

SAFE SCHOOLS

INFORMATION RESOURCE

USER'S GUIDE

Virginia Department of Education

June 2007



Prevention Through Information In Virginia

**SAFE SCHOOLS
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Table of Contents

	Page
Table of Contents.....	i
List of Figures.....	iii
List of Tables	iv
Safe Schools Information Resource User’s Guide	1
About the SSIR User’s Guide.....	1
Section 1. SSIR Quick Start	2
<i>Step 1. Go to the Selection Menu.....</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Step 2. Select data.....</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Step 3. View chart of selected data.....</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Step 4. Refine selections.....</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Step 5. Download charts and data tables.....</i>	<i>4</i>
Section 2. Background Information	5
About the SSIR User’s Guide.....	5
1. <i>What is the SSIR User’s Guide?</i>	<i>5</i>
About the SSIR Web site.....	5
2. <i>What is the SSIR Web site?</i>	<i>5</i>
3. <i>How can this information be used?</i>	<i>5</i>
4. <i>What types of information are available on the SSIR Web site?</i>	<i>6</i>
About Discipline, Crime, and Violence Data.....	6
5. <i>What are DCV data and why are they collected?.....</i>	<i>6</i>
6. <i>How are DCV data collected?.....</i>	<i>7</i>
7. <i>What is the difference between an incident and an offense?</i>	<i>10</i>
8. <i>What offenses are required to be reported?</i>	<i>10</i>
9. <i>When incidents occur, how are offenses “coded?”</i>	<i>11</i>
10. <i>What is the difference between information on the SSIR Web site and information on Virginia’s School Report Card?</i>	<i>11</i>
11. <i>What is the difference between “student offender” and “individual student offender?”</i>	<i>12</i>
Limitations of Data.....	12
Section 3. Navigating the SSIR Web site	15
SSIR Homepage.....	15
Section 4. Finding and Displaying Data.....	20
<i>Offense Frequency Data</i>	<i>20</i>
Offense Frequency Chart Features.....	22
<i>Disciplinary Outcomes Data</i>	<i>23</i>
Disciplinary Outcomes Chart Features.....	24
<i>Student Offenders Data.....</i>	<i>24</i>
Student Offender Chart Features	26
<i>Non-Student Offenses Data.....</i>	<i>27</i>
Non-Student Offenses Chart Features	28

<i>Refining Your Selection</i>	29
<i>Refining Your Selection from the Offense Frequency Chart</i>	30
Selecting Multiple Criteria.....	31
<i>Refining Your Selection from the Charts & Reports Menu</i>	31
Exploring Other Selection Criteria	37
<i>Making Comparisons in SSIR Data</i>	40
Comparing Offense Frequencies for Two Schools for Two Years.....	40
Comparing Specific Offense Trends at Three Schools.....	43
Examining Offenses Resulting in Long-Term Suspensions in the Most Recent School Years.....	46
Examining Specific Offenses Resulting in Long-Term Suspensions in the Most Recent School Years	49
Section 5. Downloading Reports from the SSIR Web site	53
<i>Downloading and Saving SSIR Reports</i>	56
Using Internet Explorer.....	56
Using Firefox	57
Section 6. Using SSIR Data	59
Converting Raw Numbers to Rates: A Critical First Step	59
A Final Reminder	63
Section 7. Learning More	64
For Technical Assistance.....	64
To Learn More.....	64
<i>Virginia-Specific Publications</i>	64
<i>General Related Publications</i>	65
ATTACHMENT 1: Offense Category and Offense Color Coding	67
ATTACHMENT 2: Offense Reporting Changes, 2001-2006	69

List of Figures

	Page
FIGURE 1. SSIR Homepage	15
FIGURE 2. VDOE Banner	16
FIGURE 3. VDOE Menu.....	17
FIGURE 4. SSIR Charts & Reports Menu	18
FIGURE 5. SSIR Resources Menu.....	19
FIGURE 6. Offense Frequency Chart Default View	21
FIGURE 7. Disciplinary Outcomes Chart Default View.....	23
FIGURE 8. Student Offenders Chart Default View	25
FIGURE 9. Non-Student Offenses Chart Default View.....	27
FIGURE 10. Refine Selection Option from Chart View.....	29
FIGURE 11. Refine Selection Options from the Offense Frequency Graph.....	30
FIGURE 12. Refine Selection Options from the Charts & Reports Menu.....	32
FIGURE 13. Criteria Selection Page to Create Customized Report.....	34
FIGURE 14. Student Offense Frequency Chart for Selected Criteria.....	35
FIGURE 15. Disciplinary Outcome Chart for Selected Criteria	36
FIGURE 16. Offense Frequency Chart for Selected Criteria	38
FIGURE 17. Offense Frequency Chart for Selected Criteria	39
FIGURE 18. Sample Criteria Selection Page – High Schools in Two School Divisions.....	41
FIGURE 19. Offense Frequency Chart for Selected Criteria – High Schools in Two School Divisions.....	42
FIGURE 20. Sample Criteria Selection Page – Trends in Three High Schools in One School Division	44
FIGURE 21. Offense Frequency Chart for Selected Criteria – Trends in Three High Schools in One School Division	45
FIGURE 22. Sample Criteria Selection Page – Offenses Resulting in Long-Term Suspensions in the Most Recent Three Years	47
FIGURE 23. Disciplinary Outcome Chart for Selected Criteria – Offenses Resulting in Long-Term Suspension in the Most Recent Three Years	48
FIGURE 24. Sample Criteria Selection Page – Long-Term Suspensions for Specific Offenses in “Offenses Against Person” Category in the Most Recent Three Years	50
FIGURE 25. Disciplinary Outcome Chart for Selected Criteria – Offenses Resulting in Long-Term Suspension in the Most Recent Three Years	51
FIGURE 26. View Report Option	53
FIGURE 27. SSIR Report Sample.....	55
FIGURE 28. Example of Save Window in Internet Explorer	57
FIGURE 29. Example of Save Window in Firefox	58

List of Tables

	Page
Table 1. High School A Student Population and Short-term Suspensions, 2001-2005.	59
Table 2. High School A Student Population, Short-term Suspensions, and Short-term Suspension Rates, 2001-2005.	60
Table 3. Student Population, Short-term Suspensions, and Short-term Suspension Rates for High Schools A, B, and C, D, 2001-2005.....	60
Table 4. Combined Student Population, Short-term Suspensions, and Short-term Suspension Rates for Four High Schools, 2001-2005.	61
Table 5. Average Student Population, Short-term Suspensions, and Short-term Suspension Rates for High Schools A, B, C and D, 2002-2005.....	62

Safe Schools Information Resource User's Guide

About the SSIR User's Guide

The *Safe Schools Information Resource (SSIR) User's Guide* provides an introduction to the SSIR Web site and is intended to assist SSIR users in becoming acquainted with the basic navigation and functions of the Web site.

The Guide is organized into seven sections:

1. **SSIR Quick Start** – Step-by-step directions for viewing DCV data for a particular school division or school.
2. **Background Information** – Background information about school “discipline, crime, and violence” (DCV) data, why and how the data are collected and reported, and important cautions about understanding and using the data.
3. **Navigating the SSIR Web site** – A feature-by-feature orientation to the Web site, including reviews of key selection menus and links.
4. **Finding and Displaying Data on SSIR** – A step-by-step walk through how to find and display data the SSIR user wants to see.
5. **Downloading Reports from SSIR** – Directions for downloading a Portable Document File (PDF) of data selected by the SSIR user.
6. **Using SSIR Data** – Procedures for and examples of converting raw numbers to rates so that more accurate conclusions can be drawn from examining trends and making comparisons.
7. **Learning More** – A list of other informational resources to learn more about DCV and related data.

The *User's Guide* is designed to be read in sequence from beginning to end. After reading the *Guide*, the user is strongly encouraged to spend time on the SSIR Web site becoming familiar with its features and comfortable in accessing data of interest.

Section 1. SSIR Quick Start

This SSIR Quick Start Section is designed to provide the SSIR user with abbreviated step-by-step directions for quickly accessing DCV data for a particular school division or school. For important background information and full directions detailing the SSIR Web site's many features, please refer to Sections 2, 3, and 4 of the *Guide*.

Step 1. Go to the Selection Menu.

On the SSIR Web page (<https://p1pe.doe.virginia.gov/pti/>), go to the Charts and Reports menu (right side) and select "Refine Selection." A Chart Selection page with multiple drop-down menus will appear.

Step 2. Select data.

For each criteria listed on the Chart Selection page, select the data desired. The default selection for each criterion is "All." To make a single selection, highlight the single item. To make multiple selection, hold down the CTRL key and highlight all items desired.

Chart Selection

School Year: All, 2001-02, 2002-03, 2003-04

Division Name : (Max 2): All, A. Linwood Holton Governor's School, Accomack County, Albemarle County

School Type : All, Combined, Elementary, High

School Name : (Max 20): All, A. G. Richardson Elementary, A. Henderson Elementary, A. Linwood Holton Governor's School

Offense Category : (Max 1): All

Offense Type : (Max 8): All, Alcohol - (AL1), All other Violations - (OT1), Arson - (AR1)

Discipline Type : All, Alternative Education, Expulsion, Long-Term Suspension (Out-Of-School)

Time Element : All, During the regular school day, In transit on the way to or from school, Non-school sponsored activity outside school hours

Offense Frequency Disciplinary Outcome
 Student Offender Non Student Offenses

Submit Reset

School Year – Select one or more school years.

Division Name – Select up to 2 school divisions. School divisions are listed alphabetically. *For purposes of SSIR Quick Start, select the school division of most interest to you.*

School Type – Select type(s) of schools. *For purposes of SSIR Quick Start, retain the "All" selection.*

School Name – Select school(s) of interest. Schools are listed alphabetically. If a school division was selected, only the schools in the selected school division will be shown. If a type of school was selected, only the schools of the selected type in the

selected school division will be shown. *For purposes of SSIR Quick Start, select the school of most interest.*

Offense Category – Select the offense category(ies). *For purposes of SSIR Quick Start, retain the “All” selection.*

Offense Type – Select the offenses of greatest interest. Offenses are listed alphabetically. If an offense category is selected, only the offenses in the selected category will be shown. *For purposes of the SSIR Quick Start, retain the selection “All.”*

Discipline Type – Select the discipline type of interest. *For purposes of the SSIR Quick Start, retain the selection “All.”*

Time Element – Select the time element of interest. *For purposes of the SSIR Quick Start, retain the selection “All.”*

At the end of the selection menus, select “**Offense Frequency**” and **Submit**.

Step 3. View chart of selected data.

The SSIR user will see a chart with a separate bar for each school selected for each school year selected. Bars are color-coded to show the different categories of offenses being reported. Below the chart is a legend showing the color codes.

There are two different scales, one on each side of the chart. The scale on the left side reflects the number of offenses shown in the color-coded bars. The scale on the right shows the school student population and coincides with the superimposed trend lines with light grey squares and circles. The light grey line with squares at the top of the graph represents the total school population; the light grey line with circles represents the number of *individual offenders*.

Using the mouse, the SSIR user can place the cursor over each segment and a **text box** explaining the segment will appear.

The features demonstrated in this graph are standard for all four of the types of data in SSIR – offense frequency, disciplinary outcome, student offenders, and non-student offenses.

Step 4. Refine selections.

To examine specific offenses –

At the top of the chart, select [Click here to refine your selection](#)

 [View Report](#)

[Click here to refine your selection](#)

Your previously selected school years, school division(s), and school(s) will be retained.

- Go to the Offense Category and select Offenses Against Person.
- Go to Offense Type and select Bullying (BU1) and Fighting-No Medical Attention (FA2)
- Select Submit.

A chart showing Bullying and Fighting Offenses will be displayed.

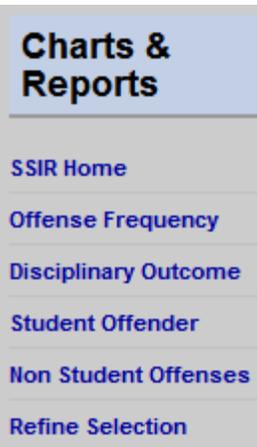
To examine disciplinary outcomes –

At the right of the chart displaying Bullying and Fighting offenses, go to the Charts and Reports menu and select Disciplinary Outcomes.

Previous selections will be retained. The SSIR user is still focused on Bullying and Fighting in selected school(s) in the school years selected.

A Disciplinary Outcome chart will appear reporting the types and numbers of disciplinary outcomes for Bullying and Fighting.

Using the mouse, the user can place the cursor over each segment and a **text box** explaining the segment will appear.



To examine numbers of student offenders –

- At the right of the chart displaying disciplinary outcomes for Bullying and Fighting, go to the Charts and Reports menu and select Student Offender. Previous selections will be retained. The SSIR user is still focused on Bullying and Fighting in the school(s) selected in the school years selected.

A Student Offender chart will appear reporting the numbers of students who committed Bullying and Fighting offenses.

Using the mouse, the user can place the cursor over each segment and a **text box** explaining the segment will appear.

Step 5. Download charts and data tables.

The SSIR Web site will generate a downloadable report, in PDF format, for any data displayed. These reports include the bar chart displayed plus all data represented in the chart in a table format. To generate any report, select the [View Report](#) link in the bar at the top of any chart being displayed.



[Click here to refine your selection](#)

Reports can be printed and/or downloaded and saved using Print and Save functions of Adobe Acrobat Reader.

To begin a new series of selections, go to the Charts and Reports menu and select Refine Selection. A refreshed Chart Selection page will appear.

SSIR users are strongly encouraged to:

- Read the remainder of the SSIR User's Guide.
- Spend time on the SSIR Web site becoming familiar with its features and comfortable in accessing data of interest.

Section 2. Background Information

About the SSIR User's Guide

1. *What is the SSIR User's Guide?*

The Safe Schools Information Resource (SSIR) *User's Guide* provides an introduction to the SSIR Web site and is intended to assist SSIR users in becoming acquainted with the basic navigation and functions of the Web site. The *Guide* is organized into seven sections and is designed to be read in sequence from beginning to end. After reading the *Guide*, the user is strongly encouraged to spend time on the SSIR Web site becoming familiar with its features and comfortable in accessing data of interest.

About the SSIR Web site

2. *What is the SSIR Web site?*

The SSIR Web site has been established by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) to provide user-friendly access to information about crimes and other problem conduct in schools. In Virginia, this type of information is referred to as “discipline, crime, and violence” (DCV) data. The SSIR Web site is designed to make DCV data and the data reporting process more understandable and transparent.

The SSIR Web site is noteworthy because it provides immediate and easy access to DCV data and to related information on the data reporting process. Although DCV data have been collected in some form for well over a decade, accessing the data in the past typically involved a rather technical and time-consuming process of extracting data from large data sets. The SSIR Web site makes DCV data for the most recent 5 years immediately available in a variety of reports tailored to SSIR user selections.

3. *How can this information be used?*

The SSIR Web site will be of interest to parents, to educators, and to other community members interested in keeping schools safe and conducive to learning.

- *Parents* can view DCV data from their child's school and become better informed about student conduct and discipline issues at the school.
- *Educators* can easily access a wealth of objective data to use in school safety and other prevention program planning.
- *Community members* can become better informed about student conduct issues in schools and support ongoing efforts to maintain schools as safe learning environments.

4. What types of information are available on the SSIR Web site?

The SSIR Web site contains DCV data collected by local school divisions and reported to the VDOE for the past 5 years (currently 2001-02 through 2005-06). Users can access data on the numbers and types of offenses and on the numbers and types of disciplinary outcomes at the state, the school division, and the school levels. The site also reports numbers of students enrolled and numbers of individual student offenders.

The SSIR user will learn much more about the specific types of data available in the next section “About Discipline, Crime, and Violence Data.” “Quick Start” directions for accessing data are provided in Section 1. More detailed step-by-step directions for accessing the data are in Section 4., Finding and Displaying Data on SSIR.

About Discipline, Crime, and Violence Data

5. What are DCV data and why are they collected?

DCV data first began to be collected in 1991 after the Virginia General Assembly enacted a law (§ 22.1-279.3:1, *Code of Virginia*) requiring school divisions statewide to submit data on incidents of discipline, crime, and violence annually to the VDOE. Incidents that are reported include those that occur on school property, in transit to and from school, or at school-sponsored activities. In 1994, the federal *Gun-Free Schools Act (GFSA)* established requirements for all states that receive federal funds to report annually the number of students suspended or expelled statewide for the possession of firearms on school property. The federal *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*, known as *IDEA*, also contains requirements for reporting disciplinary actions involving students with disabilities. Through the years, reporting requirements have evolved as federal and state laws and regulations have changed. Today, the single DCV report serves multiple purposes and all types of data collected and reported by schools are tied to state or federal reporting requirements.

Virginia’s reporting process employs a well-defined set of data elements. Nearly 150 types of offenses are reported and these offenses are organized into eight categories that are color-coded on the Web site. More specific information about offenses and a list of other types of data reported are provided in Questions 6 and 8. The eight offense categories are:

1. Weapons Related Offenses
2. Offenses Against Students
3. Offenses Against Staff
4. Offenses Against Persons
5. Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs (ATOD)
6. Property Offenses
7. Disorderly / Disruptive Behavior
8. All Other Offenses

A color-coded list of offenses organized by these eight categories is included as Attachment 1.

The types of data collected and the system of offense codes used in Virginia are consistent with recommendations of the National Center for Education Statistics and the National Forum on

Education Statistics¹. Additionally, all reporting complies with state and federal confidentiality laws that prohibit disclosure of information on individual students.

Schools are required to report incidents that occur in different places and at different times, including:

- All incidents that take place on school grounds, regardless of time of day or day of the week, even if the offender is not an enrolled student at that school;
- All incidents that take place off-campus at school-sponsored events;
- All incidents that occur in alternative education, Governor’s schools, special education, technical or regional centers; and
- All incidents that take place on school transportation to and from school or to and from special events such as field trips.

6. How are DCV data collected?

DCV data are collected using an “incident-based” reporting system. Incident-based systems such as the one used to report DCV data are organized around events (i.e., incidents) that may involve only one individual or many. A fight, for example, might involve two, three, or even more students. No matter how many students are involved, it is still considered to be just one incident. Incidents can, and do, range in severity from minor events, such as unruly behavior that disturbs a class, to very serious events that disrupt the entire school and may require immediate law enforcement intervention. Just as a single incident can include more than one student, it also can include more than one offense. For example, an incident of two students fighting where one is found to have a knife would be reported as one incident involving two offenses: fighting and possession of a knife. The single incident would likely produce two disciplinary outcomes – one for each of the student offenders. In this example, there is one incident but two student offenders, two offenses, and two disciplinary outcomes are reported.

At the School Level

The process of collecting and reporting DCV data begins at individual schools when incidents that violate the local code of student conduct occur. Information that is collected about the incident includes the following:

Information collected about the incident

Incident division and incident school – the school division and school where the incident occurred.

Enrolled division and enrolled school – the school division and school where any student offender is officially enrolled. In the vast majority of incidents, the enrolled school and the incident school are the same. When they are different, the incident usually involves a student who is officially enrolled in one school but attends an alternative, technical, or regional center.

¹ *Safety in Numbers: Collecting and Using Incident Data to Make a Difference in Schools*. U.S. Department of Education, National Center on Education Statistics, National Forum on Education Statistics. NCEES 2002-312. Washington, DC: 2002.

Incident date – The date on which the incident occurred.

Incident code – A unique code that identifies the incident.

Offense code – A unique code for each offense committed. Offense codes are discussed in greater detail in Question 8.

Victims – For certain offenses where there are victims such as bullying or assault and battery, the number of victims.

Time of incident – Whether the incident occurred during the regular school day, at a school-sponsored activity (outside school hours), non-school-sponsored activity (outside school hours), or in transit (on the way to or from school or to or from a school-sponsored activity).

Reporting to law enforcement – Whether the offenses that are required to be reported to law enforcement authorities have been reported in accordance with the law.

Information collected about student offenders

Student identifier – a unique identifier for any student who has committed a reportable offense. It is important to note that offenses are not tied to state student identification codes. If the person who committed an offense is a non-student or an unknown person, that is also reported.

Grade – The enrolled grade of any student offender at the time of the incident.

Disability – The disability of any student offender, if any.

Date of birth – The date of birth of any student offender.

Race - The racial/ethnic origin of any student offender.

Gender – Gender of any student offender.

Limited English Proficiency – Whether any student offender is limited in his/her English proficiency.

Information collected about disciplinary outcomes

Discipline sanction – Whether the student offender was assigned short-term suspension, long-term suspension, expulsion, a special education interim alternative placement, a modified expulsion, or none of the previous sanctions. Also reported is whether the student offender was placed in an alternative education program as a result of the incident. Disciplinary outcomes reported only for students in special education include in-school suspension and interim placements.

Number of days suspended or expelled – Number of days any student offender was suspended or expelled.

At the School Division Level

DCV data makes its way from the school to the school division level – typically via being entered into a local data management system. The school division is responsible for reporting DCV data to the VDOE. The school division can choose to submit the data using one of two available methods:

1. Uploading an electronic file – a method that has been in use since 1998 – or
2. Using a web-based application – a method available to school divisions since fall 2004.

All school divisions have a designated “DCV Coordinator” who serves as the primary point of contact on matters related to DCV reporting and generally serves as the data “steward,” ensuring that the process of data collection within the school division and reporting data to the VDOE operate well. Many school divisions have established teams that regularly review data being collected to detect and correct errors and to use the data in decision making related to discipline policy and school programming.

There is a “verification” process whereby the school superintendent signs off that the information is accurate. Data available on the SSIR Web site have all been verified by school division superintendents.

At the State Level

The VDOE provides detailed instructions for data submission and ongoing technical assistance through regional workshops, telephone and e-mail consultation, and even site visits, when requested. Additionally, numerous edit checks have been created to assist school divisions in identifying and correcting errors in data before final submission of data. The VDOE works on an ongoing basis to improve the DCV data collection process and monitors changes in state and federal laws and regulations as well as best practice standards to ensure Virginia’s compliance with all reporting requirements.

After school divisions submit and verify DCV data to be accurate, the VDOE uses the data for a variety of purposes, including:

- Preparing the *Annual Report on Discipline, Crime, and Violence in Virginia Schools* (a Virginia General Assembly mandate);
- Preparing federal reports required by the *Gun-Free Schools Act* (GFSA), the *Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act* (SDFSCA), and the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA);
- Identifying persistently dangerous schools as part of the *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) Unsafe Schools Choice Option;
- Reporting school safety information on Virginia’s School Report Cards; and
- Publicly disseminating information about the incidence of violence and drug-related offenses leading to suspension and expulsion as part of the Uniform Management Information Reporting System (UMIRS), an important accountability requirement under NCLB.

7. What is the difference between an incident and an offense?

An **incident** is an *event* that may involve one or more offenses. An incident also may involve one or more students and may result in one or more disciplinary outcomes.

An **offense** is the problem *behavior* exhibited by the student(s). Nearly 150 offense codes are used to report different behaviors. Each offense has a unique code and a specific definition.

The SSIR Web site currently reports the frequency of offenses – not the number of incidents. Because many incidents involve more than one offense, the number of offenses will always be a higher number than the number of incidents.

8. What offenses are required to be reported?

It is important to note that most offenses that occur are required to be reported. However, there are some minor offenses that are reported only if they result in a suspension or expulsion.

Offenses that are required to be reported, regardless of disciplinary sanction are:

- Alcohol use, possession, sale, or distribution
- Arson, either actual or attempted
- Assault and battery against school staff or a student
- Malicious wounding, without a weapon
- School threat
- Breaking and entering, burglary
- Bullying
- Disorderly conduct (major disruption)
- Drug violations for schedule I – VI drugs, marijuana, or anabolic steroids, inhalants, drug look-alikes, and drug paraphernalia
- Extortion
- Fighting, regardless of level of injury
- Gang activity
- Homicide against school staff or a student
- Kidnapping
- Inciting a riot
- Robbery
- Stalking
- Sexual battery against school staff or a student
- Sexual harassment
- Sexual offenses against school staff or students
- Sexual battery (aggravated)
- Theft offenses
- Theft offense of a motor vehicle
- Tobacco use, possession, sale, or distribution
- Threat or intimidation against school staff or students
- Trespassing
- Vandalism

- Weapon possession (firearms, handguns, pistols, zip guns, starter pistols, knives, other weapons, pneumatic weapons (BB guns, paint ball or pellet guns, air guns or rifles), taser gun, or stun guns)
- Explosive device, possession of, including ammunition
- Use of bomb or explosive device

Offenses that are reported only if they result in a suspension or expulsion are:

- Attendance violations
- Electronic devices, use of
- Disorderly conduct (minor disruption) or insubordination
- Drug violations for over-the-counter medications
- Altercation
- Gambling
- Hazing
- Other violations (inappropriate personal property, misrepresentation, or other violation not elsewhere listed)
- Sexual offenses against school staff or other students
- Tobacco paraphernalia
- Violation of technology use (damage to computers, internet policy violations)
- Weapon look-alike
- Possible weapons (razor blades, box cutters, stink bombs, firecrackers, etc. etc.)

To see lists of all offenses, their definitions and reporting codes, and the legal requirements for reporting each type of offense, visit the DCV Online Tutorial at <http://www.dcvreport.org/>. The user may access the Tutorial directly via a link from the “Resources” menu on the SSIR Web site.

9. When incidents occur, how are offenses “coded?”

It is the responsibility of the school administrator to determine the offense code that is reported, based on the offense definition. Local student conduct policies and administrator judgment can also influence what offense code is reported. For example, a first grader shoving another first grader on the playground may result in only a verbal reprimand and would not be required to be reported to the VDOE. A tenth grader shoving another tenth grader in the hallway during a change of classes may be deemed to be disorderly conduct, altercation, or even an assault, depending on the circumstances. If the offense is deemed assault or results in an out-of-school suspension, it would be required to be reported to the VDOE.

10. What is the difference between information on the SSIR Web site and information on Virginia’s School Report Card?

The Virginia School Report Card provides information on student achievement, accreditation, safety, and attendance for the state as a whole, for school divisions, and for individual schools. School Safety information on the School Report Card is based on twenty-four (24) offenses that are collapsed into four categories: 1) serious incidents, 2) fights, 3) firearms, and 4) other weapons.

Although the School Report Card uses DCV data, it is important to recognize that multiple offenses are grouped into the four reporting categories. The SSIR Web site allows users to examine separately the frequency of each type of offense reported. School Report Cards and data on the SSIR Web site will not always “match” and the two cannot be properly compared.

11. What is the difference between “student offender” and “individual student offender?”

The SSIR Web site reports a) counts of the number of student offenders and b) counts of the number of individual student offenders. Offender counts and individual offender counts are different.

- The **offender count** tabulates each student each time he or she commits an offense.
- The **“individual” offender count** tabulates each student only one time, regardless of how many times he or she has repeated an offense. Consequently, the individual offender count can never exceed the offender count.

This difference in “offenders” and “individual offenders” is demonstrated by the example of Jefferson High School where, in school year 2004-05, 100 offenses were committed by 75 different students.

Total number of offenses committed, 2004-05	100
Total number of offenders	100
Number of “individual offenders”	75

Explanation for difference in offenders and individual offenders

	# students	# offenses
63 students committed 1 offense each	63	63
1 student committed 7 offenses	1	7
2 students committed 4 offenses each	2	8
4 students committed 3 offenses each	4	12
5 students committed 2 offenses each	5	10
Totals	75 “individual” offenders	100 offenses

Limitations of Data

Among the benefits of the SSIR Web site are that it makes DCV data easily accessible and that it helps to make more transparent the process by which DCV data are collected and reported. There are, however, certain limitations of the data that warrant caution in using the data, particularly when examining data trends or attempting to compare schools and/or school divisions.

Challenge #1 – Determining what the numbers really mean

Recommendations

1. Develop a basic understanding of how the data are collected by school divisions and reported to the Virginia Department of Education. Visit the DCV Online Tutorial at <http://www.dcvreport.org/> to learn more.
2. Talk with your school or school division administrators to learn the “story behind the numbers.” The SSIR Web site displays data reported to the VDOE and verified as accurate, but it does not contain the “story behind the numbers.” It is not uncommon for local changes in student conduct policy and in programming to affect the numbers. Only the school or school division will have this important information. Don’t hesitate to contact school administrators to learn more!

Challenge #2 – Examining trends when codes and reporting requirements change from year to year

Recommendations

1. Check for changes in DCV codes and reporting requirements.

Each year, there is a careful review of offense codes to ensure that they remain consistent with legal definitions and accurately reflect the types of problem conduct occurring in schools. One example of a recent change is the “possession of BB gun” offense:

“Possession of BB gun” was reported in the category of “possession of other firearm” until 2003-04, but in 2004-05 it began to be reported as a separate offense. As a result, when the user is examining data trends that include 2004-05 data, the user will see “possession of BB gun” begin to appear in 2004-05. The user is likely to see also a decline in “possession of other firearm” because BB gun offenses were no longer reported in the “other firearm” category. In this example, the decline the user sees may be a function of change in reporting procedures rather than a decline in the actual numbers of offenses.

Included as Attachment 2 is a table summarizing changes in the reporting of listed offenses since 2001-02. Please refer to this table to be aware of changes that may affect data trends.

2. Be aware of changes in local student conduct policies and procedures and program changes that may affect trends in data.

Each year, local school boards review and updated student conduct policies. Sometimes these changes can impact data reported to the VDOE. One example is offenses related to dress codes. Some minor violations of dress codes may never be reported to the VDOE because they are so minor and do not result in a suspension. A local school board policy may define more serious dress violations (lewd or indecent exposure) as a form of disruptive behavior or may define wearing gang-related apparel, jewelry, or grooming as a form of gang-related activity. Depending on local conduct policy, dress-related offenses may be reflected in more than one offense category.

Another example of a change in local programming that affects DCV data trends is establishing an in-school suspension program at a school. In the year that the program is implemented, there is likely to be a decline in the number of out-of-school suspensions when compared to previous years. The decline does not necessarily reflect an improvement in student behavior, although it may. The decline likely reflects the change in disciplinary options available.

Talk with school or school division administrators when examining data trends; always to learn the “story behind the numbers.”

Challenge #3 – Comparing schools or school divisions

Recommendations

1. Use extreme caution when comparing school divisions and schools.

Although school division superintendents verify the accuracy of DCV data submitted to the VDOE, there are variations in local methods of collecting and managing data that may affect the data. Variations are inherent in the process. Any comparison of the two school divisions must take into account variations in the internal methods used to code, collect, and manage data. SSIR Web site users are cautioned against ranking school divisions or making comparisons among school divisions or comparing current and past years’ performance without taking into account variations in local data collection.

In addition to variations in local methods of collecting and managing data, variations in student conduct policies and in school programming across school divisions and across schools can affect the data reported.

2. Be aware of coding issues and changes.

A table summarizing changes in coding and reporting of certain offenses since 2001-02 is included as Attachment 2. Please refer to this table to be aware of changes in reporting codes that may affect data trends. Beginning with data submitted for 2006-07, all school divisions will use a consistent set of 3-digit codes for student offenses. Previously, school divisions had the option of using 5-digit codes.

A final word of advice . . .

To make comparisons of one school with another, or one year with another, that do not produce misleading results and interpretations, the data must be consistent – the same behavior must be coded in exactly the same way. Although the quality of DCV data collected and reported to the VDOE continues to improve every year, there remain certain inconsistencies that warrant great caution when comparing schools or examining trends.

When using DCV data, and before drawing conclusions, always learn the “story behind the numbers.”

Section 3. Navigating the SSIR Web site

The SSIR Web site provides several ways of accessing DCV data, along with useful links to related sites. This navigation section is designed to orient the user to the SSIR Web site by examining features of the site.²

SSIR Homepage

FIGURE 1. SSIR Homepage

The screenshot shows the SSIR Virginia Safe Schools Information Resource homepage. At the top, there is a header for the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Virginia Department of Education. Below the header is a search bar and a navigation menu. The main content area is titled "Safe Schools Information Resource" and contains a welcome message and introductory text. A purple arrow points to the main content area.

SSIR Main Content Area

Purple Arrow:
Main Content Area

The main content area is in the center of the Web page. On the SSIR homepage, this area contains a brief introduction of the features of the Web site.

² This section contains many screen shots taken from the SSIR Web page. Some of the screenshots were reduced in order to fit into the margins of the Guide. If you are viewing the Guide as a .pdf document, you can use Adobe Acrobat's "zoom" function to enlarge the page to produce a more easily read screen shot.

VDOE Page Banner

The VDOE banner at the top of the Web page is the standard banner used for all VDOE Web pages. Figures 2. and 3. show current configurations; they are subject to change over time. Currently, links to the Commonwealth's Web site and to the Governor's Office are standard features on Web sites of all state agencies.

Red Arrow:
Commonwealth of Virginia - links to the state's official Web site
Governor - links to the governor's official Web site

Black Arrow:
Skip to Content - clicking on this link centers the content of current Web page
Site Index - links to the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) site index
Contact Us - links to the VDOE contact information page

FIGURE 2. VDOE Banner



The screenshot shows the VDOE banner with the following elements: 'Commonwealth of Virginia | Governor' on the left; 'Skip to Content | Site Index | Contact Us' on the right; the VDOE logo and 'Virginia Department of EDUCATION' in the center; and a search box with 'Enter Keyword' and a 'Search' button. A breadcrumb trail at the bottom left reads 'VDOE Home >> SSIR Home'. A 'VDOE Logo' label is at the bottom center.

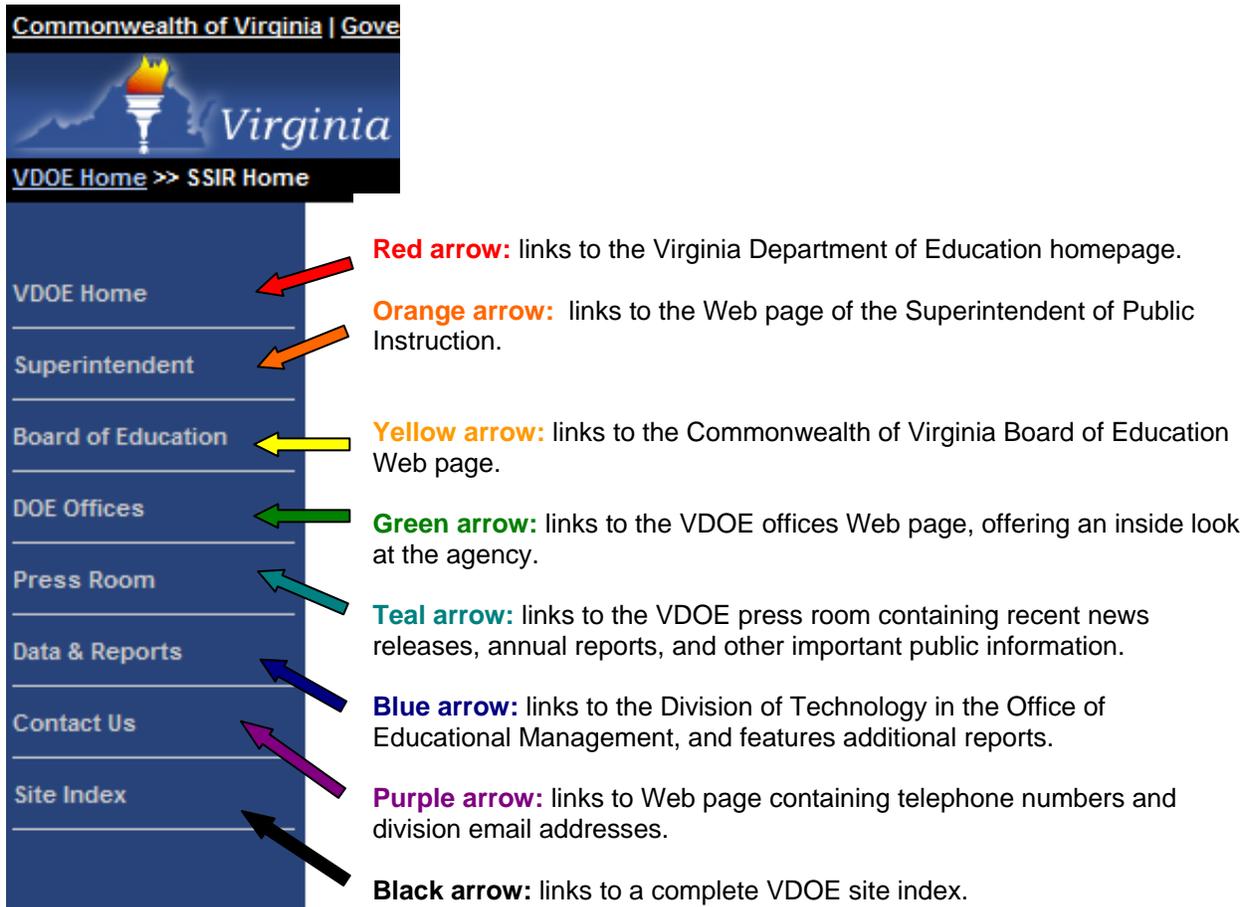
Green Arrow:
This "bread crumb trail" shows your location on the VDOE Web site. You may return to previously visited pages by clicking on their names in the trail bar.

Blue Arrow:
To perform a search of the VDOE Web site, enter a word or phrase in this box and either click on the "Search" button or press "Enter."

VDOE Menu – Left Side of Page

The links on the left side of the Web site connect to various VDOE web pages. Links are described in the following diagram.

FIGURE 3. VDOE Menu



SSIR Menu – Right Side of Page

The right side of the SSIR Homepage contains two menus: **Charts & Reports** and **Resources**. Just above the Charts and Reports menu is *SSIR User's Guide*. A copy of this *Guide*, in PDF format, can be opened and/or downloaded and saved.

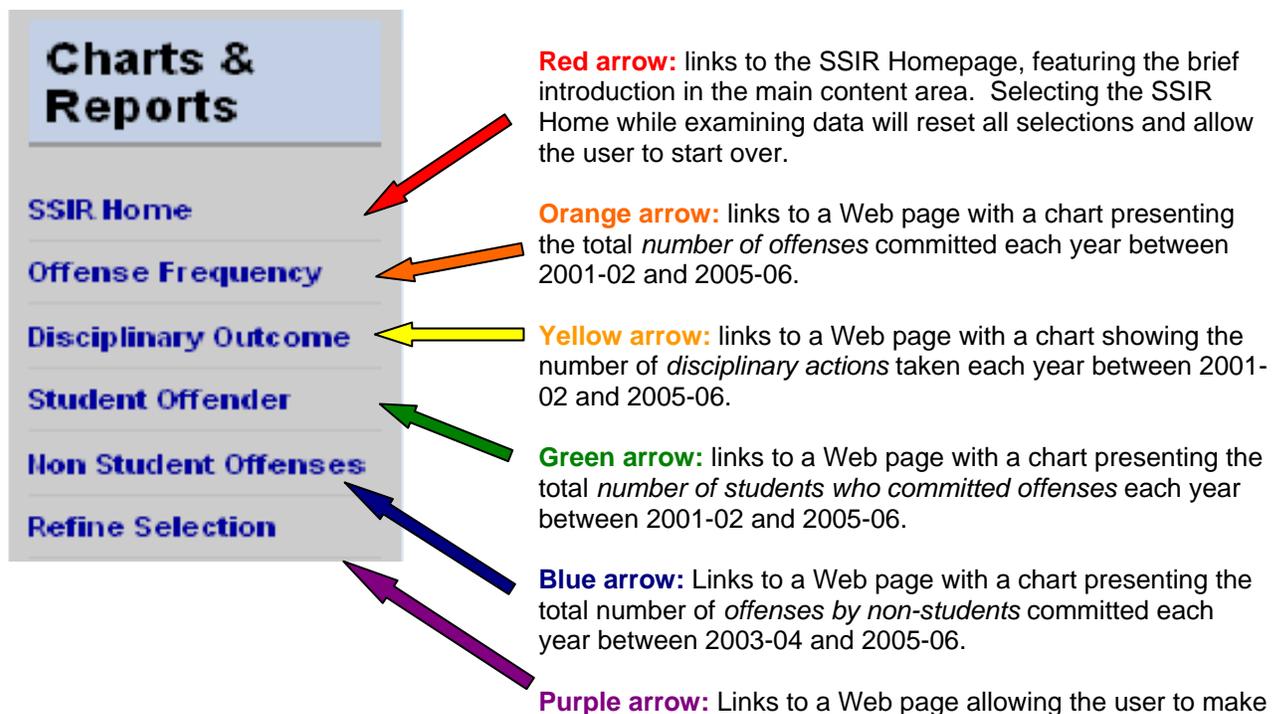
Charts and Reports

The Charts and Reports menu contains links to four major types of DCV data: 1) Offense Frequency, 2) Disciplinary Outcomes, 3) Student Offenders, and 4) Non-Student Offenses.

When any of these four options are selected, the SSIR user will see first a graph displaying statewide data of the data type selected; this is the default view for all four types of data. From that beginning point, the user can “drill down” further for more specific information.

The fifth option, Refine Selection, takes the user to a page with multiple drop-down menus where the user can narrow the search for data of interest. The Refine Selection page will be explained in detail in this Section.

FIGURE 4. SSIR Charts & Reports Menu



Resources

The Resources menu contains links to Web sites containing information and statistical data related to school safety and prevention planning.

FIGURE 5. SSIR Resources Menu



Section 4. Finding and Displaying Data

This section explains how the SSIR user can use the links under the Charts & Reports menu to find and display the SSIR data of interest. As described in Section 3., five data choices are offered.

Offense Frequency – This choice links to data on the frequency of offenses. The first Web page the user will see is a state-level chart presenting the total *number of offenses* committed each year for the most recent five school years. For each year, there is a bar and each bar is divided (and color-coded) to reflect the category of offense committed. It is important to note that offenses in SSIR are reported by the school at which they occur. In the overwhelming majority of situations, the offense school (where the offense occurs) is the same school in which the offender is enrolled (enrolled school). In the small percentage of cases in which the offense school and enrolled school are different, the incident usually involves a student who is officially enrolled in one school but attends an alternative, technical, or regional center. In SSIR, offenses are reported by incident school – where they occur.

An Important Reminder

The SSIR Web site reports the frequency of offenses – not the number of incidents that occurred.

Disciplinary Outcome – This choice links to data on the number of disciplinary actions taken. The first Web page the user will see is a state-level chart representing the total number of *disciplinary actions* taken each year for the most recent five school years. For each year, there is a bar for each type of disciplinary outcome reported and each bar is divided (and color-coded) to reflect the category of offense for which the disciplinary action was taken.

Student Offender – This choice links to data on the number of student offenders. The first Web page the user will see is a state-level chart representing the total *number of student offenders* each year for the most recent five school years. For each year, there is a bar and each bar is divided (and color-coded) to reflect the category of offense that the student offenders committed.

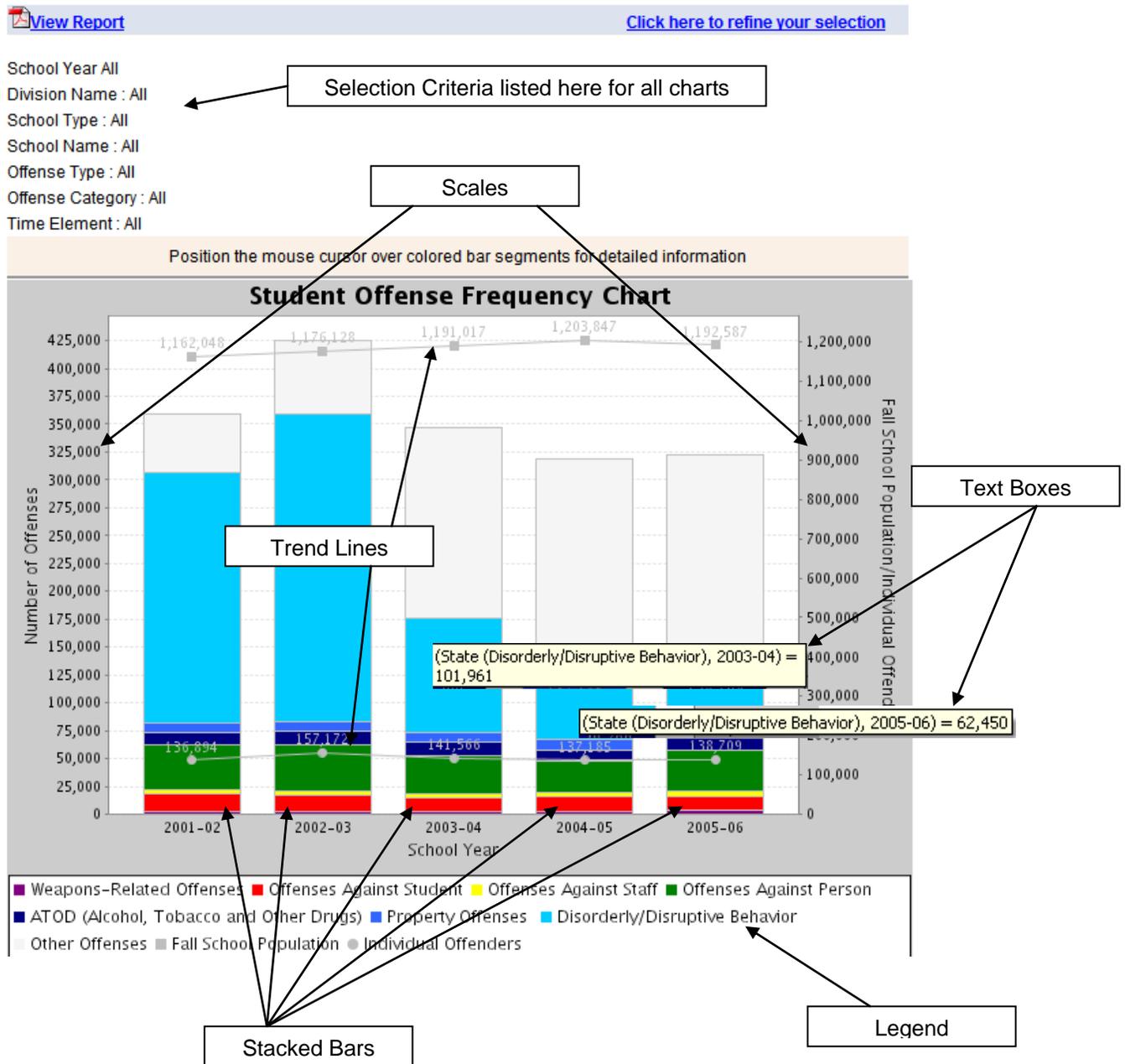
Non-Student Offenses – This choice links to data on the number of offenses committed by non-students. The first Web page the user will see is a state-level chart representing the total *number of offenses by non-students* committed each year. For each year, there is a bar and each bar is divided (and color-coded) to reflect the category of offense committed.

Refine Selection – This choice links to a Web page where the user is offered multiple drop-down lists for selecting year, school division, school type, school, offense category, specific offense, and time of offense, then type of data (offense frequency, disciplinary outcomes, student offender, or non-student offenses).

Offense Frequency Data

The default view for the Offense Frequency link is shown in Figure 6. Various features of SSIR charts will be described.

FIGURE 6. Offense Frequency Chart Default View



Offense Frequency Chart Features

Above the chart in Figure 6 are listed **selection criteria** used to generate the offense frequency chart. Selection criteria listed change as criteria are modified. This list is very helpful to the SSIR user in keeping track of what data are being viewed in charts.

In this view, there is a **stacked bar** for each year. Bars are color-coded to show the different categories of offenses being reported. The width of bars displayed in charts is designed to be proportional and will vary in accordance with the number of years and other selection criteria represented in the chart. Selecting the maximum number of selections, while technically possible, may result in charts with bars that are extremely narrow and very difficult to read and to interpret. Fewer selections will produce more readable charts.

Below the chart is a **legend** showing the name of offense categories into which offenses have been organized and their color code.

Using the mouse, the user can place the cursor over each segment and a **text box** explaining the segment will appear. This is particularly helpful when the segments are too close together to be able to distinguish the particular offense category.

There are two different **scales**, one on each side of the chart and two different **trend lines** (in light grey). These are designed to help with the interpretation of the graphical data on the charts.

Scales

In the chart in Figure 6, the left side of the graph features an increasing scale of the number of offenses, and matches the numerical offense data represented in the color-coded bars.

The right side of the graph features an increasing scale of the school student population and coincides with the superimposed light grey circles and squares connected by lines.

Trend Lines

The light grey line with squares at the top of the graph represent the total school population. In this view, the number represents the total school population of the state. If the user selects a single school division or a single school, then the scale and the line change to reflect the school division or school population.

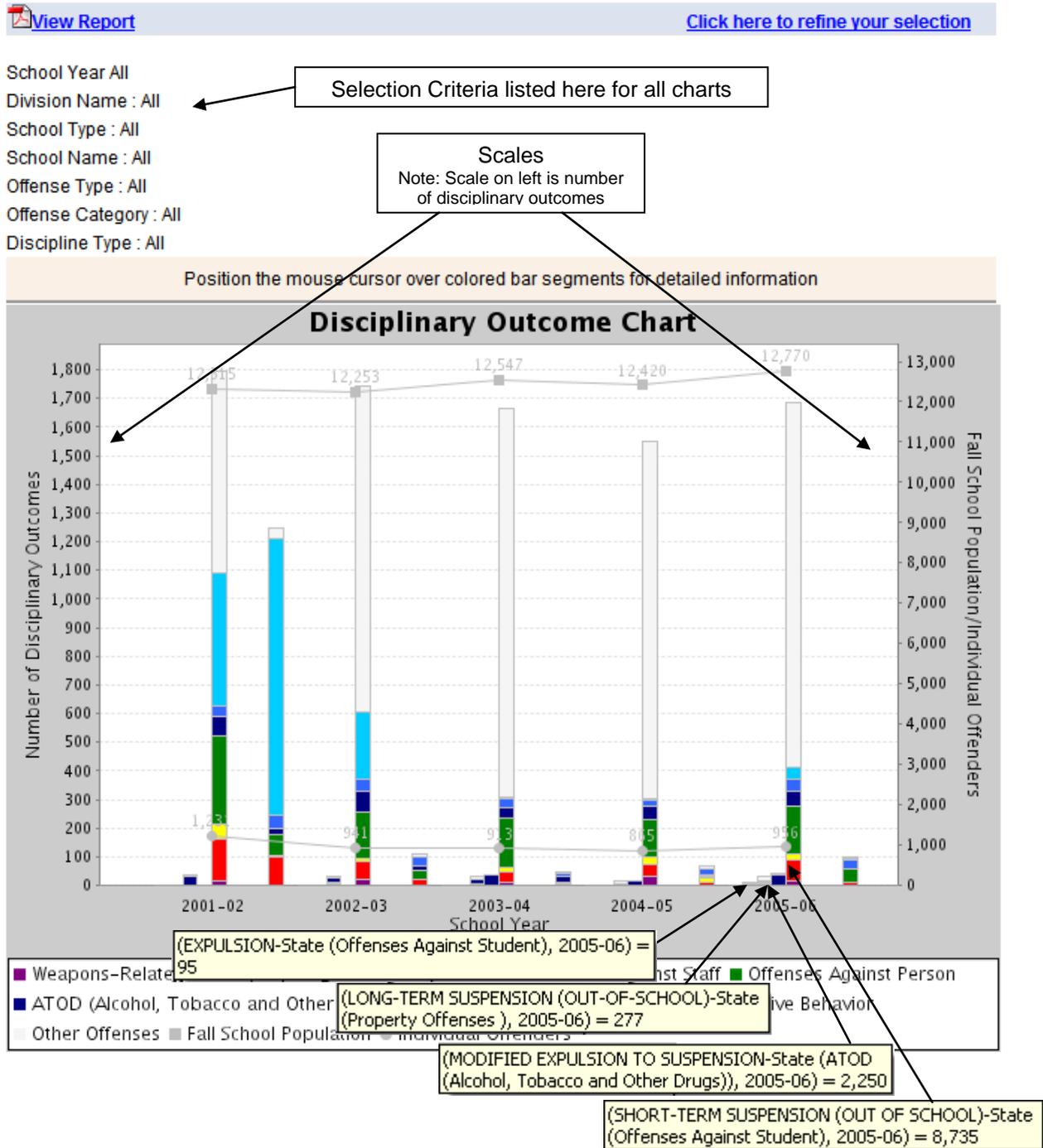
The light grey line with circles at the bottom of the chart represent the total number of *individual offenders*. Be sure to note that it does not represent either the total number of *offenses* or the total number of *offenders*. See Section 2, Question 11 for an explanation of the difference between “student offender” and “individual student offender.”

The features demonstrated in this graph are standard for all four types of data in SSIR – offense frequency, disciplinary outcome, student offenders, and non-student offenses.

Disciplinary Outcomes Data

The default view for the Disciplinary Outcomes link is shown in Figure 7.

FIGURE 7. Disciplinary Outcomes Chart Default View



Disciplinary Outcomes Chart Features

Above the chart in Figure 7 are listed **selection criteria** used to generate the disciplinary outcomes chart. Note that the selection criteria listed change as criteria are modified.

In this view, there are multiple **stacked bars** for each year. Each bar represents a category of disciplinary outcome and each bar is **stacked bar** that is color-coded to show the different categories of offenses that resulted in the disciplinary outcome the bar represents. Colors correspond to the **legend** below the chart.

The **scale** on the left features an increasing scale of the number of disciplinary outcomes and it matches the numerical disciplinary outcomes data represented in the bars. Note that the left scale is different from the left scale in the previous chart (Figure 6) which represents number of *offenses*. The scale on the right side has remained the same as in the chart in Figure 6.

Using your mouse and placing the cursor over each bar, **text boxes** will appear. In this example, the text boxes tell the user that in 2005-06 the following disciplinary outcomes occurred:

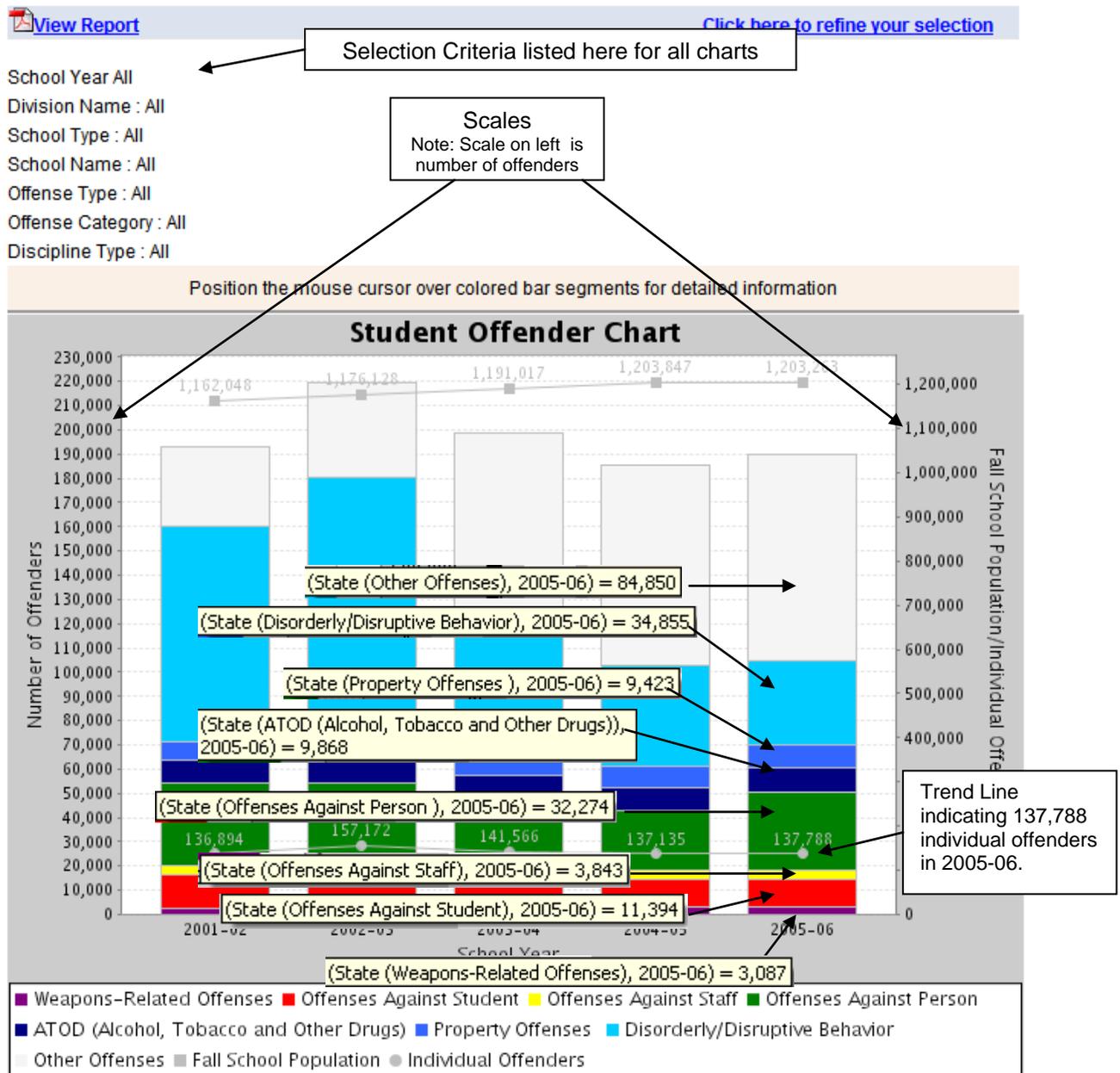
- There were 95 expulsions for Offenses Against Students.
- There were 277 long-term suspensions for Property Offenses
- There were 2,250 modified expulsions for alcohol, tobacco, drug, and other drug (AOTD) offenses
- There were 8,835 short-term suspensions for Offenses Against Students

When reviewing disciplinary data, it is important to understand that the disciplinary outcome “none” means there was no out-of-school suspension or expulsion. It does not mean there was no disciplinary action taken. Typically, it means disciplinary action such as in-school suspension, after school detention, or suspension of privileges were taken. School divisions can provide additional information on the types of disciplinary sanctions that are used.

Student Offenders Data

The default view for the Student Offenders link is shown in Figure 8.

FIGURE 8. Student Offenders Chart Default View



Student Offender Chart Features

Above the chart in Figure 8 are listed **selection criteria** used to generate the student offender chart. Note that the selection criteria listed change as criteria are modified.

In this view, there is a single **stacked bar** for each year. Bars are color-coded to represent categories of offenses committed by student offenders. Colors correspond to the **legend** below the chart.

The **scale** on the left features an increasing scale of the number of *offenders* and it matches the numerical offender data represented in the bars. Note that this scale is different from the left scale in the chart in Figure 6 which represents number of offenses. The scale on the right side has remained the same as in the chart in Figure 6 and represents school population/individual offender counts.

Using your mouse and placing the cursor over each bar, **text boxes** will appear. In this example, the text boxes tell the user the following about student offenders in 2005-06:

- For Weapons-Related Offenses, there were 3,087 student offenders.
- For Offenses Against Students, there were 22, 394 student offenders.
- For Offenses Against Persons, there were 32,274 student offenders.
- For Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug-Related Offenses (ATOD), there were 9,868 student offenders.
- For Property Offenses, there were 9,423 student offenders.
- For Disorderly/Disruptive Behavior, there were 34,855 student offenders.
- For Other Offenses, there were 84,850 student offenders.

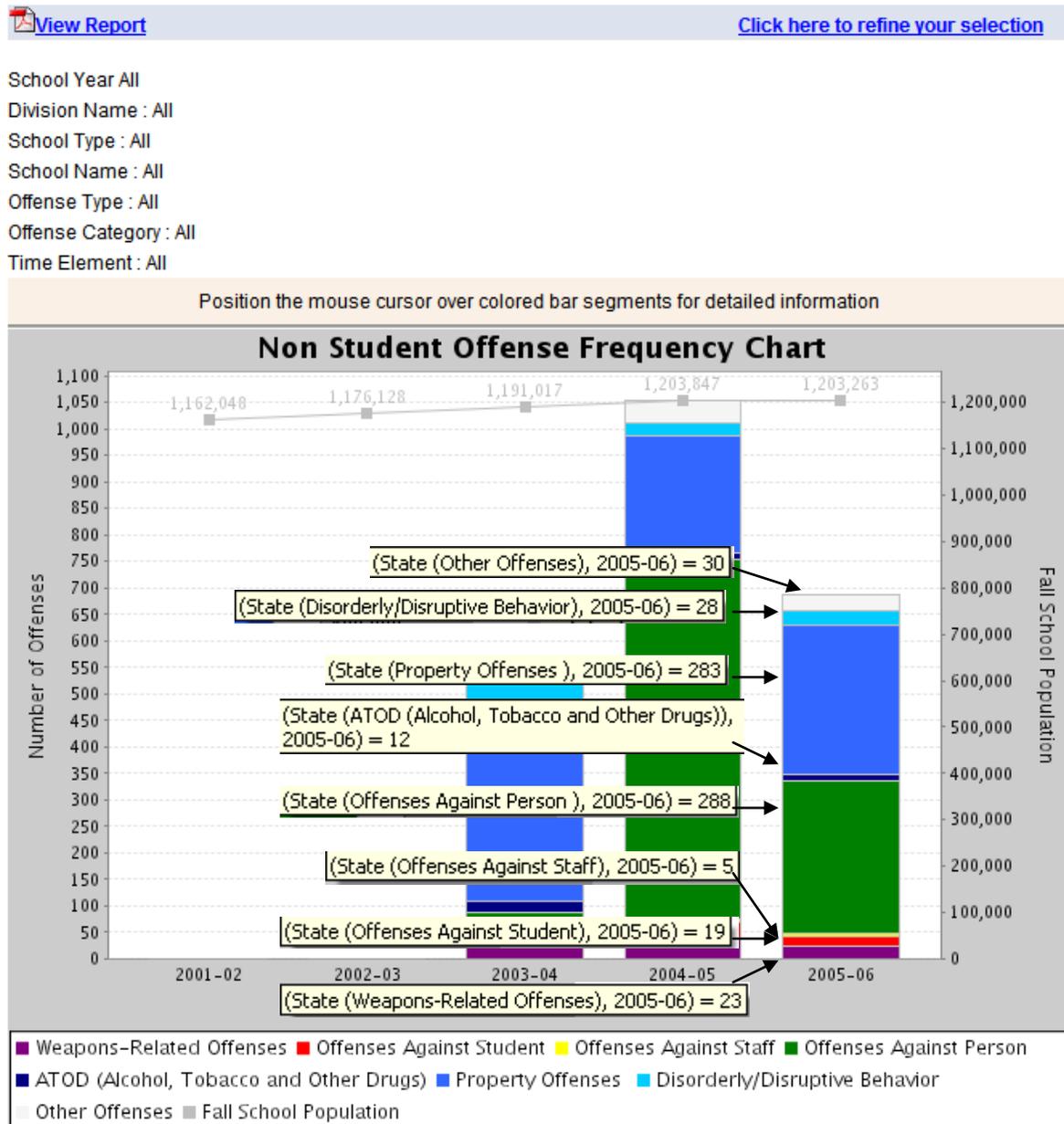
In this student offender chart it is important to make the distinction between student offenders and *individual* student offenders to avoid misinterpreting the data.

- If the numbers of student offenders listed above by offense categories were added together, the sum would be 189,594 student offenders. However, it would be incorrect to conclude that there were 189,594 *individual* offenders.
- Note that the individual offender **trend line** on the chart indicates there were 137,788 *individual* offenders.

Non-Student Offenses Data

The default view for the Non-Student Offenses link is shown in Figure 9.

FIGURE 9. Non-Student Offenses Chart Default View



Non-Student Offenses Chart Features

Above the chart in Figure 9 are listed **selection criteria** used to generate the non-student offenses chart. Note that the selection criteria listed change as criteria are modified.

In this view, there is a single **stacked bar** for each year, beginning with the 2003-04 school year. Data on non-student offenses are not available for school years before 2003-04. Bars are color-coded to represent categories of offenses committed. Colors correspond to the **legend** below the chart. Offenses by non-students include offenses such as vandalism by non-students or fights involving non-students at a football game.

The **scale** on the left features an increasing scale of the number of offenses committed by non-students and it matches the numerical offenses data represented in the bars. Note that the number of offenses by non-students is dramatically smaller than number of offenses reported in the chart in Figure 6. The scale in this chart representing non-student offenses ranges from 0 to 1,100 and the scale in the chart in Figure 6. ranges from 0 to 425,000.

Using your mouse and placing the cursor over each bar, **text boxes** will appear. In this example, the text boxes tell the user the following about non-student offenses in 2005-06:

- There were 23 Weapons-Related Offenses by non-students.
- There were 19 Offenses Against Students by non-students.
- There were 5 Offenses Against Staff by non-students.
- There were 288 Offenses Against Persons by non-students.
- There were 12 Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug-Related Offenses by non-students.
- There were 283 Property Offenses by non-students.
- There were 28 Disorderly/Disruptive Behavior Offenses by non-students.
- There were 30 Other Offenses by non-students.

Note that in this non-student offender chart, the **trend line** at the top, representing the fall school population, remains; however, the line representing individual student offenders does not appear because numbers of student offenders are not being reported in this chart.

Refining Your Selection

The information presented in all four types of SSIR data may be refined to focus on specific interests. Users may refine their selections using two different avenues:

1. On the Charts & Reports menu, select “**Refine Selection.**”
2. When the user is viewing a chart, select [Click here to refine your selection](#) on the bar at the top of each chart.

FIGURE 10. Refine Selection Option from Chart View.



At the Charts & Reports menu, when the user selects “**Refine Selection,**” the user will select one of the four types of SSIR data at the bottom of the selection menu.

When the user selects [Click here to refine your selection](#), the user will already be examining one of the four types of SSIR data and your selections will be focused on that type data.

An example of the **Offense Frequency** criteria selection page is below. To arrive at this Web page, select the link in the bar from the **Offense Frequency** chart.

Note that selections may be made for school year, division name, school type, school, offense category, offense type, and time element.

Note how the initial selection for all the criteria is “All”, as it matches the default chart view with statewide data.

FIGURE 11. Refine Selection Options from the Offense Frequency Graph

Chart Selection

School Year: All, 2001-02, 2002-03, 2003-04

Division Name : (Max 2): All, A. Linwood Holton Governor's School, Accomack County, Albemarle County

School Type : All, Combined, Elementary, High

School Name : (Max 20): All, A. G. Richardson Elementary, A. Henderson Elementary, A. Linwood Holton Governor's School

Offense Category : (Max 1): All

Offense Type : (Max 8): All, Alcohol - (AL1), All other Violations - (OT1), Arson - (AR1)

Discipline Type : All, Alternative Education, Expulsion, Long-Term Suspension (Out-Of-School)

Time Element : All, During the regular school day, In transit on the way to or from school, Non-school sponsored activity outside school hours

Offense Frequency Disciplinary Outcome
 Student Offender Non Student Offenses

Submit Reset

SSIR User Guide

Charts & Reports

SSIR Home

Offense Frequency

Disciplinary Outcome

Student Offender

Non Student Offenses

Refine Selection

 Many of the documents on the VDOE Web Site are in PDF format and require Adobe's Acrobat Reader to be viewed and printed. To obtain a free version of Acrobat Reader click the adobe image.

Refining Your Selection from the Offense Frequency Chart

To select the desired criteria, use the arrows to the right of the selection box to scroll up and down to find the desired data. Click on the data to highlight the criteria the user would like to use in your chart. To make more than one selection, hold down the CTRL key and highlight each criterion desired.

As criteria are highlighted, note how subsequent selection options change to include only the options relevant to the criteria. For example, selecting “Elementary” in the **School Type** category will then limit the **School Names** to just elementary schools in the selected school divisions.

The **Time Element** category is featured only in the criteria selection pages for Offense Frequency and Non Student Offenses charts.

A **Discipline Type** category (not shown in this Figure) is featured only in the criteria selection pages for Disciplinary Outcomes and Student Offenders.

The **Division Name** lists all school divisions. Almost all school divisions align with cities and counties; however, these exceptions should be noted:

- Bedford County and City are combined and listed as “Bedford County.”
- Fairfax County and City are combined and listed as “Fairfax County.”
- Greenville County and City of Emporia are combined and listed as “Greenville County.”
- James City County and City of Williamsburg are combined and listed as “Williamsburg-James City County.”
- In the City of Lexington, secondary students attend high school in Rockbridge County.
- The Towns of Colonial Beach and West Point have independent school divisions.

The **School Type** lists all schools, combined, elementary, middle, and high schools, and regional centers. Once a school type is selected, only schools meeting the selected criteria will be listed in the **School Name** list. “Combined” schools typically serve a range of grade levels that do not conform to the customary elementary, middle, and high school grade configurations. For example, one combined school may serve kindergarten through 8th grade and another may serve 7th through 12th grades.

Selecting Multiple Criteria

The user can select multiple years, multiple school divisions, multiple school types, multiple schools, multiple offense types, and multiple time elements by using the CTRL key. Simply hold down the CTRL key and highlight selections.

The number of selections possible for certain criteria are listed below:

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Number of Selections Possible</u>
School year	up to 5 at a time (5 = all)
School division	up to 2 at a time
School type	up to 5 at a time (5=all)
School name	up to 20* at a time
Offense category	1 at a time
Offense type	up to 8* at a time
Time element	up to 5 at a time (5 = all; on Offense Frequency and Non-Student Offenses charts only)
Discipline type	up to 9* at a time (9 = all; on Disciplinary Outcomes and Student Offenders charts only)

*While these large numbers of selections are technically possible, selecting the maximum number may result in charts with bars that are extremely narrow and very difficult to read and interpret. Fewer selections will produce more readable charts.

Refining Your Selection from the Charts & Reports Menu

Selecting “Refine Selection” from the Charts & Reports Menu will link to the Web page shown below in Figure 12. All selection options available on SSIR are listed on this Web page. Note that Figure 12 contains all the selection options shown in Figure 11 with the addition of **Discipline Type** and **Data Type** shown at the bottom (see red circle).

FIGURE 12. Refine Selection Options from the Charts & Reports Menu

The screenshot displays a web interface titled "Chart Selection" with several filter categories and a "Data Type" section at the bottom.

- School Year:** A dropdown menu with options: All, 2001-02, 2002-03, 2003-04.
- Division Name : (Max 2):** A list box with options: All, A. Linwood Holton Governor's School, Accomack County, Albemarle County.
- School Type :** A dropdown menu with options: All, Combined, Elementary, High.
- School Name : (Max 20):** A list box with options: All, A. G. Richardson Elementary, A. Henderson Elementary, A. Linwood Holton Governor's School.
- Offense Category : (Max 1):** A dropdown menu with the option: All.
- Offense Type : (Max 8):** A list box with options: All, Alcohol - (AL1), All other Violations - (OT1), Arson - (AR1).
- Discipline Type :** A list box with options: All, Alternative Education, Expulsion, Long-Term Suspension (Out-Of-School).
- Time Element :** A list box with options: All, During the regular school day, In transit on the way to or from school, Non-school sponsored activity outside school hours.

At the bottom, there are four radio buttons for "Data Type":

- Offense Frequency
- Disciplinary Outcome
- Student Offender
- Non Student Offenses

Below the radio buttons are two buttons: "Submit" and "Reset".

To access data using this Web page, the user must select a "Data Type" from the options at the bottom of the page. When the user selects the desired option, the appropriate selection menus are activated and those that are not applicable will not be active. For example, if the user selects "Offense Frequency," the "Discipline Type" selection menu will not operate and if the user selects "Disciplinary Outcomes," the "Time Element" selection menu will simply be ignored when SSIR creates your customized report.

Example 1

To illustrate the process of refining your selection, a chart and report featuring the offense frequency for fights occurring at Fairfax County middle schools in the 2004-05 and 2005-06 school years will be created.

Step 1. On the Charts & Reports menu, select “Offense Frequency.”

Step 2. On the default state-level chart that appears, select [Click here to refine your selection](#) in the bar at the top of the chart.

Step 3. On the criteria selection page, select the data that will create a chart with the desired information. Please refer to Figure 13 for selections:

School Year	2004-05 and 2005-06
Division Name	Fairfax County Public Schools
School Type	Middle
School Name	All (Note that the menu has changed to list only Fairfax County Middle Schools)
Offense Category	Offenses Against Person
Offense Type	Fighting – No Medical Attention (FA2) (Note that this list has changed to list only Offenses Against Person)
Time Element	All

Step 4. Once all the criteria have been selected, click on the “Submit” button to generate the chart.

In order to reset the data to the “All” or statewide level, click on the “Reset” button to return to the default settings.

FIGURE 13. Criteria Selection Page to Create Customized Report

Chart Selection

School Year: 2002-03, 2003-04, **2004-05**, 2005-06

Division Name : (Max 2): Enterprise Academy/Newport News City, Essex County, **Fairfax County**, Falls Church City

School Type : Elementary, High, **Middle**, Regional Centers

School Name : (Max 20): **All**, Carson Middle, Cooper Middle, Franklin Middle

Offense Category : (Max 1): Offenses Against Person

Offense Type : (Max 8): Extortion - (EX1), **Fighting-No Medical Attention - (FA2)**, Fighting-Requiring Medical Attention - (FA1), Kidnapping/Abduction - (KI1)

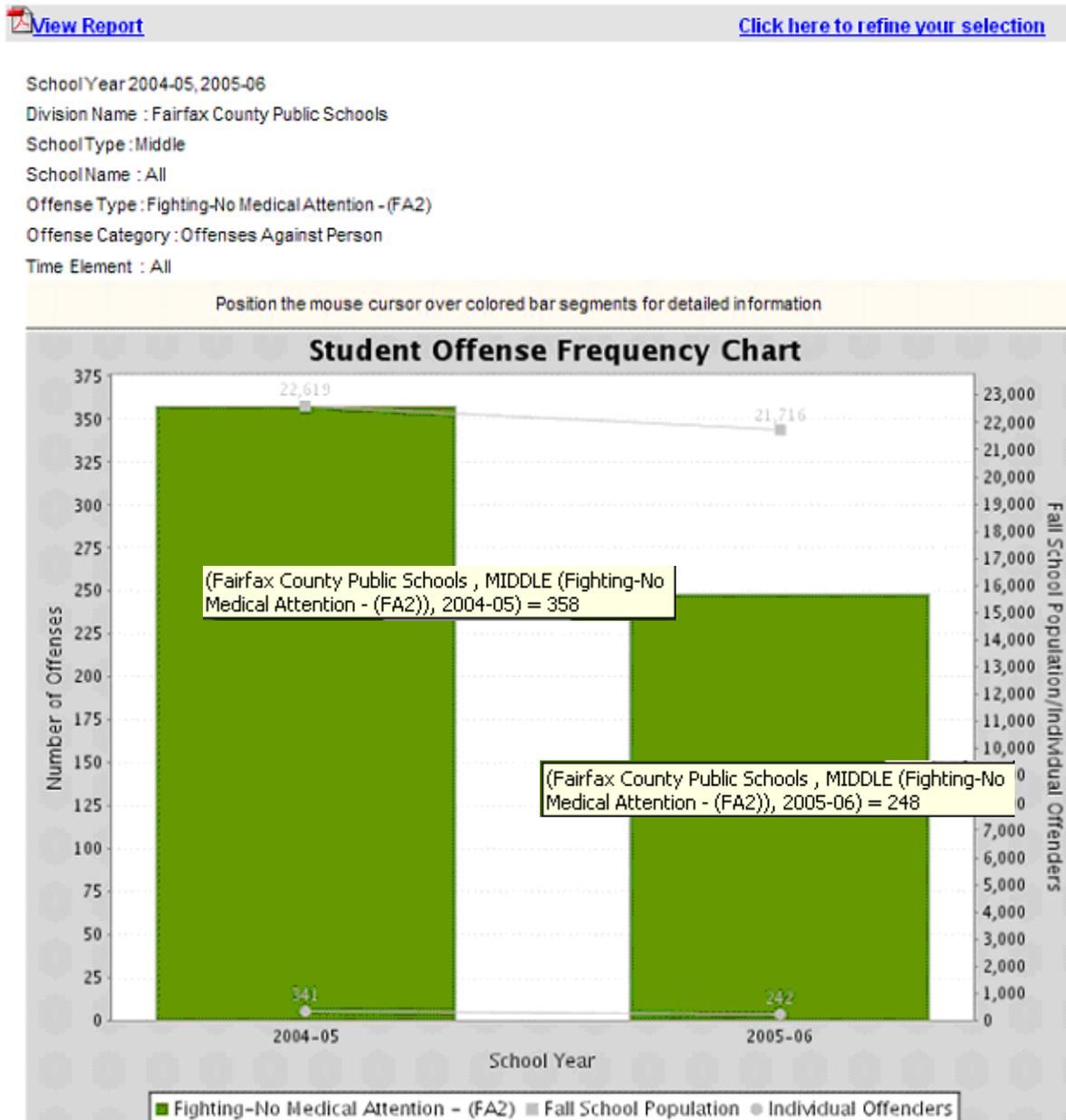
Discipline Type : **All**, Alternative Education, Expulsion, Long-Term Suspension (Out-Of-School)

Time Element : **All**, During the regular school day, In transit on the way to or from school, Non-school sponsored activity outside school hours

Offense Frequency Disciplinary Outcome
 Student Offender Non Student Offenses

The result of the above selections is shown in Figure 14.

FIGURE 14. Student Offense Frequency Chart for Selected Criteria



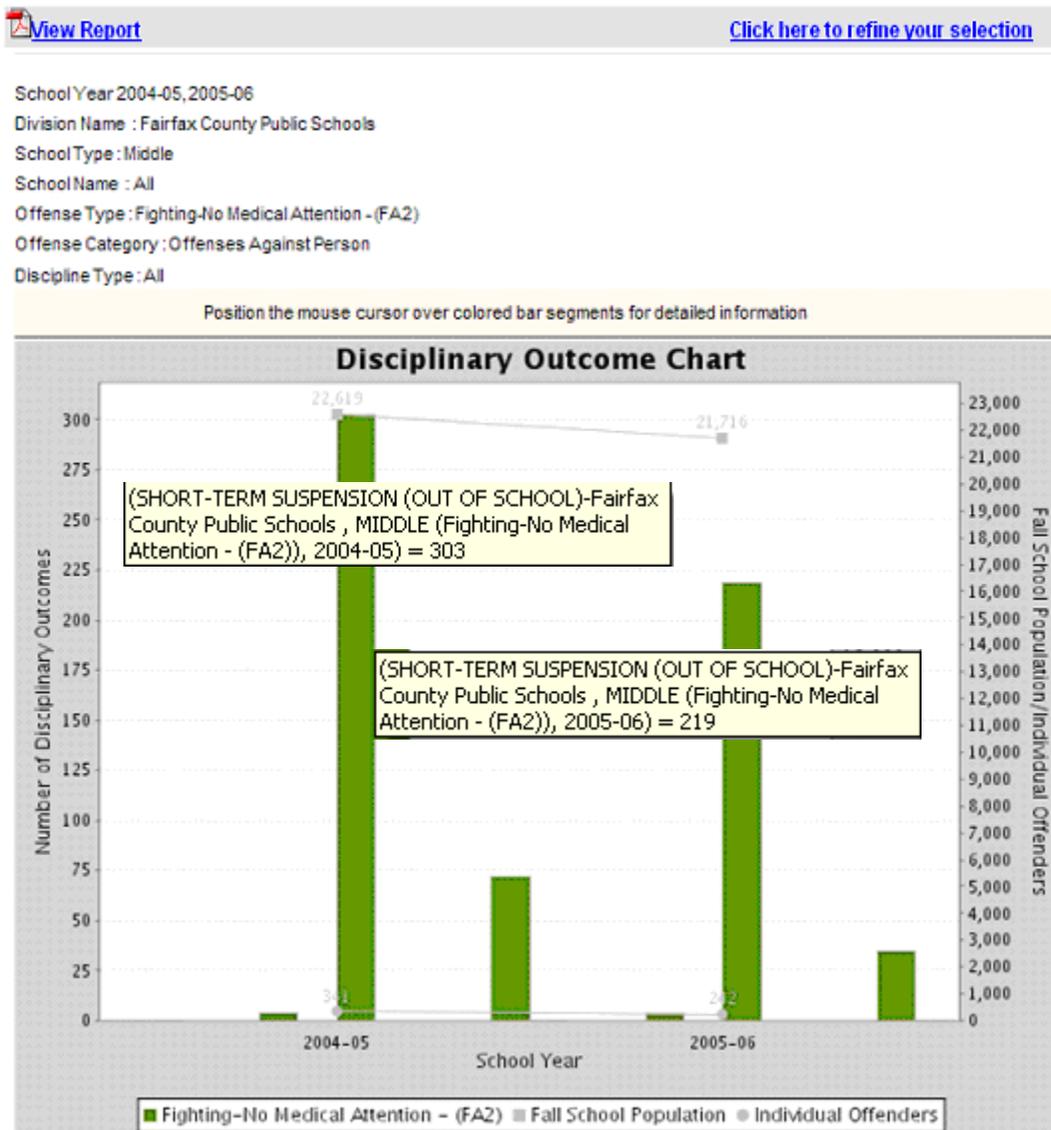
The bar displayed in the chart represents the total number of fights not requiring medical attention in all middle schools in Fairfax County. The legend at the bottom of the chart reflects the color-code for the offense. The frequency of fighting offenses reported can be viewed by positioning the mouse over the chart to create the text boxes as shown in Figure 14. The text boxes show that in Fairfax County middle schools, in school year 2004-05 there were 358 fights and in school year 2005-06 there were 248 fights not requiring medical attention.

Notice that the total number of individual offenders is shown by the light grey circle at the bottom (341 in 2004-05 and 242 in 2005-06) and that the total population of middle school students is shown by the light grey square at the top of the chart (22,619 in 2004-05 and 21,716 in 2005-06). Notice how the scales on either side of the chart have also changed to reflect the data selection criteria.

Your selection criteria (fights in Fairfax County middle schools in 2004-05 and 2005-06) will be retained in order to generate graphs for the other data categories, such as Disciplinary Outcome, by clicking on the links under **Charts & Reports**. The chart will change to display the data available within that category based upon the selected criteria.

To examine what disciplinary actions were taken, select **Disciplinary Outcome**. The result of your selections is shown in Figure 15.

FIGURE 15. Disciplinary Outcome Chart for Selected Criteria



The chart in Figure 15. displays bars representing types of disciplinary outcomes that resulted from fights in all Fairfax County middle schools in 2004-05 and 2005-06.

Again, by positioning your cursor over each bar the user can see that short-term suspensions were the most frequently occurring disciplinary outcomes with 303 in 2004-05 and 219 in 2005-06.

Again, the user can see the number of individual offenders is shown by the light grey circle at the bottom (341 in 2004-05 and 242 in 2005-06) and that the total population of middle school students is shown by the light grey square at the top of the chart (22,619 in 2004-05 and 21,716 in 2005-06).

Exploring Other Selection Criteria

To further explore the features of the Web site, begin by changing the criteria to examine all offenses (rather than just fighting). To make this change, follow these steps:

Step 1. Because the user is currently examining disciplinary outcome data, the user will need to go to the **Charts & Reports** menu and select "Offense Frequency."

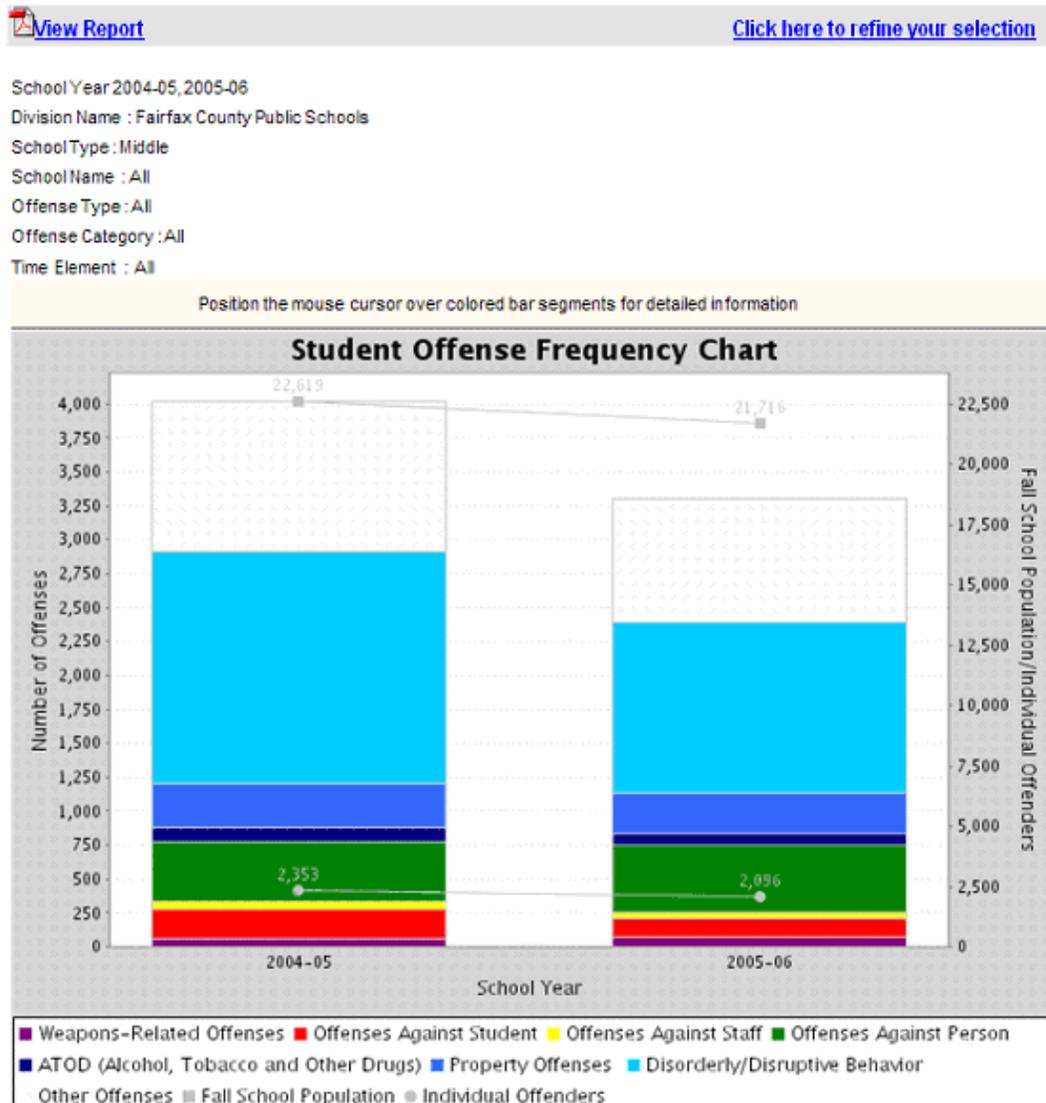
Step 2. In the bar at the top of the chart, select Click here to refine your selection. This link will return to the criteria selection page with the most recent selection settings. Note that the criteria selection page will be set at the last criteria the user selected.

Step 3. At Offense Category, select "All."

Step 4. Enter "Submit."

The result is shown in Figure 16:

FIGURE 16. Offense Frequency Chart for Selected Criteria



The chart in Figure 16 displays the color-coded segments representing all the offenses that occurred during the 2004-05 and 2005-06 school years in Fairfax County middle schools.

The total numbers of individual offenders (2,353 in 2004-05 and 2,096 in 2005-06) are represented by the light grey circles at the bottom, and the total student populations are represented by the light grey squares near the top.

Next, expand the selection criteria to include the 2003-04 academic year. To include this third year, follow these steps:

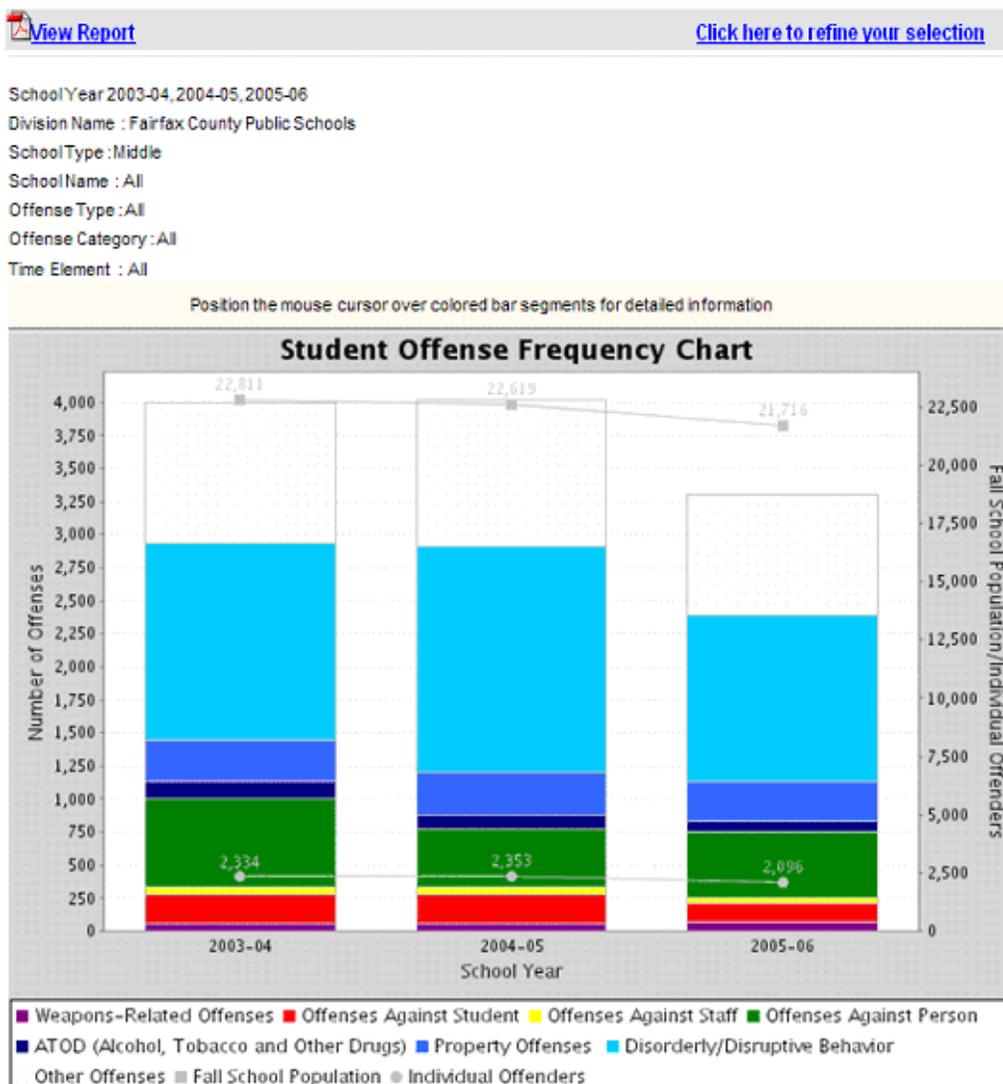
Step 1. In the bar at the top of the chart, select [Click here to refine your selection](#). This link will return to the criteria selection page with the most recent selection settings. Note that the criteria selection page will be set at the last criteria the user selected.

Step 2. At School Year, the user will see that 2004-05 and 2005-06 are already highlighted. To add 2003-04, hold down the CTRL key and highlight 2003-04. By first holding down the CTRL key, the user will be able to add a year while retaining your previously selected two years.

Step 3. Enter "Submit."

The result of your selection is illustrated in Figure 17.

FIGURE 17. Offense Frequency Chart for Selected Criteria



Making Comparisons in SSIR Data

The SSIR will allow the user to make multiple selections for several criteria so that comparisons can be made. Selection criteria and the number of selections possible are listed below:

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Number of Selections Possible</u>
School year	up to 5 at a time (5 = all)
School division	up to 2 at a time
School type	up to 5 at a time (5=all)
School name	up to 20* at a time
Offense category	1 at a time
Offense type	up to 8* at a time
Time element	up to 5 at a time (5 = all; on Offense Frequency and Non-Student Offenses charts only)
Discipline type	up to 9* at a time (9 = all; on Disciplinary Outcomes and Student Offenders charts only)

*While these large numbers of selections are technically possible, selecting the maximum number may result in charts with bars that are extremely narrow and very difficult to read and interpret. Fewer selections will produce more readable charts.

Comparing Offense Frequencies for Two Schools for Two Years

The next example compares offense frequencies for the 2004-05 and 2005-06 school years at Albemarle County High School and T.C. Williams High School in Alexandria.

Step 1. Go to the criteria selection page by either a) selecting “Offense Frequency” in the Charts & Reports menu or b) selecting [Click here to refine your selection](#) on the bar.

Step 2. On the criteria selection Web page, at School Division, select Albemarle County Public Schools and Alexandria Public Schools using the CTRL key to the two school divisions.

Step 3. At School Type, select “High.” Steps 2 and 3 will result in only high schools in Albemarle and Alexandria being displayed in the Schools list.

Step 4. At School Name, using the CTRL key, select Albemarle County High School and T.C. Williams High School.

The criteria selection page is shown in Figure 18.

FIGURE 18. Sample Criteria Selection Page – High Schools in Two School Divisions

The screenshot shows a web-based form titled "Chart Selection" with the following fields and options:

- School Year:** A dropdown menu with options: 2002-03, 2003-04, 2004-05, and 2005-06.
- Division Name : (Max 2):** A list box with options: A. Linwood Holton Governor's School, Accomack County, Albemarle County (highlighted), and Alexandria City.
- School Type :** A list box with options: All, Combined, Elementary, and High (highlighted).
- School Name : (Max 20):** A list box with options: Albemarle High, Monticello High, Murray High, and T. C. Williams High.
- Offense Category : (Max 1):** A dropdown menu with the option: All.
- Offense Type : (Max 8):** A list box with options: All, Alcohol - (AL1), All other Violations - (OT1), and Arson - (AR1).
- Discipline Type :** A list box with options: All, Alternative Education, Expulsion, and Long-Term Suspension (Out-Of-School).
- Time Element :** A list box with options: All, During the regular school day, In transit on the way to or from school, and Non-school sponsored activity outside school hours.

At the bottom of the form, there are four radio buttons for selection:

- Offense Frequency
- Disciplinary Outcome
- Student Offender
- Non Student Offenses

Below the radio buttons are two buttons: "Submit" and "Reset".

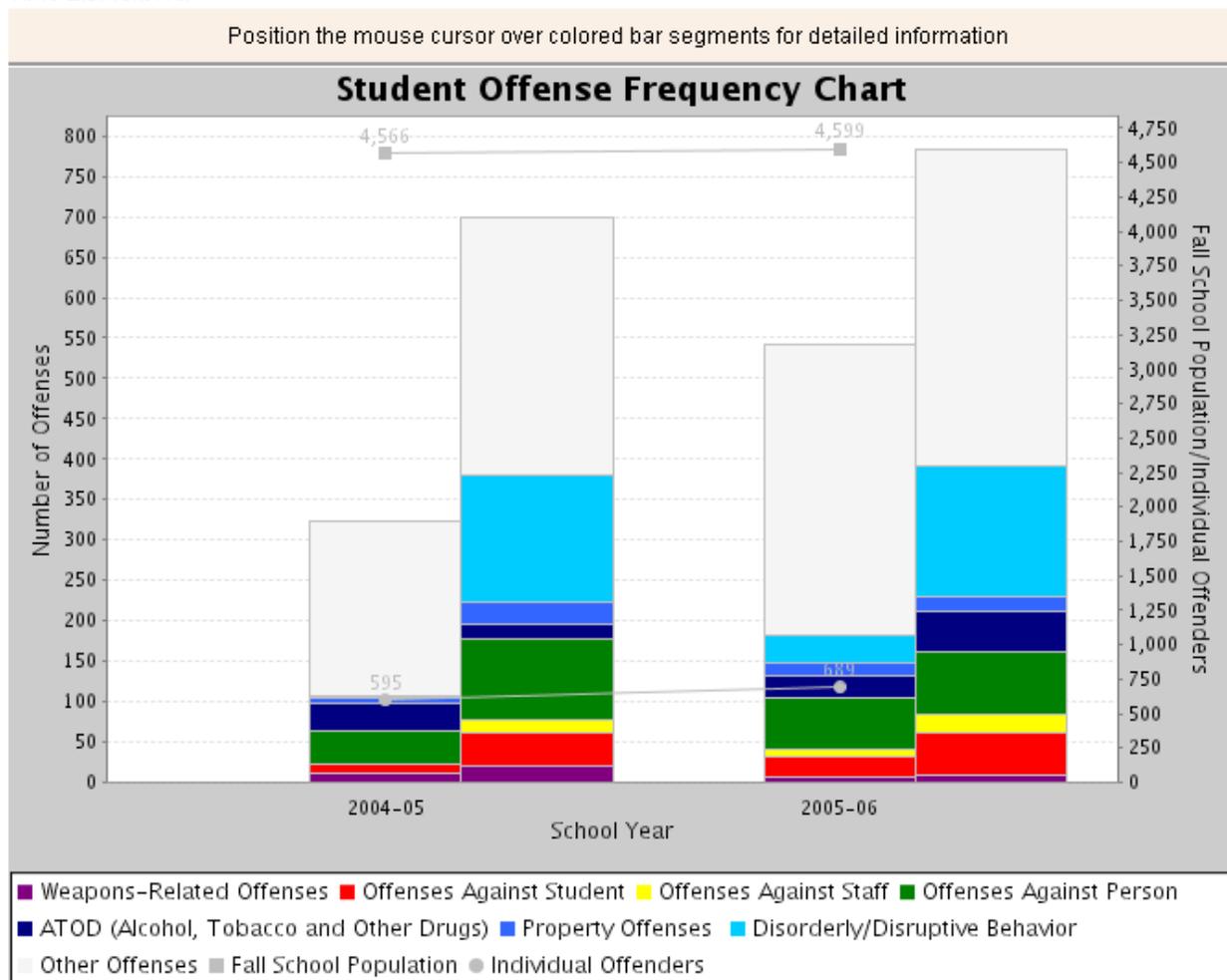
When the user enters "Submit", the chart illustrated in Figure 19 will appear.

FIGURE 19. Offense Frequency Chart for Selected Criteria – High Schools in Two School Divisions

 [View Report](#)

[Click here to refine your selection](#)

School Year 2004-05, 2005-06
 Division Name : Albemarle County , Alexandria City
 School Type : High
 School Name : Albemarle High, T. C. Williams High
 Offense Category : All
 Offense Type : All
 Time Element : All



Notice that the bars are not labeled to identify which belong to T.C. Williams and which belong to Albemarle County High School. The user may position the cursor over the segments to bring up the information text box, but the best method of attaching school names to bars is to download the report. Directions for downloading reports containing charts and related data in table format are given in Section 4.

Comparing Specific Offense Trends at Three Schools

The next example compares trends in a single offense (fighting without injury) at three high schools in Chesapeake City Schools over the three-year period 2003-04, 2004-05, and 2005-06.

Step 1. Go to the criteria selection page by either a) selecting “Offense Frequency” in the Charts & Reports menu or b) selecting [Click here to refine your selection](#) on the bar.

Step 2. At the criteria selection Web page, make the following selections:

At School Year, select 2003-04, 2004-05, and 2005-06

At School Division, select Chesapeake City Public Schools

At School Type, select High

At School, select Deep Creek, Great Bridge, and Indian River High Schools

At Offense Category, select Offenses Against Person

At Offense Type, select Fights – No Medical Attention (FA2)

At Discipline Type, retain the default “All”

At Time Element, retain the default “All”

Step 3. Make sure “Offense Frequency” is selected and enter “Submit”

The criteria selection page is shown in Figure 20.

FIGURE 20. Sample Criteria Selection Page – Trends in Three High Schools in One School Division

The screenshot shows a 'Chart Selection' form with the following fields and options:

- School Year:** 2002-03, 2003-04, 2004-05, 2005-06
- Division Name : (Max 2):** Charlottesville-Albemarle Vocational-Technical Center, Chesapeake Bay Governor's School, Chesapeake City, Chesterfield County
- School Type :** All, Combined, Elementary, High
- School Name : (Max 20):** Deep Creek High, Great Bridge High, Hickory High, Indian River High
- Offense Category : (Max 1):** Offenses Against Person
- Offense Type : (Max 8):** Bullying - (BU1), Extortion - (EX1), Fighting-No Medical Attention - (FA2), Fighting-Requiring Medical Attention - (FA1)
- Discipline Type :** All, Alternative Education, Expulsion, Long-Term Suspension (Out-Of-School)
- Time Element :** All, During the regular school day, In transit on the way to or from school, Non-school sponsored activity outside school hours

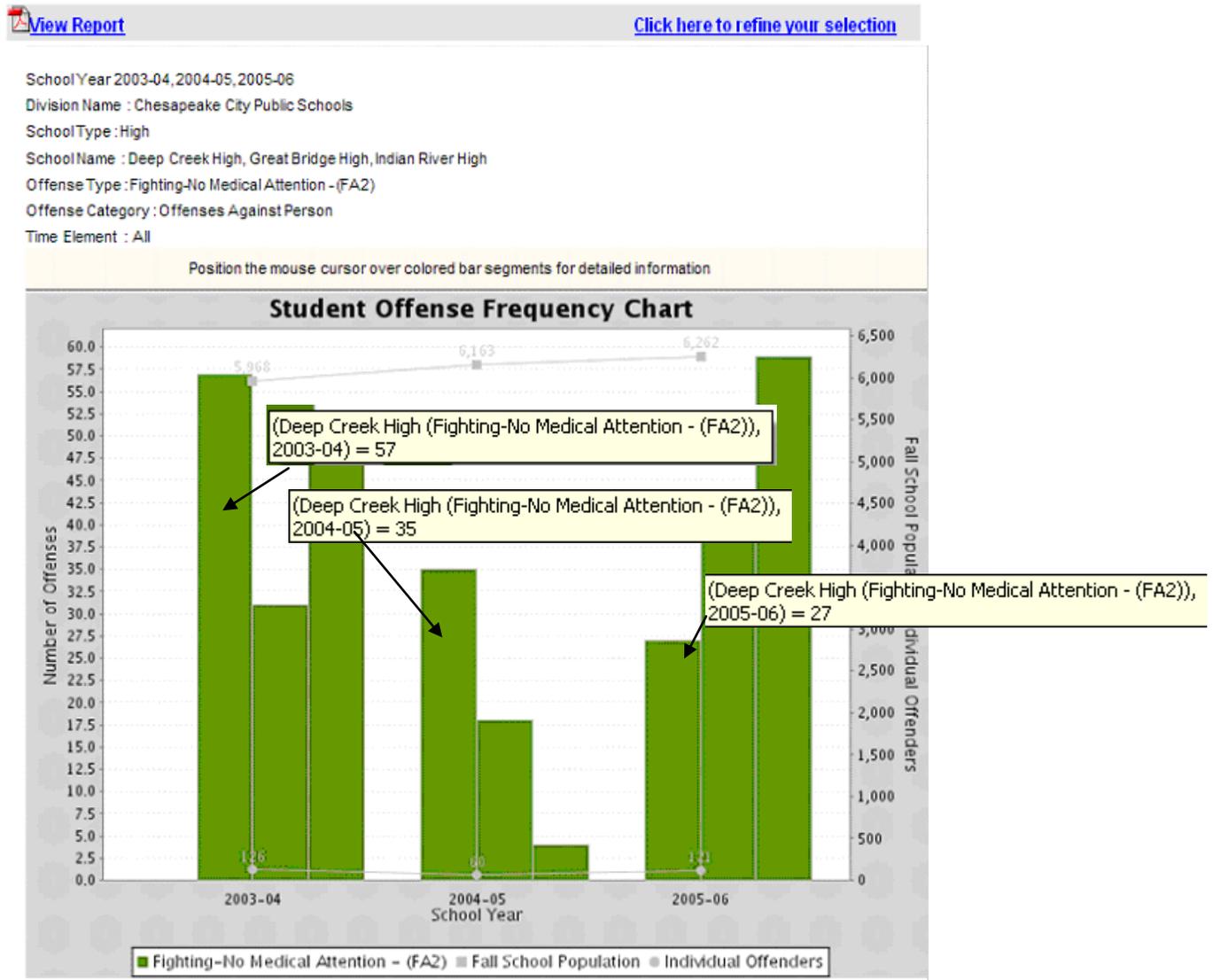
Radio buttons for selection:

- Offense Frequency
- Disciplinary Outcome
- Student Offender
- Non Student Offenses

Buttons: Submit, Reset

The result of the selections shown above is illustrated in Figure 21.

FIGURE 21. Offense Frequency Chart for Selected Criteria – Trends in Three High Schools in One School Division



In the chart in Figure 21, the first bar in each set of bars represents offense frequencies for fights at Deep Creek High School. The chart reflects a steady decline at Deep Creek over the three-year period: from 57 in 2003-04 to 35 in 2004-05 and 27 in 2005-06.

The chart reflects a more mixed picture for the other two high schools where there were declines from 2003-04 to 2004-05 but increases in 2005-06.

Examining Offenses Resulting in Long-Term Suspensions in the Most Recent School Years

The next example examines offenses resulting in long-term suspensions in the three most recent school years in Henrico County Public Schools.

Step 1. At the criteria selection page by selecting “Offense Frequency” in the Charts & Reports menu or b) selecting [Click here to refine your selection](#) on the bar.

Step 2. At the criteria selection Web page, make the following selections:

At School Year, select 2003-04, 2004-05, and 2005-06

At School Division, select Henrico County Public Schools

At School Type, select “All”

At School, select “All”

At Offense Category, select “All”

At Offense Type, select “All”

At Discipline Type, select “Long-Term Suspension (out of school)”

At Time Element, retain the default “All”

Step 3. Select Disciplinary Outcomes and enter “Submit”

The criteria selection page is shown in Figure 22.

FIGURE 22. Sample Criteria Selection Page – Offenses Resulting in Long-Term Suspensions in the Most Recent Three Years

Chart Selection

School Year: 2002-03, 2003-04, 2004-05, 2005-06

Division Name : (Max 2)
Hanover County
Harrisonburg City
Henrico County
Henry Co/Martinsville Reg Pgm

School Type :
All
Combined
Elementary
High

School Name : (Max 20)
All
Adams Elementary
Adult Education Center
Arthur Ashe, Jr. Elementary

Offense Category : (Max 1)
All

Offense Type : (Max 8)
All
Alcohol - (AL1)
All other Violations - (OT1)
Arson - (AR1)

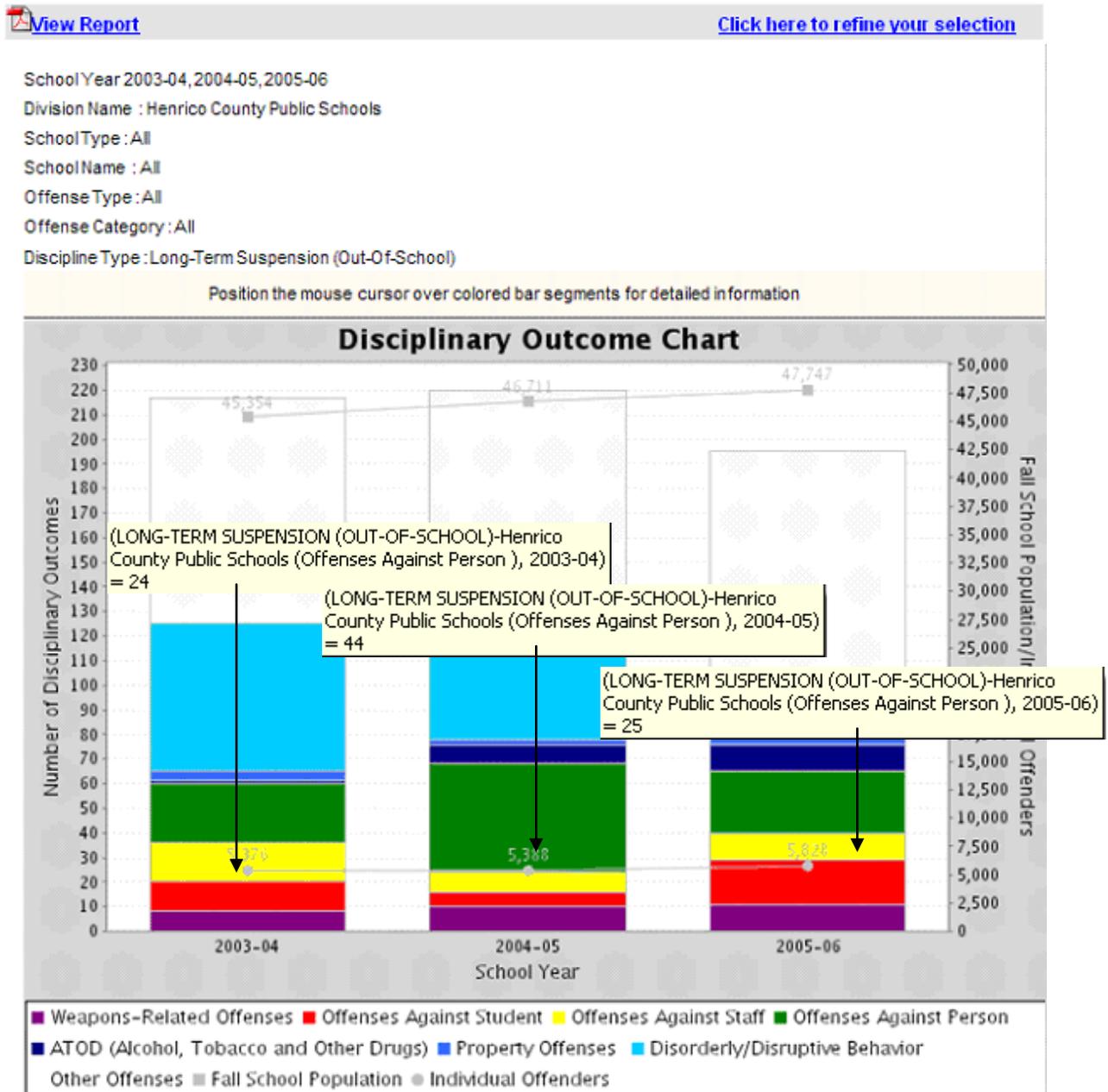
Discipline Type :
All
Alternative Education
Expulsion
Long-Term Suspension (Out-Of-School)

Time Element :
All
During the regular school day
In transit on the way to or from school
Non-school sponsored activity outside school hours

Offense Frequency Disciplinary Outcome
 Student Offender Non Student Offenses

The result of your selection is illustrated in Figure 23.

FIGURE 23. Disciplinary Outcome Chart for Selected Criteria – Offenses Resulting in Long-Term Suspension in the Most Recent Three Years



For each year shown in the chart in Figure 23, a stacked bar shows the categories of offenses resulting in long-term suspensions in Henrico Schools. From the chart, it appears that Offenses Against Person (color-coded green) represent a sizeable proportion of offenses resulting in long-term suspensions. The user may examine Offenses Against Person more closely by further refining selections to focus on specific offenses in that category.

Examining Specific Offenses Resulting in Long-Term Suspensions in the Most Recent School Years

To examine more closely the Offenses Against Person category of offenses displayed in the previous chart (Figure 23), take the following steps:

Step 1. Select [Click here to refine your selection](#) on the bar at the top of the chart.

Step 2. At the criteria selection Web page, make the following selections:

At School Year, retain the selections 2003-04, 2004-05, and 2005-06

At School Division, retain the selection Henrico County Public Schools

At School Type, retain the selection "All"

At School, retain the selection "All"

At Offense Category, select "Offenses Against Person"

At Offense Type, select Bullying, Extortion, Fighting Without Medical Attention, Fighting Requiring Medical Attention, Malicious Wounding, and Robbery.

At Discipline Type, retain the selection "Long-Term Suspension (out of school)"

At Time Element, retain the default "All"

Step 3. Enter "Submit"

The criteria selection page is shown in Figure 24.

FIGURE 24. Sample Criteria Selection Page – Long-Term Suspensions for Specific Offenses in “Offenses Against Person” Category in the Most Recent Three Years

The screenshot shows a web-based form titled "Chart Selection" with the following fields and options:

- School Year:** A dropdown menu with options: 2002-03, 2003-04, 2004-05, and 2005-06.
- Division Name : (Max 2):** A list box with options: Harrisonburg City, Henrico County (highlighted), Henry Co/Martinsville Reg Pgm, and Henry County.
- School Type :** A dropdown menu with options: All, Combined, Elementary, and High.
- School Name : (Max 20):** A list box with options: All, Adams Elementary, Adult Education Center, and Arthur Ashe, Jr. Elementary.
- Offense Category : (Max 1):** A dropdown menu with the option: All.
- Offense Type : (Max 8):** A list box with options: All, Alcohol - (AL1), All other Violations - (OT1), and Arson - (AR1).
- Discipline Type :** A list box with options: All, Alternative Education, Expulsion, and Long-Term Suspension (Out-Of-School) (highlighted).
- Time Element :** A list box with options: All, During the regular school day, In transit on the way to or from school, and Non-school sponsored activity outside school hours.

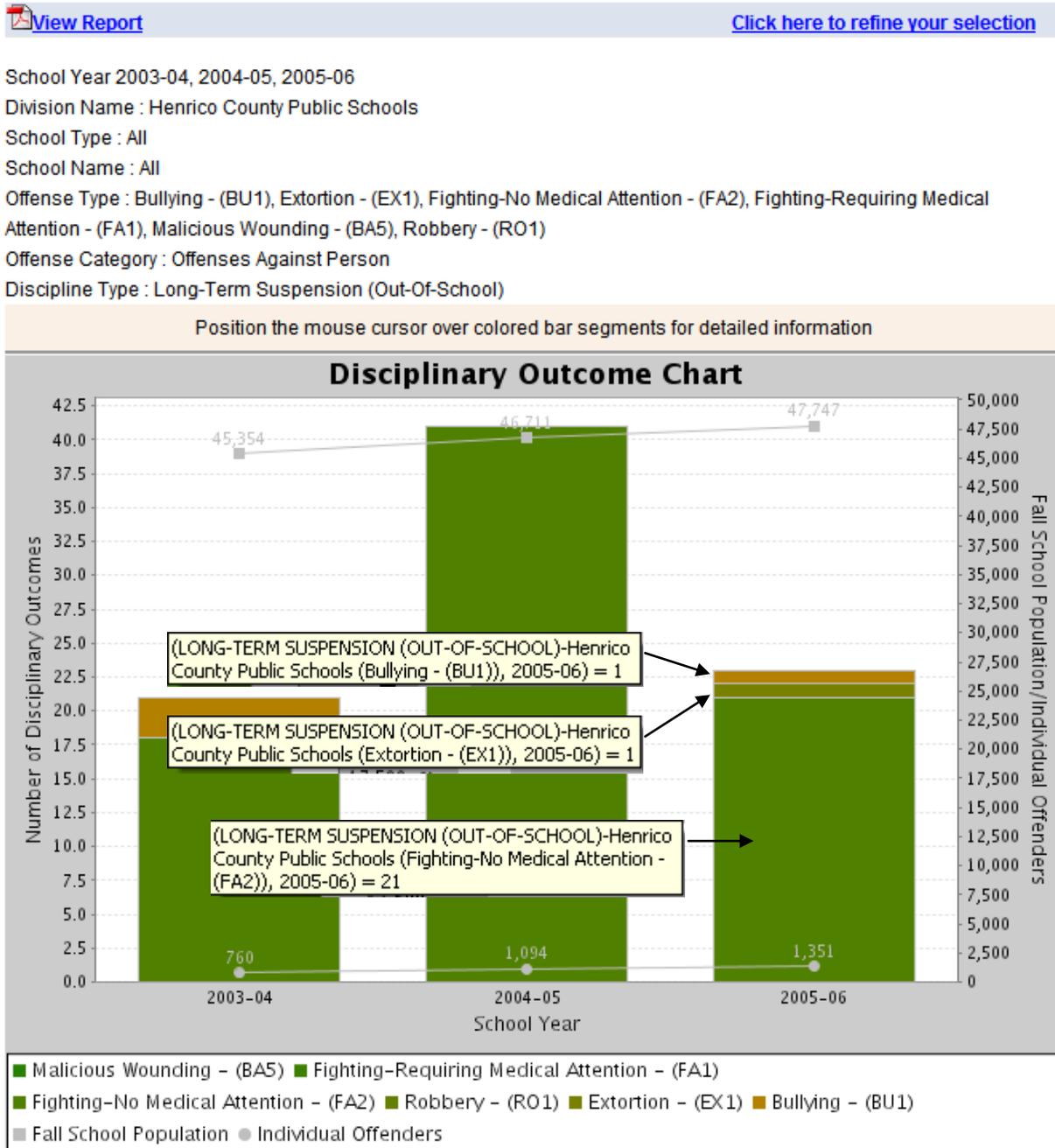
At the bottom of the form, there are four radio buttons for selection:

- Offense Frequency
- Disciplinary Outcome
- Student Offender
- Non Student Offenses

Below the radio buttons are two buttons: "Submit" and "Reset".

The result of the selections shown above is illustrated in Figure 25.

FIGURE 25. Disciplinary Outcome Chart for Selected Criteria – Offenses Resulting in Long-Term Suspension in the Most Recent Three Years



Above the chart in Figure 25 are listed **selection criteria** used to generate the disciplinary outcomes chart. This information is particularly helpful to the SSIR user when multiple criteria have been used to explore data.

The **scale** on the left features an increasing scale of the number of long-term suspensions; the scale ranges from 0 to 42.5. The scale on the right features an increasing scale of the fall school population for all schools in Henrico County. The **trend line** at the top (with grey square) represents the fall school population for all schools in Henrico County. The trend line at the bottom (with grey circles) represents the numbers of individual offenders who received long-term suspensions. The scales and trend lines tell the user:

- In 2003-04, the fall school population was 45,354 and 760 individual students received long-term suspensions.
- In 2004-05, the fall school population was 46,711 and 1,094 individual students received long-term suspensions.
- In 2005-06, the fall school population was 47,747 and 1,351 individual students received long-term suspensions.

In this view, there is a single **stacked bar** for each of the three years selected. Bars are color-coded to represent the specific offenses selected; colors correspond to the **legend** below the chart. Using your mouse and placing the cursor over each bar, **text boxes** will appear. In this example, the text boxes tells the user the following about disciplinary outcomes in 2005-06:

- There was 1 long-term suspension for Bullying.
- There was 1 long-term suspension for Extortion.
- There were 21 long-term suspensions for Fighting - Not Requiring Medical Attention.

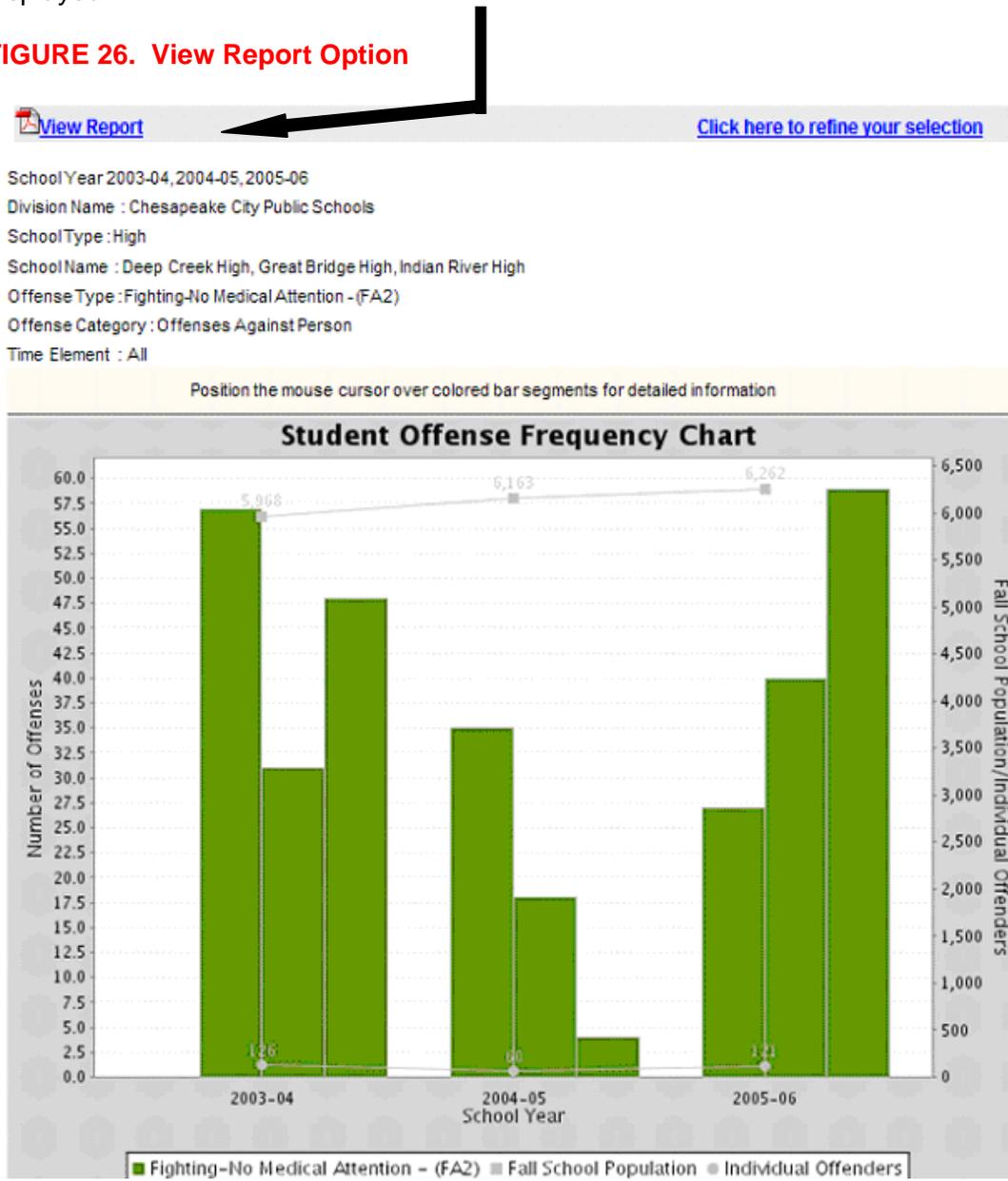
Note the offenses Fighting Requiring Medical Attention, Malicious Wounding, and Robbery are not present in the bar representing 2005-06. This means that none of these three offenses resulted in long-term suspensions.

Section 5. Downloading Reports from the SSIR Web site

The SSIR Web site will generate a downloadable report for any data displayed. These reports include the bar chart displayed plus all data represented in the chart in a table format. Having the capability to generate and view downloadable reports is especially helpful when it is difficult to distinguish the color-coded segments on the bar charts. The reports give the user a more detailed look at the data. Therefore, it is recommended that users download reports for data that are of particular interest.

To generate any report, select the [View Report](#) link in the bar at the top of any chart being displayed.

FIGURE 26. View Report Option



Selecting View Report will create a Portable Document File (PDF) that can be downloaded, or viewed using a PDF reader program, such as Adobe Acrobat.

Once the report is open, the user will see that it features a chart like the one on the Web site. However, below the chart is a tabular report that shows in detail the data on which the chart was built.

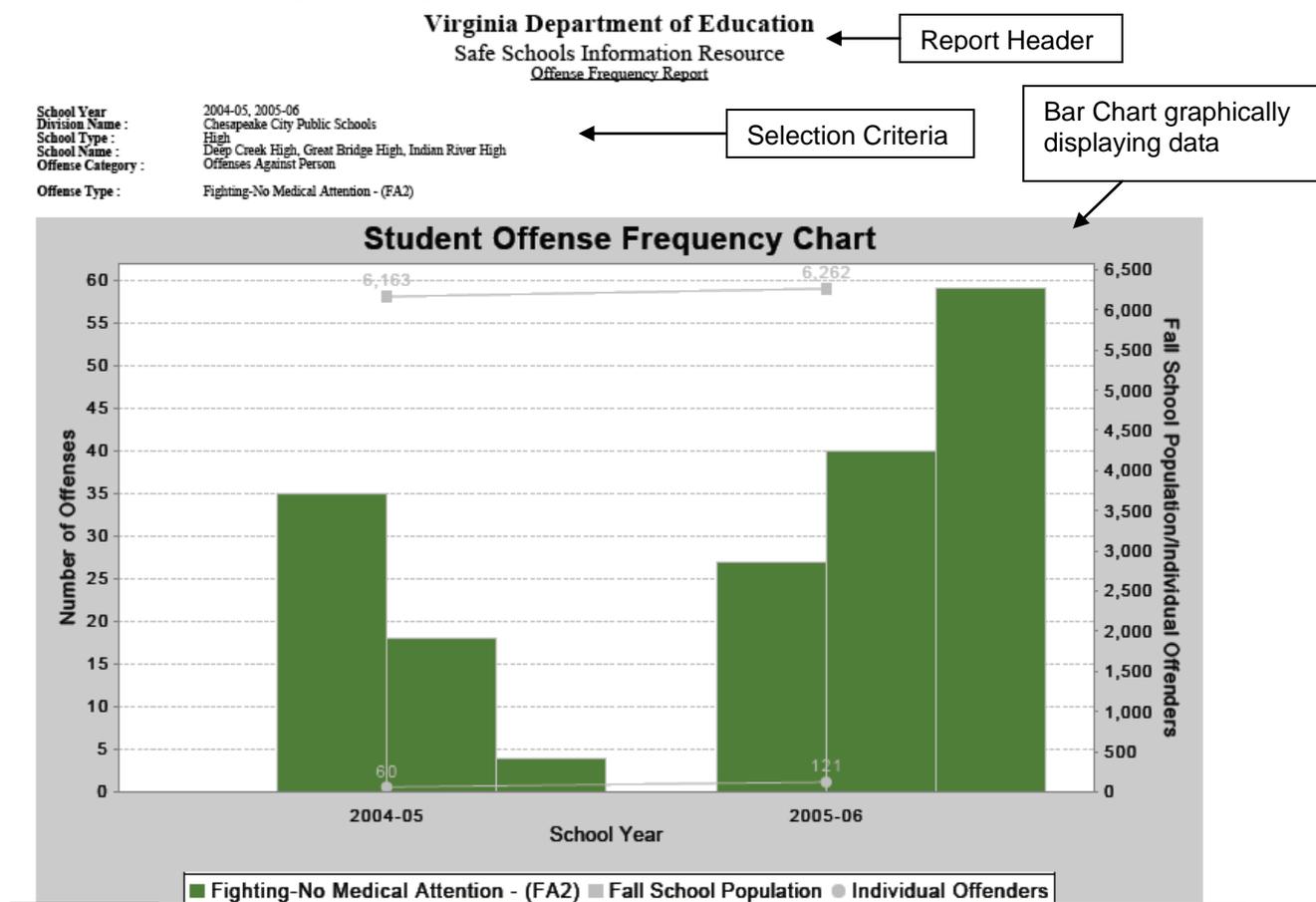
An excellent example of the value of the report is evident in the case of offense frequencies for fighting at the three Chesapeake City Public Schools illustrated in Figure 21 and shown again above in Figure 26. Although the chart provides an excellent visual “picture” of the data, the SSIR user must rely on text boxes to see the names of schools and numbers of fights for each year.

Selecting View Report creates a report containing the following elements:

- Header naming report and its source (VDOE and SSIR)
- Date and time that the report was generated
- List of criteria on which the report was built
- Bar chart graphically illustrating data
- Table detailing report data

Elements of the report are illustrated in Figure 27.

FIGURE 27. SSIR Report Sample



Virginia Department of Education
Safe Schools Information Resource
Offense Frequency Report

Page 2 of 2

School Year	Population	Individual Offenders	FA2	Total
Chesapeake City Public Schools				
School Type : HIGH				
Deep Creek High				
2004-05	2028	35	35	35
2005-06	2088	26	27	27
Great Bridge High				
2004-05	2267	18	18	18
2005-06	2338	38	40	40
Indian River High				
2004-05	1868	7	4	4
2005-06	1836	57	59	59

Table detailing report data, including

- name of school division
- name of each school
- school year(s)
- school population(s) of each school
- # individual offenders for each school/each year
- count of frequency of selected offenses (FA2 in this example)
- total count of frequency of selected offenses

Once generated, the report may be printed and/or saved. Instructions for downloading reports using Internet Explorer and Firefox web browsers are given below.

Downloading and Saving SSIR Reports

When downloading information from the SSIR Web site, your computer and web browser become a factor, since different computers/browser combinations will offer different instructions for downloading data from the internet. Presented here are examples of downloading using two popular web browsers—Internet Explorer and Firefox. If the user is using a different browser (e.g., Safari or Netscape) the user may need to use slightly different procedures. These examples are intended to serve as a general guide for downloading your reports; the dialog boxes the user sees on their computer may not be exactly the same as the ones shown in the examples provided.

Using Internet Explorer

The user will be viewing the report generated in PDF and at the top there is an Adobe Acrobat menu. There are two avenues for saving the report; select either of the two:

Option 1. At “File” at the top of the screen, select “Save,” “Save as,” or “Save a copy.”

Option 2. Select the icon that appears to be a floppy disk.

Step-by-Step Instructions

Step 1. With report viewing on the screen

Step 2. Choose either option from above

Step 3. When the user makes either of these selections, a standard directory window will open, prompting the user to select where the document is to be saved on their computer.

Step 4. Select the folder where the document is to be saved.

Step 5. Give the file a name that will allow the user to easily find it later.

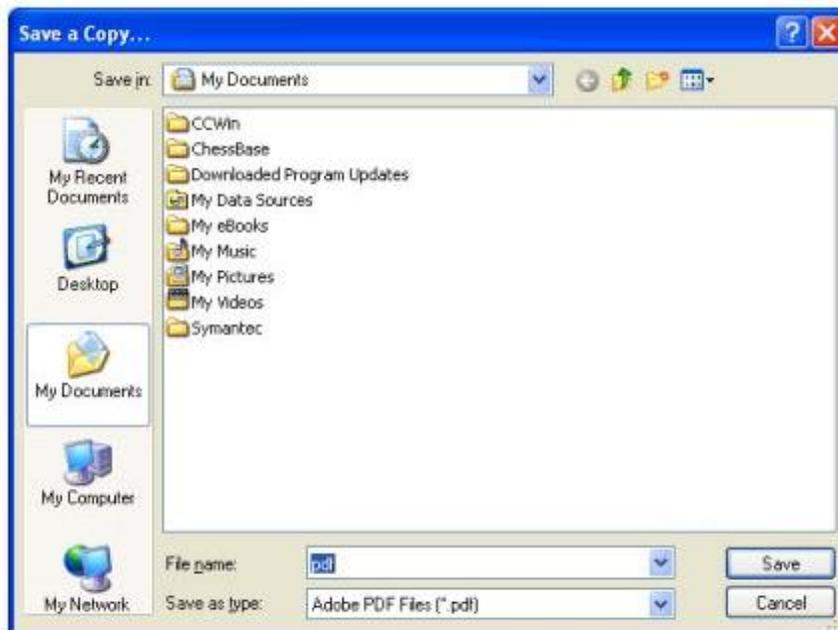
Step 6. Select the “Save” button to complete the process. The “Save a Copy” screen that typically appears is illustrated in Figure 28.

Step 7. The window viewing the report is shown on the screen

Step 8. Close the Adobe PDF chart, under File menu at top of window choose Close.

When the user makes either of these selections, a standard directory window will open, prompting the user to select where the document is to be saved on their computer. Select the folder where the document is to be saved and give the file a name that will allow the user to easily find it later. Select the “Save” button to complete the process. The “Save a Copy” screen that typically appears is illustrated in Figure 28.

FIGURE 28. Example of Save Window in Internet Explorer



Using Firefox

The user will be viewing the report generated in PDFt and at the top there is an Adobe Acrobat menu. There are two avenues for saving the report; select either of the two:

Option 1. At “File” at the top of the screen, select “Save,” “Save as,” or “Save a copy.”

Option 2. Select the icon that appears to be a floppy disk.

Step-by-Step Instructions

Step 1. With report viewing on the screen

Step 2. Choose either option from above

Step 3. When the user makes either of these selections, a standard directory window will open, prompting the user to select where the document is to be saved on their computer.

Step 4. Select the folder where the document is to be saved.

Step 5. Give the file a name that will allow the user to easily find it later.

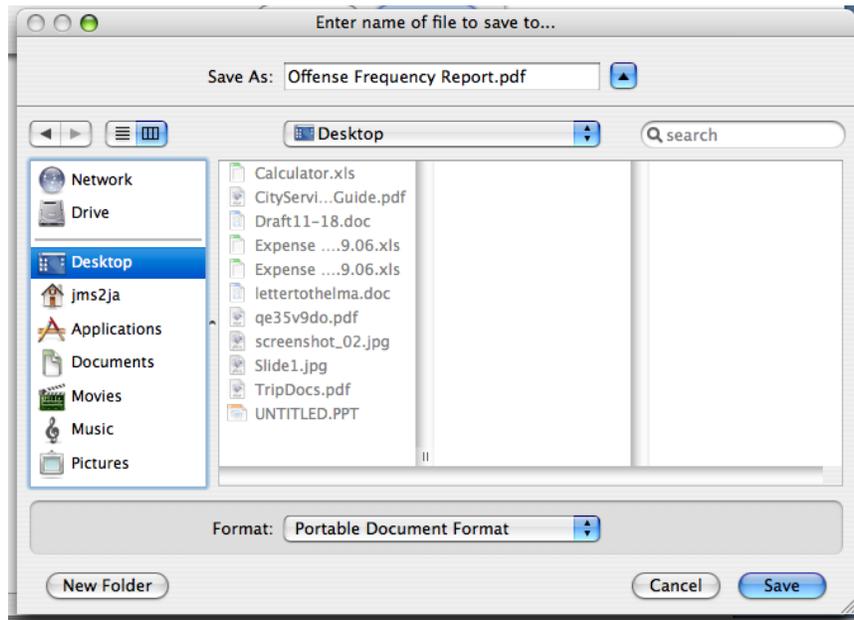
Step 6. Select the “Save” button to complete the process. The “Save a Copy” screen that typically appears is illustrated in Figure 29.

Step 7. The window viewing the report is shown on the screen

Step 8. Close the Adobe PDF chart, under File menu at top of window choose Close.

When the user makes either of these selections, a standard directory window will open, prompting the user to select where the document is to be saved on their computer. Select the folder where the document is to be saved and give the file a name that will allow the user to easily find it later. Select the “Save” button to complete the process. The “Save As” screen that typically appears is illustrated in Figure 29.

FIGURE 29. Example of Save Window in Firefox



Section 6. Using SSIR Data

Data on the SSIR Web site can be used to assess needs, establish goals for improvement, to determine progress in achieving goals and to inform decisions related to school safety and other programming to ensure that Virginia's schools remain safe environments that are conducive to learning. Previous Sections of the *SSIR User's Guide* have provided background information about DCV data, an orientation to the Web site, and specific instructions and examples for generating, displaying, and downloading reports based on various criteria. This Section focuses on basics of making valid comparisons of SSIR data including examining changes from one year to another and comparing one school with others.

Converting Raw Numbers to Rates: A Critical First Step

Using SSIR data typically involves examining data trends and making comparisons. Raw numbers, however, do not allow users to make valid observations and comparisons.

Suppose the user wishes to determine which of four high schools has the most short-term suspensions. If the user looks at only the raw numbers, the user would be making an observation without factoring in the size of the student population. The example below demonstrates how raw numbers can be converted to rates to enable an appropriate observation to be made.

In High School A, the number of short-term suspensions steadily increased over four school years reported. At the same time, the student population was growing. The raw numbers are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. High School A Student Population and Short-term Suspensions, 2001-2005.

High School A		
School Year	Student Population	Number of short-term suspensions
2001-02	1,070	159
2002-03	1,096	172
2003-04	1,122	198
2004-05	1,154	202

Given that the number of suspensions increased while the student population increased, how does the user determine whether the suspension rate in 2004-05 was higher, lower, or the same as 2001-02? To answer this question, we need to calculate the suspension **rate**. Here are the steps in calculating a rate:

Step 1. For each year reported, divide the number of suspensions by the student population.

Step 2. After dividing the two numbers (which results in a small decimal), multiply the result by a constant such as 100 or 1000. Technically, the precise number to use as a constant is arbitrary, but convention dictates that either 100, 1000, or some other multiple of 10 be used.

These calculations produce a short-term suspension rate and a short-term suspension rate per 1000. Results of these calculations are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. High School A Student Population, Short-term Suspensions, and Short-term Suspension Rates, 2001-2005.

High School A				
School Year	Student Population	Number of short-term suspensions	Short-term suspension rate	Short-term suspension rate per 1,000 students
2001-02	1,070	159	0.14860	148.6
2002-03	1,096	172	0.15693	156.9
2003-04	1,122	198	0.17647	176.5
2004-05	1,154	202	0.17504	175.0

Performing these calculations tells us that not only did the **number** of short-term suspensions increase, but that the short-term suspension **rate** also increased. The short-term suspension rate increased when the number of short-term suspensions increased more rapidly than the student population increased.

Converting raw numbers to rates is also an appropriate way to compare data for different schools. For example, suppose the user wanted to determine which of four county high schools has the most suspensions. If the user looks only at the raw numbers, the user will be failing to factor in the size of the student population.

Table 3. summarizes the short-term suspension data for each of four high schools. From Table 3. we can observe that although High School C has the fewest students and the fewest number of suspensions, it clearly has the highest short-term suspension rate.

Table 3. Student Population, Short-term Suspensions, and Short-term Suspension Rates for High Schools A, B, and C, D, 2001-2005.

School Year	Student Population	Number of short-term suspensions	Short-term suspension rate	Short-term suspension rate per 1,000 students
High School A				
2001-02	1,070	159	0.14860	148.6
2002-03	1,096	172	0.15693	156.9
2003-04	1,122	198	0.17647	176.5
2004-05	1,154	202	0.17504	175.0
High School B				
2001-02	1,630	154	0.09448	94.5
2002-03	1,651	192	0.11629	116.3
2003-04	1,642	172	0.10475	104.8
2004-05	1,707	157	0.09197	92.0

School Year	Student Population	Number of short-term suspensions	Short-term suspension rate	Short-term suspension rate per 1,000 students
High School C				
2001-02	80	32	0.40000	400.0
2002-03	85	16	0.18824	188.2
2003-04	89	14	0.15730	157.3
2004-05	91	19	0.20879	208.8
High School D				
2001-02	981	59	0.06014	60.1
2002-03	1,020	43	0.04216	42.2
2003-04	1,073	61	0.05685	56.8
2004-05	1,083	60	0.05540	55.4

Using the SSIR Web site, the user can access data on the combined total for all four county high schools by selecting school years 2001-02, 2002-03, 2003-04, and 2004-05 and then selecting High Schools A, B, C, and D (which constitute all high schools in the county). These selections will produce the student population and number of short-term suspensions for each year displayed below in Table 4. To derive short-term suspension rates at the county level for each of the four years, the user must complete the following calculations:

Step-by-Step Instructions

Step 1. For each year reported, divide the number of suspensions by the student population.

Step 2. After dividing the two numbers (which results in a small decimal), multiply the result by a constant such as 100 or 1000. Technically, the precise number to use as a constant is arbitrary, but convention dictates that either 100, 1000, or some other multiple of 10 be used.

Table 4. Combined Student Population, Short-term Suspensions, and Short-term Suspension Rates for Four High Schools, 2001-2005.

School Year	Student Population	Number of short-term suspensions	Short-term suspension rate	Short-term suspension rate per 1,000 students
2001-02	3,761	404	0.10742	107.4
2002-03	3,852	423	0.10981	109.8
2003-04	3,926	445	0.11335	113.3
2004-05	4,035	438	0.10855	108.6

When rates for the four high schools (in Table 3.) are compared with county high school rates (in Table 4.), it is clear that High School B has suspension rates somewhat above the county average, High School C has suspension rates substantially above the county rate, and High School D has suspension rates substantially below the county high school average rates.

When trends in short-term suspension rates are examined, it can be observed that the rate increased from 2001-02 to 2003-04 but declined in 2004-05. The combined data for all four high schools shows that the suspension rate changed very little in this four year period. The rate was 107.4 suspensions per 1,000 students in 2001-02 and 108.6 in 2004-05. Although the rate hardly moved, the number of suspensions increased over 8 percent, growing from 404 to 438. This difference in interpretation—between using raw numbers and rates—points out the value of looking at the data in terms of rates.

Another approach to examining data is to look at average rates for the most recent period of time for which data are available. Looking at averages can be helpful when trends are mixed, making comparisons more challenging. Table 5. summarizes the average short-term suspension rate for the most recent three years reported for each high school and the county high school average.

Table 5. Average Student Population, Short-term Suspensions, and Short-term Suspension Rates for High Schools A, B, C and D, 2002-2005.

School Years	Average Student Population	Average number of short-term suspensions	Average short-term suspension rate	Average short-term suspension rate per 1,000 students
High School A				
Average 2002-2005	1,124	191	0.16992	169.9
High School B				
Average 2002-2005	1,667	174	0.10438	104.4
High School C				
Average 2002-2005	88	16	0.18182	181.8
High School D				
Average 2002-2005	1,059	55	0.05194	51.9
All County High Schools				
Average 2002-2005	938	82	0.11701	117.0

Step-by-Step Instructions for Calculating Average Suspension Rates for Each School and All Four Schools Combined

- Step 1. Average Student Population – add Student Population for each school for years 2002-03, 2003-04, 2004-05. Divide by 3.
- Step 2. Average Number Short Term Suspensions– add number of short term suspensions for each school for years 2002-03, 2003-04, 2004-05. Divide by 3.
- Step 3. For each year reported, divide the number of suspensions by the student population.

Step 4. After dividing the two numbers (which results in a small decimal), multiply the result by a constant such as 100 or 1000. Technically, the precise number to use as a constant is arbitrary, but convention dictates that either 100, 1000, or some other multiple of 10 be used.

A Final Reminder

SSIR Web site users are strongly urged to heed the cautions contained in the Challenges and Recommendations in Section 2 of this *Guide*.

Although the SSIR Web site provides immediate and easy access to DCV data in a variety of reports tailored to SSIR user selections, it does not contain the “story behind the numbers.” Only the school or school division will have this important information. Don’t hesitate to contact school administrators to learn more! When using the SSIR Web site, and before drawing conclusions, be aware of DCV data limitations data and always take time to learn the “story behind the numbers.”

Section 7. Learning More

For Technical Assistance

For technical assistance with the SSIR Web site, please contact the VDOE by e-mail. Send your question to: ssir.help@doe.virginia.gov

You will receive a prompt response to your request.

To Learn More

There is a wealth of public information available about DCV data. Key resources and publications are listed and described below.

DCV Online Tutorial

Available at <http://www.dcvreport.org>

As a starting point, the user may wish to review the DCV Online Tutorial which can be accessed directly from the **Resources** menu on the SSIR homepage. The user may also go directly to the Tutorial at the web address listed above. Although the Tutorial was developed primarily for school personnel who are involved with the collecting and reporting DCV data, the introductory sections provide an excellent review of the rationale for collecting DCV data. The Tutorial contains direct links to numerous publications and has a comprehensive list of recommended reading.

Virginia-Specific Publications

Annual Report on Discipline, Crime and Violence

Available at <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Publications/>

The Virginia Department of Education is required by Virginia law to produce an annual report of discipline, crime, and violence in Virginia schools. Annual reports for school years 2002-03 through 2005-06 are available at <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Publications/>

It is important to note that the annual report focuses on incidents rather than offense frequencies reported on the SSIR Web site. Therefore, numbers of incidents in the annual report will not match offense frequencies reported on the SSIR Web site. See Question 7 in Section 2 of this *Guide* for an explanation of the difference in “incident” and “offense”.

Comprehensive User Guide for Discipline, Crime, and Violence (DCV) Data Collection and Submission 2006-07

Available at <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Publications/Discipline/datacoll/2006-2007/06coll.html>

This *Guide* is intended primarily for school personnel responsible for submitting DCV data to the VDOE. This highly technical publication provides extensive detail on issues ranging from the

legal basis for collecting these data to the actual coding of the data. Available on the VDOE Web site at: <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Publications/Discipline/datacoll/2006-2007/06coll.html>

General Related Publications

Safety in Numbers: Collecting and Using Crime, Violence, and Discipline Incident Data to Make a Difference in Schools. National Center for Education Statistics publication # 2002312, (2002)

This handbook is designed to be used by school, district, and state staff to improve the effectiveness of their efforts to collect and use disciplinary incident data. It provides recommendations on what types of data to collect, why it is critical to collect such data, and how the data can be used effectively to improve school safety and answer policy questions relating to school improvement and the safety of our students. This is a National Forum on Education Statistics publication and contains no data.

Available online at: <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2002/2002312.pdf>

Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2006. National Center for Education Statistics publication # 2007003, (2006)

NCES A joint effort by the Bureau of Justice Statistics and National Center for Education Statistics, this annual report examines crime occurring in school as well as on the way to and from school. It provides the most current detailed statistical information to inform the Nation on the nature of crime in schools. This report presents data on crime at school from the perspectives of students, teachers, principals, and the general population from an array of sources--the National Crime Victimization Survey, the School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey, the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, the School Survey on Crime and Safety and the School and Staffing Survey. Data on crime away from school are also presented to place school crime in the context of crime in the larger society.

Available online at <http://nces.ed.gov/programs/crimeindicators/>

Crime, Violence, Discipline and Safety in U.S. Public Schools: Findings from the School Survey on Crime and Safety: 2003-04. National Center for Education Statistics publication # 2007302rev

This report presents national-level information about crime and safety in U.S. public schools as reported by school principals, including the frequency of criminal incidents at school, the use of disciplinary actions, and efforts to prevent and reduce crime at school. Data come from the 2003–04 School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS:2004). Eighteen percent of public schools reported at least one serious violent incident during the 2003–04 school year; two percent of public schools reported hate crimes; five percent of public schools reported gang-related crimes. NOTE: This revision corrects an erroneous statement made in the first bullet on page 2 of the previous version. No data tables were changed.

Available online at <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2007/2007302rev.pdf>

Student Reports of Bullying: Results from the 2001 School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey. National Center for Education Statistics publication # 2005310 (2005).

Using data from the 2001 School Crime Supplement (SCS) to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), this report examines the prevalence and nature of bullying as reported by students ages 12 through 18 in relation to student characteristics, school characteristics, and criminal victimization. In addition, the report explores other behaviors that were reported by the bullied student, such as fear, avoidance behavior, weapon carrying, and academic grades. This report examines student reports of being bullied by direct means only, by indirect means only, and by both direct and indirect means.

Available online at: <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2005/2005310.pdf>

Crime and Safety in America's Public Schools: Selected Findings from the School Survey on Crime and Safety. National Center for Education Statistics publication # 2004370, (2004).

This brief report presents analysis of the 2000 School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS). SSOCS is a nationally representative sample of public elementary and secondary schools. Principals were asked about the amount of crime and violence, disorder, disciplinary actions, violence prevention programs, teacher and parent involvement in prevention efforts, crime and safety practice, crisis management plans, and barriers to school safety. While the SSOCS collects a wide variety of information, this report provides national estimates on the major topics covered in SSOCS.

Available online at: <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2004/2004370.pdf>

ATTACHMENT 1: Offense Category and Offense Color Coding

	Student Services Safe Schools Information Resource Offense Category and Offense Color Coding			Page 1 of 2
				Document No: _____ Rev: _____
Author: Special Ed & Student Services	Phone:	Office: Student Services	Location: Richmond, VA	Date: 05/14/07

Category Title	Offense	Offense Code	
Weapons Related Offenses	Use of Bomb Device	WP7	
	Possession of Bomb Device	WP6	
	Bringing a Rifle/Shotgun to School	WP2	
	Bringing a Handgun to School	WP1	
	Bringing Knife to School	WP5	
	Bringing Other Weapon to School	WP4	
	Possession of Other Weapon	WP9	
	Possession of a BB Gun	WP0	
	Other Firearms	WP8	
	Bomb Threat	BB1	
	Bringing a Toy Gun to School	WP3	
	Offenses Against Student	Homicide-Firearm	HO2
		Homicide-Other Weapon	HO4
		Forcible Rape	SX4
Attempted Rape		SX6	
Assault-With a Weapon		BA3	
Assault-Without a Weapon		BA4	
Aggravated Sexual Battery		SX8	
Sexual Touch		SX2	
Threatening		TI2	
Offenses Against Staff		Homicide-Firearm	HO1
	Homicide-Other Weapon	HO3	
	Forcible Rape	SX3	
	Attempted Rape	SX5	
	Assault-With a Weapon	BA1	
	Assault-Without a Weapon	BA2	
	Sexual Touch	SX1	
Offenses Against Persons	Threatening	TI1	
	Kidnapping/Abduction	KI1	
	Malicious Wounding	BA5	
	Fighting-Requiring Medical Attention	FA1	
	Fighting-No Medical Attention	FA2	
	Robbery	RO1	
	Extortion	EX1	
	Sexual Harassment	SX0	
	Sexual Offenses without Force	SX7	
	Bullying	BU1	
	Stalking	ST1	
ATOD (Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs)	Sale/Distribution Schedule I/II Drugs	DR4	
	Sale/Distribution/Paraphernalia Schedule III/VI Drugs	DR5	
	Possession/Use Schedule I/ II Drugs	DR1	
	Possession/Use Inhalants	DR2	
	Theft-Prescription Medications	DR3	
	Alcohol	AL1	
Tobacco	TB1		

	Student Services Safe Schools Information Resource Offense Category and Offense Color Coding			Page 2 of 2	
				Document No:	Rev:
Author: Special Ed & Student Services	Phone:	Office: Student Services	Location: Richmond, VA	Date: 05/14/07	

Category Title	Offense	Offense Code
Property Offenses	Arson	AR1
	Breaking and Entering/Burglary	BR1
	Theft except Motor Vehicle	TH1
	Theft Motor Vehicle	TH2
	Vandalism	VA1
Disorderly/Disruptive Behavior	Inciting a Riot	RT1
	Gang Activity	GA1
	Trespassing	TR1
	Disorderly Conduct	DC1
Other Offenses	All other Violations	OT1

ATTACHMENT 2: Offense Reporting Changes, 2001-2006

	Student Services Safe Schools Information Resource Offense Category and Offense Type Groups			Page 1 of 1	
	Author: Special Ed & Student Services		Phone:	Office: Student Services	Location: Richmond, VA

Over recent years, in response to changes in laws and improvements in data collection methods, certain offense types have been reported in different categories or as new offense types. For example, Bullying was reported in the broad category of "other offenses" in 2003-2004 and 2004-2005, but began to be reported as a separate offense type in 2005-2006. These types of changes in reporting will make it appear that bullying increased markedly in 2005-2006 when the increase is primarily the result of a change in reporting.

In the table below are offense types for which there were changes in reporting in recent years. Changes in reporting must be understood in order to correctly interpret offense trends involving these offenses.

Offense Type	2001 – 2002	2002 – 2003	2003 – 2004	2004 – 2005	2005 - 2006
Bringing a Toy/Look-alike Gun to School	Weapons Related	Weapons Related	Other Offenses	Other Offenses	Other Offenses
Bullying	Against Persons	Against Persons	Other Offenses	Other Offenses	Against Persons
Disorderly Conduct	Disorderly or Disruptive	Disorderly or Disruptive	* Disorderly or Disruptive	* Disorderly or Disruptive	* Disorderly or Disruptive
Drug Possession/Use Inhalants	** Alcohol Tobacco Other Drugs	** Alcohol Tobacco Other Drugs	Alcohol Tobacco Other Drugs	Alcohol Tobacco Other Drugs	Alcohol Tobacco Other Drugs
Drug Sale/Distribution/Possession Schedule III-VI/Paraphernalia	** Alcohol Tobacco Other Drugs	** Alcohol Tobacco Other Drugs	Alcohol Tobacco Other Drugs	Alcohol Tobacco Other Drugs	Alcohol Tobacco Other Drugs
Extortion	Other Offenses	Other Offenses	Other Offenses	Other Offenses	Against Persons
Harassment	Other Offenses	Other Offenses	Other Offenses	Other Offenses	Bullying
Inciting a Riot	Other Offenses	Other Offenses	Other Offenses	Other Offenses	Disorderly or Disruptive
Malicious Wounding without a Weapon	Not established as separate type	Not established as separate type	Against Persons	Against Persons	Against Persons
Possession of a BB Gun	*** Weapons Related	*** Weapons Related	*** Weapons Related	Weapons Related	Weapons Related
Sexual Touch	Against Student	Against Student	Other Offenses	Other Offenses	Other Offenses
Sexual Touch	Against Staff	Against Staff	Other Offenses	Other Offenses	Other Offenses
Stalking	Other Offenses	Other Offenses	Other Offenses	Other Offenses	Against Persons
Theft/Attempted Theft Prescription Medications	Not established as separate type	Alcohol Tobacco Other Drugs	Alcohol Tobacco Other Drugs	Alcohol Tobacco Other Drugs	Alcohol Tobacco Other Drugs

- * = Some Sub-types reported in Other Offenses
- ** = Included Over the Counter Drugs, 2001-2003
- *** = Included with Other Firearms, 2001-2004