# *Statewide Report on*

# *School Safety*

# *and*

# *Discipline Data*

# *1998-1999*
# *1999-2000*

**Florida Department of Education**
**Division of Public Schools and Community Education**
**Bureau of Equity, Safety and School Support**
**2001**

This product was developed by the State of Florida, Department of Education, Division of Public Schools and Community Education, Bureau of Equity, Safety and School Support, Office of Safe Schools.

For additional information on this publication, contact the Office of Safe Schools, Florida Department of Education, Room 301 Turlington Building, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400.

Telephone: (850) 410-1667
FAX: (850) 410-1796

Suncom: 210-1667

E-mail: sdfs@mail.doe.state.fl.us

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

# LIST OF TABLES

# LIST OF FIGURES

# INTRODUCTION

In public schools across America, students thrive and learn in schools that are free of crime and violence, in classrooms that are well-disciplined, and in surroundings that exude safety. With this in mind, one of the primary goals of the Florida Department of Education (DOE) is to develop and implement safety and security measures that will help schools continue to provide safe and secure learning environments. One of the measures developed to help districts with data assessments and evaluations during their planning for school safety is this publication of the <u>1998-1999 and 1999-2000 Statewide Report on School Safety and Discipline Data.</u>

Now more than ever, data plays a pivotal role in planning for school safety because it can assist in identifying potential or existing safety problems within schools. Since the 1995-1996 school year, DOE has annually collected data on 21 incidents of crime, violence, and disruptive behaviors through the *School Environmental Safety Incident Reporting (SESIR)* system. SESIR, as it is commonly identified, collects incident data that occur on school grounds, during school-sponsored transportation, and at off-campus, school-sponsored events during any 24-hour period, 365 days per year. Incidents are reported to SESIR even if individuals other than students are involved or if the offender is unknown. DOE also collects annual data on six types of discipline actions that are administered when students violate school or district rules. The three main disciplinary actions described in this report are In School Suspensions, Out of School Suspensions, and Expulsions.

This publication contains tables and figures that summarize the 1998-1999 and 1999-2000 SESIR and Discipline data that were reported to DOE by the 67 Florida school districts. The first section of this report analyzes the statewide totals and provides a trend analysis of the SESIR data over a period of three school years: 1997-1998, 1998-1999, and 1999-2000. This section also includes Discipline data from the 1998-1999 and 1999-2000 school years. The second section of the report contains a comprehensive data profile of the SESIR and Discipline data for each of the 67 school districts in Florida.

The student population numbers are from *Survey 5* Demographics, which provides a cumulative count of all the students served in a given school year. The *Survey 5* population for the 1997-1998 school year is current as of March 1999, 1998-1999 population as of February 2000, and 1999-2000 population as of March 2001. The SESIR and Discipline data provided and discussed are also collected in *Survey 5* and are a cumulative record of all the incidents in the respective years. The SESIR data for the 1997-1998 school year is current as of January 1999, 1998-1999 data as of December 1999, and 1999-2000 data as of November 2000.

SESIR Incidents and Related Elements

As previously stated, the SESIR system collects data on 21 incidents of crime, violence, and disruptive behaviors that occur on school grounds, during school-sponsored transportation, and at off-campus, school-sponsored events during any 24-hour period, 365 days per year. Below, the incidents have been divided into categories based on incident characteristics with the coding abbreviation in parentheses.

Ð        **Violent Acts Against Persons**
   1. *Homicide (HOM)*
   2. *Sexual Battery (SXB)*
   3. *Robbery (ROB)*
   4. *Battery (BAT)*
   5. *Kidnapping (KID)*

Ð        **Alcohol, Tobacco, or Other Drugs**
   6. *Drugs (DRG)*
   7. *Alcohol (ALC)*
   8. *Tobacco (TBC)*

Ð        **Property**
   9. *Breaking/Entering (BRK)*
   10. *Larceny/Theft (STL)*
   11. *Motor Vehicle Theft (MVT)*
   12. *Arson (ARS)*
   13. *Vandalism (VAN)*

Ð        **Harassment**
   14. *Threat/Intimidation (TRS)*
   15. *Sexual Harassment (SXH)*

Ð        **Other Non-Violent Incidents**
   16. *Sexual Offense (SXO)*
   17. *Trespassing (TRS)*
   18. *Other Major (OMC)*

Ð        **Incidents Not Categorized**
   19. *Fighting (FIT)*
   20. *Disorderly Conduct (DOC)*
   21. *Weapons Possession (WPO)*

Following the 1998-1999 school year, the SESIR incident definitions were revised to better define the incidents and help schools identify incidents more correctly. These new definitions were effective for the 1999-2000 school year. Appendix A contains the SESIR definitions that were utilized in the 1999-2000 school year and Appendix B

contains the SESIR definitions that were utilized in the 1997-1998 and 1998-1999 school years.

In addition to the 21 incident types, SESIR also collects five "related" data elements that are often associated with the incidents. These elements describe whether the following external factors were present when the incident occurred:

- Gang-Related
- Alcohol-Related
- Drug-Related
- Hate Crime-Related
- Weapon-Related

These related elements allow SESIR incidents to be more thoroughly described. For example, during a *Battery* incident in which a knife was used and the student was also under the influence of alcohol, the incident would be reported as a *Battery*, *Weapon-Related* and A*lcohol-Related*. This coding method provides a more accurate depiction of the elements that are often present in SESIR incidents.

In addition to the five related elements, other specific details about SESIR incidents are also collected. The specific details that are provided in this report include the following:

- *Type of Offender*—Student or Non-student.
- *Time of Day*—During School Hours or After School Hours.

Collectively, these descriptive elements provide an inclusive picture of the various types of incidents that occur in schools.

SESIR Data Quality

The National Center for Education Statistics has previously recognized the SESIR system as a model for school safety data collection.[1] Although the system has been nationally recognized, the data continues to be based on subjective decisions and interpretations made by administrators at the school level. Thus, caution must be exercised in the interpretation and application of SESIR data. Threats to data validity that have been identified include the inaccurate and inconsistent application of incident definitions, over and under-reporting of SESIR data, and variations within the formats utilized by schools to report SESIR incidents.

The Department of Education is aware of these concerns with the SESIR system and has, over the past several years, developed and delivered training to school district personnel throughout the state. These training sessions were designed to help schools and districts become more knowledgeable of the SESIR incident definitions and to develop more accurate and consistent data reporting. In addition, a training CD-ROM was developed that provides interactive instruction on SESIR incident reporting

---

[1] U.S. Department of Education. National Center for Education Statistics. *Recommendation of the Crime, Violence and Discipline Reporting Task Force*, NCES 97-581, prepared by the National Education Statistics Agenda Committee: 1996.

requirements.  The CD-ROM includes details about the SESIR incidents and definitions, examples of how and when to code SESIR incidents, video clips that illustrate incidents and proper coding procedures, and a self-assessment test that evaluates users on their knowledge of the SESIR system.  This CD-ROM was disseminated to school districts before the 2000-2001 school year to assist in improving the knowledge and skills of school-level personnel who identify and report SESIR incidents.

The SESIR data and categories provided in this report will differ slightly from what is reported in the *Florida School Indicators Report (FSIR)* published by the Florida Department of Education.  The *FSIR* provides status and performance data on the elementary, middle, and high schools for each of the Florida school districts (available on the Internet at http://info.doe.state.fl.us/fsir/).  There are many schools in the state that do not fit the *FSIR* grade level categories such as charter and combination schools, which may have grades K-8 together in one school.  Because SESIR data are reported by the incident and not by the student, it is difficult to classify the grade level in which a charter or combination school may fit.  Therefore, the SESIR incident data within this report are reflective of all types of schools in the state of Florida.

SESIR Data Interpretation

For users of the data contained in this report, caution should be exercised when making comparisons between school districts.  Numerous social and environmental factors, such as the size of the student population, can significantly affect SESIR data among districts.  Additionally, the number of SESIR incidents reported may vary among districts due to different interpretations of incident definitions, varying levels of consistency with which schools report incidents, and variation in the amount and level of training provided to school personnel.

It is extremely difficult, and not recommended, to make general comparisons of SESIR data from one district to another without taking into consideration other social factors and variables which are not provided in this report.  It is important to recognize that the information contained in this report should not be misconstrued to imply that districts that reported fewer incidents have safer schools.  The purpose of this report is to simply provide the SESIR and Discipline data that was reported to DOE by the 67 Florida school districts for use in strategic planning, needs assessment, and trend monitoring. Any further interpretation regarding the safety and security of Florida schools using this report is not advised.

## ANALYSIS OF STATE SESIR DATA

As previously identified, the Florida Department of Education collects data on 21 incidents of crime, violence, and disruptive behaviors that occur on school grounds, during school-sponsored transportation, and at off-campus, school-sponsored events during any 24-hour period, 365 days per year.  For the purpose of this narrative report, the incidents have been assembled into five main categories: 1) *Violent Acts Against Persons, 2) Alcohol, Tobacco or Other Drugs (ATOD), 3) Property, 4) Harassment,* and *5) Other Non-Violent Incidents*.  Additionally, the three incidents of *Fighting, Disorderly Conduct,* and *Weapons Possession* will remain as separate categories throughout this report due to the special interest in these behaviors.

Raw Data Totals

Table 1 summarizes the latest statewide SESIR data for the 1998-1999 and 1999-2000 school years with the 1997-1998 data provided for comparison purposes. During the 1998-1999 school year, there were 227,675 SESIR incidents reported, an 8% increase from the 1997-1998 school year.  During the 1999-2000 school year, there were 180,351 SESIR incidents reported, representing a large decrease (-21%) in reported incidents from the 1998-1999 school year.

# Table 1—SESIR Incidents Raw Data Totals

| SESIR CLASSIFICATION | 1997-1998 | 1998-1999 | 1999-2000 |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Population* | *(2,458,423)* | *(2,502,281)* | *(2,550,124)* |
| Homicide | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| Sexual Battery | 162 | 159 | 184 |
| Robbery | 459 | 365 | 341 |
| Battery | 14,238 | 14,088 | 13,449 |
| Kidnapping | 13 | 5 | 5 |
| *Violent Acts Against Persons* | *14,874* | *14,618* | *13,980* |
| Drugs | 4,567 | 4,742 | 5,294 |
| Alcohol | 1,022 | 1,024 | 1,065 |
| Tobacco | 19,738 | 16,065 | 12,394 |
| *Alcohol, Tobacco, or Other Drugs* | *25,327* | *21,831* | *18,753* |
| Breaking/Entering | 1,993 | 1,505 | 1,452 |
| Larceny/Theft | 9,067 | 8,311 | 7,171 |
| Motor Vehicle Theft | 313 | 218 | 141 |
| Arson | 271 | 272 | 233 |
| Vandalism | 7,840 | 7,346 | 6,494 |
| *Property* | *19,484* | *17,652* | *15,491* |
| Threat/Intimidation | 10,377 | 12,601 | 14,183 |
| Sexual Harassment | 2,469 | 2,829 | 2,738 |
| *Harassment* | *12,846* | *15,430* | *16,921* |
| Sexual Offense | 1,528 | 1,684 | 1,540 |
| Trespassing | 1,405 | 1,413 | 1,515 |
| Other Major | 4,776 | 5,541 | 4,916 |
| *Other Non-Violent Incidents* | *7,709* | *8,638* | *7,971* |
| *Fighting* | *67,269* | *66,605* | *67,412* |
| *Disorderly Conduct* | *60,015* | *78,948* | *36,091* |
| *Weapons Possession* | *3,918* | *3,953* | *3,732* |
| TOTAL | 211,442 | 227,675 | 180,351 |

Overall, most categories experienced a steady decline in the number of total incidents reported. The exceptions are *Harassment* incidents, which increased 21% since 1997-1998, and *Disorderly Conduct*, which has fluctuated greatly over the past three years. Analyzing the data in Table 1 reveals that *Disorderly Conduct* incidents were responsible for the majority of the decrease in the total number of SESIR incidents reported in the 1999-2000 school year. It is believed that this large decrease is primarily due to a change in the *Disorderly Conduct* definition that was made after the 1998-1999 school year. This change will be discussed in more detail later in the report.

Figure 1 provides a visual illustration of how the SESIR data has evolved since the 1997-1998 school year. The figure clearly shows the dramatic decline in the number of *Disorderly Conduct* incidents reported in the 1999-2000 school year.

## Figure 1—SESIR Trend Data 1997-1998 through 1999-2000

Figure 2 provides a visual analysis of the 1998-1999 SESIR incident categories and the percentage that each category composes of the total number of incidents reported.  As shown, the two incidents of *Fighting* and *Disorderly Conduct* composed 63% of the total SESIR incidents reported during the 1998-1999 school year.
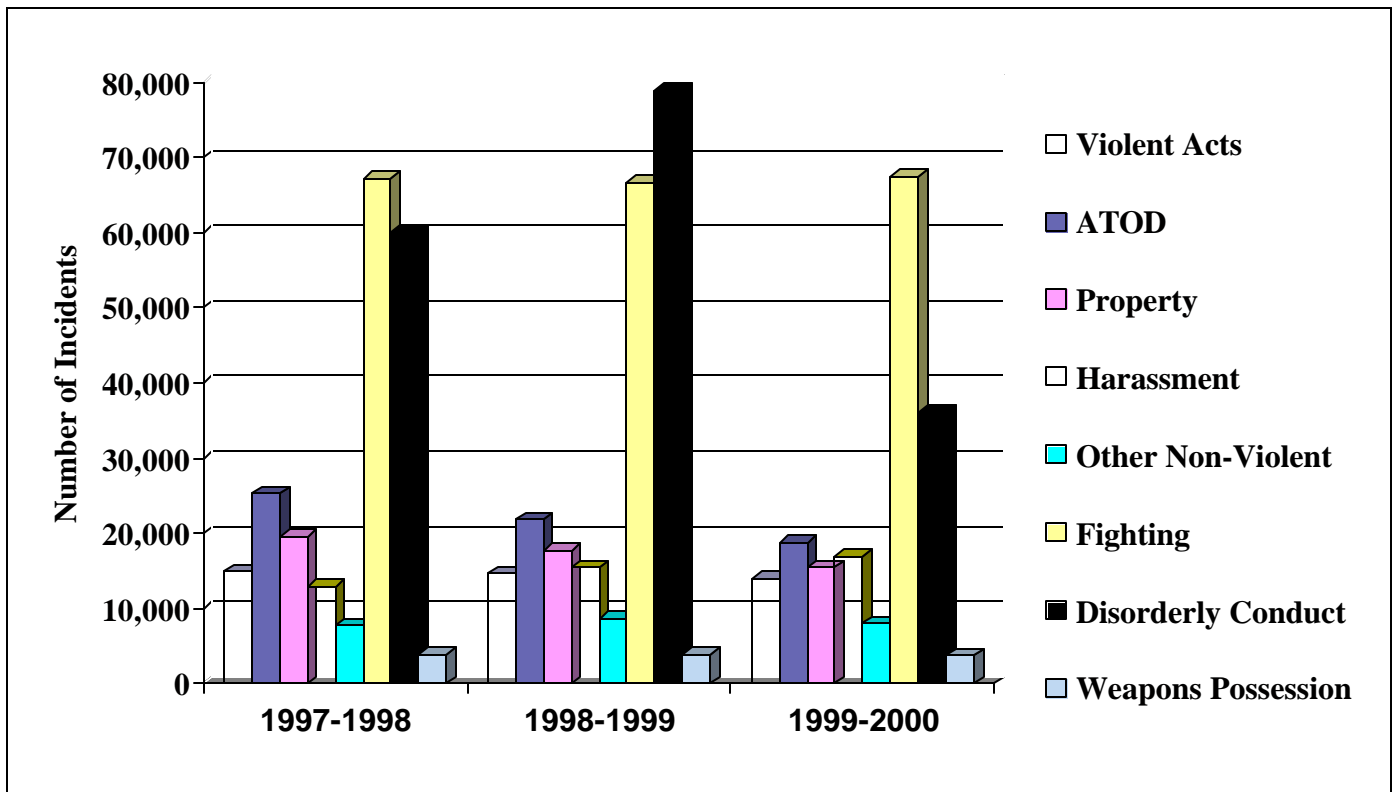
**Figure 2—SESIR 1998-1999 SESIR Categorization**
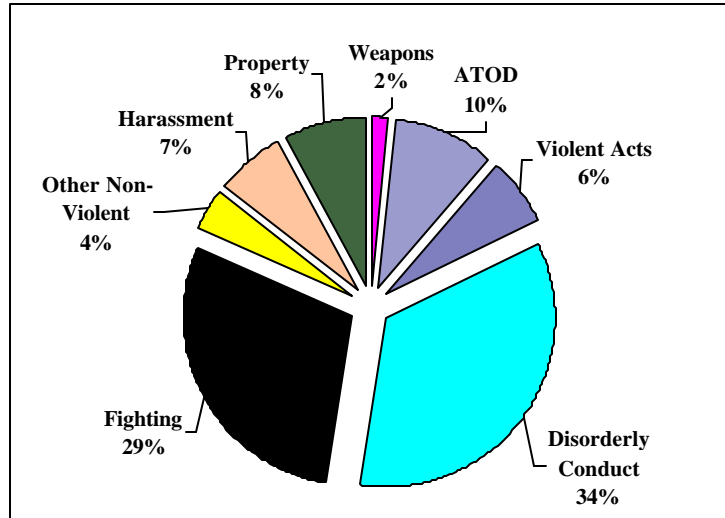


Figure 3 provides a visual analysis of the 1999-2000 SESIR incident categories and the percentage that each category composes of the total number of incidents reported.

**Figure 3—SESIR 1999-2000 SESIR Categorization**
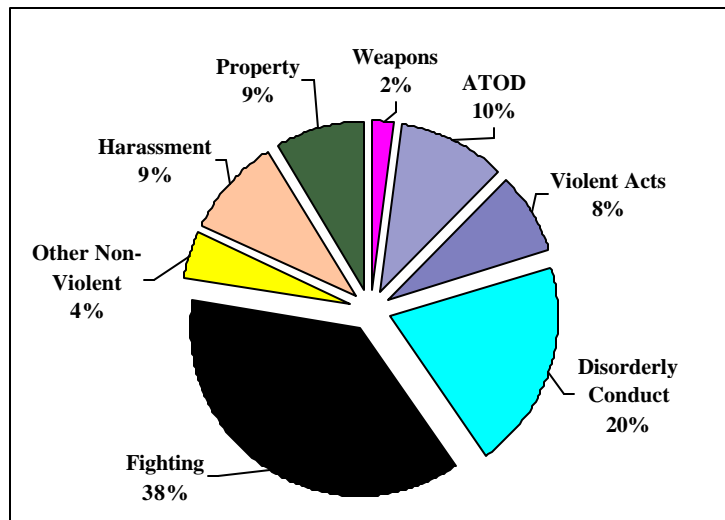
Again, the two incidents of *Fighting* and *Disorderly Conduct* composed the majority of the total incidents reported during the 1999-2000 school year (58%), although the percentage decreased from the previous year due to the large reduction in the number of *Disorderly Conduct* incidents reported.

Incidents Per 1,000 Students Totals

When reviewing and analyzing SESIR data, the raw data totals often provide a stark depiction of the number of incidents that occur in schools throughout Florida. In an effort to provide a more realistic portrayal of how often SESIR incidents occur, a formula was used to calculate the number of SESIR incidents that occur per 1,000 students. The formula is computed by dividing the total number of SESIR incidents by the total student population and then multiplying by 1,000. Calculating the number of incidents per 1,000 students allows all districts to be evaluated the same, regardless of student population. Even though a district may have a large student population, the frequency in which incidents occur is often comparable to smaller districts that report fewer incidents.

Due to number rounding in the per 1,000 students calculations, the values within each incident, when totaled, may not equal the category total. The category totals reflect the values when the data is totaled on an aggregate category level. In addition, due to several incidents such as *Homicide* and *Kidnapping* having very low numbers, the value for the incident per 1,000 students will be shown as 0.00. For ease of reading, the values have been rounded only two decimal points. The SESIR data displayed in Table 2 shows how frequently each incident occurs on a statewide level.

# Table 2—SESIR Incidents Per 1,000 Students

| SESIR CLASSIFICATION | 1997-1998 | 1998-1999 | 1999-2000 |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Population* | *(2,458,423)* | *(2,502,281)* | *(2,550,124)* |
| Homicide | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Sexual Battery | 0.07 | 0.06 | 0.07 |
| Robbery | 0.19 | 0.15 | 0.13 |
| Battery | 5.79 | 5.63 | 5.27 |
| Kidnapping | 0.01 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| *Violent Acts Against Persons* | *6.05* | *5.84* | *5.48* |
| Drugs | 1.86 | 1.90 | 2.08 |
| Alcohol | 0.42 | 0.41 | 0.42 |
| Tobacco | 8.03 | 6.42 | 4.86 |
| *Alcohol, Tobacco, or Other Drugs* | *10.30* | *8.73* | *7.35* |
| Breaking/Entering | 0.81 | 0.60 | 0.57 |
| Larceny/Theft | 3.69 | 3.32 | 2.81 |
| Motor Vehicle Theft | 0.13 | 0.09 | 0.06 |
| Arson | 0.11 | 0.11 | 0.09 |
| Vandalism | 3.19 | 2.94 | 2.55 |
| *Property* | *7.93* | *7.05* | *6.07* |
| Threat/Intimidation | 4.22 | 5.04 | 5.56 |
| Sexual Harassment | 1.00 | 1.13 | 1.07 |
| *Harassment* | *5.23* | *6.17* | *6.64* |
| Sexual Offense | 0.62 | 0.67 | 0.60 |
| Trespassing | 0.57 | 0.56 | 0.59 |
| Other Major | 1.94 | 2.22 | 1.93 |
| *Other Non-Violent Incidents* | *3.14* | *3.45* | *3.13* |
| *Fighting* | *27.36* | *26.62* | *26.43* |
| *Disorderly Conduct* | *24.41* | *31.55* | *14.15* |
| *Weapons Possession* | *1.59* | *1.58* | *1.46* |
| TOTAL | 86.01 | 91.00 | 70.72 |

# ANALYSIS OF STATE SESIR CATEGORY TOTALS

SESIR data are instrumental in analyzing the frequency and severity in which incidents of crime and violence occur in schools across the state of Florida. A further understanding of the types of incidents that occur is achieved by analyzing the incident data within each of the main SESIR categories. On an aggregate level, one incident can cause the entire category total to decrease, even though other incidents in the category experienced an increase in the number of incidents reported. Therefore, conducting separate analyses for each individual category helps identify incidents that cause a significant change in the category total.

Detailed category analyses are presented for the five main SESIR categories and the three individual SESIR incidents previously identified. For each SESIR category analyzed, two tables are provided. The first table summarizes the incident raw data totals for the category and the second table summarizes the incidents per 1,000 students for the category.

Violent Acts Against Persons

The Violent Acts Against Persons category combines the data from the five incidents of *Homicide, Sexual Battery, Robbery, Battery,* and *Kidnapping.* Table 3 indicates that the number of incidents as a whole has consistently declined over the three-year period. *Battery* is by far the most frequent violent incident that occurs in schools, although the number of incidents is slightly declining. However, the number of *Sexual Battery* incidents is on the rise, increasing 16% during the 1999-2000 school year.

### Table 3—Violent Acts Against Persons Incidents Raw Data Totals

| SESIR Classification | 1997-1998 | 1998-1999 | 1999-2000 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Homicide | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| Sexual Battery | 162 | 159 | 184 |
| Robbery | 459 | 365 | 341 |
| Battery | 14,238 | 14,088 | 13,449 |
| Kidnapping | 13 | 5 | 5 |
| **Total** | **14,874** | **14,618** | **13,980** |

Table 4 indicates the frequency in which Violent Acts Against Persons occur per 1,000 students. The frequency of *Battery* and *Robbery* incidents are on the decline while all other violent acts have remained constant over time. It is interesting to note that although the number of *Sexual Battery* incidents increased in the 1999-2000 raw data totals, the frequency in which the incident occurs is minimal and has remained constant over time.

## Table 4—Violent Acts Against Persons Incidents Per 1,000 Students

| SESIR Classification | 1997-1998 | 1998-1999 | 1999-2000 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Population | (2,458,423) | (2,502,281) | (2,550,124) |
| Homicide | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Sexual Battery | 0.07 | 0.06 | 0.07 |
| Robbery | 0.19 | 0.15 | 0.13 |
| Battery | 5.79 | 5.63 | 5.27 |
| Kidnapping | 0.01 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| **Total** | **6.05** | **5.84** | **5.48** |

Alcohol, Tobacco, or Other Drugs

The Alcohol, Tobacco, or Other Drugs (ATOD) category combines the data from the three incidents of *Alcohol, Tobacco,* and *Drugs.* Table 5 indicates that the total number of ATOD incidents has declined 26% since the 1997-1998 school year. However, this decline is solely due to the substantial decrease in the number of *Tobacco* incidents. Incidents of *Drugs* and *Alcohol* have consistently increased with the highest number of incidents occurring during the 1999-2000 school year.

## Table 5—ATOD Incidents Raw Data Totals

| SESIR Classification | 1997-1998 | 1998-1999 | 1999-2000 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Drugs | 4,567 | 4,742 | 5,294 |
| Alcohol | 1,022 | 1,024 | 1,065 |
| Tobacco | 19,738 | 16,065 | 12,394 |
| **Total** | **25,327** | **21,831** | **18,753** |

Table 6 indicates that the most frequent ATOD incident that occurs in schools is *Tobacco,* although the frequency in which the incident occurs has significantly declined (-37%) since 1997-1998. The table also indicates that the number of *Alcohol* incidents reported in 1999-2000 occurred at the same rate as the 1997-1998 school year, even though the number of incidents has consistently increased, a trend that will emerge throughout the report.

## Table 6—ATOD Incidents Per 1,000 Students

| SESIR Classification | 1997-1998 | 1998-1999 | 1999-2000 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Population | (2,458,423) | (2,502,281) | (2,550,124) |
| Drugs | 1.86 | 1.90 | 2.08 |
| Alcohol | 0.42 | 0.41 | 0.42 |
| Tobacco | 8.03 | 6.42 | 4.86 |
| **Total** | **10.30** | **8.73** | **7.35** |

Property

The Property category combines the data from the five incidents of *Arson*, *Breaking/Entering*, *Larceny/Theft*, *Motor Vehicle Theft*, and *Vandalism*. Table 7 indicates that the Property category experienced a significant decline in the total number of incidents reported during the last two years. *Vandalism* and *Larceny/Theft*, the most frequent Property incidents, experienced the largest decline in the 1999-2000 school year.

**Table 7—Property Incidents Raw Data Totals**

| SESIR Classification | 1997-1998 | 1998-1999 | 1999-2000 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Breaking/Entering | 1,993 | 1,505 | 1,452 |
| Larceny/Theft | 9,067 | 8,311 | 7,171 |
| Motor Vehicle Theft | 313 | 218 | 141 |
| Arson | 271 | 272 | 233 |
| Vandalism | 7,840 | 7,346 | 6,494 |
| **Total** | **19,484** | **17,652** | **15,491** |

In the definition for *Larceny/Theft* effective for the 1999-2000 school year, a reporting guideline was added which indicated that the item involved in the incident must have a value in excess of $50 in order for the incident to be reported to SESIR. This new guideline was added to clarify the level of seriousness that was required to report *Larceny/Theft* incidents to SESIR, with the intent to reduce the number of minor incidents that did not result in a large monetary loss. As Table 8 shows, the number of *Larceny/Theft* incidents per 1,000 students experienced its largest decline in the 1999-2000 school year, which is likely related to the definition clarification.

**Table 8—Property Incidents Per 1,000 Students**

| SESIR Classification | 1997-1998 | 1998-1999 | 1999-2000 |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Population** | **(2,458,423)** | **(2,502,281)** | **(2,550,124)** |
| Breaking/Entering | 0.81 | 0.60 | 0.57 |
| Larceny/Theft | 3.69 | 3.32 | 2.81 |
| Motor Vehicle Theft | 0.13 | 0.09 | 0.06 |
| Arson | 0.11 | 0.11 | 0.09 |
| Vandalism | 3.19 | 2.94 | 2.55 |
| **Total** | **7.93** | **7.05** | **6.07** |

Harassment

The Harassment category combines the data from the two incidents of *Threat/Intimidation* and *Sexual Harassment*. Table 9 illustrates that the Harassment category has experienced a consistent increase in the total number of incidents reported during the last three years, the only SESIR category to increase at a consistent rate over time. Between 1997-1998 and 1999-2000, the number of Harassment incidents has increased by 31%, with the largest increase occurring during the 1998-1999 school year.

**Table 9—Harassment Incidents Raw Data Totals**

| SESIR Classification | 1997-1998 | 1998-1999 | 1999-2000 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Threat/Intimidation | 10,377 | 12,601 | 14,183 |
| Sexual Harassment | 2,469 | 2,829 | 2,738 |
| **Total** | **12,846** | **15,430** | **16,921** |

*Threat/Intimidation* composes the majority of the Harassment incidents and is responsible for the very steady rise in the number of incidents reported. A possible explanation for the increase in *Threat/Intimidation* incidents may be attributed to schools taking student threats more seriously than in previous years due to recent acts of school violence across the country. As a result, schools may now be acknowledging threats and are subsequently reporting incidents at a much higher rate, as evidenced in Table 10.

**Table 10—Harassment Incidents Per 1,000 Students**

| SESIR Classification | 1997-1998 | 1998-1999 | 1999-2000 |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Population** | **(2,458,423)** | **(2,502,281)** | **(2,550,124)** |
| Threat/Intimidation | 4.22 | 5.04 | 5.56 |
| Sexual Harassment | 1.00 | 1.13 | 1.07 |
| **Total** | **5.23** | **6.17** | **6.64** |

Other Non-Violent Incidents

The Other Non-Violent Incident category combines the data from the three incidents of *Sexual Offense, Trespassing,* and *Other Major*. Table 11 illustrates that the number of Other Non-Violent incidents has fluctuated each year. *Trespassing* is the only incident to steadily increase each year, with the largest increase occurring during the 1999-2000 school year. The number of *Sexual Offense* and *Other Major* incidents also increased during the 1998-1999 school year but then decreased in 1999-2000.

## Table 11—Other Non-Violent Incidents Raw Data Totals

| SESIR Classification | 1997-1998 | 1998-1999 | 1999-2000 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Sexual Offense | 1,528 | 1,684 | 1,540 |
| Trespassing | 1,405 | 1,413 | 1,515 |
| Other Major | 4,776 | 5,541 | 4,916 |
| **Total** | **7,709** | **8,638** | **7,971** |

Although the number of Other Non-Violent incidents has fluctuated during the past three years, Table 12 shows that on an aggregate level, the frequency in which the incidents have occurred was at its lowest rate during the 1999-2000 school year. Although the number of *Trespassing* incidents has steadily increased, the per 1,000 students ratio reveals an increase of two-tenths of a percent since 1997-1998, an insignificant amount.

## Table 12—Other Non-Violent Incidents Per 1,000 Students.

| SESIR Classification | 1997-1998 | 1998-1999 | 1999-2000 |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Population** | **(2,458,423)** | **(2,502,281)** | **(2,550,124)** |
| Sexual Offense | 0.62 | 0.67 | 0.60 |
| Trespassing | 0.57 | 0.56 | 0.59 |
| Other Major | 1.94 | 2.22 | 1.93 |
| **Total** | **3.14** | **3.45** | **3.13** |

Fighting

*Fighting* consists of incidents in which two or more persons mutually participate in physical violence that requires physical restraint and/or results in injury. These incidents do not include minor scuffles, tussles, or verbal confrontations between two individuals. Table 13 shows that each year a very large number of *Fighting* incidents are reported and the number of incidents has changed very little from year to year.

## Table 13—Fighting Incidents Raw Data Totals

| SESIR Classification | 1997-1998 | 1998-1999 | 1999-2000 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Fighting | 67,269 | 66,605 | 67,412 |

A recurring trend that has been present throughout the report emerges again in *Fighting*, as the highest number of incidents occurred during the 1999-2000 school year. However, Table 14 shows that the frequency in which fights occur was at its lowest rate during the 1999-2000 school year due to an increase in student population.

## Table 14—Fighting Incidents Per 1,000 Students

| SESIR Classification | 1997-1998 | 1998-1999 | 1999-2000 |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Population** | **(2,458,423)** | **(2,502,281)** | **(2,550,124)** |
| Fighting | 27.36 | 26.62 | 26.43 |

Weapons Possession

*Weapons Possession* consists of incidents in which a firearm or other instrument that could cause harm is confiscated on school campuses. Table 15 illustrates that the number of *Weapons Possession* incidents slightly increased in the 1998-1999 school year then experienced a (-6%) decrease in 1999-2000. This decrease is also reflected in Table 16 as the number of incidents per 1,000 students was at the lowest rate in the 1999-2000 school year. As illustrated, the number and frequency in which *Weapons Possession* incidents occur within schools is extremely low.

### Table 15—Weapons Possession Incidents Raw Data Totals

| SESIR Classification | 1997-1998 | 1998-1999 | 1999-2000 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Weapons Possession | 3,918 | 3,953 | 3,732 |

### Table 16—Weapons Possession Incidents Per 1,000 Students

| SESIR Classification | 1997-1998 | 1998-1999 | 1999-2000 |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Population** | **(2,458,423)** | **(2,502,281)** | **(2,550,124)** |
| Weapons Possession | 1.59 | 1.58 | 1.46 |

Disorderly Conduct

*Disorderly Conduct* is the primary SESIR incident that has been traditionally misunderstood by districts and schools throughout the state. As a result, *Disorderly Conduct* incidents have composed a disproportionate percentage (28%) of the SESIR incidents over the past three years. Table 17 indicates that incidents of *Disorderly Conduct* have fluctuated greatly each year, particularly between the 1998-1999 and 1999-2000 school years. During 1999-2000, there was a (-54%) decrease in the number of *Disorderly Conduct* incidents reported. Accordingly, the number of incidents per 1,000 students also significantly decreased from 31 incidents per 1,000 students to 14 incidents per 1,000 students in 1999-2000 as illustrated in Table 18.

**Table 17—Disorderly Conduct Incidents Raw Data Totals**

| SESIR Classification | 1997-1998 | 1998-1999 | 1999-2000 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Disorderly Conduct | 60,015 | 78,948 | 36,091 |

This large variation in the number of incidents reported during the past three years is a result of a modification that was made in the definition of *Disorderly Conduct.* The change took effect in the 1999-2000 school year and was designed to clarify the level of disorderly conduct that should be reported to SESIR. Districts now exclude major classroom disruptions from being reported to SESIR and only report major whole campus disruptions. Table 17 and 18 show a very significant decline in the number of *Disorderly Conduct* incidents reported during the 1999-2000 school year, which is an indication that many school districts understood and implemented the new definition within schools.

**Table 18—Disorderly Conduct Incidents Per 1,000 Students**

| SESIR Classification | 1997-1998 | 1998-1999 | 1999-2000 |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Population** | **(2,458,423)** | **(2,502,281)** | **(2,550,124)** |
| Disorderly Conduct | 24.41 | 31.55 | 14.15 |

For a better understanding of the changes to the *Disorderly Conduct* definition, the 1998-1999 and 1999-2000 definitions are provided.

1998-1999 Definition

*Disorderly Conduct (*serious class or campus disruption)
Any act that substantially disrupts the orderly conduct of a school function, behavior that substantially disrupts the orderly learning environment or poses a threat to the health, safety, and/or welfare of students, staff, or others. If the action results in a more serious incident, report in the more serious incident category. Examples include: serious instances of classroom or campus disruption, such as pulling the fire alarm, defiance of authority, disobeying or showing disrespect to others, using obscene or inappropriate language or gestures and disruptive demonstrations.

<u>1999-2000 Definition</u>

<u>*Disorderly Conduct*</u> (serious campus disruption)
Any disruptive behavior that poses a serious threat to the <u>learning environment</u>, <u>health</u>, <u>safety</u>, and/or <u>welfare</u> of others.

- *Examples*: Situations where order is not easily restored, disruptive demonstrations, inciting a riot, pulling a fire alarm, bomb threats.
- *Non-Examples*: Less serious incidents such as defiance of authority, disobeying or showing disrespect to others, using obscene or inappropriate language or gestures.

This clarification in the definition was instituted to improve reporting consistency and accuracy and to reduce the traditional over-reporting of *Disorderly Conduct* incidents. School districts are advised to continue collecting classroom incidents that involve disorderly student behavior for school and district use, but these incidents should no longer be reported to SESIR.

# SESIR INCIDENT DESCRIPTIVES

When SESIR incidents occur in schools, questions arise such as "When did the incident occur?" and "Who was involved in the incident?". This section provides descriptive characteristics pertaining to SESIR incidents, resulting in a comprehensive description of the incident categories.

Classification of SESIR Offenders

Currently, individuals that have been involved in SESIR incidents are identified by two classifications: 1) Student and 2) Non-student. A "Student" is classified as an individual who is a student in the respective district where the incident occurred. When incidents involve both a student of the district and an individual that is not a student of the district, the individuals are both classified as "Students." A "Non-student" is classified as an individual who is not a student in the district where the incident occurred or it is unknown who was involved in the incident.

Figure 4 displays the total number of SESIR incidents reported in the 1998-1999 school year, separated by the classification of the offender.

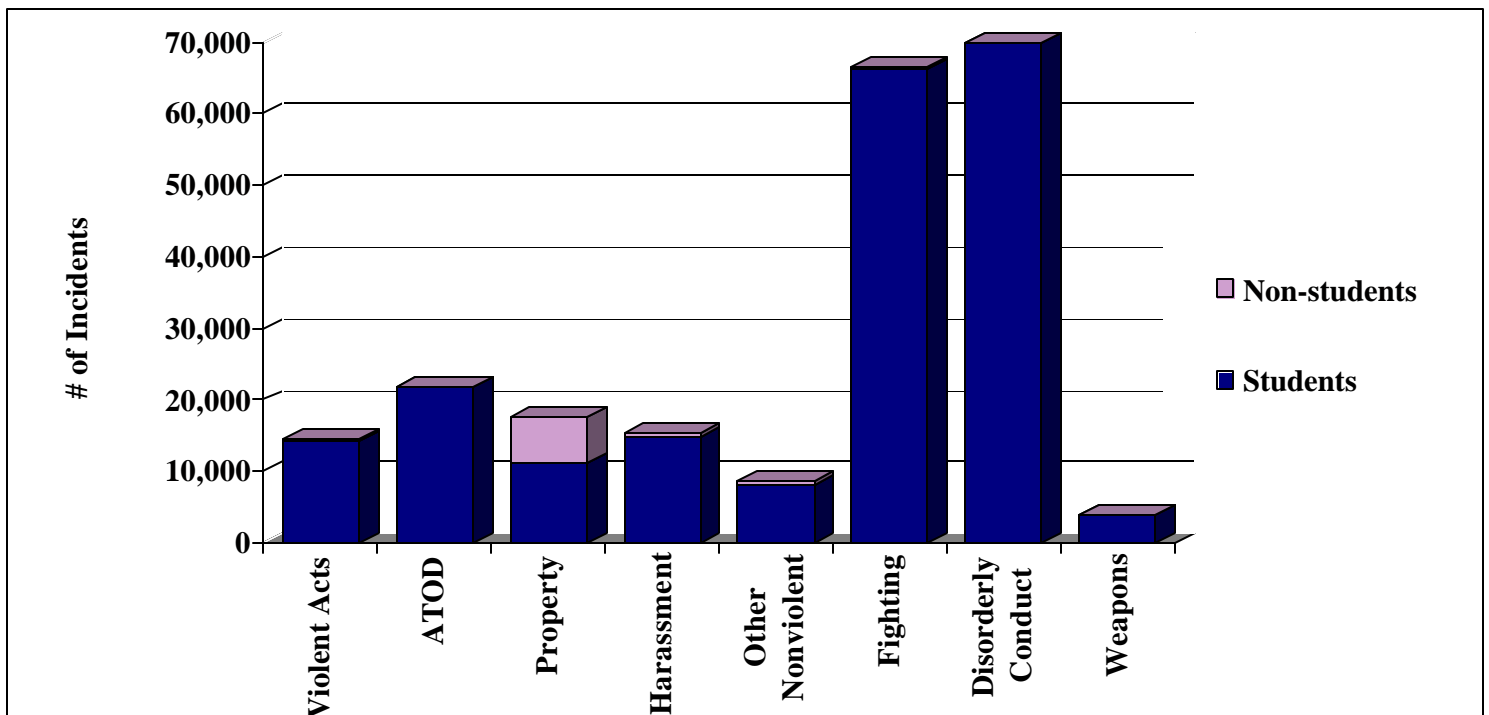**Figure 4—Classification of Offenders in SESIR Incidents 1998-1999**

Figure 4 illustrates that in all of the SESIR categories, with the exception of Property incidents, "Students" composed between 93% and 99% of the individuals involved. In Property incidents, "Students" composed only 64% of the offenders. A possible explanation for the smaller percentage could be that many of the Property incidents, such as *Vandalism*, occur after school hours and the offender is most likely unknown. Additionally, many Property incidents are often detected after the incidents have occurred. This increases the difficulty in identifying the offender.

Figure 5 displays the total number of SESIR incidents reported in the 1999-2000 school year, separated by the classification of the offender. Again, the Figure illustrates that in all of the SESIR categories, with the exception of Property incidents, "Students" were the primary individuals involved, composing between 95% and 99% of the total number of offenders. However, in Property incidents, "Non-students" composed 41% of the individuals involved—again, a large percentage when compared to the other incident categories.

**Figure 5—Classification of Offenders in SESIR Incidents 1999-2000**
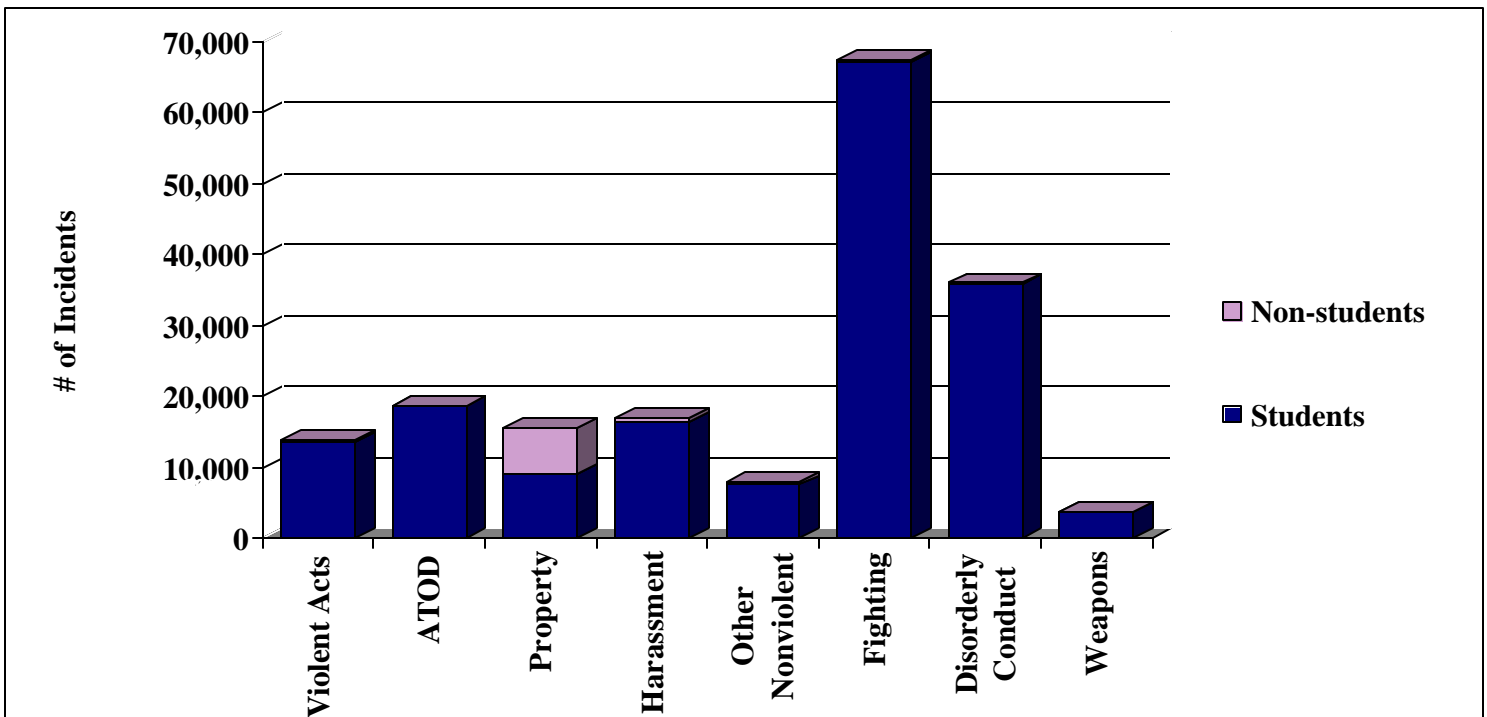
Time of Day When SESIR Incidents Occur

The time of day in which SESIR incidents occur on school campuses is a very critical characteristic that schools and districts can utilize to assist in planning for safety and security prevention activities.  The SESIR System Handbook indicates that schools should classify SESIR incidents by the time of day in which the incident occurs.  Time of day is identified by two classifications: 1) "During School Hours" and 2) "After School Hours."  "During School Hours" is defined as the time when instruction and learning is taking place within the school.  "After School Hours" is classified as any time when instruction is not taking place or when the normal school day is not in session, which includes the time when after-school programs and school-sponsored events are in progress.

Figure 6 provides an illustration of when SESIR incidents occurred during the 1998-1999 school year.  With the exception of Property incidents, it is evident that between 93% and 99% of all the SESIR incidents occurred "During School Hours."  However, during 1998-1999, 19% of the Property incidents occurred "After School Hours."  As previously mentioned, many Property incidents, such as *Vandalism, Arson,* and *Breaking/Entering*, are committed during the evening hours when there is a lack of school supervision.

**Figure 6—Time of Day SESIR Incidents Occurred 1998-1999**

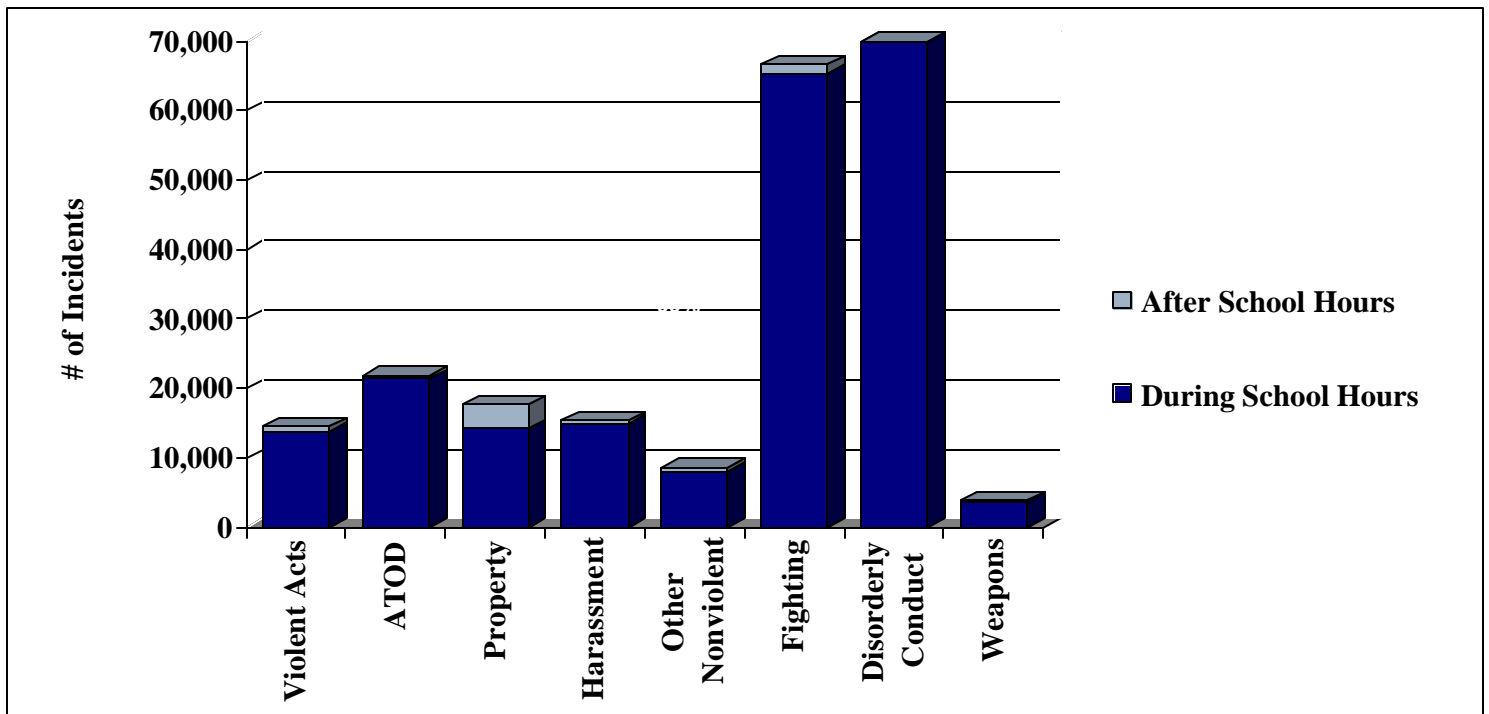Figure 7 provides an illustration of when SESIR incidents occurred during the 1999-2000 school year. Once again, with the exception of Property incidents, 93% to 99% of all SESIR incidents occurred "During School Hours." However, the Property incidents category again had the largest amount of "After School Hours" incidents, which composed 29% of the category total.

**Figure 7—Time of Day SESIR Incidents Occurred 1999-2000**
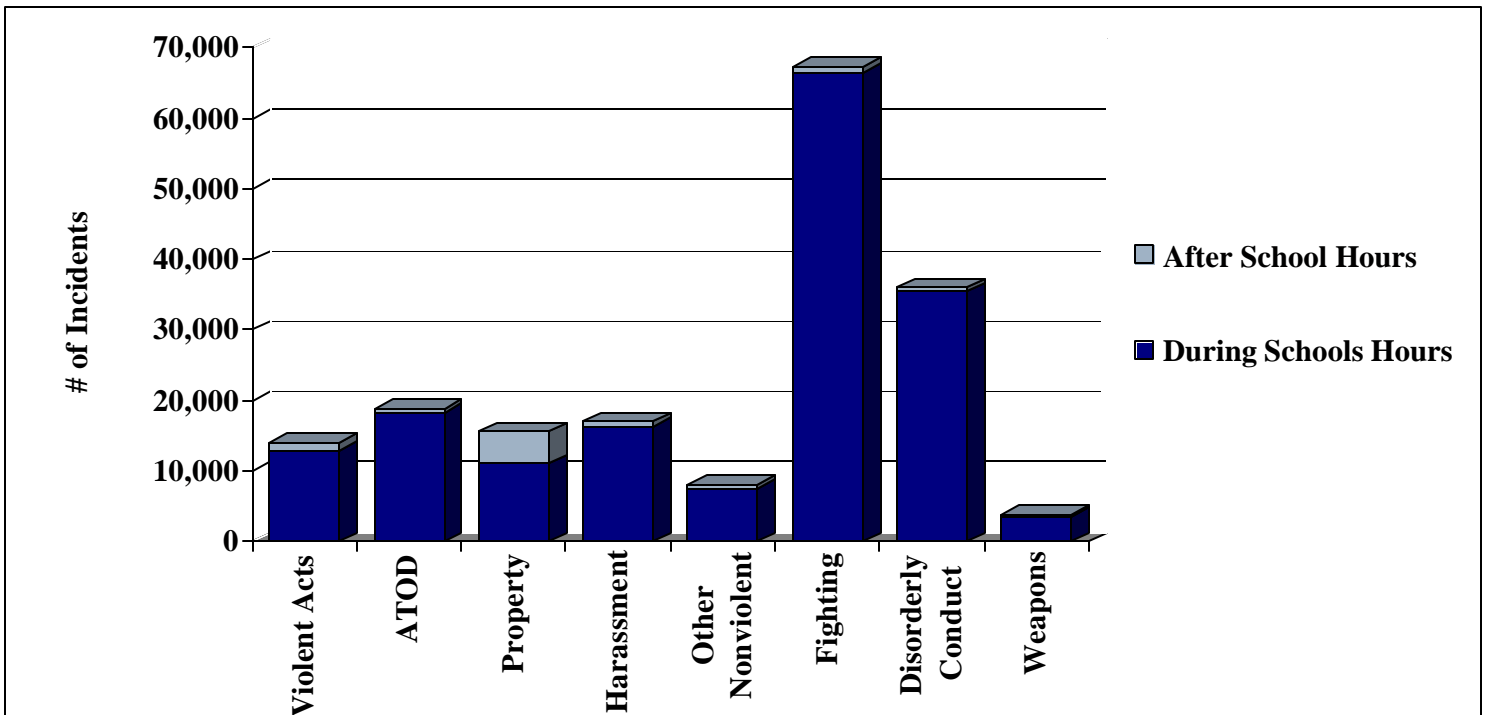
# DISCIPLINE DATA

In addition to the school safety data that is collected through SESIR, this report collects and describes discipline data that is reported by schools across the state. The three main disciplinary actions described in this report are: 1) *In School Suspensions*, 2) *Out of School Suspensions*, and 3) *Expulsions*. These three disciplinary actions are defined according to Section 228.041, Florida Statutes:

> *Out of School Suspension-* The temporary removal of a student from all classes of instruction on public school grounds and all other school-sponsored activities, except as authorized by the principal or the principal's designee, for a period not to exceed 10 school days and remanding of the student to the custody of the student's parent with specific homework assignments for the student to complete.

> *In School Suspension-* The temporary removal of a student from the student's regular school program and placement in an alternative program, such as that provided in Section 230.2316, F.S., under the supervision of school district personnel, for a period not to exceed 10 school days.

> *Expulsion-* The removal of the right and obligation of a student to attend a public school under conditions set by the school board, and for a period of time not to exceed the remainder of the term or school year and 1 additional year of attendance. Expulsions may be imposed with or without continuing educational services and shall be reported accordingly.

It is important to note that the discipline data provided in this report is not exclusively for SESIR incidents. Due to the seriousness of the incidents that are reported to the SESIR system, a form of disciplinary action is typically administered to students who are offenders in the incident. However, the discipline actions described in the report are for all incidents (including SESIR) in which students violate school or district policies that may include behavior such as chronic truancy, insubordination, or violation of a school dress code, which are not SESIR incidents.

This report simply provides a descriptive account of the number of disciplinary actions that were dispensed and the frequency in which they occurred in schools during the 1998-1999 and 1999-2000 school years. The type and length of discipline action administered is determined by individual districts and their various policies concerning violation of district rules and regulations.

Table 19 provides the raw data totals for the number of discipline actions administered during the 1998-1999 and 1999-2000 school years, separated by grade level. The table shows that the number of discipline actions in all three categories decreased during the 1999-2000 school year. The largest decrease occurred in the number of *Out of School Suspensions*, which decreased 12% from the previous year.

**Table 19—Discipline Actions Raw Data Totals 1998-1999 and 1999-2000**

| Grade Level | In School Suspensions | | Out of School Suspensions | | Expulsions | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1998-1999 | 1999-2000 | 1998-1999 | 1999-2000 | 1998-1999 | 1999-2000 |
| Elementary | 34,487 | 32,457 | 46,075 | 39,760 | 33 | 54 |
| Middle | 251,797 | 241,170 | 209,308 | 185,978 | 429 | 395 |
| High | 226,619 | 237,976 | 181,726 | 159,627 | 605 | 498 |
| **Total** | **512,903** | **511,603** | **437,109** | **385,365** | **1,067** | **947** |

During both school years, middle schools administered the most suspensions out of all of the school levels, while high schools administered the most expulsions. Between 1998-1999 and 1999-2000, the number of *In School Suspensions* in high schools increased while the number of *Out of School Suspensions* decreased, which may indicate that high schools are making a concentrated effort to keep students in school and off the streets. Elementary schools, on the other hand, administered more *Out of School Suspensions* than *In School Suspensions*, which is likely due to elementary schools not having adequate resources to house large number of students serving *In School Suspensions*. Table 19 also illustrates that the number of students who are expelled each year is extremely low when compared to the number of suspensions that are administered.

Table 20 represents the frequency in which schools have administered the disciplinary actions per 1,000 students, separated by grade level.

**Table 20—Discipline Actions Per 1,000 Students 1998-1999 and 1999-2000**

| Grade Level | Population | | In School Suspensions | | Out of School Suspensions | | Expulsions | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1998-1999 | 1999-2000 | 1998-1999 | 1999-2000 | 1998-1999 | 1999-2000 | 1998-1999 | 1999-2000 |
| Elementary | 1,304,399 | 1,166,902 | 26.44 | 27.81 | 35.32 | 34.07 | .03 | .05 |
| Middle | 607,944 | 557,129 | 414.18 | 432.88 | 344.29 | 333.81 | .71 | .71 |
| High | 720,241 | 654,865 | 314.64 | 363.40 | 252.31 | 243.76 | .84 | .76 |

Table 20 also indicates that the number of disciplinary actions administered is on the decline.  Although elementary schools have a much larger population than middle and high schools, the frequency in which disciplinary actions are administered is much lower.

Table 21 provides a detailed analysis of the discipline action data from the past two schools years, separated by the number of actions administered and the number of students receiving the actions.

### Table 21—Discipline Actions and Students 1998-1999 and 1999-2000

| School Year | In School Suspensions | | Out of School Suspensions | | Expulsions | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Students | Number Administered | Students | Number Administered | Students | Number Administered |
| 1998-1999 | 233,725 | 512,903 | 218,990 | 437,109 | 1,060 | 1,067 |
| 1999-2000 | 229,216 | 511,603 | 200,282 | 385,365 | 928 | 947 |

The table shows that for each year, the number of discipline actions administered was higher than the number of students who received them.  This phenomenon is likely due to the same students being disciplined multiple times throughout the school year.  Likewise, the difference in the number of expulsions administered and number of students receiving expulsions may be due to students being expelled from multiple schools within one year, including expulsions from alternative placement schools.

# DISTRICT DATA PROFILES

The following section of the report contains safety and discipline data for each of the 67 Florida school districts, in alphabetical order.  For each district, the following information is provided:

- *Raw Data Totals of SESIR Incidents, 1997-2000*

- *Visual Illustration of SESIR Incidents, 1997-2000*

- *SESIR Incidents Per 1,000 Students, 1997-2000*

- *Raw Data Totals of Discipline Data, 1998-2000*

- *Discipline Data Per 1,000 Students, 1998-2000*

- *Discipline Data by Number of Actions and Students, 1998-2000*

All of the data that is provided in the district profiles contain SESIR and Discipline data that was reported to DOE by the school districts.  The profiles are intended to provide descriptive information on the incidents of crime and violence reported in schools, as well as the types and number of discipline actions administered by schools.  Again, caution is advised when analyzing and interpreting the data contained in the district profiles.  It is important to recognize that fewer reported incidents do not always indicate higher levels of school safety.  Therefore, the use of these district profiles to draw comparisons or definitive conclusions about safety and security in Florida's school districts is not advised.