

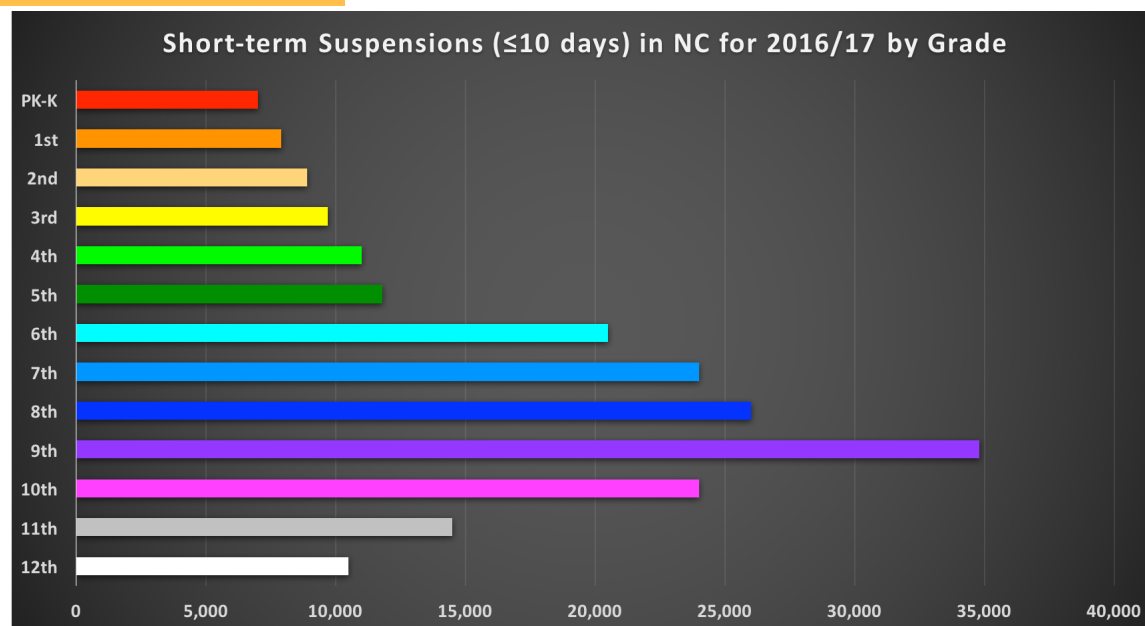


# Juvenile Justice in Mecklenburg County

## National Juvenile Justice Awareness Month October (2018)

### The School-to-Prison Pipeline

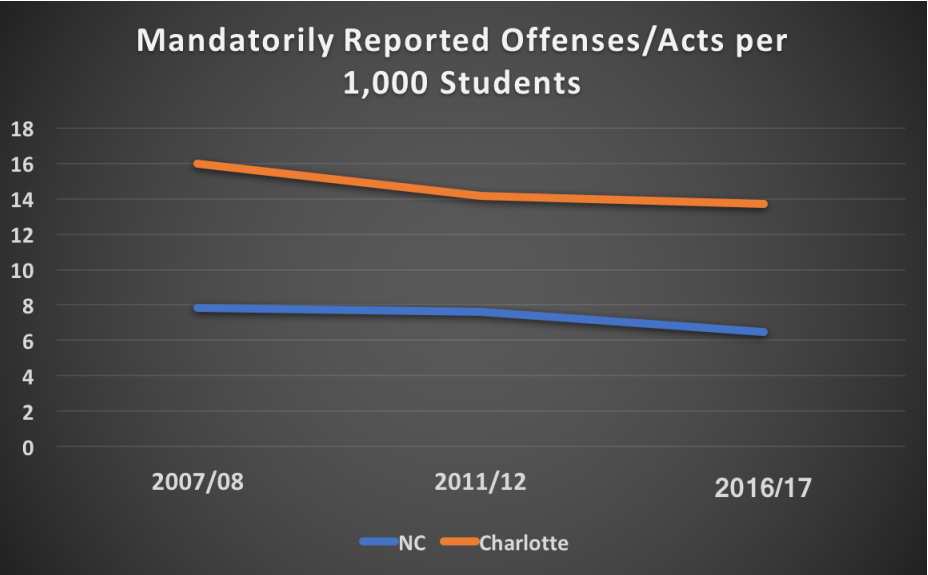
The School-to-Prison Pipeline refers to the pathway between the school system and the justice system.



### The School-to-Prison Pipeline (STPP) in NC and Charlotte

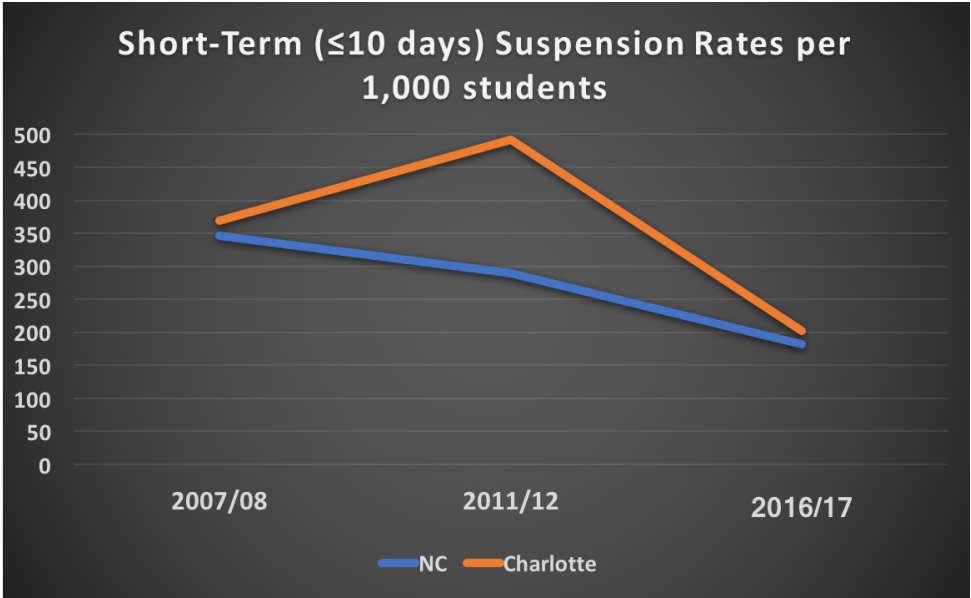
- **Factors that contribute to STPP:** zero tolerance policies; high stakes testing; exclusionary discipline (e.g., suspension); explicit and implicit bias at individual and system level [1, 2]
- NC classifies 16 offenses as mandatorily reported and, in **2016/17**, the **top 3 reported offenses** for high school students were: drug possession, weapon (not gun/explosive), and alcohol possession. [3]
- Across the US, NC and in CMS, **mandatorily reported offenses comprise 3%** of all school-based offenses. [3,4]
- That means, **97%, of children are suspended from school for discretionary offenses** (e.g., aggressive/disruptive behavior, insubordination, fighting, and inappropriate language/disrespect) [3,4]
- In Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools 2016/17, 3.3% of students had one or more discretionary suspensions in grades K-5, 11.2% in 6-8, & 9.2% in 9-12. By school, CMS suspensions vary from <1% to more than 20% of the student body. [5]
- Though not considered exclusionary discipline, disciplinary school reassignment removes children from their home school and assigns them to alternative learning placements (ALPs). **In 2016/17, across NC, 12,224 students were assigned to ALPs** (a 5% decrease in ALP assignments from last year). [3]
- **Some students are disproportionately impacted by the STPP**, including: students of color, poor students, students with disabilities, ESL students, and students who identify as LGBTQ+. [2]
- **Youth with just one suspension or expulsion are at increased risk** of juvenile justice (JJ) or criminal justice (CJ) system contact. [4]

# The School-to-Prison Pipeline

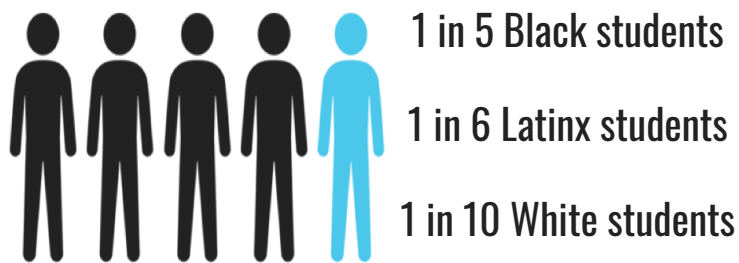


In 2016/17, there were 13.69 reportable offenses per 1,000 students in Charlotte - more than twice the state rate.

In 2016/17, there were 13,206 short term suspensions in Charlotte. At 3.7 out of every 10 students, this is lowest rate since 2007.



Of those who have been suspended, more than 1 in 7 students has subsequent contact with the juvenile or criminal justice system.



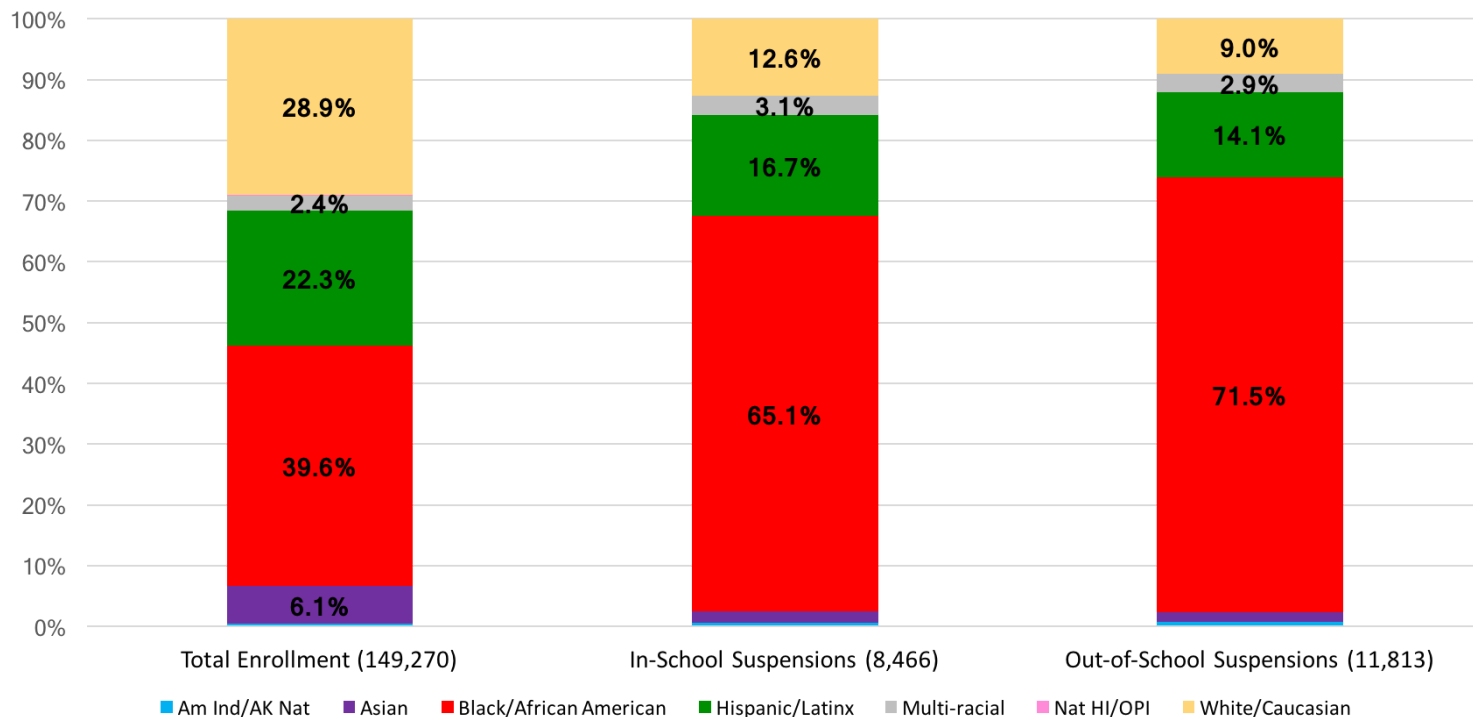
This is in comparison to 2% of students who received no school disciplinary action. [3]

## Consequences of System Involvement

- Youth with Juvenile Justice (JJ) system contact have lower rates of educational attainment and higher rates of dropping out of school. [1, 6, 7]
- Youth with JJ system contact have lower employment rates and earnings. [8]
- Youth with JJ system contact are more likely to become involved with the CJ system as compared to youth without juvenile justice system contact. [9]

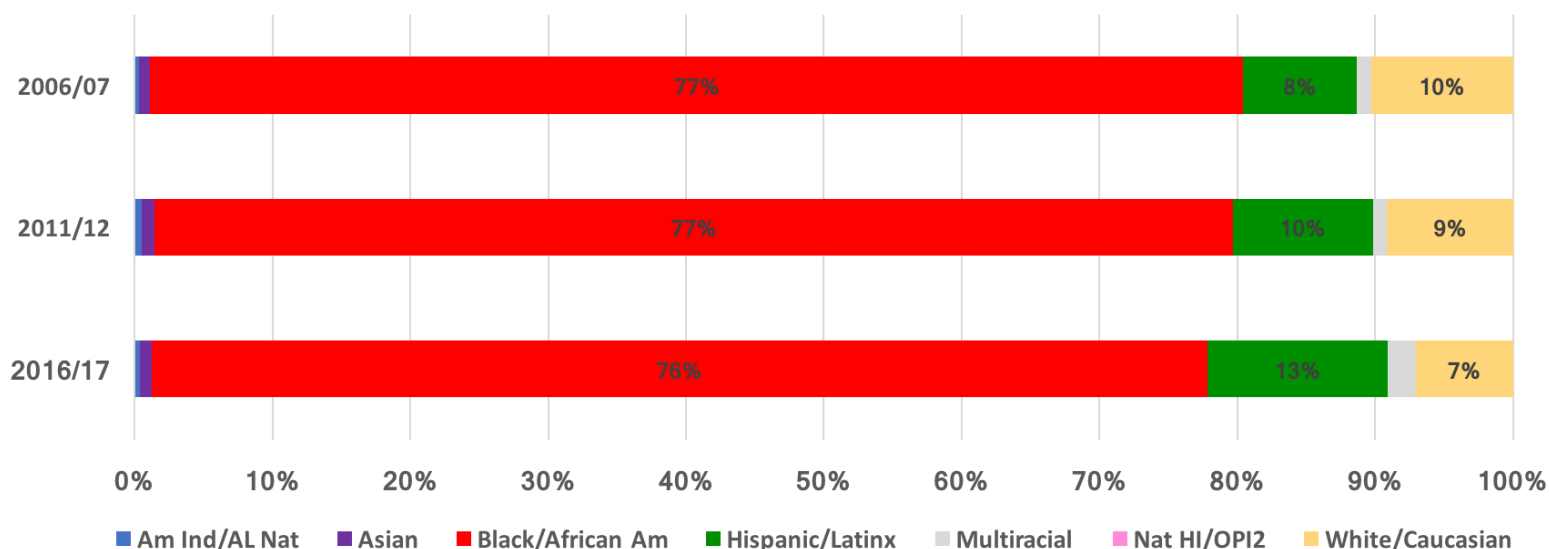
# The School-to-Prison Pipeline

Charlotte Mecklenburg Suspensions by Race/Ethnicity (2015)



Students of color are more likely to be disciplined with In-school and Out-of-School Suspensions as compared to White students for the same offenses. [10]

Charlotte Mecklenburg Short-Term Suspensions by Race/Ethnicity (2006-2017)



Since 2006, STS rates have remained consistent for Black students, increased for Latinx students, and decreased for White students. [3]

# The School-to-Prison Pipeline

## Steps to Correct the School-to-Prison Pipeline

- School-Justice Partnerships can address the STPP by improving data collection and dissemination, keeping kids in school and out of court, building positive school climate, addressing racial/ethnic disparities, and including discussions on trauma and mental health. [9]
- Research suggests that school-wide initiatives such as Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and Restorative Justice can reduce suspension rates [11]
- Funding support staff (e.g., social workers, nurses, counselors) can improve school climate and help teachers and schools meet the increasingly complex needs children bring with them each day. [12]
- Enacting policies that reduce or ban exclusionary discipline for our youngest students can decrease the associated negative impacts (e.g., anti-social behaviors, school avoidance, low academic achievement) and prevent children from losing valuable time in school. (Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools requires that the Superintendent approves all suspensions of K-2 students.)
- These steps can also improve social mobility and the Leading on Opportunity Council's work: Family Stability, Education, Career Readiness, Segregation, and Social Capital.

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Council for  
Children's  
Rights

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### Authors:

Susan McCarter, PhD, MSW - Associate Professor, UNC Charlotte & RMJJ

Katherine Bradshaw, MSW

James Granberry, MSW Student UNC Charlotte, RMJJ Intern

Emily Tamin, MA, Council for Children's Rights Director of Research and Policy

Jaimelee Behrendt-Mihalski, MA, Council for Children's Rights, Policy Advocate