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SENIOR PROJECT

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The Impact of Public School Substance Abuse Policies on High School Graduation Rates

Department *of* Political Science



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Submitted to the Department of Political Science of Allegheny College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts.

I hereby recognize and pledge to fulfill my responsibilities as defined in the Honor Code and to maintain the integrity of both myself and the College community as a whole.

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Abstract

America over time has a long history of societal inequalities based on race and class. One of the major inequalities in American society has been education. This project explores the inequalities of public school's substance abuse policies. This project examines four different communities and school districts. This paper goes in depth about how a community's demographic, socioeconomic status, and crime rate can influence a school districts substance abuse policy. Based on these influences, a school district will choose to implement law enforced or treatment based drug policies for students who suffer from drug addiction. Based on the implications of the substance abuse policy, that specific school's graduation rate will be inevitably effected. My goal is to find the correlation of the impact of substance abuse policies on high school graduation rates.

Chapter 1

Section 1.0: Introduction

In the United States of America every child is entitled to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). Education is supposed to be the ultimate equalizer for all children in America. In the United States, we have this neoliberal or race to the top attitude that if a student works hard in the classroom and competes with their peers they can be successful. But unfortunately, that methodology has not held true and the American public education system has one of the biggest achievement gaps in any institution in the United States of America. There are many issues that create these achievement gaps within America's public education system such as, funding, socioeconomic status, race, and much more. In the United States, every school district is different. Many schools face different issues than other districts, or receive more funding than neighboring school districts. Schools are different in the sense of how their students achieve. Student performance/achievement is measured by standardized test scores, graduation rate, and even college preparation. Most if not every school vary for worse or for the better in each of these categories. They're various reasons why schools vary in these categories which I will get into later in this chapter. But I wanted to focus on one specific idea that I believe attributes greatly to the public education achievement gap in the United States, which is drug policy within public schools. In this paper, I will delve into four different schools and their drug policies. All four of these schools are different in many ways such as school demographic, socioeconomic status, classroom achievement, the number of drugs within the schools, and much more. I will look at these school's drug policies to see if these policies are influencing graduation rates. But before I narrow down my research to these four schools I want to have a more macro conversation on the topic, because it is vital to understand this is a nationwide issue.

Section 1.1: Inequality in Education

They're many factors that create inequality amongst public schools in the United States. Many times, school districts perform at different rates because every school in America is different. Public education is payed for by citizen tax dollars. This is a big part of public education and a school's success. Usually, in affluent communities, families will have a much higher household income compared to poorer communities. This enables affluent communities to receive more tax dollars to funnel into their public school systems. More money, results into better facilities, better resources, such as technology, textbooks, and more faculty to educate students. With better facilities and resources, a school can prepare their students adequately for state standardized testing that results into more state funding for that achieving school district. But underperforming schools in the inner city that are much more different than affluent suburban communities run into this cyclical problem that is hard to solve. With low resources and a poor community, it is hard to receive the adequate amount of funding to educate students properly for these standardized tests. A result of no funding, usually will end in very low student performance in that school district. With struggling schools and minimal hope for student academic success it is easy to find a student involved in the distribution of drugs or substance abuse.

This is a pattern of many underserved communities within America's inner cities. The high levels of drug activity within inner cities, caused the government to act and launch a full-blown War on Drugs in the 1980s. The result of the legislation created full out attack on our inner cities incarcerating African American and Hispanic/Latino citizens at insurmountable rates. The War on Drugs did not only just ravage the African American and Hispanic/Latino communities it has also made it into the American public school system's as well. School districts substance abuse policies are very similar to the harsh realities that drug offenders on the streets face in the United States

judicial system. Many times, if students are in violation of their school's substance abuse polciy their fate lies in the hands of law enforcement with no chance of attaining a high school diploma after their alleged crime. The magnitude of some of these school drug policies are aimed to heavily police African American and Hispanic/Latino student bodies more than Caucasian students.

Section 1.2: The Drug War

The first utmost important proponent to know about school drug policy is how the American Public school systems are policing drug abuse. One of the most effective avenues that many school districts around the nation are using is random drug tests, because of these random drug screenings schools have slightly brought down the percentage of students that abuse drugs in their respective school districts. Literature states,

> "The Office of National Drug Control Policy asserts that drug testing in schools has been extremely effective at reducing use and, most importantly, deterring drug use among adolescents. In a case study of Autauga County School System in Alabama, drug testing in schools was attributed to significantly decreasing tobacco use among 8th graders from 35.9% to 24.4%, alcohol use from 39.9% to 30.0%, and marijuana use from 18.5% to 11.8%. In another case study of Hunterdon Central Regional High School in Flemington, New Jersey, Principal Lisa Brady concluded that a random drug-testing policy at her school worked; for example, cocaine use among seniors at Hunterdon Central High School dropped from 12% to 4%. In 2000, the school had to suspend their random drug-testing policy due to legal suits. Principal Brady noted that the drug problem in her school had "gotten worse" (Yamaguchi, Johnston, O'Malley).

The case study shows that drug testing is effective in schools. If these random drug testing policies in school's help keep young teens away from drugs, and deters drug abuse it must be implemented around the country. But further in the data I found a discrepancy. It is a fact that drug testing works, but I asked the fundamental question who gets drug tested the most? The largest number of students that were tested were for cause and suspicion. The data shows that,

> "Across five years, 14.3% of the schools, containing 14.7% of the students, tested due to cause and suspicion (Yamaguchi, Johnston, O'Malley). The least common reason for drug testing was random testing applied to the entire school, where only 0.8% of the schools, containing 0.7% of students, reported using random drug tests in which all students are eligible for drug testing (Yamaguchi, Johnston, O'Malley)."

Cause and suspicion is a very objective way to test a young teen for drugs. And it has been covered in documentaries, the media, and in literature such as *The New Jim Crow* written by Michelle Alexander that police bias and harsh policing policies such as stop and frisk attribute to the mass convictions of African American and Hispanic/Latino men and women (Alexander, 2010). With these statistics, I have reason to believe that school administrators are using the same kind of bias against their minority students, and then proceeding to test them for drugs. The system is tailored to oppress a specific population of young people in our schools. With that being said how are these African American and Hispanic/Latino students punished for a positive drug test.?

I researched the discipline of African American and Hispanic/Latino students in the American public school system. I found a case study that shows data that African American and Hispanic/Latino students are disciplined more than their Caucasian classmates. The data shows that African American and Hispanic/Latino students are disciplined nearly 15% more than their Caucasian peers (Lewis, Butler, Bonner III, Joubert). Most of these offenses are non-violent, but due

to zero-tolerance policies in school's students are subject to harsher penalties than they should be for their alleged crime.

> "Zero tolerance policies developed in the 1990s, in response to school shootings and general fears about crime. In 1994, the federal government passed the Gun-Free Schools Act, which requires schools to expel any student who brings a gun to campus. Around the same time, the "broken windows" theory of law enforcement became popular. The idea was that cracking down on minor violations prevented serious crimes. Under similar thinking, schools started enacting disciplinary policies that went further than the federal law. The rules varied from school to school, but they commonly required suspending or expelling students for a wide range of conduct, such as: bringing any weapon to school, including seemingly innocent items like nail clippers and toy swords, having any alcohol or drugs on campus, including tobacco and over-the-counter medications like aspirin or Midol, fighting, including minor scuffles, threatening other students or teachers, or saying anything that could be perceived as a threat, insubordination, which could include talking back to a teacher or swearing in the principal's office, and any behavior considered disruptive, like cutting in a lunch line" (Gjelten).

This zero-tolerance policy is similar to mandatory sentencing of non-violent crimes in our justice system. Students are being punished severely for minor infractions that can be handled by the discretion of administrators, but since zero-tolerance policies were implemented administrators must discipline their students according to the law. Since African American and Hispanic/Latino students are being punished more than their Caucasian peers this can have severe repercussions for the school's achievement rate, if African American and Hispanic/Latino students are not graduating high

school due to these zero-tolerance policies. Which is disbanding students who break these drug policies from a free and appropriate public education (FAPE).

I examined another case study done by the Civil Rights Data Collection showed the same injustice of disciplining African American and Hispanic/Latino students at an insurmountable rate. Our education system has subjected preschool children to out-of-school suspensions. The study states, "Black children represent 18% of preschool enrollment, but 48% of preschool children receiving more than one out-of-school suspension; in comparison, white students represent 43% of preschool enrollment but 26% of preschool children receiving more than one out of school suspension" (U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights). This criminalization of African American young people starts at the earliest levels of our education system which leads to a stigma about students of color early in their education. Which leads into another mind-blowing statistic, "While black students represent 16% of student enrollment, they represent 27% of students referred to law enforcement and 31% of students subjected to a school-related arrest" (U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights). The discipline in school starts at a young age, and continues throughout their education. As education, has evolved, administrators have opened the school doors to the police department and security guards. Which attributes to the mind set of criminality of black and brown bodies, which directly correlates with incarceration rates down the line. Outside of violent crimes, the most common offense that students are suspended or expelled for are drug violations (Colorado Department of Education). Which directly supports my thesis that drug policies push African American and Latino students out of school which then will lead them down the road of incarceration or being stuck at the lowest class on the socioeconomic spectrum in the United States. But most of all if African American and Hispanic/Latino students are being persecuted by these strict drug policies it prevents them from graduating from school.

Section 1.3: Discipline/Achievement of African American and Hispanic/Latino Students

Since African American and Hispanic/Latino students are being disciplined for drug offenses the most within our American public school it is important to explore the dropout rates among this certain demographic of students in the United States. The study used age group 16-24 and counted students who did not receive a high school diploma or a GED. As graduation rates are going up, inversely, dropout rates are at an all-time low. The study from child trends states,

> Overall, this rate has greatly declined, from 17 percent in 1967, to 7 percent in 2014. In 1972, the dropout rate was 21 percent among non-Hispanic blacks, 12 percent among non-Hispanic whites, and 34 percent among Hispanic youth. Dropout rates for Hispanic youth reached a peak in the late 1980s and early 1990s, at 36 percent; rates have since declined substantially for each group. In 2014, the dropout rate for black youth reached an historic low of seven percent, while rates among Hispanic youth also reached an historic low of 11 percent. However, the long-term decline is, at least in part, related to increased incarceration rates among young black and Hispanic males (disproportionately affecting dropouts), which more than doubled between 1980 and 1999, removing them from the population base (non-institutionalized civilians) used for these estimates (Child Trends).

The data states that the dropout rate is down, but would it be if our nation's education system was not policing our young people so heavily? This correlates with my thoughts from the data that maps the effect of incarceration and outsourcing police officers into our public schools. In turn it has an impact on American student's graduation rates, and ultimately supports my belief. We are removing people from our educational system, which does not even leave the option for students to receive a diploma. But while studying this data I wanted to investigate why students are dropping out of school. The National Dropout Prevention Center/Network at Clemson University says students are

mostly pushed out of schools. The forces that push them out of school usually have to do with disciplinary sanctions such as suspension and expulsion.

Figure 1.0

Educational Longitudinal Study (2002) Ranked Reasons for Dropout in 2006 by Student Dropouts.

Type	Rank	Cause of Dropout	Overall Frequency Percentage	Males	Females
	Overall	Pushed out—10 factors	48.7	53.1	47.1
		Pulled out—8 factors	36.9	30.4	40.0
		Falling out—3 factors	14.3	16.5	12.9
Total			100.0	100.0	100.0

Figure 1.0 shows that, students are not dropping out of school because they want to leave, but there are factors such as suspension, expulsion, school policies, and arrest that are pushing students out of the American public education system.

"The pressures on students of push and pull dropout factors. A student is pushed out when adverse situations within the school environment lead to consequences, ultimately resulting in dropout. Students can be pulled out when factors inside the student divert them from completing

school (Jordan, 1994). Some scholars added a third factor called falling out of school, which occurs when a student does not show significant academic progress in schoolwork and becomes apathetic or even disillusioned with school completion. It is not necessarily an active decision, but rather a "side-effect of insufficient personal and educational support" (Watt and Roessingh, 1994).

Most of these students happen to be African American and Hispanic/Latino. The data implicitly states that almost half of all dropouts, are dropping out of school for reasons that they cannot control within the school environment. Some of these adverse situations within the school environment can be drugs. Students being subject to severe zero-tolerance punishments by these substance abuse policies can be put in situations that they must leave or cannot return to school to receive their diploma, which can add to the achievement gaps between schools across the United States.

Figure 1.1

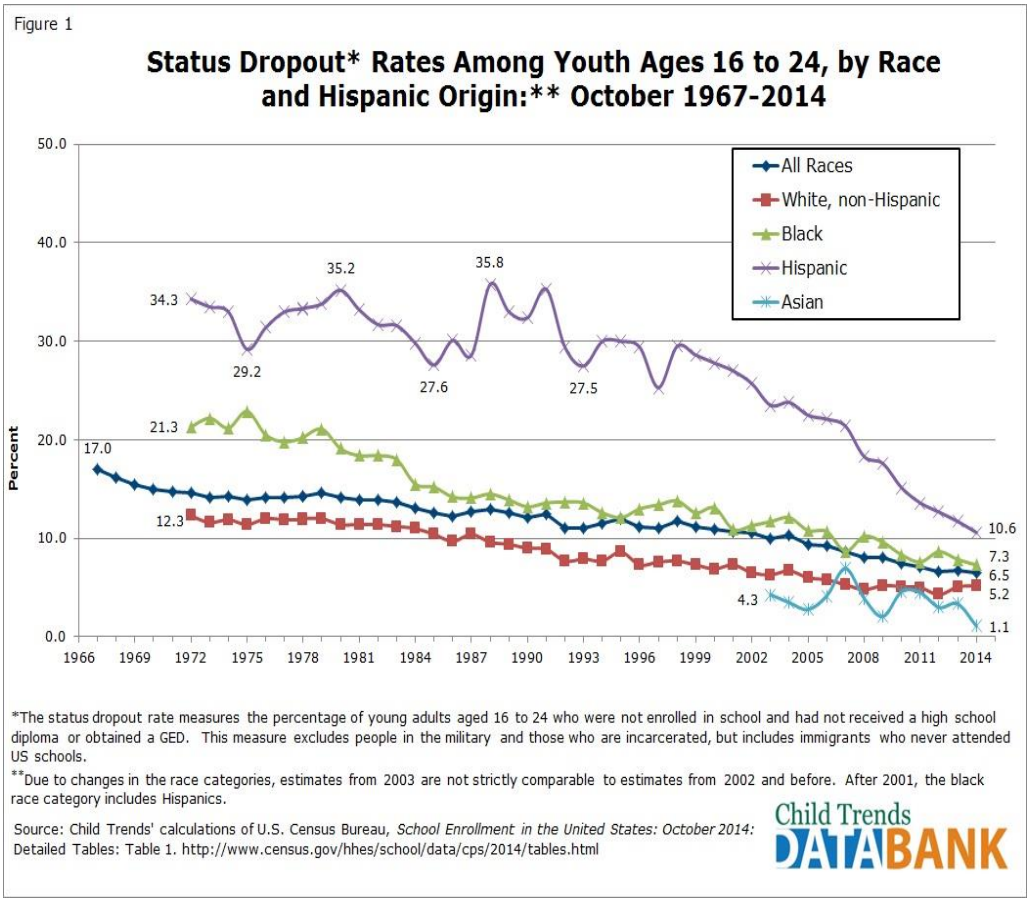
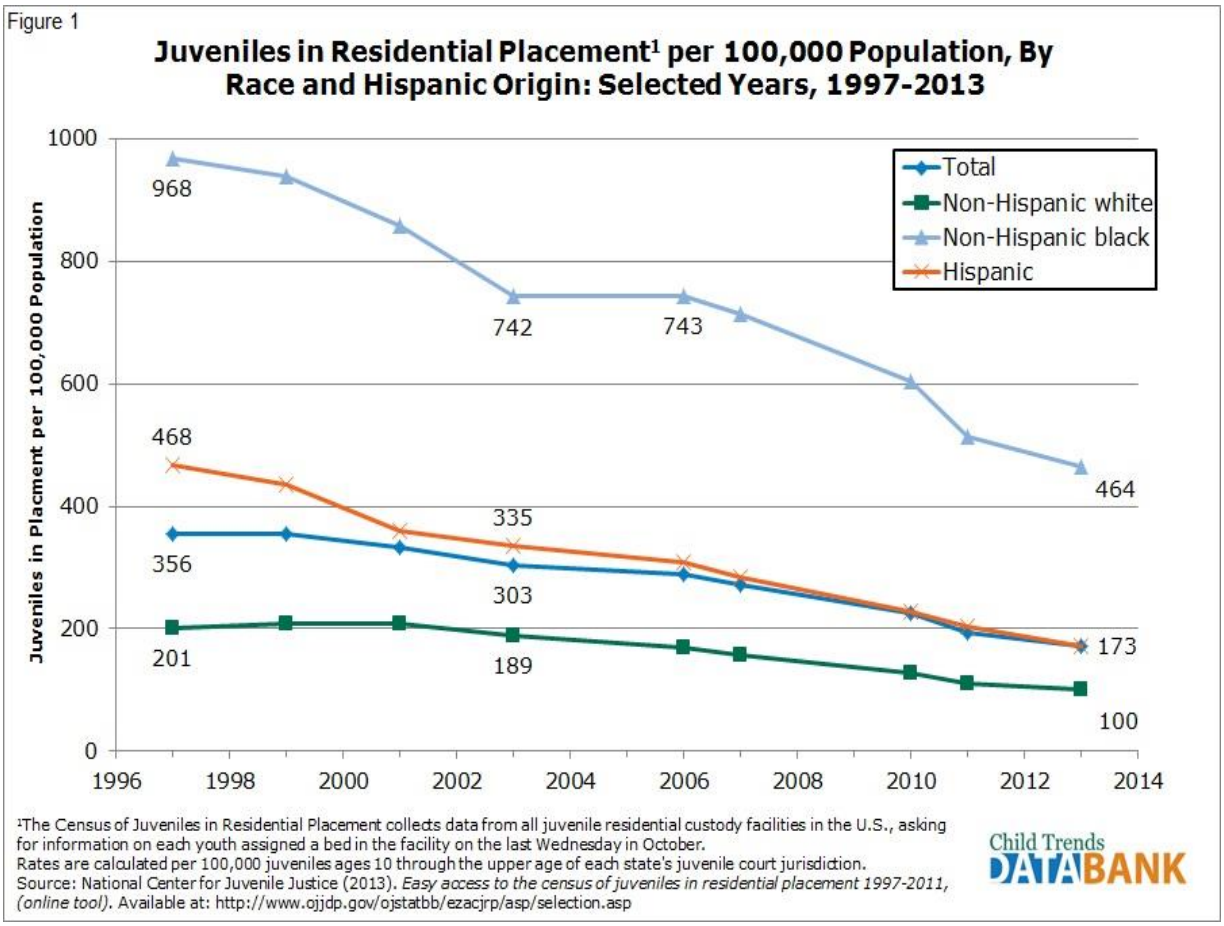


Figure 1.2

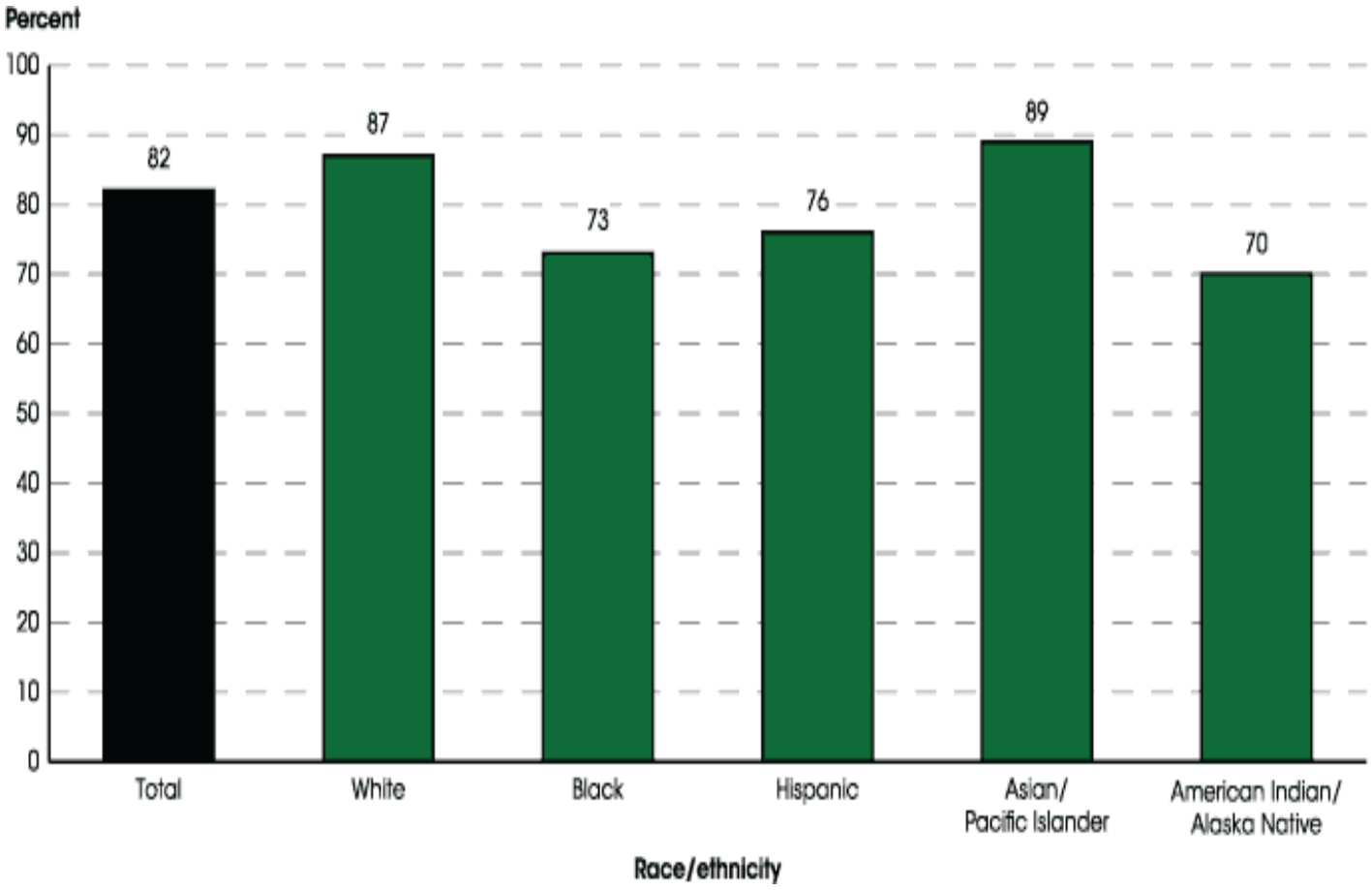


Both figures 1.1 and 1.2 are correlated. Figure 1.1 shows the huge decline in school dropouts. But figure 1.2 shows the number of juveniles incarcerated throughout 2014 as well. This is directly correlated with how many students are incarcerated before they can finish school which results in a student dropping out or withdrawing from their respective schools. But figure 1.1 does not incorporate incarceration into the dropout rate of students in America. As we can see that African American students are being incarcerated at a far higher rate than any of their classmates. These two factors combined would show that the dropout rates are not declining at the rates that are reported. With African American/Latino student's being incarcerated at the

highest rates ,what does that do for school's graduation rates in an African American and Hispanic/Latino community.

Figure 1.4

Adjusted cohort graduation rate (ACGR) for public high school students, by race/ethnicity: School year 2013–14



Inevitability they're many forces that contribute to the difference in graduation rates by race and ethnicity shown in figure 1.3. Some of these forces were exemplified in figures 1.0. 1.1, and 1.2. Dropout rates and incarceration rates of African American and Hispanic/Latino students are much higher than their Caucasian constituents. Dropout and incarceration rates all attribute to the

achievement gap between students of color and their white classmates, and why graduation rates are unequal. But the driving force behind these institutional breakdowns of our public education system is drug policies.

Section 1.4: Methods

As aforementioned in the beginning of my chapter, I will be examining four different school districts substance abuse policies. Along with studying these school districts substance abuse policies I will be looking at outside factors within the community such as demographic, socioeconomic status, and crime rate that can influence the severity of each individual school districts substance abuse policy. In my first chapter I will be comparing Newark Public Schools Freehold Regional High School District substance abuse policies and factors around both communities that may influence the policy. I am using an inner city like Newark, NJ because it is very different than Freehold, NJ which is an affluent suburb. These two very different communities can shed light on the inequalities of school drug policies based off the influences of race, socioeconomic status, and crime rate, which will inevitably impact the graduation rate of these schools. The way these policies impact the graduation rate, is by the way the school districts handle students whom are involved in drugs. Do school districts substance abuse policies focus on treatment or persecuting students by the harsh implications of the law? I want to find out if because Newark is an inner city and Freehold is an affluent suburb, if their school districts drug policy has different course of action and consequences for their students.

In my second chapter I will be examining another inner city school district in Camden, NJ, and there implications of their substance abuse policies. I am using another inner city school similar to Newark, because I wanted to find if all inner city school district substance abuse policies are

extremely consequential or just at certain schools. The fourth and last school I will look at is Roselle's Public Schools. Roselle, NJ is a middle class African American community. I wanted to use this school district in my analysis paper because, I wanted to discover whether or not based off class that the substance abuse policy would differ, or if all African American and Hispanic/Latino students face the same fate of a heavily consequential enforced school drug policy. The main objective at the end of this study is to prove that demographic, socioeconomic status, and crime rate influence whether a school's substance abuse policy is focused on treatment, and readmittance or whether the policy is heavily law enforced where students do not have a second chance, which will inevitably impact each school districts graduation rate.

Chapter 2

Section 2.0: Introduction

In chapter two I will be getting more in depth about drug policies in two specific school districts in New Jersey. I will be taking an inner city school district in Newark, NJ and comparing the drug policies of that to a suburban School in Freehold, NJ. By taking two school districts that completely differ in socioeconomic status, demographic, and crime rate, and seeing if these driving factors will impact the way these communities school districts differ in drug policy, ultimately effecting the graduation rates of each school district

Section 2.1: Background of Community (Newark, NJ)

Newark is one of the biggest and one of the most well-known cities in New Jersey. It is a metropolitan area that is densely populated. It is one of New Jersey's ethnic enclaves where the demographic is largely made up of African American and Hispanic/Latino citizens.

Figure 2.0

Race

One race		%
White	72537	26.52%
Black or African American	146250	53.46%
American Indian and Alaska Native	1005	0.37%
Asian	3263	1.19%
Asian Indian	1428	0.52%
Chinese	489	0.18%
Filipino	586	0.21%
Japanese	99	0.04%
Korean	133	0.05%
Vietnamese	127	0.05%
Other Asian	401	0.15%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	135	0.05%
Native Hawaiian	24	0.01%
Guamanian or Chamorro	32	0.01%

Samoan	33	0.01%
Other Pacific Islander	46	0.02%
Some other race	38430	14.05%
Two or more races	11926	4.36%
Hispanic or Latino and race		
Total Population	273546	100.00%
Hispanic or Latino(of any race)	80622	29.47%
Mexican	2295	0.84%
Puerto Rican	39650	14.49%
Cuban	2962	1.08%
Other Hispanic or Latino	35715	13.06%
Not Hispanic or Latino	192924	70.53%
White alone	38950	14.24%

The figure above (Figure 2.0) shows that Newark, New Jersey is primarily populated by African American and Hispanic/Latino residents. This is important to understand and note when it comes to drug policy within Newark school districts because African Americans and Hispanics/Latino students are disciplined more than white students. This is a fact, I referred to a statistic in my opening chapter stating that, African Americans and Hispanic/Latino students are disciplined nearly 15% more than their Caucasian peers (Lewis, Butler, Bonner III, Joubert). Another statistic proves that, "While black students represent 16% of student enrollment, they represent 27% of students referred to law enforcement and 31% of students subjected to a school-related arrest" (U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights). This is an important concept to understand because racial bias still exists in America, and we also see very high incarceration rates of both African American and Hispanic/Latinos throughout the nation, which can indicate that administrators see these students as threats, and are more likely to commit a crime within the schools. This can cause administrators and the Board of Education to have much harsher drug policies along with severe consequences when dealing with drugs within the school building.

Along with Newark being heavily populated with African American and Hispanic/Latino citizens it is also one of New Jersey's poorest cities.

Figure 2.1

ECONOMY	Newark, New Jersey	United States
Unemployment Rate	7.90%	5.20%
Recent Job Growth	1.30%	1.59%
Future Job Growth	34.70%	37.98%
Sales Taxes	7.00%	6.00%
Income Taxes	5.53%	4.60%
Income per Cap.	$16,828	$28,555
Household Income	$34,012	$53,482
Family Median Income	$37,914	$65,443
ESTIMATED HOUSEHOLDS BY HOUSEHOLD INCOME		
Income Less Than 15K	23.93%	12.55%
Income between 15K and 20K	7.51%	5.36%
Income between 20K and 30K	13.62%	10.42%
Income between 30K and 40K	11.31%	9.80%
Income between 40K and 50K	9.29%	8.80%
Income between 50K and 60K	7.56%	7.90%
Income between 60K and 75K	8.19%	9.93%
Income between 75K and 100K	8.54%	12.16%

Income between 100K and 150K	7.25%	13.01%
Income between 150K and 200K	1.69%	5.04%
Income greater than 200K	1.13%	5.03%

In figure 2.1 it indicates that the median income for a family in Newark is a little over 27,000 dollars less than the national median income for an American family. Also, 23.93% of households are bringing in an income less than 15,000 dollars a year, which is about 13% above the national average for a household income. It is evident that Newark has a high poverty rate, and many households are making far below what an average household brings in financially around the country. Socioeconomic status can have a lot to do with the way Newark Public School's deal with student's once they violate the drug policy. For students that are using and abusing illegal substances the consequence of their actions might be dictated by their family's socioeconomic status. I can assume that it is more likely for a student to be referred to the police instead of receiving substance abuse treatment, because treatment can be quite expensive. Because the household median is low in Newark, treatment is not a viable option for these families. This is how socioeconomic status can be a part of a school districts drug policy and drug plan for students that struggle with substance abuse.

Many times, in communities, poverty can cause higher crime rates. When citizens cannot adequately provide for themselves or families financially, this can result in an underground industry that involves illegal activity. Newark is no exception it is one of the most crime ridden cities in New Jersey.

Figure 2.2

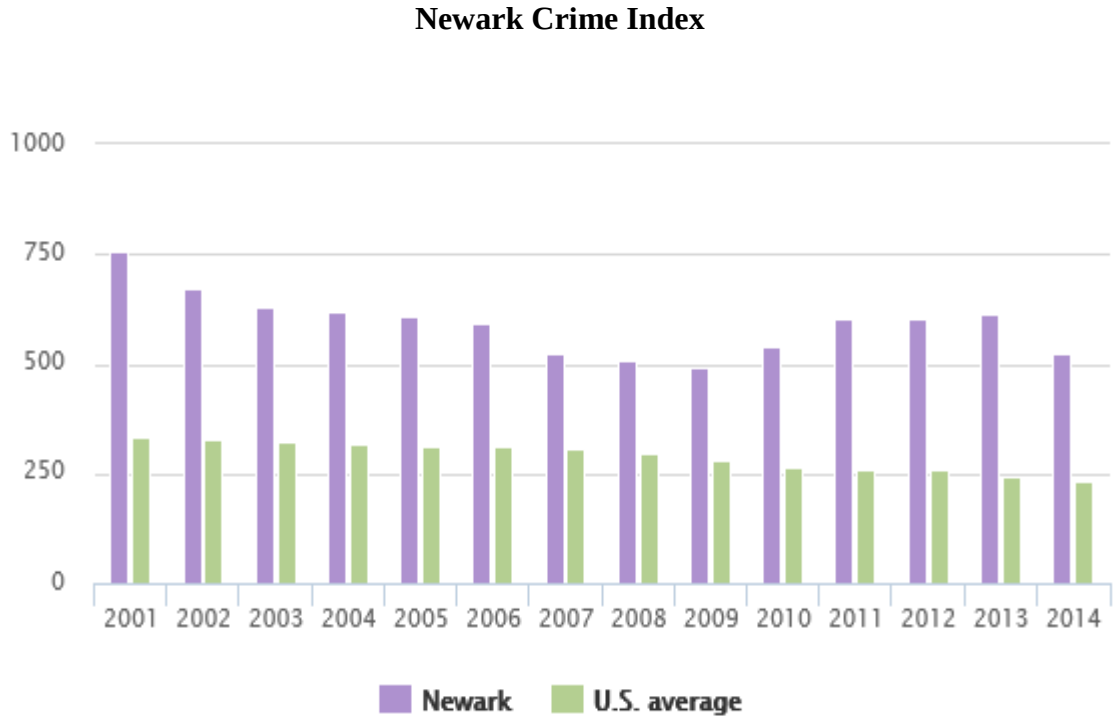


Figure 2.2 is showing the crime rate of Newark, NJ compared to the average crime rate in the U.S. It is evident that Newark as a city surpasses the U.S. average by almost half. This is important to consider because schools do consider the amount of crime that is happening outside of the school to prevent crime within the schools. Since Newark has a high crime rate it is safe to say that the school will adjust its drug policy accordingly. So, to further understand Newark Public Schools drug policy, it is important to understand the community's crime rate.

Section 2.2: The Newark Public Schools Drug Policy

The Newark Public School District drug policy makes it clear that the student's safety is of the utmost importance, which all schools polices typically revolve around. But as I examined the

Newark Public School District drug policy, the use of law enforcement seemed to be the best way to deal with drugs within the Newark Public School system. The policy states,

> "Pupils suspected of being under the influence of drugs, alcohol, tobacco or steroids will be identified, evaluated, and reported in accordance with the law. A pupil who uses, possesses, or distributes drugs, alcohol, tobacco or steroids on school premises or while attending a school-sponsored activity will be subject to discipline, that may include suspension or expulsion, and may be reported to appropriate law enforcement personnel (The Newark Public Schools).

Within the Newark Public School system when students are suspected or caught using drugs they are persecuted to the fullest extent of the law. The drug policy within Newark Public Schools are law abiding and enforced by law enforcement. It is stated within the policy that if a school employee believes that anyone on school property is using or distributing drugs of any sort they are mandated to report it to the principal. Than from the principal it is reported to the superintendent, then the superintendent will notify security, at that point security will report the information to the proper law enforcement agency for an investigation (The Newark Public Schools). From here on law enforcement is in control of the student whom violated the drug policy. It is evident within the drug policy that law enforcement has the most jurisdiction on what happens to the student in the case of a drug offense.

Law enforcement is involved so much that they can have their own undercover drug operations within the school building. Newark Public School drug policy implicitly states,

> "The District is authorized to request that law enforcement authorities conduct an undercover operation in the school if he/she has reason to believe that drug use and/or drug trafficking is occurring in the school and that a less intrusive means of law enforcement intervention

> would be ineffective. The District recognizes that law enforcement authorities may contact the Superintendent to request that an undercover operation be established in District schools. The District recognizes that the Superintendent is prohibited from discussing the request with the board. The Superintendent and school principal shall cooperate with law enforcement authorities in the planning and conduct of undercover school operations. The Superintendent, principal, or any other school staff or district board member who may have been informed about the undercover operation is required to immediately communicate information to the county prosecutor or designee if the integrity of the undercover school operation has been compromised in any way" (The Newark Public Schools).

By evaluating the Newark Public School system's drug policy, it seems to be evident that the school must have high levels of drug activity. With a law enforcement led drug policy and a high crime rate within the community, it is my assumption that drugs have been infiltrating the school for years. But with not a clear plan on how to treat their students that suffer from drug addiction, and how to readmit their students back into the school, I must think that it takes a toll on the Newark Public Schools graduation/retention rate. One can imply that these policies are not giving students the best opportunity to graduate from high school. This policy does not give the students' a second chance to reach the goal of graduating.

Section 2.3: Performance Data of Newark Public Schools

Currently Newark Public Schools are below the state and national average of graduating their students. According to the Department of Education the percentage of graduating students in the state of New Jersey in 2015 is 89.7% (Kiefer, 2016). The Department of Education also reported that in the school year of 2015 Newark Public Schools graduated their students at a rate of 69.59%

(Kiefer, 2016). That is nearly 20% lower than the New Jersey state average. On the contrary dropout rates and reasons for not graduating were hard to identify because the Newark Public Schools could not collect data for specific reasons why students dropped out. The Newark Public Schools Board of Education Assessment of District Progress reported that,

> "In SY11-12, the district reported 687 students dropped out of high school for reasons unknown. An additional 316 students never reported to school. Data indicates that in SY 1112 a combined 80% of high school dropouts were no-shows or had an unknown reason for dropping out. As of Feb. 2014, the district could not identify the dropout reason for 74% of high school dropouts. 25% of high school dropouts reported in SY13-14 were no-shows and 49% had an unknown drop-out reason in the district's reporting system. The high school dropout data provided did not include full data for SY2013-14" (Newark Public Schools Board of Education Assessment of District Progress).

The data shows that in many cases in past school years that the biggest reason for students dropping out were no shows and for reasons unknown. But the data also shows that incarceration was the fourth leading cause of students dropping out behind reasons unknown, no shows, and dissatisfied with the school itself (Newark Public Schools Board of Education Assessment of District Progress). In figure 1.0 in chapter 1 a dissatisfied education and incarceration falls under the leading most cause of student dropout's nationwide. The student is not choosing to leave, but instead they are being pushed out.

Now it is unclear that Newark Public Schools drug policy is the cause of low graduation rates and high dropout rates. But the drug policy states that the involvement of law enforcement is a key strategy of combatting drug activity in the school (Newark Public Schools). Since law enforcement is so heavily implemented into the school districts drug policy, I can make an educated assumption

that a good portion of students that dropped out due to incarceration, and violated some form of the drug policy. I can also assume that the reason why the highest percent of high school dropouts in the Newark Public School district is left unknown for the public, is because the drug policy states that all students drug policy violations must remain confidential (Newark Public Schools). This confidentiality law can be a factor in why the percentage for unknown dropouts are so high.

Section 2.4: Background of Community (Freehold, NJ)

Freehold, New Jersey is a suburban township located in Monmouth County. Freehold is very different than Newark. It is not as densely populated and they're many more housing developments, that are populated usually by working-class to wealthier families that can afford the mortgages on bigger houses.

Figure 2.3

2012 Population by Race and Ethnicity	Freehold, NJ 07728	New Jersey	United States
Population by Race			
White Population	81.48%	68.05%	71.71%
Black or African American Population	6.29%	13.51%	12.86%
American Indian and Alaska Native Population	0.22%	0.33%	0.96%
Asian Population	5.87%	8.78%	5.30%
Multi-racial Population	2.13%	2.99%	3.13%
Other Population	4.01%	6.35%	6.05%
Population by Ethnicity			
Population Hispanic	16.37%	18.89%	16.91%
Population Non Hispanic	83.63%	81.11%	83.09%

It is important to understand the demographic of a community, because that will be the same demographic that populates the school districts. In Freehold, it is evident that the community is heavily populated by Caucasian families. Freehold is very different from Newark in almost every aspect and demographics is no exception. The data indicates that the majority of Freehold's School District is made up of white students which is very different from Newark's Public Schools that are primarily populated by African American and Hispanic/Latino students. Figure 2.3 is important to note because demographics can and will impact a school districts drug policy, and the way they police their students.

As I mentioned previously Freehold is made up of many housing developments with descent size homes that require a high income to buy and maintain. The socioeconomic status of many residents that live in this community is upper middle-class to upper-class.

Figure 2.4

ECONOMY	Freehold, New Jersey	United States
Unemployment Rate	4.40%	5.20%
Recent Job Growth	2.35%	1.59%
Future Job Growth	40.30%	37.98%
Sales Taxes	7.00%	6.00%
Income Taxes	5.53%	4.60%
Income per Cap.	$43,557	$28,555
Household Income	$102,511	$53,482
Family Median Income	$123,584	$65,443

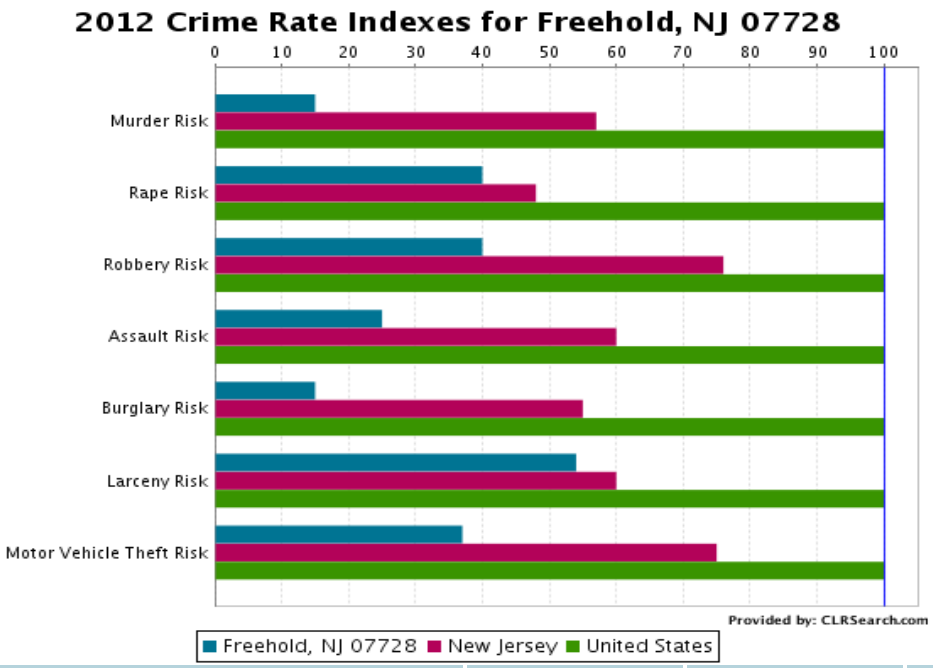
ESTIMATED HOUSEHOLDS BY HOUSEHOLD INCOME		
Income Less Than 15K	4.49%	12.55%
Income between 15K and 20K	1.92%	5.36%
Income between 20K and 30K	5.57%	10.42%
Income between 30K and 40K	6.55%	9.80%
Income between 40K and 50K	3.59%	8.80%
Income between 50K and 60K	7.24%	7.90%
Income between 60K and 75K	7.18%	9.93%
Income between 75K and 100K	11.29%	12.16%
Income between 100K and 150K	24.51%	13.01%
Income between 150K and 200K	12.53%	5.04%
Income greater than 200K	15.13%	5.03%

Figure 2.4 shows that Freehold is a very affluent community. The highest percentage of families are earning six figures. The median family income is standing at an outstanding 123,584 dollars. A family in Freehold earns 85,670 dollars more than a family that lives in Newark. It is evident to see when comparing the data in figure 2.4 to figure 2.1 that there is a huge economic inequality gap between these two communities. This will have an impact on Freehold School Districts drug policy because parents can pay for rehabilitation programs for their children if they struggle with substance abuse. Socioeconomic status can also indicate that families can pay for the proper legal representation if their child gets into legal trouble, if they were to be in violation of the school's drug policy. So, with that being said when an affluent community is more school's drug policy will focus

on treatment and readmission back into the school rather than legal action, which will result in an increase in graduation rates.

In most cases when looking at different communities it is easy to assume whether the crime rate will be high or low depending on the socioeconomic status of the citizens that populate that specific community. Freehold was no exception the total crime rate of this affluent suburb was way below the state average. This is important to take into consideration when looking at a school districts drug policies, because if they do not have high levels of crime in the community the school may not feel like they need to have severe punishments or police their students as much. The data below in figure 2.5 details the low crime rates with in Freehold's community.

Figure 2.5



2012 Crime Rate Indexes	Freehold, NJ 07728	New Jersey	United States
Total Crime Risk	16	54	100
Murder Risk	15	57	100

2012 Crime Rate Indexes	Freehold, NJ 07728	New Jersey	United States
Rape Risk	40	48	100
Robbery Risk	40	76	100
Assault Risk	25	60	100
Burglary Risk	15	55	100
Larceny Risk	54	60	100
Motor Vehicle Theft Risk	37	75	100

Section 2.5: Freehold Regional High School Drug Policy

The Freehold Regional High School's drug policy states that the student's safety is the utmost important part of the policy, and in further reading they do demonstrate that throughout their procedures in handling drug offenses. The policy states that if any staff member observes a student under the influence of drugs or any other substance they must report it, and from there on it will be handled as a health issue (Freehold Regional High School). Than the student will go through several screenings, first by the school nurse, then by a physician that the parent/guardian can choose at their own expense (Freehold Regional High School). All documents from these examinations must be presented to the school along with a drug screening before the student can be readmitted back into the school (Freehold Regional High School). If the student then fails a drug screening or the student and his/her parent/guardian fails to provide documentation from the physician that states the student is able to return to school, that is the only time the student is subjected to disciplinary action. The disciplinary action of the drug policy states,

Disciplinary Action

If the results of the chemical screening are positive, progressive discipline will be implemented as follows:

A. First Offense

1. 4 day suspension

2. meeting with parent/guardian, student, and student assistance coordinator during suspension period

3. re-entry meeting after suspension period with parent/guardian, student, student assistance coordinator, and building administrator

4. re-entry contract signed

5. student privileges may be revoked

B. Second Offense

1. 8 day suspension

2. meeting with student and student assistance coordinator during suspension period

3. re-entry meeting after suspension period with parent/guardian, student, student assistance coordinator, and building administrator

4. re-entry contract signed

5. student privileges may be revoked

C. Third Offense

1. 10 day suspension

2. Central Administration discipline hearing

3. possible expulsion referral

4. student privileges will be revoked
(Freehold Regional High School District)

It is evident that the Freehold Regional High School District drug policy is very forgiving. It is designed to prevent drug abuse, but more importantly to rehabilitate their students if they are suffering from substance abuse issues. Also, the school's policy focuses heavily on the readmittance of their students into the school district after their drug policy infraction. This will inherently result

into higher achievement rates and graduation rates within the school district, because the school's drug policy puts emphasis on rehabilitation and readmission of each student, instead of immediate legal action.

Section 2.6: Performance Data of Freehold Regional High School District

As I stated in my last section, because the Freehold Regional High School District is very forgiving and gives their student body several chances to finish school and receive a high school diploma. In result of their drug policy, the Freehold Regional High School District has one of the highest graduation rates, along with the lowest dropout rates in the state of New Jersey. The New Jersey School performance report has the Freehold Regional High School District as one of the most successful schools in the state.

Figure 2.6

Graduation & Post Secondary Indicators	Schoolwide Performance	Peer Rank (Percentile)	Statewide Rank (Percentile)	Statewide Targets	Met Target
Overall Graduation Rate	**93.6%**	**77**	**58**	**75%**	**YES**
Dropout Rate	**1.6%**	**42**	**31**	**2%**	**YES**
SUMMARY - Graduation & Post-Secondary		**60**	**45**		**100%**

The school districts graduation rate is above the state average of 89.3% (Kiefer). And the data shows that it is way above the statewide target as well. I believe the Freehold Regional High School District graduation rates correlate with their drug policy within the school district, along with their discipline actions amongst their students. But do they discipline their students proportionately amongst their student demographic.

Figure 2.7

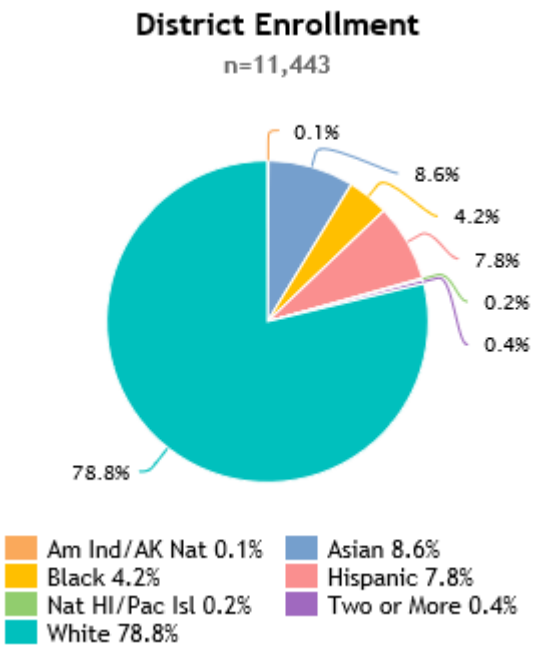
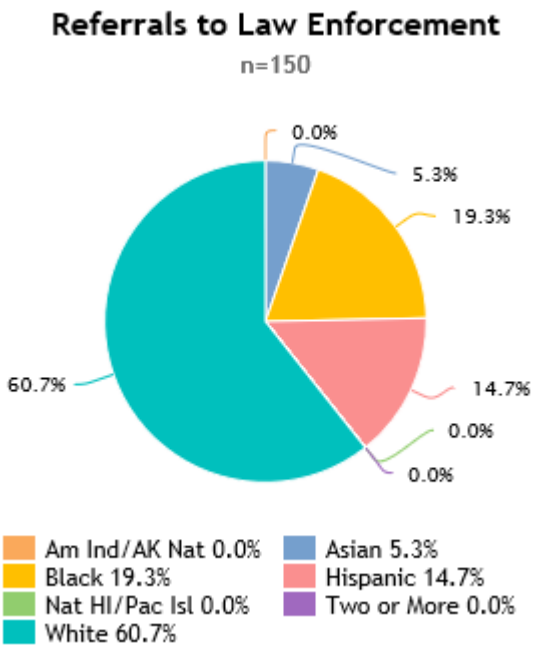


Figure 2.8



The Civil Rights Data collection reported disciplinary statistics on the Freehold Regional High School District. The statistics are interesting and show the difference in percentage of referrals to law enforcement in violation of school policy (includes drug policy). According to the pie chart in figure 2.7, African Americans and Hispanic/Latino students only make up 12.6% of the school enrollment. But in figure 2.8 those same number of students make up 34.0% of all students that are being refereed to law enforcement. The amount of African American and Hispanic/Latino students that are represented in figure 2.8 compared to their overall enrollment in the school district is unprecedented. This could be one of the driving reasons why African American and Hispanic/Latino students are dropping out of the Freehold Regional High School District.

Figure 2.9	School	State Target
Schoolwide	1.6%	2%
White	.3%	
Black	4.3%	
Hispanic	5.2%	

Figure 2.9 makes it evident that there is still an achievement gap between white students, African American and Hispanic/Latino students. Students of color are dropping out at lower rates in Freehold Regional High School District compared to the nationwide reports in chapter 1, but still much higher than their white classmates. This can be because students of color are being pushed out of schools as I mentioned in chapter 1 in figure 1.0, by unequal disciplinary consequences for the same offense, and different outcomes for students of color if charged with violating the drug policy. Which is a nationwide problem comparable to the growing incarceration rate of African Americans and Hispanic/Latino citizens, and the harsh reality of mandatory sentencing of people of color within the American justice system.

Section 2.7: Analysis/Conclusion

In order to get a full understanding of the complexity of this study, it would have been helpful if I was able to supply some data to measure how much drug use or activity is going on in these schools. But due to confidentiality laws protecting the students, the data is not public. But even without that data there are very clear indicators that tough drug enforcement policies within public schools are impacting graduation rates, and marginalizing African American and Hispanic/Latino students. In Newark, NJ, it is evident that poverty, drug use/distribution, high crime, and low graduation rates is present in the same community. In many low-income areas, such as Newark, NJ these are issues that are correlated with one another. School should be a place where students are in a

safe learning environment, sometimes the only place that can be safe for children in a community such as Newark. But the drug policies make it seem that the students are under seize by law enforcement within a school building, which can most definitely effect academic performance.

It is important to acknowledge that Freehold and Newark are very different. Many of their differences are a result of various social issues that lie outside of these school buildings. It is evident in the data that I have presented that school's drug policy is tangled up in these social issues. This is a serious issue. Students are entitled to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). But when school districts within the same state have separate drug policies that gives opportunities to white students in a higher socioeconomic class, but will take an education away from a poor African American and Hispanic/Latino student, is the education still appropriate. I understand that the parents of the students that attend Freehold Regional High School District have the financial means to pay for a quality treatment program. But the basis of race and class should not create two completely different policing environments. Students in our inner cities need help as well, probably more than ever. I understand that school districts cannot control these social issues outside of the jurisdiction of the school. Drug policy might not be the only problem, but these outside social issues also impact student performance. What schools can do is make a drug policy where all students are treated fairly and get the same educational opportunities as every student, no matter what race or social class.

Chapter 3

Section 3.0: Introduction

In chapter three I am studying two more communities, and examining their school districts drug policy. I will be getting in depth of the dynamics of the communities by supplying research and data on these community's demographics, socioeconomic status, and crime rate. These three major factors can influence a school districts drug policy, inevitability creating an achievement gap between each community's school districts graduation rates. The two specific communities and school districts I will be examining throughout this chapter are Camden, NJ and Roselle, NJ. I wanted to research another inner city school to understand if all low-income areas such as Camden and Newark, have matching school substance abuse policies. But what sets chapter three apart from chapter two is the analysis of Roselle Borough Public School. Roselle is a middle-class minority community, and I will be able to learn whether class or race has a bigger influence of how schools shape their drug policies.

Section 3.1: Background of Community (Camden, NJ)

Camden, New Jersey is a city in southern New Jersey located in Camden County. It is one of New Jersey's biggest city, most known for its crime and its easy access into Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Camden, NJ is extremely similar to Newark, NJ that was mentioned in chapter two. From the information, I gathered about Newark, NJ in chapter two, it is safe to assume there will be some similar data especially when it comes to demographics.

Figure 3.0

Race		
One race		%
White	13454	16.84%
Black or African American	42628	53.35%
American Indian and Alaska Native	435	0.54%
Asian	1958	2.45%
Asian indian	113	0.14%
Chinese	144	0.18%
Filipino	50	0.06%
Japanese	20	0.03%
Korean	64	0.08%
Vietnamese	1246	1.56%
Other Asian	321	0.4%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	59	0.07%
Native Hawaiian	23	0.03%
Guamanian or Chamorro	12	0.02%
Samoan	7	0.01%
Other Pacific Islander	17	0.02%
Some other race	18239	22.83%
Two or more races	3131	3.92%
Hispanic or Latino and race		
Total Population	79904	100.00%
Hispanic or Latino(of any race)	31019	38.82%
Mexican	1908	2.39%
Puerto Rican	23051	28.85%
Cuban	206	0.26%
Other Hispanic or Latino	5854	7.33%
Not Hispanic or Latino	48885	61.18%
White alone		

The table in figure 3.0 directly indicates that Camden, NJ is heavily populated by African Americans and Hispanic/Latino residents. The data states that Camden is made up of 53.35% of African Americans, and 38.82% of Hispanics and Latino. With that being said, the city of Camden population is over 90% African American and Hispanic/Latino. The population of

African Americans and Hispanic/Latinos in Camden are greater than the population in Newark. The reason why it is important to consider the demographic of Camden, NJ is because statistically African Americans and Hispanic/Latino citizens are more heavily policed than their Caucasian counterparts. The NAACP reports that, "Together, African American and Hispanics comprised 58% of all prisoners in 2008, even though African Americans and Hispanics make up approximately one quarter of the US population" (NAACP). It is a fact that African American and Hispanic/Latino students within these school districts are being policed more than other school districts with a more Caucasian student body. In relation to the criminalization of young African American and Hispanic/Latino citizens, I can assume that drug policies within school districts that have a large minority population like Camden, are strict policies, with unforgiving consequences, based off the demographic of their student body.

The second factor within the community that can impact a school districts drug policy is socioeconomic status. Camden, New Jersey is one of the poorest cities in New Jersey. Data shows,

Figure 3.1

ECONOMY	Camden, New Jersey	United States
Unemployment Rate	10.30%	5.20%
Recent Job Growth	2.52%	1.59%
Future Job Growth	34.74%	37.98%
Sales Taxes	7.00%	6.00%
Income Taxes	5.53%	4.60%
Income per Cap.	$13,597	$28,555

Household Income	$26,201	$53,482
Family Median Income	$29,783	$65,443
ESTIMATED HOUSEHOLDS BY HOUSEHOLD INCOME		
Income Less Than 15K	32.48%	12.55%
Income between 15K and 20K	8.52%	5.36%
Income between 20K and 30K	13.76%	10.42%
Income between 30K and 40K	9.93%	9.80%
Income between 40K and 50K	8.46%	8.80%
Income between 50K and 60K	5.97%	7.90%
Income between 60K and 75K	6.41%	9.93%
Income between 75K and 100K	7.88%	12.16%
Income between 100K and 150K	4.86%	13.01%
Income between 150K and 200K	0.99%	5.04%
Income greater than 200K	0.74%	5.03%

The data shows that Camden is a city with major financial and economic issues. Above in figure 3.1 the data shows that the unemployment rate is double what the national average is, while the highest percentage of families are making under fifteen thousand dollars a year (32.48%). It is important to consider a community's socioeconomic status in correlation with their school districts drug policy. As it was discovered in chapter two, communities with higher socioeconomic status, seemed to have more forgiving consequences for students who broke the drug policy of their respected school districts. This could be because families with a higher socioeconomic status can pay for drug treatment programs for their child if they struggle with substance abuse. But from what figure 3.1

indicates is that many students who attend school in Camden, NJ, come from an impoverished community and households. Many families in Camden, statistically shown in figure 3.1 cannot afford expensive drug treatment for their children. This could impact the school districts drug policy, because they might not see rehabilitation or readmission back into the school realistic based on family's socioeconomic status. This can directly push students out of school and put the graduation rates of the district on a downward trend.

The third and last factor that can directly affect school districts drug policy is the community crime rate outside of the school building.

Figure 3.2

2017 Crime (Projected Data)*	**Incidents**
Aggravated Assault	1,208
Arson	41
Burglary	1,073
Forcible Rape	83
Larceny and Theft	1,815
Motor Vehicle Theft	266
Murder and Manslaughter	58
Robbery	749
Crime Rate (Total Incidents)	4,970
Property Crime	3,159
Violent Crime	2,099

By examining figure 3.2 it is evident that Camden, NJ has a very high crime rate. Camden, NJ has been continuously one of the most dangerous cities to live in not only in New Jersey but in the United States as well. Figure 3.2 shows the projected crime index for this year, and it has crime getting worse in Camden. Now, the cause of such a high crime rate is a result of two factors. First factor, is what I mentioned previously in chapter three. The demographic of Camden is predominately African American and Hispanic/Latino. It is a fact that African American and Hispanic/Latino communities are policed more heavily than predominately Caucasian communities. This can result in an inflation in crime rate based on race, and the targeting of minorities in urban areas. The second factor is that when there is a community that has such a low socioeconomic status, and a high unemployment rate, citizens of that community find other ways to earn a living. Many of the times this results into citizens involving themselves into illegal activity to earn a livable wage. Both factors effect and correlate with the result of a failing graduation rate. Drug policies within public schools that heavily police their students due to the high crime rate within the community, push students out of school which inevitably deters them from graduating. As a result of a student not graduating in a community with limited employment opportunities, that student has a higher chance of getting involved in illegal activity to support themselves financially.

Section 3.2: Camden City Public Schools Drug Policy

The Camden City Public Schools drug policy is very different than the other polices that I have reviewed in chapter two. Instead of the policy being concerned about the individual student's health and safety, the Camden City Board of Education is more worried about the threat of drugs to the whole school community. In the opening statement the policy states,

> "The Board of Education recognizes that a student's abuse of harmful substances seriously impedes that student's education and threatens the welfare of the entire school community. The Board is committed to the prevention of substance abuse and the rehabilitation of substance abusers by educational means, but will take the necessary and appropriate steps to protect the school community from harm and from exposure to harmful substances" (Camden City Public Schools).

The district makes it very clear in their opening statement that the safety of their school community is their number one concern in their substance abuse policy. This is very different than the two drug policies that I examined in chapter two. They are not worried about the student's health or rehabilitation, but rather than keeping the school community safe. This is an indication that the school district views students that violate their substance abuse policy as a threat to the school community. This type of language make me believe that they are willing to remove students who violate their policy in order to keep the rest of the school community in order. But in fact, they are willing to keep these students out of the school building at all costs. The Camden City Public Schools substance abuse policy allows them not only to persecute students that are found with drugs in school but off school premises as well. The policy states,

> "A student who uses, possesses, or distributes alcohol or other drugs will be subject to discipline in accordance with the district's Code of Student Conduct. School authorities also have the authority to impose a consequence on a student for conduct away from school grounds in accordance with the provisions of N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.5. Discipline may include suspension or expulsion" (Camden City Public Schools).

If Camden City Public Schools can persecute students for drug crimes outside of the school premises, they must have a drug issue that they are keeping out of their school community at all

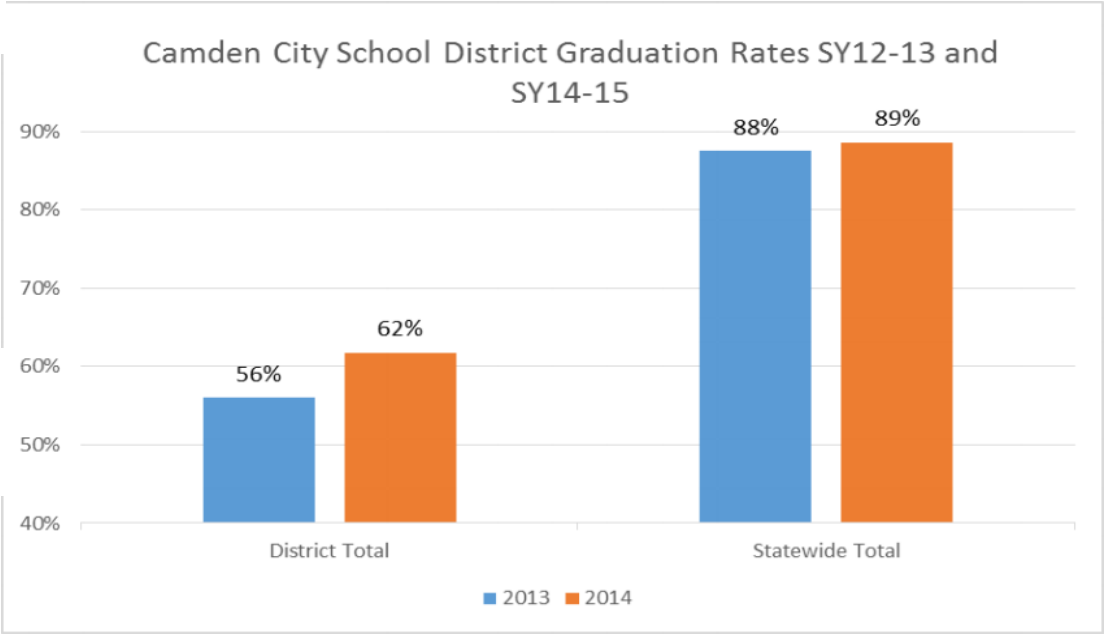
costs. The policy does not say anything about readmission into the school if caught off school grounds with illegal contraband on the student's person, so it is safe to say that they are trying to keep students that may have already violated the substance abuse policy out of school completely. This type of policy does not help the graduation rate and achievement statistics of the school district. Camden City Public Schools has its differences and similarities to Newark and Freehold school districts that I evaluated in chapter two. The similarities of Camden City Public Schools and Freehold Regional High School District is that they use the same procedures when a student is deemed under the influence of a controlled substance in school. The teacher or school employee that identifies the student that is under the influence of a controlled substance must report them to the principal or some sort of school administrator. Than proceeding that course of action the student will than see a school physician/nurse to make sure that the student is not at any health risk. Than the student must see a certified physician to deem if the student is in the right state of mind to return to school, and can efficiently complete their assigned school work (Camden City Public Schools). But I believe by reading the policy in its entirety that the schools main objective is to keep drug abusers and dealers out of the school entirely, with a zero-tolerance mindset.

Section 3.3: Performance Data of Camden City Public Schools

In community where there is low socioeconomic status, and high crime there tends to be a correlation with low graduation rates. Alongside, a harsh drug policy it can be assumed based off the similarities of Camden and Newark that there will be a low graduation rate, alongside a high dropout rate**.** Figure 3.3 below gives the graduation rate of Camden City Public Schools for the school years of 2013-2014. The graph below (Figure 3.3) has Camden City Public Schools graduation rate in

2013 at 56%. The graduation rate rose in 2014 to 62%, but is still about 30% under the state average of 89%.

Figure 3.3



Alongside, a very low graduation rate Camden City Public Schools has a very high dropout rate of 11.2%, which is 9% over the state targeted dropout rate which is 2% (NJ School Performance Report). The high dropout rate and the low graduation rate can be a result of a harsh drug policy. Camden City Public School's drug policy plays a factor in the 'push out' theory talked about in chapter one. The fact that students can be persecuted for drug infractions outside of school premises, can in fact 'push' students out of school. The substance abuse policy of Camden City Public Schools does not have a substantial amount of support for their students that's needed if they have a drug abuse problem, to recover from their addiction and finish school. Which inevitably can force students to drop out of school, and not receive a high school diploma.

Section 3.4: Background of Community (Roselle, NJ)

It is important to understand a community's make-up because it can help administrators form the school districts drug policy. Demographic has been a huge factor in the difference between school districts drug policy thus far. In chapter two and three, I have discovered that it is typical for school districts that have a large population of African American and Hispanic/Latino students, to have much more consequential drug policies. I am providing data on Roselle, NJ demographic below, in order to describe if it has an impact on the way Roselle Borough Board of Education shaped its substance abuse policy.

Figure 3.4

Race	Roselle	New Jersey	National
Caucasian	24.62%	68.67%	73.81%
African American	52.53%	13.54%	12.60%
Asian	3.90%	8.79%	5.00%
American Indian	0.00%	0.21%	0.82%
Native Hawaiian	0.00%	0.03%	0.17%
Mixed race	1.39%	2.48%	2.91%
Other race	17.56%	6.28%	4.70%

In Roselle, 29.5% of people are of Hispanic or Latino origin.

Please note: Hispanics may be of any race, so also are included in any/all of the applicable race categories above.

In figure 3.4 above shows the Borough of Roselle's demographic. The majority of the community is made up of African American residents (52.53%). "In Roselle, 29.5% of people are of Hispanic or Latino origin. Please note: Hispanics may be of any race, so also are included in any/all of the applicable race categories above" (as showed above in figure 3.4). Roselle, NJ has a very similar demographic as Newark, NJ and Camden, NJ. There is a variation in the number of Caucasian residents that live in Roselle, but Roselle is populated by majority of African American and Hispanic/Latino residents. Typically, I have seen race/ethnicity impact school districts drug policy in a way that they have much more severe consequences for their students than school districts that are heavily populated by Caucasian students.

Another factor that I have discovered that impacts school districts drug policies is socioeconomic status of residents that live in that specific community. Community's that have higher household incomes seem to look for rehabilitation options for their students, instead of legally persecuting students like school districts that are located in a lower socioeconomic community.

Figure 3.5

2012 Household Income Statistics	Roselle, NJ	New Jersey	United States
Total Area Household Income	$35,134,613	$327,453,636,989	$9,110,376,126,223
Median Household Income	$60,877	$75,845	$57,639
Average Household Income	$79,548	$101,584	$77,190
Per Capita Household Income	$27,765	$37,074	$29,126
Income Less than $15,000	11.68%	8.52%	11.77%
Income $15,000 to $24,999	8.91%	7.11%	9.67%
Income $25,000 to $34,999	7.79%	7.27%	9.73%

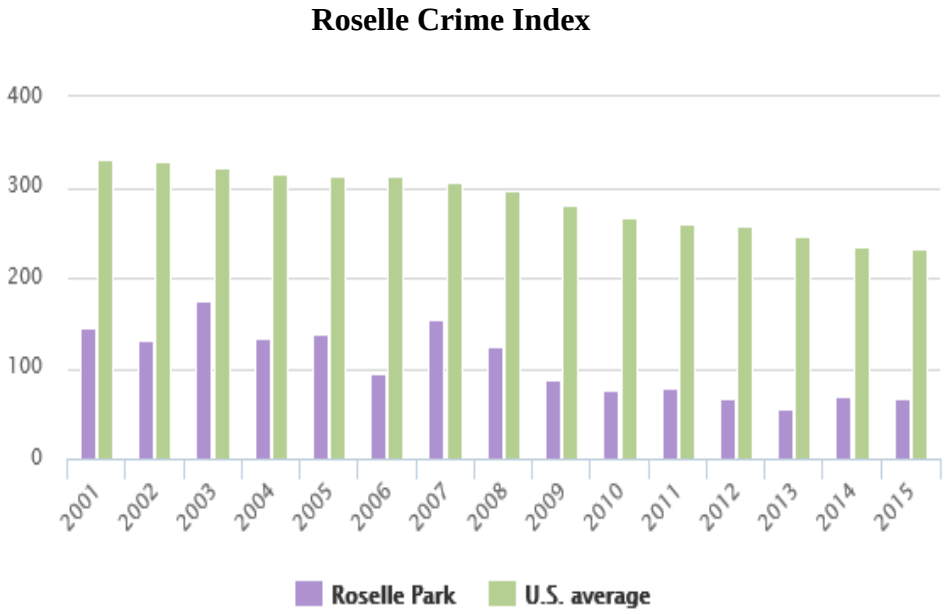
2012 Household Income Statistics	Roselle, NJ	New Jersey	United States
Income $35,000 to $49,999	13.79%	10.48%	13.33%
Income $50,000 to $74,999	20.75%	16.16%	18.03%
Income $75,000 to $99,999	12.37%	13.62%	12.97%
Income $100,000 to $124,999	9.05%	10.65%	8.65%
Income $125,000 to $149,999	5.63%	7.65%	5.40%
Income $150,000 to $199,999	5.44%	8.60%	5.12%
Income $200,000 and Over	4.57%	9.94%	5.34%

The socioeconomic status of residents in Roselle, NJ is important to note, because it is different than many other African American and Hispanic/Latino communities that I have examined. Camden, NJ, and Newark, NJ, were two heavily populated African American and Hispanic/Latino cities, that had very low average household incomes. In both cities, the majority of the residents were living in poverty. Roselle, NJ is different in the aspect of African American and Hispanic/Latino residents belong to the middle-class of this community. By examining the Roselle Borough Board of Education substance abuse policy, I will be able to determine what actual outside community factors are influencing the way school districts shape their drug policies.

Previously in Chapter 3 and in Chapter 2 we saw a correlation between demographic, socioeconomic status, and crime rate. Typically, the correlation consisted of communities with a large population of African American and Hispanics/Latinos would earn less money on average. Because, citizens were struggling to find employment in these communities, the result would be a spike in crime rate around the community. But since Roselle, NJ is a middle-class area it could be apparent that crime rate could be down. The fact, that residents of Roselle, NJ have decent paying jobs, and are not living in poverty like cities such Camden, NJ, and Newark, NJ that share the similar

demographic. It is my assumption that data will show lower crime rates than many minority communities based off average household income. A variable that can inflate the crime rate in Roselle, NJ, is that African American and Hispanic/Latino communities are in fact policed heavily. This could be a variable that we do not see in any other middle class white communities.

Figure 3.6



Above in figure 3.6 it is evident that this correlation has been broken in the Borough of Roselle. By the research and evidence provided above Roselle, NJ is a middle-class African American community with a very low crime rate. Figure 3.6 compares the amount of crime rate in Roselle, NJ compared to the national average. It is obvious that Roselle, NJ does not have a high crime rate in their community. This is an important concept to understand, when it comes to school drug policy because it will be interesting to see the consistencies within the policy according to race, or the differences because Roselle is a middle-class community with a low crime rate. Will the drug polciy look more like Camden and Newark's or a forgiving policy like Freehold School District.

Section 3.5: Roselle Borough Board of Education Drug Policy

In order to grasp the complexity of the Roselle Borough Board of Education substance abuse policy, it is important to understand the dynamics of the community. The fact that Roselle, NJ is a middle-class African American community, with a low crime rate, I expected a drug policy that resembled all combined drug policies previously stated in this study. The Roselle Borough Board of Education substance abuse policy states that,

> "The Board of Education recognizes that a pupil's abuse of harmful substances seriously impedes that pupil's education and threatens the welfare of the entire school community. The Board is committed to the prevention of substance abuse and the rehabilitation of substance abusers by educational means, but will take the necessary and appropriate steps to protect the school community from harm and from exposure to harmful substances. Accordingly, the Board will establish and maintain a comprehensive substance abuse intervention, prevention, and treatment referral program in the schools of this district" (Roselle Borough Board of Education).

The statement of commitment to uphold the safety of the school community is a direct quote from the Camden City Public Schools substance abuse policy. Both policies make students who suffer from substance abuse issues seem like a direct threat to the school community and shall be removed accordingly. The Camden City Public School substance abuse policy mirrored that exact ideology aforementioned in my previous sentence. But the difference in the Roselle Borough Board of Education is that they explicitly mention, "the Board will establish and maintain a comprehensive substance abuse intervention, prevention, and treatment referral program" (Roselle Borough Board of Education). This implication of intervention and treatment is a characteristic that is seen in the

Freehold Regional High School District drug policy, where students could receive treatment. This was probably added into the Roselle Borough Board of Education, because of the socioeconomic status of the student population. Middle-class families can possibly pay for treatment programs for their children.

Another similarity in the Roselle Borough Board of Education policy and the Camden City Public School substance abuse policy is,

> "A pupil who uses, possesses, or distributes a substance, on or off school premises, will be subject to discipline. Discipline will be graded to the severity of the offenses, the nature of the problems and the pupil's needs. Discipline may include suspension or expulsion. The Board may establish consequences for a pupil not following through on the recommendations of an evaluation for alcohol or other drug abuse and related behaviors" (Roselle Borough Board of Education).

The fact, that the Roselle Borough Board of Education is willing to persecute students for drug infractions off school property just as the Camden City Public Schools are doing to their students as well, infers that they take drug use and distribution seriously. Since the Board of Education is taking substance abuse so seriously, the board is willing to persecute their students to the fullest extent of the policy and law. But the difference in the Roselle School District is that they use more discretion than other drug policies in African American school districts. For example, the above quote states, "Discipline will be graded to the severity of the offenses, the nature of the problems and the pupil's needs" (Roselle Borough Board of Education). The administrators are evaluating the problem, the history of the student, and what is best for the student moving forward. Using this type of administrative discretion can retain students and inevitably heighten the graduation rate of the school district. Discretion and care for the student's well-being is

expressed within the policy. The policy states, “The Board shall provide a comprehensive program of prevention, intervention, referral for evaluation, referral for treatment, and continuity of care for pupil alcohol, tobacco, and other drug abuse” (Roselle Borough Board of Education). This is not the norm for many African American populated school districts. I have mostly seen policies that have persecuted African American and Hispanic/Latino students to the fullest extent of the law, which would result into the underperformance of the school and low graduation rate. This policy is stuck in the middle of an inner city polciy and a suburban school district substance abuse polciy. The harsh repercussions of the policy are most likely implemented because of the demographic of the school. The treatment aspects of the policy are defiantly due to the students socioeconomic status.

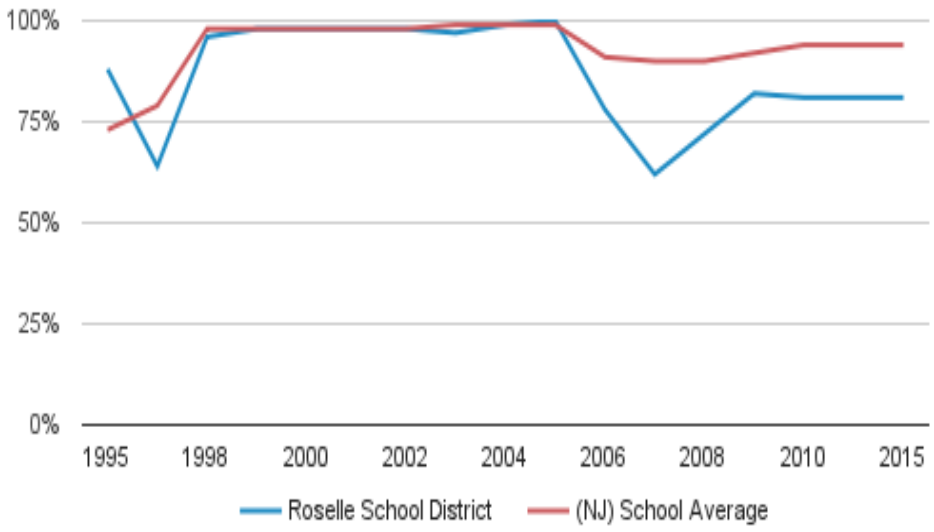
Section 3.6: Performance Data of Roselle Borough Public School

Typically, in my research when a school district has a forgiving drug policy, where the administrators use their discretion and focus on the readmittance of the student, the graduation rate seems to soar. Roselle Borough Board of Education substance abuse policy holds students accountable for their actions that can result into severe disciplinary actions, but at the same time the policy enables administrators to use their discretion to get the students help and come up with the best plan of action so the student can succeed. I believe because of these specific implications the graduation rate will reflect the Board of Education’s drug policy. Figure 3.7 below shows the graduation rate of Roselle School District, compared to the New Jersey average graduation rate. The current graduation rate at the Roselle School District is at 81% according to the data given in figure 3.7. Even though, the Roselle School District is below the New Jersey state average graduation rate of 89.17%, it is still much better than schools such as Newark (69.59%) and Camden (62.0%) that

have the similar school demographic as one another. But not as quite high as Freehold Regional High School district. This can possibly attest to the middle of the road drug policy that is implemented in Roselle Public Schools.

Figure 3.7

Roselle School District Graduation Rate



I believe Roselle School District can reach the state average. But our healthcare system can prevent middle-class students from receiving treatment and being readmitted back into the school, to receive their high school diploma. Governor Chris Christie in a speech spoke out on this issue, he stated, "Who has the biggest economic barriers to treatment? The working men and women of the middle class of New Jersey. Not wealthy enough to pay privately. Too high an income to qualify for even expanded Medicaid. They are dependent on a health insurance industry that too often finds a way to say no" (Christie, 2017). These students that cannot receive treatment because of their social

class might see the severe consequences of the Roselle School District's substance abuse policy can have. This population, can represent the students that get expelled, or do not make it to graduation, because the school district does not see treatment as an option due to healthcare problems. Healthcare alongside of the substance abuse policy can play a part in the slightly underperforming school as Roselle. Even though these school districts such as Newark, Camden, and Roselle have similar student demographics, there drug policies have key differences that may affect each school districts graduation rate. I believe this explains why Roselle School District is may be more successful than Newark and Camden Public Schools, because Roselle's substance abuse policy uses more discretion and concern for the students' academic success. Therefore, giving the student the opportunity to finish school and earn a High School Diploma despite violating the drug policy.

Section 3.7: Conclusion

It is important to my study/research to try to find a middle-class African American community to truly find out what are the underlying forces behind Public School substance abuse policies and what makes them more or less strict. Also, I wanted to find out what affect that these substance abuse policies would have on the school districts graduation rate. Roselle, NJ is a community that is a bridge between inner cities such a Camden/Newark and Freehold a wealthy white community. The drug policy represents that it is more forgiving than the inner city policies that I have presented in this study, but not as forgiving as Freehold Regional High School substance abuse policy. What Roselle School District proved is one, African American students can succeed in the classroom if given an equal opportunity as their Caucasian peers. It also, proved that the more forgiving a drug policy is, the higher your graduation rate will be. What is proven in this chapter is

that the most influential characteristics in a community that has the most impact on a school districts substance abuse policies are indeed race, crime rate and socioeconomic status.

Chapter 4

Section 4.0: Introduction

Chapter four will discuss why drug policies within different school districts are such a pressing issue for the future of our youth in New Jersey. New Jersey is a state that is going through a serious opioid addiction epidemic. There has been a severe amount of substance induced overdoses due to opioid abuse. There have been forums to raise awareness of the drug problem in New Jersey, and now Governor Christie the current Governor of New Jersey has made the opioid epidemic his number one priority moving forward into the next year. This chapter will sort out these issues, and explain the social implications of these drug polices can have on the future of our youth.

Section 4.1: Opioid Epidemic

Heroin and opioid use has been a growing issue in the United States for a little over a decade now. “Heroin use and abuse in America has dramatically increased over the past decade. Between 2006 and 2013, federal records reveal, the number of first-time heroin users doubled, from 90,000 to 169,000. Some of those users, no doubt, already are gone. The Center for Disease Control announced last month that the rate of deadly heroin overdoses nearly quadrupled between 2002 and 2013” (Cohen, 2015). The numbers of opioid deaths and overdoses have been increasing for the past decade. While the numbers are dramatically increasing nationwide they have also been increasing at insurmountable rates in New Jersey as well.

Figure 4.0

Heroin/Morphine deaths in New Jersey 2004 to 2015

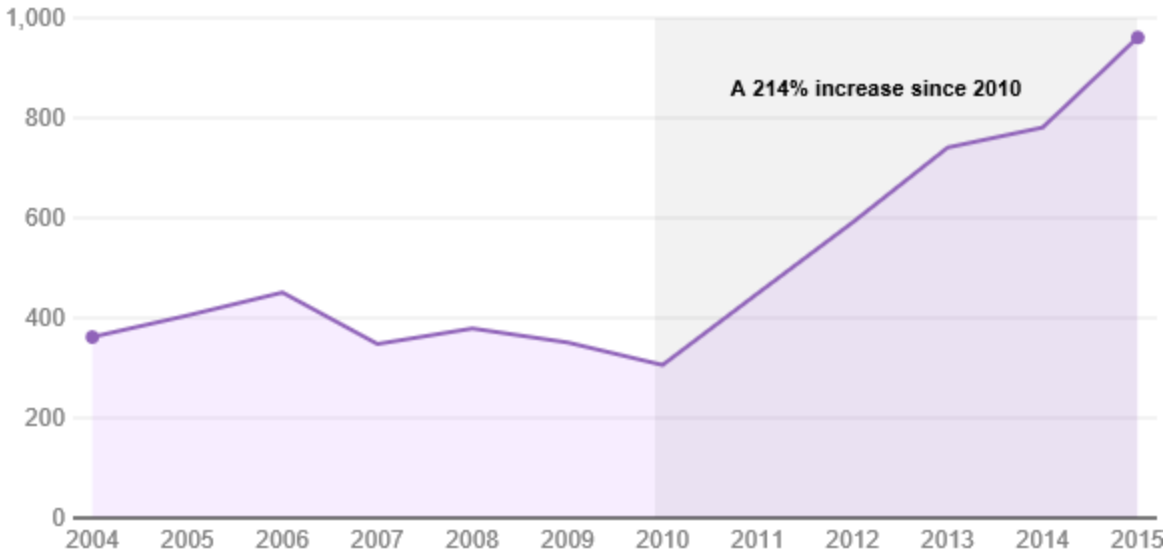


Figure 4.0 shows the major increase in heroin/morphine deaths in New Jersey from 2004 to 2015. The astounding data in Figure 4.0 shows that from 2010 to 2015 there has been a 214% increase in deaths due to overdose. Be mindful the figure above only records deaths, not how many people who were lucky enough to survive an overdose. Those numbers would be even higher. In response to these numbers increasing uncontrollably, politicians have been considering the opioid epidemic as a health concern and no longer a crime.

> "These troubling figures, and a spate of more recent stories and daunting statistics, have prompted officials across the country to implement bold new policies and practices designed to reduce the harm of heroin use. Although there has been some push to enhance criminal sanctions to combat the heroin surge, much of the institutional reaction to the renewed popularity of the drug has sounded in the realm of medicine, not law. One public official after another, in states both "red" and "blue," has pressed in recent years to treat increased

> heroin use as a public-safety problem as opposed to a criminal-justice matter best left to police, prosecutors, and judges" (Cohen, 2015).

What do these policies mean for the four school districts that I have discussed in my previous chapters? The fact that many people believe, heroin addiction is considered a health issue and no longer a crime, has severe social implications. The social issue at hand in this opioid epidemic is a health issue because it has become a "white problem," that is affecting affluent suburban Caucasian youth. What is driving state and national legislation implement a treatment plan for addicts is because it has become a "white problem." These are serious social issues that are based heavily on race. Drugs, have been an issue in America's inner cities like Camden and Newark for decades, but the government has always seen the narcotics as a crime. As long as African American and Hispanic/Latino people were using or distributing controlled substance's it is a crime. This shows in our incarceration rates, when the data shows African American and Hispanic/Latino men going to prison at insurmountable rates compared to their white counterparts. And yet, the government wants to make drug use a health issue, but there is inequality within school district substance abuse policies. Affluent suburban schools are subject to treatment, but inner city schools with a high population of African American and Hispanic/Latino students are subject to persecution as aforementioned in chapter three and four.

Section 4.2: Policy in New Jersey

In section 4.1 it is evident that there is a serious drug addiction problem in the state of New Jersey. It has not gone unnoticed by the state legislation. Governor Chris Christie the governor of New Jersey spent most of his 2017 state of the state address, talking about the drug addiction epidemic that is plaguing the entire state. Christie began his stance on the opioid epidemic by stating, "our state faces a crisis which is more urgent to New Jersey's families than any other issue we

could confront. A crisis which is destroying families. One that is ripping the very fabric of our state. The crisis of drug addiction. Yet, very few people want to talk about it. We want to continue to pretend that it is isolated to one class of people or one type of family in our state" (Chris Christie, 2017). It is interesting that Governor Christie would bring this to the forefront as one of his last initiatives before he leaves office. His opening quotes struck me as controversial because he is identifying that there is a drug problem in New Jersey, that is starting to affect a different social class. The social class that he is referring to is an affluent class, very much like the social class that attends Freehold Regional High School as described in chapter two. Governor Christie proceeds to state that, "Drug addiction is a disease. It is not a moral failing. It is a disease that can be treated" (Chris Christie, 2017). When Christie took office drug addiction was a crime and now that it has hit the suburbs and teens that come from an affluent backgrounds are seeing the horrors of addiction, it has transformed into a disease considered by the state legislation.

Yes, drug addiction is a disease and treatment is vital for people who suffer from this disease. But treatment is half the battle, Chris Christie failed to consider what type of policies are being implemented into our school districts because that is where addiction starts. Substance abuse is harming our youth that are in fact in the age range of high school to middle school students. Governor Christie presented data in his state address that states,

> "One in twelve high school seniors report using Vicodin. One in twenty use OxyContin. 467,000 children between 12-17 years old use prescription pain medication; 168,000 are addicted. The prescribing rates for these drugs to this age group doubled between 1994 and 2007. Use of these drugs often leads to abuse of and addiction to heroin as a cheaper and more readily available alternative" (Chris Christie, 2017).

This is true, many young men and women become addicted to heroin by first abusing prescription drugs that they or their parents were prescribed. They turn to heroin because it is cheaper to get on the street than prescription drugs. This is affecting young people, who are in the age bracket of middle and high school students. But some of these drug policies like Camden, Newark, do not deal with these problems through treatment but through law enforcement and major disciplinary consequences such as expulsion or suspension. I look at Governor Christie's initiatives and say his ideas do not match with the school districts substance abuse policies throughout the state. This is important because the teenagers that attend these schools are falling victim to this opioid crisis.

Governor Christie, proceeds to brief the audience on how addiction is a lifelong struggle. Recovering addicts will be once again immersed into a drug pressure environment, whether it be their high school, friend group, neighborhood, or college/universities. In order to aid addicts in the long road to recovery Governor Christie announces his initiative to assure sobriety and reduce relapse for young people. Christie states,

> "we need to acknowledge that the path to recovery is a lifelong one. We have many young people who enter our colleges and universities already having received treatment for addiction. How do we drop them into the life-changing pressure cooker that college is for any student without the appropriate atmosphere of support? In order to further support New Jersey's students who have been caught in the addiction epidemic, I will be increasing funding by $1 million for college housing programs set up for students in recovery. They are called recovery dorms and they are a lifeline for students who want to succeed in the classroom and have their recovery continue as they learn. These housing programs provide a community for students in need of

> counseling and additional supports. Attending college for any child can be challenging, but it can be particularly difficult for students in recovery; there is often a culture of "partying" and students living on campus may be exposed to added temptations in their dorms. Safe havens such as recovery dorms are critical in our fight against addiction, which is a life-long battle to maintain sobriety" (Chris Christie, 2017).

I believe that Governor Christie ideas and initiatives on drug addiction are well-intended. But this does not scratch the surface of the issue at hand. If the most effected age group are students that are in middle school or high school, and drug policies in these school districts are persecuting and 'pushing out' students out of educational institutions, how can the state legislation think about college. I have found throughout this study that schools like Camden, Newark, and Roselle school districts that have harsher substance abuse policies have lower graduation rates than schools like Freehold Regional High School that treat addiction more as a health concern than a crime. So, if we cannot get students to graduate that attend schools with opposite drug policies that Governor Christie seems to prefer, how can we form a college drug outreach program, when we cannot get students to graduate high school. The goals of Governor Christie once again do not match up with school districts within New Jersey.

Section 4.3: Solutions/Conclusion

This is a very complex issue that has many moving parts. But I believe that there are steps to solve these institutional and social problems. First solution that I would impose is equality of treatment throughout all school districts and social classes. Governor Christie realizes that, "the wealthy in our society have few, if any, economic barriers to treatment. They have the financial means to pay whatever the costs are to g et treatment for their loved ones" (Chris Christie, 2017).

This is evident that wealthy school districts substance abuse policies are much more revolved around treatment because students come from a household that can afford a recovery program. This is not the case for middle-class and lower-class school districts. Legislation needs to bridge the gap between substance abuse policies and social class so we can give all students treatment regardless of, race, and socioeconomic class. Along with making treatment affordable for all students comes with the school district drug policies matching the desired legislation initiatives on drug addiction. Currently Governor Christie's vision does not match with the substance abuse policies of public schools in New Jersey. There is a huge disconnect and it needs to be regulated. Also, I would like to see our government regulate big PHARMA corporations, that distribute prescription pills that are leading to heroin addiction of so many young people. Big pharmaceutical companies need to be regulated, and not minorities in inner cities for low level, non-violent drug crimes. This can also reduce the market for heroin on the street because the government would try to limit the amount of prescription pills available to patients. I believe this could alleviate some of the pressure of some inner-city school districts drug policy, which can help students get a second chance and graduate with a high school diploma.

Inevitably, education can bridge many inequalities that society experiences. It is imperative that young people receive a high school diploma, so they can become productive citizens. Education can be the equalizer within society, but drugs are a major issue for students in all communities in New Jersey and around the United States. But we can no longer handle substance abuse in such an unequal fashion, because it is evident it effects school performance for many underserved school districts. Administrators and Board of Education representatives need to believe in all students, and show compassion in the development of our youth. Substance abuse cannot be the end of the road for students, it's not only the schools but now the government's

responsibility to open opportunities for all students, to enter the world prepared to live a healthy and productive life.

Throughout this study I knew that I would find differences in school's drug policies. I never believed it would be this extreme. I learned that based off where you live can alter someone's life, along with their education experience. Not every school is the same, there are many dynamics and characteristics that make a school unique. But the discipline for the same crime in an affluent suburban school should not have different repercussions for a student who goes to an underserved inner city public school. But, this has something to say about race and class. Whether it be school drug policy, education, or other contexts, people live under a different set of rules based off race and class. It is the harsh reality of our political system. It's unfortunate, because it's the people who live in a poor minority community that have to deal with an unfair system. These drug policies have serious implications for students who are at the wrath of harsh consequences. In some cases, students are going to prison, some are not graduating, and in the worst case some students are dying because they cannot receive drug treatment. These are serious implications past the drug policies that young people may never recover from. The youth is our future and American society needs to do everything in their power to protect, educate, and preserve our young people.

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