



OFFICE OF THE
STUDENT
ADVOCATE

School Year 2017-18 Report Quarters 1 & 2



Our Office



Office of the Student Advocate, an independent office within the State Board of Education, provides guidance and resource supports for families in order to assist them in navigating our complex system of public education in the District of Columbia.



Request for Assistance Line

- operates live Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. to answer questions/concerns regarding public education in DC

(202) 741-4692



Online Resources and Tools

- resources for topics ranging from special education to homelessness to attendance and truancy

student.advocate@dc.gov



Education and Community Resource Guide

- over 400 education-related resources and agencies categorized into 20 different topic areas on our website

<https://studentadvocate.dc.gov>

Quarters 1 & 2

August 1st – October 31st & November 1st– January 31st



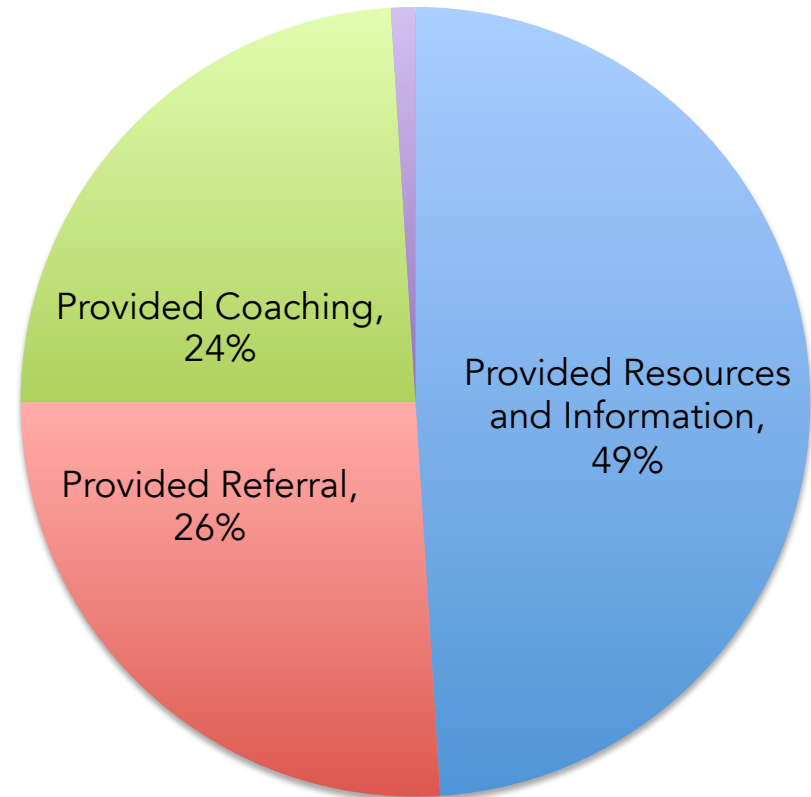
Requests for Assistance (RFAs) – Quarters 1 & 2 Breakdown

220

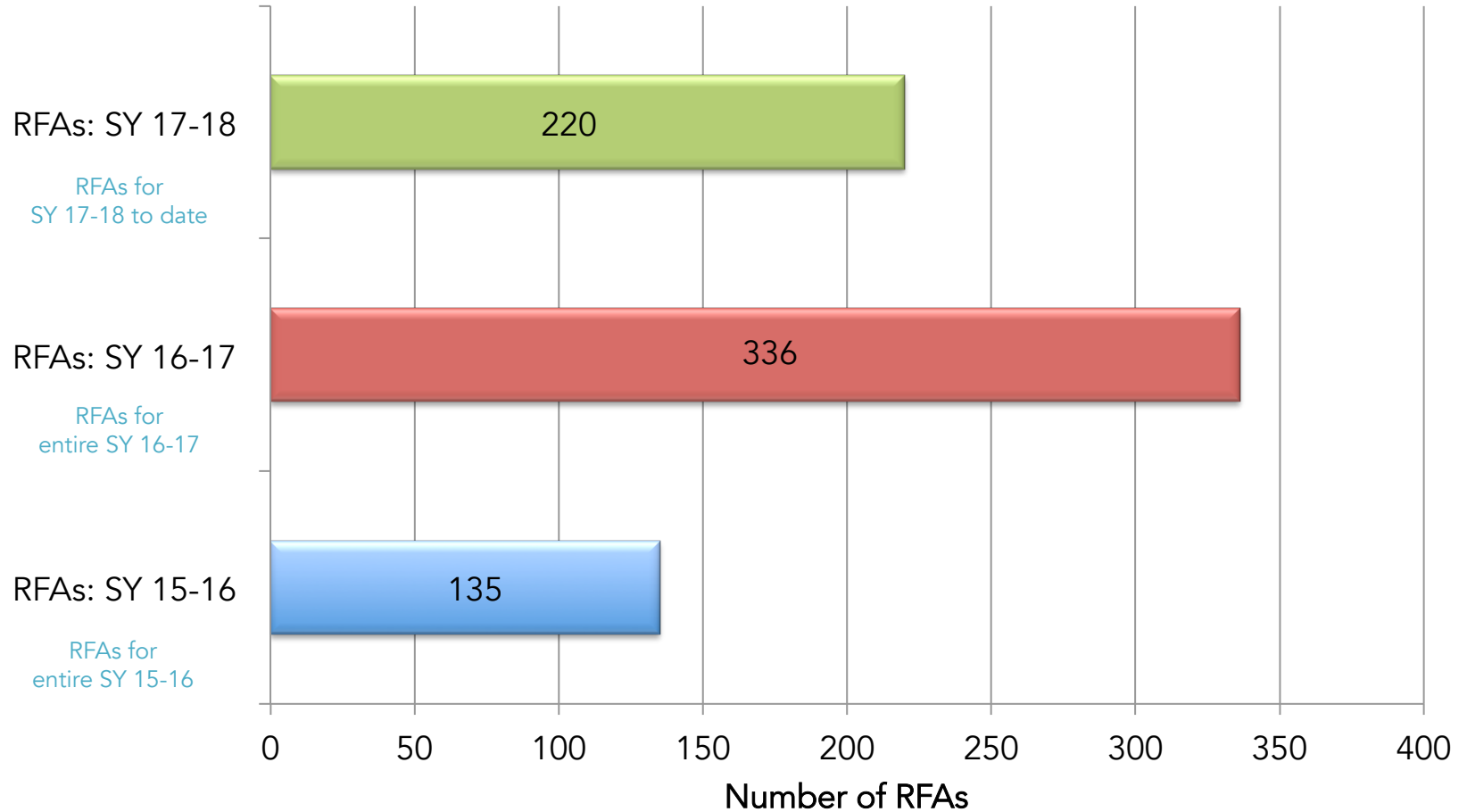
Quarters 1 & 2
Requests for
Assistance

Resolutions

Intervention, 1%



RFA School Year Comparison

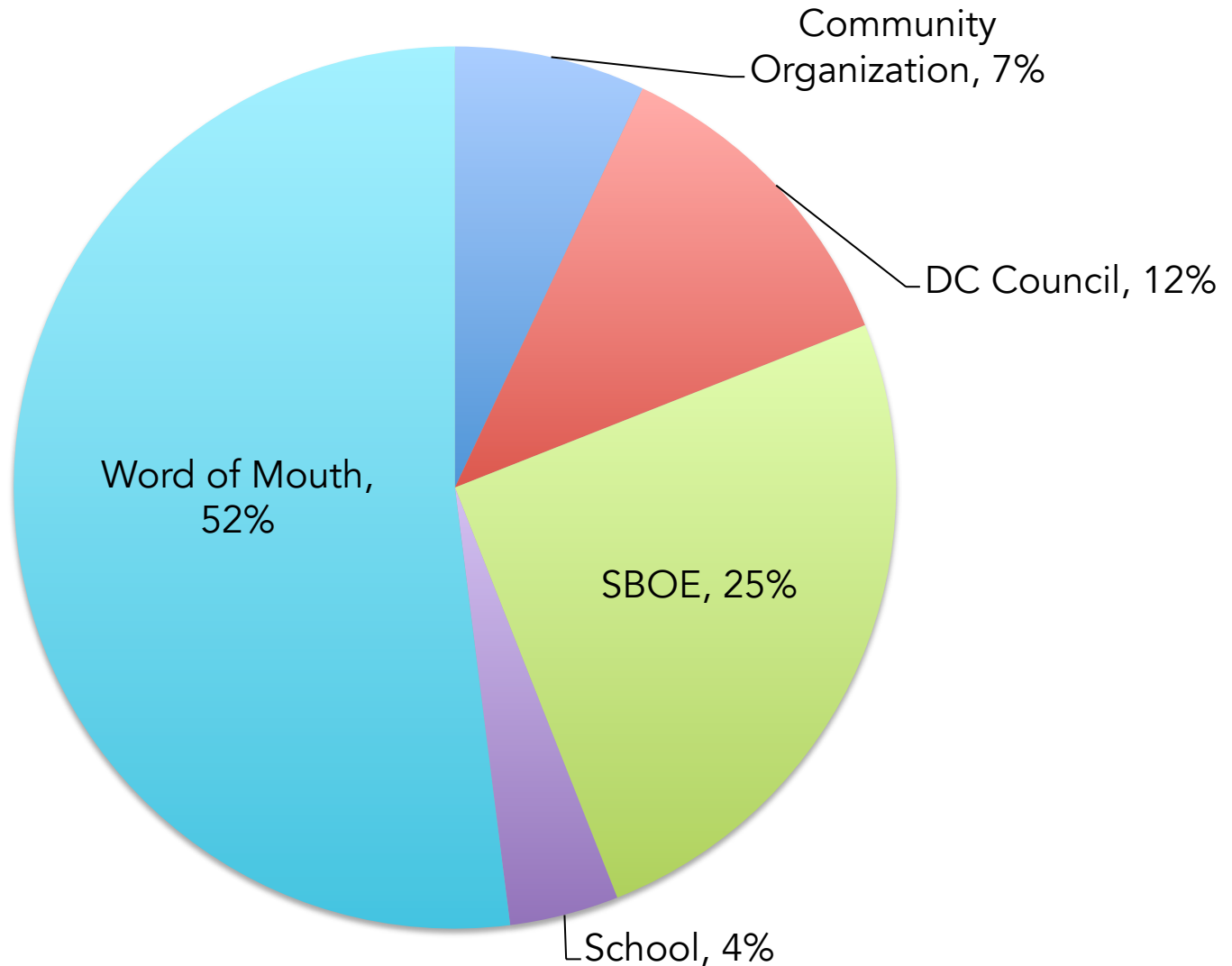


Where We Are Today

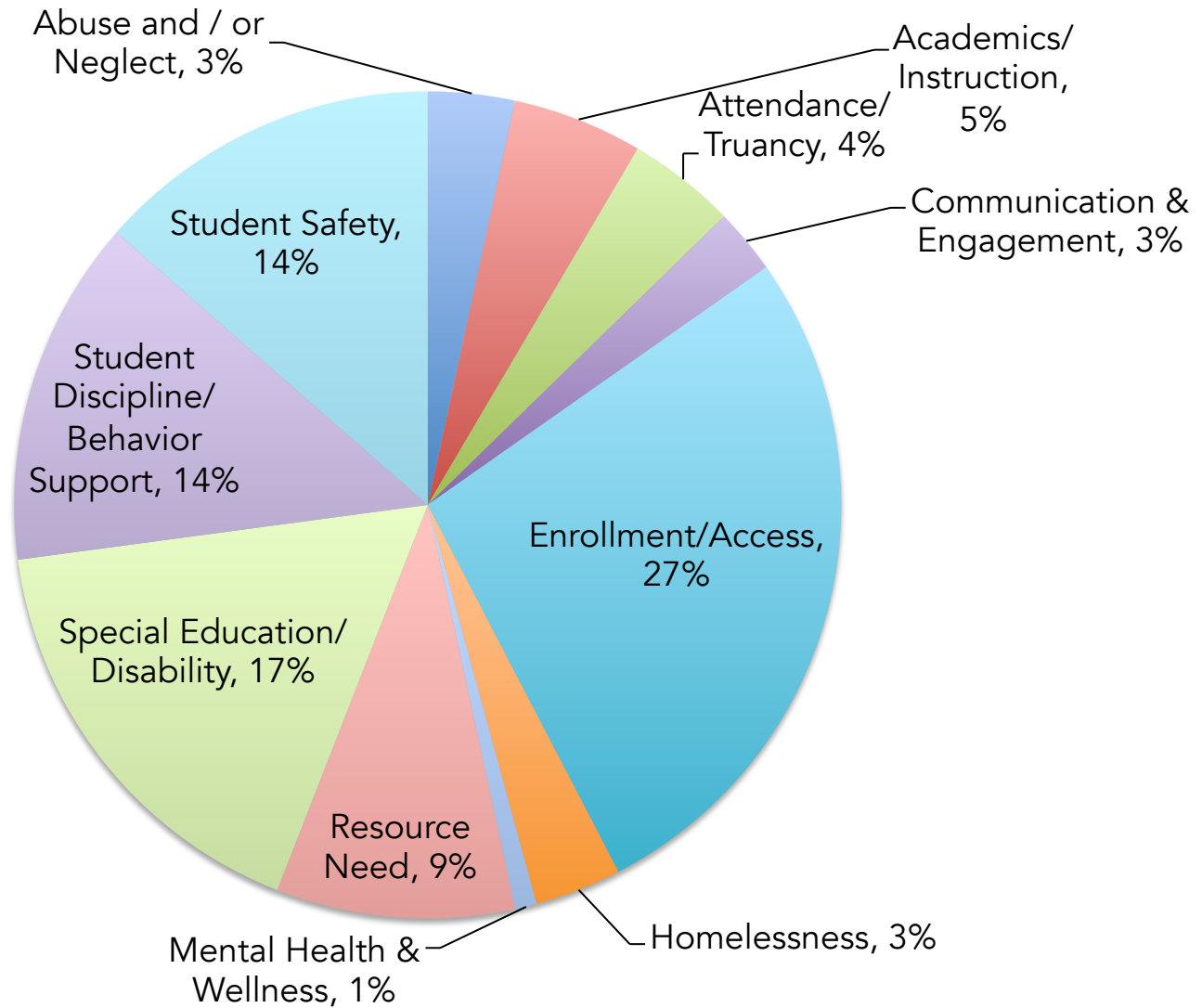
To date, for SY 2017-18 Quarters 1 and 2:
...we have supported 220 individuals through our Request for Assistance (RFA) process. This accounts for a percentage increase of over 120% from where we were this time last year.

Quarters 1 & 2

Origin of Referrals to Our Office

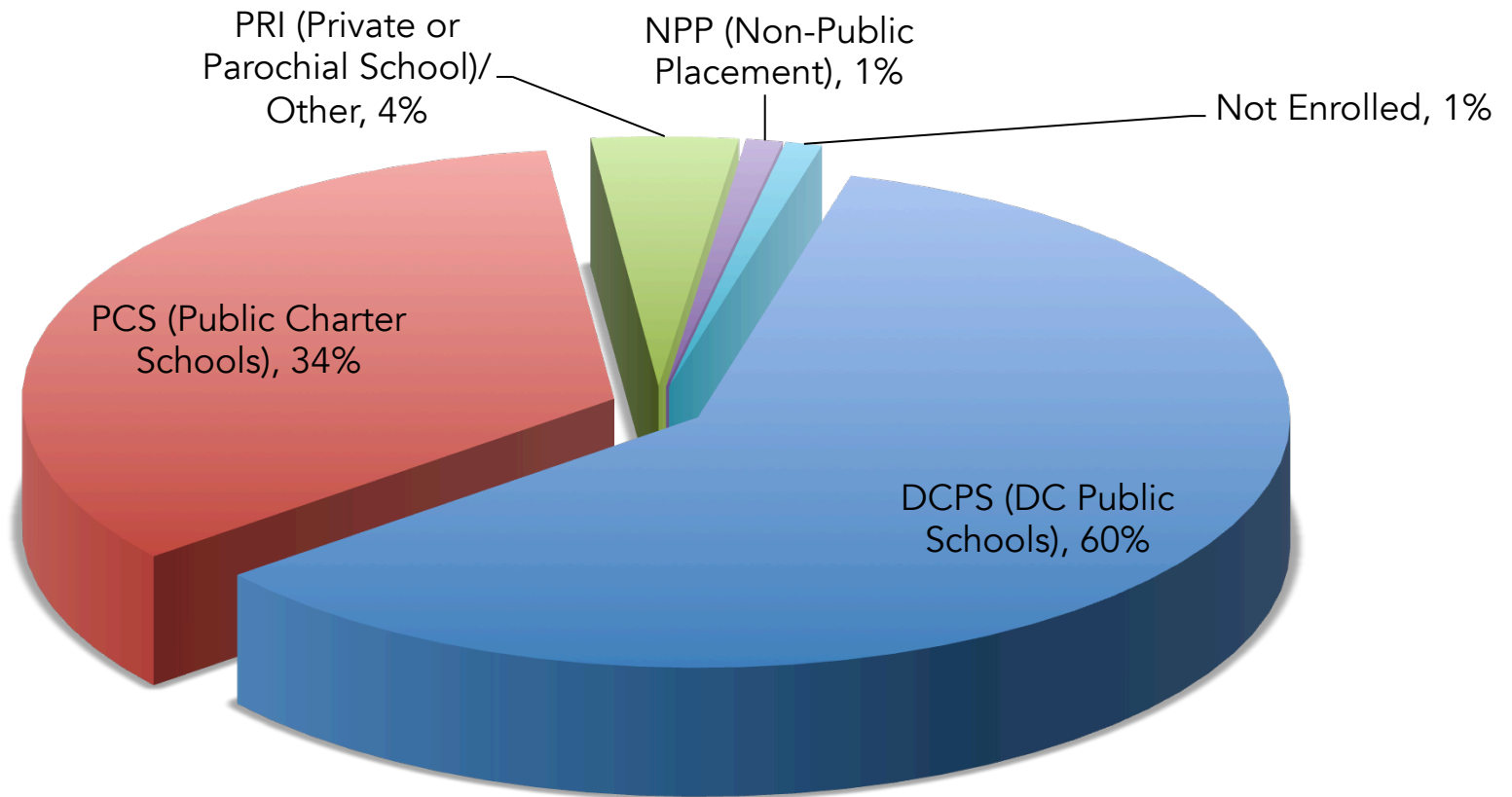


RFA Quarters 1 & 2 Topic Areas



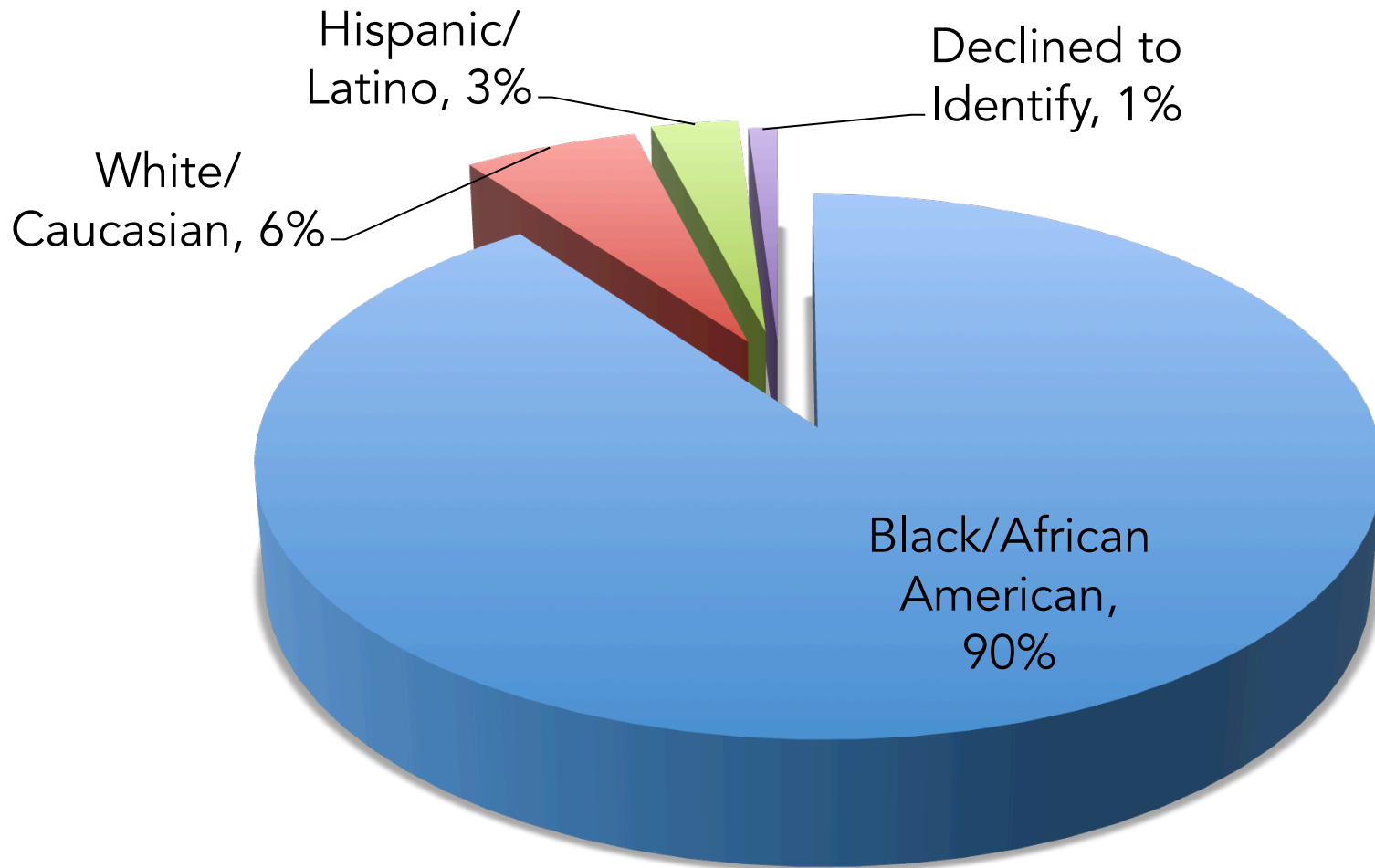
RFA Numbers by Sector

Quarters 1 & 2



RFA Numbers by Race

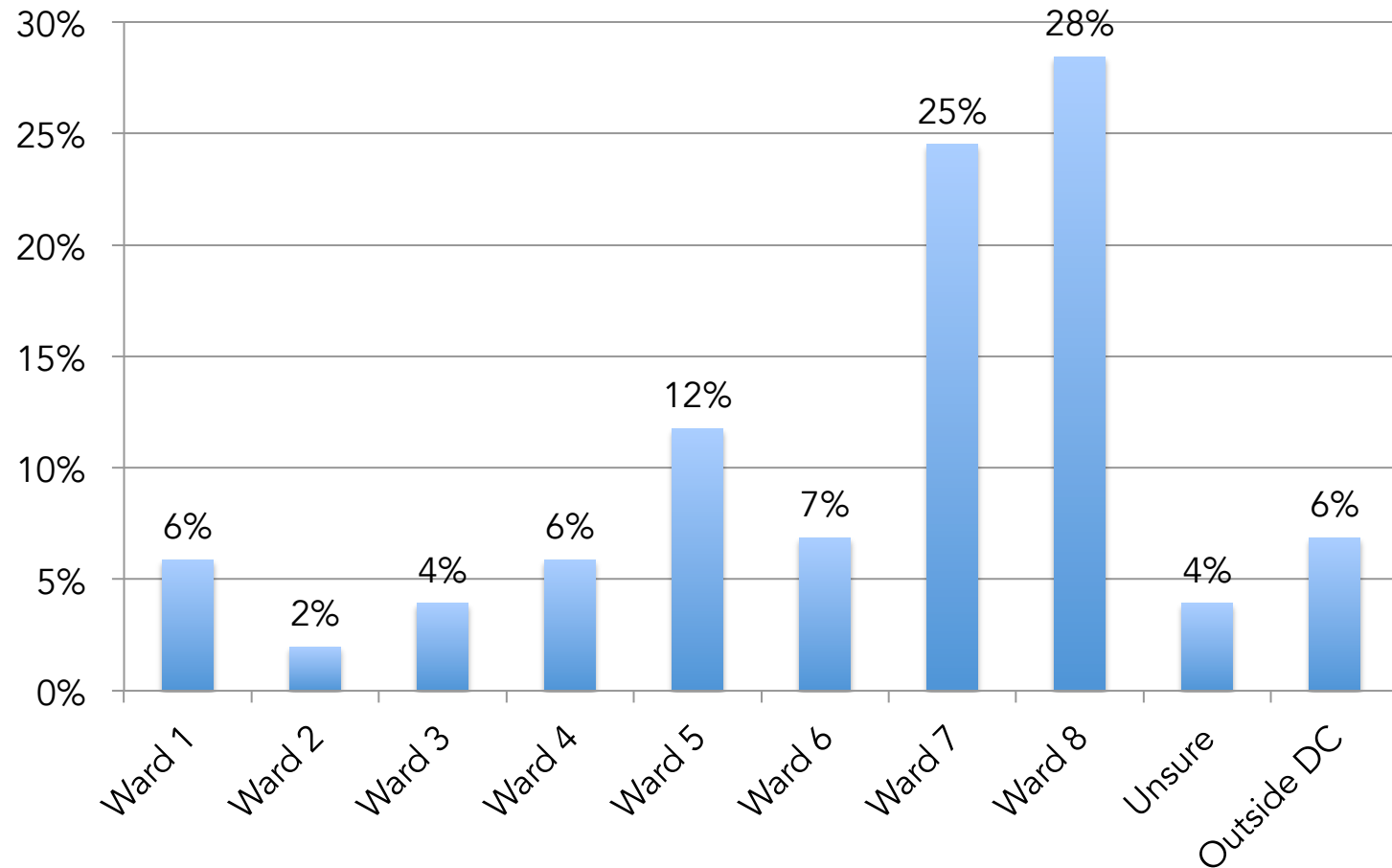
Quarters 1 & 2



RFAs by Ward Breakdown

RFAs SY 17-18 Quarters 1 & 2

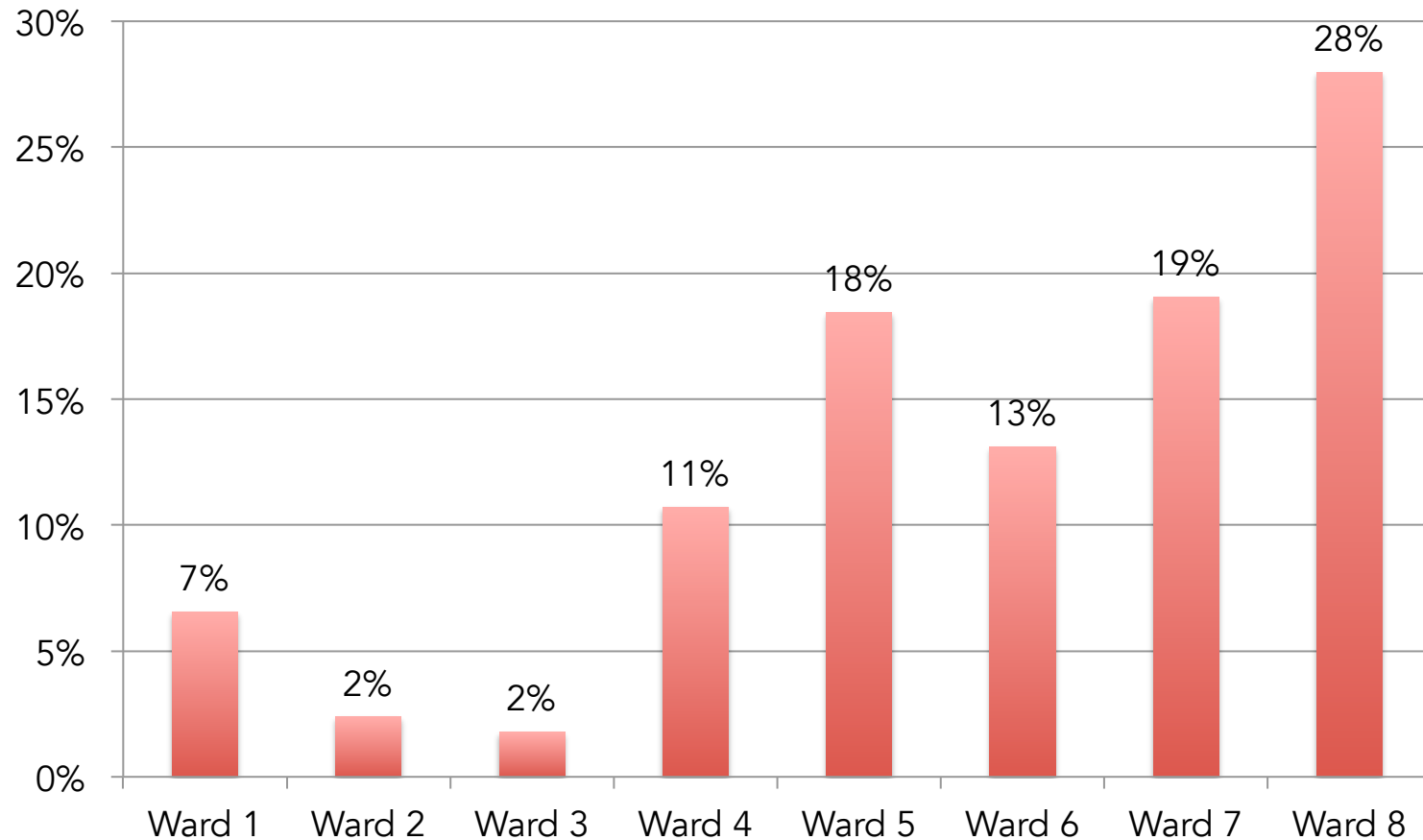
Ward of Residence Breakdown



*Data included reflects the number of total RFAs.

RFAs SY 17-18 Quarters 1 & 2

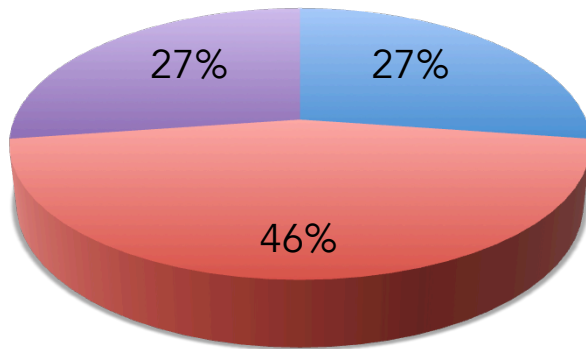
School Ward Breakdown



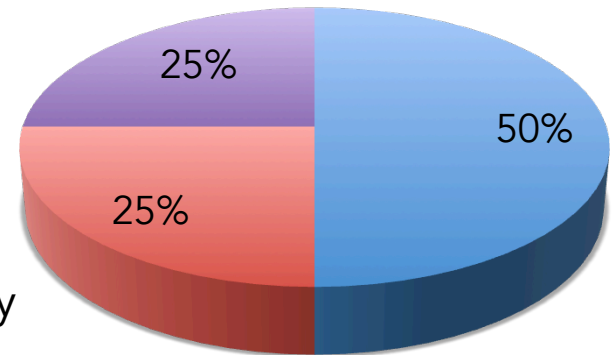
*Data included reflects number of RFAs associated with a public school, either DCPS and public charter.

RFA Data by School Ward Location

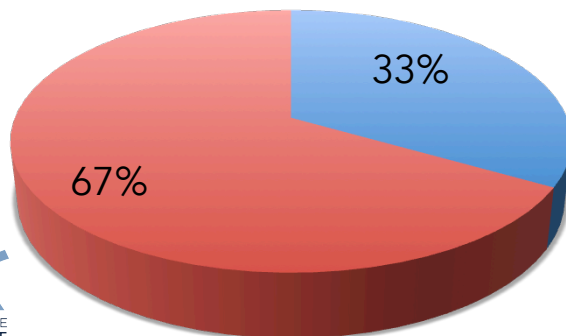
Ward: 1



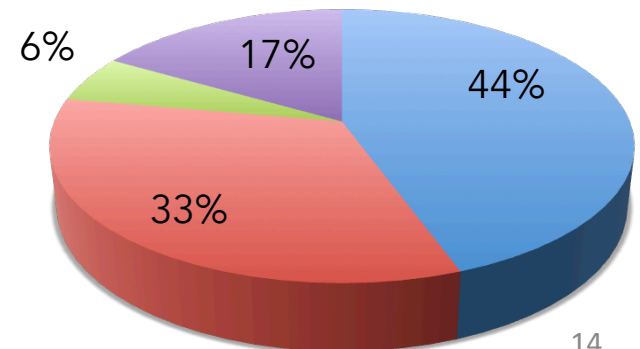
Ward: 2



Ward: 3



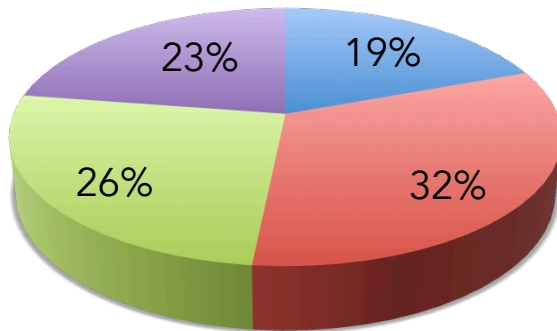
Ward: 4



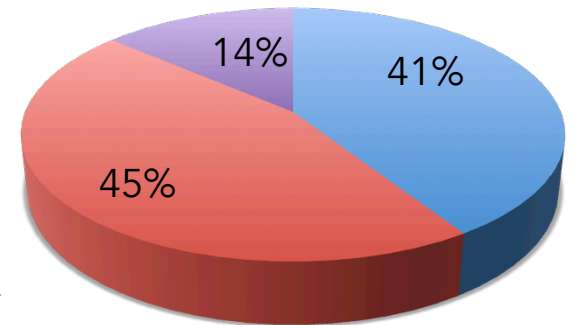
- DCPS in-boundary
- DCPS out-of boundary
- PCS (w/in ward)
- PCS (outside of ward)

RFA Data by School Ward Location

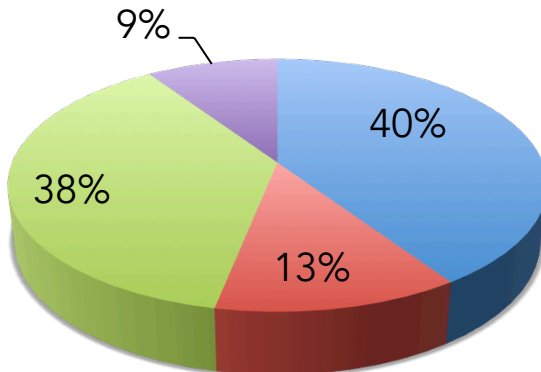
Ward: 5



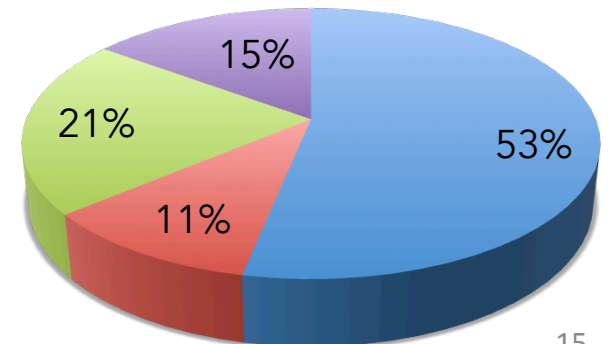
Ward: 6



Ward: 7



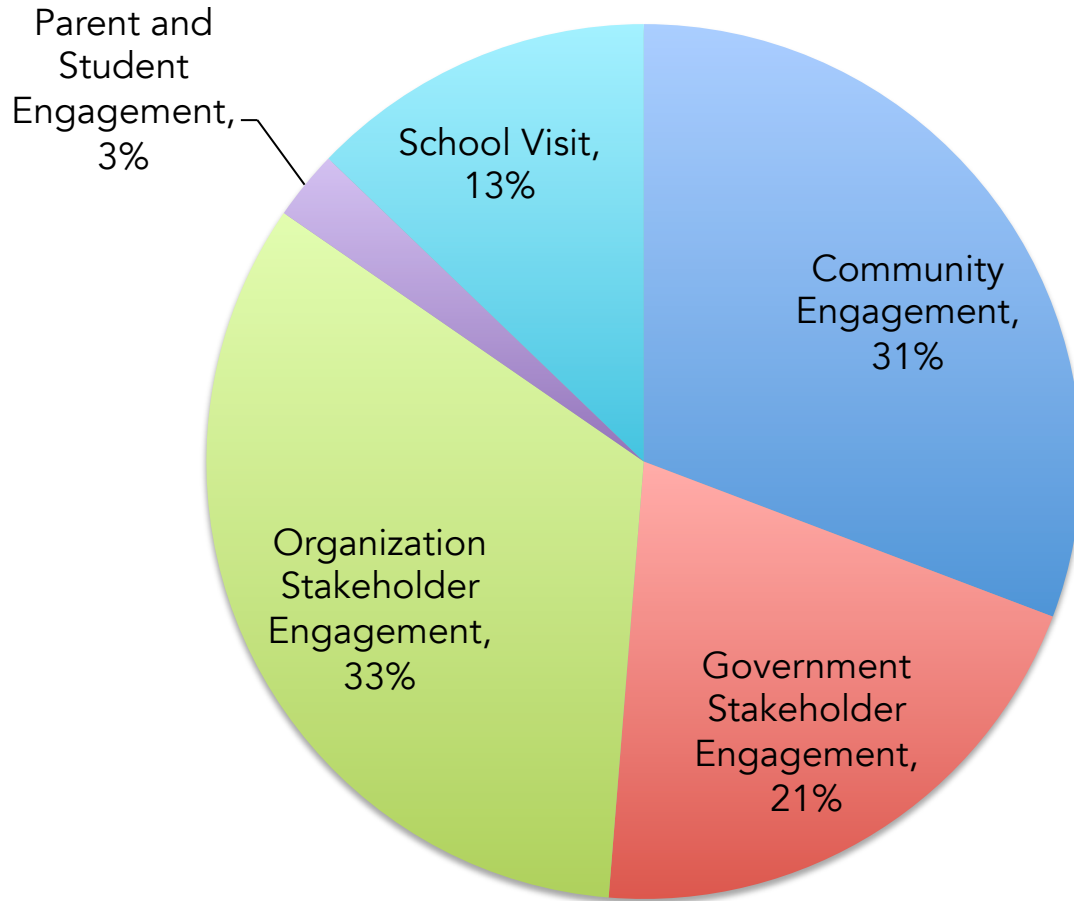
Ward: 8



- DCPS in-boundary
- DCPS out-of boundary
- PCS (w/in ward)
- PCS (outside of ward)

Quarters 1 & 2

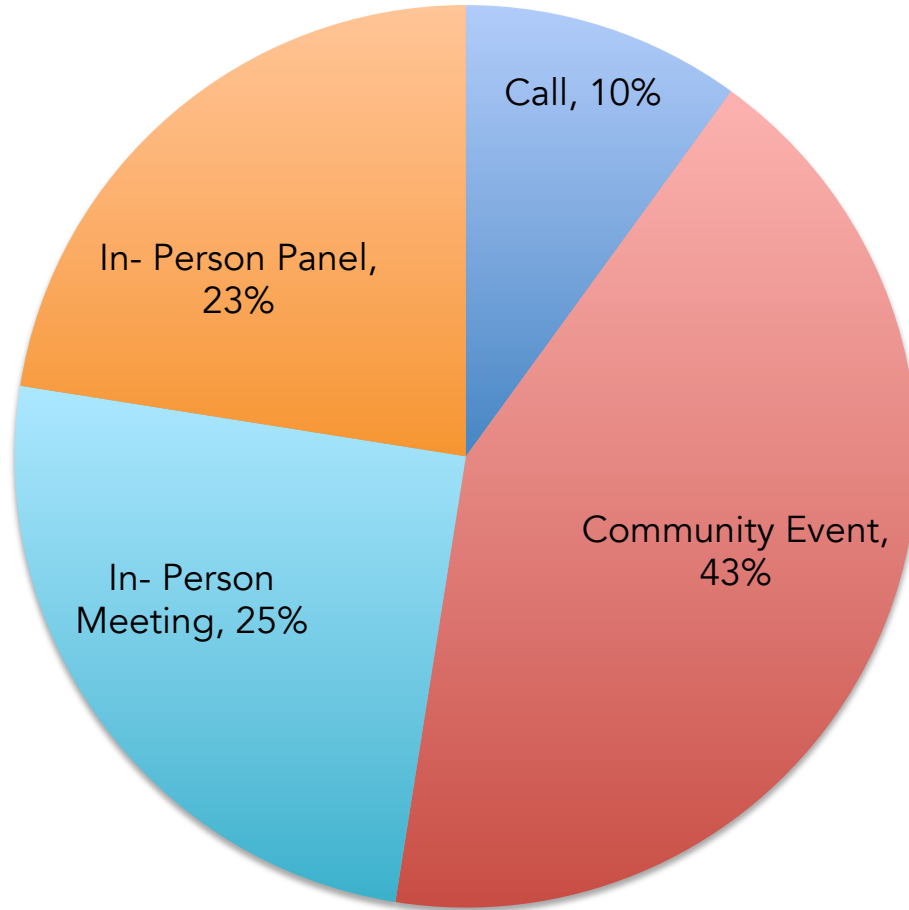
Outreach & Engagement Activities



Meetings, Panels,
& Events attended in
Quarters 1 & 2

40

Outreach & Engagement Modes SY 17-18 to Date

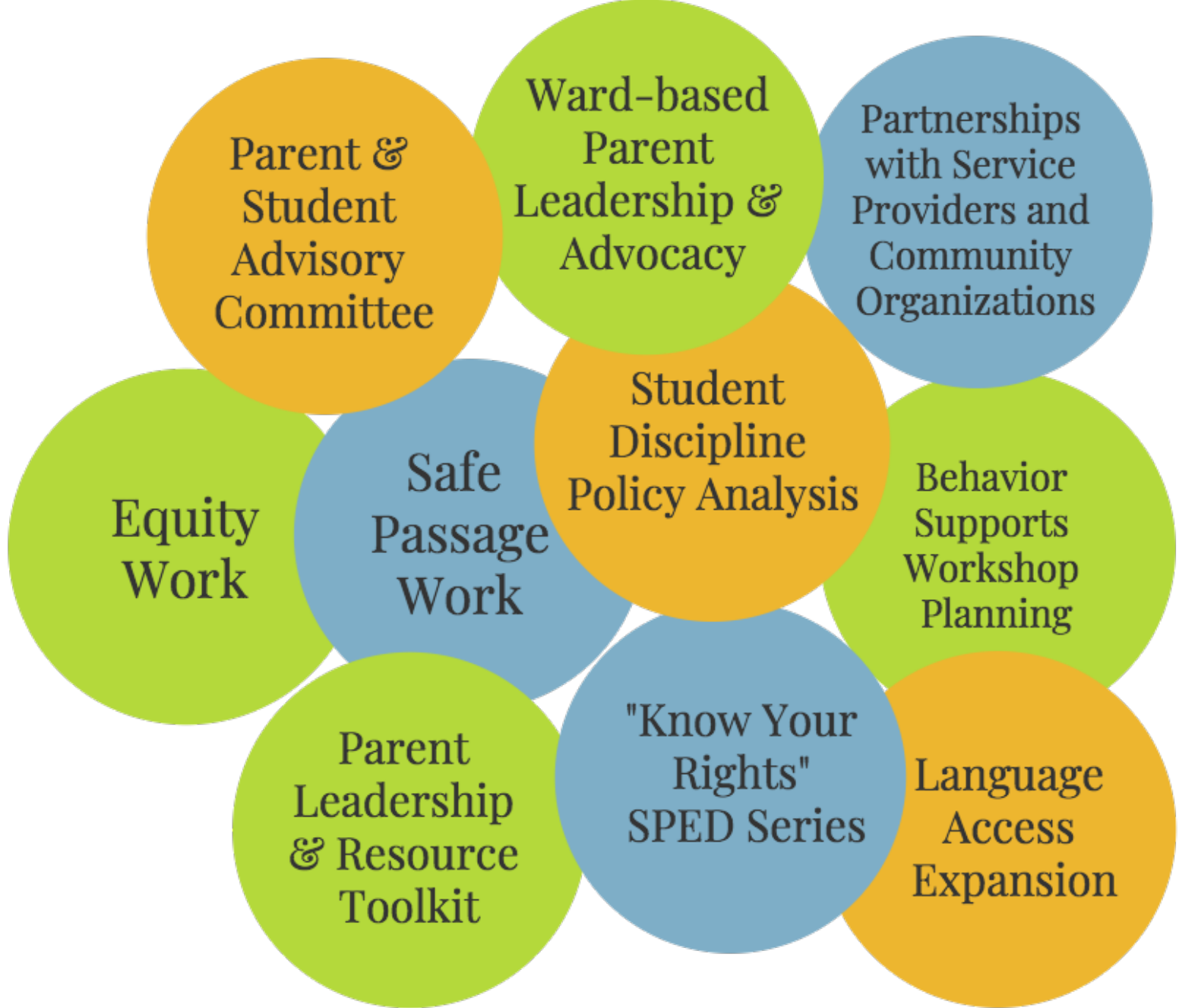


More than...

900

have been touched by our
office via one of our
engagement and outreach
modes.

Ongoing Work



"Right to Know" Ask Sheets

These ask sheets serve as a guide, providing helpful conversation starters for families.

Topics include:

- Absences
- Achievement
- Attendance
- Behavior
- Enrollment
- Homelessness
- PARCC
- Pre-K3/Pre-K4
- Response to Intervention
- Special Education

Right to Know Enrollment

The following questions are helpful conversation starters when facing homelessness.

Right to Know Homelessness

The following are helpful conversation starters when facing homelessness.

Assistance Act

is a federal act that ensures that all students have access to the public education system.

Attendance

The following are helpful points to remember when considering school attendance.

20
If the student is 13 years old or younger, the school must refer the family to the Child and Family Services Agency after **twenty unexcused absences** or when educational neglect is suspected.

25
If the student is 13 years old or older, the school must refer the family to the Superior Court and the Office of the Attorney General after **25 unexcused absences**.

5
After **five unexcused absences** in a grading period, the school based support team **MUST** meet within 4 days to develop an intervention plan.

10
If the student is 13 years old or younger, the school must refer the family to the Child and Family Services Agency and conduct immediate intervention to address the student's needs after **ten consecutive unexcused absences**.

1
After **one unexcused absence**, the school **MUST** make personal contact with the parent or guardian.

2
After five unexcused absences, the school **MUST** notify the parent or guardian within **two days**.

Students who:

- are homeless
- are in foster care
- are in a shelter
- are in a waiting foster home
- are in a placement that is not a regular placement
- are in a placement of a parent or guardian
- are in a placement in the community

Based on the best interest of the student, The LEA shall ...

- Assist the student in obtaining necessary immunizations, medical records, uniforms, or other necessities for school.
- Continue the student's education at the student's current school.
- Immediately enroll the student in the neighborhood school if not currently enrolled in a school.
- Immediately enroll the homeless student even if the student is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment.

If you need additional help, call us.

The District of Columbia ensures that all homeless children and youth will have access to and be enabled to participate fully in all educational programs for which they are eligible and interested.

gov
DC 20001

it https://sboe.dc.gov/node/1285456

Right to Know

Office of the Student Advocate

Phone: (202) 741-4692
Email: student.advocate@dc.gov
Web Address: studentadvocate.dc.gov
1441 4th Street, NW, 723 N, Washington, DC 20001

For more information, visit https://sboe.dc.gov/node/1284401.

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Right to Know

Office of the Student Advocate

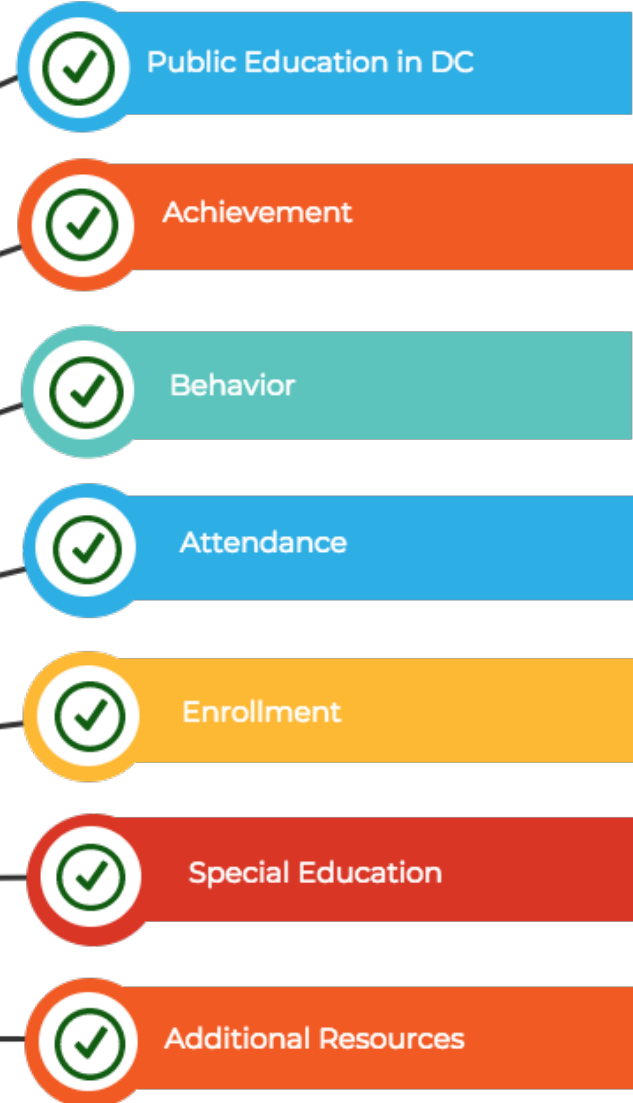
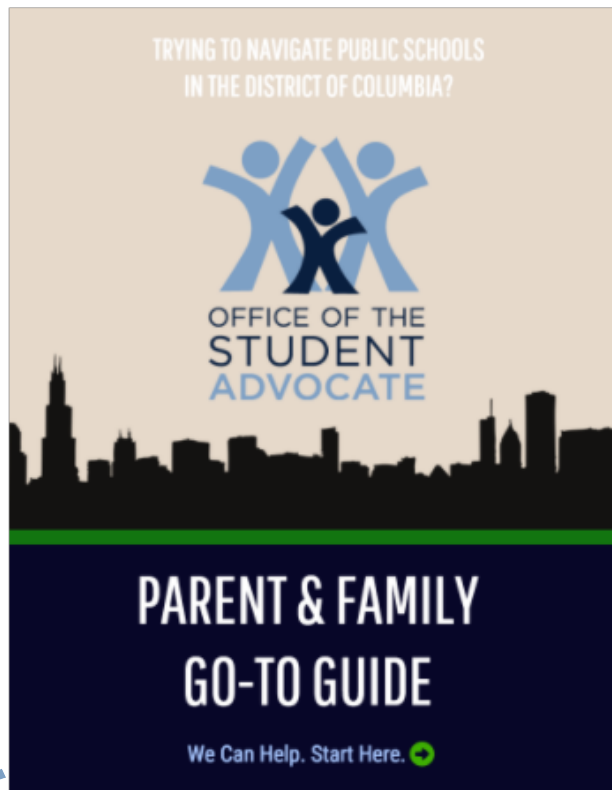
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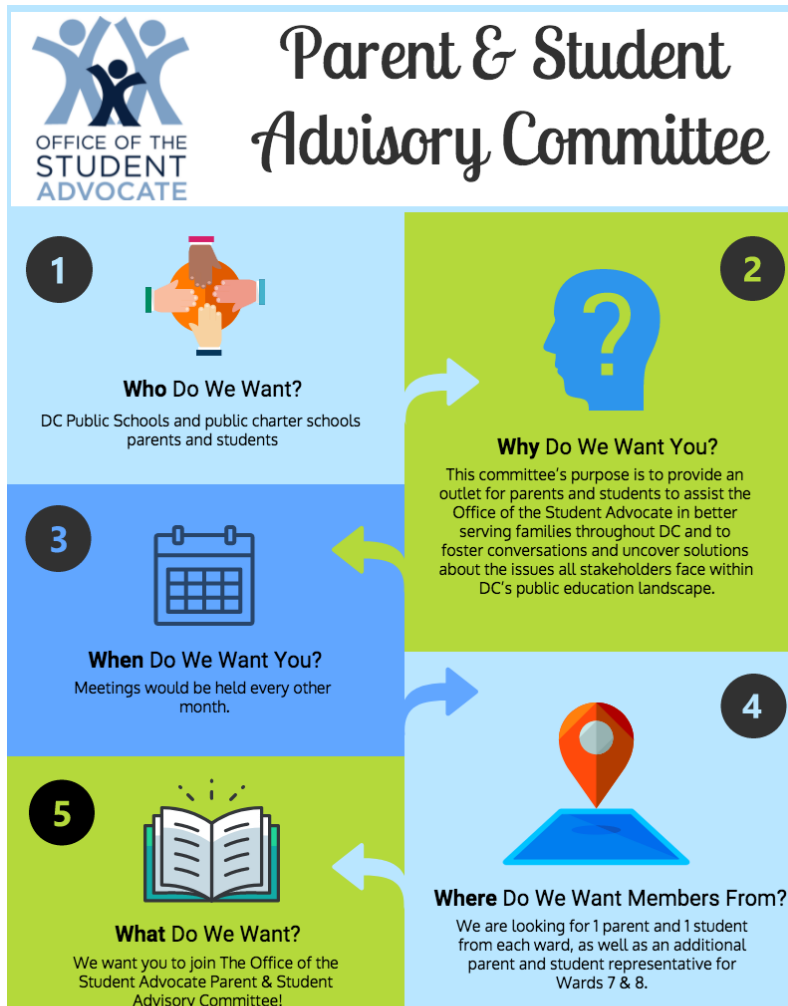
Our Go-To Guide

Our Go-To Guide includes some information and resources we offer on our website in one handy document.

Topics include:



Parent & Student Advisory Committee



Our Parent and Student Advisory Committee provides an outlet for parents and students as they assist the Office of the Student Advocate in better serving families throughout DC. This committee fosters conversations and uncovers solutions about issues all stakeholders face within DC's public education landscape.

<https://sboe.dc.gov/page/parent-student-advisory-committee>

SPED Workshop Series



Special Education Workshop Series

in conjunction with Markus Batchelor,
Ward 8 Representative, State Board of Education, and Excel Academy PCS



Partners include: Office of the State Superintendent of Education, DC Special Education Cooperative, DC Public Schools, Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education, Advocates for Justice & Education, Disability Rights DC at University Legal Services, & Children's Law Center



Know Your Rights Discussion

Lead by our team at Office of the Student Advocate on everything you need to know for your student(s) about special education

1



Thursday, February 1, 2018
6:30 - 8:30 p.m.
Excel Academy PCS
2501 Martin Luther King Jr Ave SE

*Child-friendly environment with light snacks provided.

2



Individualized Mini-Sessions

That's right! One-on-one mini-sessions with various partners who work in the special education space in DC who can help in answering your specific questions about the needs of your student(s)



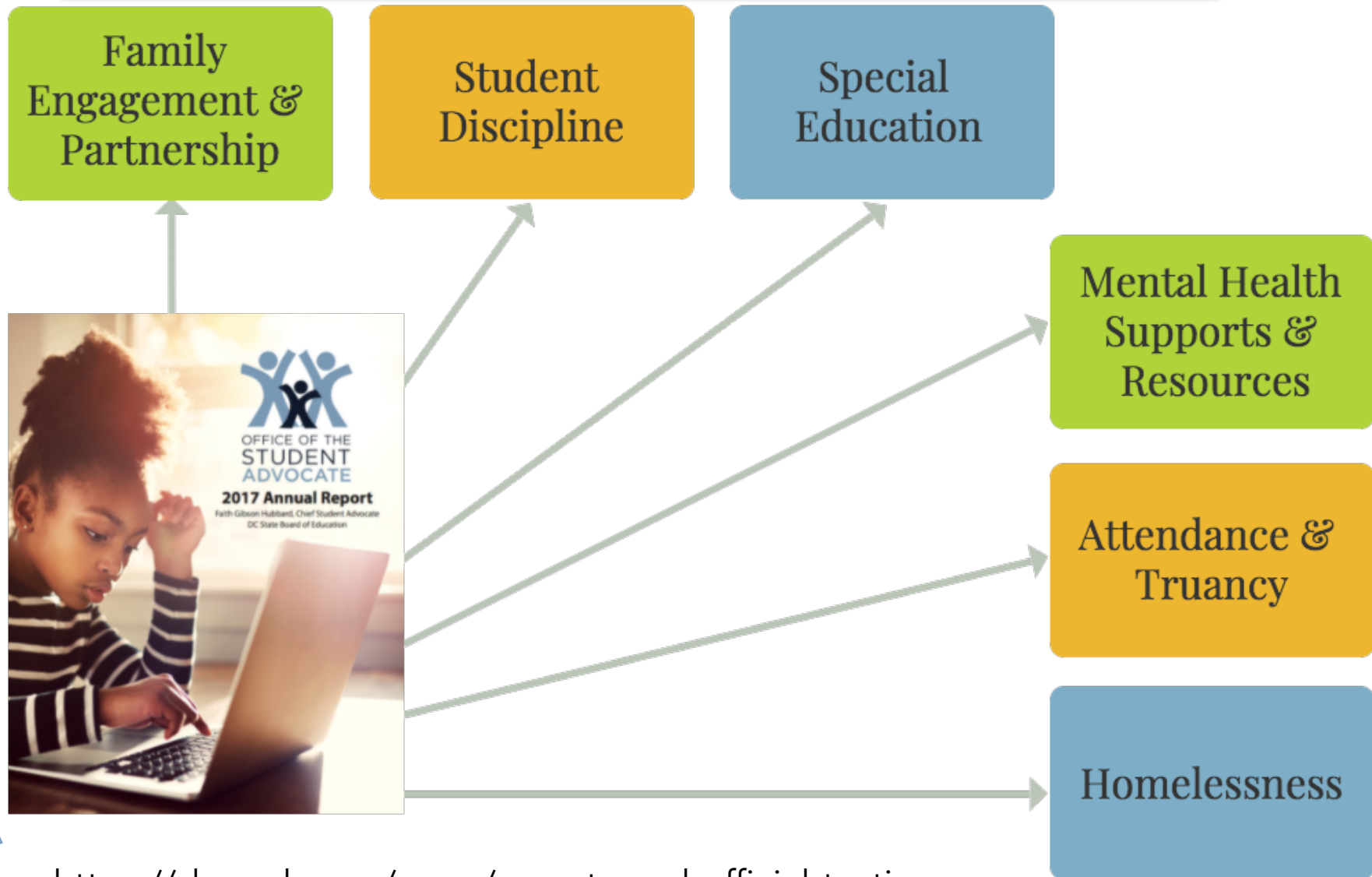
Special Education Resources

We will have a compiled list of special education resources for you and your student(s), including 504 plans v. IEPs, how to make a request for evaluation, annual reviews, and connections for organizational support.

3

To RSVP: visit <http://bit.ly/2D95aTy>
For more information: email student.advocate@dc.gov or call 202-741-4692.

2017 Annual Report



<https://sboe.dc.gov/page/reports-and-official-testimony>

Student Discipline Work

Each of the 60 plus LEAs or school districts in the District of Columbia has its own student discipline policies.

So there is a lot of confusion...

Our office is working to provide clarity.

For the past two school years (2016-17 and 2017-18), our office has conducted, in partnership with the Council for Court Excellence and Howard University School of Law, an analysis of LEA student discipline policies in the District.

2017 Student Discipline Analysis Findings

During Fall 2017, students in the School Discipline seminar and the Education Rights Center (ERC) at Howard University School of Law in collaboration with the Office of the Student Advocate analyzed the discipline policies in the handbooks of 57 local education agencies (LEAs) in the District of Columbia.

Analysis of LEA handbook policies in five areas:



1) parents/students rights and responsibilities



2) statements of infractions and penalties



3) due process, appeal process, and impartial decision makers



4) zero tolerance/positive or restorative justice



5) alternative education for students out of school due to discipline or illness

2017 Student Discipline Analysis Findings



Parents' Rights and Responsibilities

- *In general, parent and student rights and responsibilities that are created or imposed by LEAs are not consistently presented in a clear and easily identifiable section. Rather, they are scattered throughout various provisions of handbooks, making them difficult to fully access and comprehend.*
- *Approximately two-thirds of LEA handbooks contain good or very good descriptions of discipline policies for students with disabilities. However, approximately 20% of the handbooks have little or no mention of such policies.*

Statements of Infractions and Penalties

- *While more than half of the LEAs have statements of infractions and a tiered consequence system, approximately 20% do not even list statements of infractions nor provide students and parents any notice of disciplinary consequences.*
- *Even among LEAs that list infractions and consequences, many of the policies are very vague and lack definitions, potentially leading to confusion among students and parents.*



Analysis By:

Office of the Student Advocate in collaboration with

Howard University School of Law School Discipline seminar and the Education Rights Center (ERC)

2017 Student Discipline Analysis Findings

Due Process, Appeal Process, and Impartial Decision Maker

- *While roughly two-thirds of LEAs have good statements of basic due process rights for expulsions and suspensions, half have good statements of the appeal process, and only 20% have appellate decision makers who hold a position with some degree of impartiality.*



Zero Tolerance, Trauma-Informed Discipline, Positive Behavior, & Restorative Justice

- *Most LEA handbooks indicate some form of exclusionary discipline. Slightly less than half still maintain some form of zero tolerance policy.*
- *While approximately 20% of handbooks contain good or very good trauma-informed or positive behavioral intervention disciplinary practices, roughly half make little or no mention of either. Restorative justice practices are present in a small sampling of LEAs.*

Analysis By:

Office of the Student Advocate in collaboration with

Howard University School of Law School Discipline seminar and the Education Rights Center (ERC)

2017 Student Discipline Analysis Findings

Alternative Education

- *Approximately half of all the policies fail to mention anything regarding alternative education for students on suspension or medical leave. Those schools that do provide alternative education have very limiting policies. For the most part, many schools only indicate that students are allowed to receive assignments and make-up any missed exams. However, there are not many schools that focus on students' actual access to learning during suspension.*



Analysis By:

Office of the Student Advocate in collaboration with
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Questions?