Black students suspended more often than White students. However, a greater percentage of Acts Against Persons incidents for Black students was for Fighting – Medium, a high-level incident, compared to White students. Conversely, a greater percentage of Acts Against Persons incidents for White students was for Assault/Threat (Non-Criminal), a low-level incident, compared to Black students (see Table 2).

Table 2: Specific Incidents of Acts Against Persons by Race/Ethnicity, 2018-19

Acts Against Persons Incidents	Race/Ethnicity					
	Black		Hispanic		White	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Assault/Threat - Serious	12	.1	2	.1	2	.1
Assault/Threat (High Level)	60	.6	26	1.0	14	1.0
Assault/Threat (Medium)	360	3.4	105	4.2	77	5.7
Assault/Threat (Non-Criminal)	749	7.1	418	16.6	284	21.0
Battery	1,293	12.3	296	11.8	200	14.8
Battery -Serious	81	.8	15	.6	6	.4
Battery On District Employee	171	1.6	28	1.1	16	1.2
Bullying	90	.9	48	1.9	31	2.3
Fight -Minor/Altercation/Conf	3,384	32.1	720	28.6	372	27.6
Fighting - Medium	3,458	32.8	650	25.8	240	17.8
Fighting - Mutual Combat	263	2.5	54	2.1	19	1.4
Harassment	41	.4	21	.8	18	1.3
Making False Accusation/Staff	14	.1	2	.1	2	.1
Physical Attack	182	1.7	21	.8	5	.4
Sexual Harassment	160	1.5	57	2.3	24	1.8
Sexual Misconduct/Indecent Exp	210	2.0	53	2.1	40	3.0
Total	10,528	100.0	2,516	100.0	1,350	100.0

The analyses provide some 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 racial 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 2016-17 through 2018-19 school years. Over the three-year period the number and rate of incidents increased from 18,513 incidents in 2016-17 (14.4% incident rate) to 25,130 incidents in 2018-19 (19.9% incident rate) at elementary schools. Disruptive incidents were the most prevalent for all three school years, with 3.7% in 2016-17, 4.1% in 2017-18, and 5.1% in 2018-19, of all elementary school students registering at least one disruptive incident type. Approximately 3% of elementary school students committed multiple incidents in the 2018-19 school year. These data include all incidents (including those that did not result in suspensions; see also Appendices A-1 and A-2).

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, 2018-19, the overall suspension rate was 3.9%, and the percent of students receiving at least one suspension of any type (internal, external, or AES) was 1.7%. Less than 1% of all elementary school students received an external suspension during all three school years. Less than 1% of all elementary students were suspended multiple times (see also Appendix B).

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

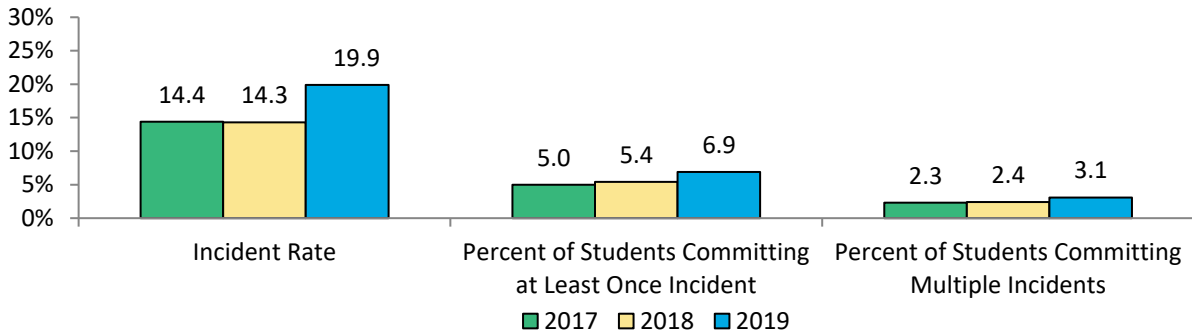


Figure 12. Elementary School Percent of Students Committing Incidents by Incident Type

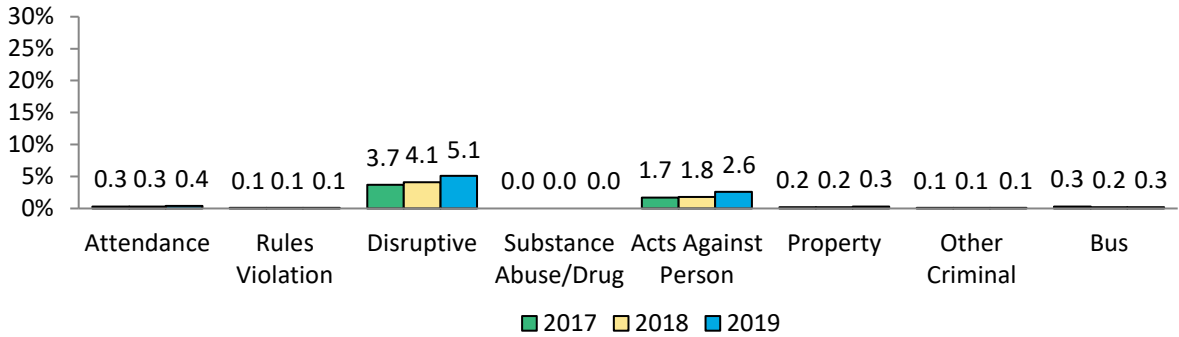


Figure 13. Elementary Schools Suspension Rate and Percent of Students Suspended

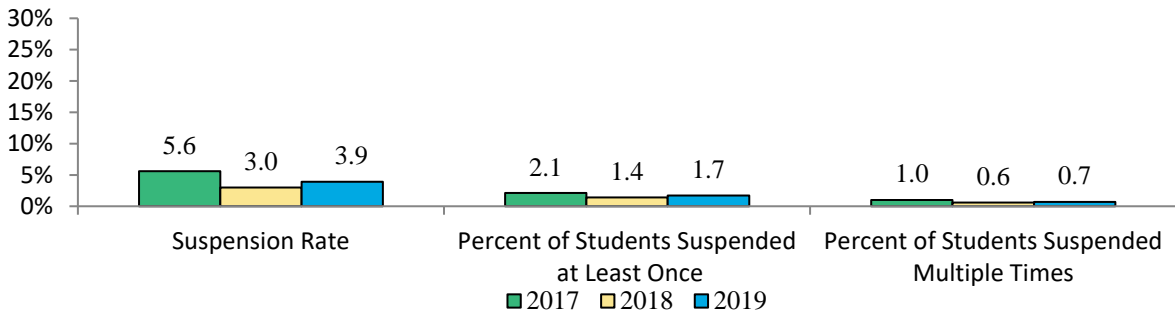
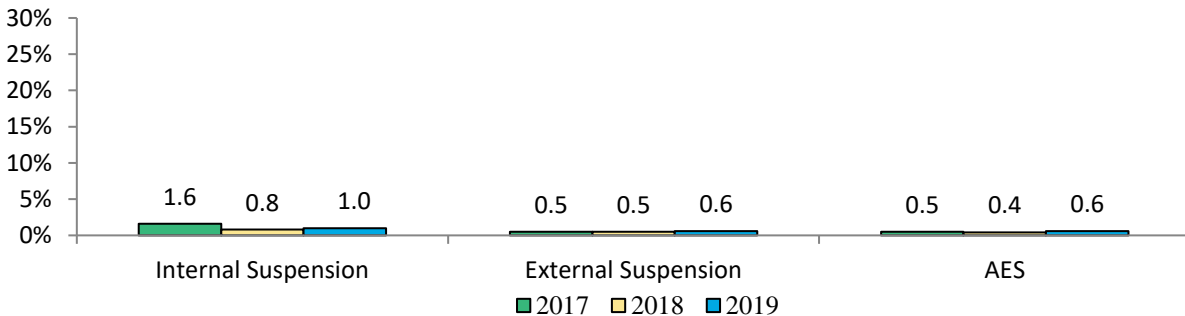


Figure 14. Elementary Schools Suspension Rate by Suspension Type



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 suspension rate by suspension type for the 2016-17, 2017-18, and 2018-19 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 2016-17 through the 2018-19 school years are displayed in Figures 15 and 16. Over the three-year period the number and rate of incidents increased at middle schools from 34,672 incidents (56.9% incident rate) in 2016-17 to 39,077 incidents (61.6% incident rate) in 2018-19. During the most recent school year, disruptive incidents registered the largest percent of students, with 13.6% of all middle school students registering at least one disruptive incident type, followed by acts against persons (7.3%), and attendance (4.3%). These data include all incidents (including those that did not result in suspensions; see also Appendices A-1 and A-2).

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 increased from 38.1% in 2016-17 to 41.1% in 2018-19. During the most recently completed school year, 2018-19, 16.0% of students received at least one suspension, while 7.8% received multiple suspensions. Approximately 4% of all middle school students received an external suspension during the 2018-19 school year (see also Appendix B).

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

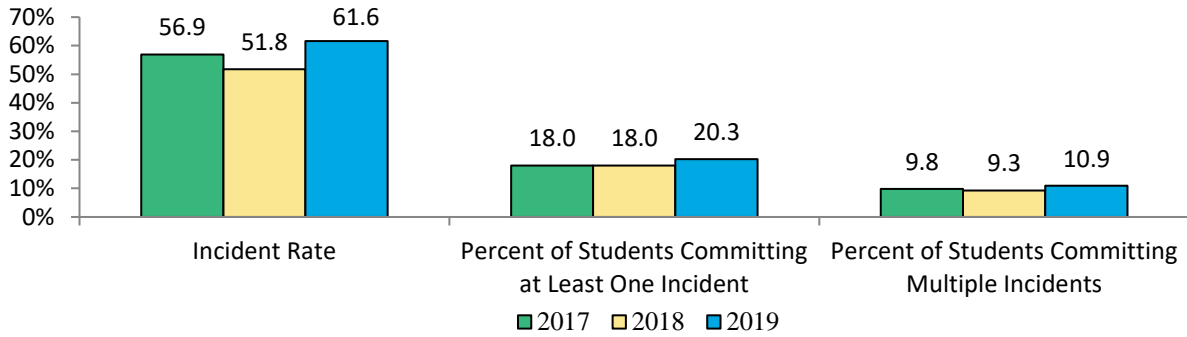


Figure 16. Middle School Percent of Students Committing Incidents by Type of Incident

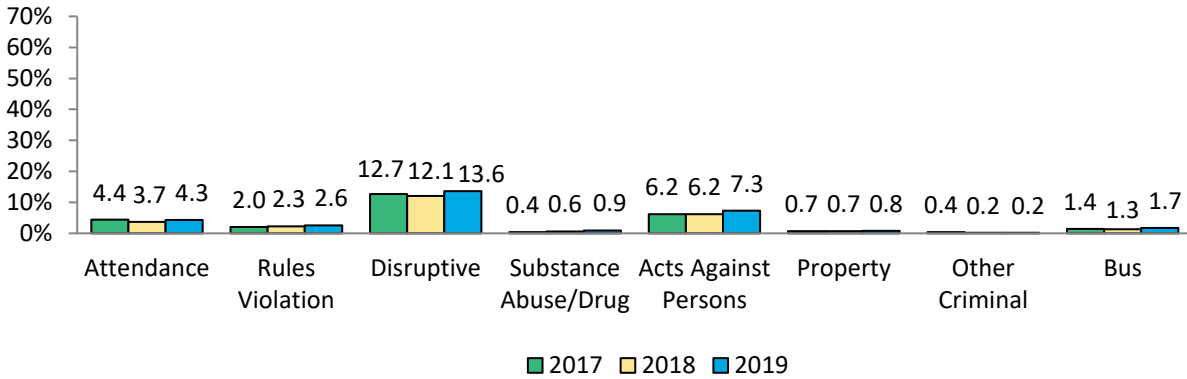


Figure 17. Middle School Suspension Rate and Percent of Students Suspended

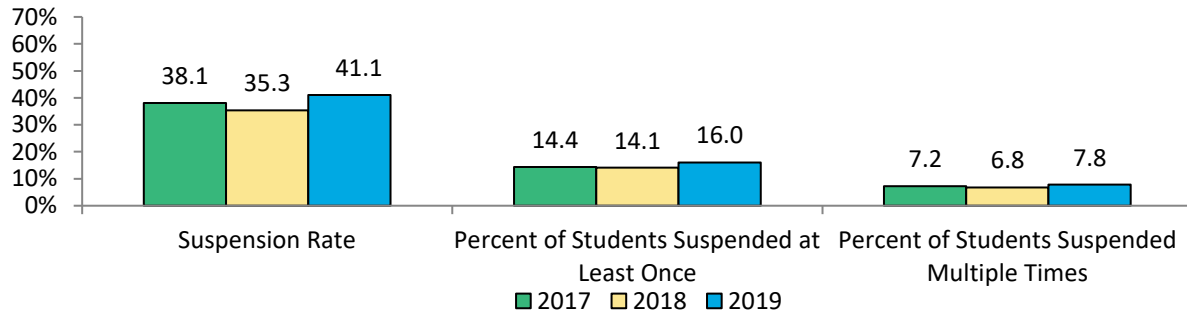
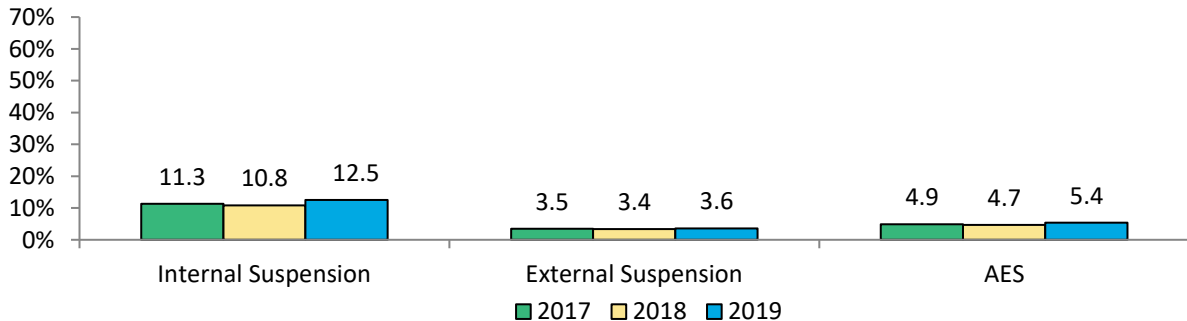


Figure 18. Middle School Suspension Rate by Suspension Type



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 2016-17, 2017-18, and 2018-19 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 2016-17 through the 2018-19 school years are displayed in Figures 19 and 20. Over the three-year period the number and rate of incidents increased at high schools from 25,293 incidents (31.0% incident rate) in 2016-17 to 30,637 incidents (39.3% incident rate) in 2018-19. During the most recent school year, disruptive incidents registered the largest percent of students, with 8.5% of all high school students registering at least one disruptive incident type, followed by attendance (7.9%), and rules violation (3.2%). These data include all incidents (including those that did not result in suspensions; see also Appendices A-1 and A-2).

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 increased from 18.8% in 2016-17 to 19.4% in 2018-19. During the most recently completed school year, 2018-19, 11.0% 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 2018-19 school year (see also Appendix B).

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

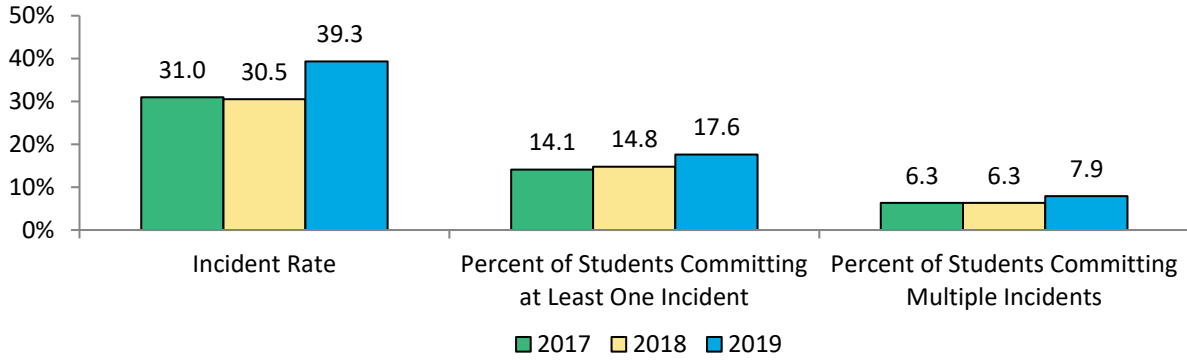


Figure 20. High School Percent of Students Committing Incidents by Incident Type

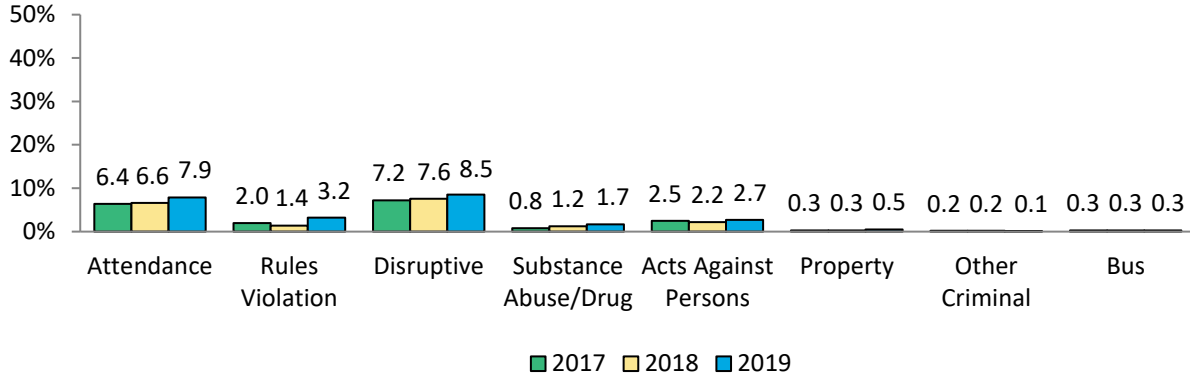


Figure 21. High School Suspension Rate and Percent of Students Suspended

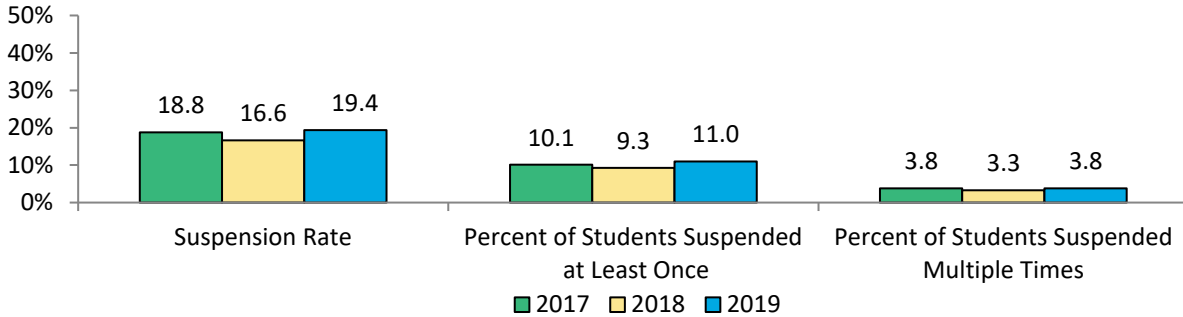
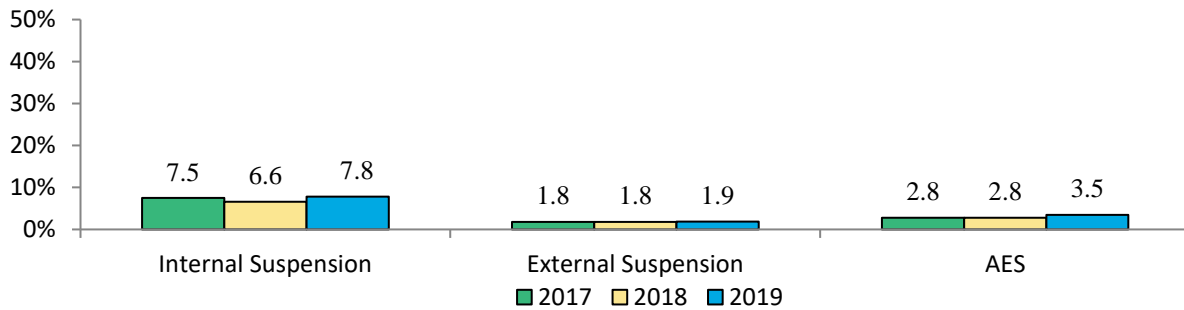


Figure 22. High School Suspension Rate by Suspension Type



Figures 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 2016-17, 2017-18, and 2018-19 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 2016-17 through the 2018-19 school years. Over the three-year period the number and rate of incidents decreased at center schools from 6,994 incidents (121.6% incident rate) in 2016-17 to 6,520 incidents (82.3% incident rate) in 2018-19. During the most recent school year, disruptive incidents registered the largest percent of students, with 15.9% of all center school students registering at least one disruptive incident type, followed by attendance (8.4%), and acts against persons (5.8%). These data include all incidents (including those that did not result in suspensions; see also Appendices A-1 and A-2). *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 2016-17 (75.1%) to 2018-19 (48.0%). During the most recently completed school year, 2018-19, 17.9% of students received at least one suspension, while 9.5% received multiple suspensions. Six percent of all center school students received an external suspension during the 2018-19 school year (see also Appendix B).

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

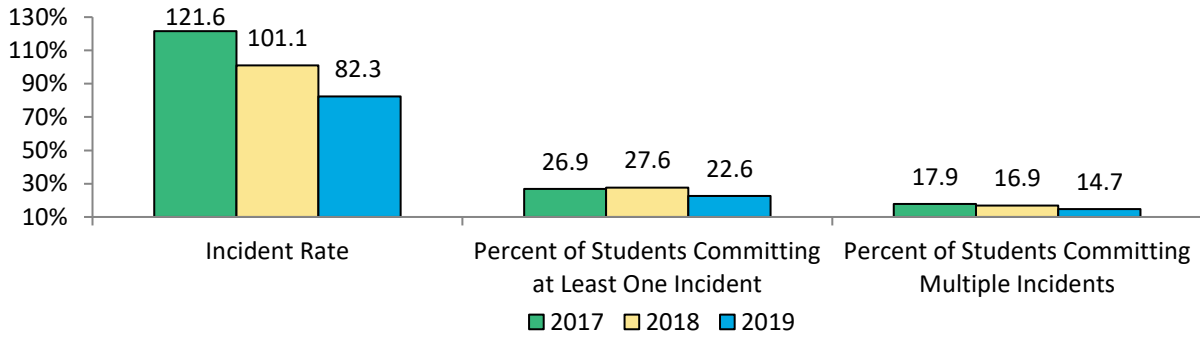


Figure 24. Center School Percent of Students Committing Incidents by Incident Type

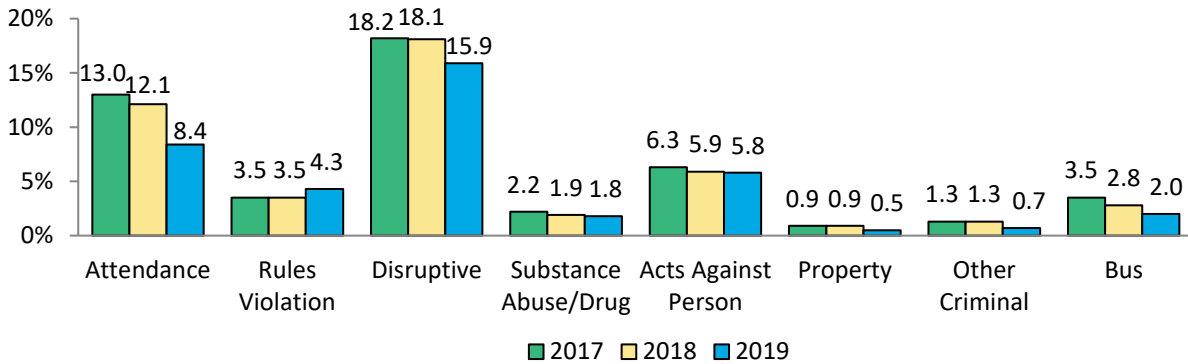


Figure 25. Center School Suspension Rate and Percent of Students Suspended

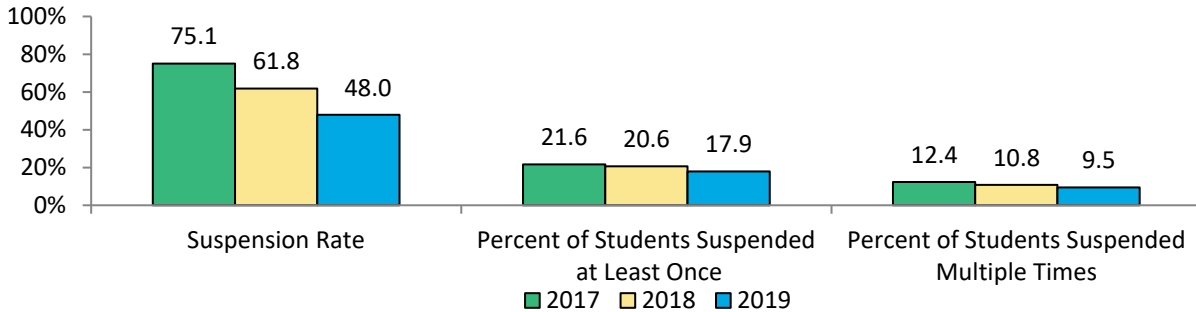


Figure 26. Center School Suspension Rate by Suspension Type

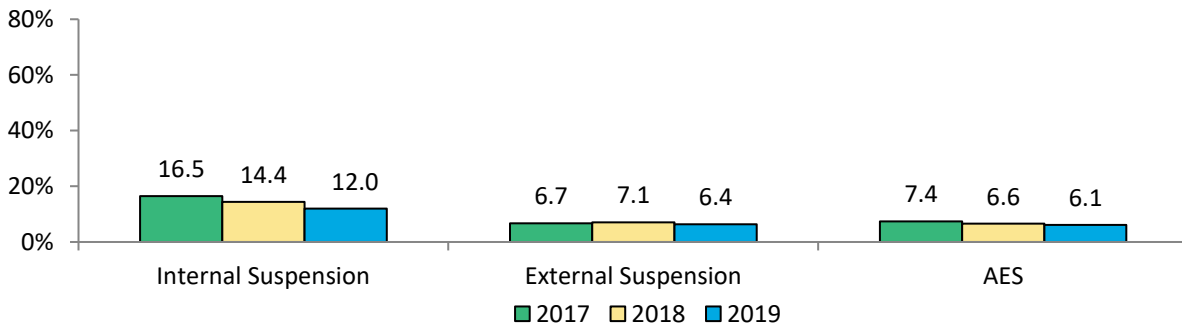


Figure 23, 24, 25 and 26. Center School incident rate and percent of students committing incidents; percent of students committing incidents by incident type; suspension rate and percent of students suspended; and suspension rate by suspension type for the 2016-17, 2017-18, and 2018-19 school years.

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 2016-17 through 2018-2019 school years were presented in this report. Overall, the incident rate decreased from 31% to 29% between 2016-17 and 2017-18 and increased from 29% to 37% between 2017-18 to 2018-19. The percent of students committing at least one incident stayed consistent at 11% from 2016-17 to 2017-18 and increased to 14% in 2018-19, with the percent of students committing multiple incidents first decreasing from 6% to 5% and then increasing from 5% to 7%.

Disruptive incidents were the most common incident type, with 8.4% of students committing a disruptive incident in the 2018-2019 school year. Acts against persons was the next most common (3.8%) followed by attendance (3.7%) and rules violation (1.7%). Less than one percent of students were involved with substance abuse/drug, property, other criminal, and bus incidents.

The suspension rate decreased from 18% to 15% between 2016-17 and 2017-18 and increased from 15% to 18% between 2017-18 and 2018-19. The percent of students suspended at least once from 2016-17 to 2017-18 decreased from 8% to 7% and then increased back to 8%. The percent of students suspended multiple times stayed consistent at 3% between 2016-17 and 2017-18 and rose to 4% between 2017-18 and 2018-19.

Black students registered a higher incident rate (61.3%; with 20.0% percent of students committing at least one incident) than Hispanic (22.5%, with 9.9% percent of students committing at least one incident) and White (20.9% with 9.1% 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 other criminal (14.3 percentage points), although a one-way analysis of variance indicated that this difference was not statistically significant. A difference of 5.9 percentage points exists in the substance abuse/drugs category and a difference of 13.7 percentage points exists in the Acts Against Person category. Further analyses reveal at least part of this difference can be accounted for by controlling for the effect of incident severity, suggesting that this difference is not necessarily a reflection of bias alone.

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, 2017a). 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.

In the aftermath of targeted-school violence, fear of future targeted-school violence becomes the driving force behind the efforts of school officials, law enforcement professionals, and parents (Vossekuil, Fein, Reddy, Borum, & Modzeleski, 2002). There is often an overly aggressive response to student misbehavior as a result of the hypersensitivity that exists within the community as it tries to recover. Thus, the reporting of student incidents often increases. Broward County Public Schools is no different from other school communities that have faced similar school tragedies. However, it is at these times that professionals must improve effectiveness, efficiency, and relevance of practices to prevent school violence, substance abuse/misuse and bullying behavior. To that point, as the end of 2018-19 school year approached, Broward County Public Schools actively began efforts to scale-up the implementation of a systemic framework or process through which school climates and student behavioral-health needs are better supported.

Through the comprehensive recovery efforts being implemented to address the targeted school-violence and subsequent trauma, BCPS leveraged its Multi-Tiered System of Supports/Response to Intervention (MTSS/RtI) processes to more closely review the behavioral-health, social-emotional and mental health needs of students. The goal for this collective review was to intervene earlier to support students before there is a behavioral crisis. In addition, the District scaled up efforts to reeducate school leaders and parents on appropriate ways to respond to student misbehavior, provide access to more violence prevention programs, teacher training and peer mediation interventions. Lastly, the District drafted a Mental Health Plan, which outlined future steps to intervene, address and support the behavioral-health needs of students.

The road to recovery will be a long one for BCPS, but ensuring that the overall behavioral-health needs of students are being met, as well as implementing smart investments in evidence-based solutions to improve school climate and prevent violence will likely eventually cause the increased student incidents the District is currently experiencing to level out (Fiddiman, Jeffrey, & Sargrad, 2018).

The School Climate & Discipline 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-1:

Total number and rate of incidents by incident type and by school level, 2016-17 through 2018-19

Appendix A-2: Total number and percent of students who committed incidents by incident type and by school level, 2016-17 through 2018-19

Appendix B:

Number and percent of students suspended overall and by suspension type, and suspension rate, by school level, 2016-17 through 2018-19

Appendix C-1:

Total number and rate of incidents by incident type and by student race/ethnicity, 2016-17 through 2018-19

Appendix C-2: Percent of students who committed incidents and number of incidents by incident type and by student race/ethnicity, 2016-17 through 2018-19

Appendix D:

Total number of suspensions by student race/ethnicity and special populations, 2016-17 through 2018-19

Appendix E:

Total number of incidents and rate of incidents assigned a suspension by student race/ethnicity, 2018-19

Appendix F:

Total number of incidents by school, 2016-17 through 2018-19

Appendix G:

Total number of suspensions by school, 2016-17 through 2018-19

Appendix H:

Incidents category details

Appendix I:

Example of BASIS behavioral dashboard data, incidents and suspensions by month, 2018-19

XII. REFERENCES

- Fiddiman, B. Jeffrey, A. & Sargrad, S. (December 19, 2018). Smart investments for safer schools. *Center for American Progress*. Retrieved October 23, 2019, from <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/education-k-12/reports/2018/12/19/464445/smart-investments-safer-schools/>
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