

West Hartford Public School District

Agenda Item: Safe School Climate and Discipline Report

Meeting Date: May 15, 2018

From: Andy Morrow, Assistant Superintendent for Administration

Through: Tom Moore, Superintendent of Schools

This year's safe school climate and discipline report provides feedback on K-12 school climate, as well as data that reflects student behavior in our secondary schools that resulted in suspensions and expulsions. Overall, the data indicates that the overwhelming majority of our students conduct themselves appropriately and contribute to a safe and orderly learning environment in our schools. Each year we survey students, parents and staff on school climate and safety. The results of these surveys are reviewed at the building and District levels to identify areas of need and improvement. These survey results will be available later this month for review and will be shared with the BOE at a later date.

We continue to review and update all of our safety protocols with the assistance of the West Hartford Police Department, as well as completed an All-Hazards Safety and Security Plan with local agencies. We also continue to train staff and students on safety measures in coordination with local agencies and latest guidance.

Andy Morrow, Dan Zittoun, Julio Duarte, and Eric Dency will be presenting an overview of the report and sharing the work being done at the high school level to build positive connections and community. They will also share an update on the safety and security measures that have been put in place and are planned for the future.

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Infractions

A **summary of serious infractions**, as defined by the State of Connecticut, is included in the following chart. This year there were 175 suspensions for serious infractions in all five secondary schools from a population of approximately 5,200 students. Sixty-nine percent (69%) of all suspensions for serious infractions were served in school. Last year at this time there were 221 suspensions for the same type of offenses from a population of approximately 5,200 students. This year there were 4 verified cases of bullying at the secondary level and 4 cases of verified bullying at the elementary level. For reference, in 2016-17 there were 8 verified cases of bullying at the secondary level and 1 at the elementary level, in 2015-16 there were 10 verified cases of bullying at the secondary level and 1 at the elementary level.

**Detail of Serious Offenses Resulting in a Suspension
State Definition – 2017-18 School Year – Through 4/16/18**

Serious Offenses Defined by the State of Connecticut

<u>Code</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>BRISTOW</u>	<u>KPM</u>	<u>SEDGWICK</u>	<u>CONARD</u>	<u>HALL</u>
1100	Arson					
1400	Burglary/Breaking and Entering					
1410	Theft/Stealing	0	0	2	2	1
1420	Robbery					0
1700	Fighting/Altercation	2	22	15	2	5
1710	Physical Altercation	5	4	14	10	3
1711	Verbal Altercation	1	0	1	10	2
1712	Incite Fighting/Riot					
1720	Battery					
1730	Throwing Object at Victim					
1800	Harassment—Non Sexual	0	3	4	3	0
1810	Threat/Intimidation/Verbal Harassment	0	5	4	4	3
1811	Racial Slurs/Hate Crimes	0	0	1	2	0
1813	Hazing					
1900	Harassment—Sexual	1	0	2	0	2
1910	Sexual Battery					
1920	Sexual Offense					
2000	Homicide					
2100	Stabbing					
2200	Blackmail					
2300	Kidnapping/Abduction					
2700	School/Bomb Threat					
3500	Vandalism					
3700	Weapons	1	0	4	1	0
3800	Drugs/Alcohol/Tobacco	0	0	1	17	16
	Totals	10	34	48	51	32

There have been a total of 3 expulsions this year. There were 22 in 2010-11, 10 in 2011-12, 10 in 2012-13, 9 in 2013-2014, 4 in 2014-15, 11 in 2015-16, and 5 in 2016-17. This year there have been 3 expulsions at the high school level and 0 at the middle school level.

We will continue to support the REACH and STRIVE programs, as well as the Alternative Education Program (AEP) for students who have been expelled, appropriate guidance support, and ongoing professional development programs that have been implemented and have improved the learning environment in our schools. To better support students and families, we added an additional transition classroom to the STRIVE program that has been a success. We are also examining new ways and ideas to improve behavior for all of our students and to engage our entire school community in ways to keep our children safe.

For example, any time we see an increase in a particular activity at a school, we meet together to discuss what has happened, case by case, to see if the behaviors could have been headed off. In addition, statistics from surveys, referrals, and suspensions are reviewed by administrators and also go to the Safe School Climate Committee for discussion with parents, teachers, and school resource officers. As part of this review, we continue to monitor and analyze discipline data during the year by grade and race to identify and address areas of concerns and trends. As the chart below illustrates, while significantly better than the CT average, suspension rates for both Black and Hispanic students remain considerably higher than White students. This remains an active concern that we are addressing in our schools by working with students, staff, and parents. Furthermore, both School and District administration examine each case and each student on an individual basis to ensure that consequences are appropriate and consistently applied. Our Administrators' and teachers' continued work with cultural competency and the Collaborative & Proactive Solutions (CPS) model are tools that we continue to expand and implement to address racial disparity.

Suspension Rates Trend by Race/Ethnicity

School	Asian			Black or African American			Hispanic or Latino			White			Total		
	Enrollment	Count	% of Enr	Enrollment	Count	% of Enr	Enrollment	Count	% of Enr	Enrollment	Count	% of Enr	Enrollment	Grand Total	% of Enr
Conard	221	10	4.52%	161	16	9.94%	258	33	12.79%	805	23	2.86%	1449	83	5.73%
Hall	194	3	1.55%	135	17	12.59%	213	25	11.74%	941	24	2.55%	1485	69	4.65%
Total HS	415	13	3.13%	296	33	11.15%	471	58	12.31%	1746	47	2.69%	2934	152	5.18%
District	1200	19	1.58%	999	85	8.51%	1673	134	8.01%	5761	96	1.67%	9656	334	3.46%
State			1.60%			15.20%			9.70%			3.90%			3.90%

Our review of discipline in the schools indicates that our schools are safe learning environments for students and staff. Administrators speak frequently with students, parents, teachers, and members of the community to gain additional information about the learning environments. Input from all segments of the school community is reviewed and considered in developing and adjusting policies, procedures, and programs to improve the learning environment. This discipline data will be used to instruct any necessary changes in professional development and/or programmatic changes necessary to keep our buildings safe learning environments for all students.

Safe School Climate Committees/State of CT Climate Surveys

Each school has a safe school climate committee comprised of teachers, administrators, parents, and at the high school level, students. Each committee examines data from their school that speaks to the environment for students there. Each school committee will look at the results of the safe school climate committee survey to tailor specific school plans to meet each building's needs, both for policies and for professional development. There is much to be learned from the climate survey questions that we administer to students, parents, and staff in the district.

School Security Update

School safety and security is our paramount concern and is at the center of all we do with students, staff, and parents. We work closely with the West Hartford Police Department and state agencies to assess our facilities and programs, and over the past four years, we have implemented a number of security measures to address specific concerns that have helped secure our schools and improved the safety of our students and teachers. In addition, we have new projects planned to improve sites and protect students. In addition to presenting to the Parent Teacher Council, Eric Dency, our Director of Safety and Security, has updated staff and PTOs at our schools on our recent activities and continued plans. He and Andy Morrow are available for questions.

Recent Projects:

- Universal Badge Access System
- New Classroom Locks/System
- Exterior and Interior Camera Upgrades
- Active Shooter Buttons
- Improved Entryways (Hall, Sedgwick, COIA)

Next Steps:

- Camera enhancements
- Conard Entryway
- Bugbee Entryway

Ongoing Training:

- Enhanced Training with Staff
- Bleed Control Kits
- Emergency Action Guide and Drills
- Lockdown Drills and Fire Drills -Student, PD and FD Involvement
- SRO/CRO collaboration
- WHPD Use of Schools for Training
- Daily Police Visits to Schools