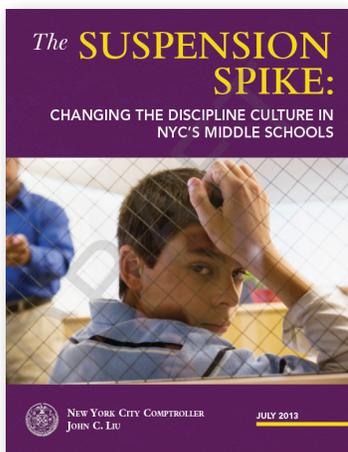


THE SUSPENSION SPIKE:

CHANGING THE DISCIPLINE CULTURE IN NYC'S MIDDLE SCHOOLS

JULY 2013

Published by the New York City
Comptroller's Office



About Beyond High School NYC

Beyond High School NYC is a major initiative launched by Comptroller John C. Liu to increase the proportion of New Yorkers with higher education to 60 percent by the year 2025 through strategic investments in public education.

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REPORT SUMMARY

Maintaining a calm, respectful, and secure school climate is critical to the success of New York City's 210,000 middle school students. However, the current overreliance on punitive measures, including suspensions, for disruptive behavior results in lost learning days, contributes to students' feelings of alienation from school, and does little or nothing to address the root causes of the behavior. There are significant racial, ethnic, and other disparities in suspension rates. This study reviews and assesses the current approach to school discipline in New York City public schools, and makes three key recommendations to improve the approach to behavior management to help middle school students remain on the path to college and career readiness.

Key Findings

- **Each year, on average, black and Hispanic students comprise 90% of those suspended** in New York City standalone middle schools. They were suspended at five times the rate of white students and 20 times the rate of Asian students.
- **Middle schools suspend an average of 100 students per school day.** The use of suspensions as a disciplinary tactic increases significantly for students in 6th, 7th, and 8th grades, as compared to elementary school.
- **Males and special education students** were substantially more likely to be suspended than their female and general education counterparts.

Key Recommendations

- The New York City Department of Education should pilot an approach known as "whole-school climate change" at the 30 schools with the greatest number of suspensions.
- Significantly expand the number of middle school counselors and social workers to reduce the student-to-counselor ratio to 250:1 and the student-to-social worker ratio to 400:1.
- Eliminate suspensions for minor infractions and those that last more than 10 days.
- Empower principals to oversee school discipline and safety.



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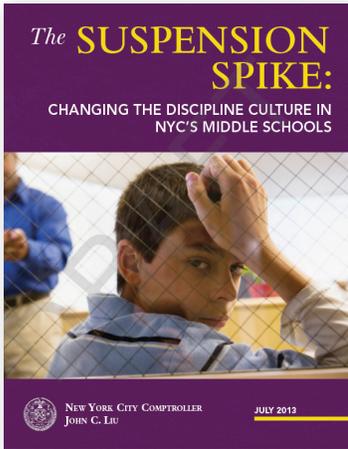
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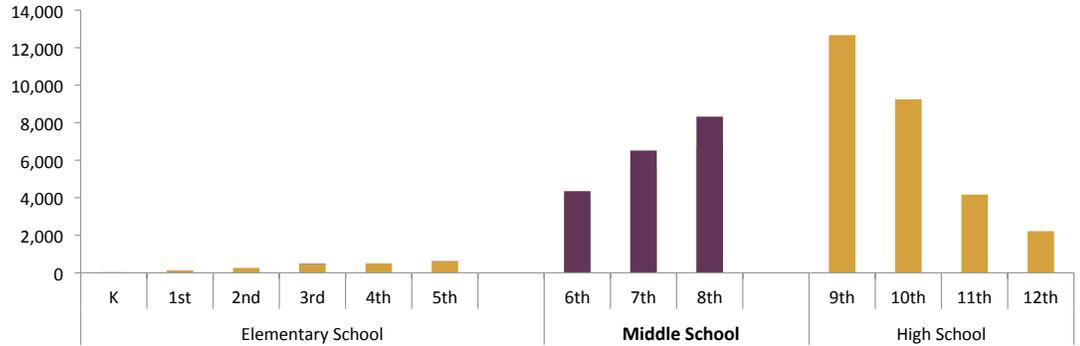
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Key Graphs

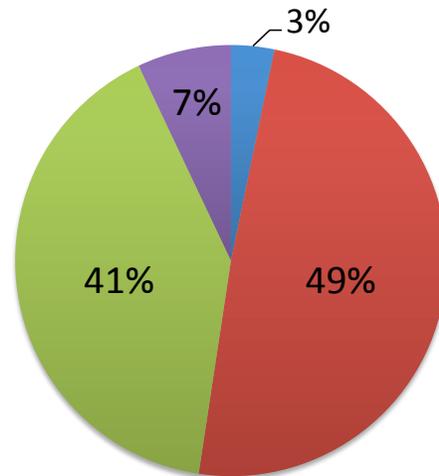
SUSPENSIONS BY GRADE



Source: New York City Council, Annual Report 2011-2012.

STANDALONE MIDDLE SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS BY RACE AND ETHNICITY

■ Asian ■ Black ■ Hispanic ■ White



Source: New York City Council, Annual Report 2011-2012.

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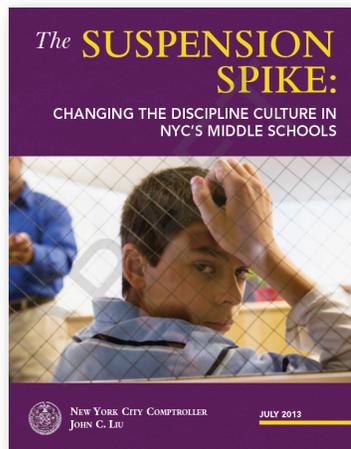
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Key Graphs *continued*

TOP 30 SCHOOLS BY NUMBER OF SUSPENSIONS

30 Middle Schools with the Most Suspensions, 2011-2012

RANK	SCHOOL	BOROUGH	TOTAL NUMBER
1	J.H.S. 078 Roy H. Mann	Brooklyn	467
2	I.S. 072 Rocco Laurie	Staten Island	427
3	I.S. 051 Edwin Markham	Staten Island	369
4	I.S. 145 Joseph Pulitzer	Queens	363
5	I.S. 061 William A Morris	Staten Island	342
6	I.S. 061 Leonardo Da Vinci	Queens	327
7	M.S. 137 America's School of Heroes	Queens	309
8	Albert Shanker School for Visual and Performing Arts	Queens	291
9	I.S. 068 Isaac Bildersee	Brooklyn	279
10	J.H.S. 118 William W. Niles	Bronx	268
11	I.S. 339	Bronx	241
12	J.H.S. 194 William Carr	Queens	241
13	I.S. 73 - The Frank Sansivieri Intermediate School	Queens	222
14	J.H.S. 022 Jordan L. Mott	Bronx	204
15	J.H.S. 166 George Gershwin*	Brooklyn	198
16	J.H.S. 131 Albert Einstein	Bronx	197
17	I.S. 010 Horace Greeley	Queens	190
18	J.H.S. 190 Russell Sage	Queens	188
19	Andries Hudde	Brooklyn	186
20	J.H.S. 234 Arthur W. Cunningham	Brooklyn	182
21	J.H.S. 217 Robert A. Van Wyck	Queens	180
22	I.S. 059 Springfield Gardens	Queens	175
23	I.S. 5 - The Walter Crowley Intermediate School	Queens	173
24	I.S. 093 Ridgewood	Queens	158
25	I.S. R002 George L. Egbert	Staten Island	158
26	MS 596 Peace Academy**	Brooklyn	157
27	J.H.S. 054 Booker T. Washington	Manhattan	156
28	I.S. 285 Meyer Levin	Brooklyn	156
29	J.H.S. 220 John J. Pershing	Brooklyn	153
30	J.H.S. 278 Marine Park	Brooklyn	149

Source: New York City Council, Annual Report 2011-2012.

*Slated for closure in 2013

**Also known as Knowledge and Power Preparatory Academy VII Middle School



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