



Florida Information Note

Education Information & Accountability Services

Trends in Discipline and the Decline in the Use of Corporal Punishment

January 2008

Series 2008-13F

Introduction

Corporal punishment is defined by Florida Statutes as the moderate use of physical force or physical contact by a teacher or principal to maintain discipline or to enforce school rules. The school board shall have the authority to prohibit the use of corporal punishment, provided that the school board adopts or has adopted a written program of alternative control or discipline (s. 1006.07(1), Florida Statutes).

Over the past fifteen years, the use of corporal punishment by Florida school districts has drastically decreased (see table below). For the 2006-07 school year, there were 5,245 incidents of corporal punishment, compared to 24,198 in 1991-92. This represents a cumulative decrease of over 78 percent.

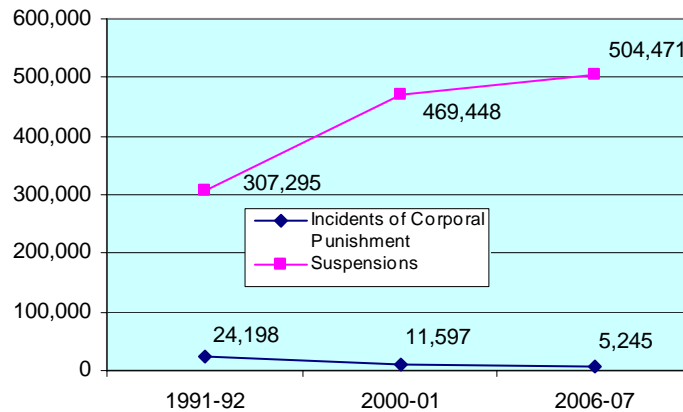
In 2006-07, 29 school districts reported students receiving corporal punishment. In 1988-89, all 67 school districts administered corporal punishment. (Note that these figures reflect how many times discipline was administered, not the number of students receiving the discipline). In 1989-90, seven districts (Broward, Charlotte, Dade, Martin, Monroe, Palm Beach, and Sarasota) reported no use of corporal punishment. This was the first year that any district reported no use of corporal punishment at all. Since then, districts have steadily reported fewer incidences of corporal punishment. The most significant decrease in the last 15 years occurred between 2004-05 and 2005-06 with 29.9 percent fewer incidents of corporal punishment reported.

School Year	Incidents of Corporal Punishment	Percent Change from Prior Year
1991-92	24,198	-4.28%
1992-93	20,315	-16.05%
1993-94	14,731	-27.49%
1994-95	13,900	-5.64%
1995-96	15,161	9.07%
1996-97	13,817	-8.86%
1997-98	12,813	-7.27%
1998-99	13,166	2.76%
1999-00	11,488	-12.74%
2000-01	11,597	0.95%
2001-02	10,685	-7.86%
2002-03	10,039	-6.05%
2003-04	9,472	-5.65%
2004-05	7,819	-17.45%
2005-06	5,485	-29.85%
2006-07	5,245	-4.38%

Corporal Punishment Versus Suspensions

There appears to be a correlation between the decline of corporal punishment and a rise in the number of suspensions for students in Florida's public schools, as outlined in the following graph. Factors accounting for the rise in suspensions may include the use of suspensions as an alternative form of discipline in place of corporal punishment, as determined by policy decisions.

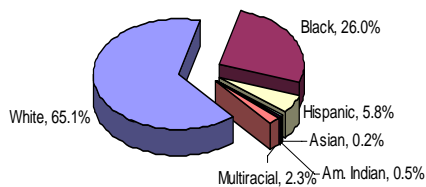
Corporal Punishment Versus In-School and Out-of-School Suspensions



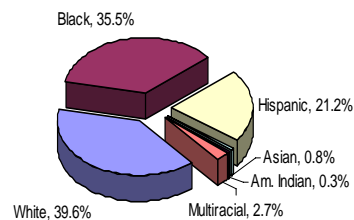
Discipline by Race

Out-of-school suspensions occurred more often with black students than with other races. In-school suspensions occurred with similar frequency among white and black students, and white students received the majority of corporal punishments and expulsions.

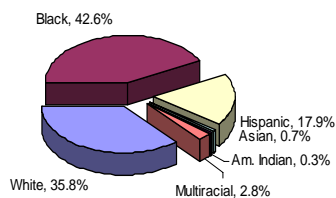
Corporal Punishment



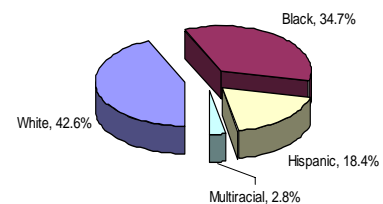
In-School Suspension



Out-of-School Suspension



Expulsion



Conclusion

With the decline in use of corporal punishment, Florida has seen increases in alternative forms of discipline, such as in-school and out-of-school suspensions. (The number of expulsions has remained fairly constant.) Additional data as reported offenses requiring disciplinary response may also be useful in assessing the effectiveness of current approaches to discipline. Discipline data by district is provided on the next page.

Student Discipline Data, 2006-07

District	Suspensions		Corporal Punishment	Expulsions	Membership
	Out-of-School	In-School			
ALACHUA	897	95	0	1	28,998
BAKER	350	186	28	12	4,974
BAY	2,702	2,553	14	37	27,005
BRADFORD	378	977	0	0	3,683
BREVARD	8,511	3,456	0	82	74,791
BROWARD	14,251	24,197	0	0	262,726
CALHOUN	80	164	114	0	2,227
CHARLOTTE	1,362	1,778	0	4	17,888
CITRUS	1,130	1,518	0	14	16,077
CLAY	2,516	5,802	102	17	35,711
COLLIER	1,624	6,087	0	0	43,164
COLUMBIA	1,251	1,750	0	0	10,179
DADE	21,336	30,764	0	0	353,783
DESOTO	257	0	31	23	4,984
DIXIE	230	292	3	1	2,241
DUVAL	23,602	19,411	0	0	125,171
ESCAMBIA	7,500	1,868	0	0	42,708
FLAGLER	1,043	2,121	0	4	12,149
FRANKLIN	156	260	36	0	1,317
GADSDEN	1,287	1,061	0	30	6,650
GILCHRIST	268	395	120	1	2,887
GLADES	129	395	12	6	1,256
GULF	192	504	175	0	2,193
HAMILTON	436	471	239	38	2,036
HARDEE	415	56	161	2	5,037
HENDRY	1,089	1,370	199	0	7,463
HERNANDO	2,336	3,767	0	15	22,447
HIGHLANDS	1,087	2,862	76	2	12,453
HILLSBOROUGH	15,109	29,728	0	96	193,480
HOLMES	180	139	430	1	3,384
INDIAN RIVER	1,799	2,007	0	6	17,611
JACKSON	755	886	712	17	7,382
JEFFERSON	294	3	13	0	1,220
LAFAYETTE	57	219	0	1	1,074
LAKE	4,328	2,695	0	11	39,566
LEE	8,136	9,793	0	29	78,980
LEON	2,821	2,844	0	6	32,383
LEVY	620	1,429	141	12	6,257
LIBERTY	29	95	159	0	1,475
MADISON	432	608	82	0	2,935
MANATEE	5,057	3,957	0	0	42,242
MARION	6,923	4,545	189	22	42,570
MARTIN	1,588	909	0	3	18,239
MONROE	552	831	0	3	8,375
NASSAU	889	1,526	70	1	10,938
OKALOOSA	2,481	1,232	0	32	30,254
OKEECHOBEE	1,008	612	0	31	7,289
ORANGE	7,902	1,559	0	14	175,155
OSCEOLA	7,716	4,423	0	113	51,881
PALM BEACH	16,786	10,020	0	2	171,429
PASCO	5,656	9,360	0	5	64,688
PINELLAS	10,247	18,634	0	34	109,880
POLK	11,117	7,339	21	49	92,873
PUTNAM	1,709	1,743	0	17	12,101
ST. JOHNS	2,145	1,135	0	0	26,922
ST. LUCIE	5,594	5,460	0	20	38,786
SANTA ROSA	1,146	1,687	466	2	25,392
SARASOTA	3,458	2,822	0	62	42,190
SEMINOLE	4,867	6,015	0	62	66,349
SUMTER	986	1,189	0	17	7,432
SUWANNEE	671	1,060	522	1	5,981
TAYLOR	708	958	0	1	3,420
UNION	232	311	111	1	2,265
VOLUSIA	7,319	11,139	0	7	65,867
WAKULLA	328	909	234	5	5,050
WALTON	441	641	482	8	6,704
WASHINGTON	294	511	303	0	3,565
DISTRICTS 1-67	238,795	265,133	5,245	980	2,655,782
DEAF/BLIND	4	11	0	0	729
DOZIER/OKEE	0	13	0	0	375
FAU LAB SCH	19	98	0	0	671
FSU LAB SCH	203	0	0	1	2,203
FAMU LAB SCH	41	2	0	2	422
UF LAB SCH	67	85	0	0	1,155
STATE TOTAL	239,129	265,342	5,245	983	2,662,701

Corporal Punishment Incidents by District, 2006-07

