Del Norte County Unified School District

School Suspensions, 2012-2013

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Del Norte County Unified School District:
School Suspensions, 2012-2013

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by The California Center for Rural Policy at Humboldt State University

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Executive Summary

Background & Significance

Del Norte County and the adjacent tribal lands (DNATL) is one of fourteen places in California participating in Building Healthy Communities (BHC), a ten-year initiative of The California Endowment (TCE). One of the big results the initiative is aiming for is an increase in school attendance. This report was prepared by the California Center for Rural Policy (CCRP) to provide a baseline analysis of school suspensions in the Del Norte County Unified School District (DNCUSD).

A growing body of research provides evidence that frequent suspensions and expulsions are associated with negative outcomes for students, families, schools, and communities.\textsuperscript{1-5} School teachers and administrators are faced with the challenge of creating safe, productive learning environments that instill good behavior and prepare students for adulthood. Alternatives to zero tolerance policies exist and research has shown them to more likely to “ensure safe and orderly schools while keeping students in school.”\textsuperscript{1}

Methods

This report provides an analysis of out-of-school suspension in the Del Norte County Unified School District for the 2011-12 and 2012-13 school years and focuses on answering the following questions:

• How often is suspension used as a disciplinary action?
• Do suspension rates vary among schools?
• Are certain groups of students suspended more than others?
• For what behaviors were students suspended?

Summary of Findings

\textbf{Del Norte County Unified School District}

• In the past year (2012-13):
  o 12% of district students were suspended. Twice as high as the California average of 6%.\textsuperscript{13}
  o 415 students received a total of 749 suspensions (average of 1.8 suspensions per student).
  o For every100 students, 20 suspensions were given.
  o 10\textsuperscript{th} grade students were suspended more than other grades.
  o Male students were suspended more than female students.
  o Black/African American and American Indian/Alaska Native students were suspended more than White and Hispanic/Latino students. Asian students were suspended the least.
  o The percent of students suspended during the 2012-13 school year ranged from 3% at Smith River to 30% at Sunset High.
  o The number of suspensions per enrolled student ranged from 0.10 at Crescent Elk, Mary Peacock, and Smith River to 0.6 at Margaret Keating. In other words, there are 10 suspensions per 100 students at Crescent Elk, Mary Peacock, and Smith River and 60 suspensions per 100 students at Margaret Keating.
  o The majority of all suspensions in the district were for behavior/language issues (43.5%), followed by fighting/violence (20.3%), alcohol, drugs, tobacco (5.9%), harassment/intimidation (3.7%), property damage/theft (3.1%), weapon possession/use (2.0%), and other (21.5%).

• In the past 2 years (2011-12 and 2012-13)
  o Overall, total district suspension rates did not change significantly.
  o Suspension rates significantly increased among students in 1\textsuperscript{st}, 9\textsuperscript{th}, and 10\textsuperscript{th} grades.
  o Suspension rates significantly decreased among students in 2nd, 3rd, and 8\textsuperscript{th} grades.
  o Del Norte High School had a significant increase in suspension rates, while Crescent Elk, Smith River, and Sunset had a significant decrease. Other schools did not have a significant change.
  o Suspension rates significantly increased for female students and did not change for male students.
  o Suspension rates by race/ethnicity did not change significantly.

\textit{Continued on next page}
Conclusions and Next Steps

It appears that suspension is used as a disciplinary action more frequently in DNCUSD compared to California as a whole. Suspension rates vary among schools with the highest rates at Sunset and Margaret Keating. Suspension is used most frequently in the ninth and tenth grades. This analysis shows that certain groups of students are suspended more than others. Black/African American, American Indian, and male students receive a disproportionate amount of suspensions, which is consistent with national findings.\textsuperscript{1,2,5-7}

DNCUSD is currently in the process of assessing and improving school disciplinary actions. The findings in this report and additional analyses will inform improvement efforts. DNCUSD has started implementation of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and the Second Step Curriculum.
Background

Del Norte County and the adjacent tribal lands (DNATL) is one of fourteen places in California participating in Building Healthy Communities (BHC), a ten-year initiative of The California Endowment (TCE). The goal of BHC is to “support the development of communities where kids and youth are healthy, safe and ready to learn” (more information at http://www.calendow.org/healthycommunities/index.html). One of the big results the initiative is aiming for is an increase in school attendance. This report was prepared by the California Center for Rural Policy (CCRP) to provide a baseline analysis of school suspensions in the Del Norte County Unified School District (DNCUSD).

Why Suspensions Matter

Application of “zero tolerance” policies have led to a dramatic increase in school suspensions and expulsions across the country. These exclusionary discipline practices have sparked concern as a growing body of research provides evidence that frequent suspensions and expulsions are associated with negative outcomes for students, families, schools, and communities.1-5 Moreover, there is evidence of discipline disparities along racial, gender, and socioeconomic lines with students of color, males, and low socioeconomic status receiving a disproportionate amount of suspensions.1,2,5-7 There is no evidence to support the supposition that these subgroups of students have higher rates of misbehavior or violence.1 Rather, research suggests that the observed discipline disparities may be due to lack of teacher training in classroom management skills, cultural competency, and possibly “conscious or unconscious racial and gender biases at the school level.”1,4

Students who are removed from school are at increased risk for poor academic outcomes. Suspended students are more likely to misbehave in the future, have repeat suspensions, and dropout of school or fail to graduate on time.1,3,5,8 Students with more than one suspension in sixth grade are less likely to graduate with their same-age peers.8 The very reasons that often contribute to removal from school (academic difficulties, irregular attendance, and poor relationships with school adults) tend to worsen with removal from school, creating a vicious cycle whereby the “interventions aimed at students’ troubles actually compound them.”7 As such, suspension may act as a “pushout” tool encouraging “at risk” or “challenging” students to leave school before graduation, which may lead to unintended social costs of increased delinquency and incarceration.5 This connection between exclusionary discipline practices and incarceration has been termed the “school to prison pipeline.”5,9,10

Students who are not in school are more likely to engage in risky health behaviors.3-5,11 Out-of-school adolescents are significantly more likely than in-school adolescents to be involved in physical fights, carry weapons, smoke cigarettes and marijuana, use alcohol and cocaine, eat less fruits and vegetables, and have sexual intercourse with multiple sex partners.11 Students at highest risk for suspension are the least likely to have supervision at home and most likely to have major stressors at home.5,12

While removal of students from school is appropriate for students who pose a danger to others, studies have found that only about 5% of out-of-school suspensions were for possession of weapons or drugs and the remaining 95% were for disruptive behavior or other reasons.5 Researchers have found that suspension rates often vary from school to school and a greater proportion of the variance is explained by school and district characteristics (teacher attitudes, administration centralization, quality of school governance, teacher perception of student achievement, and racial make-up of the school) rather than student attitudes and behavior.5 Schools with higher rates of suspension tend to have lower school climate ratings and lower academic achievement without any evidence of increased safety or improved student behavior.3,5

School teachers and administrators are faced with the challenge of creating safe, productive learning environments that instill good behavior and prepare students for adulthood. Alternatives to zero tolerance policies exist and research has shown them to more likely to “ensure safe and orderly schools while keeping students in school.”1
Methods

This report provides an analysis of out-of-school suspension in the Del Norte County Unified School District (Bess Maxwell, Crescent Elk, Joe Hamilton, Margaret Keating, Mary Peacock, Mountain, Pine Grove, Redwood, Smith River, Sunset, and Del Norte High). All out-of-school suspensions during the 2011-12 and 2012-2013 school years are included. The total enrollment by school, grade, gender, and race/ethnicity is obtained from the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS), which provides the total unique or unduplicated number of primary enrollments on the first Wednesday in October of the associated academic year. This date was selected as it allows for consistency in data analysis and comparisons year to year. All data used in the analysis were obtained from the DNCUSD.

This report focuses on answering the following questions about out-of-school suspensions in DNUSD schools:

- How often is suspension used as a disciplinary action?
- Do suspension rates vary among schools?
- Are certain groups of students suspended more than others?
- For what behaviors were students suspended?

Definitions of Terms

Unduplicated Suspension Rate (Percent of Students Suspended at Least 1 Time)

\[
\text{Unduplicated Suspension Rate} = \left( \frac{\text{number of students suspended at least 1 time}}{\text{total enrollment}} \right) \times 100
\]

This represents the proportion of students who were suspended at least once during the school year. A student is only counted once even if they received many suspensions.

Duplicated Suspension Rate (Number of Suspensions per Enrolled Student)

\[
\text{Duplicated Suspension Rate} = \frac{\text{total number of suspensions}}{\text{total enrollment}}
\]

Since many students are suspended more than once in a given year, this measure captures how often suspension is used as a disciplinary action. If the suspensions were evenly distributed among all students, this shows how many suspensions each student would have.

Number of Suspensions per Suspended Student

\[
\text{Number of Suspensions per Suspended Student} = \frac{\text{total number of suspensions}}{\text{number of students suspended}}
\]

This shows the average number of suspensions given to suspended students.

Reasons for Suspensions

Each suspension is associated with one or more discipline codes. Discipline codes were categorized into broad categories (see Appendix B).

\[
\text{Percent Discipline Category} = \frac{\text{total number of suspensions for given category}}{\text{total number of suspension}}
\]

Statistical Significance

Whenever comparisons are made between groups there is always the possibility if finding a difference simply by chance. In research we like to find “true” differences and not differences that have occurred by chance. By convention, most researchers use a significance level of 95% to determine if a difference is significant. This means there is less than a 5% probability that the difference observed has occurred by chance alone. For this analysis, tests of statistical significance were conducted where appropriate.
Findings

Analyses of out-of-school suspensions are presented in the following order:

- By School
- By Grade
- By Race/Ethnicity
- By Gender

This is followed by an analysis of the main reasons for suspensions. Appendix A provides a summary for the district and each school.

Suspensions by School

Analysis of out-of-school suspensions by school shows considerable variation. The percent of students suspended at least one time during the 2012-13 school year ranged from 3% at Smith River to 30% at Sunset High with the district total of 12%. This is higher than the California average, which is about 6%. This measure is also known as the unduplicated suspension rate as students are only counted once, even if they received multiple suspensions. Between 2011-12 and 2012-13, there was a statistically significant increase in the percent of students with at least 1 suspension at Del Norte High School. Conversely, there was a statistically significant decrease at Crescent Elk, Smith River, and Sunset. Other schools and the district total did not have a statistically significant change in the unduplicated suspension rate between 2011-12 and 2012-13 (Figures 1, 2, 3).

The number of suspensions per enrolled student is a measure that captures how often suspension is used as a disciplinary action. If the suspensions were evenly distributed among all enrolled students, this measure shows how many suspensions each student would have during the school year. The number of suspensions per enrolled student ranges from 0.10 at Crescent Elk, Mary Peacock, and Smith River to 0.6 at Margaret Keating (Figures 2 & 4). In other words, there are 10 suspensions per 100 students at Crescent Elk, Mary Peacock, and Smith River and 60 suspensions per 100 students at Margaret Keating. While Margaret Keating has less than 100 students enrolled, it is typical to calculate suspensions per 100 students (also known as the duplicated suspension rate).

The number of suspensions per suspended student is a measure of the average number of suspensions received by a suspended student during the school year. This ranges from 1.0 at Mountain Elementary to 3.1 at Margaret Keating (Figures 2 & 5).

Notes: Within the district, 415 students were suspended at least once during the 2012-13 school year. Nine students moved between schools and had suspensions at both schools. The total number of students suspended at each school includes these nine students; therefore the district total will not match the school total.
Figure 2. Del Norte County Unified School District: Summary of Out-of-School Suspensions by School 2012-2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Total Enrollment</th>
<th>Number of Students Suspended at Least 1 Time</th>
<th>Percent of Students Suspended at Least 1 Time</th>
<th>Total # of Suspensions</th>
<th>Number of Suspensions per Enrolled Student (all Students)</th>
<th>Number of Suspensions per Suspended Student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bess Maxwell</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crescent Elk</td>
<td>535</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Del Norte High</td>
<td>931</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joe Hamilton</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margaret Keating*</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Peacock</td>
<td>394</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain*</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pine Grove</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redwood</td>
<td>471</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith River</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunset High</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Total</td>
<td>3595</td>
<td>415</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>749</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Within the district, 415 students were suspended at least once during the 2012-13 school year. Nine students moved between schools and had suspensions at both schools. The total number of students suspended at each school includes these nine students; therefore the district total will not match the school total. Total enrollment is the enrollment on the first Wednesday in October, which is reported to CALPADS.

*These schools have enrollment less than 100 students, so percentages are less stable.

Between 2011-12 and 2012-13, there was a statistically significant difference (at the 95% level) in the unduplicated suspension rate at Crescent Elk, Del Norte High, Smith River, and Sunset High.

Figure 3. Percent of Students with at Least 1 Suspension by School (unduplicated suspension rate)

*These schools have enrollment less than 100 students in 2011-12 or 2012-13, so percentages are less stable.
*These schools have enrollment less than 100 students in 2012-13, so percentages are less stable.

**Figure 4.**
Del Norte County Unified School District:
Number of Suspensions per Enrolled Student
(Duplicated Suspension Rate) by School, 2012-13

For every 100 students in the district, 20 suspensions were given.

*These schools have enrollment less than 100 students in 2012-13, so percentages are less stable.

**Figure 5.**
Del Norte County Unified School District:
Number of Suspensions per Suspended Student by School, 2012-13

*These schools have enrollment less than 100 students in 2012-13, so percentages are less stable.
Suspensions by Grade

By grade, the percent of students suspended at least one time during the 2012-13 school year was lowest in Kindergarten (6%), second (8%), third grade (6%) and eighth grade (8%) and highest in ninth grade (21%) and tenth grade (27%). Between 2011-12 and 2012-13, there was a statistically significant increase in the percent of students with at least 1 suspension in first grade, ninth grade, and tenth grade. Conversely, there was a statistically significant decrease in second grade, third grade, and eighth grade (Figures 6, 7, 8).

Students in the tenth grade received the highest number of suspensions (115) and the highest number of suspensions per enrolled student (0.44). In other words, there are 44 suspensions for every 100 students in tenth grade (Figures 6, 7, 8, 9).

The number of suspensions per suspended student was highest in kindergarten (2.4), followed by fourth grade (2.3) and second grade (2.1) (Figures 6, 7, 10).

---

**Figure 6. Del Norte County Unified School District:**  
Summary of Out-of-School Suspensions by Grade, 2012-13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Total Enrollment</th>
<th>Number of Students Suspended at Least 1 Time</th>
<th>Percent of Students Suspended at Least 1 Time</th>
<th>Total # of Suspensions</th>
<th>Number of Suspensions per Enrolled Student (all Students)</th>
<th>Number of Suspensions per Suspended Student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Between 2011-12 and 2012-13, there was a statistically significant difference (at the 95% level) in the percent of students suspended in grades 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, and 10. The difference between years for the other grades and the district total was not statistically significant.

Between 2011-12 and 2012-13, there was a statistically significant difference (at the 95% level) in the percent of students suspended in grades 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, and 10. The difference between years for the other grades and the district total was not statistically significant.
By race/ethnicity, the unduplicated suspension rate (percent of students suspended at least one time) during the 2012-13 school year was highest for Black/African American students (29.6%) and American Indian/Alaska Native students (18.7%), followed by White students (11.6%), Hispanic/Latino students (10.8%), and Asian students (4.7%). The difference between Black/African American and American Indian students is not statistically significant. Similarly, the difference between White and Hispanic students is not statistically significant. Essentially, there are three groups of students (Black/African American and American Indian students; White and Hispanic students; and Asian students) and these groups do differ significantly from the other groups in terms of unduplicated suspension rates (Figures 11, 12, 13).

Between 2011-12 and 2012-13 the unduplicated suspension rate for each race/ethnicity did not change significantly (Figure 14).

Black/African American students had the highest number of suspensions per enrolled student (0.41), followed by American Indian/Alaska Native students (0.37), White students (0.21), Hispanic/Latino students (0.15) and Asian students (0.08). In other words, there are 41 suspensions for every 100 Black/African American students, 37 suspensions for
every 100 Native American students, 21 suspensions for every 100 White students, 15 suspensions for every 100 Hispanic/Latino students, and 8 suspensions for every 100 Asian students (Figures 11 & 15).

The number of suspensions per suspended student was highest for American Indian/Alaska Native students (2.0), followed by White students (1.8), Asian students (1.6), Black/African American students (1.4), and Hispanic/Latino students (1.4) (Figures 11 & 16).

**Figure 11. Del Norte County Unified School District: Summary of Out-of-School Suspensions by Race/Ethnicity, 2012-2013**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Total Enrollment</th>
<th>Number of Students Suspended at Least 1 Time</th>
<th>Percent of Students Suspended at Least 1 Time</th>
<th>Total # of Suspensions</th>
<th>Number of Suspensions per Enrolled Student (all Students)</th>
<th>Number of Suspensions per Suspended Student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black/African American</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>29.6%</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian/Alaska Native</td>
<td>491</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>18.7%</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>1974</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
<td>748</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Only showing race/ethnicities with reported suspensions (none reported for Pacific Islander or Two or More Races). Asian includes Filipino. Hispanic/Latino is an ethnicity and can be any race. For the purpose of this analysis, any student listed as Hispanic/Latino is categorized as such and is not categorized by race.

**Figure 12. Del Norte County Unified School District: Suspensions by Race/Ethnicity, 2012-13**

*Total number of enrolled students identified as Black/African American is 27, so percentages are less stable.*
Total number of enrolled students identified as Black/African American is 27, so percentages are less stable. The unduplicated suspension rate (tested at the 95% level) is not significantly different between Black and American Indian students, and between White and Hispanic students. The differences between the three groups shown are statistically significant.

Between 2011-12 and 2012-13 the unduplicated suspension rate for each race/ethnicity did not change significantly (tested at the 95% level).

*Total number of enrolled students identified as Black/African American is 27, so percentages are less stable. Between 2011-12 and 2012-13 the unduplicated suspension rate for each race/ethnicity did not change significantly (tested at the 95% level).
Total number of enrolled students identified as Black/African American is 27, so percentages are less stable.

Figure 15.
Del Norte County Unified School District:
Number of Suspensions per Enrolled Student by Race/Ethnicity, 2012-13

*Total number of enrolled students identified as Black/African American is 27, so percentages are less stable.

Figure 16.
Del Norte County Unified School District:
Number of Suspensions per Suspended Student by Race/Ethnicity, 2012-13
Suspensions by Gender

By gender, the unduplicated suspension rate (percent of students suspended at least one time) during the 2012-13 school year was significantly higher for male students (17%) compared to female students (7%) (Figures 17, 18, 19). Between 2011-12 and 2012-13 the unduplicated suspension rate for male students did not change significantly, whereas there was a statistically significant increase in the rate for female students (Figures 17, 18, 19).

The duplicated suspension rate (number of suspensions per enrolled student) was higher for male students (0.31), compared to female students (0.10) (Figures 17 & 20). In other words, there are 31 suspensions for every 100 male students and 10 suspensions for every 100 female students.

The number of suspensions per suspended student was higher for male students (1.9) than female students (1.5) (Figures 17 & 21).

Figure 17. Del Norte County Unified School District: Summary of Out-of-School Suspensions by Gender, 2011-2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Total Enrollment</th>
<th>Number of Students Suspended at Least 1 Time</th>
<th>Percent of Students Suspended at Least 1 Time</th>
<th>Total # of Suspensions</th>
<th>Number of Suspensions per Enrolled Student (all Students)</th>
<th>Number of Suspensions per Suspended Student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1851</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>581</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1744</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Between 2011-12 and 2012-13, there was a statistically significant difference (at the 95% level) in the percent of female students suspended.
Reasons for Suspensions

The majority of all suspensions in the district during the 2012-13 school year were for behavior/language issues (43.5%), followed by fighting/violence (20.3%), alcohol, drugs, tobacco (5.9%), harassment/intimidation (3.7%), property damage/theft (3.1%), weapon possession/use (2.0%), and other (21.5%) (Figure 22). The majority of reasons categorized as “other” were “no Saturday school.” See Appendix B for discipline codes and categories.
Expulsions

There were very few expulsions during the 2011-12 and 2012-13 school years. In 2011-12, three White students were expelled in grades 3, 6, and 12. In 2012-13 one Hispanic student was expelled. The reasons for expulsion included: battery on school personnel, selling & possession of a controlled substance, committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion, possession of a knife or other dangerous object, and willfully used force or violence upon another person. Expelled students were either enrolled in a county school or expelled until 2012-13 with stipulation.

Conclusions & Next Steps

It appears that suspension is used as a disciplinary action more frequently in DNCUSD compared to California as a whole. Suspension rates vary among schools with the highest rates at Sunset and Margaret Keating. Suspension is used most frequently in the ninth and tenth grades. This analysis shows that certain groups of students are suspended more than others. Black/African American, American Indian, and male students receive a disproportionate amount of suspensions, which is consistent with national findings.\textsuperscript{1,2,5-7}

DNCUSD is currently in the process of assessing and improving school disciplinary actions. The findings in this report and additional analyses will inform improvement efforts. DNCUSD has started implementation of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and the Second Step Curriculum.

PBIS is an operational framework for improving student academic and behavior outcomes through ensuring all students have access to the most effective and accurately implemented instructional and behavioral practices and interventions. PBIS is a framework, not a curriculum, intervention, or practice. The decision making framework guides selection, integration, and implementation of the best evidence-based academic and behavioral practices for improving academic and behavior outcomes. The framework is based on a three-tiered prevention logic with Tier 1 focusing on all students receiving supports and Tiers 2 and 3 providing more focused group or individualized supports. DNCUSD has formed School Site PBIS Teams at all K-5, K-8, and 6-8 schools and will be implementing Tier 1 PBIS school-wide during the 2013-14 school year with Tier 2 and 3 implementation in the following two years. More information about PBIS can be obtained at http://www.pbis.org/.

Second Step curriculum features developmentally appropriate ways to teach core social-emotional skills such as empathy, emotion management, and problem solving as well as self-regulation and executive function skills. DNCUSD began implementation of the Second Step curriculum in grades 3 and 4 in all elementary schools in 2013 as a part of Tier 1 response to behavioral intervention. The curriculum is available for all grades pre-K through grade 8 and the implementation plan is to have the curriculum taught at each grade level pre-K-5 by the end of the 2015 school year.
References

Appendix A
District and School Summary

Del Norte County Unified School District

- **In the past year** (2012-13):
  - 12% of district students were suspended. Twice as high as the California average of 6%.
  - 415 students received a total of 749 suspensions (average of 1.8 suspensions per student).
  - For every 100 students, 20 suspensions were given.
  - 10th grade students were suspended more than other grades.
  - Male students were suspended more than female students.
  - Black/African American and American Indian/Alaska Native students were suspended more than White and Hispanic/Latino students. Asian students were suspended the least.
  - The majority of all suspensions in the district were for behavior/language issues (43.5%), followed by fighting/violence (20.3%), alcohol, drugs, tobacco (5.9%), harassment/intimidation (3.7%), property damage/theft (3.1%), weapon possession/use (2.0%), and other (21.5%).

- **In the past 2 years** (2011-12 and 2012-13):
  - Overall, total district suspension rates did not change significantly.
  - Suspension rates significantly increased among students in 1st, 9th, and 10th grades.
  - Suspension rates significantly decreased among students in 2nd, 3rd, and 8th grades.
  - Suspension rates significantly increased for female students and did not change for male students.
  - Suspension rates by race/ethnicity did not change significantly.

Bess Maxwell

- **In the past year** (2012-13):
  - 9% of students were suspended.
  - 25 students received a total of 60 suspensions (average of 2.4 suspensions per student).
  - For every 100 students, 20 suspensions were given.

- **In the past 2 years** (2011-12 and 2012-13):
  - Suspensions rates did not change.

Crescent Elk

- **In the past year** (2012-13):
  - 10% of students were suspended.
  - 54 students received a total of 70 suspensions (average of 1.3 suspensions per student).
  - For every 100 students, 10 suspensions were given.

- **In the past 2 years** (2011-12 and 2012-13):
  - Suspension rates decreased significantly (from 14% to 10%)

Del Norte High

- **In the past year** (2012-13):
  - 17% of students were suspended.
  - 155 students received a total of 264 suspensions (average of 1.7 suspensions per student).
  - For every 100 students, 30 suspensions were given.

- **In the past 2 years** (2011-12 and 2012-13):
  - Suspension rates increased significantly (from 8% to 17%).
Joe Hamilton

- **In the past year** (2012-13):
  - 15% of students were suspended.
  - 43 students received a total of 75 suspensions (average of 1.7 suspensions per student).
  - For every 100 students, 30 suspensions were given.

- **In the past 2 years** (2011-12 and 2012-13):
  - Suspension rates did not change significantly.

Margaret Keating

- **In the past year** (2012-13):
  - 21% of students were suspended.
  - 16 students received a total of 50 suspensions (average of 3.1 suspensions per student).
  - For every 100 students, 60 suspensions were given (while there are less than 100 students at Margaret Keating, it is typical to calculate suspensions per 100 students).

- **In the past 2 years** (2011-12 and 2012-13):
  - Suspension rates decreased from 34% to 21%, but this was not a statistically significant change (due to small numbers).

Mary Peacock

- **In the past year** (2012-13):
  - 5% of students were suspended.
  - 21 students received a total of 44 suspensions (average of 2.1 suspensions per student).
  - For every 100 students, 10 suspensions were given.

- **In the past 2 years** (2011-12 and 2012-13):
  - Suspension rates did not change significantly.

Mountain

- **In the past year** (2012-13):
  - 16% of students were suspended.
  - 4 students received a total of 4 suspensions (average of 1.0 suspension per student).
  - For every 100 students, 20 suspensions were given (while there are less than 100 students at Mountain, it is typical to calculate suspensions per 100 students).

- **In the past 2 years** (2011-12 and 2012-13):
  - Suspension rates did not change significantly.

Pine Grove

- **In the past year** (2012-13):
  - 9% of students were suspended.
  - 21 students received a total of 37 suspensions (average of 1.8 suspensions per student).
  - For every 100 students, 20 suspensions were given.

- **In the past 2 years** (2011-12 and 2012-13):
  - Suspension rates did not change.

Redwood

- **In the past year** (2012-13):
  - 8% of students were suspended.
  - 39 students received a total of 77 suspensions (average of 2.0 suspensions per student).
  - For every 100 students, 20 suspensions were given.

- **In the past 2 years** (2011-12 and 2012-13):
  - Suspension rates did not change significantly.
Smith River

- **In the past year** (2012-13):
  - 3% of students were suspended.
  - 8 students received a total of 13 suspensions (average of 1.6 suspensions per student).
  - For every 100 students, 10 suspensions were given.

- **In the past 2 years** (2011-12 and 2012-13):
  - Suspension rates decreased significantly (from 7% to 3%).

Sunset

- **In the past year** (2012-13):
  - 30% of students were suspended.
  - 38 students received a total of 55 suspensions (average of 1.4 suspensions per student).
  - For every 100 students, 40 suspensions were given.

- **In the past 2 years** (2011-12 and 2012-13):
  - Suspension rates decreased significantly (from 49% to 30%).
Appendix B
Reasons for Suspensions:
Discipline Codes & Categories

Following are the discipline codes reported for suspensions. For the purpose of analysis used in this report, broad discipline categories were created to present the main reasons for suspensions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discipline codes</th>
<th>Behavior/Language</th>
<th>Fighting/Violence</th>
<th>Harassment/Intimidation</th>
<th>Alcohol, Drugs, Tobacco</th>
<th>Property Damage/theft</th>
<th>Weapon Possession/use</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Behavior, Defiance 48900 (k)</td>
<td>Behavior, Disruptive 48900 (k)</td>
<td>Battery 48900(a)(2)</td>
<td>Bullying 48900 (r)</td>
<td>Alcohol, Possession of 48900 (c)</td>
<td>Burglary 48900(g)</td>
<td>*Knife, Brandishing 48900(b) 48915(c)(2)</td>
<td>Failed In-House 48900 (k)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior, Inappropriate 48900 (k)</td>
<td>Battery School Personnel 48915(a)(5) 48900a2</td>
<td>Harassment/Bullying 48900.4</td>
<td>Alcohol, Use of 48900 (c)</td>
<td>Robbery 48900(e) 48915(a)(4)</td>
<td>*Weapon, Possession 48900(b) 48915(a)(2)</td>
<td>No Saturday School 48900 (k)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language, Obscene 48900 (l)</td>
<td>Fighting 48900 (a)(1)</td>
<td>Sexual Harassment 48900.2</td>
<td>Drugs, Paraphernalia 48900(j)</td>
<td>Theft 48900 (g)</td>
<td>*Weapon, Use of 48900(b) 48915(a)(2)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language, Profanity 48900 (l)</td>
<td>Serious Bodily Injury 48915 (a)(1) 48900 (a)(2)</td>
<td>Threats, Terrorist to Personnel 48900.7 (k)</td>
<td>Drugs, Possession of 48900(c)</td>
<td>Arson 48900(f)</td>
<td>Dangerous Object 48900 (b)(2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial Slur 48900.4</td>
<td>Threats to Others 48900 (a) (1)</td>
<td>Threats to Students 48900 (a) (1)</td>
<td>Drugs, Possession of 48900(c) 48915(a)(3)</td>
<td>Property, Deface/Tag/Graffiti 48900(f)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>*Bomb Threat 48900</td>
<td>Drugs, Sale of 48900(d) 48915(c)(3)</td>
<td>Property, Vandalism/Destruction of 48900(f)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco, Use of or Possession of 48900 (h)</td>
<td>Property, Vandalism 48900 (f)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stolen Property, Possession of 48900 (l)</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Building Healthy Communities
http://www.bhccconnect.org/health-happens-here

Building Healthy Communities is a ten-year initiative of The California Endowment to support the development of communities where kids and youth are healthy, safe and ready to learn.

Please visit the CCRP website for additional reports, briefs and maps.

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