



Transformers for Equitable Education



A PLI THEREMIX! PROJECT



September 2021 GCDD NoFA 21ED2

About the Project

PLI TheRemix! participants work in teams to complete an advocacy project during their time in the institute. The advocacy projects provide participants with the experience of creating, designing and implementing an advocacy campaign. The projects require participants to perform research, analyze data, create campaign materials and engage identified targets and/or communities.

Team Transformers presented their project and recommendations at a community-based parent training. Their presentation and recommendations follow.



Parent
Leadership
Institute
TheREMIX!

Powered by the Science of Learning to End the School-to-Prison Pipeline

A Call to Arms for Parents & Community

Sunday, August 29th, 2021, 7pm

Our Students Need

- A positive school climate to learn and grow
- Equitable policies
- Insight into their rights and responsibilities

If you agree, Come Join Our Discussion!

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://tinyurl.com/acalltoarms1>

Or connect by phone

+1 312 626 6799

+1 301 715 8592

Meeting ID: 840 7513 5092

Passcode: 693730

A Transformers for Equitable Education event in conjunction with PLI TheREMIX!

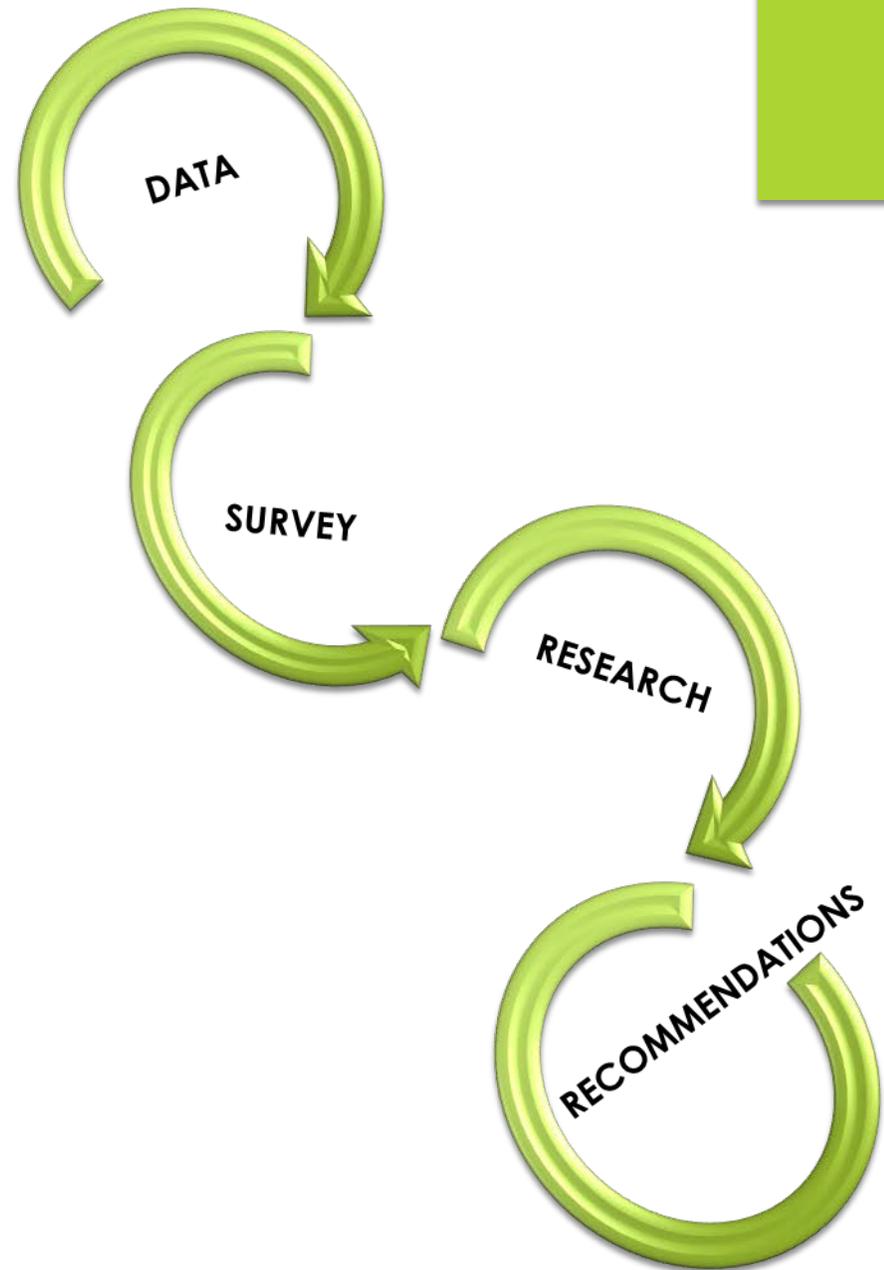
Transformers for Equitable Education Objectives

Our objectives:

- ▶ Develop policy recommendations that are equitable, clear, and effective in reducing incidences of discipline
- ▶ Ensure that students are aware of their rights and responsibilities
- ▶ Foster a restorative environment for student learning engagement and character development

Transformers for Equitable Education

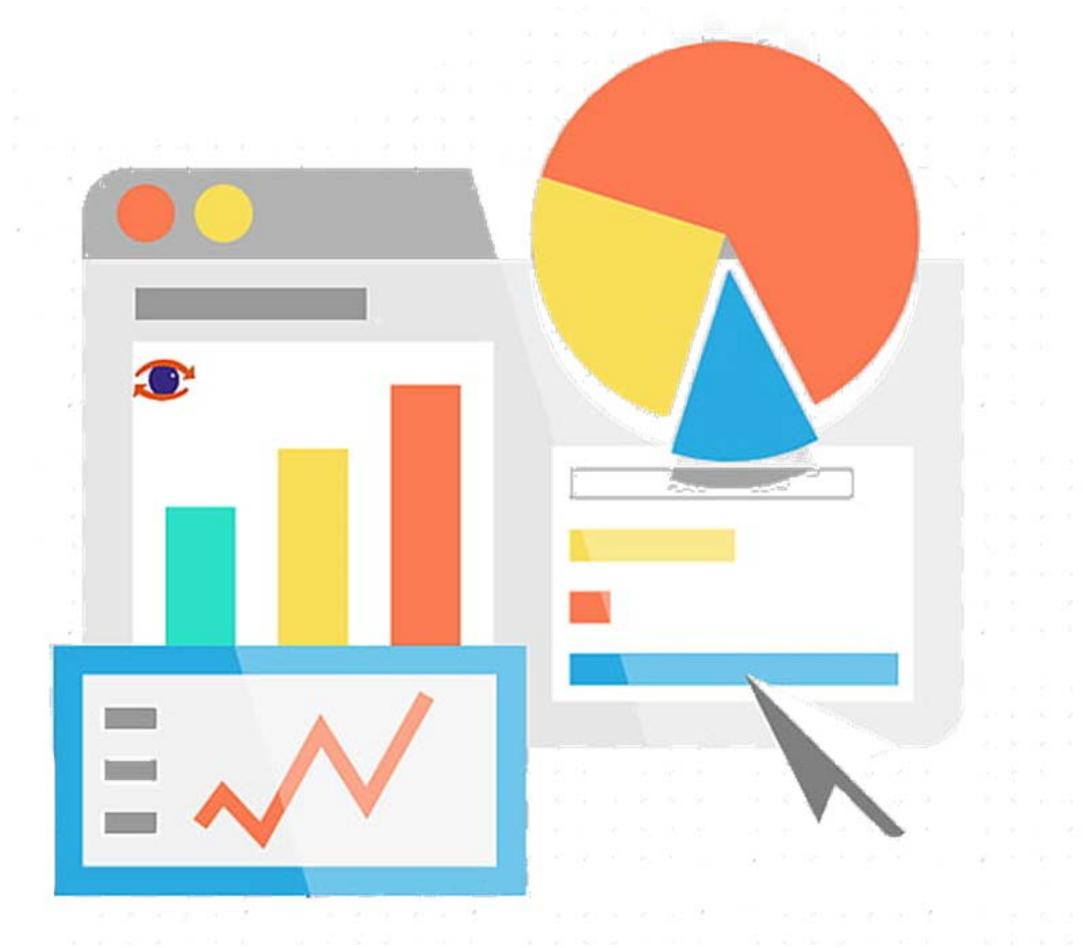
From Here to There -
Our Process



Transformers for Equitable Education

From Here to There – Gather Data

- ▶ Data Sources
 - ▶ GaDOE
 - ▶ Schoolwide Information System (SWIS)
- ▶ Findings
 - ▶ Bullying
 - ▶ Fighting



Discipline Data for Georgia Schools :Breakdown by Gender and Race/Ethnicity

Governors Office of Student Achievement K-12 Discipline Dashboard

Discipline Incidents and Consequences by Demographics

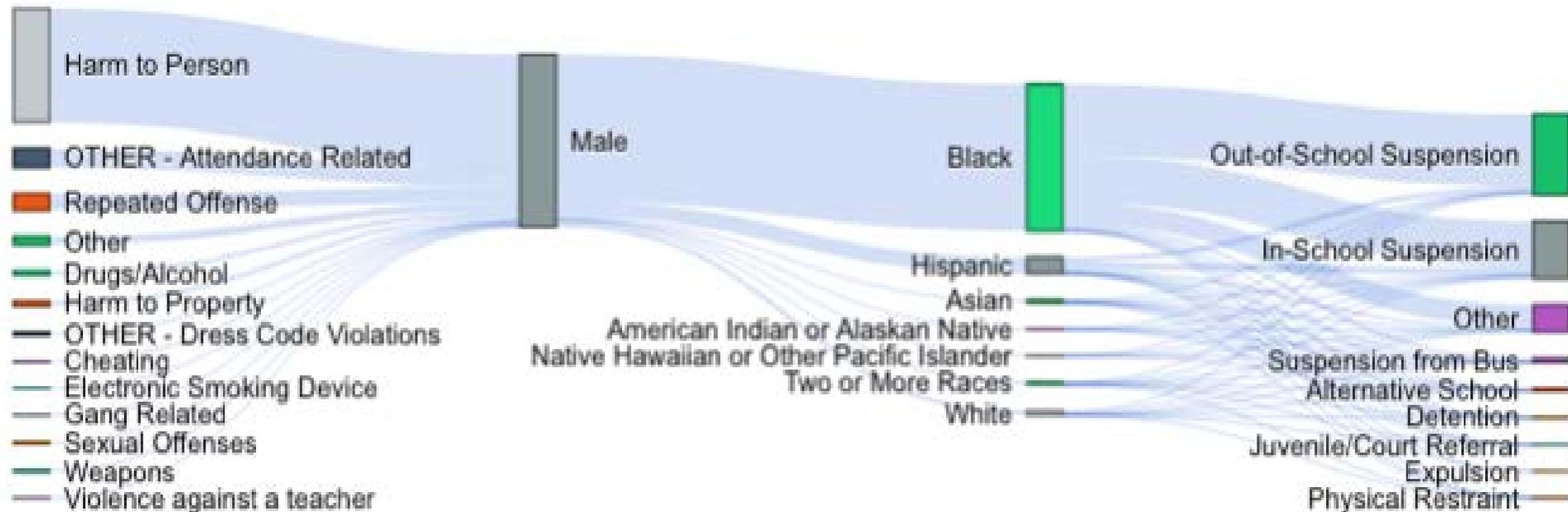
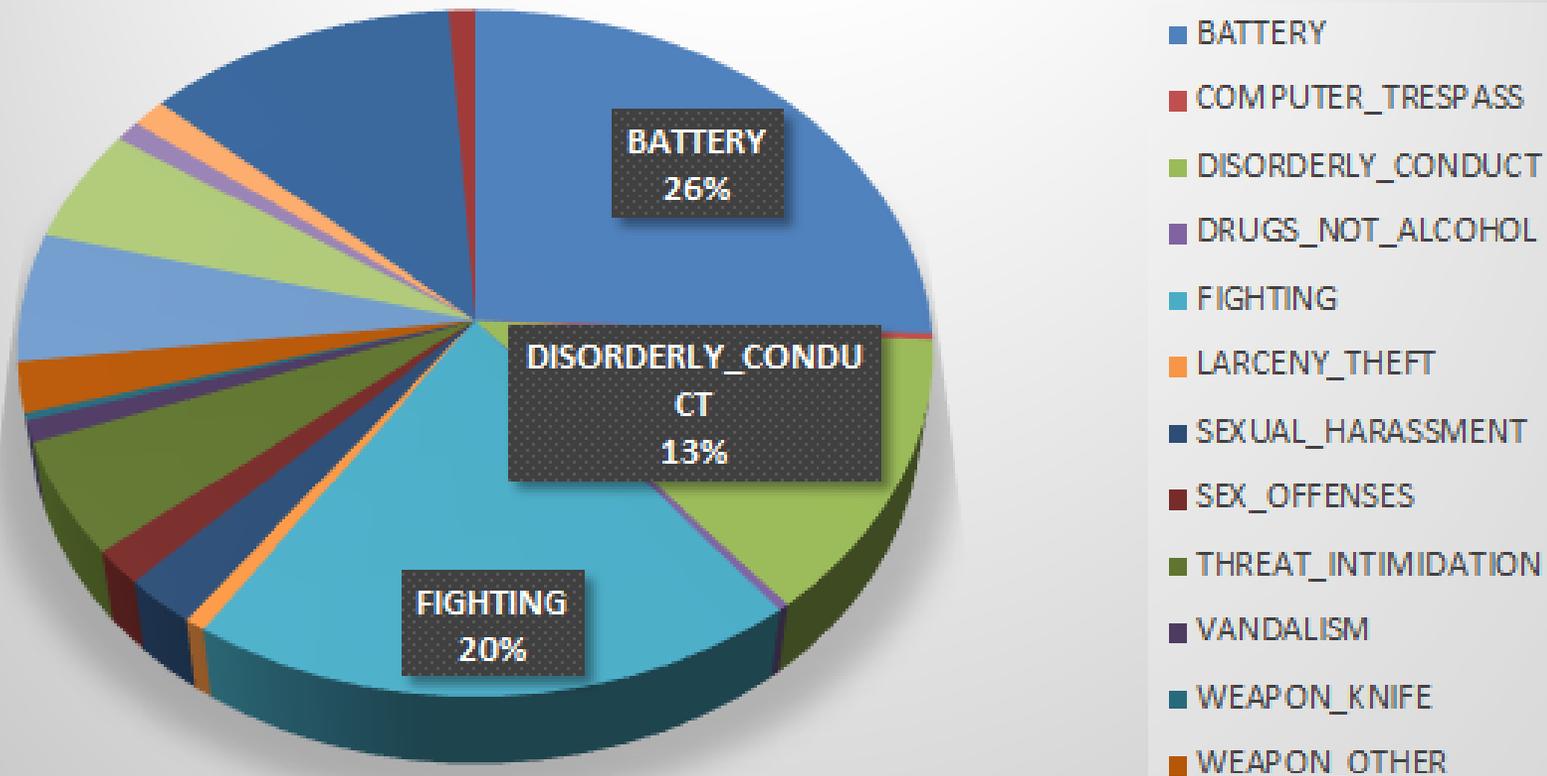


Chart Selections:

Gender: Male

Major Infractions for Dekalb County Elementary Students

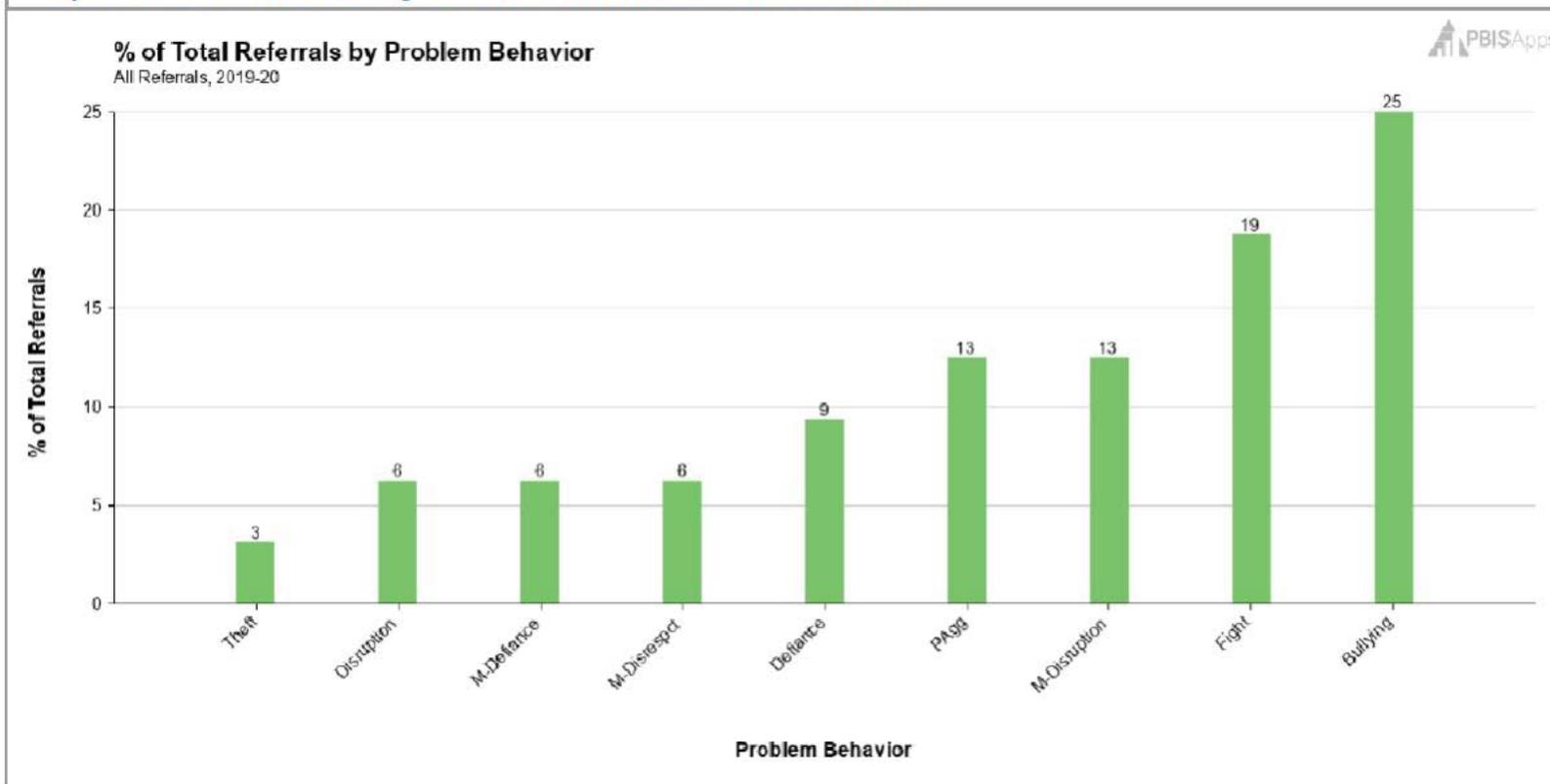
Dekalb Elementary Schools ISS 2019 Infractions



Most Common Infractions

2019-20 Data for "Elementary School A" SWIS

Proportion of Referrals by Problem Behavior - All Referrals



Proportion of Referrals by Problem Behavior-Major

Bullying	33
Fighting	25
Physical Aggression	17
Defiance	13
Disruption	8
Theft	4

Proportion of Referrals by Problem Behavior-Minor

Minor Disruption	50
Minor Disrespect	25
Minor Defiance	25

Transformers for
Equitable Education

From Here to
There –
Survey Schools





*DeKalb County School District
Code of Student Conduct*

2021-2022



ELEMENTARY
MIDDLE
HIGH

The DeKalb County School District provides translation of DeKalb County School District Code of Student Conduct, courtesy of the DeKalb International Welcome Center. Request for a translated hard copy may be made to the school principal or an electronic version is available at www.dekalbschools.ga.org/student-support-intervention/student-solutions.

The English language version is considered the most accurate.

In the event of a disagreement or discrepancy between the translation and the original English version of this handbook or any notice or disclaimer therein, the original English version will prevail.

Transformers for Equitable Education From Here to There - Research

Transformers for Equitable Education

From Here to There - Recommendations

CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT RECOMMENDATIONS

- ▶ Reduce Discrepancies between Fighting & Bullying in the Classroom vs. On the Bus
- ▶ Allow Students More Time to Report Incidents of Bullying & Harassment

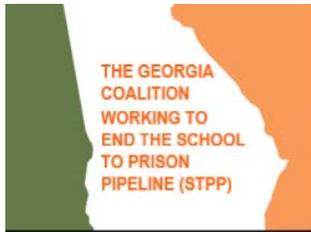
SCHOOL CLIMATE RECOMMENDATIONS

- ▶ Create a School Culture and Climate Team (SCCT) at Every School
- ▶ Provide Training and Management Support for Entire School Staff
- ▶ Offer Conflict Resolution Training for Students, Entire School Staff & Transportation Staff

Questions????



Contact Us



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Recommendations



Parent
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THE REMIX!

Powered by the Georgia Coalition Working to End the School to Prison Pipeline

TRANSFORMERS FOR EQUITABLE EDUCATION

DEKALB COUNTY CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT RECOMMENDATIONS

It is essential that the district and schools create a discipline system that is both preventative and restorative. Because “major infractions,” as identified in the DeKalb County Code of Student Conduct, can cause a child to be removed from the classroom setting, it is the intent of these recommendations to reduce the amount of occurrences involving fighting and bullying, while keeping the students in the classroom, reducing In School Suspension (ISS), cultivating a positive learning environment, and increasing the practice of restorative measures.

With the stated intent in mind, we identified and focused on the highest major infractions at Chapel Hill Elementary and Toney Elementary schools--fighting and bullying.

Chapel Hill Elementary School¹

- Total enrollment: 493 students
- Race/ethnicity composition: 99.19%, children of color
- Male: 248 (approx. 50.3%)
- Female: 245 (approx. 49.7%)

Highest categories of major Infractions per the 2019 -20 Schoolwide Information System (SWIS) Report:

- Fighting 25%
- Bullying 33%

Toney Elementary School²

- Total enrollment: 330 Students
- Race/ethnicity composition: 99.09% children of color

¹ Chapel Hill Elementary Student Enrollment Summary Report

² Toney Elementary Student Enrollment Summary Report

- Male: 148 (approx. 45%)³
- Female: 182 (approx. 55%)⁴

Highest categories of major Infractions per the 2019 -20 Schoolwide Information System (SWIS) Report:

- Fighting 35%
- Physical Aggression 30%

Code of Student Conduct

<https://www.dekalbschoolsga.org/documents/code-of-conduct/2021-2022-dcsd-code-of-student-conduct.pdf>

There currently are five (1-5) levels of disciplinary action that can be initiated in an elementary school setting in response to fighting and bullying. Understanding that the amount of time a student spends in the classroom is critical to life-long success, in conjunction with a desire to decrease the impact of the school-to-prison pipeline, we reviewed the sections of the district’s code of student conduct which address Fighting: 7B DCSD Code of Student Conduct (Pg. 36) and Bullying/Harassment: 7G DCSD Code of Student Conduct (Pg. 36)⁵, with the goal of generating a positive and restorative effect for the student, as well as promoting a positive school climate.

A detailed description of the levels and consequences for bullying and fighting can be found in the code of student conduct, as listed in the following table:

<u>Code of Student Conduct</u>	<u>Location in DCSD Consequence Levels</u>
Bullying: Levels 1-5	Pg. 38
Bullying on the bus: Levels 2-5	Pg. 51
Fighting in school: Levels 2-5	Pg. 34
Fighting on the bus: Levels 4-5	Pg. 51

³National Center for Education Statistics https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/school_detail.asp?ID=130174000713

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ DeKalb County Code of Student Conduct 2021-2022 <https://www.dekalbschoolsga.org/documents/code-of-conduct/2021-2022-dcsd-code-of-student-conduct.pdf>

CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on our review of the discipline data collected and the code of student conduct policy, our recommendations are listed as follows:

1) Reduce Discrepancies between Fighting & Bullying in the Classroom vs. On the Bus⁶

- Create consistency between classroom infractions and infractions that take place on the school bus.
- Altercations ought to be of certain circumstances before being considered a Level 5 incident, especially for the first offense.
- Offer interventions before starting at Level 4, especially for the first offense.
- In alignment with creating a positive school climate:
 - Utilize bus monitors on elementary school buses;
 - Implement schoolwide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), which includes the school bus environment, as well.

2) Allow Students More Time to Report Incidents of Bullying and Harassment

- The bullying flowchart of the DeKalb County Code of Student Conduct (Pg. 94) currently states that a parent, guardian, student or concerned citizen that has a bullying, harassment, discrimination or hazing concern is to verbally or in writing report the matter to school personnel at the school "as soon as practicable, but preferably within thirty (30) days." Having more time to report traumatic experiences might increase reporting. One report found "that 64% of students who were bullied never told anyone about it. Even when injuries occurred, 40% of bullied students still never reported the incident."⁷
 - Understanding that it can take a substantial amount of time to gather the courage to speak up and report an incident of bullying and/or harassment, especially being an elementary student, we recommend that the amount of time available to report an incident should be clearly communicated to all students and their parents or guardians (1) during the orientation process for the new school year; and (2) upon enrollment of a student into the school system.
 - In alignment with creating a feeling of support and safety for all students, and in conjunction with the US Department of Education, it is

⁶ DeKalb County Code of Student Conduct 2021-2022 <https://www.dekalbschoolsga.org/documents/code-of-conduct/2021-2022-dcsd-code-of-student-conduct.pdf>

⁷ From Sherri Gordon - Updated February 27, 2021, Medically reviewed by Amy Morin, LCSW Verywell Family <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/complaintintro.html>

recommended to increase the statute of limitations to 180 Days. To become: "as soon as practicable, but preferably within 180 days." ⁸

SCHOOL CLIMATE RECOMMENDATIONS

1) Create a School Culture and Climate Team (SCCT) at every school

The SCCT would facilitate the implementation of positive schoolwide safety and discipline policies that includes a continuum of behavior supports. Additionally, the SCCT would continuously evaluate and cultivate a positive school climate and culture in the school. School climate affects student learning. "Research has shown that [a] positive school climate is tied to high or improving attendance rates, test scores, promotion rates, and graduation rates."⁹ Therefore, we offer the following recommendations:

- Ascertain the root causes for the fighting and bullying to better address the matter and provide the needed supports for the student who was bullied and for the student who committed the bullying.
- Implement a framework and process that focuses on interrupting combative behavioral patterns and reducing instances of bullying. In Georgia, bullying is not just a violation of school policy, punishment for bullying is actually codified in state law. Therefore, an act of bullying can accelerate a student's entry into the school-to-prison pipeline. (Georgia State Bullying Statute: O.C.G.A. 20-2-751.4)¹⁰

2) Provide Support for Entire Staff

Dr. Ivan Prilleltensky, Dean of Education and Director of the University of Miami- Support Network for Novice Teachers, surmised that "Teachers need the same kind of support that doctors receive who are doing their residency training under supervision. And they usually don't get it."¹¹ In light of that insightful observation, we offer the following recommendations:

- Explore areas for improvement such as classroom size.

⁸ US Department of Education Office of Civil Rights <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/complaintintro.html>

⁹ The National Center On Safe Supportive Learning Environments [National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments \(NCSSLE\) | American Institutes for Research \(air.org\)](https://www.ncssle.org/)

¹⁰ Georgia State Codes of Law <https://law.justia.com/codes/georgia/2019/title-20/chapter-2/article-16/part-2/subpart-2/section-20-2-751-4/>

¹¹ Dr. Ivan Prilleltensky, Dean of Education and Director of the University of Miami- Support Network for Novice Teachers From an American Psychological Association article titled - "Support For Teachers" Tori DeAngelis - Feb. 2012, Vol. 43, No.2 <https://www.apa.org/monitor/2012/02/teachers>

- Ensure teachers and staff have the required training and support necessary to successfully manage their classrooms.
- Offer additional support for new teachers, such as:
 - In conjunction with coaching, create mentorships between teachers who are more proficient in using the PBIS framework with those who are not.
 - Include the sharing of ideas and best practices pertaining to culturally responsive teaching, classroom management and classroom style among all faculty members.
 - Improve the support system for teachers and staff and promote a more positive school experience for students by providing a paraprofessional level teacher's assistant in every classroom.

Ensure that the recommended support for the staff includes an assessment of student needs and a plan for meeting those needs. Furthermore, parent and school collaboration should be a part of any behavioral management conversation. In order to ensure each child's success, parent buy-in is essential to this critical intervention process.

3) Offer Conflict Resolution Training for Students & Entire Staff

- In order to foster a positive school climate, emphasize prevention, and reduce the number of major infractions, conflict resolution training can be offered to address the following occurrences:
 - Conflict between students
 - Conflict between students and teachers/staff
 - Conflict between students and bus drivers
- Provide training for administrators, teachers, staff and bus drivers in effective de-escalation intervention techniques.
- Implement conflict resolution with a focus on the primary understanding of what is "in the best interest of the students."
- "In [schoolwide] behavior support, commitment from at least 80% of program staff is required. Leadership teams can design strategies to establish buy-in and develop a process for obtaining a commitment from program staff, administrators, and other support staff (e.g. secretaries, custodians, and kitchen staff)."¹²

¹² Handbook of Positive Behavior Support, Edited by Wayne Sailor, Glen Dunlap, George Sugai, Rob Homer [Handbook of Positive Behavior Support - Google Books](#)