

Crime & Suspension in 5 Different School Types in an Entire U.S. State

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Presented at the *9th International Conference of The Future of Education*, Florence, Italy, June 27, 2019

Research Questions

- 1) What school crime and violence (SCV) rate differences exist (if any) in the the five types of of public schools in North Carolina (NC) during the 2015-16 school year?
- 2) Do short term suspension differences exist across the 5 types of schools in the state?

The 5 School Types in this Study (in school year 2015-2016):

Total school n in the state of NC = 2,592

Traditional schools $n = 1,838$ (71% of all schools; all levels)

Charter public schools $n = 157$ (6.1% of all schools; all levels)

PBIS *Green Ribbon* schools $n = 269$ (10.4 % of all schools; all levels)

PBIS *Model* schools $n = 211$ (8.1% of all schools; all levels)

PBIS *Exemplar* schools $n = 115$ (4.4% of all schools; all levels)

Characteristics of the 5 school types in this study:

Traditional public schools were nothing out of the ordinary, just the typical schools found in the state (i.e., elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, multi-grade “mixed” schools such as grades K-8 & K-12); they are governed by local school districts and the NC Department of Public Instruction.

Characteristics of the 5 school types in this study:

Charter public schools were those that were independently run. They were schools of “choice,” meaning students are not assigned to the school because of where they live. Instead, families must choose to enroll their child in a charter school, and many such schools restrict how many and who they accept as students. Their school administrative rules and regulations are also different from traditional public schools, but still under the auspices of the NC Department of Public Instruction (DPI).

Characteristics of the 5 school types in this study:

PBIS Green Ribbon Schools are schools that have been trained to use *Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS)* practices at the Tier 1 level. PBIS is a form of classroom behavior management where students are reinforced for “being good,” following school rules, and the whole school and its teachers and administrators are involved in prevention of inappropriate student behavior and reinforcement of proper school behavior in students.

Characteristics of the 5 school types in this study:

PBIS Model Schools are schools that have been trained to use *Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS)* practices at Tiers 1 & 2 levels. PBIS Tier 2 requires more behavioral support training by a school's teachers and administrators, and offers more comprehensive behavioral interventions for students who need more than just Tier 1 services. At Tier 2, both Tiers 1 & 2 services are provided.

Characteristics of the 5 school types in this study:

PBIS Exemplar Schools are schools that have been trained to use *Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS)* practices at Tiers 1, 2, & 3 levels. PBIS Tier 3 requires much more individual student behavioral support training by a school's teachers and administrators, and offers more comprehensive and individually-oriented behavioral interventions for students who need more than just Tiers 1 & 2 services. At Tier 3 schools, all 3 Tiers and services are provided.

Characteristics of the 5 school types in this study:

The five public school types educated over 1.53 million students during the school year (i.e., 2015-2016) of interest in this study.

Ethnic Distribution of Students:

Traditional Public Schools = 26.1% African American, 2.5% Asian American, 16% Latino, 0.9% Native American, 3.7% other, 0.1% Pacific Islander, & 50.6% White

Ethnic Distribution of Students:

Charter Public Schools = 26.3% African American, 3.4% Asian American, 8.4% Latino, 0.8% Native American, 3.8% other, 0.2% Pacific Islander, & 57.1% White

Ethnic Distribution of Students:

PBIS Green Ribbon Public Schools = 28.1% African American, 1.8% Asian American, 16% Latino, 2.0% Native American, 4.2% other, 0.2% Pacific Islander, & 47.7% White

Ethnic Distribution of Students:

PBIS Model Public Schools = 30.2% African American, 2.3% Asian American, 17.4% Latino, 3.1% Native American, 4.4% other, 0.2% Pacific Islander, & 42.4% White

Ethnic Distribution of Students:

PBIS Exemplar Public Schools = 23.4% African American, 2.9% Asian American, 16.2% Latino, 5.2% Native American, 4.5% other, 0.2% Pacific Islander, & 47.6% White

Categories of Reported Student Acts of Crime and Violence at School (n = 16)

- Possession of a weapon
- Possession of a controlled substance
- Possession of alcoholic beverage
- Assault on school personnel
- Assault resulting in serious injury
- Sexual assault
- Assault involving use of a weapon
- Sexual offense
- Possession of a firearm
- Robbery with a dangerous weapon
- Taking indecent liberties with a minor
- Rape
- Death by other than natural causes
- Kidnapping
- Bomb threat
- Burning of school building

(reported as per 1,000 students at a school)

Statistical Analyses

Because of the data characteristics the following statistical tests were used in the analyses:

- Kruskal-Wallace** nonparametric tests (to examine differences across school type on school crime & violence rates, and short-term suspension [i.e., 10 days or fewer per incident] rates)

- Dwass, Steel, Critchlow, & Fligner** (post-hoc testing) method

- Bonferroni** adjustments to correct for multiple comparisons across variables

- Pearson product-moment correlations** among school size, school crime, and short-term suspensions

School Crime and Violence Results

The school types differed significantly on 5 of the 16 types of school crime and violence:

--**Assault on school personnel** (charter schools were significantly lower than traditional schools and all 3 types of PBIS schools)

School Crime and Violence Results

The school types differed significantly on 5 of the 16 types of school crime and violence:

--**Student possession of an alcoholic beverage at school (PBIS Model schools were significantly lower than traditional public schools)**

School Crime and Violence Results

The school types differed significantly on 5 of the 16 types of school crime and violence:

--**Possession of a firearm at school** (the 5 school types differed significantly on this variable [i.e., traditional vs. PBIS Model schools], but not at the $p < .005$ level)

School Crime and Violence Results

The school types differed significantly on 5 of the 16 types of school crime and violence:

--Possession of a controlled substance (PBIS Model, PBIS Exemplar schools, & charter schools were lower than traditional schools; charter schools were lower than PBIS Green Ribbon)

School Crime and Violence Results

The school types differed significantly on 5 of the 16 types of school crime and violence:

--**Possession of a weapon** (charter schools were lower than traditional schools, PBIS Green Ribbon, and PBIS Model schools)

School Short-Term Suspension (STS) Results

The 5 school types differed significantly on days per STS incident:

- PBIS Model schools assigned fewer days than did traditional schools
- Charter schools assigned fewer days than did traditional schools

School Short-Term Suspension (STS) Results

The 5 school types differed significantly on STS per 100 students at a school:

--Charter schools suspended fewer students than did traditional schools, PBIS Model schools, and PBIS Green Ribbon schools

Correlational Results (significant at $p < .05$)

- School size & assault on school personnel (-.06)
- School size & assault resulting in serious injury (-.05)
- School size & rape (.04)
- School size & robbery with a dangerous weapon (.07)
- School size & STS days per incident (.24)
- School size & STS per 100 students (-.01)

(very weak correlations produced statistically significant results because of large sample sizes)

Odds Ratios

School Crime & Violence: Odds favored charter schools (vs. traditional & PBIS types; traditional vs. PBIS schools comparison produced no difference)

Short-term suspensions (rate per 100 students): Odds favored charter schools (vs. traditional & PBIS types; traditional vs. PBIS schools comparison produced no difference)

Short-term suspensions (days per incident): Odds favored charter schools (vs. traditional & PBIS types; plus PBIS schools were favored vs. traditional schools)

Limitations

- Did not separate schools into elementary, middle, and high school levels
- Do not know whether charter school administrators treat student misbehavior in a manner that is different than other school types (and thus, have fewer suspensions *by choice*)

Conclusions

- Charter schools have a distinct advantage (i.e., less) in student crime and violence at school vs. both PBIS and traditional schools
- Charter schools have a distinct advantage (i.e., fewer) in short-term suspensions vs. both PBIS and traditional schools

Thank you for your attention!

(Grazie mille.)

(Ti ringrazio tanto.)

(Grazie di cuore.)