INDIANA DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION

Indiana Schools Bullying, Arrests, & Safety Staffing

2025 Annual Report

Indiana Department of Education

100 N. Senate Ave.
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Table of Contents

Annual Report Overview

As required by Indiana Code (IC) 20-34-6-1, each school corporation must report the number of bullying incidents, by category, involving a student attending a school within their corporation. Further, the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) is statutorily required to report the following information, reported by each school corporation, to the Indiana General Assembly, the Board for the Coordination of Programs Serving Vulnerable Individuals (established by IC 4-23-30.2-8), and the Criminal Justice Institute:

- The number of arrests of students on school corporation property, including arrests made by law enforcement officers, security guards, school safety specialists, and other school corporation employees, and any citizen arrests.
- The offenses for which students were arrested on school corporation property.
- The number of contacts with law enforcement personnel from a school corporation employee that have resulted in arrests of students not on school corporation property.
- Statistics concerning the age, race, and gender of students arrested on school corporation property, categorizing the statistics by offenses.
- Whether the school corporation has established and employs a school corporation police department under IC 20-26-16, and if so, report:
  - The number of officers in the school corporation police department, and
  - The training the officers must complete.
- If the school corporation employs private security guards to enforce rules or laws on school property, a detailed explanation of the use of private security guards by the school corporation.
- If the school corporation has an agreement with a local law enforcement agency regarding procedures to arrest students on school property, provide a detailed explanation of the use of the local law enforcement agency by the school corporation.
- The number of reported bullying incidents involving a student of the school corporation, by category. However, nothing in this subdivision may be construed to require all bullying incidents to be reported to a law enforcement agency.

This report includes acts of bullying reported during the 2024-2025 school year.

Bullying

IC 20-33-8-0.2 defines bullying as:

- Overt, unwanted, repeated acts or gestures, including verbal or written communications or images transmitted in any manner (including digitally or electronically), physical acts committed, aggression, or any other behaviors that are committed by a student or group of students against another student with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, intimidate, or harm the targeted student and create for the targeted student an objectively hostile school environment that:
  - Places the targeted student in reasonable fear of harm to the targeted student's person or property;

3

- ○ Has a substantially detrimental effect on the targeted student's physical or mental health;
- ○ Has the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted student's academic performance; or
- ○ Has the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, and privileges provided by the school.
- The term may not be interpreted to impose any burden or sanction on, or include in the definition of the term, the following:
  - ○ Participating in a religious event.
  - ○ Acting in an emergency involving the protection of a person or property from an imminent threat of serious bodily injury or substantial danger.
  - ○ Participating in an activity consisting of the exercise of a student's rights protected under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution or Article I, Section 31, of the Constitution of the State of Indiana, or both.
  - ○ Participating in an activity conducted by a nonprofit or governmental entity that provides recreation, education, training, or other care under the supervision of one or more adults.
  - ○ Participating in an activity undertaken at the prior written direction of the student's parent.
  - ○ Engaging in interstate or international travel from a location outside Indiana to another location outside Indiana.

Bullying Criteria

Bullying fosters a climate of fear and disrespect that can seriously impair the physical and psychological health of its victims and creates conditions that negatively impact learning. Bullying includes unwanted, aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated over time. The imbalance of power involves the use of physical strength or popularity to access embarrassing information to control or harm others. Bullying can occur anywhere (in school or out of school) and at any time – both during and after school hours.

Bullying can include physical bullying, verbal bullying, social/relational bullying, and electronic/written communication.

- **Physical Bullying:** Involves hurting a person's body or possessions. It includes hitting/kicking/punching, spitting, tripping or pushing, taking or breaking someone's things, and/or making mean or rude hand gestures.

- **Verbal Bullying:** Involves saying mean things. It can include teasing, name-calling, inappropriate sexual comments, taunting, or threatening to cause harm.

- **Social/relational Bullying:** Involves hurting someone's reputation or relationships. Social/relational bullying involves telling other children not to be friends with someone, leaving someone out on purpose, spreading rumors about someone, or embarrassing someone in public.

- **Electronic/written Communication:** Involves cyberbullying, collective or group note writing, or any bullying undertaken using electronic devices (computer, cell phones).

Considerations when determining if the behavior meets the definition of bullying:

- **The history between the individuals:** Have there been past conflicts? Have these individuals had a dating relationship? (This may not be considered bullying.)

- **Power differential:** Is there an imbalance of power? (Power imbalance is not limited to physical strength.)

- **Repetition:** Has this or a similar incident happened before? Is the individual worried that it may happen again?

- **Gang affiliation:** Are any of the individuals involved with a gang? (This may result in interventions different from bullying.)

Additionally, bullying is a behavior that will not always be exhibited by one set of actions or categories. When a student has been targeted by a bully, that target may be bullied verbally and physically, or verbally and socially, and so on. Therefore, the category of "Combination Incidents" was added to the collection to include incidents that crossed over more than one type of bullying category. Incidents that qualify as "Combination Incidents" were to be reported once, rather than be reported in multiple fields.
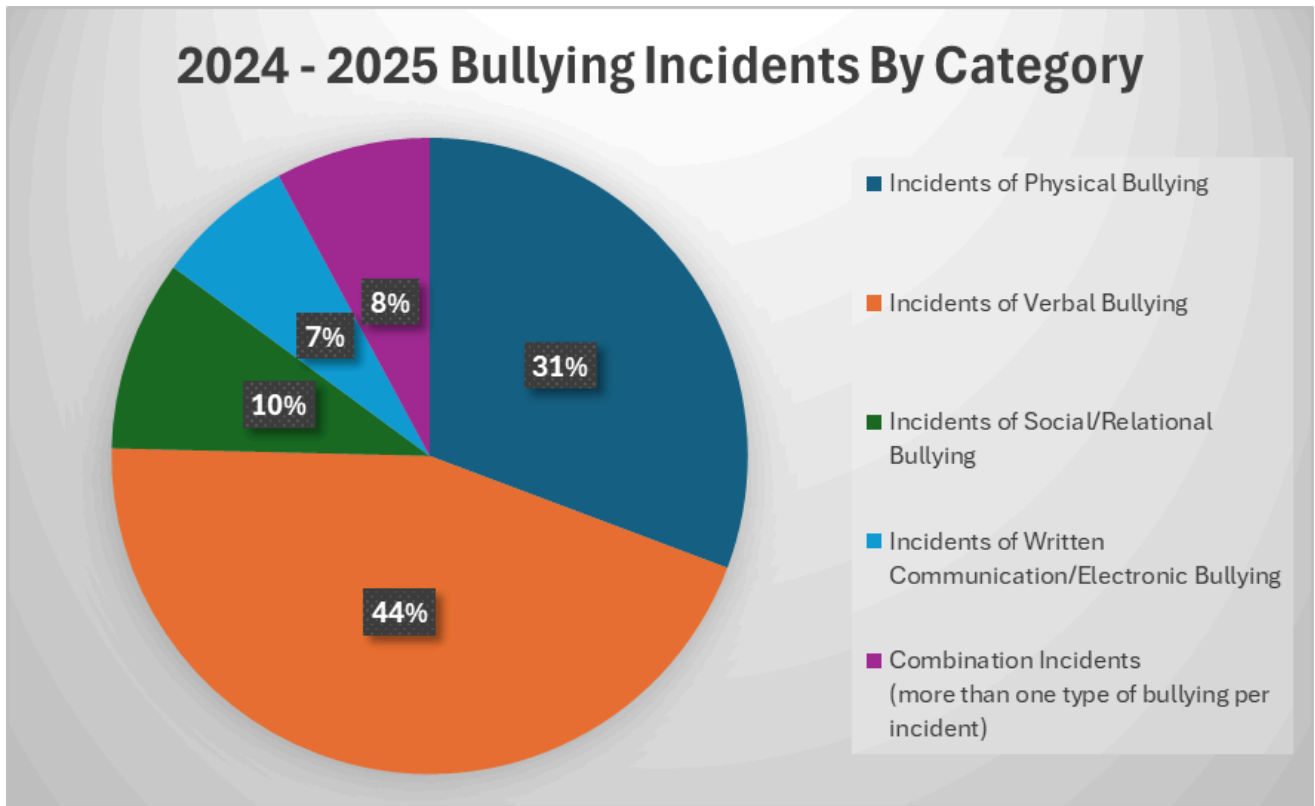
Data Collection

For the 2024-2025 school year, bullying data was collected via IDOE's Data Exchange platform. Schools reported this data through their chosen student management system.

To increase compliance and understanding of the requirements, throughout the year, IDOE sent frequent reminders to superintendents, principals, school safety specialists, and school counselors through IDOE's various communication methods. IDOE worked with schools to ensure detailed bullying information was submitted accurately.

Pursuant to IC 20-34-6-2(b), IDOE may conduct an audit of any school corporation to ensure the school corporation's compliance with the bullying incident reporting requirements and post any findings of discrepancies on IDOE's website; however, IDOE has no statutory enforcement authority to ensure school corporation reporting compliance.

2024-2025 Bullying Incidents

Overall, there were 6,718 total reported incidents of bullying during the 2024-2025 school year across Indiana's school corporations, compared to 7,700 incidents reported during the previous school year. Broken down by category, this includes 2,064 physical incidents, 3,000 verbal incidents, 653 social/relational incidents, 472 electronic/written incidents, and 529 combination incidents.

2024 - 2025 Bullying Incidents By Category

- Incidents of Physical Bullying
- Incidents of Verbal Bullying
- Incidents of Social/Relational Bullying
- Incidents of Written Communication/Electronic Bullying
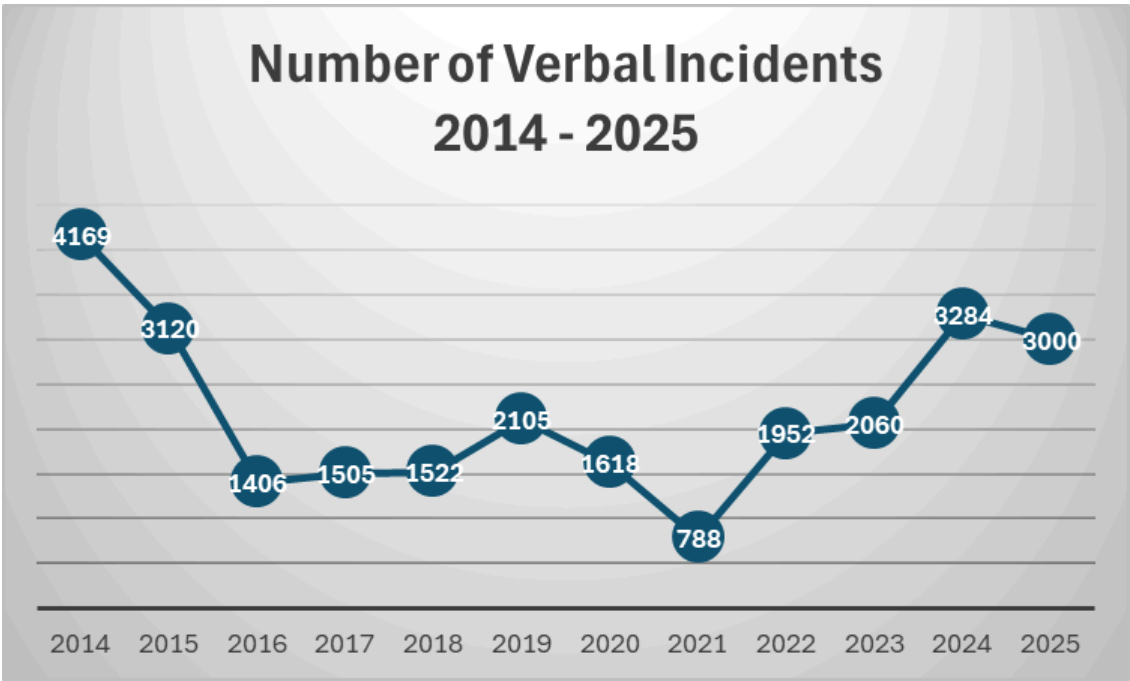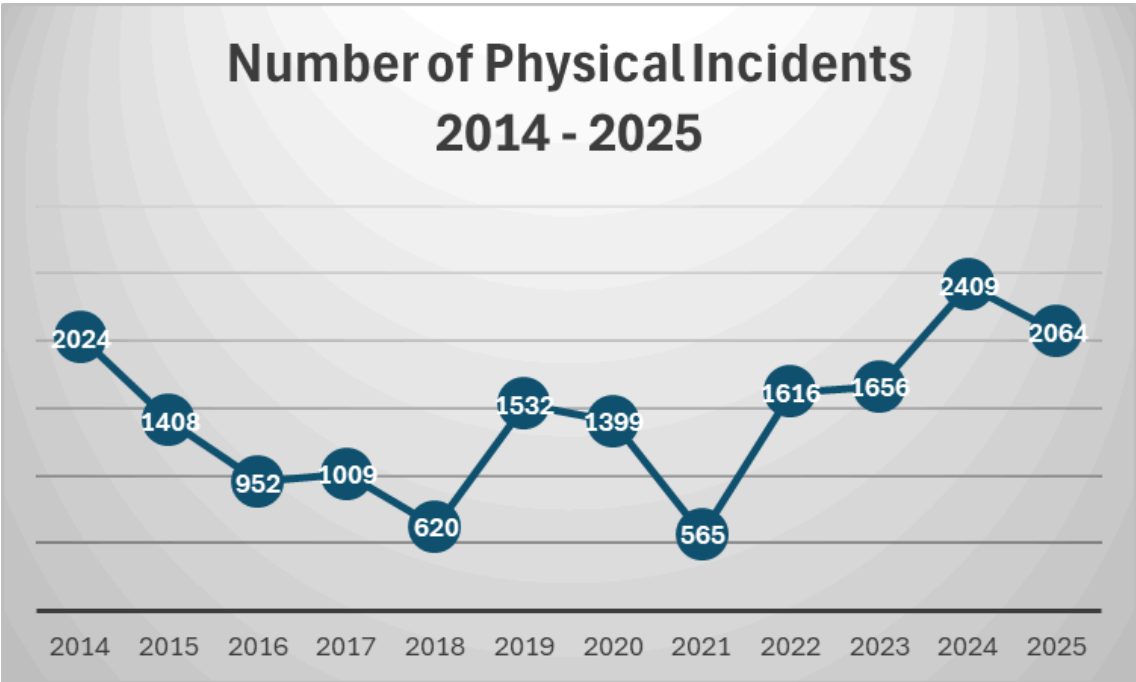- Combination Incidents (more than one type of bullying per incident)

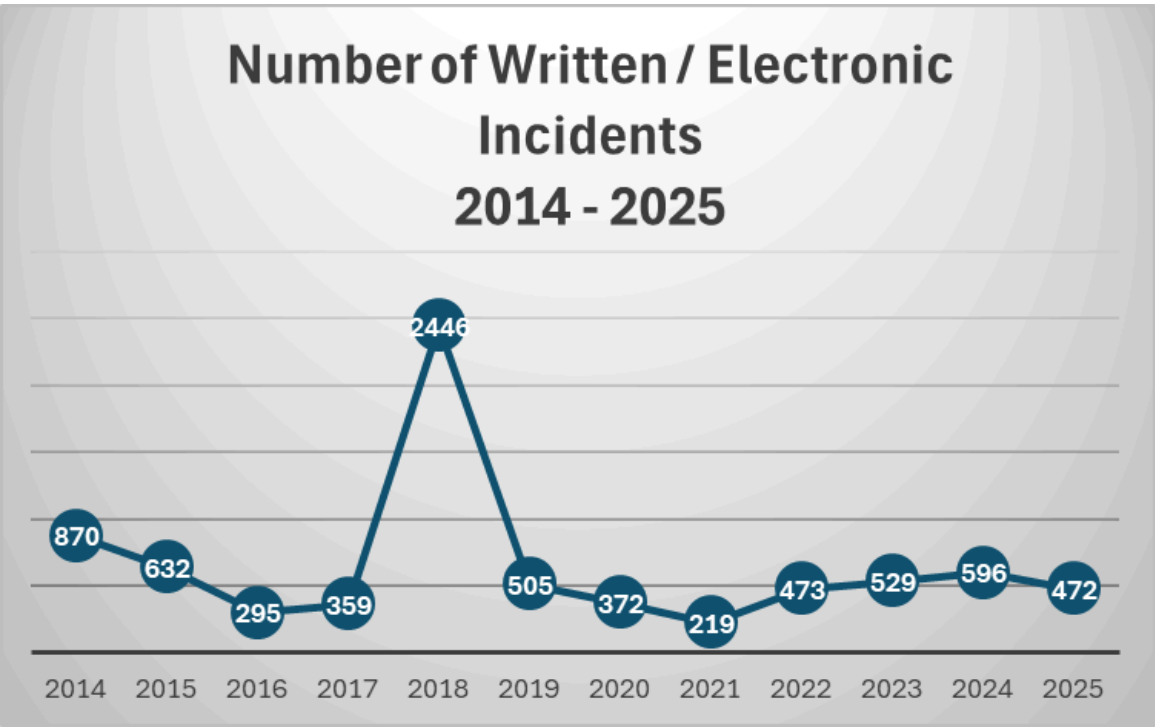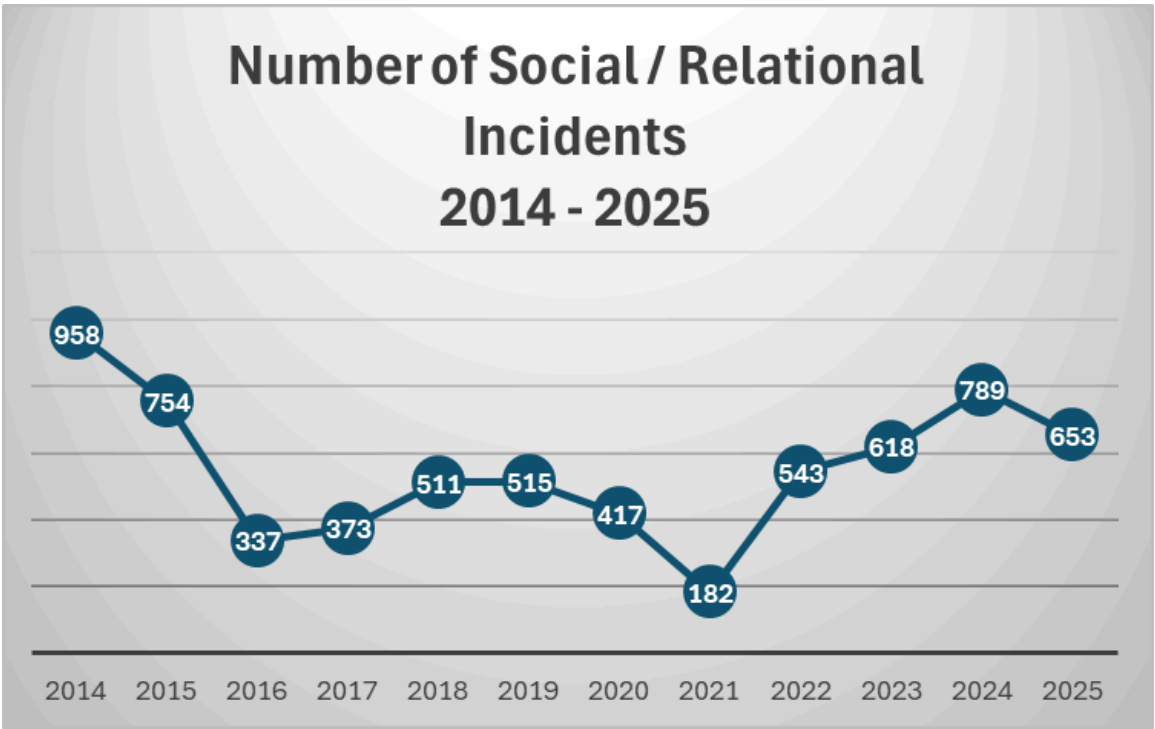## Total Confirmed Bullying Incidents: 2014-2025

As reflected in the charts and graphs below, bullying incidents declined during COVID-19 pandemic-impacted school years, but have since continued trending towards pre-pandemic rates. The 2024-2025 school year saw a decrease across all bullying incident categories, with verbal incidents representing the greatest number of incidents, as is historically the case.

2014-2025 School-Level Data

Bullying Incidents By Category												
Incident Type	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Physical Incidents	2,024	1,408	952	1,009	620	1,532	1,399	565	1,616	1,656	2,409	2,064
Verbal Incidents	4,169	3,120	1,406	1,505	1,522	2,105	1,618	788	1,952	2,060	3,284	3,000
Social/ Relational Incidents	958	754	337	373	511	515	417	182	543	618	789	653
Written/ Electronic Incidents	870	632	295	359	2,446	505	372	219	473	529	596	472

Combination Incidents	1,576	891	678	791	505	600	689	230	519	597	622	529
Totals	**9,597**	**6,805**	**3,668**	**4,037**	**5,604**	**5,257**	**4,495**	**1,984**	**5,103**	**5,460**	**7,700**	**6,718**

Number of Physical Incidents 2014 - 2025

Year	Value
2014	2024
2015	1408
2016	952
2017	1009
2018	620
2019	1532
2020	1399
2021	565
2022	1616
2023	1656
2024	2409
2025	2064

Number of Verbal Incidents 2014 - 2025

Year	Value
2014	4169
2015	3120
2016	1406
2017	1505
2018	1522
2019	2105
2020	1618
2021	788
2022	1952
2023	2060
2024	3284
2025	3000

Number of Social / Relational Incidents 2014 - 2025

Number of Written / Electronic Incidents 2014 - 2025

Number of Combination Incidents 2014 - 2025

Year	Incidents
2014	1576
2015	891
2016	678
2017	791
2018	505
2019	600
2020	689
2021	230
2022	519
2023	597
2024	622
2025	529

Implications of Current Data

As noted above, the 2024-2025 school year saw a decrease in the number of incidents across all categories. Overall, the proportions of incidents remained consistent with previous years, with 2018 being an outlier when electronic/written incidents represented a majority of all bullying incidents.

Despite a reduction in the number of total incidents compared to the 2023-2024 school year, t bullying prevention must continue to be a key focus of schools across Indiana. Information on how to prevent, respond to, and report incidents of bullying should be reflected in training provided to educators. Schools should also continue to review/update their bullying policies and procedures and ensure proper implementation in order to prevent and respond to incidents of bullying.

Available Resources

Several IDOE-provided training sessions for the 2024-2025 school year were focused on a variety of bullying types. The Indiana School Safety Specialist Academy conducted training on the topics of threat assessment, sexting, cyberbullying, and harassment. Additional training focused on all types of bullying should be considered by local school corporations.

IC 20-19-3-11.5 also requires IDOE to maintain resources regarding the prevention and reporting of bullying and cyberbullying incidents, which can be found on IDOE's Student Safety/Bullying Reporting webpage.

As required by IC 20-26-5-34.2, school corporations must provide training to employees and volunteers who have direct, ongoing contact with students concerning the school's bullying prevention and reporting policies. This should increase the knowledge and capabilities of educators

and enable staff to intervene in bullying situations earlier, reduce bullying in classrooms, and ultimately, lead to fewer incidents.

Additionally, every public school is required by law to provide age appropriate, research-based instruction focused on bullying prevention for all students in grades one through 12. Implementation of this training should empower students to directly reduce bullying incidents through peer awareness and bystander intervention before bullying escalates. Local school corporations should continue to partner with local and state agencies to share resources and combat bullying.

Student Arrests

Data Collection

As outlined in IC 20-34-6-1, school corporations are required to report the following data on student arrests to IDOE:

- The number of arrests of students on school corporation property, including arrests made by law enforcement officers, security guards, school safety specialists, and other school corporation employees, and any citizen arrests.
- The offenses for which students were arrested on school corporation property.
- The number of contacts with law enforcement personnel from a school corporation employee that have resulted in arrests of students not on school corporation property.
- Statistics concerning the age, race, and gender of students arrested on school corporation property and categorizing the statistics by offenses.

For the 2024-2025 school year, there were 531 total arrests reported via Data Exchange. Students arrested off school property due to a school-initiated report to law enforcement are included in this number. Additional demographic and offense data were also collected locally. A summary of the data is included below.
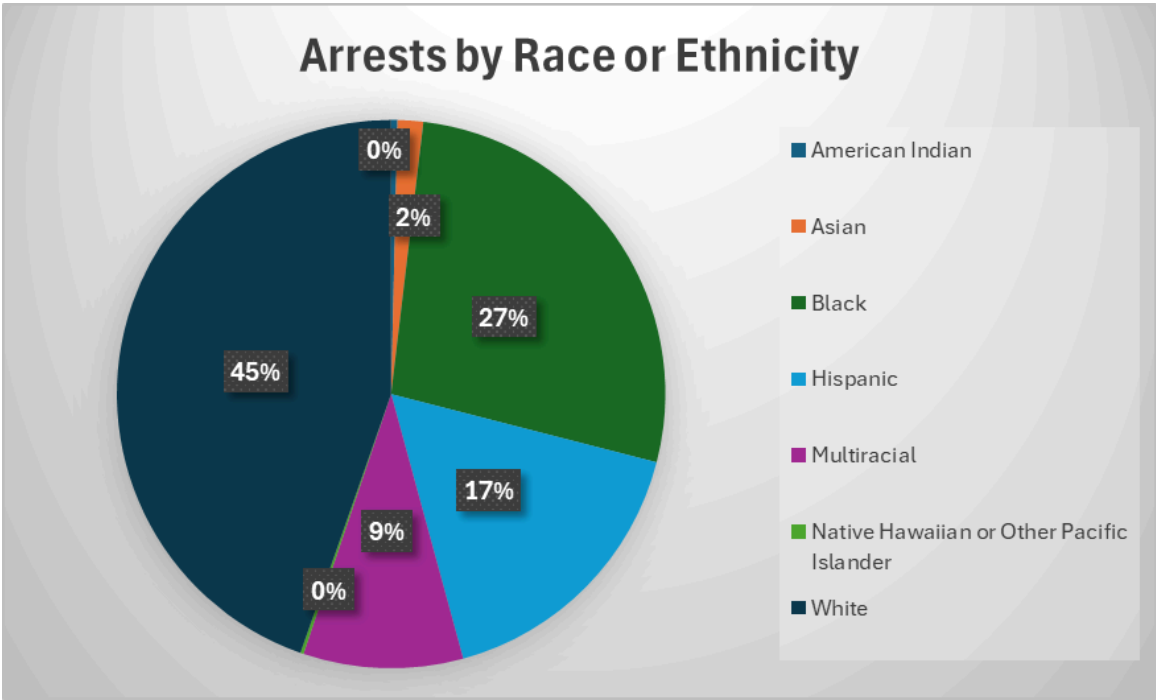
Data Results

There were 531 total arrests reported for the 2024-2025 school year. Of the overall student arrests, 72% were male. Ages of those arrested range from nine to 20.
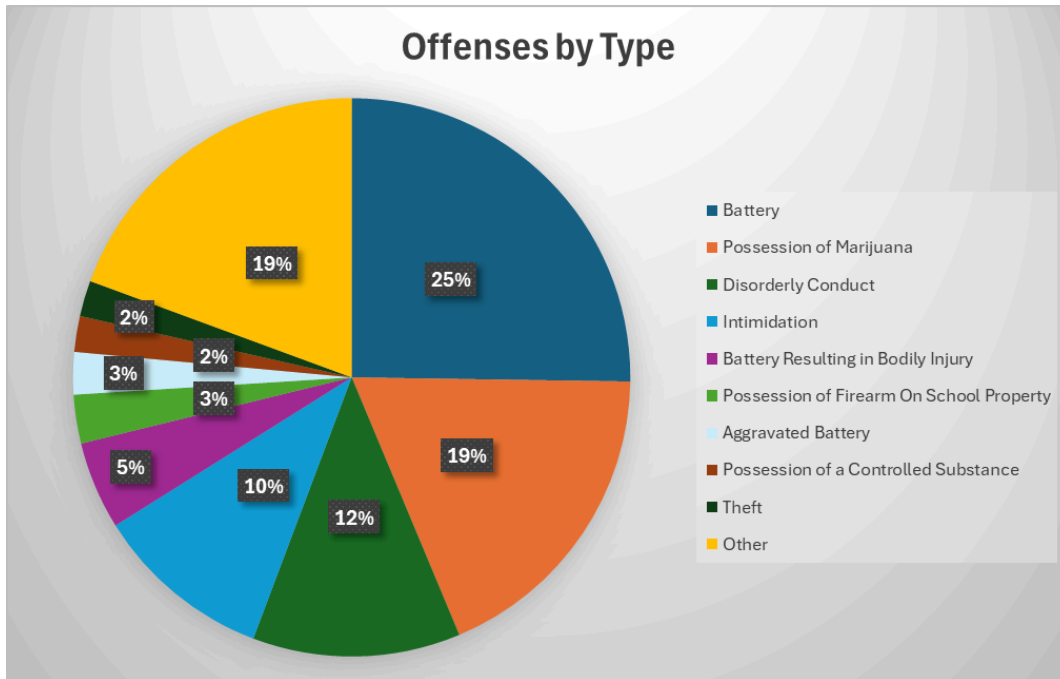
Age	Number of Arrests
9	2
10	7
11	14
12	52
13	76

14	100
15	125
16	94
17	46
18	13
19	1
20	1

Of those arrested, 45% were white, 27% were Black, and 17% were Hispanic of any race.

The most common offenses for arrests were possession of marijuana, battery and other. Other offenses included, but were not limited to, trespass, robbery, truancy, and theft.
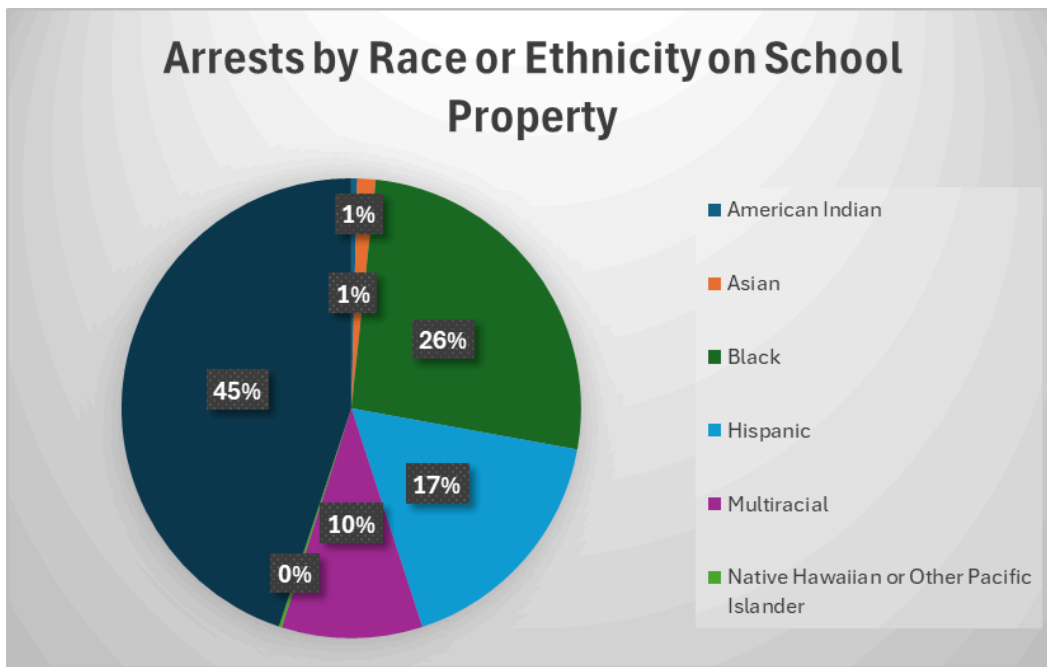
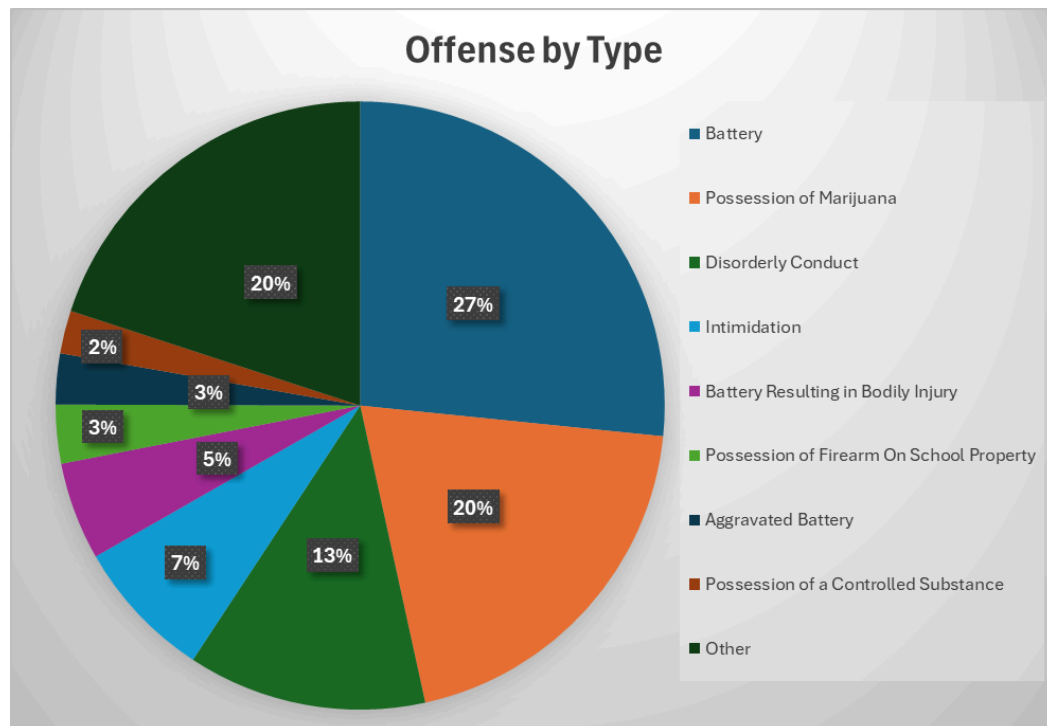## Students Arrested on School Corporation Property

The total number of students arrested on school corporation property totaled 481. Seventy-one percent of those arrested were male. Ages of those arrested on school property ranged from nine to 20.

Age	Number of Arrests on School Property
9	2
10	7
11	10
12	47
13	67
14	93
15	114
16	88
17	39
18	12
19	1
20	1

Of those arrested on school property, 45% were White, 26% were Black, and 17% were Hispanic of any race.

The most common offenses for arrests on school property were battery, possession of marijuana, and other. Other arrests included, but were not limited to, attempted theft, aggravated battery, and resisting law enforcement.

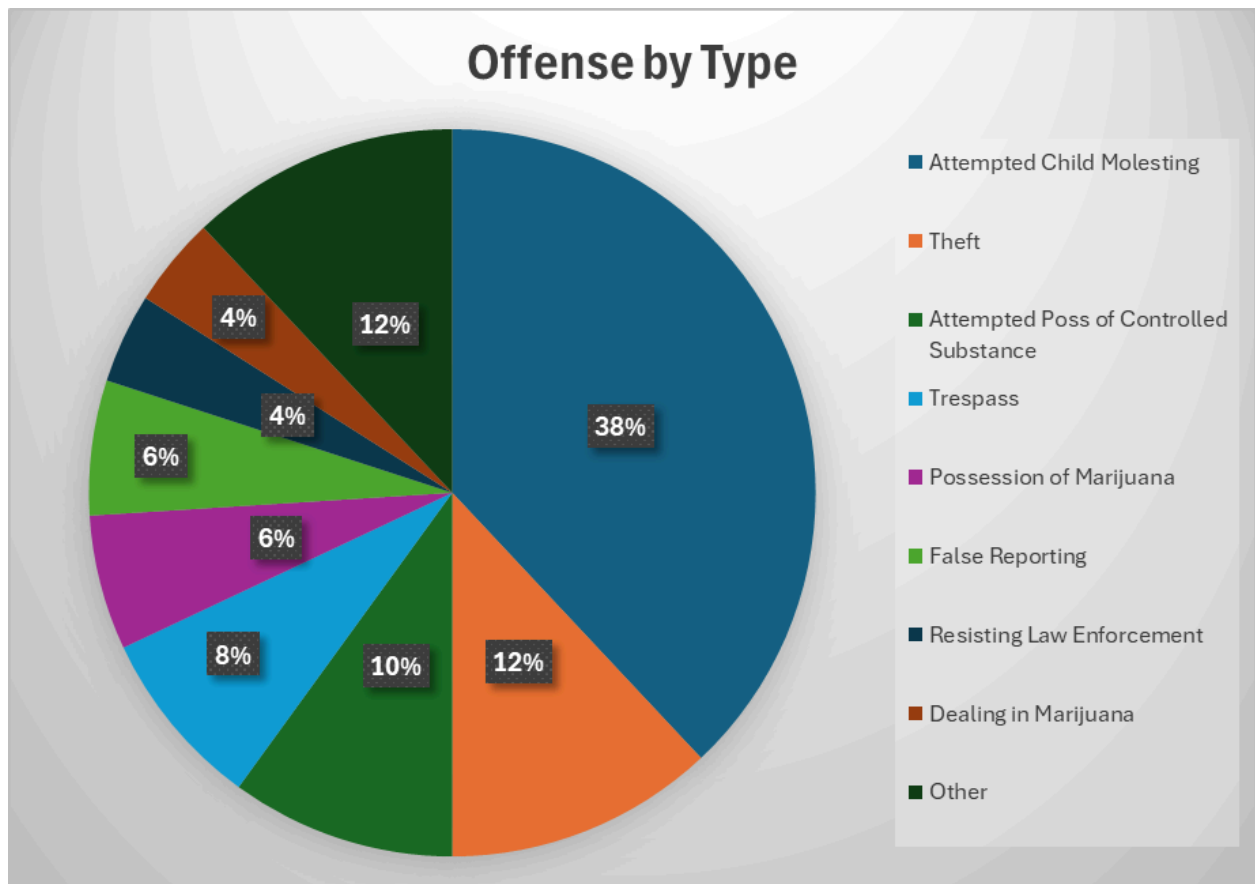## Students Arrested Not on School Corporation Property

The number of arrests occurring off school property due to the school corporation contacting law enforcement totaled 50. Seventy-five percent of those arrested were male. Ages of those arrested ranged from eleven to 18.

Age	Number of Arrests Not on School Corporation Property
11	4
12	5
13	9
14	7
15	11
16	7
17	7
18	1

Of those arrested, 46% were White, 31% were Black, and 17% were Hispanic of any race.
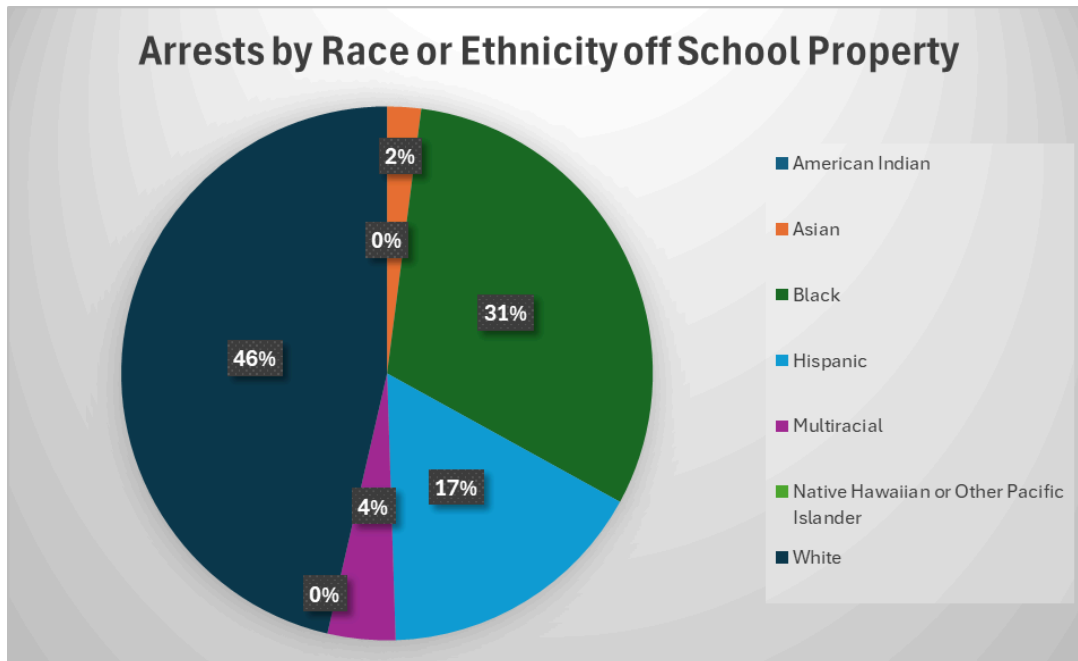
The most common offenses for arrests occurring not on school property were battery, disorderly conduct, intimidation, and other. Other arrests included, but were not limited to, harassment, aggravated battery, public intoxication, attempted escape, and truancy.

Offense by Type

- ■ Attempted Child Molesting
- ■ Theft
- ■ Attempted Poss of Controlled Substance
- ■ Trespass
- ■ Possession of Marijuana
- ■ False Reporting
- ■ Resisting Law Enforcement
- ■ Dealing in Marijuana
- ■ Other

Safety Staffing

Data Collection

For the 2024-2025 school year, the safety staffing data was collected via Data Exchange. Schools reported this data through their chosen student management system.
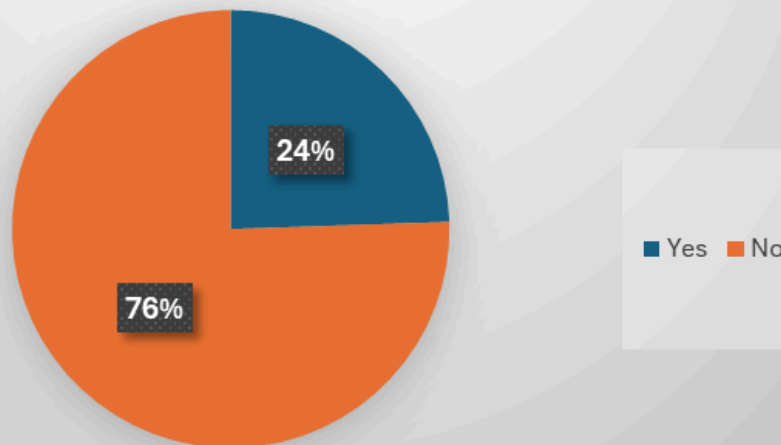
The following information represents the safety staffing data collected for the 2024-2025 school year.

Question 1: Has the school corporation established a school corporation police department?

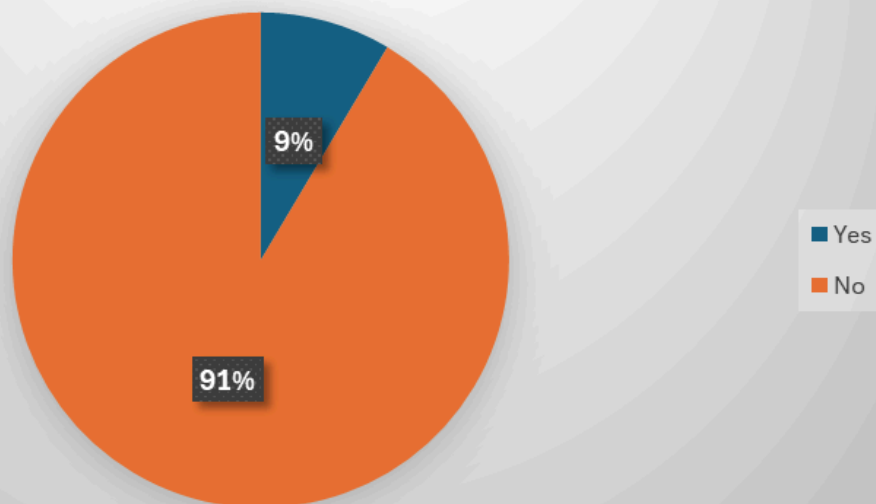**Yes:** 464   **No:** 1,432

Question 2: Does the school corporation employ private security guards?

Yes: 162   **No:** 1,738

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Question 3: Does the school corporation have an agreement with a local law enforcement agency regarding procedures to arrest students on school property?

Yes: 1,341   **No:** 562
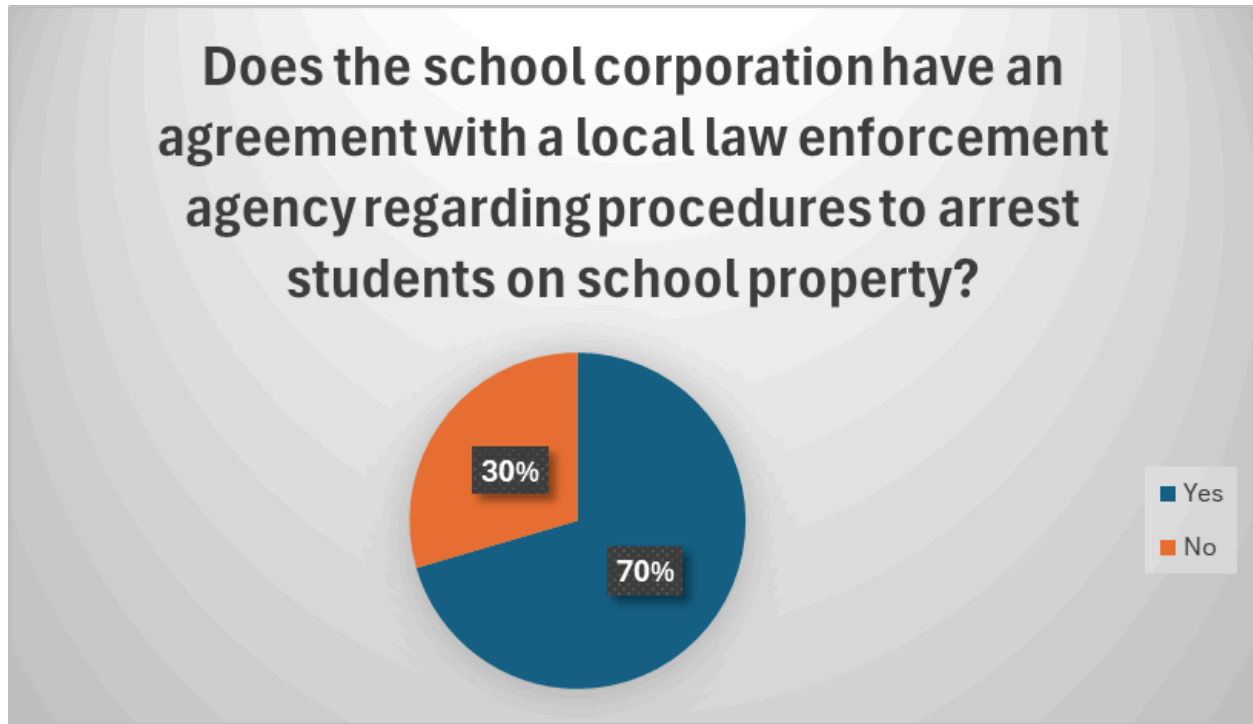
This report was compiled July 2025 by the Indiana Department of Education.