



FACT SHEET

Analysis Of Student Discipline Data In Kentucky Schools And Challenges Associated With Addressing Persistent Or Severe Behaviors

Office of Education Accountability

Research Report No. ###

Highlighted Findings

- Student behavior is presenting at least moderate challenges to teaching, learning and staff morale in about one third of Kentucky schools and classrooms
- Elementary schools face greater challenges than middle or high schools with extremely disruptive student behavior, student-to-staff assaults, and lack of alternative settings for students with persistent or severe behaviors
- Behaviors affecting the greatest number of schools are attendance-related issues, student apathy/disengagement, and – in high schools – vapes and cell phones
- Policies addressing chronic disruption are implemented in about 1/3 of schools; many principals may be unaware of recent chronic disruption legislation
- Concerns about the safety of students or staff have at least a moderate presence in 17 percent of schools, though a small minority have major concerns
- A minority of dangerous weapon and threat violations result in statutorily-required expulsion or alternative placement; statutory requirements are not clear in many cases

Highlighted Recommendations

- The General Assembly might consider clarifying statutes related to dangerous weapons or threats and data collection for violence against staff or students.
- The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) and the Kentucky Center for School Safety should identify promising alternative programs, with special attention to elementary settings for students with difficulty regulating extreme behavior.
- KDE should solicit data from educators about challenges implementing federal law related to persistent or severe behavior of students with disabilities.
- KDE should submit findings of its data collection to the Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee and the Interim Joint Committee on Education.
- Based on its findings, KDE should develop guidance documents and training to assist educators in understanding their options and responsibilities under federal law to prevent and address persistent or severe behavior challenges of students with disabilities.

Key Numbers

**1
3**

of teachers say
misconduct
frequently
disrupts learning

39%

of principals report
major challenges with
federal restrictions on
disciplinary removals
for students
with disabilities

34%

of principals report
major challenges
with a lack of
alternative settings.

32%

of elementary
principals report
repeatedly clearing
a classroom due
to one student's
extreme behavior