

Interpreting Referral and Suspension Rates for 2010-11

Your charts on discipline referrals and suspensions for 2010-11 present four different kinds of information, but they can be used together to paint a complete picture for your school. From top to bottom, the four charts are:

Students per 100 with one or more referrals (unduplicated count). For every 100 students in your school, this is the number of students who had ANY referrals. (District value for “All” students = 23)

Discipline referrals per 100 students (duplicated count). This is the TOTAL number of referrals accumulated per 100 students. (District value = 70)

Students per 100 with one or more suspensions (unduplicated count). For every 100 students in your school, this is the number of students who had ANY suspensions. (District value = 13)

Suspensions per 100 students (duplicated count). This is the TOTAL number of suspensions accumulated per 100 students. (District value = 23)

Looking at your whole school data (the “All” category at the right end of the chart), you can actually use these to make a connected series of statements by reading down from one chart to the next. Using the District values noted above, we could observe that “Across the whole district, 23 of every 100 students had a discipline referral last year, and accumulated a total of 70 referrals among them. Of these 23 students, 13 students received a total of 23 suspensions.” You can construct a similar commentary from your own numbers. In addition, the total number of discipline referrals and suspensions for the past five years are tabled below the charts, so you can make some observations about whole-school trends.

The reason the charts present information in terms of 100 students is to allow greater equity in comparison among groups. Values presented for each student group are also based on 100 students *in that group*. So, for example, if you wish to understand the different experiences of students on free/reduced lunch compared with paid lunch students, but you have a much higher proportion of free/reduced than paid, this provides a *common denominator for the groups*. You can make the same kind of sequential statement as we made, above, for the District by following downward from one chart to the next within your category of interest. One note of caution: This presentation works well for the District and for large schools, but if your school is small and if you have very few students in a group of interest, be cautious. For example, if you have fewer than 20 students on paid lunch in your school, you might wish to disregard results for that group. You know your student population, so use your judgment.