FIGURES & FINDINGS:

DISCIPLINE REFORM THROUGH THE EYES OF TEACHERS

By David Griffith and Adam Tyner
FIGURE 1. Teachers in high-poverty schools report higher rates of verbal disrespect, physical fighting, and assault.

- % of teachers who say they were physically attacked by a student in 2017–18: Low-poverty schools 4%, High-poverty schools 13%
- % of teachers who say there was physical fighting in their school every day/week: Low-poverty schools 5%, High-poverty schools 32%
- % of teachers who say they dealt with verbal disrespect every day: Low-poverty schools 14%, High-poverty schools 33%

N=1,205
FIGURE 2. How often would you say you dealt with verbal disrespect in your classroom last school year (2017–18)?

- Every day
- Weekly
- Monthly
- A few times
- Never
- I don’t know

N=1,098
FIGURE 3. How often would you say physical fighting happened at your school last year (2017–18)?

N=1,098

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>White Teachers</th>
<th>Black Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt;75% FRL</td>
<td>&gt;75% FRL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-75% FRL</td>
<td>50-75% FRL</td>
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<tr>
<td>25-50% FRL</td>
<td>25-50% FRL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;25% FRL</td>
<td>&lt;25% FRL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Every day | Weekly | Monthly | A few times | Never | I don’t know

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

N=1,098
FIGURE 4. Were you physically attacked by a student last school year (2017–18)?

N=1,091

White Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FRL</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>I don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt;75% FRL</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50–75% FRL</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25–50% FRL</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;25% FRL</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Black Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FRL</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>I don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt;75% FRL</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50–75% FRL</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25–50% FRL</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;25% FRL</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FIGURE 5. Which statement comes closer to describing your school last year (2017–18)?

- Student behavior problems contributed to a disorderly or unsafe environment that made it difficult for many students to learn.
- Student behavior problems were manageable and did not interfere with student learning or seriously compromise student safety.

Low-Poverty Schools: 24%
High-Poverty Schools: 58%

N=653
FIGURE 6. Which statement comes closer to describing your school last year (2017–18)?

- Student behavior problems contributed to a disorderly or unsafe environment that made it difficult for many students to learn.
- Student behavior problems were manageable and did not interfere with student learning or seriously compromise student safety.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>White Teachers</th>
<th>Black Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt;75% FRL</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-75% FRL</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-50% FRL</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;25% FRL</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=1,097
FIGURE 7. Which of the following do you think was most responsible for the student behavior problems at your school last year (2017–18)?

- Uninvolved parents or troubled families: 42%
- Administrators who enforced school discipline inconsistently: 23%
- Community factors such as poverty, crime, and/or gang activity: 14%
- Teachers who were ineffective at classroom management: 13%
- None of these: 7%
- N/A—There were no student behavior problems at my school last year: 1%
FIGURE 8. Which statement comes closer to describing your school last year (2017–18)?

- School discipline policy was consistently enforced: 66%
- School discipline policy was inconsistently enforced: 34%

N=1,204
FIGURE 9. Did you find yourself putting up with offending behavior in the classroom due to a lack of administrative support?

- Yes: 48%
- No: 50%
- I don’t know: N=1,196
FIGURE 10. How responsible do you think each of the following is for the decline in out-of-school suspensions at your school?

- Completely responsible
- Mostly responsible
- Somewhat responsible
- Not at all responsible

N=481

- Increased use of alternatives to OSS
- Higher tolerance for misbehavior
- Improved student behavior
- Underreporting
FIGURE 11. Based on your experiences as a teacher, how often would you say that administrators tell students to stay home from school without officially recording it as a suspension?

- **Always**
- **Often**
- **Sometimes**
- **Rarely**
- **Never**
- **I don't know**

N=1,197

- >75% FRL
- 50–75% FRL
- 25–50% FRL
- <25% FRL
FIGURE 12. Based on your accumulated experiences, how often do you think administrators do each of the following?

- Tell students to stay home from school without officially recording it as a suspension
- Fail to officially report serious disciplinary incidents

[Bar chart showing responses]
FIGURE 13. How responsible do you think increased underreporting is for the decline in suspensions at your school?
FIGURE 14. In your opinion, how effective is each of the following approaches to school discipline?

- **An approach that focuses on establishing specific consequences for misbehavior (e.g., a student code of conduct)**

- **An approach that focuses on systematically rewarding good behavior (e.g., PBIS)**

- **An approach that focuses on identifying and addressing the root causes of misbehavior (e.g., “trauma-informed” practices)**

- **An approach that focuses on repairing the harm to specific relationships or the community through intentional dialogue (e.g., “restorative justice”)**

N=937–1,187
FIGURE 15. Indicate your agreement with the following statements about the use of out-of-school suspensions (OSS).

- OSS is useful for sending messages to parents about the seriousness of infractions.
- OSS is useful for removing disruptive students so that others can learn.
- OSS helps ensure a safe school environment.
- OSS for misbehaving students encourages other students to follow the rules.
- OSS is harmful because the suspended student falls further behind academically.
- OSS is useful as a deterrent to the suspended student’s future misbehavior.
- OSS increases a student’s odds of criminal justice involvement.
- The negative impacts of OSS outweigh any possible benefits.

N=1,041–1,188
FIGURE 16. Which do you think accomplishes each of the following more effectively, ISS or OSS?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>OSS does this more effectively</th>
<th>ISS does this more effectively</th>
<th>OSS and ISS are equally effective</th>
<th>Neither OSS nor ISS is effective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sending messages to parents about the seriousness of infractions</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensuring a safe school environment</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deterring the suspended student’s future misbehavior</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouraging other students to follow the rules</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Removing disruptive students so that others can learn</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping students who misbehave stay on track academically</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FIGURE 17. Assuming there are no extenuating circumstances, which do you think is the most appropriate consequence for the following infractions?

- Illegal drug use
- Sexual activity (on school grounds)
- Physical fighting
- Theft
- Verbal disrespect toward teachers
- Cutting class
- Cell phone misuse/disruption
FIGURE 18. Although they are reluctant to use out-of-school suspension for first-time offenses, many teachers believe it can be appropriate when other measures have failed.
FIGURE 19. Based on your experiences at your school last year (2017–18), indicate your agreement with the following statement:
Most students suffered because of a few persistent troublemakers.
FIGURE 20. Did you have any students with chronic discipline problems who you felt should not have been in your [high-poverty] classroom last year (2017–18)?

- Yes: 64%
- No: 35%
- I don’t know: 1%

N=526
FIGURE 21. All else equal, if a student with special needs and a general education student commit the same infraction, is the consequence likely to be:

Harsher for the general education student: 66%
Harsher for the student with special needs: 4%
About the same for both students: 25%
I don’t know: 5%

N=1,195
FIGURE 22. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: Students with IEPs were treated too leniently, even when their behavior had nothing to do with their disability.
FIGURE 23. What impact (if any) do you think getting suspended has on a student's odds of criminal justice involvement?

![Bar chart showing responses to the question about the impact of getting suspended on a student's odds of criminal justice involvement, categorized by teachers' race.](chart.png)
FIGURE 24. All else equal, if an African-American student and a white student commit the same infraction (e.g., verbally disrespecting a teacher), is the consequence likely to be:

White Teachers:
- 24% harsher for the African American student
- 77% about the same for both students
- 9% harsher for the white student

Black Teachers:
- 77% harsher for the African American student
- 22% about the same for both students
- 1% harsher for the white student
FIGURE 25. Did you recommend that a student be suspended or personally suspend a student last school year (2017–18)?

White Teachers
- Yes: 35
- No: 95
- I don't know: 5

Black Teachers
- Yes: 31
- No: 97
- I don't know: 2

N=500
FIGURE 26. In general, do you think your school used the following responses to student behavior problems too much, too little, or about the right amount?

- **Out-of-school suspension (OSS)**
  - Used too little: 36
  - Used the right amount: 9
  - Used too much: 13
  - I don’t know: 9

- **In-school suspension (ISS)**
  - Used too little: 35
  - Used the right amount: 35
  - Used too much: 20
  - I don’t know: 10

- **Expelling or counseling out students exhibiting dangerous behavior**
  - Used too little: 29
  - Used the right amount: 36
  - Used too much: 2
  - I don’t know: 33

- **A separate class that attempts to improve the behavior of persistently disruptive students (e.g., ALC)**
  - Used too little: 19
  - Used the right amount: 38
  - Used too much: 5
  - I don’t know: 38

N=1,203
FIGURE 27. In general, do you think your [high-poverty] school used out-of-school suspensions too much, too little, or about the right amount?

- Used too little
- Used the right amount
- Used too much
- I don’t know

N=503

White Teachers

- Used too little: 46%
- Used the right amount: 34%
- Used too much: 9%
- I don’t know: 11%

Black Teachers

- Used too little: 50%
- Used the right amount: 34%
- Used too much: 7%
- I don’t know: 10%
FIGURE 28. In general, do you think your [high-poverty] school used alternative learning centers ("ALC") too much, too little, or the right amount?

- **Used too little**
  - White Teachers: 41%
  - Black Teachers: 44%

- **Used the right amount**
  - White Teachers: 18%
  - Black Teachers: 17%

- **Used too much**
  - White Teachers: 6%
  - Black Teachers: 7%

- **I don't know**
  - White Teachers: 32%
  - Black Teachers: 32%

N=503
FIGURE 29. In general, do you think your [high-poverty] school used expulsions too much, too little, or the right amount?

- **White Teachers**
  - Used too little: 39%
  - Used the right amount: 26%
  - Used too much: 1%
  - I don’t know: 33%

- **Black Teachers**
  - Used too little: 36%
  - Used the right amount: 26%
  - Used too much: 5%
  - I don’t know: 33%

N=879–916
FIGURE 30. Based on how your school implemented in-school suspension last year (2017–18), how often do you think each of the following happened?

- Always
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

**Students did coursework or homework during ISS**
(as opposed to busy work or no work at all).

**Students who received ISS were connected with an adult (e.g., an administrator or counselor) to discuss the root causes of their misbehavior.**

N=879–916
FIGURE 31. Most African American teachers in high-poverty schools say Alternative Learning Centers should be used more often.
FIGURE 32. What is the most important reason that OSS increases students’ odds of criminal justice involvement?

- Students are more likely to get into trouble if they are left unsupervised during the day. 23%
- Students lose their sense of connection to school if they aren’t there on a daily basis. 68%
- Students are more likely to come into contact with law enforcement if they aren’t in school. None of the above.
FIGURE 33. Which of the following did your school use as a response to student behavior problems last year (2017–18)?

- In-school suspension (ISS): 82%
- Out-of-school suspension (OSS): 80%
- A designated "de-escalation room" or space for students to cool off and then return to class: 42%
- Expelling or counseling out students exhibiting dangerous behavior: 40%
- A separate class that attempts to improve the behavior of persistently disruptive students (e.g., ALC): 33%
- None of the above: 3%

N=1,205
FIGURE 34. Suppose that your school had additional funds to put toward addressing student behavior. Which of the following do you think would be the best use of those funds?

- Hiring more mental health professionals to help students manage their emotions: 40%
- Hiring more teaching assistants to increase the number of adults in classrooms: 33%
- Hiring more social workers to help students and families cope with issues like abuse or addiction: 14%
- Hiring more school resource officers to help maintain order: 6%
- None of these: 8%

N=1,206