



# DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION SERVICES

## ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Patrick Murphy, Superintendent  
Meg Tuccillo, Assistant Superintendent

**FROM:** Helene Hartman, Data Architect

**THROUGH:** Salah Khelifaoui, Assistant Superintendent

**CC:** Suzanne Raber, Director Planning and Evaluation  
Lisa Stengle, Assistant Director Evaluation

**SUBJECT:** Suspension Report by Race/Ethnicity and Disability Status for 2009-10

**DATE:** October 20, 2010

This memo provides details on suspensions with a focus on race/ethnicity. Attached is a summary of 2009-10 out-of-school suspensions by race/ethnicity for each school.

We report the results by race/ethnicity to monitor the distribution of suspensions among student groups. Only out-of-school suspensions are discussed in this document. Definitions for the two main reporting categories and the gap follow.

- “Suspensions” counts each student one time for each suspension received.
- “Students Suspended” counts each student only one time per school regardless of how many times he or she was suspended at that school.
- The gap represents the difference between the proportion of overall APS enrollment for an identified group and the proportion of suspensions.

In the report on the Strategic Plan Indicators, suspensions are reported for students who were still enrolled in the Arlington Public Schools at the end of the 2009-10 school year, a method that is applied consistently across all student indicators. In contrast, this report includes suspensions that occurred during the school year, irrespective of student enrollment status at the end of the school year.

In Table 1, the APS population is the same information reported in the Civil Rights Report as of October of each school year.

The total number of out-of-school suspensions decreased by 17% from 484 in 2008-09 to 401 in 2009-10, continuing the downward trend started in 2006-07.

Table 1 provides a summary of suspensions, students suspended and the related gaps by race/ethnicity from 2005-06 through 2009-10. Both the number of suspensions and the number of students suspended decreased over the last 4 years.

Table 1  
OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS BY RACE/ETHNICITY  
Gap in the Proportion of Suspensions and Students Suspended  
Compared to Proportion of Total Enrollment<sup>1</sup>

	School Year Ending	APS Total	Asian		Black		Hispanic		White	
			Total	Percent	Total	Percent	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
Population	2010	19298	2138	11	2455	13	5066	26	9344	48
	2009	18605	1991	11	2391	13	4965	27	8953	48
	2008	17819	1925	11	2402	13	4711	26	8528	48
	2007	17591	1912	11	2428	14	4785	27	8263	47
	2006	17584	1816	10	2471	14	5093	29	8051	46
Suspensions	2010	401	23	6	131	33	163	41	81	20
	2009	484	30	6	182	38	155	32	117	24
	2008	524	36	7	176	34	197	38	114	22
	2007	715	54	8	212	30	284	40	163	23
	2006	1028	91	9	354	34	326	32	254	25
Suspensions Gap	2010			-5		20		15		-28
	2009			-5		25		5		-24
	2008			-4		21		12		-26
	2007			-3		16		13		-24
	2006			-1		20		3		-21
Students Suspended <sup>2</sup>	2010	316	17	5	95	30	126	40	76	24
	2009	360	23	6	127	35	123	34	87	24
	2008	406	26	6	128	32	156	38	95	23
	2007	510	38	7	150	29	209	41	111	22
	2006	729	63	9	235	32	243	33	185	25
Students Suspended Gap	2010			-6		17		14		-24
	2009			-5		22		7		-24
	2008			-5		19		12		-25
	2007			-4		15		14		-25
	2006			-1		18		4		-21

<sup>1</sup> Gap is equal to the proportion of suspensions minus the proportion of the population. A positive proportion indicates the groups is overrepresented in the indicator.

<sup>2</sup> A student will be counted once per school at which a suspension occurred. Percentages are rounded to the nearest integer.

Black students have been disproportionately overrepresented in suspensions since reporting started in 1999-2000. In 2005-06, Black students represented 34% of the suspensions and the gap was 20 percentage points. In 2009-10, Black students accounted for 33% of out-of-school suspensions while they made up 13% of the population, resulting in a gap of 20 percentage points, a decrease of 5 percentage points from 2008-09.

Enrollment by Hispanic students in the Arlington Public Schools decreased from 27% in 2008-09 to 26% in 2009-10, while the percentage of suspensions among Hispanic students increased from 32% to 41%, increasing the gap for suspensions of Hispanic students from 5 to 15 percentage points from 2008-09 to 2009-10. Asian and White students continue to be underrepresented among the Arlington suspensions.

The change in the gaps reflect decreases in the number of suspensions for Black and White students and a more notable increase in the number of suspensions for Hispanic students between 2008-09 and 2009-10. Over this period, suspensions for Black students decreased by 51 to 131, and suspensions for White students decreased by 36 to 81. At the same time, the number of suspensions for Hispanic students increased by 8 to 163, and the number of suspensions for Asian students decreased by 7 to 23.

Table 2 shows the change in the number of suspensions by race/ethnicity and the percentage change from the previous year. In 2009-10, there was an 17% decrease in the total number of suspensions from 2008-09, dropping by 61% from the 1028 suspensions reported in 2005-06.

The percentage of suspensions among Asian students dropped 23% from the previous year. The number of suspensions has dropped for the last 4 years, with an overall decrease of 75% from 2005-06.

In 2009-10, suspensions among Black students decreased by 28%. With the exception of 2008-09, there has been a steady decrease in the number of suspensions for Black students. The 2009-10 level has decreased by 63% from 2005-06.

In 2009-10, the number of suspensions among Hispanic students increased by 5% from 2008-09 but has decreased overall by 50% from 2005-06.

Suspensions among White students decreased by 31% from 2008-09 and by 68% from 2005-06.

Table 2  
SUSPENSIONS BY RACE/ETHNICITY  
Change in Total Suspensions by Race/Ethnicity

Race/ Ethnicity	School Year Ending	Total Suspensions	Change from Previous Year
Total	2010	401	-17%
	2009	484	-8%
	2008	524	-27%
	2007	715	-30%
	2006	1028	
Asian	2010	23	-23%
	2009	30	-17%
	2008	36	-33%
	2007	54	-41%
	2006	91	
Black	2010	131	-28%
	2009	182	3%
	2008	176	-17%
	2007	212	-40%
	2006	354	
Hispanic	2010	163	5%
	2009	155	-21%
	2008	197	-31%
	2007	284	-13%
	2006	326	
White	2010	81	-31%
	2009	117	3%
	2008	114	-30%
	2007	163	-36%
	2006	254	

Percentages are rounded to the nearest integer.

Table 3 reports suspensions by school level. Comparing 2009-10 to 2008-09, the total number of suspensions decreased for elementary, middle, and high schools. Overall, the total number of suspensions reduced by 61% from 2005-06 to 2009-10.

Elementary schools suspended 26 students in 2009-10, the lowest since 2005-06 and a decrease of 68% from the 80 suspensions reported in 2005-06.

Middle school suspensions decreased by 35% from 158 suspensions in 2008-09 to 103 suspensions in 2009-10. This represents a decrease of 79% from the 484 suspensions reported in 2005-06.

High school suspensions decreased by 7% from 2008-09 to 2009-10, continuing their steady decrease from 2005-06. The overall decrease in high school suspensions over the 5-year period is 41%.

Table 3  
SUSPENSIONS BY SCHOOL LEVEL  
Change in Total Suspensions by School Level

School Level	School Year Ending	Total Suspensions	Change from Previous Year
Total	2010	401	-17%
	2009	484	-8%
	2008	524	-27%
	2007	715	-30%
	2006	1028	
Elementary	2010	26	-24%
	2009	34	-19%
	2008	42	-14%
	2007	49	-39%
	2006	80	
Middle	2010	103	-35%
	2009	158	8%
	2008	146	-48%
	2007	283	-42%
	2006	484	
High	2010	272	-7%
	2009	292	-13%
	2008	336	-12%
	2007	383	-17%
	2006	464	

Percentages are rounded to the nearest integer.

Table 4  
**SUSPENSIONS BY DISABILITY STATUS**  
 Gap in the Proportion of Suspensions and Students Suspended  
 Compared to Proportion of Total Enrollment<sup>1</sup>

	School Year Ending	APS Total	Students with Disabilities		Students without Disabilities	
			Total	Percent	Total	Percent
Population <sup>2</sup>	2010	20389	3096	15	17293	85
	2009	19766	2941	15	16825	85
	2008	19078	2882	15	16196	85
	2007	18834	2893	15	15941	85
Suspensions	2010	401	175	44	226	56
	2009	484	220	45	264	55
	2008	524	195	37	329	63
	2007	715	336	47	379	53
Suspensions Gap	2010			28		-28
	2009			31		-31
	2008			22		-22
	2007			32		-32
Students Suspended <sup>3</sup>	2010	316	121	38	195	62
	2009	360	141	39	219	61
	2008	406	137	34	269	66
	2007	510	215	42	295	58
Students Suspended Gap	2010			23		-23
	2009			24		-24
	2008			19		-19
	2007			27		-27

<sup>1</sup> Gap is equal to the proportion of suspensions minus the proportion of the population. A positive proportion indicates the groups is overrepresented in the indicator.

<sup>2</sup> This includes all students who were enrolled at any time during the year. A student will be counted once per school at which he or she was enrolled.

<sup>3</sup> A student will be counted once per school at which a suspension occurred. Percentages are rounded to the nearest integer.

Table 4 was introduced for school year 2007-08 to provide information about students with disabilities. In Table 4, the APS population is not taken from the Civil Rights Report as disability status is not collected for that report. Instead, the APS population has been taken from the data submitted in the state report at the end of each school year.

Over the last 4 years, enrollment in the Arlington Public Schools by students with disabilities remained constant at 15%. During the same period, students with disabilities have been disproportionately overrepresented in suspensions.

Over the last year, there was a 1% decrease in the proportion of suspensions for students with disabilities and a 3 percentage point decrease in the suspensions gap. There is no clear pattern over time.