

Keeping Kids in School:
New London Data and Next Steps

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Agenda

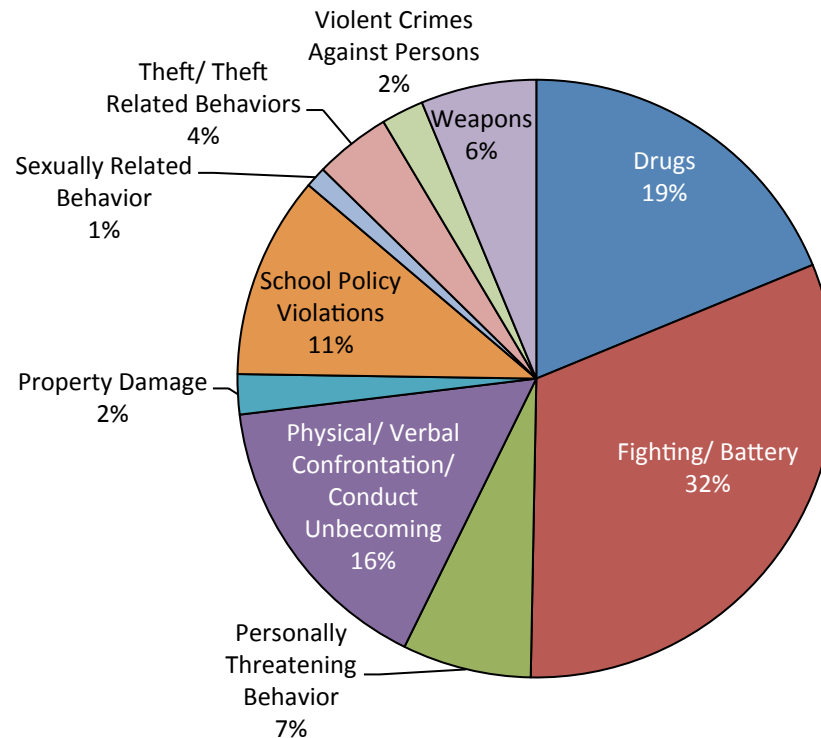
- Data Overview
- School Arrests
- Action Steps

Data Overview

- School Discipline: Form ED166
- Data Challenges
- Two ways of counting arrests
 - **Number** of arrests
 - **Rates** of arrests— provides a way to compare arrests amongst schools of different sizes

Student Arrests: What and Why?

- Rise of zero tolerance policies
- Variety of Student Behaviors
- Across Connecticut
- Students K-12
- Little evidence of effectiveness



Connecticut, 2010-2011 School Year

What are the Consequences of Student Arrests?

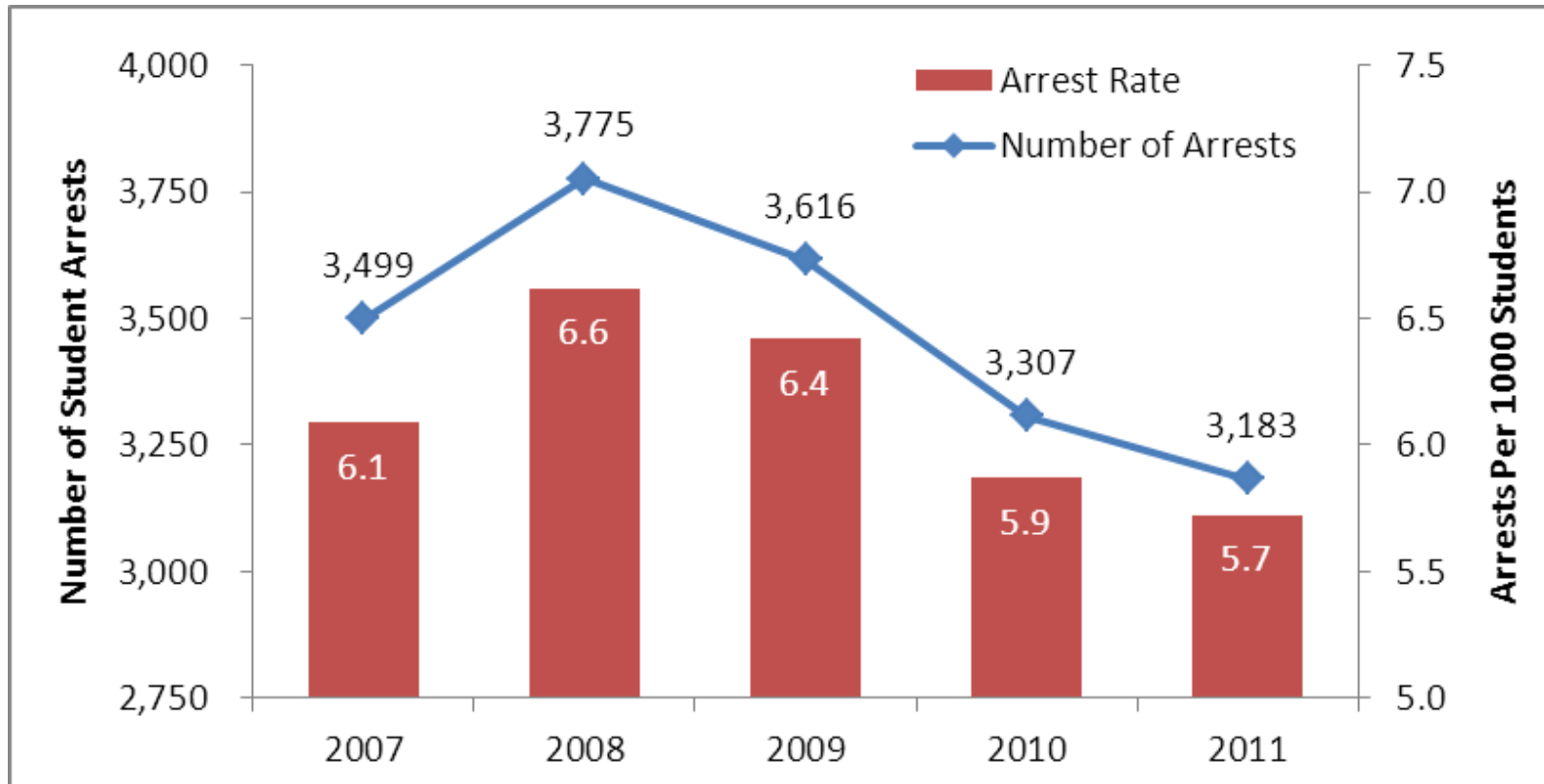
- Arrest doubles the probability of dropout
- Entrance into the juvenile justice system is one of the most direct pathways by which youth become disconnected from school and work.
- Previously arrested young people are more likely to engage in dangerous behaviors and suffer from psychiatric problems.
- Cost to society of career criminals, heavy drug users, high school dropouts.

“Arresting Development: Student Arrests in CT”

Key Findings:

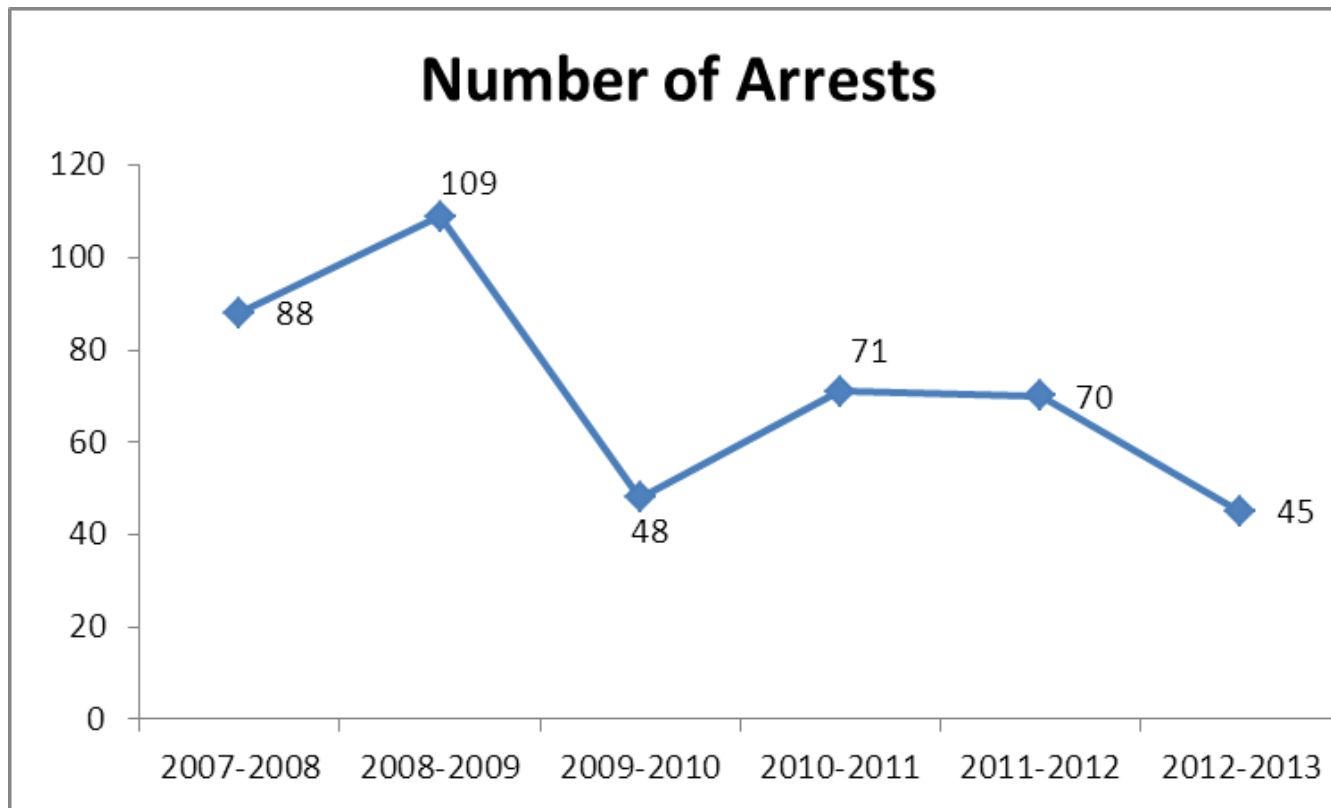
- The number of students arrested has declined in recent years.
- Many arrests likely were avoidable.
- Arrest rates were higher for students of color, students in poor school districts, and special education students.
- Arrest rates varied widely between similar school districts and among schools in the same district.

The number of student arrests has declined in recent years



Connecticut

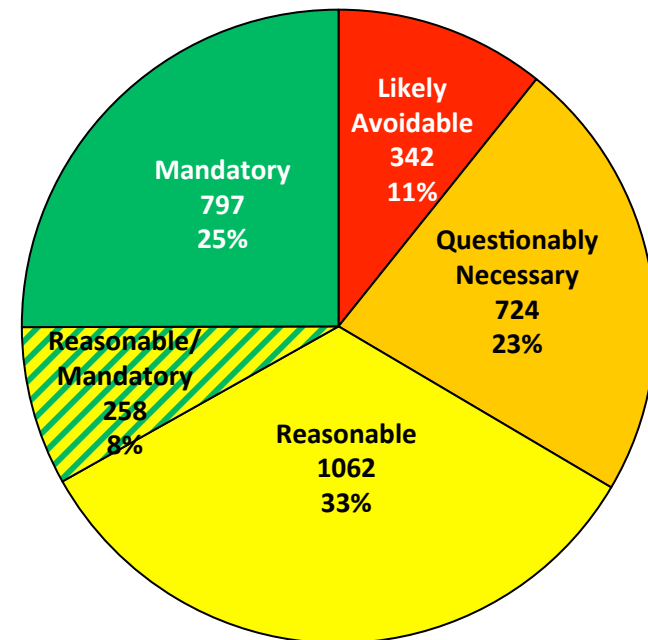
Trends in New London Arrests



New London

Many Arrests were “Likely Avoidable”

Incidents Resulting in “Likely Avoidable” Student Arrests (2011)	Total Number of Arrests
Insubordination/Disrespect	51
Disorderly Conduct	45
Disruption/Disruptive Behavior	43
Verbal Altercation	42
Skipping Class	41
Obscene Language/Profanity	26
Failure to Attend Detention or In School Suspension	20
Leaving Grounds	16
Inappropriate behavior	14
Cell phone	8
Attendance Policy	6
Leaving class without permission	**
Obscene Written Messages	**
Tardiness	**
Behavioral referrals	**
Camera	**
Motor vehicle	**
Spitting	**
Throwing objects (such as a paper airplane or rubber band)	**
Truancy	**
Cheating	**
Dress Code Violation	**
Electronic music device	**
Failure to comply with agreement/behavior plan	**
False information/Lying	**
Forgery	**
Refusal to identify	**
Teasing	**
Unauthorized use of computers	**
Total	342



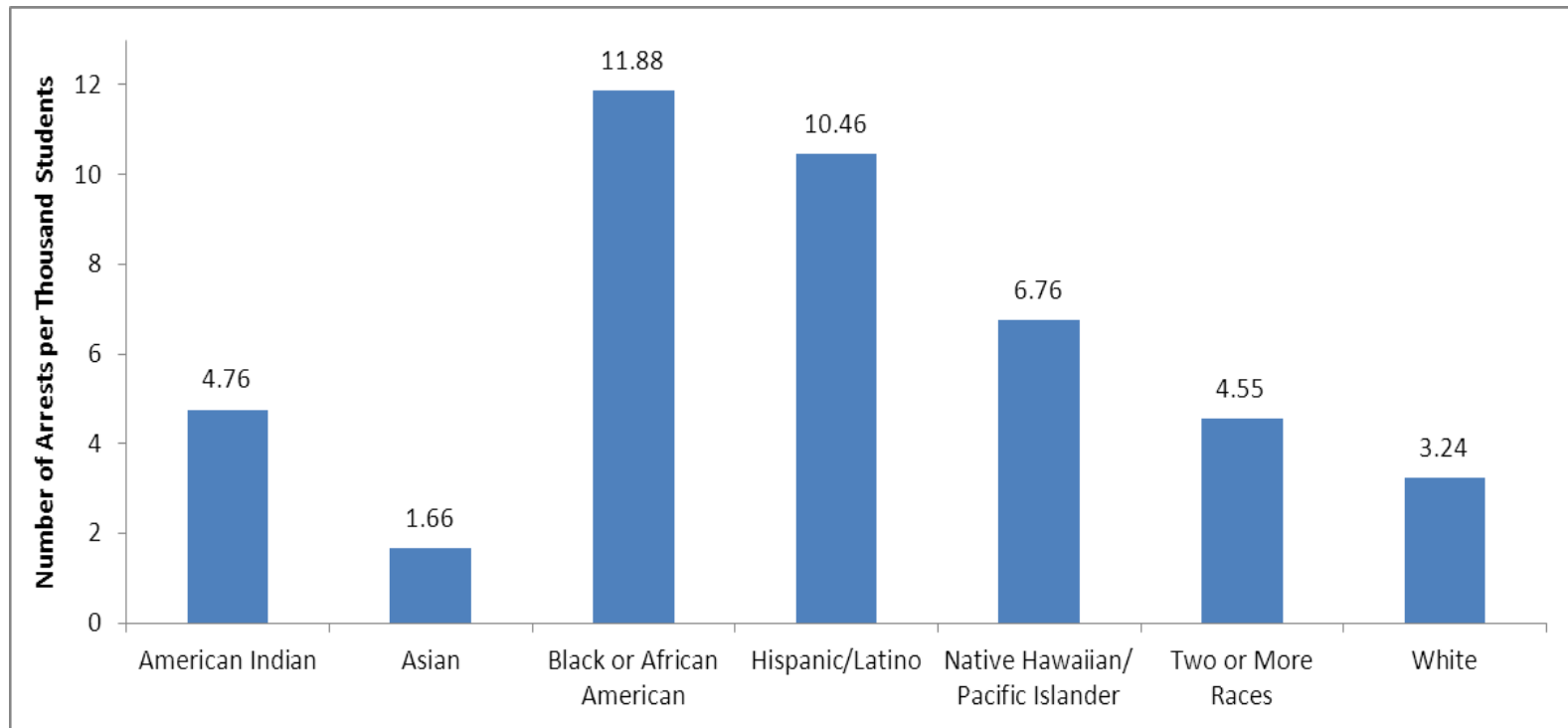
Connecticut, 2010-2011 School Year

Likely Avoidable Reasons for Arrest

Tardiness
Attendance Policy
Verbal Altercation
Electronic music device
Behavioral referrals
Spitting
Cheating
Motor vehicle
Failure to Attend Detention or ISS
Forgery (note from parent)
Unauthorized use of computers
Disruption/Disruptive Behavior
Truancy
Inappropriate behavior
Dress Code Violation
Obscene Language/Profanity
Refusal to identify
Cell phone
Insubordination/ Disrespect
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Failure to comply with agreement/behavior plan
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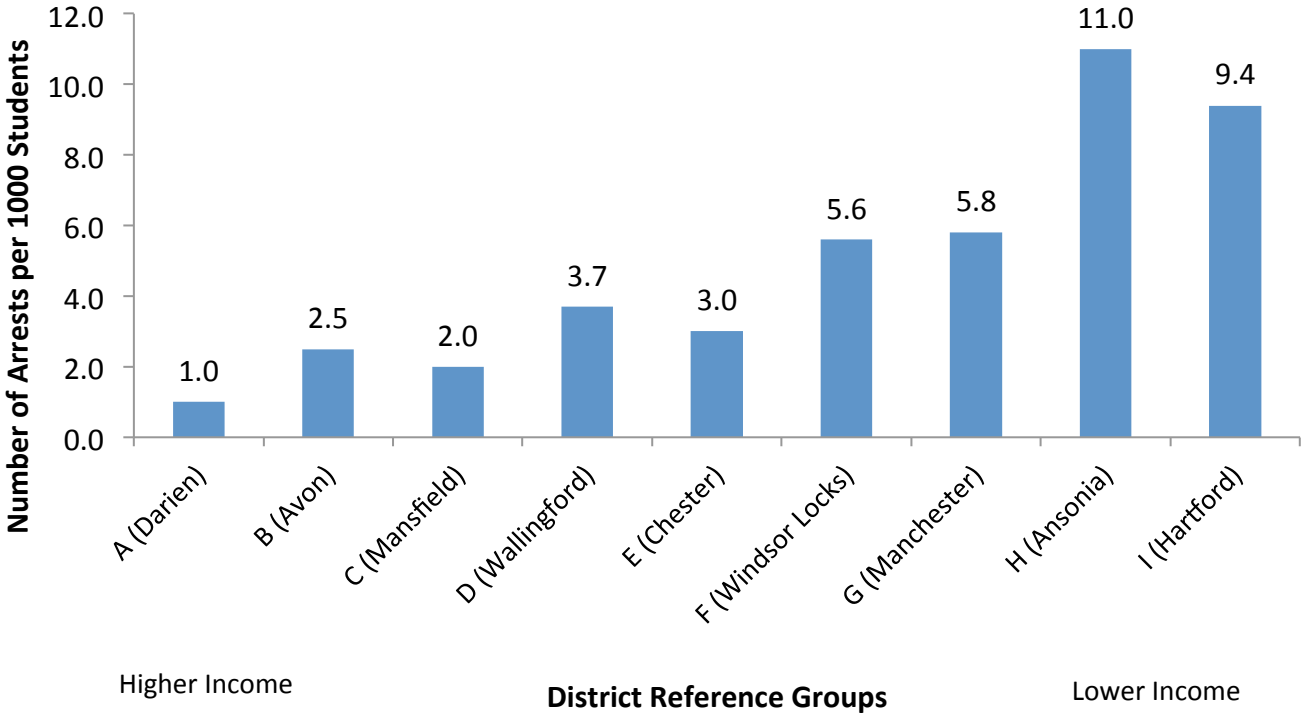
Arrest Rates are Higher for Students of Color (200-2011 School Year)

In Connecticut....



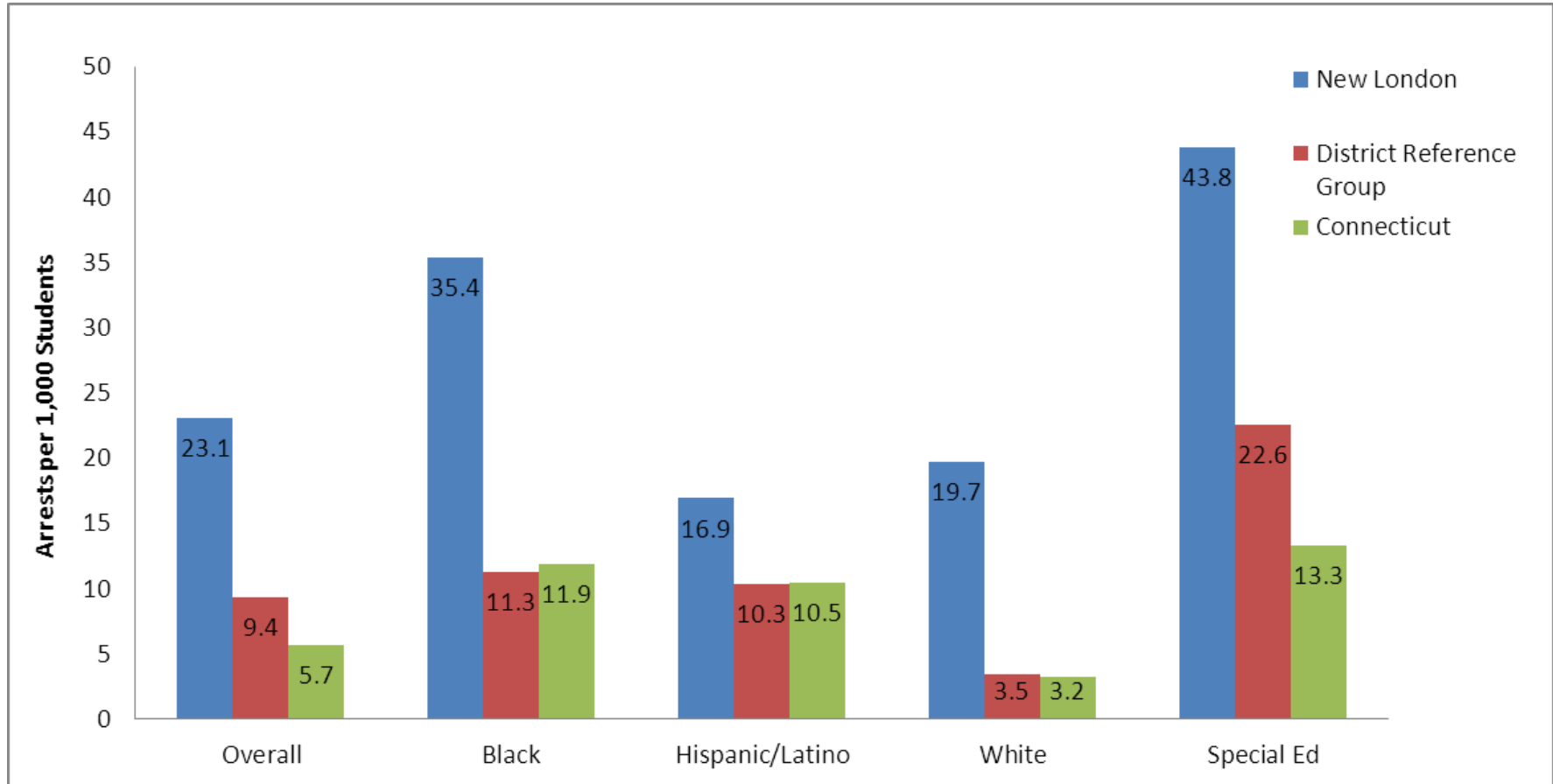
Black students **3.7 times** more likely to be arrested
Latino students **3.2 times** more likely to be arrested

Arrest Rates are Higher in Lower-Income Districts (2010-2011 School Year)

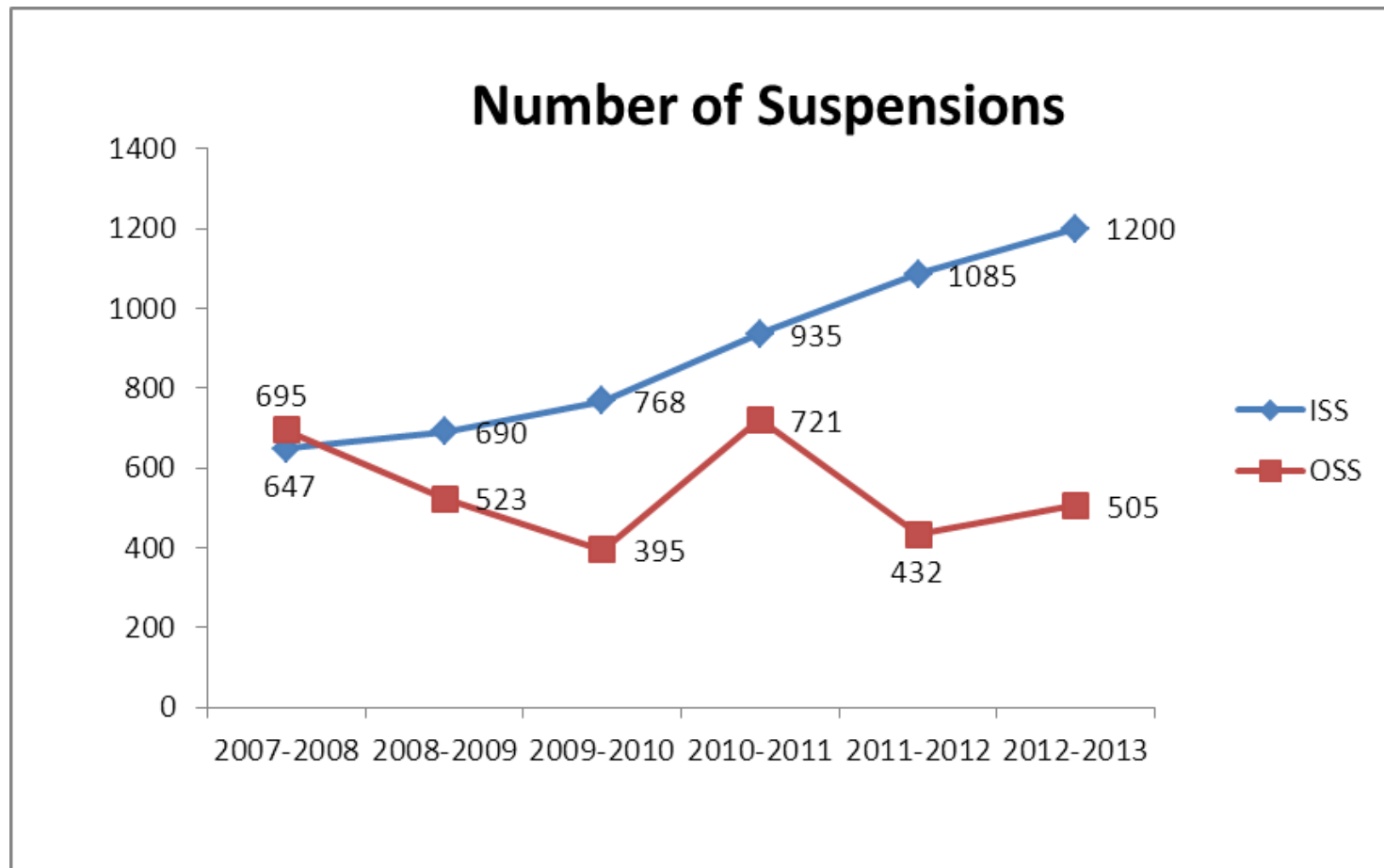


Schools in DRG I (Bridgeport, Hartford, New Britain, New Haven, New London, Waterbury, and Windham) arrest students **9 times** more often than wealthier schools.

New London has Higher Arrest Rates than Peer Districts and the State (2010-2011 School Year)



New London Suspensions



Note: This is the number of suspensions issued, not the number of students suspended.

How can we reduce unnecessary
student arrests and keep New
London's youth in school?

What Can You Do? State Policy

- **Support School Arrest Bill**
 - Clearly define “student arrests,” which are not currently defined by the state.
 - Collect and publish data on all student arrests (currently not required for all incidents resulting in arrests).
 - Mandate the creation of grounds rules for student arrests, memorialized in memoranda of agreement between schools and police, in all districts with police stationed in schools.
- **Contact your legislators**
 - Senator Andrea Stillman, Representative Ernest Hewitt, Representative Elissa Wright

What Can You Do? Community

- Request up-to-date data from Mark Irons, Waterford Juvenile Probation Supervisor
- Join LISTs (Local Interagency Services Teams), groups of community stakeholders that review youth-related mental health and juvenile justice needs. (In Waterford, meets first Monday of the month in Montville.)
- Expand use of Juvenile Review Boards (in Waterford), locally-run alternatives to the court system for minors.
- Attend January 22nd Color of Justice Screening

What Can You Do? Schools

- Make sure your local police department and schools know about free trainings for appropriate police/student interaction. (Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee)
- Ask district administrators to initiate the MOA process if one is not already in place. Request a copy of your district's graduated response discipline policy and compare it to best practice models.
- Ask whether staff are receiving mental health and trauma-response training, and encourage the district to provide such programs. Ensure staff know about EMPS, Emergency Mobile Psychiatric Services.

What Can You Do? Schools, cont'd

- Ask for a copy of your district's school climate and bullying policies. Determine whether they call for police involvement that could be avoided. As for student arrest reduction to be included in the plan.
- Check with your schools to see if they know what resources are available in the community and offer to compile a list if there isn't one.
- Work with teachers and administrators to create alternative, restorative justice practices – discussion groups, circles, etc.

Additional Resources

- Connecticut Voices for Children Report “Arrested Development: Student Arrests in CT”
- Connecticut Health and Development Institute Report “The SBDI Toolkit: A Community Resource for Reducing School-Based Arrests”
- Connecticut Juvenile Justice Alliance
- Connecticut Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee
- Dignity in Schools Campaign

Questions?

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