



Dangerous
Weapons
and
Disciplinary
Incidents

School Year
2008-09

February 2010

FY2010
Report
To the Legislature

As required by
Minnesota Statutes
Section 121A.06
Subdivision 3

COMMISSIONER:

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Upon request, this report can be made available in alternative formats.

ESTIMATED COST OF PREPARING THIS REPORT

This report provides information that is maintained and published as Minnesota Rules by the Office of Revisor of Statutes as a part of its normal business functions. Therefore, the cost information reported below does not include the cost of gathering the data but rather is limited to the estimated cost of actually analyzing the data, determining recommendations, and preparing this report document.

Special funding was not appropriated for the costs of preparing this report.

The estimated cost incurred by the Minnesota Department of Education in preparing this report is \$500.00.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Minnesota Statutes Section 121A.06, Subdivision 3, requires the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) to annually report on disciplinary incidents, and incidents involving dangerous weapons, that occur in Minnesota public schools. The current report covers the 2008-2009 school year. Data for this report were obtained from MDE's Disciplinary Incident Report System (DIRS).

The majority of disciplinary incidents in the DIRS dataset can be characterized in the following way:

- The most common incident types are: disruptive, disorderly conduct or insubordination, and fighting, followed by assault, threats/intimidation, and verbal abuse.
- The majority of all reported incidents occur during school hours.
- Most incidents occur in the classroom or other indoor areas, followed by the hallway.
- Although most incidents do NOT involve weapons, when a weapon is involved, the most common weapon type is a pocketknife or a knife.
- Almost all incidents do not involve victims.
- The vast majority of incidents did not report any associated cost. For those incidents with property damaged/loss, the estimated cost was less than \$250.00.
- Male offenders commit 75 percent of the incidents.
- The majority of offenders are White, Non-Hispanic or Black, Non-Hispanic.
- Most offenders are clustered in the following grades: eighth, ninth, and tenth and eleventh.
- With a very few exceptions, most incidents are committed by youth who are students enrolled at the school of the incident.
- Students with an IEP commit approximately 46 percent of the disciplinary incidents.
- The majority of incidents in the DIRS dataset result in out-of-school suspensions.

As a result of reporting requirements, a desire for additional local validation of disciplinary data, and the need for a broad variety of users to access disciplinary incident data, MDE developed a Web-based reporting system for disciplinary incidents-the Disciplinary Incident Reporting System (DIRS). This system was implemented in 2004-2005 school year and was in use for the 2005-2006, 2006-2007, 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 school years with minor revisions each year to the process. DIRS will continue to be used to provide data for subsequent reports required by Minnesota Statutes Section 121A.06, Subdivision 3. Local Education Agencies (LEAs) may submit disciplinary incidents using:

<https://education.state.mn.us/MIDMS/login.jsf?Appld=DIRS>

INTRODUCTION

Each year, Minnesota school districts and charter schools (LEA's—Local Education Agencies) are required to report all disciplinary incidents resulting in a student being out of school for more than one day, as well as all incidents involving the use or possession of a dangerous weapon in school zones. During the 2008-2009 school years, LEAs submitted reports electronically through the Minnesota Department of Education's Disciplinary Incident Reporting System (DIRS), a Web-based reporting system. Slight revisions were made to the 2006-07, 2007-08, and 2008-09 versions of DIRS to make the process more user-friendly and to increase the accuracy of the data. Note that especially large districts submit their data electronically through a batching process, rather than directly through the Web-based reporting system.

The DIRS system gathers a variety of information about disciplinary incidents, including the following items: type of disciplinary incident; time of incident; location of incident; whether a weapon was involved in the incident; the number of victims involved in the incident; the estimated property cost of an incident; the gender, race/ethnicity, grade, school status, Individual Education Plan (IEP) status, 504 status, and disability status of the offender; disciplinary action taken and number of days suspended or out of school. Although a few additional items are collected as part of the DIRS system for federal reporting requirements, only the above items are included in this report.

CAUTIONS ABOUT DATA

The data captured by the DIRS system are not verified or validated with individual LEAs. The data presented in this report are drawn directly from the DIRS system. Only minimal efforts are made to check or verify the data beyond the validation processes included in the DIRS system. The only incidents excluded for the DIRS system were those incidents that had no “incident type” recorded. Aside from incident type, where other data elements are missing from the system, a separate category for missing data is presented in the data tables for each variable.

The reader is cautioned not to draw conclusions by comparing DIRS data across years. Incidents in the DIRS system are a reflection of many factors, including the quality of data entered, training and capacity of staff to enter data, as well as individual disciplinary policies of and enforcement of policies by each district. To date, MDE has provided minimal on-going, consistent technical assistance or training to districts to support entry of data into the DIRS system. MDE has provided guidance to districts regarding uniformity of data through the HELP assistance available through the electronic system.

TYPE OF DISCIPLINARY INCIDENTS: SCHOOL YEAR 2008-2009

Disciplinary incidents are categorized into one of 26 different types. Included below in Table 1 are the frequencies and percentages of disciplinary incidents by type. Incidents of “disruptive, disorderly conduct or insubordination” and “fighting,” are the most common, followed by “assault,” “threat/intimidation” and “verbal abuse” incidents. Figures 1 and 2 represent graphic illustrations of Table 1, using frequency of incidents and percent of incidents, respectively.

TABLE 1. Type of Disciplinary Incident		
	Frequency	Percent
Alcohol	780	1%
Arson	70	0%
Assault	4,151	6%
Attendance	2,475	4%
Bomb	5	0%
Bomb Threat	27	0%
Bullying (all forms except cyber bullying)	902	1%
Computer	155	0%
Controlled Substances (prescription)	318	0%
Cyber Bullying	38	0%
Disruptive/Disorderly Conduct/Insubordination	23,173	36%
Extortion	9	0%
Fighting	10,635	17%
Gang Activity	473	1%
Harassment	2,110	3%
Hazing	41	0%
Illegal Drugs	1,959	3%
Other	3,242	5%
Over-the-Counter Medications against school policy	79	0%
Pyrotechnics	82	0%
Robbery (using force)	2	0%
Terroristic Threats	332	1%
Theft	1,999	3%
Threat/Intimidation	3,377	5%
Tobacco	1,871	3%
Vandalism/Property Related	932	1%
Verbal Abuse	3,482	5%
Weapon	1,311	2%
Total	60,398	100%

Figure 1. Type of Disciplinary Incidents (Number) 2008-09

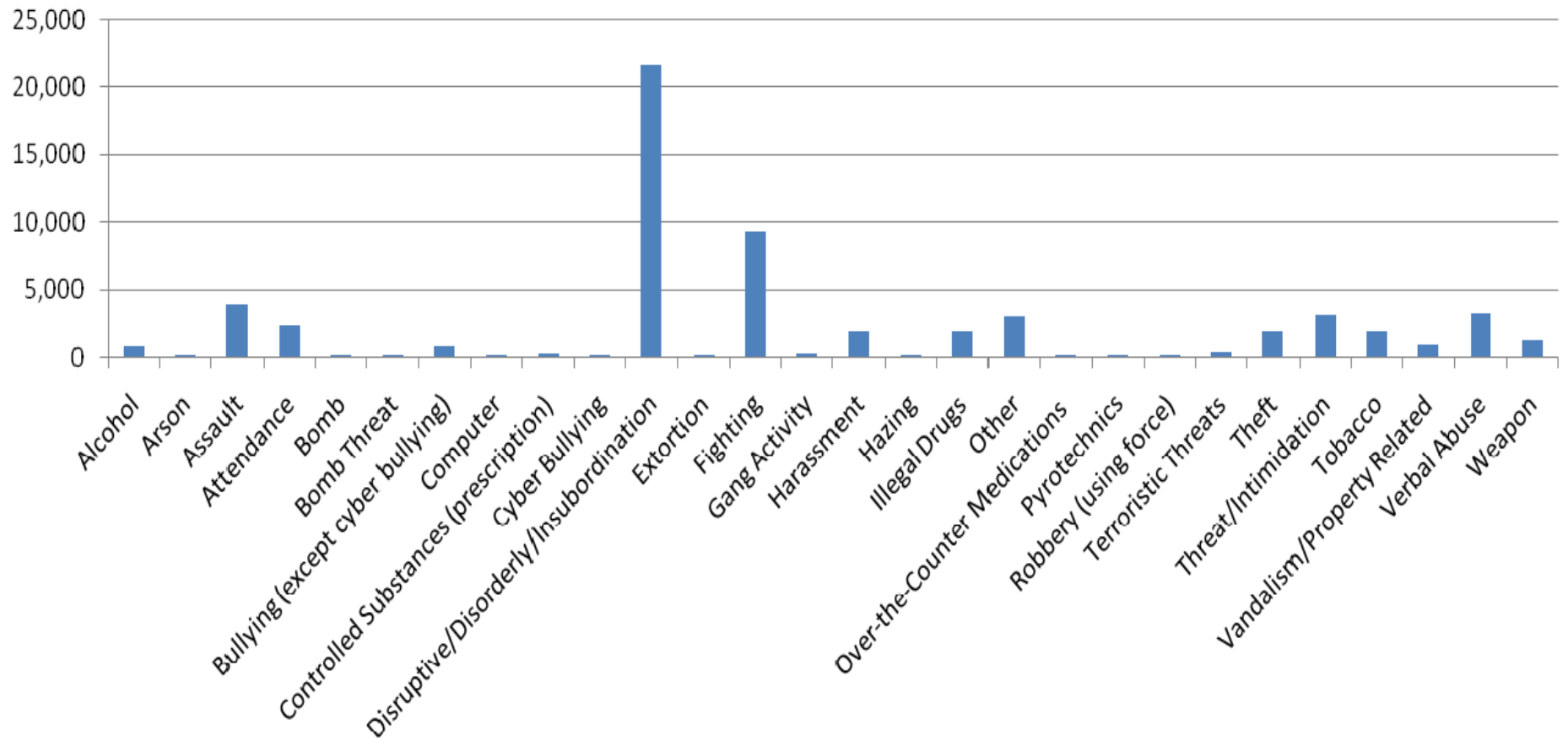
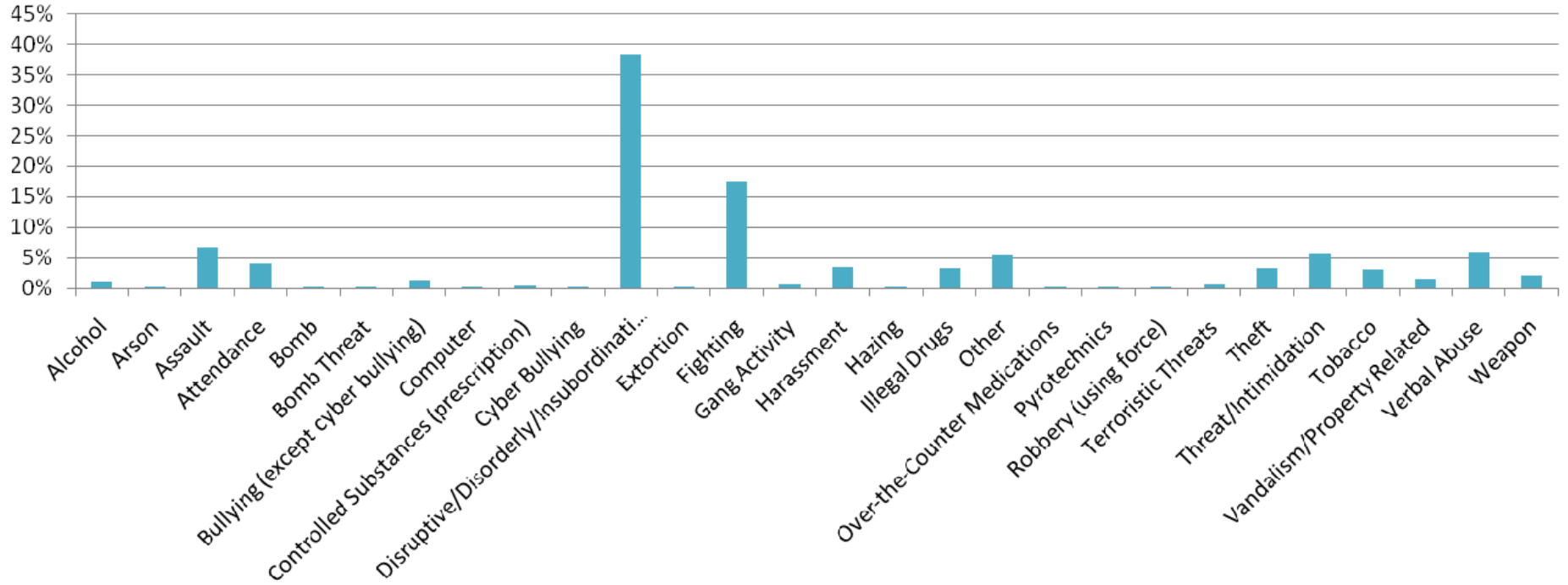


Figure 2. Types of Disciplinary Incident (Percent) 2008-09



TIME OF DISCIPLINARY INCIDENTS: SCHOOL YEAR 2008-2009

Disciplinary incidents are categorized into one of two different incident times when they occurred. Included below in Table 2 are the frequencies and percentages of the times of disciplinary incidents. Incidents occurring “during school hours” represent the majority of disciplinary incidents reported by LEAs. Figures 3 and 4 represent graphic illustrations of Table 2, using frequency of incidents and percent of incidents, respectively.

TABLE 2. Time of Incident

Time of Incident	Frequency	Percent
During School Hours	58755	97%
Outside of School Hours	2011	3%
TOTAL	67,766	100%

Figure 3. Time of Incidents (Number) 2008-09

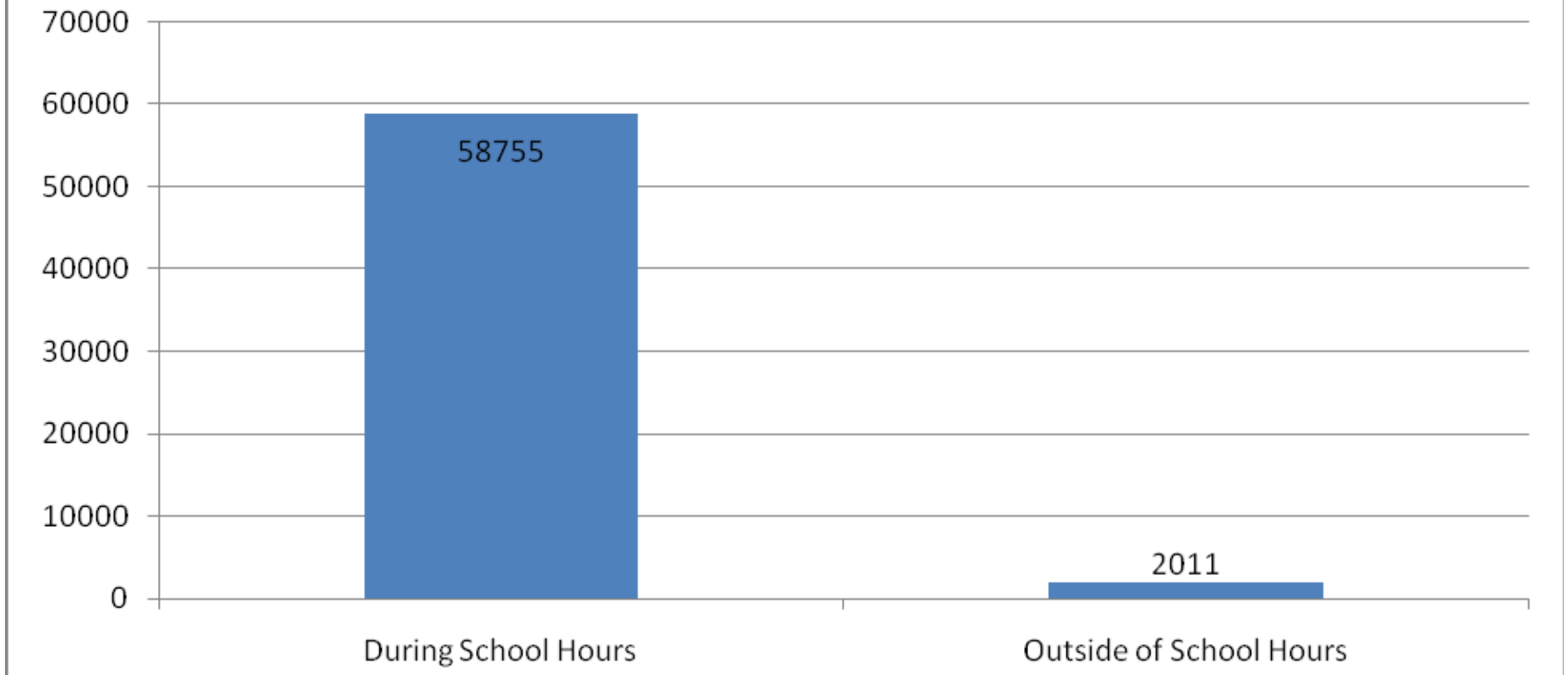
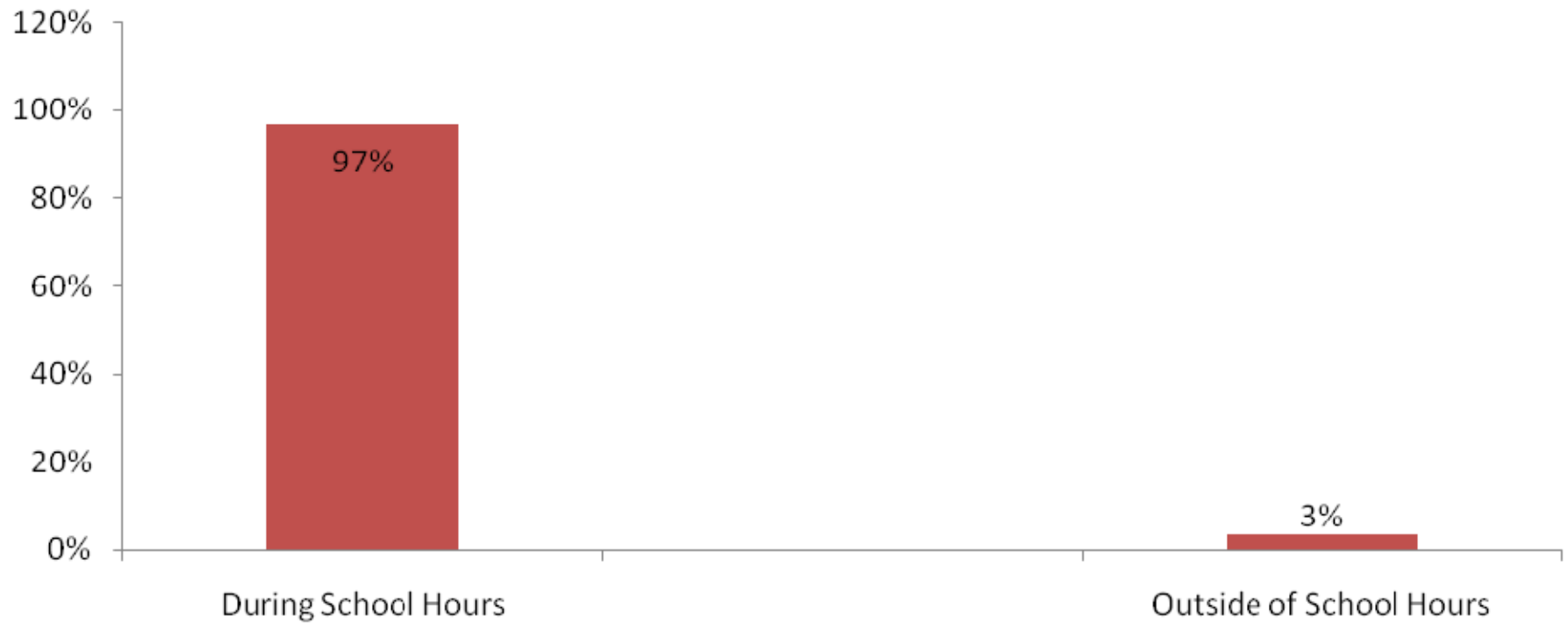


Figure 4. Time of Incident (percent) 2008-09



LOCATION OF DISCIPLINARY INCIDENTS: SCHOOL YEAR 2008-2009

Disciplinary incidents are categorized into one of nine different locations where they occurred. Included below in Table 1 are the frequencies and percentages of disciplinary incidents by location for each school year included in this report. Incidents occurring in the “classroom” and “other indoor area” are the most common, followed by “hallway.” Figures 5 and 6 represent graphic illustrations of Table 3, using frequency of incidents and percent of incidents, respectively.

TABLE 3. Location of Incident

Location	Frequency	Percent
Classroom	24773	41%
Hallway	10959	18%
Locker	1093	2%
Off Campus	1655	3%
Other Indoor Area	16117	27%
Other Outdoor Area	3615	6%
Parking Lot	847	1%
Restroom	1060	2%
School Bus	1658	3%
TOTAL	67,235	100%

Figure 5. Location of Incidents (Numbers) 2008-09 School Year

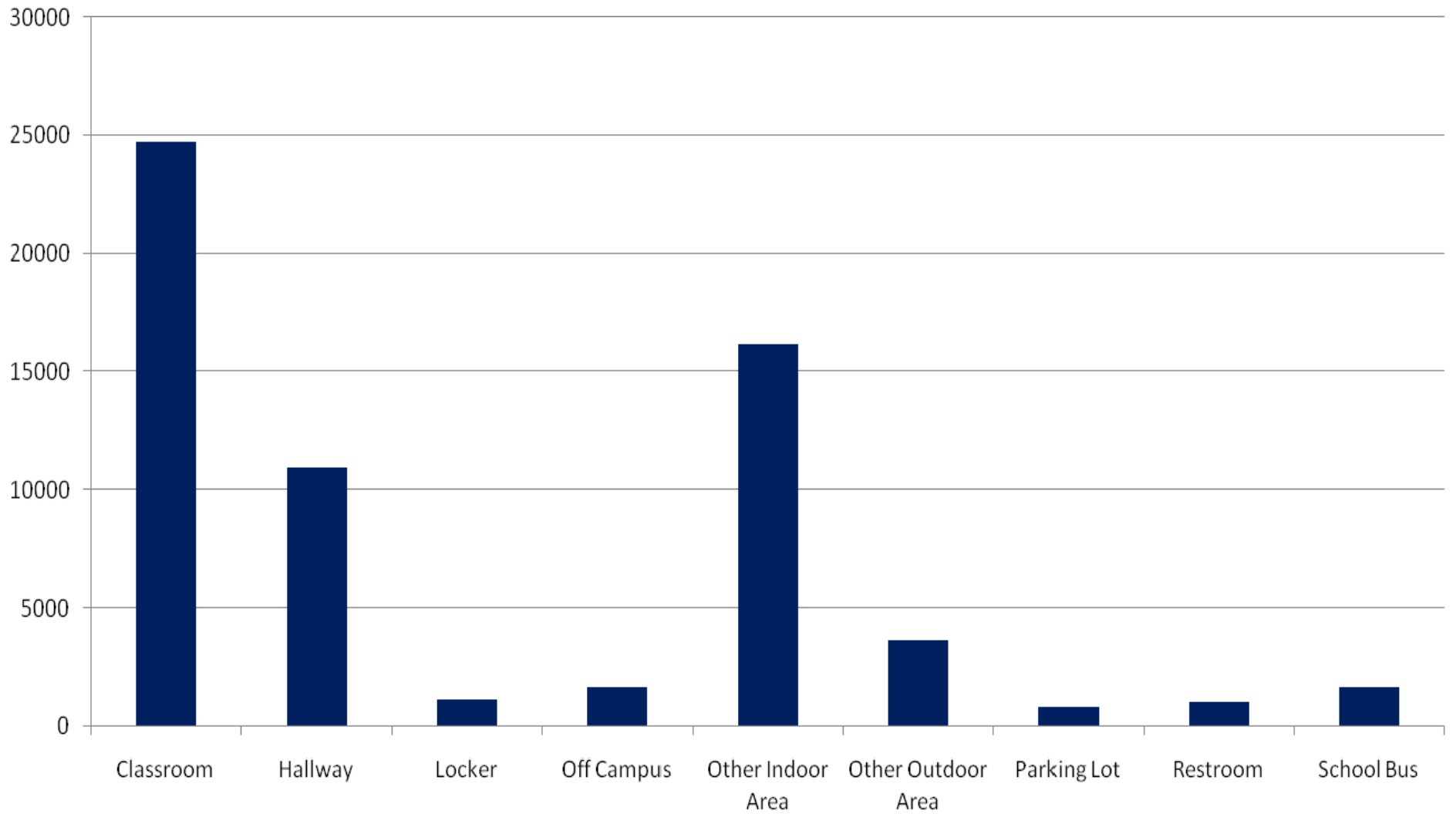
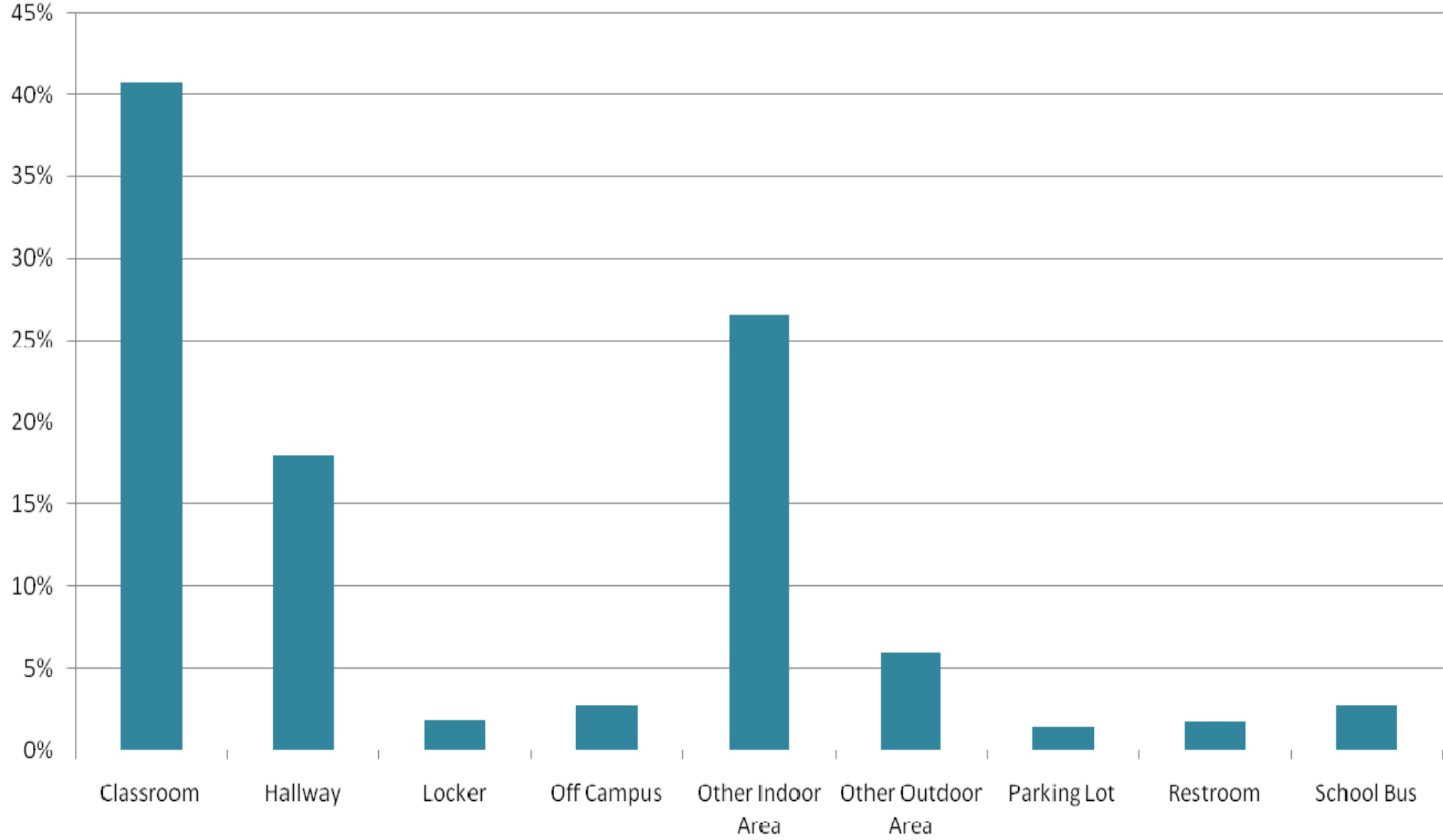


Figure 6. Location of Incidents (Percent) 2008-09 School Year



INVOLVEMENT OF WEAPONS IN DISCIPLINARY INCIDENTS: SCHOOL YEAR 2008-2009

If disciplinary incidents involve weapons, the weapons are categorized into one of sixteen different types. Included below in Table 4 are the frequencies and percentages of incidents where weapons were involved for the 2008-09 school year. Although weapons are involved in only 2 percent of all incidents (see Table 1 and Figures 1 and 2), when weapons are involved, “pocketknife, less than 2 ½ inches” and “knife” are the most common, followed by “pocketknife, 2 ½ inches or greater.” Figures 7 and 8 represent graphic illustrations of Table 4, using frequency of incidents and percent of incidents, respectively.

Table 4. Involvement of Weapon in Incident

Type of Weapon	Frequency	Percent
Blunt Object (ex: numchuck or nunchaku, chains)	35	3%
Hand Gun	14	1%
Knife	320	23%
Long Gun	7	1%
Mace/Noxious Substance	5	0%
Other	59	4%
Paintball Gun	4	0%
Pellet/BB/Air Gun	76	6%
Pocketknife, 2 1/2 inches or greater	230	17%
Pocketknife, less than 2 1/2 inches	422	31%
Replica/Toy Gun	92	7%
Sharp Object - not a knife or pocketknife (ex: razor blade, chinese star)	112	8%
Stun Guns/Taser Gun	1	0%
Total Incidents with Weapon	1377	100%

Figure 7. Involvement of Weapons (Number) 2008-09

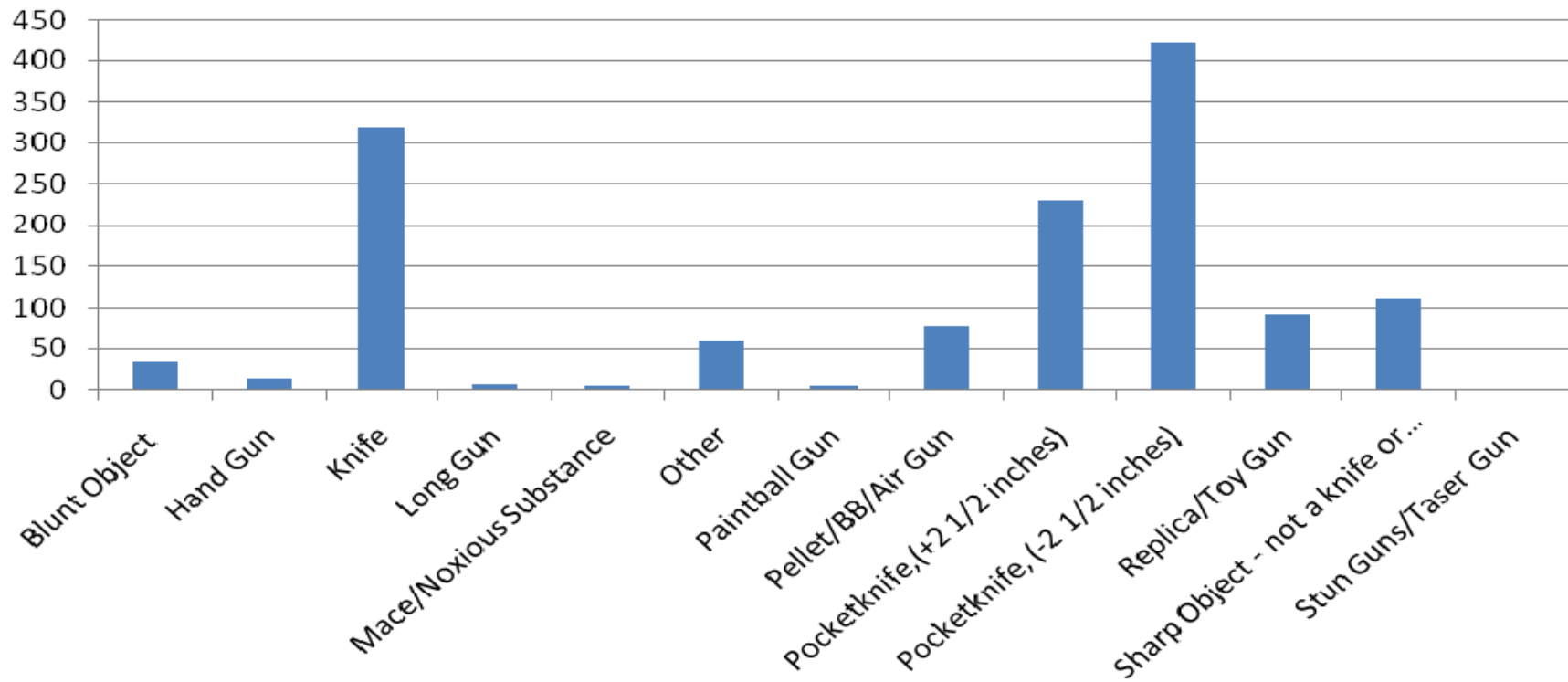
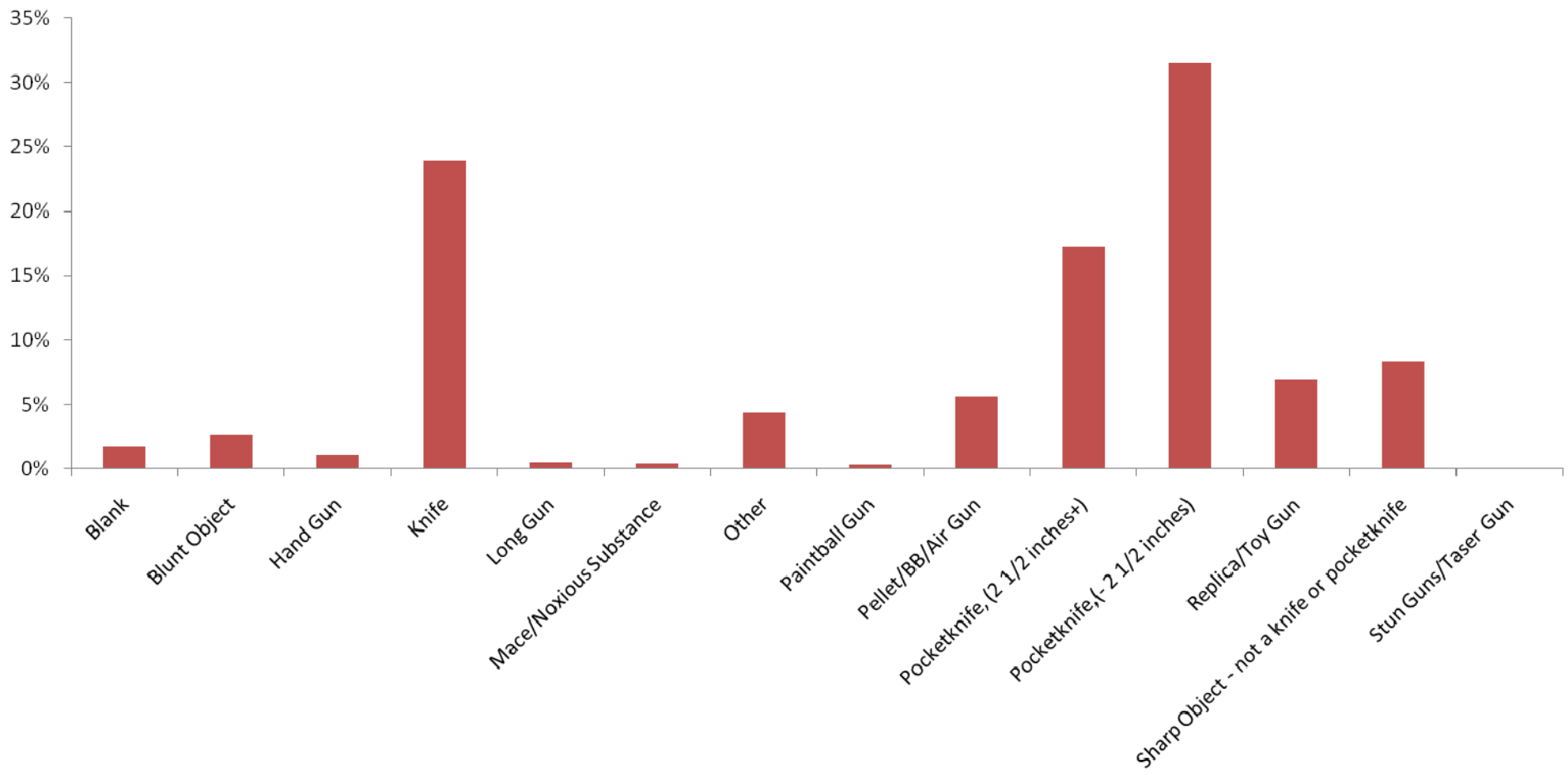


Figure 8. Involvement of Weapons (Percent) 2008-09



NUMBER OF VICTIMS INVOLVED IN INCIDENTS: SCHOOL YEAR 2008-2009

Disciplinary incidents are recorded with the number of victims involved. Although LEAs can enter any number of victims, for the purposes of this report, the number of victims has been categorized into five options. Included below in Table 5 are the frequencies and percentages of disciplinary incidents by number of victims involved for each school year included in this report. Most incidents included in the DIRS dataset were reported as incidents where no victims were involved. Figures 9 and 10 represent graphic illustrations of Table 5, using frequency of incidents and percent of incidents, respectively.

TABLE 5. Number of Victims Involved

Number of Victims	Frequency	Percent
No (0) Victims	43175	71%
1 Victim	12802	21%
2 Victims	4278	7%
3-5 Victims	134	0%
More than 5 Victims	9	0%
Total	60398	100%

Figure 9. Number of Victims (Number) 2008-09

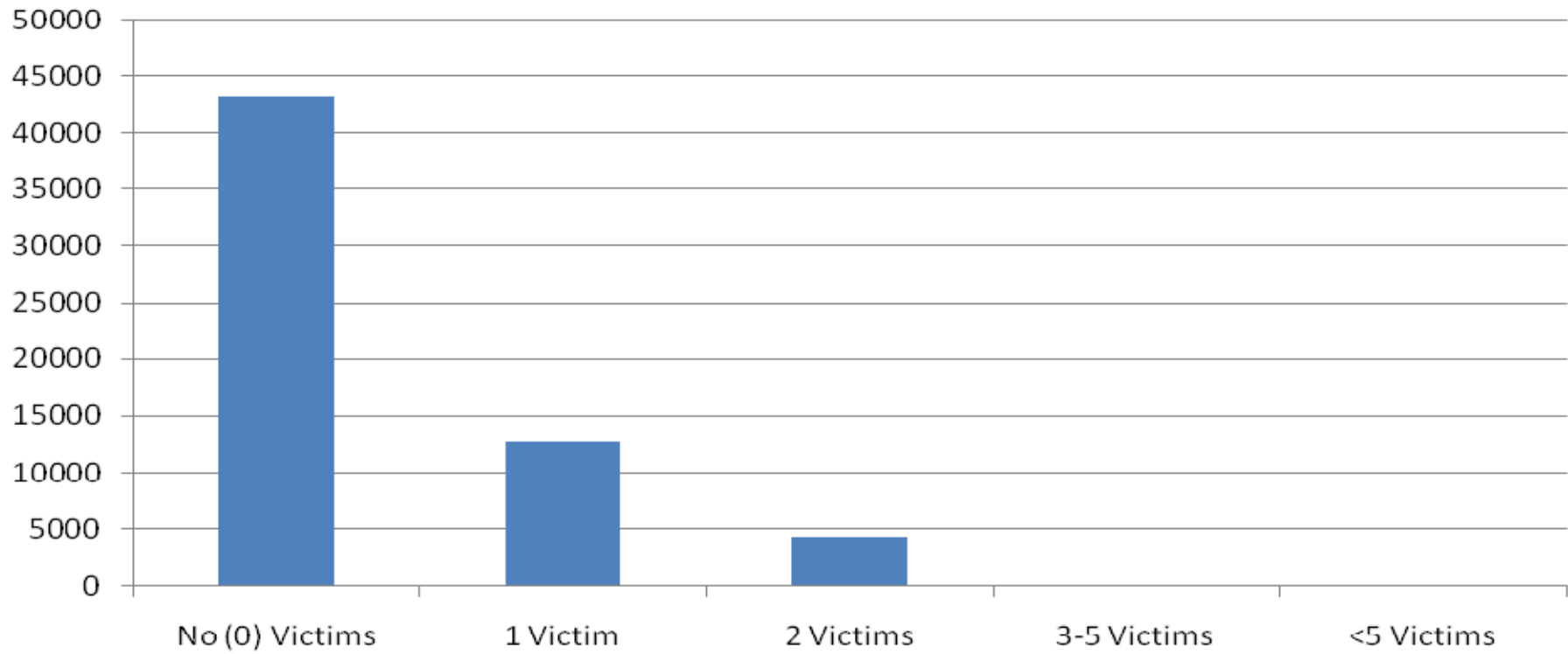
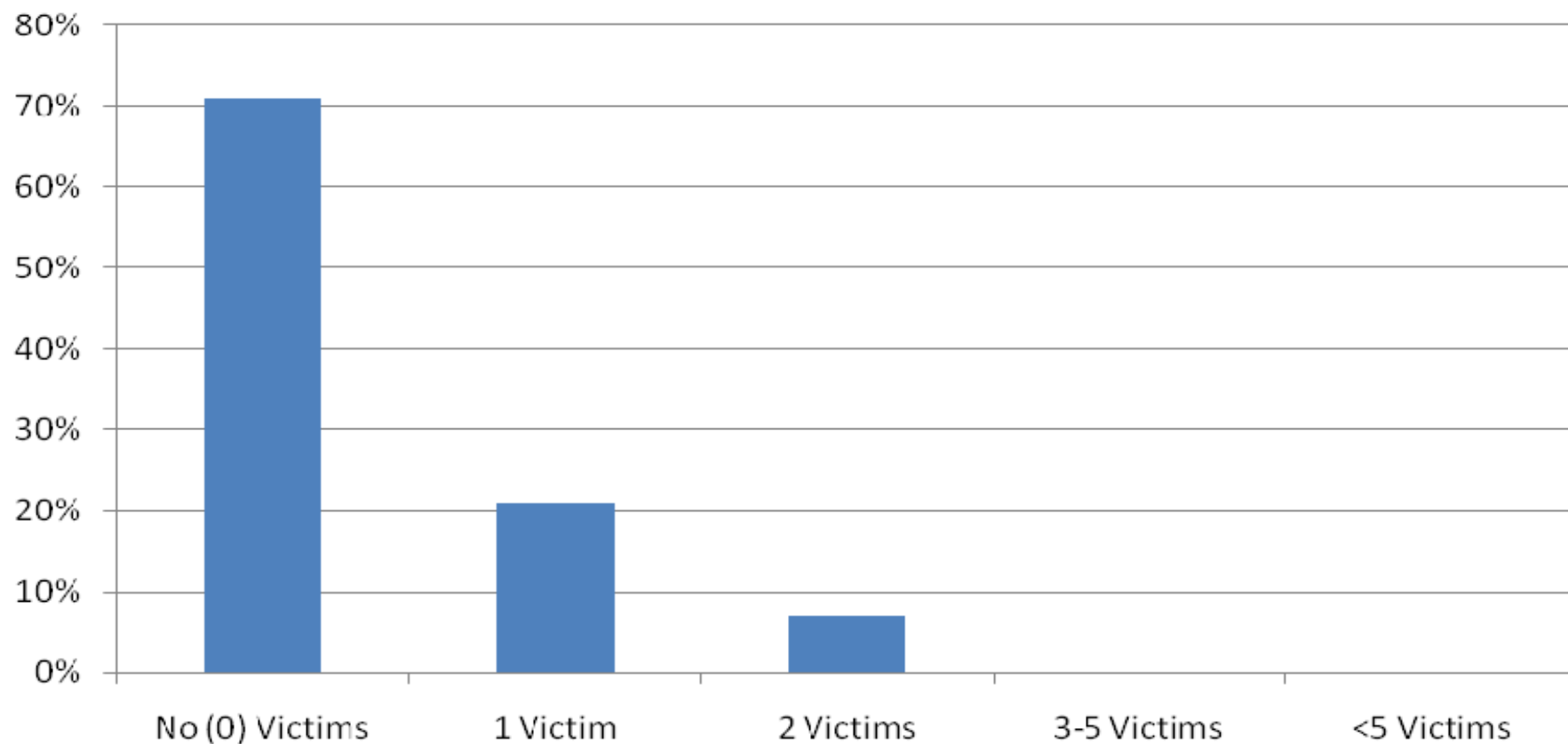


Figure 10. Number of Victims (Percent) 2008-09



ESTIMATED COST TO PROPERTY: SCHOOL YEAR 2008-2009

Disciplinary incidents where a victim has been reported also ask for the estimated damage to property. LEAs are asked to select a range of the estimated damage. In the 2008-2009 school year, one percent of the incidents were cited for incurring a cost. Included below in Table 6 are the frequencies and percentages of disciplinary incidents by the range of the estimated cost to property. Most incidents had no cost to property. Figures 11 and 12 represent graphic illustrations of Table 6, using frequency of incidents and percent of incidents, respectively.

Table 6. Estimated Cost to Property		
Cost	Frequency	Percent
\$0	60085	99%
1-\$500	609	1%
Over \$500	70	0%
Total Estimated Cost	60764	100%

Figure 11: Estimated Cost to Property (Number) 2008-09

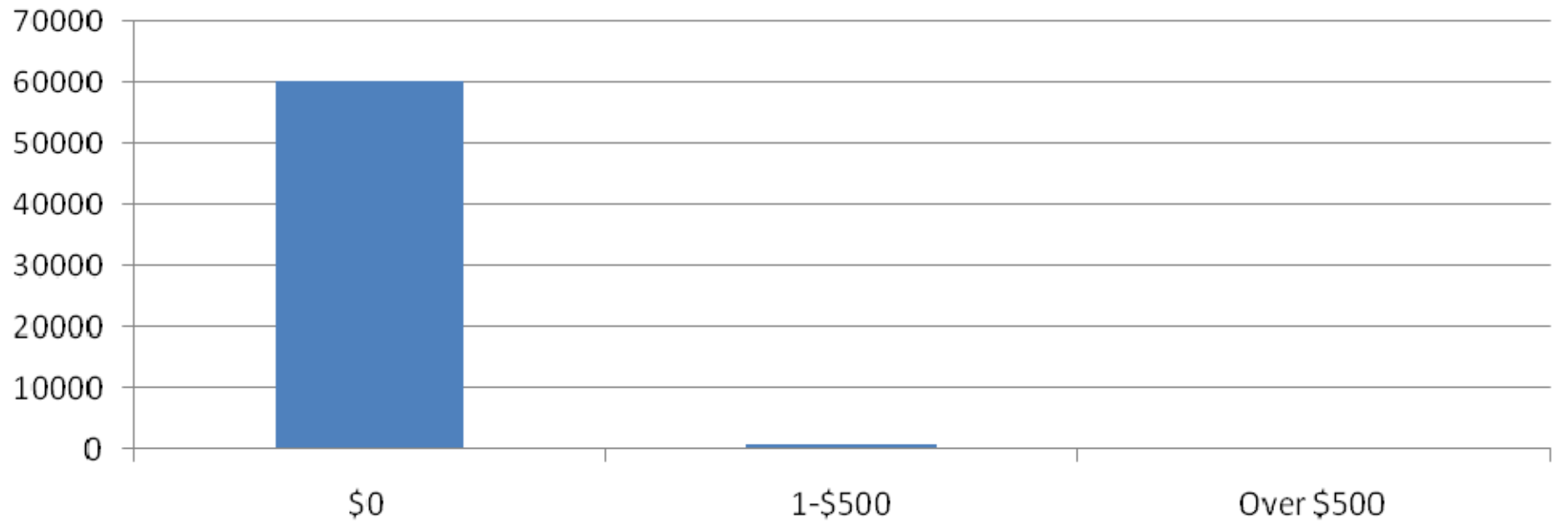
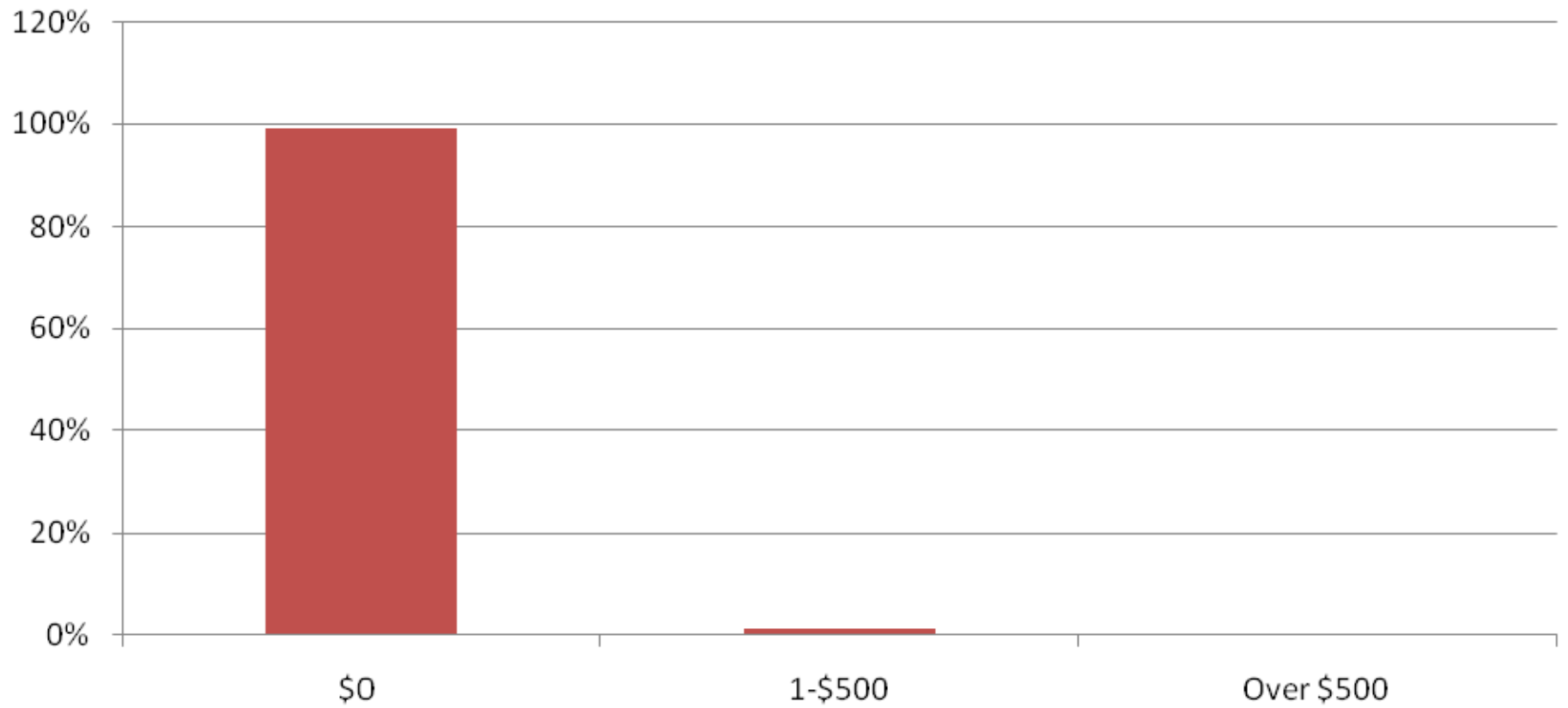


Figure 11. Estimated Cost to Property (Percent) 2008-09



GENDER OF OFFENDERS: SCHOOL YEAR 2008-2009

Gender of offender is recorded for each disciplinary incident. Included below in Table 7 are the frequencies and percentages of disciplinary incidents by gender of offender. The majority of offenders in the DIRS dataset are males. Figures 13 and 14 represent graphic illustrations of Table 7, using frequency of incidents and percent of incidents, respectively.

Table 7. Gender of Offender		
Gender	Frequency	Percent
Female	15,094	25%
Male	45,506	75%
Total	60,600	100%

Figure 13. Gender of Offenders (Number) 2008-09

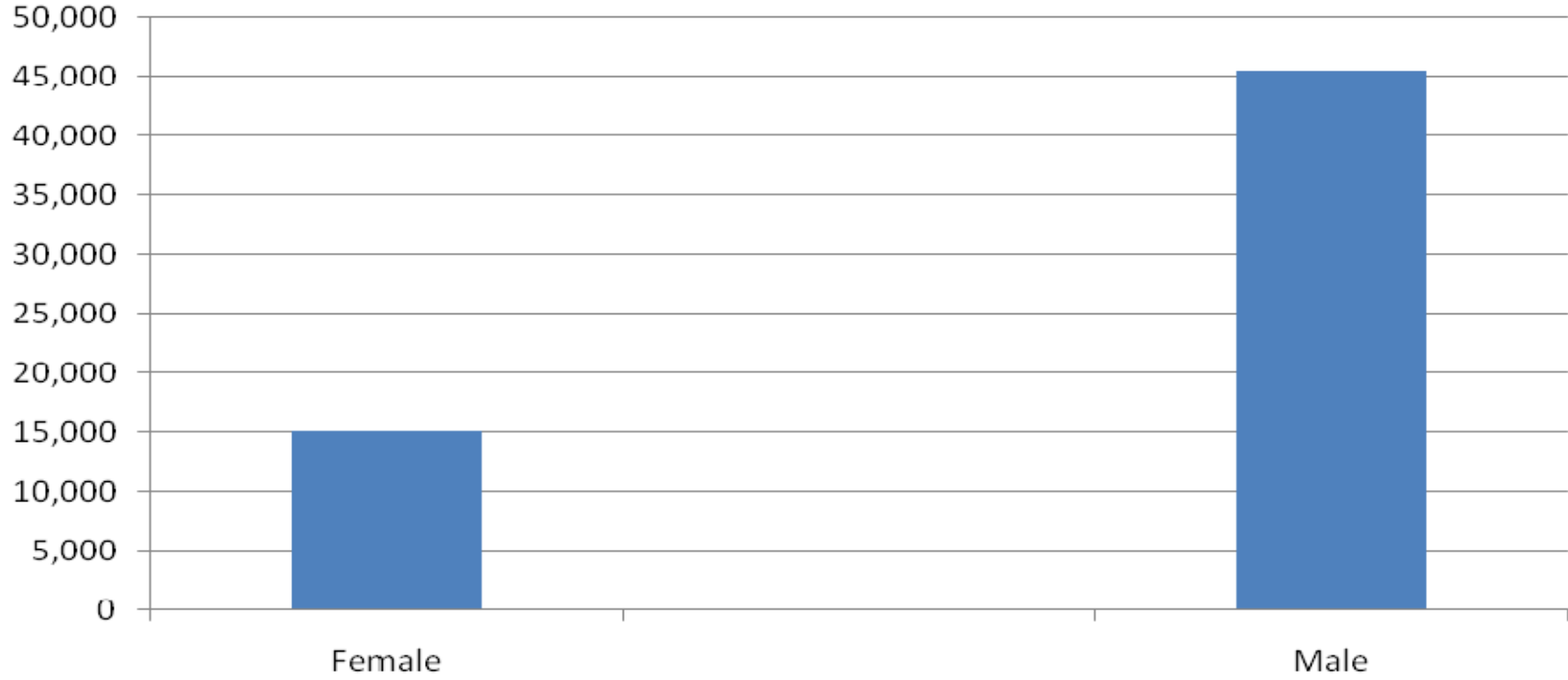
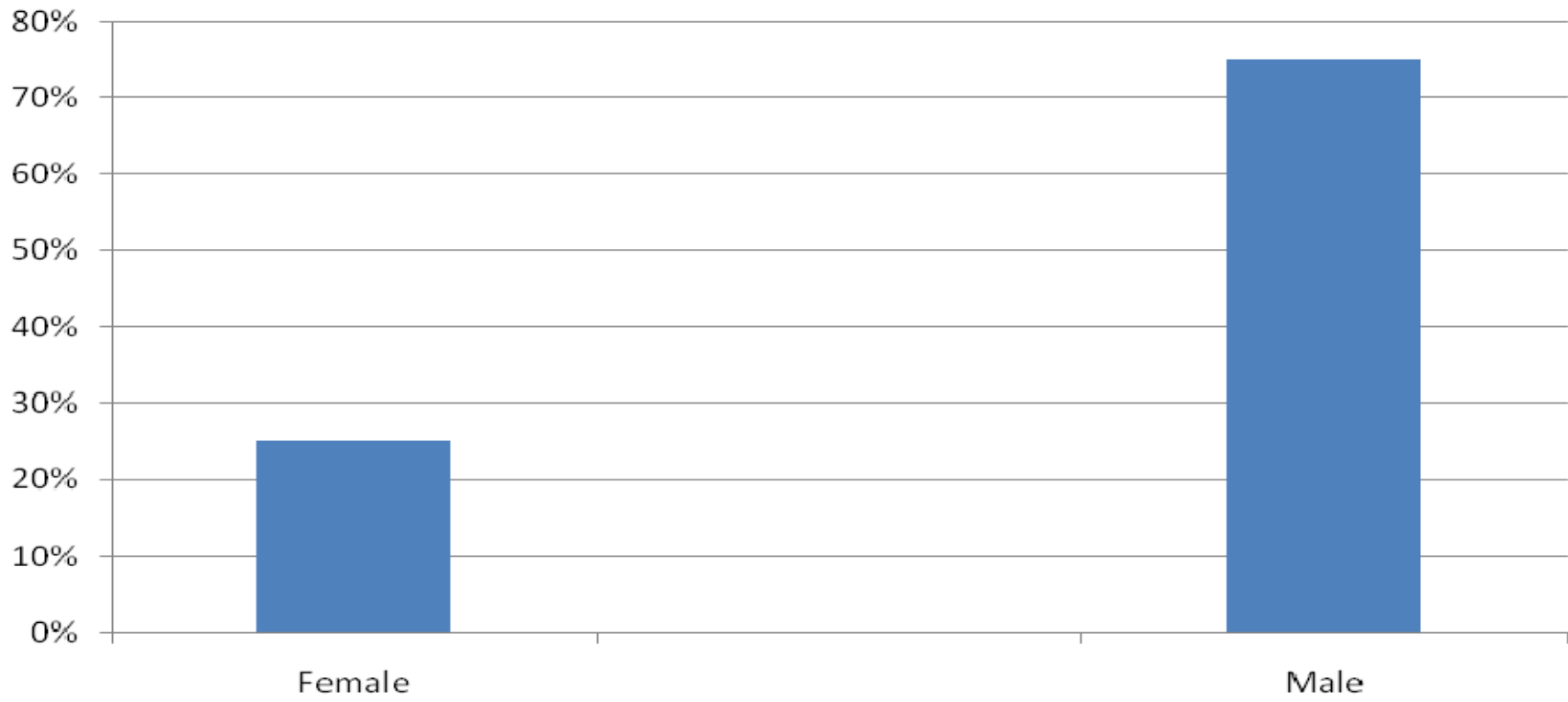


Figure 14. Gender of Offenders (Percent) 2008-09



RACE/ETHNICITY OF OFFENDERS: SCHOOL YEAR 2008-2009

The race/ethnicity of the offender is recorded for each disciplinary incident. Included below in Table 8 are the frequencies and percentages of disciplinary incidents by race/ethnicity of offender for each school year included in this report. Note that in 2008-2009, the DIRS system included additional data validation checks related to a students' race and ethnicity by validating the information entered in DIRS with the information that has been submitted with a student's Minnesota Automated Reporting Student System (MARSS) number (an individual student level tracking number). The majority of offenders in the DIRS dataset is White, Non-Hispanic; followed by Black, Non-Hispanic. Figures 15 and 16 represent graphic illustrations of Table 8, using frequency of incidents and percent of incidents.

In 2008-2009, Minnesota student demographics, as cited by the MDE Website, were as follows: American Indian or Alaskan Native: 2 percent; Asian or Pacific Islander: 6 percent; Hispanic: 6 percent; Black, Non-Hispanic: 10 percent; White, Non-Hispanic: 76 percent.

TABLE 8. Race/Ethnicity of Offender

Race/Ethnicity	Frequency	Percent
Native American	3,836	6%
Asian/Pacific Islander	1,499	2%
Black Non-Hispanic	24,161	40%
Hispanic	5,101	8%
White Non-Hispanic	26,255	43%
Gender Total	60,398	100%

Figure 15. Race and Ethnicity of Offenders (Number) 2008-09

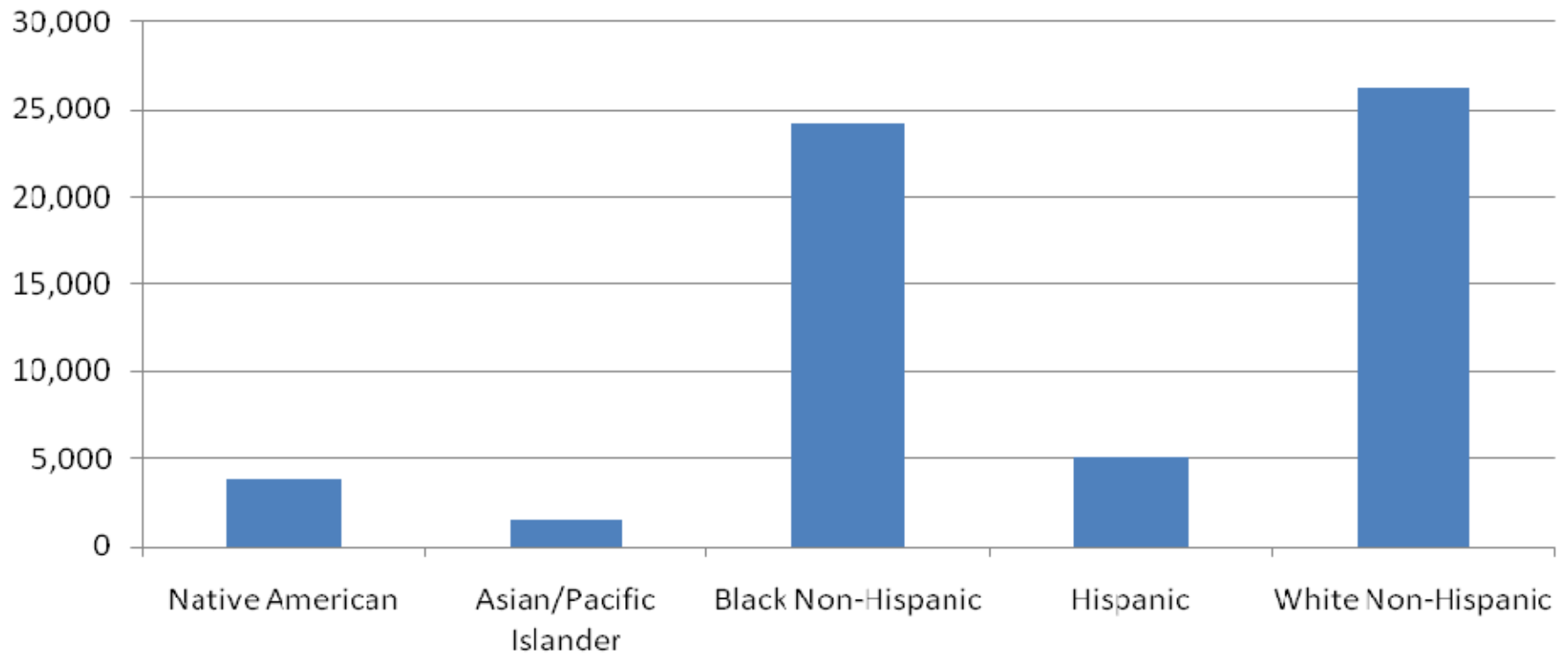
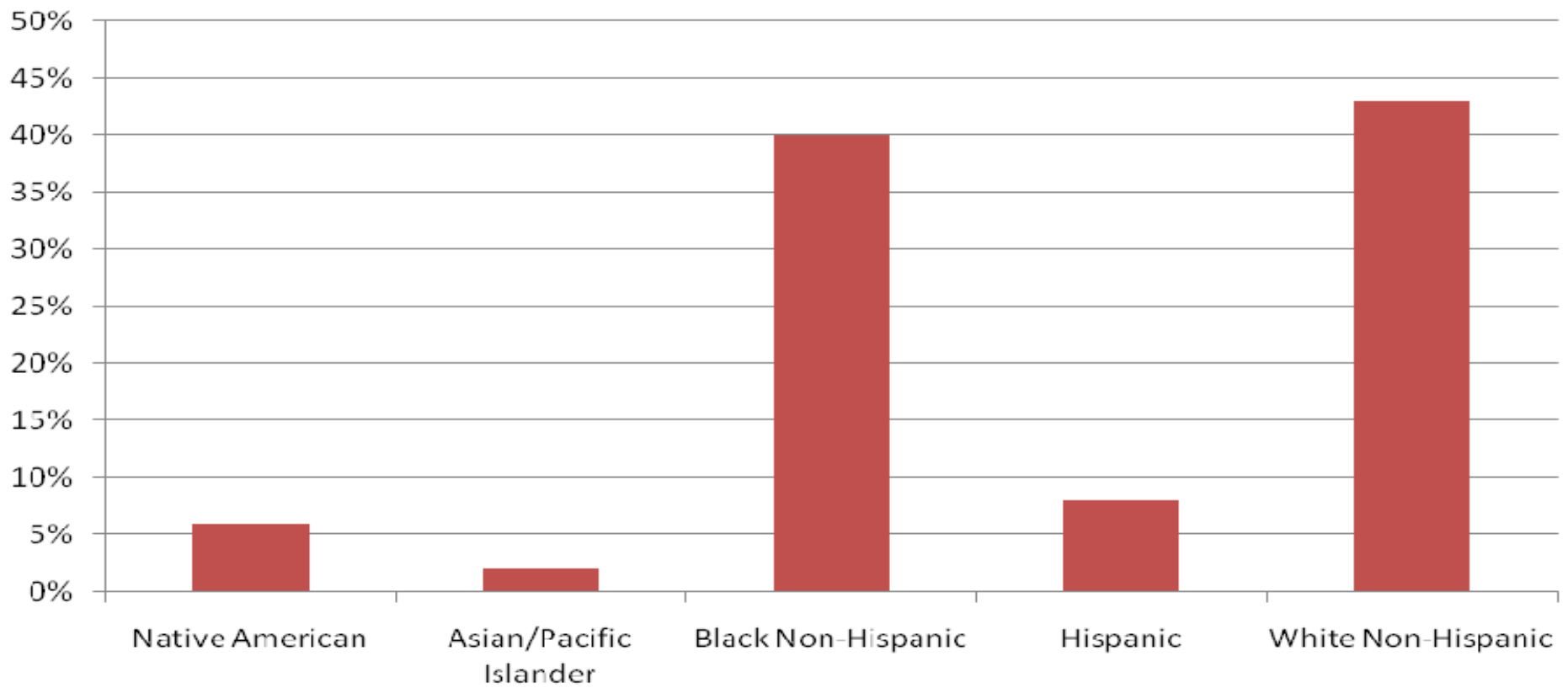


Figure 16. Race and Ethnicity of Offenders (Percent) 2008-09



GRADE OF OFFENDERS: SCHOOL YEAR 2008-2009

Grade of offender is recorded for each disciplinary incident. Included below in Table 9 are the frequencies and percentages of disciplinary incidents by grade of offender for each school year included in this report. The majority of offenders in the DIRS dataset is clustered around seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth and eleventh grades. Figures 17 and 18 represent graphic illustrations of Table 9, using frequency of incidents and percent of incidents, respectively.

Table 9. Grade of Offenders

Grade	Frequency	Percent
1 st	936	1%
2 nd	1,263	2%
3 rd	1,701	3%
4 th	2,083	3%
5 th	2,551	4%
6 th	4,625	7%
7 th	7,830	12%
8 th	9,574	15%
9 th	10,281	16%
10 th	9,483	15%
11 th	7,672	12%
12 th	5,983	9%
TOTAL	63,982	100%

Figure 17: Grade of Offenders (Number) 2008-09

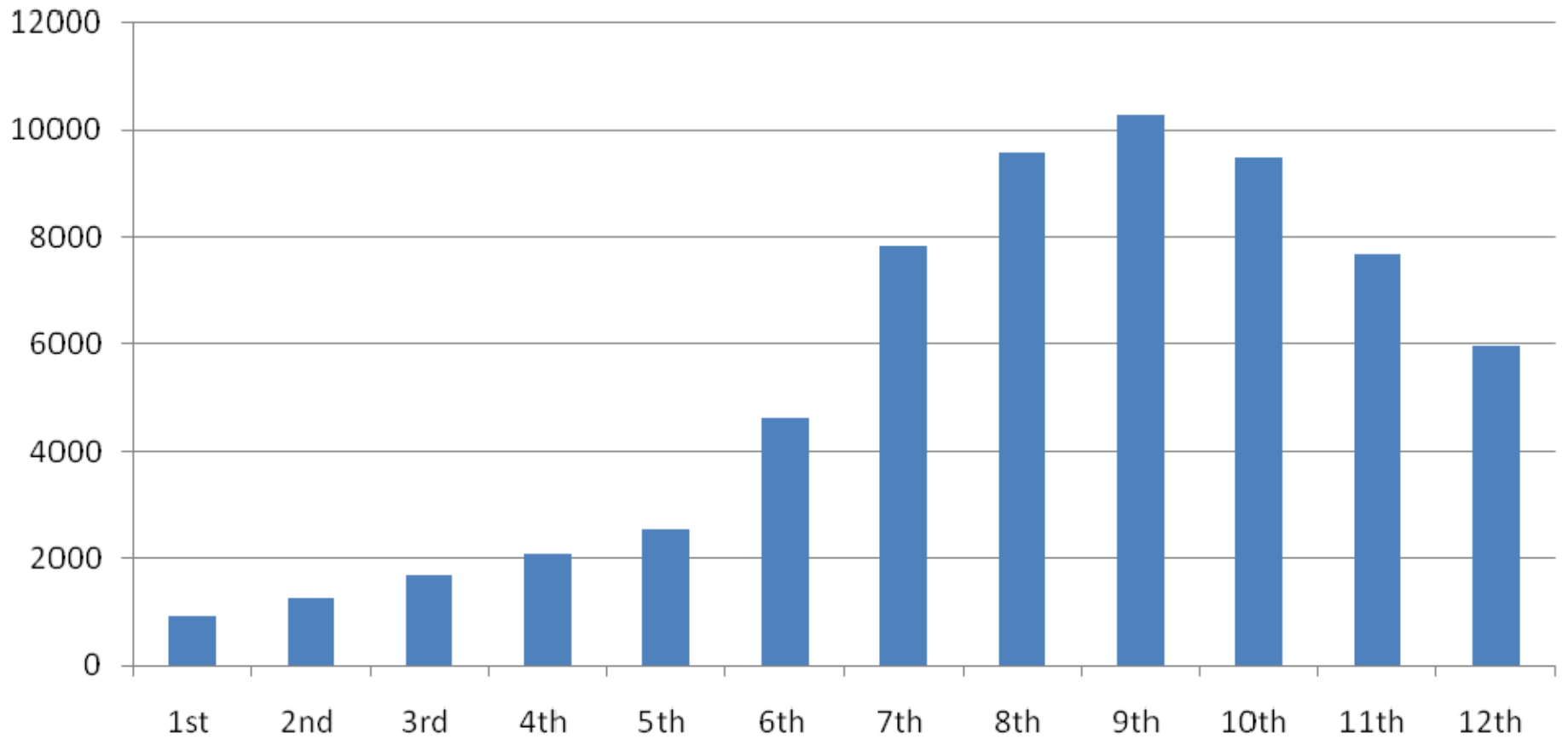
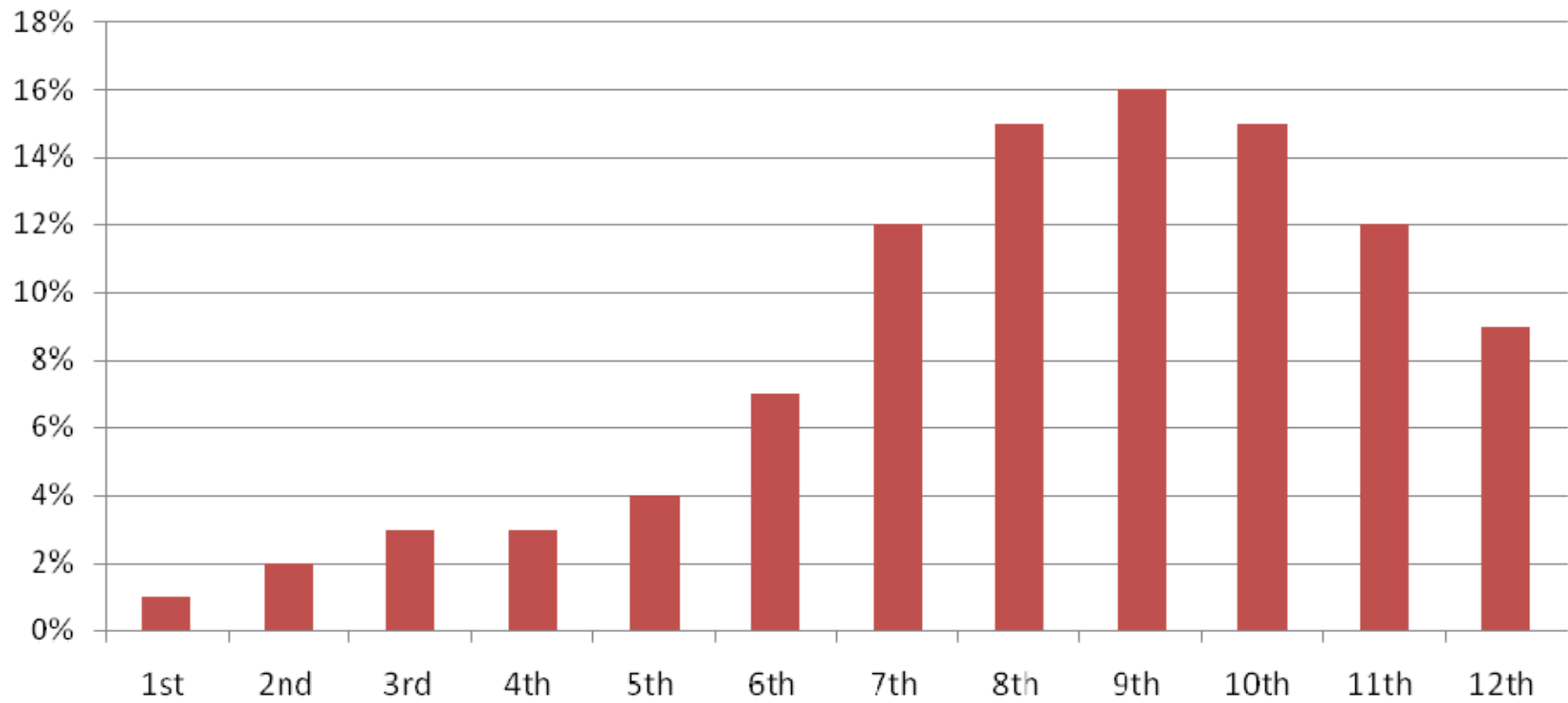


Figure 18: Grade of Offenders (Percent) 2008-09



SCHOOL STATUS OF OFFENDERS: SCHOOL YEAR 2008-2009

School status of the offender is recorded for each disciplinary incident. Included below in Table 10 are the frequencies and percentages of disciplinary incidents by school status of offender for each school year included in this report. Almost all of the offenders in the DIRS dataset are students enrolled at the school of the incident. Figures 19 and 20 represent graphic illustrations of Table 10, using frequency of incidents and percent of incidents.

Table 10. School Status of Offender		
School Status	Frequency	Percent
Involving Enrolled Offenders	60764	100%
Involving Non-Enrolled Offenders	85	0%
TOTAL	60849	100%

Figure 19. School Status of Offenders (Number) 2008-09

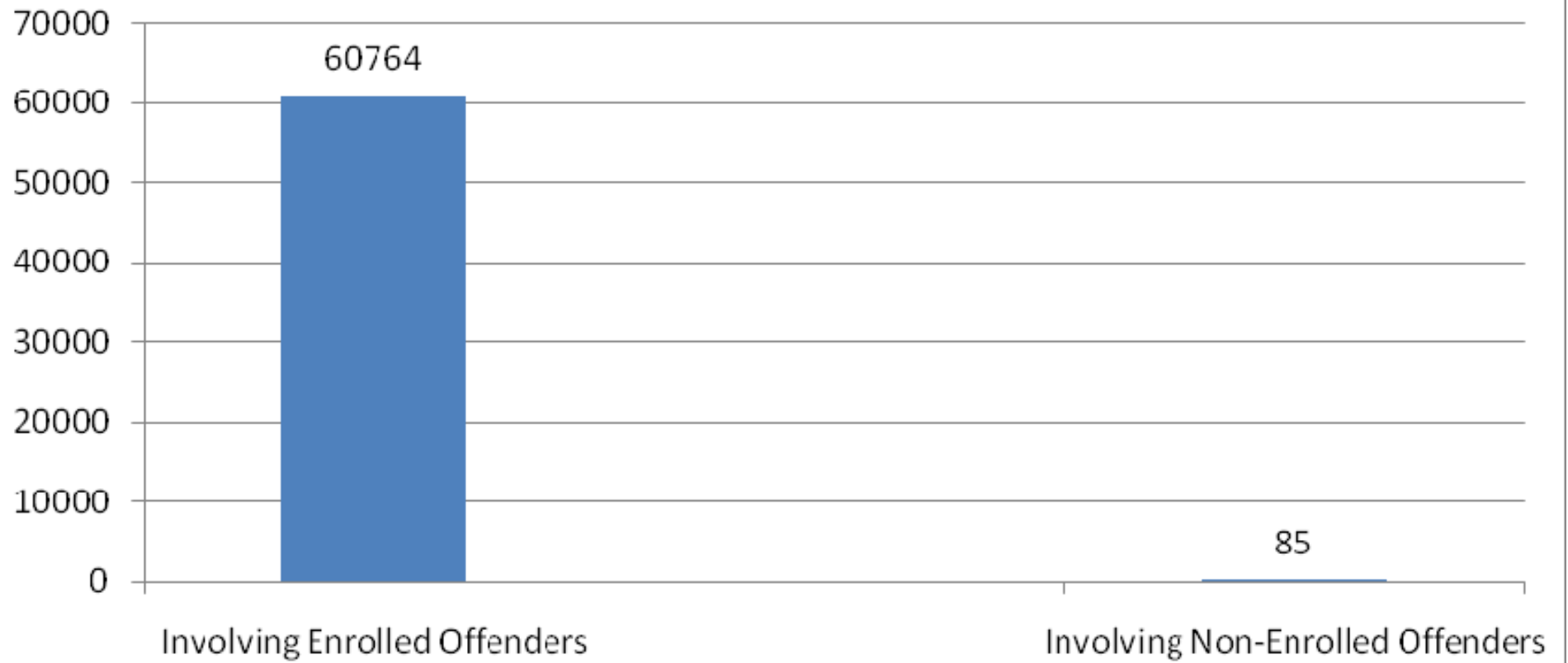
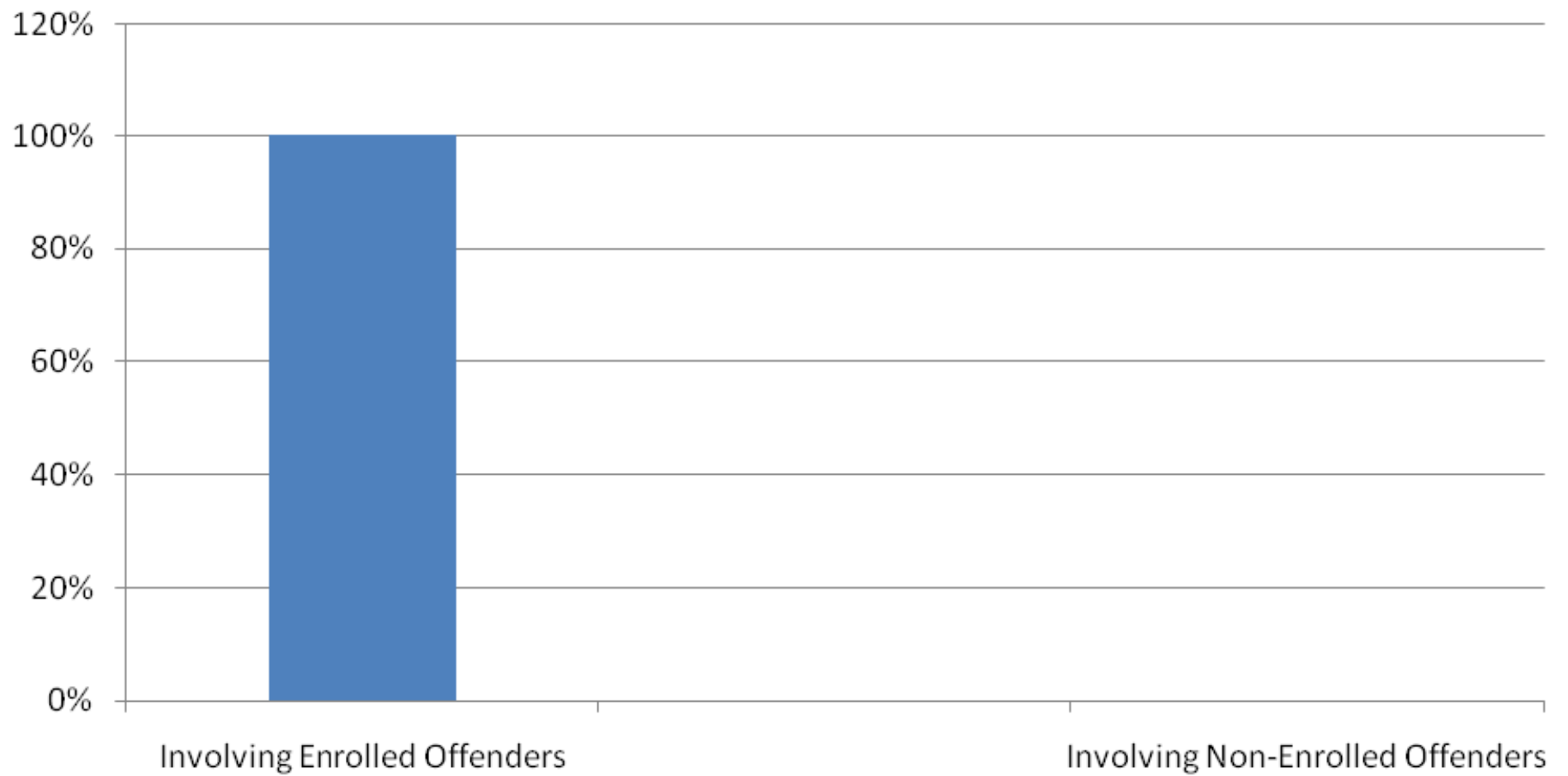


Figure 20. School Status of Offenders (Percent) 2008-09



INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN (IEP) AND 504 STATUS OF OFFENDERS: SCHOOL YEAR 2008-2009

IEP and 504 status of the offender are recorded for each disciplinary incident. Included below in Table 11 are the frequencies and percentages of disciplinary incidents by IEP status of offender for each school year included in this report. Fifty percent of the offenders in the DIRS dataset have an IEP (compared with approximately 14 percent of all students enrolled in public schools in the 2008-2009 school year). Figures 21 and 22 represent graphic illustrations of Table 11, using frequency of incidents and percent of incidents, respectively. *Note: There is a difference of 46 in the IEP count because those students had a change of IEP status during the school year and were counted in both categories.

TABLE 11. IEP Status of Offender

IEP Status	Frequency	Percent
YES-IEP	30,469	50%
No-IEP	29,975	50%
Total	60,398	100%

Figure 21. IEP Status of Offenders (Number) 2008-09

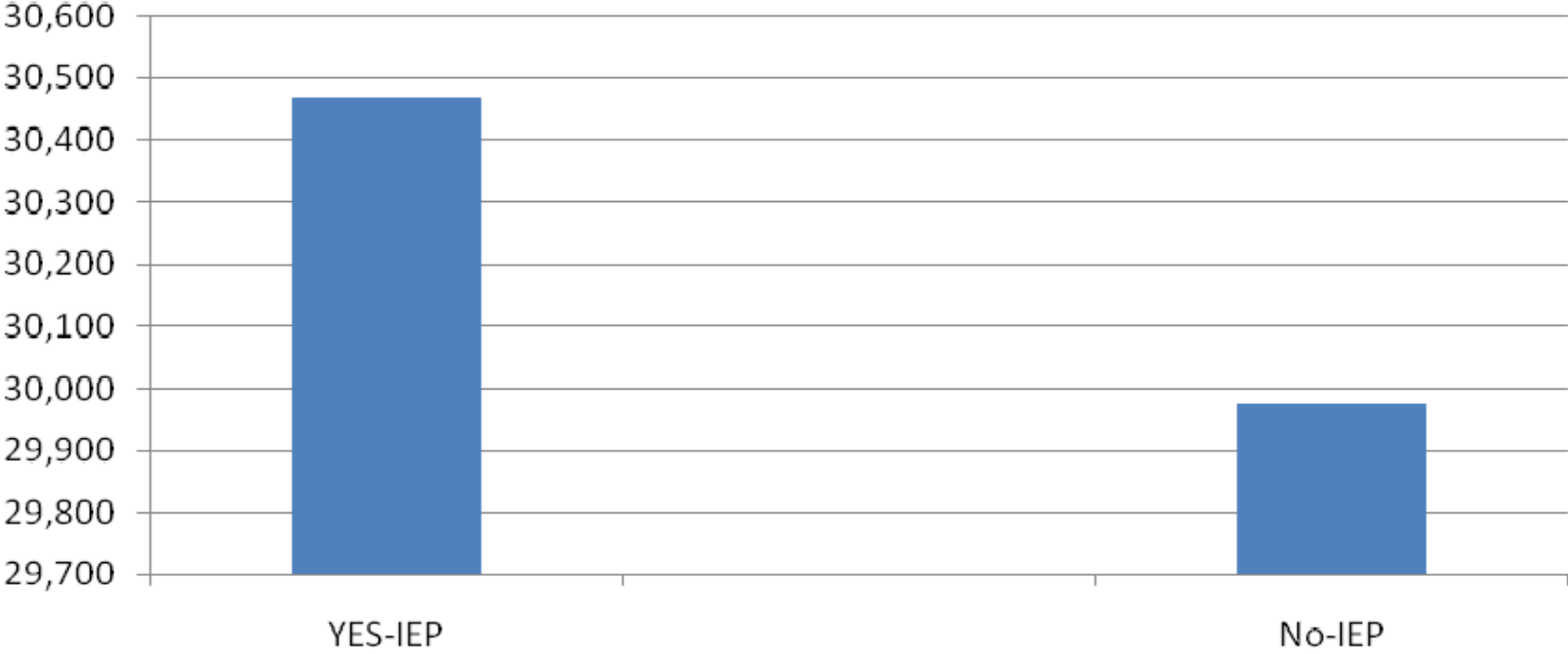


Figure 22. IEP Status of Offender (Percent) 2008-09



504 Status of Offenders: School Year 2008-2009

Table 12 shows the frequencies and percentages of disciplinary incidents by 504 status of offender for this school year. One percent of offenders in the DIRS dataset have a 504 Status. Figures 23 and 24 represent graphic illustrations of Table 12, using frequency of incidents and percent of incidents.

Table 12. 504 Status of Offender		
Disability Category	Frequency	Percent
Yes 504	462	1%
No 504	59927	99%
Total	60389	100%

Figure 23. 504 Status of Offenders (Number) 2008-09

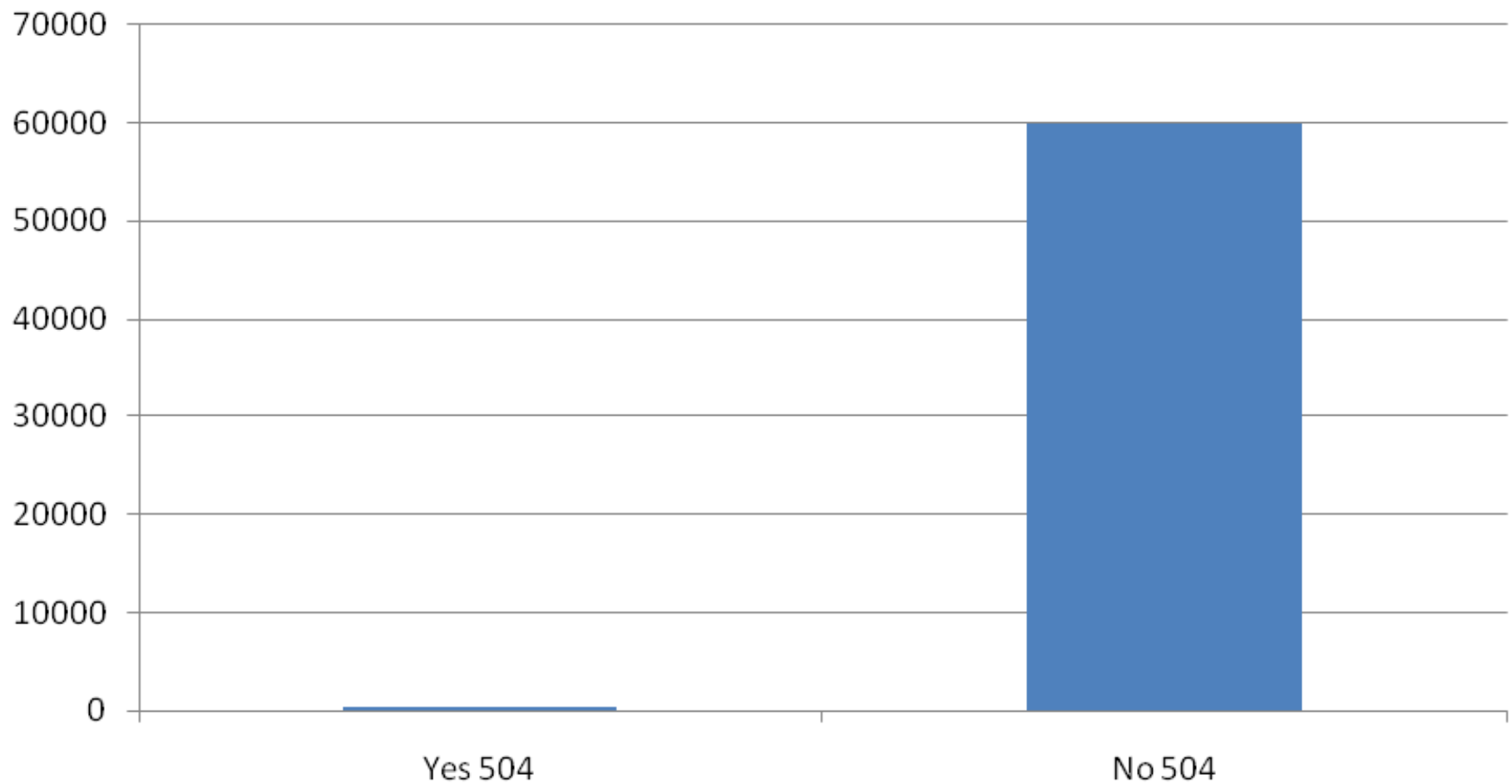
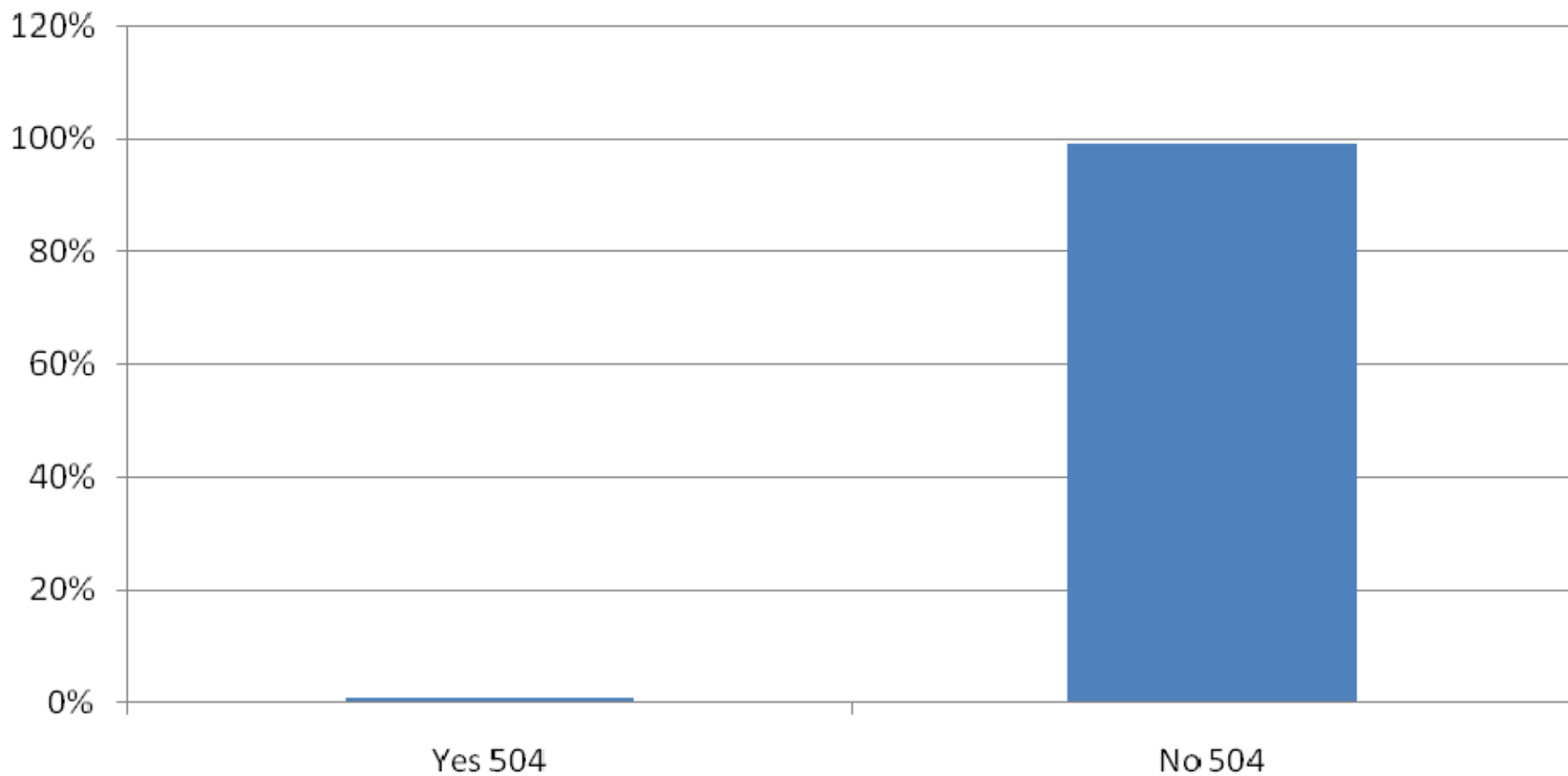


Figure 24. 504 Status of Offenders (Percent) 2008-09



DISABILITY STATUS OF OFFENDERS: SCHOOL YEAR 2008-2009

Disability status of the offender is recorded for each disciplinary incident. Included below in Table 13 are the frequencies and percentages of disciplinary incidents by disability status of the offender. The majority of offenders do not have a disability. Of those students with a disability, “emotional/behavioral disorders” and “specific learning disability” are the most common disabilities. Figures 25 and 26 represent graphic illustrations of Table 13, using frequency of incidents and percent of incidents.

Table 13. Disability of Offenders

Disability	Frequency	Percent
Autism Spectrum Disorder	1,077	4%
Blind or Visually Impaired	14	0%
Deaf/Blind	5	0%
Deaf/Hard of Hearing	206	1%
Development Delay	126	0%
Developmental Cognitive Disabilities: Mild - moderate	1,255	4%
Developmental Cognitive Disabilities: Severe - profound	72	0%
Emotional or Behavioral Disorders	15,243	50%
Other Health Disabilities	4,540	15%
Physical Impairment	65	0%
Severely Multiply Impaired	33	0%
Specific Learning Disability	7,082	23%
Speech or Language Impairment	771	3%
Traumatic Brain Injury Disabled	128	0%
Offender Activity Total	30,617	100%

Figure 26. Disability of Offenders (Number) 2008-09

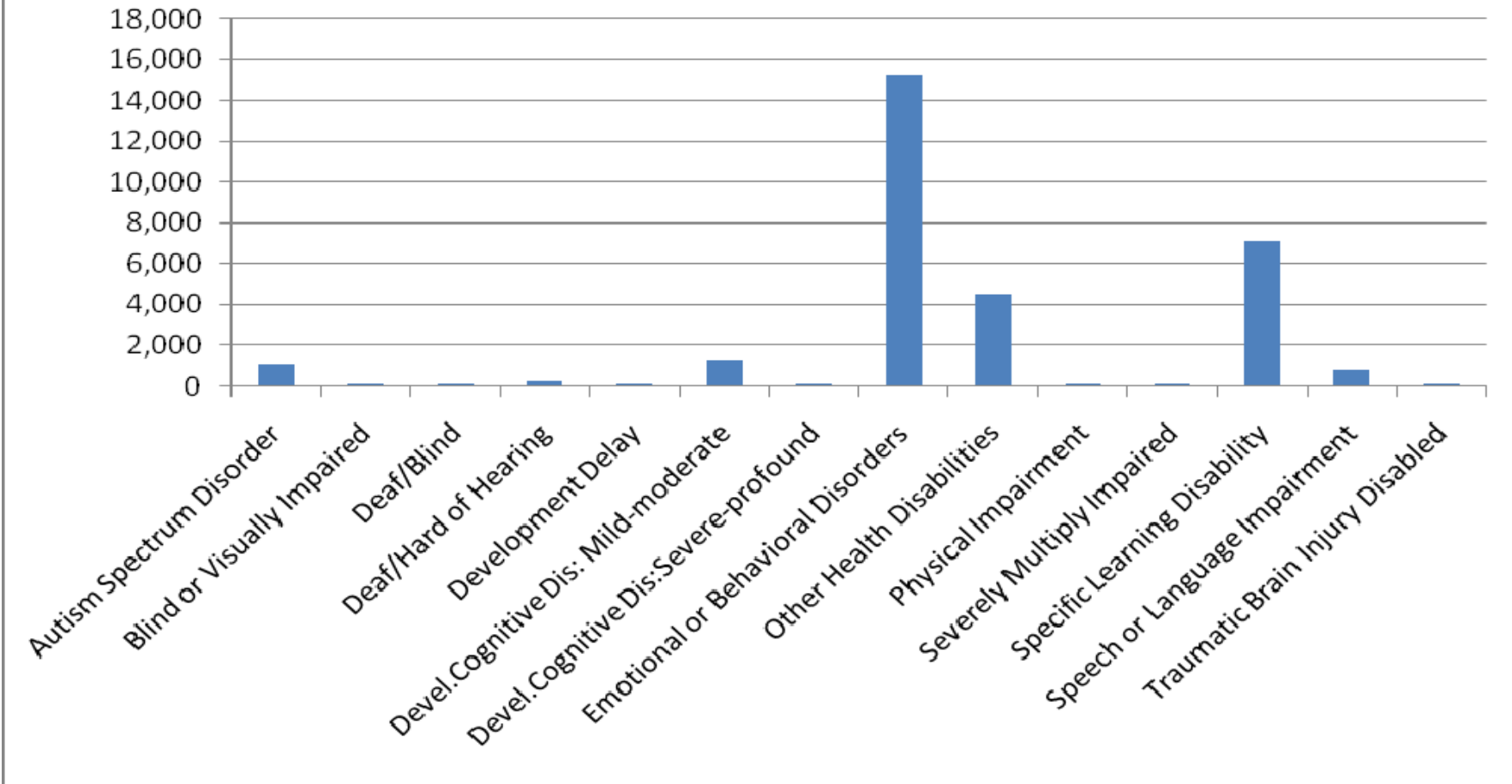
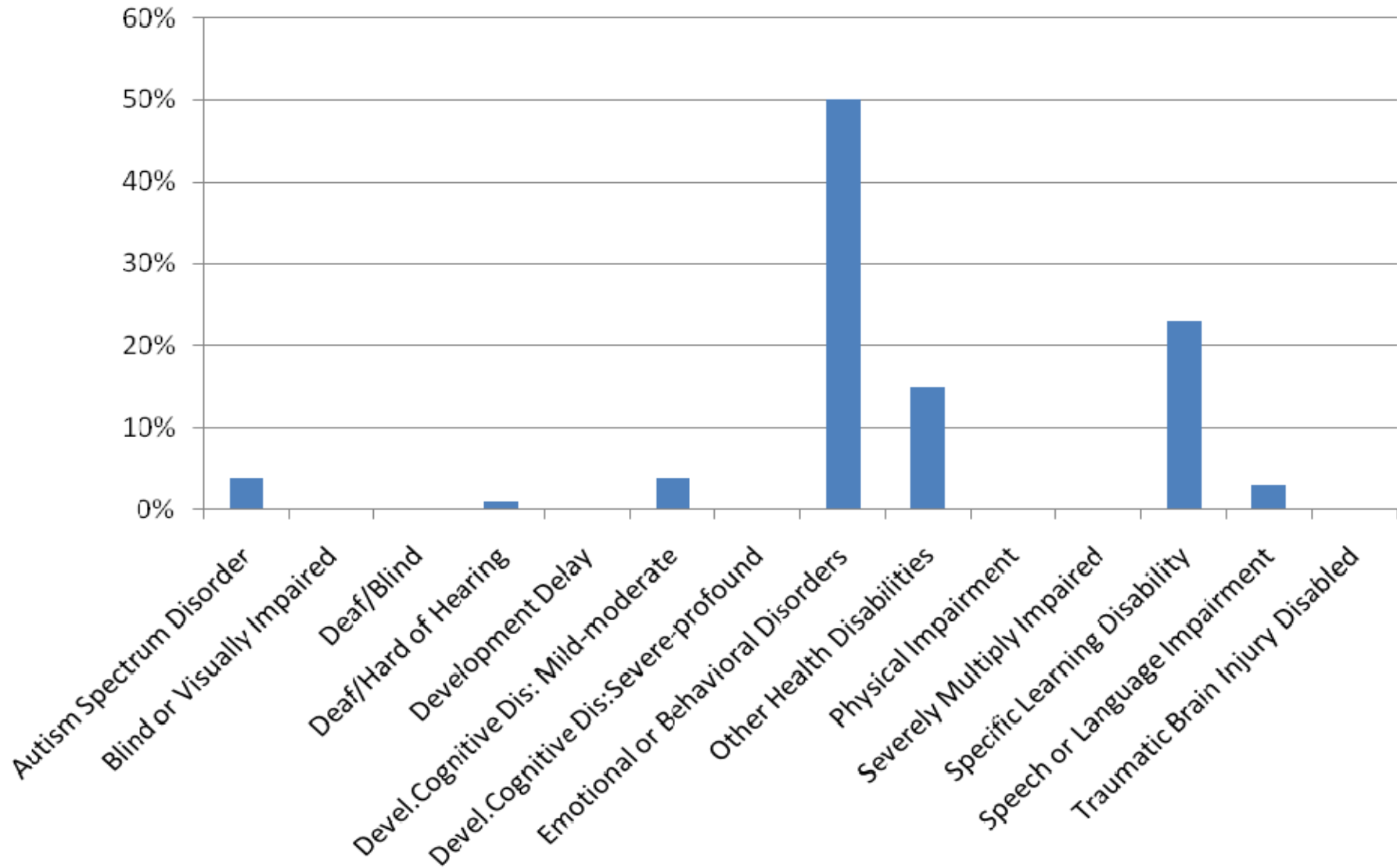


Figure 27. Disability of Offender (Percent) 2008-09



Limited English Proficiency (LEP) STATUS OF OFFENDERS: SCHOOL YEAR 2008-2009

Limited English Proficiency or LEP status of the offender is recorded for each disciplinary incident. Included below in Table 14 are the frequencies and percentages of disciplinary incidents by LEP status of offender. Of the total number of offenders, over 8 percent of offenders are identified as LEP (compared with approximately 8 percent of all students in the 2008-2009 school year). Figures 27 and 28 represent graphic illustrations of Table 14, using frequency of incidents and percent of incidents.

TABLE 14. LEP Status of Offenders

LEP Status	Frequency	Percent
N	55,809	92%
Y	4,752	8%
Offender Activity Total	60,398	100%

Figure 28. LEP Status of Offenders (Number) 2008-09

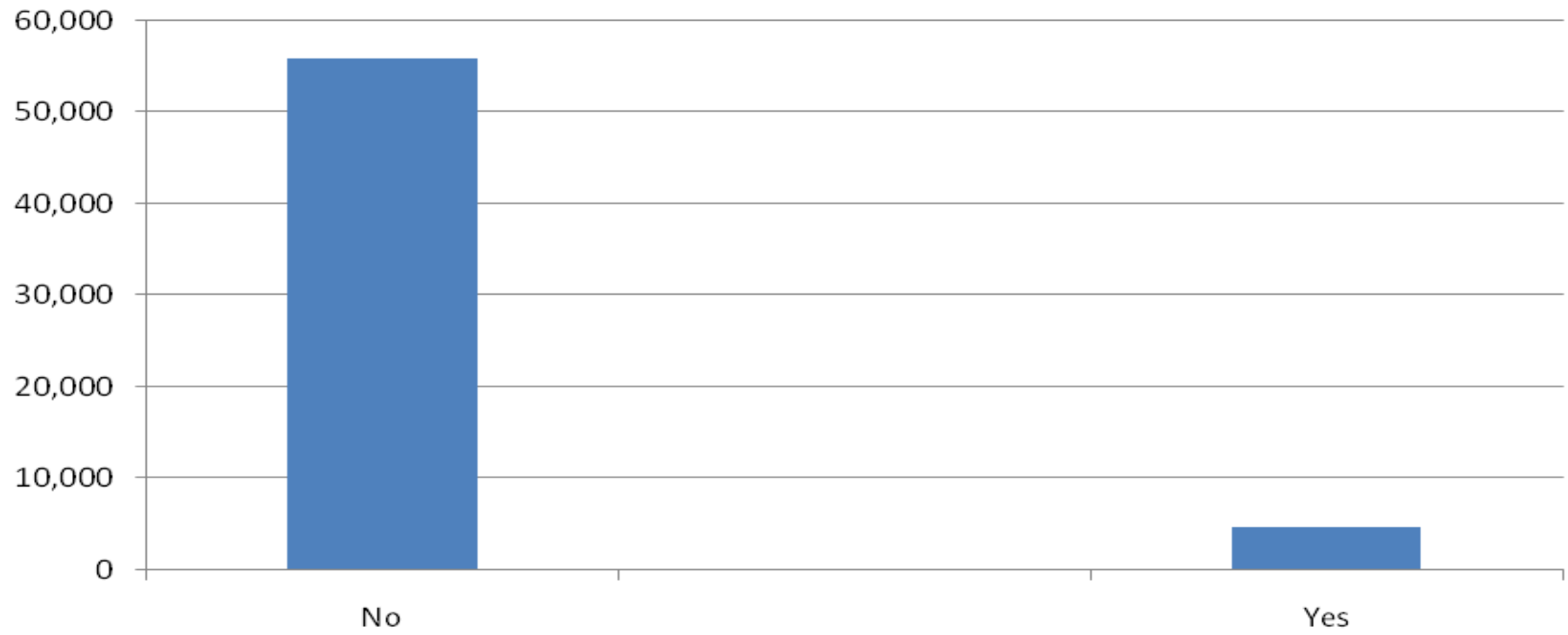
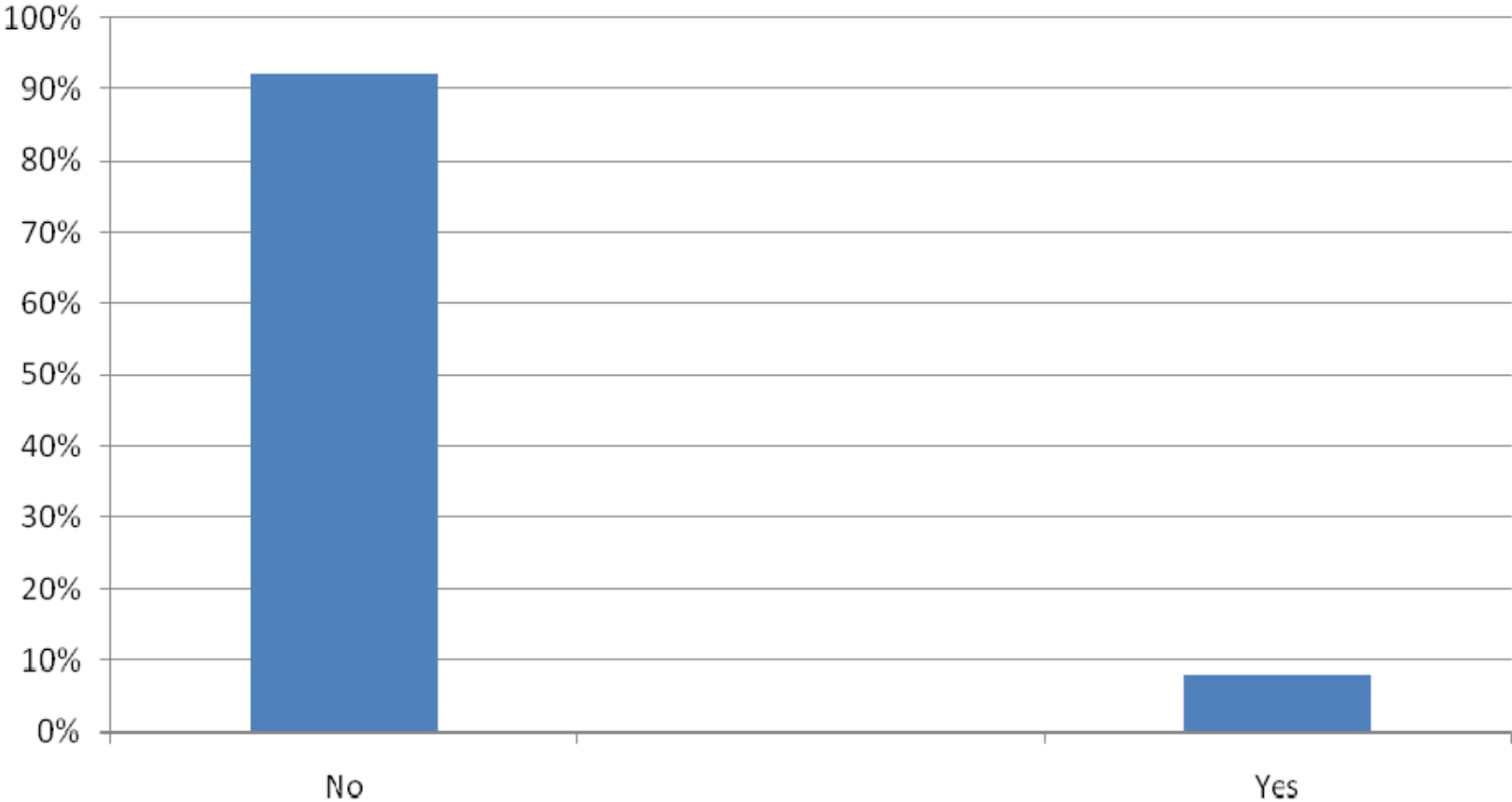


Figure 29. LEP Status of Offenders (Percent) 2008-09



DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS TAKEN: SCHOOL YEAR 2008-2009

Disciplinary incidents are categorized by one of ten different disciplinary actions taken. Included below in Table 15 are the frequencies and percentages of disciplinary incidents by action taken for each school year included in this report. The vast majority of incidents in the DIRS dataset result in removals or out-of-school suspensions (87 percent of all disciplinary actions). Figures 29 and 30 represent graphic illustrations of Table 14, using frequency of incidents and percent of incidents.

TABLE 15. Disciplinary Actions Taken

Disciplinary Action	Frequency	Percent
No disciplinary action identified	7	0%
Administrative transfer	147	0%
Exclusion from the school setting (exclusions can only extend through current school year)	136	0%
Expulsion from the school setting	286	1%
In-school suspension	3,010	8%
No school response	620	2%
Offender requested to transfer to another district	65	0%
Offender requested to transfer within district	40	0%
Offender withdrew from school	239	1%
Out-of-school suspension	32,045	87%
Removal by hearing officer on determination of likely injury	1	0%
Unilateral removal to an alternative educational setting	88	0%
Offender Activity Total	34,446	100%

Figure 30. Disciplinary Action Taken (Number) 2008-09

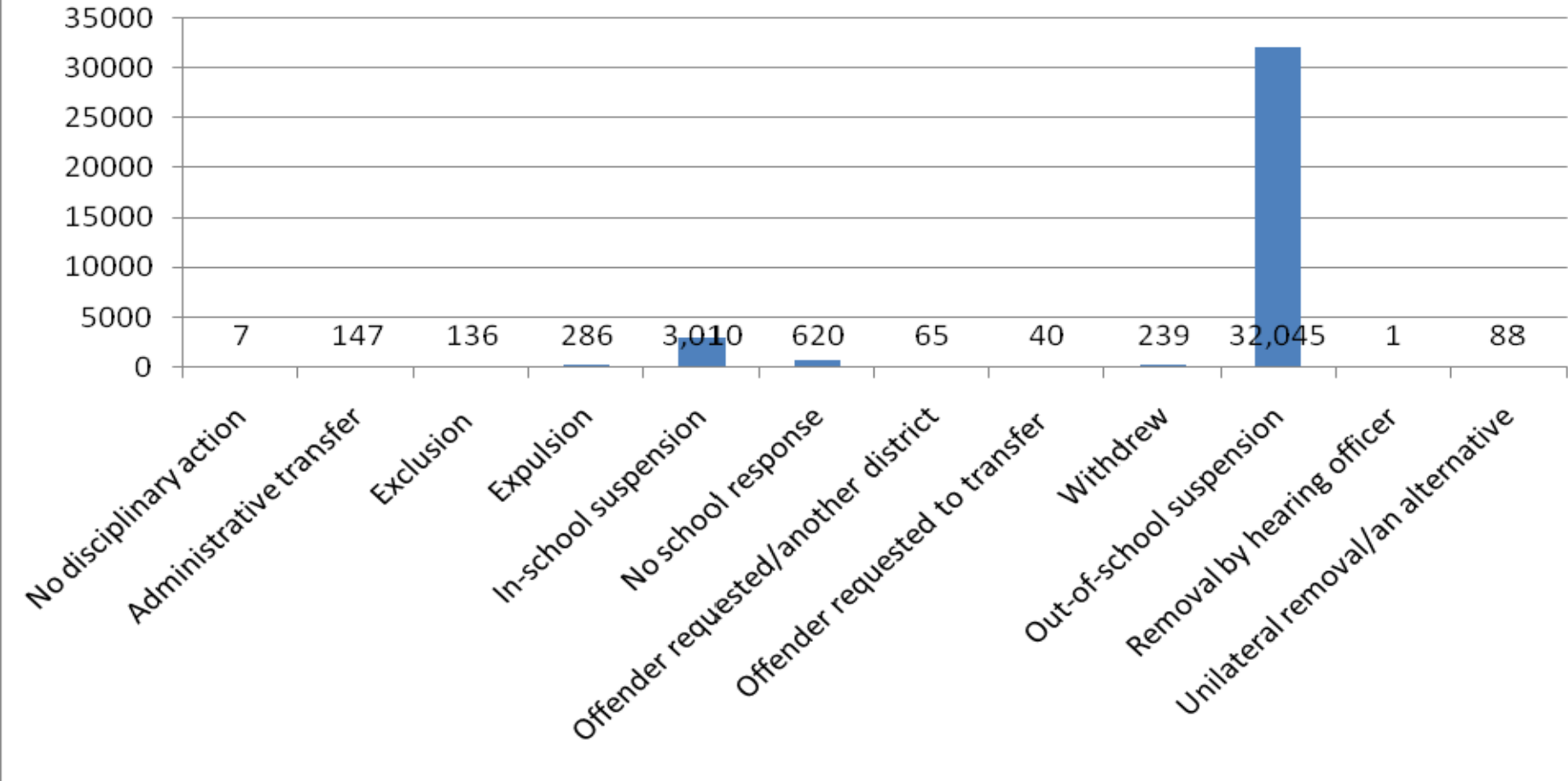
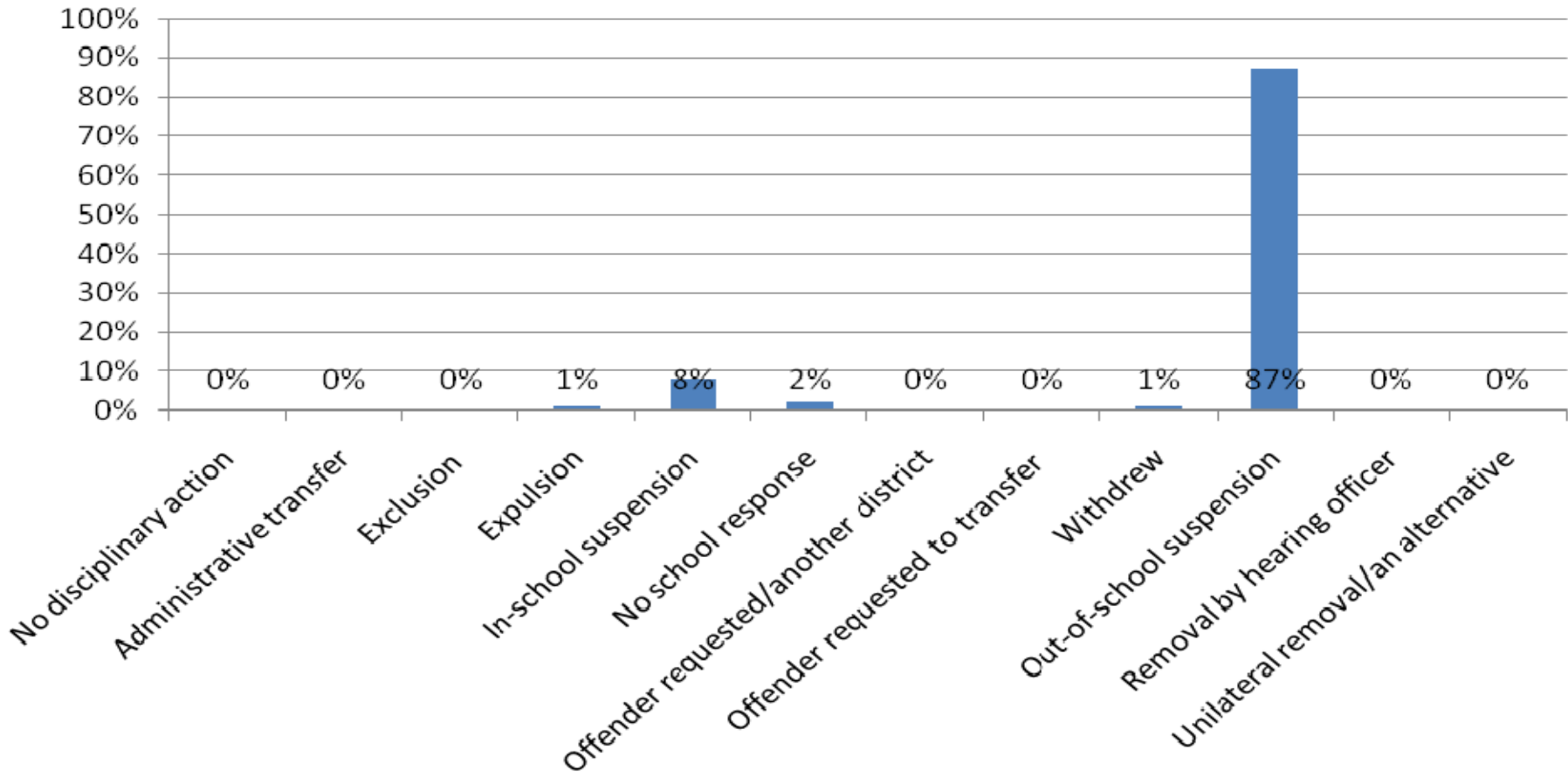


Figure 31. Disciplinary Action Taken (Percent) 2008-09



TOTAL NUMBER OF DAYS SUSPENDED/OUT OF SCHOOL: SCHOOL YEAR 2008-2009

The DIRS dataset also includes information from LEAs about how many days students were suspended or out of school. Included below in Table 16 are the mean number of days out of school, median number of days out of school, mode number of days (or the most frequent number of days) and total (i.e., sum) number of days offenders were out of school as a result of disciplinary incidents.

TABLE 16. Number of Days Suspended/Out of School

Statistics	Frequency	Number
Mean	2.58	2.58
Median	2.0	2.0
Mode	1.0	1.0
Total	96947.73	96947.73

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121A.06 REPORTS OF DANGEROUS WEAPON INCIDENTS IN SCHOOL ZONES

Subdivision 1. Definitions. As used in this section:

- (1) "dangerous weapon" has the meaning given it in section [609.02, subdivision 6](#);
- (2) "school" has the meaning given it in section [120A.22, subdivision 4](#); and
- (3) "school zone" has the meaning given it in section [152.01, subdivision 14a](#), clauses (1) and (3).

Subd. 2. Reports; content. School districts must electronically report to the commissioner of education incidents involving the use or possession of a dangerous weapon in school zones. The form must include the following information:

- (1) a description of each incident, including a description of the dangerous weapon involved in the incident;
- (2) where, at what time, and under what circumstances the incident occurred;
- (3) information about the offender, other than the offender's name, including the offender's age; whether the offender was a student and, if so, where the offender attended school; and whether the offender was under school expulsion or suspension at the time of the incident;
- (4) information about the victim other than the victim's name, if any, including the victim's age; whether the victim was a student and, if so, where the victim attended school; and if the victim was not a student, whether the victim was employed at the school;
- (5) the cost of the incident to the school and to the victim; and
- (6) the action taken by the school administration to respond to the incident.

The commissioner shall provide an electronic reporting format that allows school districts to provide aggregate data.

Subd. 3. Reports; filing requirements. By July 31 of each year, each public school shall report incidents involving the use or possession of a dangerous weapon in school zones to the commissioner. The reports must be submitted using the electronic reporting system developed by the commissioner under subdivision 2. The commissioner shall compile the information it receives from the schools and report it annually to the commissioner of public safety and the legislature.

History: 1993 c 326 art 1 s 1; 1Sp1995 c 3 art 9 s 7,8; art 16 s 13; 1998 c 397 art 9 s 1,2,26; art 11 s 3; 1Sp2005 c 5 art 2 s 26,27