



DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION SERVICES

ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Patrick Murphy, Superintendent
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FROM: Helene Hartman, Evaluation Data Specialist

THROUGH: Walter McKenzie, Assistant Superintendent

CC: Kathy Wills, Director Planning and Evaluation
Lisa Stengle, Assistant Director Evaluation

SUBJECT: Suspension Report by Race/Ethnicity and Disability Status for 2007-08 and 2008-09

DATE: October 30, 2009

This memo provides details on suspensions with a focus on race/ethnicity. Attached are a summary of 2008-09 out-of-school suspensions by race/ethnicity for each school and a revised summary of results for 2007-08. The number of suspensions for school year 2007-08 was over-reported because it included in-school alternatives as well as out-of-school suspensions. This was identified during verification of the 2008-09 data. 2007-08 information reported in this document has been recalculated to exclude in-school alternatives, and a revised Suspension Report for 2007-08 will be posted on the APS web site by November 6, 2009.

By mid-November, we will provide a new report similar in format to the attached report but focusing solely on in-school alternatives.

We report the results by race/ethnicity to monitor the distribution of suspensions among student groups. Definitions for the two main reporting categories and the gap follow.

- “Suspensions” counts each student one time for each suspension received. Only out-of-school suspensions are discussed in this document.
- “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 2008-09 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 8% from 524 in 2007-08 to 484 in 2008-09. Although the percentage decrease realized was smaller than in the previous two years, this continued the downward trend started in 2006-07. Table 1 provides a summary of suspensions, students suspended and the related gaps by race/ethnicity from 2004-05 through 2008-09. Both the number of suspensions and the number of students suspended decreased over the last 3 years.

Table 1
OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS BY RACE/ETHNICITY
Gap in the Proportion of Suspensions and Students Suspended
Compared to Proportion of Total Enrollment¹

	School Year Ending	APS Total	Asian		Black		Hispanic		White	
			Total	Percent	Total	Percent	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
Population	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
	2005	17917	1821	10	2580	14	5538	30	7890	46
Suspensions	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
	2005	974	75	8	340	35	365	37	194	20
Suspensions Gap	2009			-5		25		5		-24
	2008			-4		21		12		-26
	2007			-3		16		13		-24
	2006			-1		20		3		-21
	2005			-2		21		7		-26
Students Suspended ²	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
	2005	692	58	8	218	32	264	38	152	22
Students Suspended Gap	2009			-5		22		7		-24
	2008			-5		19		12		-25
	2007			-4		15		14		-25
	2006			-1		18		4		-21
	2005			-2		18		8		-24

¹ 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.

² 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 2004-05, Black students represented 35% of the suspensions and the gap was 21 percentage points. In 2008-09, Black students accounted for 38% of out-of-school suspensions while they made up 13% of the population, resulting in a gap of 25 percentage points, an increase of 4 percentage points from 2007-08.

Enrollment by Hispanic students in the Arlington Public Schools increased from 26% in 2007-08 to 27% in 2008-09, while the percentage of Hispanic students suspended decreased from 38% to 32%, reducing the gap for suspension of Hispanic students from 12 to 5 percentage points from 2007-08 to 2008-09. Asian and White students continue to be underrepresented among the Arlington suspensions.

The change in the gaps reflect small increases in the number of suspensions for Black and White students and a more notable decrease in the number of suspensions for Hispanic students between 2007-08 and 2008-09. Over this period, suspensions for Black students increased by 6 to 182, and suspensions for White students increased by 3 to 117. At the same time, the number of suspensions for Hispanic students decreased by 42 to 155, and the number of suspensions for Asian students decreased by 6 to 30.

Table 2 shows the change in the number of suspensions by race/ethnicity and the percentage change from the previous year. In 2008-09, there was an 8% decrease in the total number of suspensions from 2007-08, dropping by half from the 974 suspensions reported in 2004-05.

The percentage of suspensions among Asian students dropped 17% from the previous year. The number of suspensions has dropped for the last 3 years.

In 2008-09, suspensions among Black students increased by 6 to 182 suspensions. Over the previous 2 years, the number of suspensions for Black students had decreased. The 2008-09 level has decreased by almost half from the 340 suspensions reported in 2004-05.

The number of suspensions for Hispanic students continued to decrease to a low of 155 suspensions. This is 58% lower than the 365 suspensions reported in 2004-05.

Suspensions for White students increased slightly with 117 suspensions in 2008-09. This is a 3% increase from a low of 114 suspensions in 2007-08, but still a 40% drop from 2004-05.

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

Race/ Ethnicity	School Year Ending	Total Suspensions	Change
Total	2009	484	-8%
	2008	524	-27%
	2007	715	-30%
	2006	1028	6%
	2005	974	
Asian	2009	30	-17%
	2008	36	-33%
	2007	54	-41%
	2006	91	21%
	2005	75	
Black	2009	182	3%
	2008	176	-17%
	2007	212	-40%
	2006	354	4%
	2005	340	
Hispanic	2009	155	-21%
	2008	197	-31%
	2007	284	-13%
	2006	326	-11%
	2005	365	
White	2009	117	3%
	2008	114	-30%
	2007	163	-36%
	2006	254	31%
	2005	194	

Percentages are rounded to the nearest integer.

Table 3 reports suspensions by school level. Comparing 2008-09 to 2007-08, the total number of suspensions decreased for elementary and high schools and rose slightly for middle school. Overall, the total number of suspensions reduced by half from 2004-05 to 2008-09.

Elementary schools reported 34 suspensions in 2008-09, the lowest since 2004-05 and a decrease of 71% from the 118 suspensions reported in 2004-05.

Middle school suspensions increased by 8% from 146 suspensions in 2007-08 to 158 suspensions in 2008-09. This still represents a decrease of 62% from the 417 suspensions reported in 2004-05.

High school suspensions decreased by 13% from 2007-08 to 2008-09, continuing their steady decrease from 2006-07. The overall decrease in high school suspensions over the 5-year period is 33%.

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

School Level	School Year Ending	Total Suspensions	Change
Total	2009	484	-8%
	2008	524	-27%
	2007	715	-30%
	2006	1028	6%
	2005	974	
Elementary	2009	34	-19%
	2008	42	-14%
	2007	49	-39%
	2006	80	-32%
	2005	118	
Middle	2009	158	8%
	2008	146	-48%
	2007	283	-42%
	2006	484	16%
	2005	417	
High	2009	292	-13%
	2008	336	-12%
	2007	383	-17%
	2006	464	6%
	2005	439	

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 Enrollment¹

	School Year Ending	APS Total	Students with Disabilities		Students without Disabilities	
			Total	Percent	Total	Percent
Population ²	2009	19766	2941	15	16825	85
	2008	19078	2882	15	16196	85
	2007	18834	2893	15	15941	85
Suspensions	2009	484	220	45	264	55
	2008	524	195	37	329	63
	2007	715	336	47	379	53
Suspensions Gap	2009			31		-31
	2008			22		-22
	2007			32		-32
Students Suspended ³	2009	360	141	39	219	61
	2008	406	137	34	269	66
	2007	510	215	42	295	58
Students Suspended Gap	2009			24		-24
	2008			19		-19
	2007			27		-27

¹ 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.

² This includes all students who were enrolled at any time during the year.

³ 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 was not taken from the Civil Rights Report as disability status did not form part of that report. Instead, the APS population has been taken from the data submitted in the state report at the end of each school year.

During verification of the 2008-09 data, it was identified that whereas the suspensions data included suspensions for students who were enrolled in APS anytime during the school year, the APS Total Population figures only included students who were enrolled at the end of the school year. This has been rectified here for all 3 school years. Please note that although the increase in the APS total population brought with it an increase in the number of students with disabilities in that population, the percentages remained the same and hence did not alter the overall picture presented in the table.

Over the last 3 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.

From 2006-07 to 2007-08, the percentage of suspensions and the corresponding gap for students with disabilities decreased 10 percentage points, but then increased in 2008-09, almost returning to their 2006-07 level. A similar pattern is present in students suspended.