

The Impact of Locale Type on Student Discipline in Georgia

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GRANT - Developing Cultural Responsiveness

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It has been well documented that the impacts of school discipline, specifically exclusionary discipline practices such as suspension and expulsion, have lasting negative impacts on students. This study aims to examine differences in the types of discipline actions used across Georgia based on the locale designation (rural, town, suburb, urban), year, grades served of schools, school size, and student demographics. Data used is publicly available from the Georgia Governor's Office of Student Achievement, and spans the years 2014 through 2017. Regression analyses are used to determine the differences in school discipline practices. Preliminary results indicate that across all years, rural, town, and urban schools have statistically significantly more students who receive disciplinary incidents than their suburban counterparts when controlling for total school enrollment, CCRPI ratings, and STAR scores. When examining in-school suspensions (ISS), rural and town schools have statistically significant greater percentages of students who receive ISS than comparable suburban districts. Compared to similar suburban districts, rural schools had no statistically significant difference in the percentage of students who receive out-of-school suspensions, though town and urban districts had a significantly higher percentage of students receiving out-of-school suspensions. Across all years, rural schools had a significantly higher percentage of students who were expelled than their suburban counterparts. Though school-level aggregate data provides less accurate results than individual student data might for this kind of research, this study will serve as a guidepost for the types of disciplinary actions used and the students being disciplined across the different locale types.