



**Delaware Department of Education**

Student Support Team

2019

## **Statewide Summary Report**

**School Discipline Improvement Program\***

**2018-19 School Year**

\*As required under 14 Del C§703

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## Background and Overview

The information contained in this report fulfills the requirements outlined in 14 Del.C. §703, directing the Delaware Department of Education (Department) to collect, evaluate and communicate data related to the use of exclusionary disciplinary practices in Delaware schools and the efforts being undertaken by our schools to reduce those occurrences.

The main purpose of the information contained in this report is to document the efforts of public schools in the area of school discipline improvement. Schools in Delaware utilize a variety of restorative practices as well as alternatives to suspension in order to reduce the impact of negative consequences upon students during the disciplinary process.

Each school district and charter school in Delaware has its own Code of Conduct which defines violations and the resulting consequences. The Department respects district and charter decisions to determine what acceptable conduct is and what is not as it relates to students in their building as they understand the context of their environments and community. The Codes of Conduct are required to follow any applicable State laws and regulations. This report documents the application of the district and charter school Codes of Conduct and provides best practices that schools in Delaware and around the nation have used to change the culture of exclusionary discipline in education today.

Beginning next year, this report will also note schools which have exceeded the threshold as set forth in Delaware Code. Schools which exceed this threshold, once identified by the Department, shall be required to evaluate their disciplinary practices and develop a corrective action plan using one or several different approved interventions to reduce the disproportionate application of discipline as well as to further reduce the impact of exclusionary discipline as it relates to student achievement.

It is also important to note the origin of the information contained within this report. While the Department collects and reviews this information, it originates at the district/ charter and school level. Quality controls are incumbent on the school and district/charter level. Desk audits and reviews by the Department are conducted to ensure compliance with mandatory reporting laws and regulations. The information contained in this report is solely derived from information entered by the local school personnel. Every effort has been made to provide relevant and useful information while still protecting the rights of students as afforded by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

**Data Revision:** Based upon a review of the supporting data that was originally used to create this report, it was noted that there were concerns regarding the verification of the number of unduplicated students in several categories of the data. Upon discovery of the error, the report was removed and updated information, which was reviewed by the Department with the assistance of several stakeholders, was utilized to create this updated version.

## Executive Summary

- The State has experienced a significant drop in the number of students who have been expelled from schools in the three years covered by this report.
  - During the 2016-2017 school year, 98 students were expelled from Delaware schools, while during the 2018-2019 school year only 35 students were expelled. This represents a 65% reduction in expulsions.
  - This reduction represents an improvement of approximately 11,340 more days of education that students received based on the reduced number of expulsions.
  - This reduction in and of itself represents a significant improvement in outcomes for Delaware students.
- The threshold for the 2018-19 school years is 20%. The breakdown may be found in Table 3.
  - Thirteen (13) schools exceeded the threshold in one subgroup.
  - Forty-three (43) schools exceeded the threshold in more than one subgroup.
    - Seventeen (17 middle schools) and thirteen (13) high schools exceeded the threshold in two or more subgroups.
    - These data demonstrate a primary focus of statewide efforts to improve discipline should be focused upon the middle schools and high schools.
- Complete data for the state, including breakdown in individuals school information by subgroup, may be found on the School Climate Office Website at: <https://www.doe.k12.de.us/domain/470>

## How your school can use the data?

The very first step in addressing concerns about your discipline process is to review the chain of events that lead a student into your disciplinary process. Where does the cycle begin and where can it be interrupted? By looking at the referral process, you can get a better understanding of where most suspensions originate and focus your intervention efforts in those areas. Review how each member of the discipline team issues a consequence and ensure that they all are using the same thought process when issuing discipline, the offense-consequence matrix should look the same across the school if not across the district.

For example, take a middle school who reviews their suspension data and notes that the 7<sup>th</sup> grade has a significantly higher suspension rate. Drilling down further in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade, the administration discovers that many referrals for “disruption of the education process” are coming from one of the 7<sup>th</sup>-grade subject teams more than others. This is an opportunity to begin observing these specific classrooms to determine which intervention will assist the teaching staff and reduce the number of students removed from the classroom setting for disciplinary reasons.

Review your Action Taken consequence report and test to see if all of your consequences are equal across each aspect of the spectrum. Second and third offense consequences should be looked at carefully as this is where most discrepancies lie. Also, these are areas where the most opportunities for enhanced interventions can be the most beneficial in breaking the cycle.

## Interventions

Delaware Code identifies several interventions schools can utilize as a way to improve the outcomes of their disciplinary practices. Below is a brief description of what each of those recommended interventions entails.

1. **Restorative Practices:** While most traditional disciplinary practices are focused on rule enforcement and action versus consequence, restorative practices look at relationships and how a person’s actions impact them. It shows students that their actions do not just impact them, but also their school community as a whole. Students often use “restorative circles” which are small semi-formal group discussions which focus on allowing all the people affected by an issue to have a chance to discuss its impact on them. The goal is to reinforce the

“community” aspects of school and allow the offending student a chance to resolve his or her conflict within that community. Unlike traditional discipline, which is often viewed as being based on an incident and simply interrupting a student’s participation in school, restorative practices seek to maintain if not strengthen relationships after there has been an offense. These “incidents’ become opportunities to heal internal relationships but also strengthen and reinforce the global sense of community within the school.

2. **Trauma Informed Care:** This intervention attempts to take the focus away from simply looking at a student’s actions but educating the staff to look beyond what they “see” of a student to understand the whole child and what the student brings into their classroom. Research continues to reinforce the understanding that student behaviors are tied back to whatever they had experienced well before they entered our school or classrooms. The impacts of trauma on a student may well be demonstrated as outbursts or behaviors that would traditionally simply be looked at as “bad behavior.” These efforts focus more on educating the staff about their students and how they can respond differently to a student’s needs rather than simply referring them for discipline. This practice involves changing the normal mantra of teachers asking, “What is wrong with you,” but rather looking at a child and asking themselves, “What has happened to you?” And even more importantly, looking at a child’s strengths.
3. **Implicit Bias Awareness:** This is another intervention based upon changing the perceptions of the staff and better educating them in the nature of their students and more importantly themselves. This is very different from normal “bias or anti-discrimination training.” Everyone, regardless of race, creed or color subconsciously possesses implicit bias revolving around their knowledge of others. Some of these biases may be good and some bad. The goal is to make staff members aware that this bias does absolutely exist and that they have the tools and awareness to manage the impact of their own internal bias while limiting the possible negative impact on the kids that they serve.
4. **Cultural Competency:** While implicit bias training is focused on the individual, cultural competency helps to understand the more global view of our own culture and the other cultures which we serve within our school community. This training looks at different norms, values and perceptions as it relates to cultural differences and how we can view these differences as areas of opportunity for increased awareness and understanding of others.

5. **Classroom Management:** This type of training focuses on using the classroom environment to prevent an incident from occurring in the first place. This is accomplished by providing the teacher with the tools to design engaging learning activities that encourage students to focus. In addition, teachers are given some tools and practices that help them see the signs of escalation prior to that escalation becoming a disruptor and requiring action. Teachers will be better equipped to prevent and contain occurrences which in the past may have required the assistance of a disciplinarian or administrator.

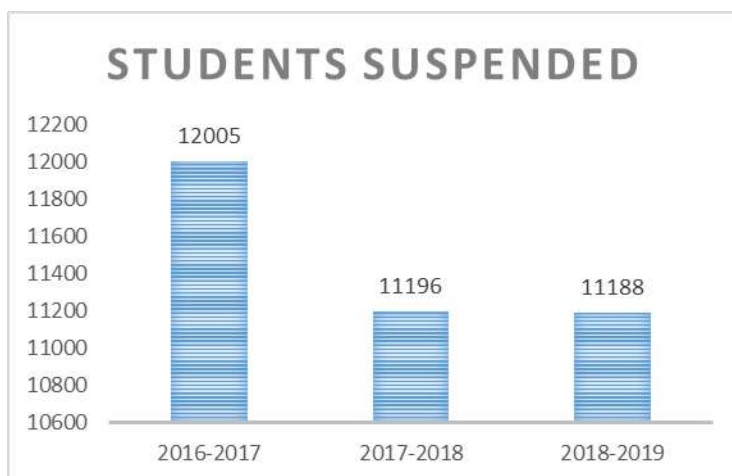
Trend Analysis for previous three reporting years

**Table 1. Total Out of School Suspensions**

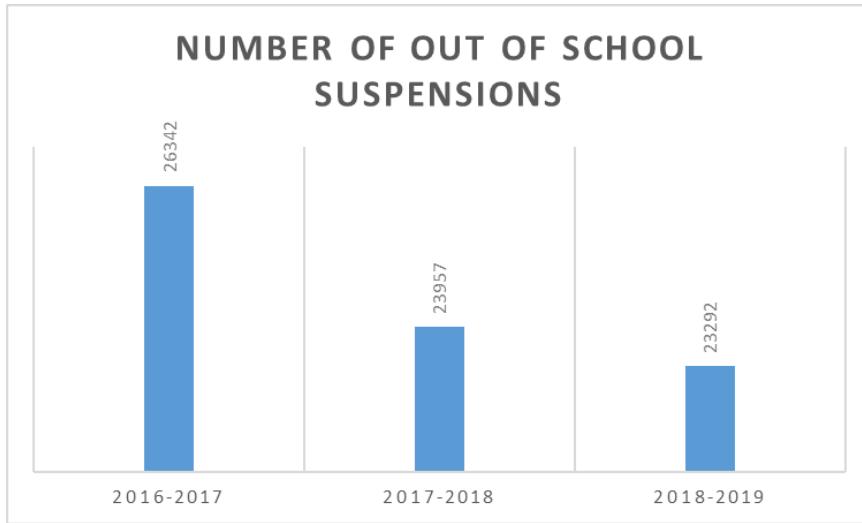
	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
<b>Number of Students Suspended</b>	<b>12,005</b>	<b>11,196</b>	<b>11,188</b>
<b>Number of days suspended</b>	<b>88,421</b>	<b>71,301</b>	<b>66,603</b>
<b>Total number of suspensions</b>	<b>26,342</b>	<b>23,957</b>	<b>23,292</b>

**Table 1** shows the overall trend in the number of students suspended, number of days that they were suspended and the number of out of school suspensions given as a consequence for a disciplinary infraction.

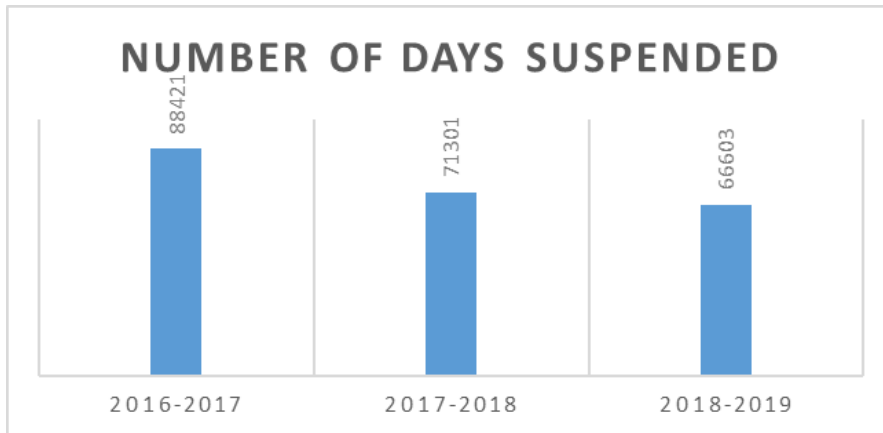
**Graph 1.** Number of students suspended.



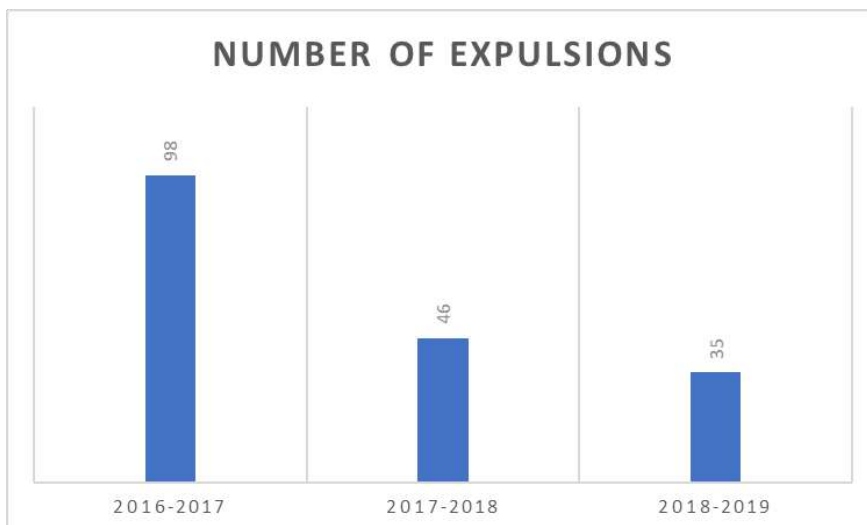
**Graph 2.** Number of Out of School Suspensions.



**Graph 3.** Number of Days of Out of School Suspensions.



**Graph 4.** Number of Expulsions.



**Table 2. Statewide Suspension and Expulsion Rates**

	Demographic	Enrollment		Out-of-School Suspensions		In-School Suspensions		Out-of-School Suspensions - CDAP		Expulsions	
		Students	Rate	Students	Rate	Students	Rate	Students	Rate	Students	Rate
<b>All Students</b>	All Students	146683	100.00	11188	7.63	9390	6.40	182	0.12	34	0.02
<b>Gender</b>	Female	71210	48.55	3777	5.30	3139	4.41	60	0.08	7	0.01
	Male	75481	51.46	7411	9.82	6251	8.28	122	0.16	27	0.04
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	African American	45112	30.75	6476	14.36	4763	10.56	108	0.24	22	0.05
	Native American	630	0.43	41	6.51	32	5.08	<5	<0.79		
	Asian American	6111	4.17	92	1.51	85	1.39				
	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	187	0.13	10	5.35	12	6.42	<5	<2.67		
	Hispanic/Latino	26313	17.94	1503	5.71	1463	5.56	19	0.07	<5	<0.02
	White	62854	42.85	2615	4.16	2587	4.12	48	0.08	CSC	CSC
	Multi-Racial	6063	4.13	463	7.64	455	7.50	5	0.08		
<b>Special Populations</b>	Active EL Students	14719	10.03	606	4.12	681	4.63	8	0.05		
	Students with Disabilities	25615	17.46	3695	14.43	2728	10.65	37	0.14	8	0.03
	Low-Income	49102	33.47	6301	12.83	5012	10.21	115	0.23	16	0.03

**Table 2** reflects statewide suspension and expulsion rates disaggregated by gender, race and special population designations for the 2018-2019 School Year.

**Table 3. Schools which exceeded the 20% threshold during the 2018-2019 School Year.**

Type of School	Exceeds 20% in one subgroup	Exceeds 20% in two or more subgroups
Elementary	2	6
Middle	6	17
High	5	13
Mixed Grades	0	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>43</b>



**Table 3** reflects schools which exceeded a suspension rate of 20% unduplicated students for one or more subgroups during the 2018-19 school year.

District Name	School Name	Discipline Action	Subgroups At or Above Threshold	
Appoquinimink School District				
	Appoquinimink High School	Out-of-School Suspensions	Students with Disabilities	1
Brandywine School District				
	Brandywine High School	Out-of-School Suspensions	Male, African American, Active EL Students, Students with Disabilities, Low-Income	5
	Concord High School	Out-of-School Suspensions	Students with Disabilities, Low-Income	2
	duPont (Pierre S.) Middle School	Out-of-School Suspensions	African American, Students with Disabilities, Low-Income	3
	Harlan (David W. ) Elementary School	Out-of-School Suspensions	Male	1
	Mount Pleasant Elementary School	Out-of-School Suspensions	Students with Disabilities	1
	Mount Pleasant High School	Out-of-School Suspensions	Multi-Racial, Students with Disabilities, Low-Income	3
	Springer Middle School	Out-of-School Suspensions	African American, Hispanic/Latino, Students with Disabilities, Low-Income	4
	Talley Middle School	Out-of-School Suspensions	Students with Disabilities	1
Caesar Rodney School District				
	Fred Fifer III Middle School	Out-of-School Suspensions	Active EL Students	1
Capital School District				
	Central Middle School	Out-of-School Suspensions	Male, African American, Students with Disabilities, Low-Income	4
	Kent County Secondary ILC	Out-of-School Suspensions	All Students, Female, Male, African American, White, Students with Disabilities, Low-Income	5
	South Dover Elementary School	Out-of-School Suspensions	Students with Disabilities	1
	William Henry Middle School	Out-of-School Suspensions	Male, African American, Multi-Racial, Students with Disabilities, Low-Income	5

Christina School District	Bayard Middle School	Out-of-School Suspensions	All Students, Female, Male, African American, Hispanic/Latino, White, Active EL Students, Students with Disabilities, Low-Income	9
	Christiana High School	Out-of-School Suspensions	Male, African American, Multi-Racial, Students with Disabilities, Low-Income	5
	Elbert-Palmer Elementary School	Out-of-School Suspensions	Male, Students with Disabilities	2
	Gauger-Cobbs Middle School	Out-of-School Suspensions	All Students, Male, African American, Multi-Racial, Students with Disabilities, Low-Income	6
	Glasgow High School	Out-of-School Suspensions	Female, African American, Multi-Racial, Students with Disabilities, Low-Income	5
	Kirk (George V.) Middle School	Out-of-School Suspensions	Students with Disabilities, Low-Income	2
	Newark High School	Out-of-School Suspensions	Female, African American, Multi-Racial, Students with Disabilities, Low-Income	5
	Shue-Medill Middle School	Out-of-School Suspensions	African American, Low-Income	2
Colonial School District	Bedford (Gunning) Middle School	Out-of-School Suspensions	Students with Disabilities, Low-Income	2
	McCullough (Calvin R. ) Middle School	Out-of-School Suspensions	Male, African American, Multi-Racial, Students with Disabilities, Low-Income	5
	New Castle Elementary School	Out-of-School Suspensions	Male, Students with Disabilities	2
	Penn (William) High School	Out-of-School Suspensions	Students with Disabilities	1
	Read (George) Middle School	Out-of-School Suspensions	Multi-Racial, Low-Income	2
	The Wallace Wallin School	Out-of-School Suspensions	All Students, Female, Male, African American, White, Students with Disabilities, Low-Income	5

Delmar School District	Delmar High School	Out-of-School Suspensions	Multi-Racial, Students with Disabilities	2
	Delmar Middle School	Out-of-School Suspensions	Students with Disabilities	1
East Side Charter School				
	East Side Charter School	Out-of-School Suspensions	Male, Students with Disabilities, Low-Income	3
Freire Charter School Wilmington				
	Freire Charter School	Out-of-School Suspensions	African American, Students with Disabilities, Low-Income	3
Gateway Lab School				
	Gateway Lab School	Out-of-School Suspensions	All Students, Male, African American, White, Students with Disabilities, Low-Income	4
Great Oaks Charter School				
	Great Oaks Charter School	Out-of-School Suspensions	All Students, Female, Male, African American, Students with Disabilities, Low-Income	6
Indian River School District				
	Georgetown Middle School	Out-of-School Suspensions	Multi-Racial	1
	Indian River High School	Out-of-School Suspensions	African American, Multi-Racial, Low-Income	3
	Selbyville Middle School	Out-of-School Suspensions	African American	1
Sussex Central High School				
	Sussex Central High School	Out-of-School Suspensions	Native American	1
Lake Forest School District				
	Chipman (W.T.) Middle School	Out-of-School Suspensions	Male, African American, Students with Disabilities, Low-Income	4
	Lake Forest High School	Out-of-School Suspensions	African American	1
Laurel School District				
	Laurel Intermediate Middle School	Out-of-School Suspensions	African American	1
Milford School District				
	Milford Central Academy	Out-of-School Suspensions	African American, Students with Disabilities	2

Positive Outcomes Charter School	Positive Outcomes Charter School	Out-of-School Suspensions	Male, African American, Low-Income	3
Red Clay Consolidated School District	Dickinson (John) High School	Out-of-School Suspensions	African American, Students with Disabilities	2
	duPont (Alexis I.) High School	Out-of-School Suspensions	African American, Students with Disabilities, Low-Income	3
	duPont (Alexis I.) Middle School	Out-of-School Suspensions	All Students, Male, African American, Multi-Racial, Students with Disabilities, Low-Income	6
	Highlands Elementary School	Out-of-School Suspensions	Male, Students with Disabilities	2
	McKean (Thomas) High School	Out-of-School Suspensions	Male, African American, Students with Disabilities, Low-Income	4
	Skyline Middle School	Out-of-School Suspensions	All Students, Male, African American, Students with Disabilities, Low-Income	5
	Stanton Middle School	Out-of-School Suspensions	African American, Students with Disabilities	2
	Warner Elementary School	Out-of-School Suspensions	Male, Students with Disabilities	2
	Seaford School District	Frederick Douglass Elementary School	Out-of-School Suspensions	African American, Students with Disabilities
Seaford Middle School		Out-of-School Suspensions	Male, African American, Multi-Racial, Active EL Students, Students with Disabilities, Low-Income	6
Seaford Senior High School		Out-of-School Suspensions	Male, African American, Multi-Racial, Students with Disabilities, Low-Income	5
Woodbridge School District	Woodbridge High School	Out-of-School Suspensions	Students with Disabilities	1
	Woodbridge Middle School	Out-of-School Suspensions	African American, Multi-Racial, Students with Disabilities	3

The role of the School Climate Program Manager is to assist public schools in Delaware in their efforts to provide every student with a safe and supportive learning environment. As part of that charge, the Department collects and analyzes information from schools in various areas of student behavior in order to develop training and best practice tools that will assist schools in addressing those behaviors. The Department supports the use of Best Practices as a tool to help schools prevent issues such as these and to address the changing emotional, mental and educational needs of a diverse student population throughout the First State.

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Program Manager

School Climate & Discipline