

**BREAKING SCHOOLS' RULES:**  
A Statewide Study of How School Discipline Relates to Students' Success and Juvenile Justice Involvement

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THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS  
*Collaborative Approaches to Public Safety*

**Breaking Schools' Rules Report and School Discipline Consensus Project**

*Carl Reynolds*  
Senior Legal & Policy Advisor

**November 6, 2013**

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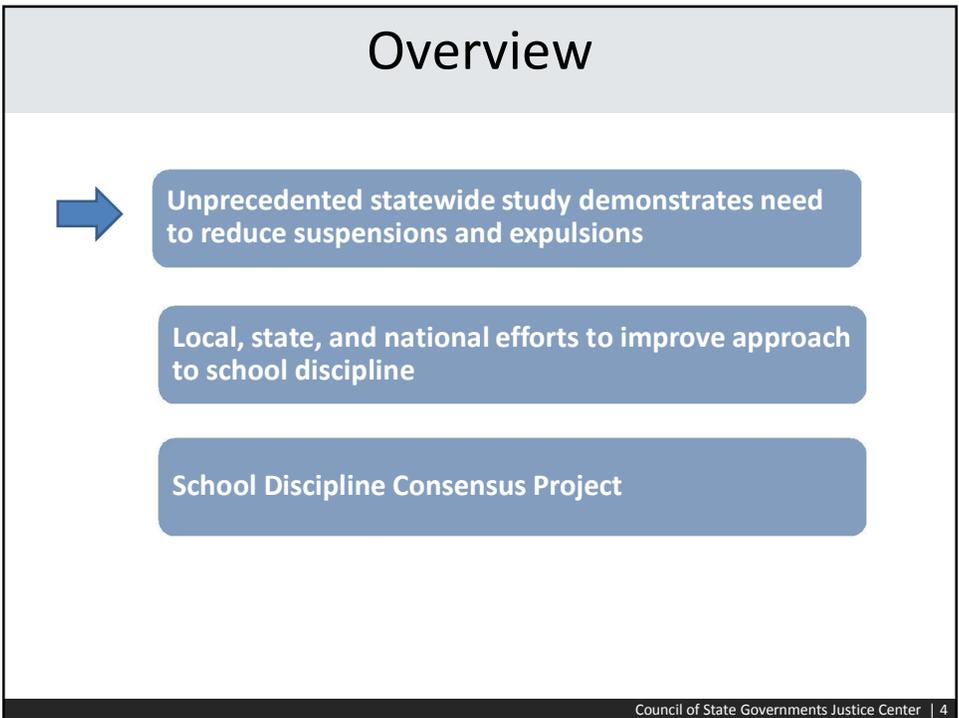
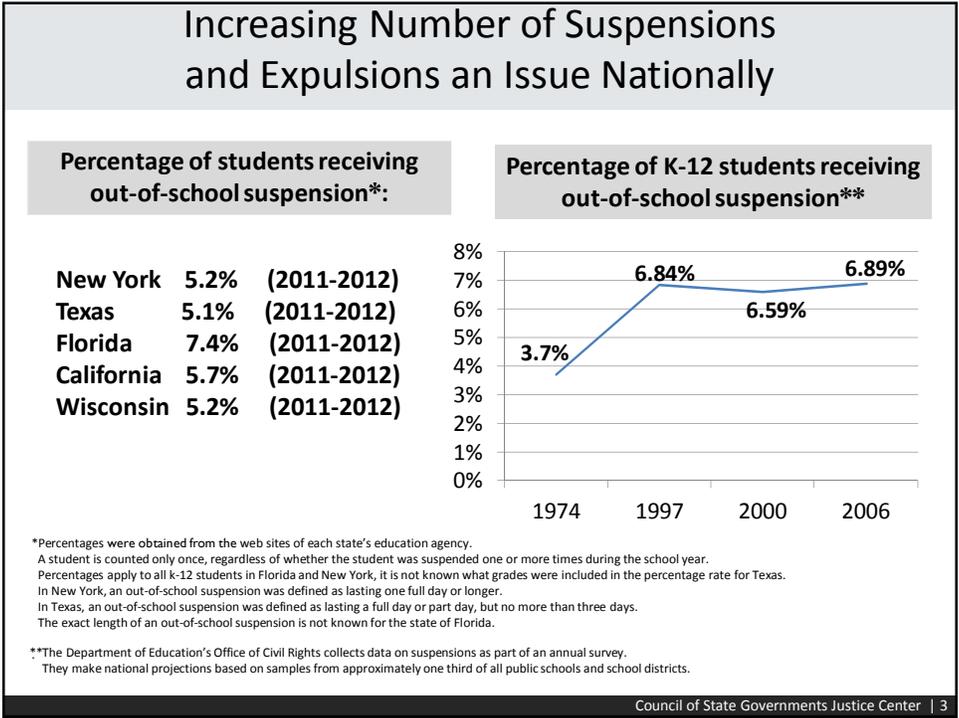
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- **National non-profit, non-partisan membership association of state government officials**
- **Represents all three branches of state government**
- **Provides practical, nonpartisan advice informed by the best available evidence**

Corrections 	Courts 	Justice Reinvestment 	Law Enforcement 
Mental Health 	Reentry 	Substance Abuse 	Youth 

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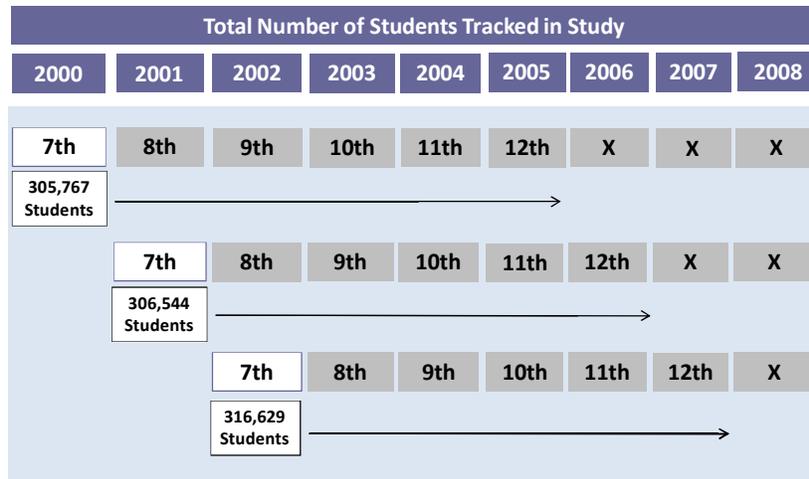


## Texas and New York Have Similarities When Examining School Discipline Issues

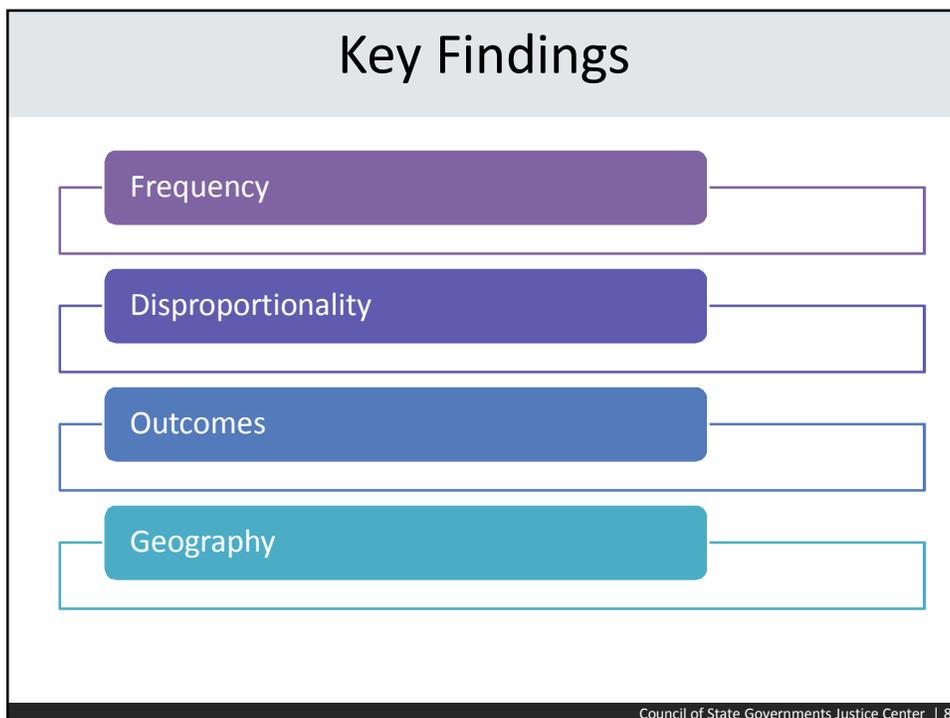
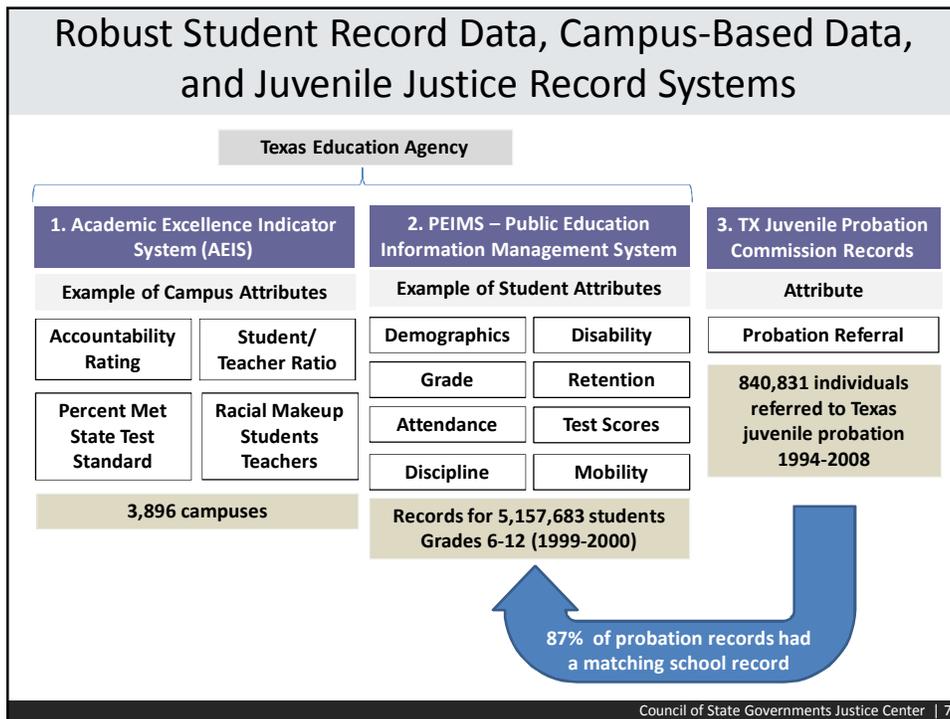
	Texas	New York
<b>Exceptionally large school system</b>	Approximately 5 million students 1,200 school districts 1 in 10 public school students in US	Approximately 3 million students 1,000 school districts
<b>Diverse student population</b>	40% Hispanic 43% White 14% African-American 3% Other	22% Hispanic 50% White 19% African-American 9% Other

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## BSR Study Follows Over 900,000 Students

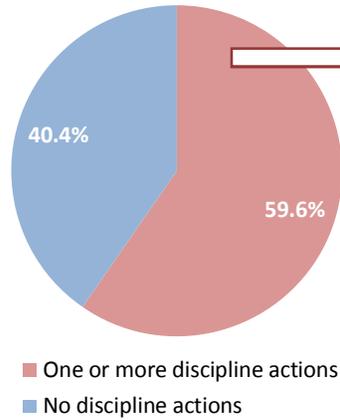


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### Frequency: Almost 60% of Students Disciplined in Almost 5 Million Events

Percent of Students with Discipline Actions During Study Period



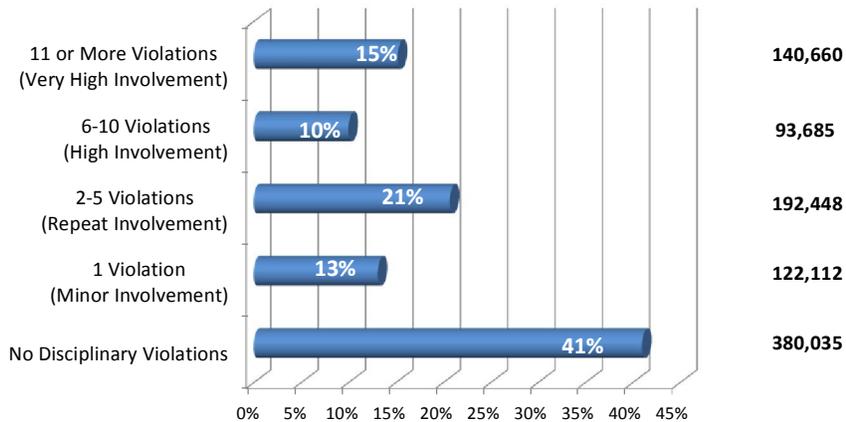
553,413 of the 928,940 students studied had at least one discipline action during the study period

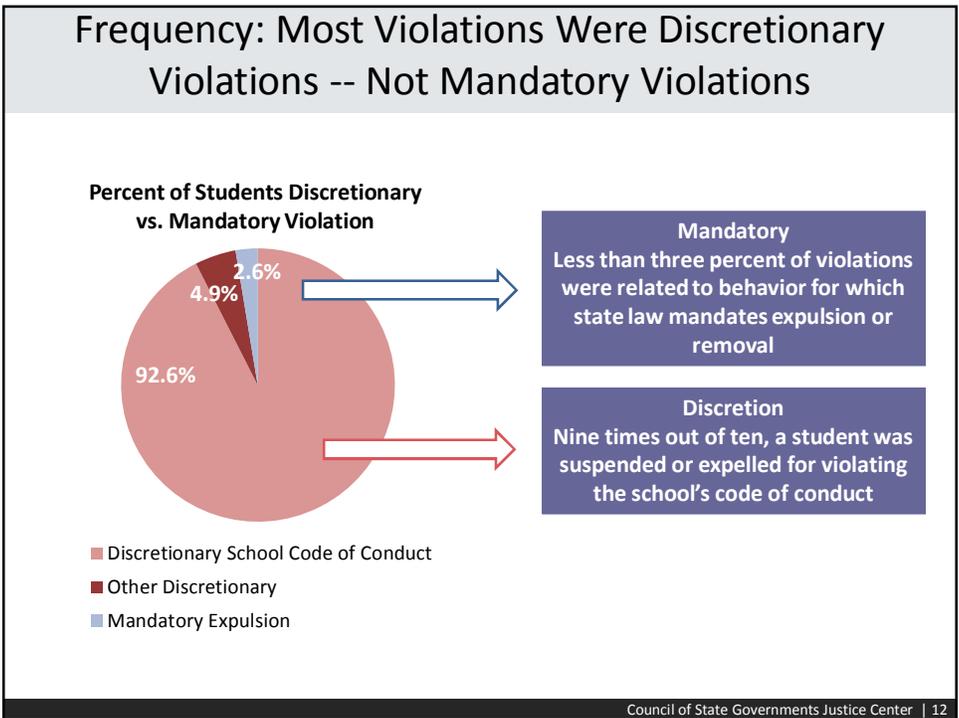
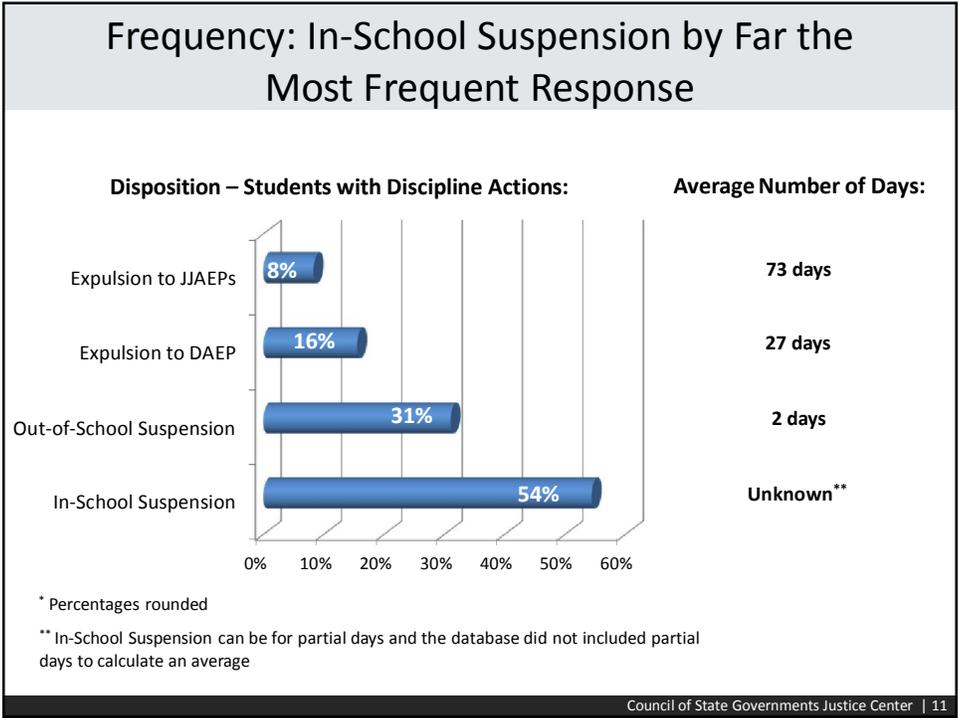


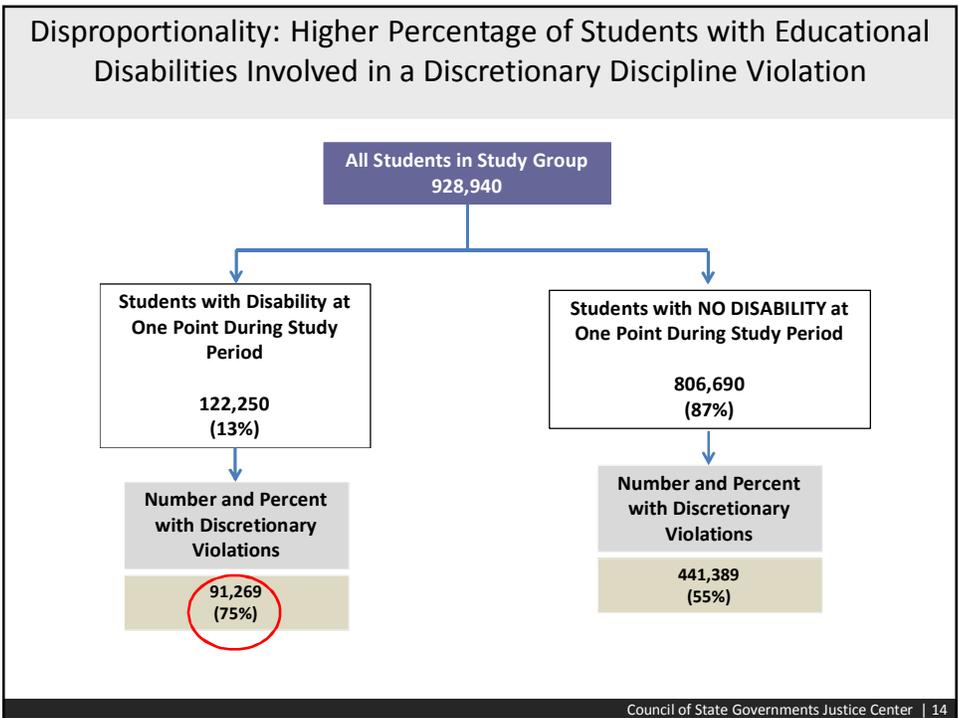
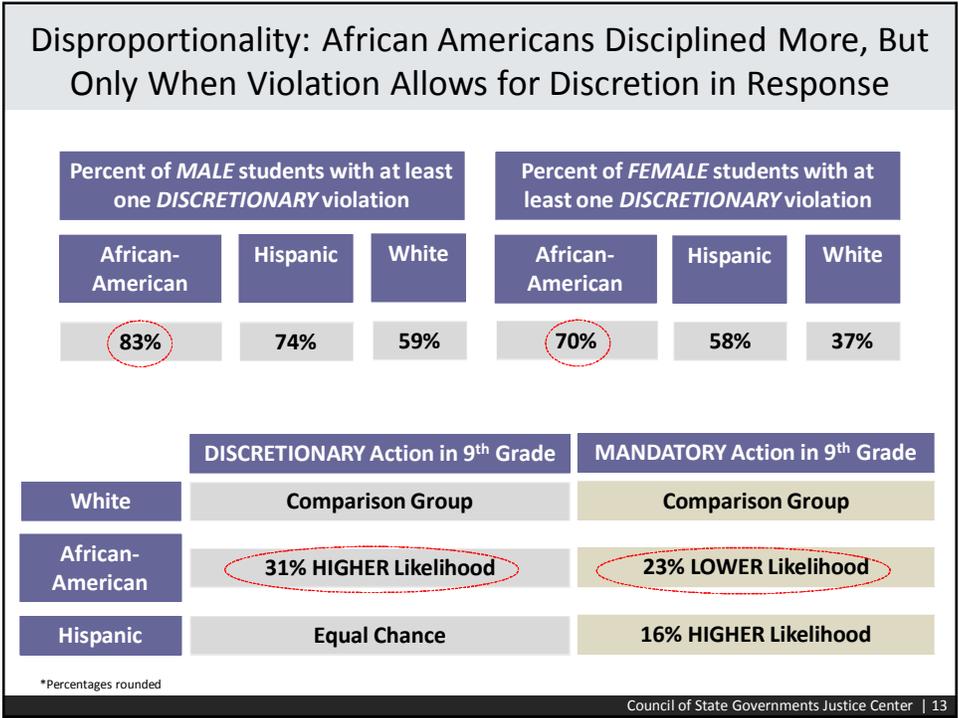
The 553,413 students accounted for 4,910,917 suspensions or expulsions  
Median # of violations experienced per student = 4

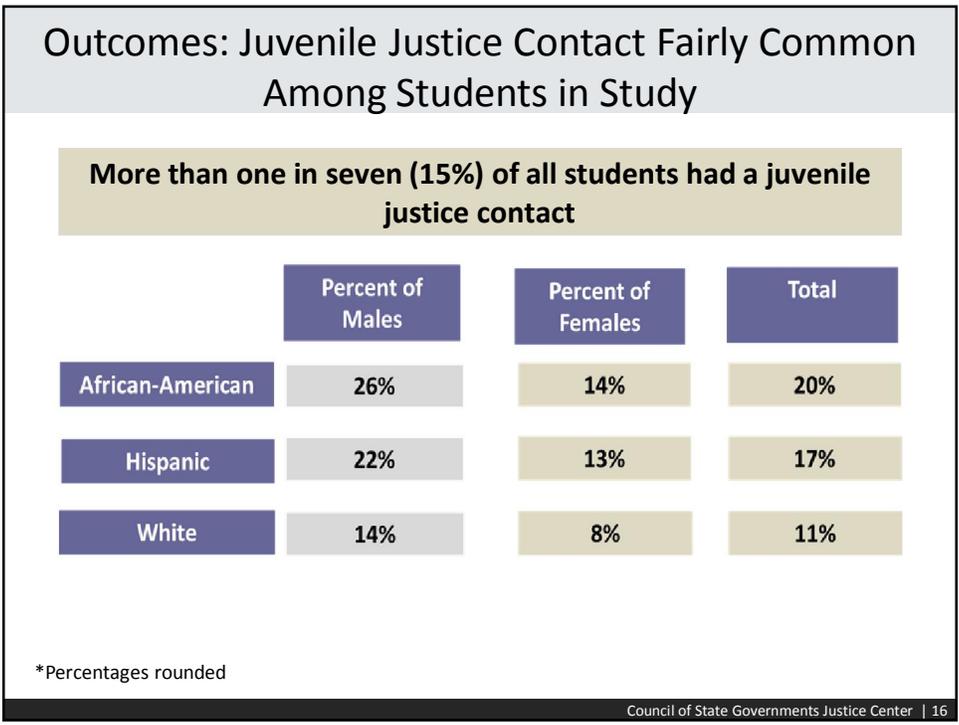
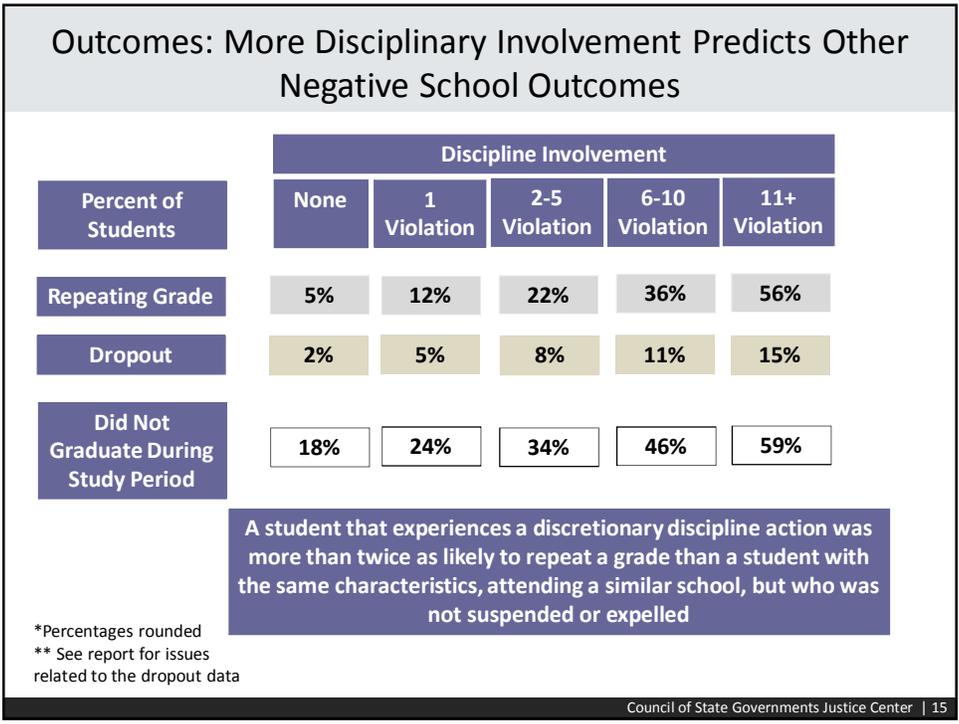
### Frequency: 46% of Students Disciplined Multiple Times and 15% Removed 11+ Times

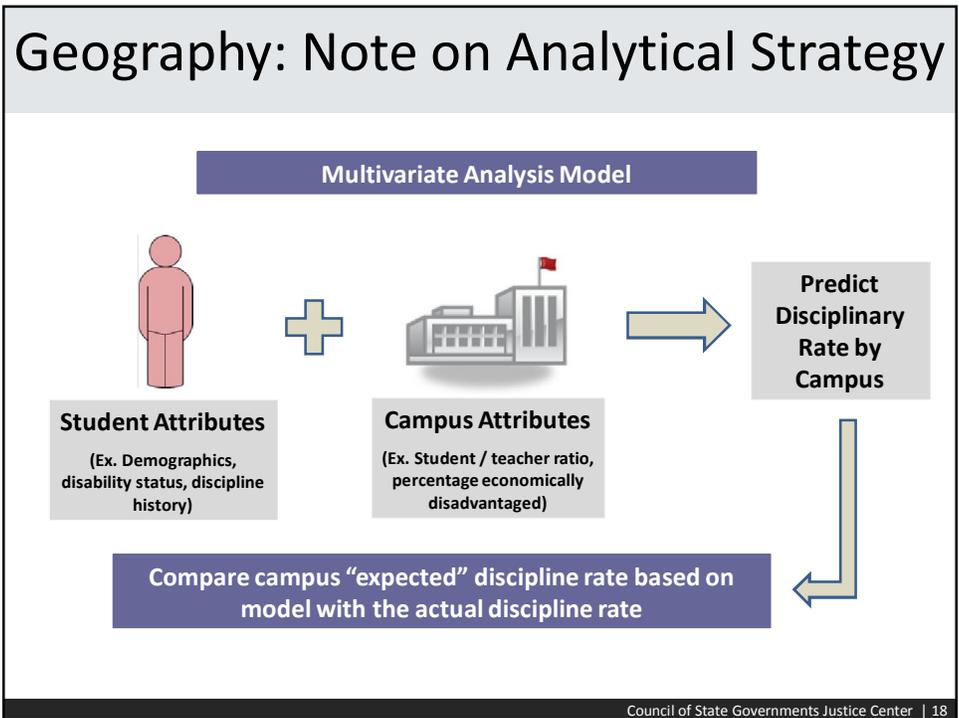
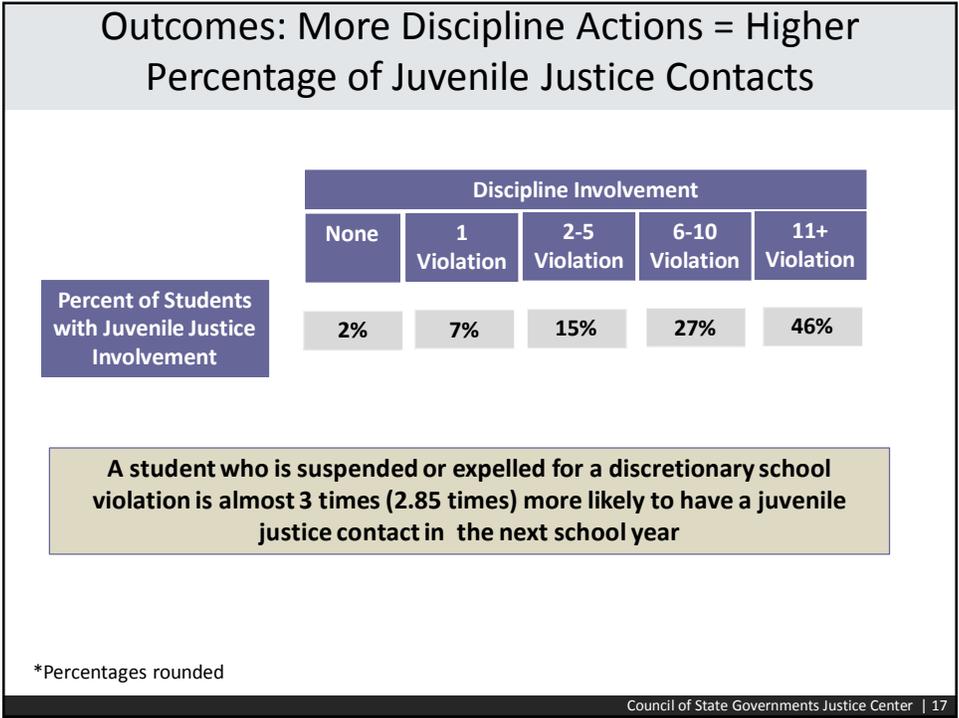
Percentage of Students with Discretionary Discipline Violations



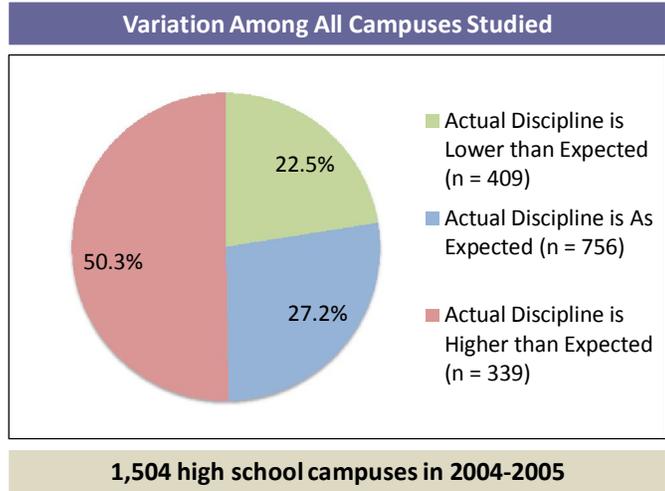




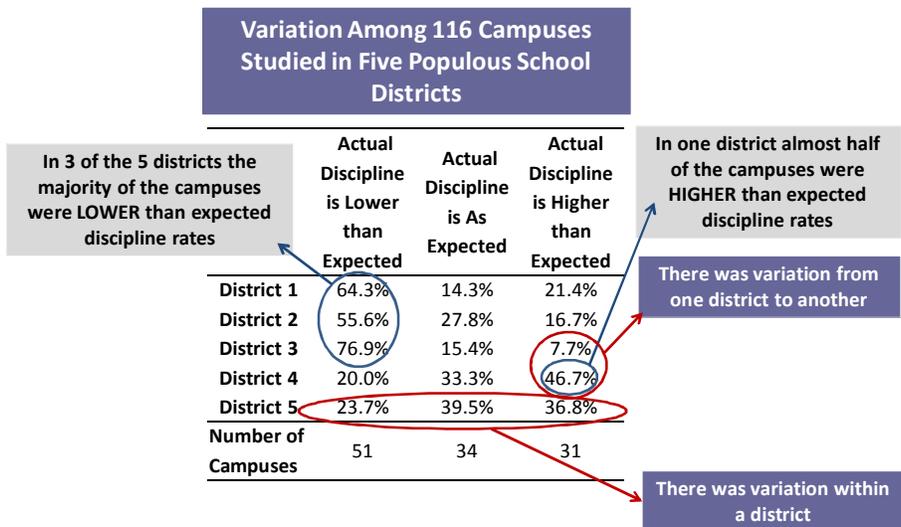




## Geography: Significant Variation in Discipline Rates Among Schools



## Geography: Five School Districts and Their Distribution of Campuses Along Actual vs. Expected Rates



## Key Findings

Frequency – 60 percent, median 4 events

Disproportionality – by race and disability

Outcomes – negatives increase with discipline

Geography – where it happens, adult response

## Overview

Unprecedented statewide study demonstrates need to reduce suspensions and expulsions



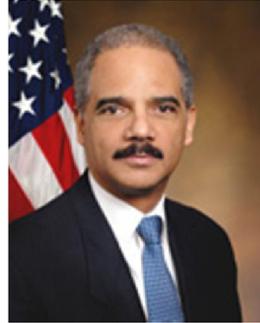
Local, state, and national efforts to improve approach to school discipline

School Discipline Consensus Project

## US Cabinet Officials Announce “School Discipline Initiative”

### Attorney General Holder and Secretary Duncan Announce “Supportive School Discipline Initiative”

Consensus Building	Federal Guidance
Research and Data Collection	Technical Assistance



## U.S. Senate Judiciary Hearing Convening on School Discipline December 12, 2012



## Report from the President Highlights Importance of School Discipline



### CREATE A SAFER CLIMATE AT SCHOOLS ACROSS THE COUNTRY

A report issued by the U.S. Secret Service and the Department of Education after the Columbine shooting found that one of the best things schools can do to reduce violence and bullying is to improve a school's climate and increase trust and communication between students and staff. Fortunately, we already have evidence-based strategies which have been found to reduce bullying and other problem behaviors like drug abuse or poor attendance, while making students feel safer at school and improving academic performance.

- **Help 8,000 schools create safer and more nurturing school climates:** With technical assistance from the Department of Education, 18,000 schools have already put in place

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evidence-based strategies to improve school climate. These strategies involve certain steps for the whole school (like consistent rules and rewards for good behavior), with more intensive steps for groups of students exhibiting at-risk behavior, and individual services for students who continue to exhibit troubling behavior. The Administration is proposing a new, \$50 million initiative to help 8,000 more schools train their teachers and other school staff to implement these strategies. The Administration will also develop a school climate survey, providing reliable data to help schools implement policies to improve climate.

- **Share best practices on school discipline:** Students who are suspended or expelled are far more likely to repeat a grade, not graduate, or become involved in the juvenile justice system. As a result, effective school discipline policies are critical to addressing school and community crime and violence issues. The Department of Education will collect and disseminate best practices on school discipline policies and help school districts develop and equitably implement their policies.

## States Enacting New Laws to Improve Approach to School Discipline



**Establishes alternatives to police involvement in school discipline matters.**



**Caps maximum number of days for out-of-school suspension and improves school discipline data collection.**



**Reforms school discipline and ending zero-tolerance policies.**



**Requires districts to collect and report on school discipline data, examine disparities, and implement positive alternatives to suspension.**

## Other Local and National Initiatives



**Los Angeles Unified School District Board bans suspension for “willful defiance.”**



**UCLA Civil Rights Project releases report further documenting the overuse of suspensions in middle and high schools.**



**School-Justice Partnership Task Force releases report urging New York City schools to adopt new approaches to school discipline.**



**Indiana University’s Research to Practice (RTP) Collaborative launches new web site to compile resources on addressing disparities in discipline.**

## Overview

Unprecedented statewide study demonstrates need to reduce suspensions and expulsions

Local, State, and National Efforts to Improve Approach to School Discipline



School Discipline Consensus Project

## Consensus-Building Project Support



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## Consensus-Building Project Participants



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## Consensus-Building Project Participants



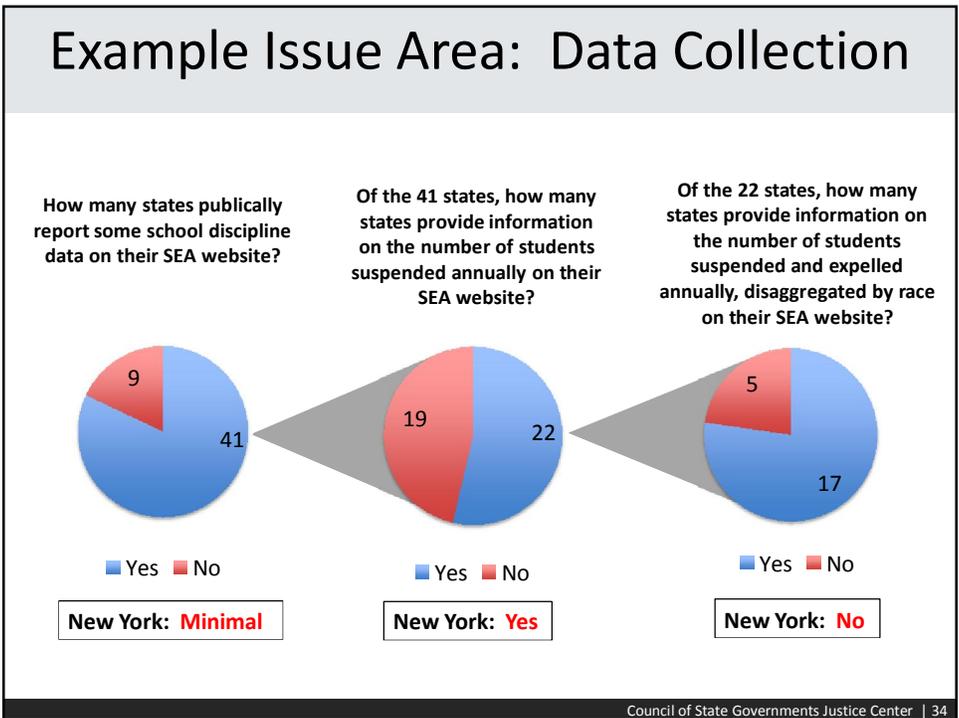
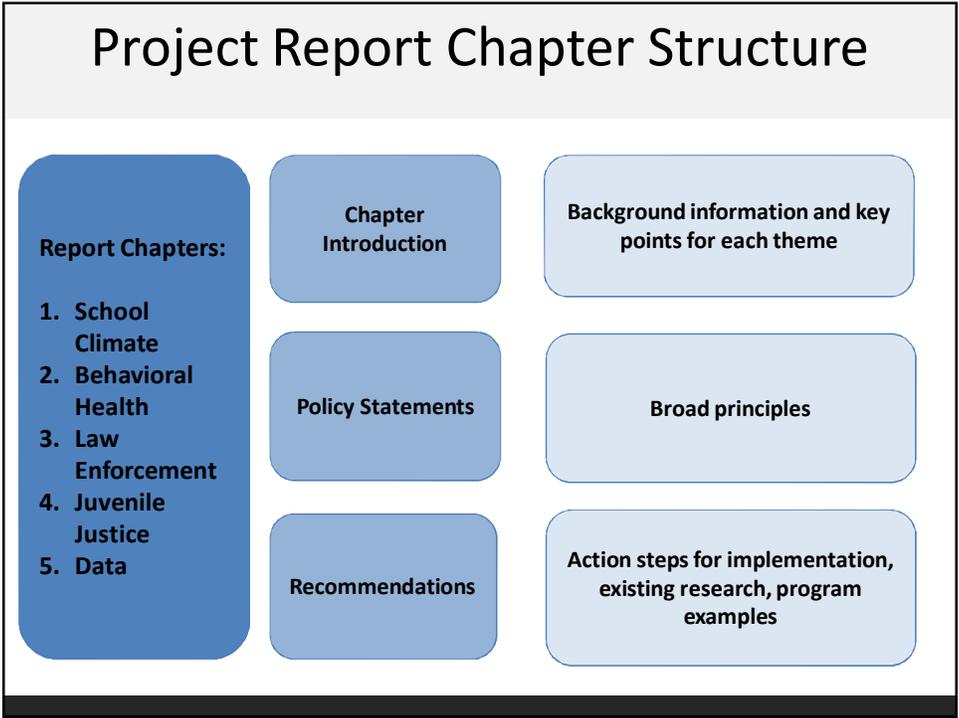
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## Consensus Project Deliverable

A comprehensive set of recommended policies that, if implemented with rigor, would improve the effectiveness of school discipline systems by:

- making schools safer,
- improving academic performance,
- minimizing dependence on suspension, expulsion, arrest and referral to the courts,
- reducing involvement in the juvenile justice system

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## Issue Area: Data Collection

**What information should states track regarding suspension and the performance of schools (and school districts) discipline systems?**

### Data Collection in New York

# of students experiencing suspension?	Frequency individual students experience suspension?	Offense	Race or Ethnicity
Yes	Yes	No	No

Gender	Special Ed	Grade or School Level	Statewide	District	Campus
No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

## Other Issue Areas

*School Climate:* How should schools create a positive environment and respond to non-serious forms of student misconduct?

*Behavioral Health:* How can schools better use data to serve the needs of students with more targeted and intensive behavioral health issues?

*Law Enforcement:* What is the appropriate role of police in schools?

*Juvenile Justice:* How can states and localities minimize juvenile justice referrals by schools?

## Thank You

Report at:

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*The presentation was developed by members of the Council of State Governments Justice Center staff. The statements made reflect the views of the authors, and should not be considered the official position of the Justice Center, the members of the Council of State Governments, or the funding agency supporting the work. Citations available for statistics presented in preceding slides available on CSG Justice Center web site.*