Pittsburgh Public Schools
K-2 Non-Violent Suspension Ban Evaluation

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pronouns: she/her/hers

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Evaluation Questions

• What was the impact of the K-2 non-violent suspension ban on out-of-school suspensions (OSS)?

• What can the data tell us about K-2 OSS and potentially extending the ban to grades 3-5?
Key Background

• The K-2 non-violent suspension ban was implemented in January 2018.
• The district’s discipline coding changed in 2017-18.
• PPS K-2 population is 50% Black, 30% White, and 20% Other.
Methodology

• Analysis of extant data
  • Statistical
  • Thematic coding of description field in Incident Reports – 2,305 reports, covering 2015-16 through 2019-20

• Online, confidential survey of K-2 teachers
  • 85 responses (18% of all K-2 teachers)
  • DEC20-JAN21
  • All ES represented, 79% taught at their school 5+ years

• Interviews with 6 elementary principals
  • DEC20
  • Average of 6 years at their current schools
  • Confidential

• District review of drafts and discussions
Main Findings

Since the K-2 non-violent OSS ban, the overall number of OSS has decreased.
Main Findings

Since the K-2 non-violent OSS ban, non-violent suspensions have decreased. However

District discipline coding changed

School Year

% of OSS due to NON-VIOLENT Incidents

- 15-16
- 16-17
- 17-18
- 18-19
- 19-20

Partial year
Other Findings

The ban has not resulted in a shift from OSS to in-school suspensions (ISS).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Year</th>
<th>OSS</th>
<th>ISS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17-18</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-19</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-20 (FYE)</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

# of OSS and ISS
Other Findings

In a year, OSS typically only happens once for a K-2 student (if it happens). The percent of K-2 students with 3+ OSS has not changed much.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Year</th>
<th>Only 1</th>
<th>2 OSS</th>
<th>3+ OSS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015-16</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-17</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017-18</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018-19</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019-20</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other Findings


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th># OSS Black Students (unique count)</th>
<th># Black Students Enrolled</th>
<th>Total # OSS Non-Black Students (unique count)</th>
<th>Total # Non-Black Students Enrolled</th>
<th>Office of Civil Rights (OCR) Risk Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015-16</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>3,159</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>2,838</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-17</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>2,973</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>2,757</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017-18</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>2,793</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>2,691</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018-19</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>2,731</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>2,635</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019-20 (Partial Year)</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>2,586</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>2,589</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Evaluation Summary

1. The number of K-2 OSS in 2018-9 was lower than in 2016-17.

2. The K-2 non-violent suspension ban has decreased the percentage of K-2 OSS given for non-violent incidents. In 2019-20, only 18% of K-2 OSS were for non-violent incidents.

3. The number and rates of K-2 OSS have been lower from 2015-16 to 2018-19 but there are problems of disproportionality.

4. Elementary schools have not replaced OSS with ISS, as might expected.

5. In a given year, suspended K-2 students were suspended only once. However, there is a persistent portion suspended 3+ times each year.

6. District-level data are likely not capturing all details schools take in providing progressive discipline.
Recommendations

1. Dedicate physical space in each elementary school for use as an ISS room. Provide ISS staffing trained in restorative practices. Do this prior to banning non-violent suspensions for grades 3-5.

2. Assess need for training and ongoing data review related to OSS disproportionality.

3. Emphasize need to document progressive discipline practices in data that can be analyzed at the district level.

4. Develop alternative district response to a $3^{rd}$+ OSS.
District Response to Recommendations

• Ensure classroom management plans and school learning environments are culturally responsive and inclusive
• Develop parameters for Restorative/Cool-down Rooms that includes staffing, protocols, materials, etc...
• Offer summer/fall Restorative Practice training opportunities for all staff
• Train 50 individuals on implicit bias to serve as train-the-trainers
• Build out culturally relevant trauma-informed care training with the Association of Black Psychologist (ABPsI) for key staff including counselors, social workers, learning environment specialists, psychologists, and equity fellows
• Enhance Multi Tiered System of Support (MTSS) and Student Assistance Program (SAP)
• Provide more equity-focused training for mental health and trauma related services for students and staff
• Provide training to improve data entry of progressive discipline practices at the school-level
• Work toward meaningful diversionary practices
Questions?

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