



# Climate for Academic Success

January 16, 2018

## Last year our team began to focus on Destination Excellence

**BUILDING SAFE, SUPPORTIVE, JOYFUL LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS:**  
**Students, teachers and leaders—working** with families and community partners—will foster safe, supportive, and joyful learning environments that emphasize **acceptance and inclusion for all students** in all schools.

NO-NONSENSE NURTURER

SCHOOLWIDE  
CULTURE PLANNING

REAL TIME TEACHING COACHING

BUILDING CULTURALLY  
RELEVANT CLASSROOMS



## Why does a focus on positive school climate matter?



Positive school climate supports increased attendance and increased graduation rates.



Positive school climate fosters a healthy, safe and supportive working environment for teachers and staff.



Focusing on positive school climate matters for student achievement and life outcomes.



## Learnings and Insights



# What did we learn from 2016-2017?

We learned that reducing suspensions alone did not support the needs of teachers who faced challenging student behaviors within the classroom and in their schools.

- **2017-2018:** we set school site goals to decrease suspensions while providing direct leadership support focused on de-escalation strategies

We learned that our students' behaviors had various origins which requires specialized training for school leaders , teachers, and school staff.

- **2017-2018:** we are supporting school leaders by providing professional learning opportunities including but not limited to the following: trauma informed practices, social and emotional learning and restorative practices.

We learned that it is important to include various stakeholders in the planning and implementation process of strategies to support a positive school culture and climate.

- **2017-2018:** we are leveraging teachers'/staff access to real time data through data dashboards and using this information to make decisions and adapt based on student needs.



How do we build a climate for academic success?





# Classroom management alone?

- Classroom management strategies alone were helpful for addressing baseline student behaviors.
- Classroom management strategies alone are not enough to significantly impact on teacher/student relationships.
- Multiple strategies must be used to support a climate that empower students to practice and internalize self-awareness, self-regulation, and responsible decision-making.



## What does the research say?

Studies show that social emotional learning and culturally responsive teaching practices **increase [feelings of] trust** and **belonging** in schools, **reduce exclusionary disciplinary** practices, and foster positive school cultures.

(Durlak et al. 2011)





## How do we focus on school climate?

- **Safety:** Schools and school-related activities where students are safe from violence, bullying, and harassment. Our focus is on:
  - creating strong school culture plans, and
  - decreasing exclusionary practices
- **Environment:** Appropriate facilities, well-managed classrooms, available school-based health supports, and a clear and fair discipline policy. Our focus is on:
  - implementing restorative practices
- **Engagement:** Strong relationships between students, teachers, families, and schools and strong connections between schools and the broader community. Our focus is on:
  - integrating social emotional learning strategies



## What is social and emotional learning? What is exclusionary discipline?

**Social and emotional learning (SEL)** is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage **emotions**, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.

**Exclusionary** discipline describes any type of **school** disciplinary action that removes or excludes a student from the student's usual **educational** setting. Two of the most common **exclusionary** discipline **practices** at schools include suspension and expulsion.



## What does it mean to have restorative practices?

**Restorative Practices** is a set of principles and practices inspired by indigenous values used to build community, respond to harm/conflict and provide individual support for individuals in need.

By building, maintaining and restoring relationships between members of the entire school community, we can create an environment where all individuals thrive.

**EXAMPLE:** In the past, responses to student conflicts with other students, teachers and staff typically rendered a punitive measure that left little to no room for reflection, repair and restoration.

Schools are now utilizing restorative practices to foster stronger lines of communication regarding the harm done and a collaborative approach to repairing the harm.



# Restorative Practices in Tulsa Public Schools

2016-2017

Professional learning included supports for:

- building life altering relationships with students,
- utilization of strategies that improve classroom climate,
- de-escalation strategies, and
- introduction of conflict resolution cards.

2017-2018

Supports currently in place include:

- how to repair relationships when they have been harmed, and
- how to ask and answer restorative questions, and
- transitional processes for struggling students.



## Anderson Elementary School Spotlight





Data

## Current Suspension data (12/1/2017)

1723

suspensions (down by  
48 from last year)

8277

days (1,337 more days  
than last year)

increase in days  
indicates suspensions  
for extreme cases



## Current Data Reflection

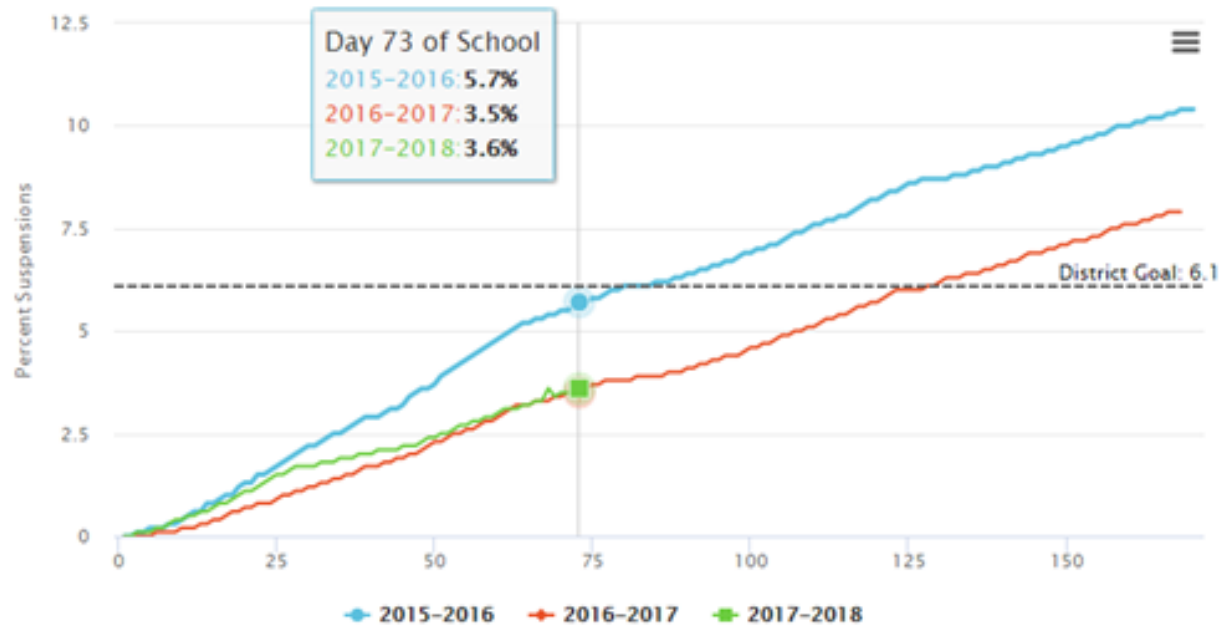
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18 (as of 12/1/17)	2017-18 (Goal)
<b>% Unique Students Suspended</b>	<b>8.8%</b>	<b>7.8%</b>	<b>3.6%</b>	<b>6.1%</b>
Total Suspensions	8,193	6,033	1,782	
Days Suspended	48,784	27,993	8,504	





As of early December, TPS has suspended 3.6% of students across the district. This is about even with last year at the same point in time, but high schools are far ahead of last year's pace.

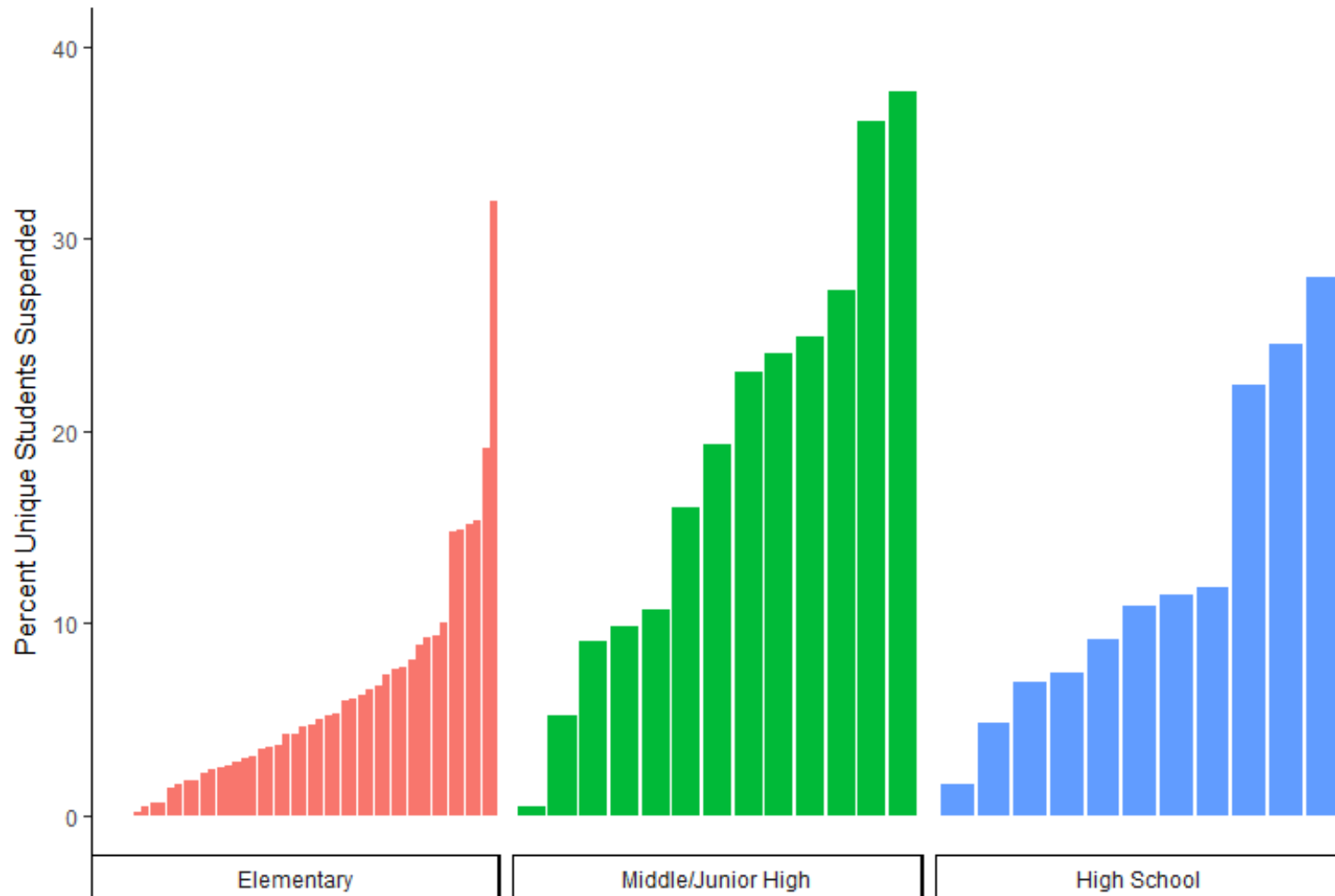
## Unique Suspensions



	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
Middle	10.6%	7.7%	7.4%
Elementary	3.7%	2.6%	2.2%
High	7.9%	3.9%	5.8%
District	5.7%	3.5%	3.6%

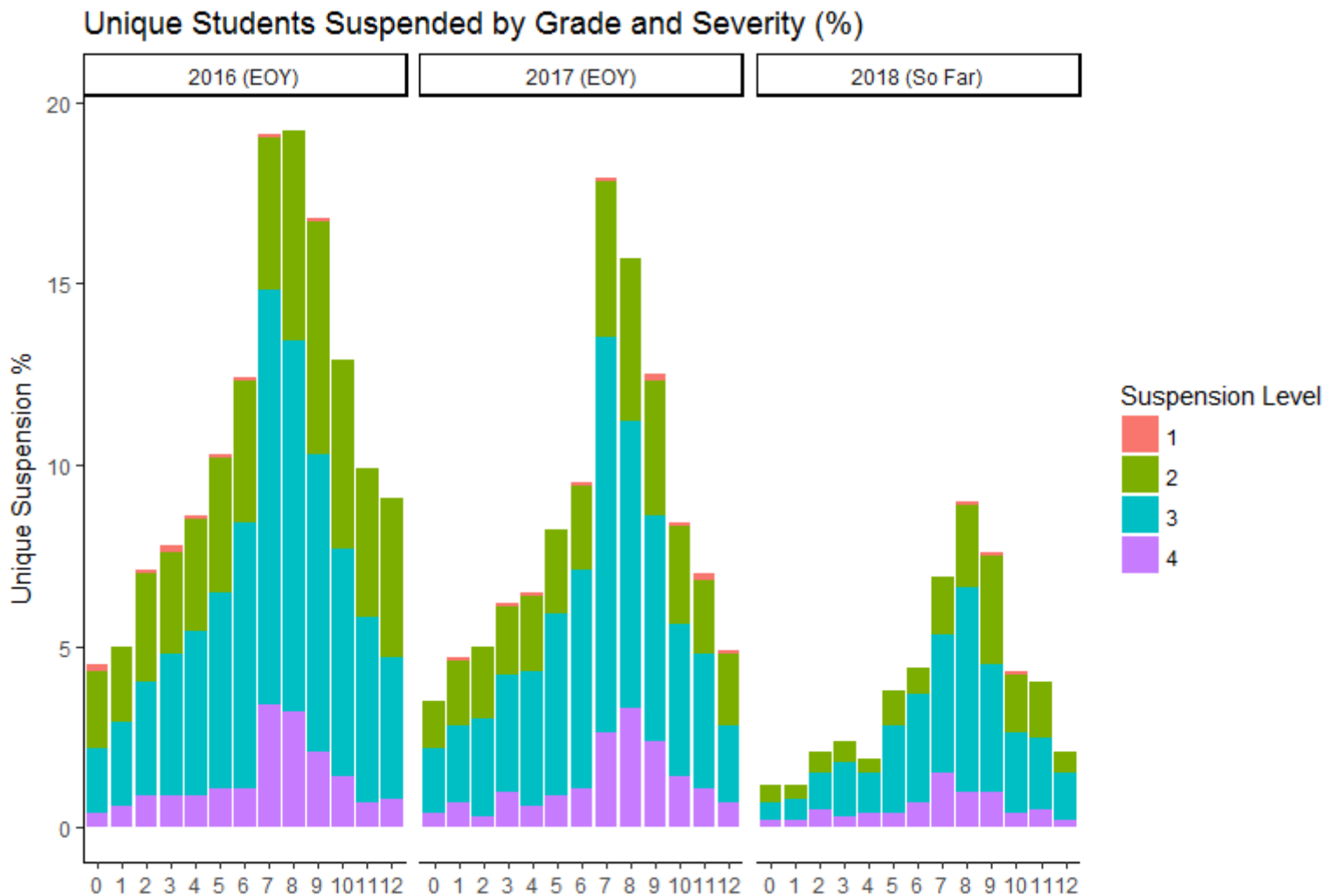


**Suspension Rate varies significantly by school and is typically higher at secondary schools.**

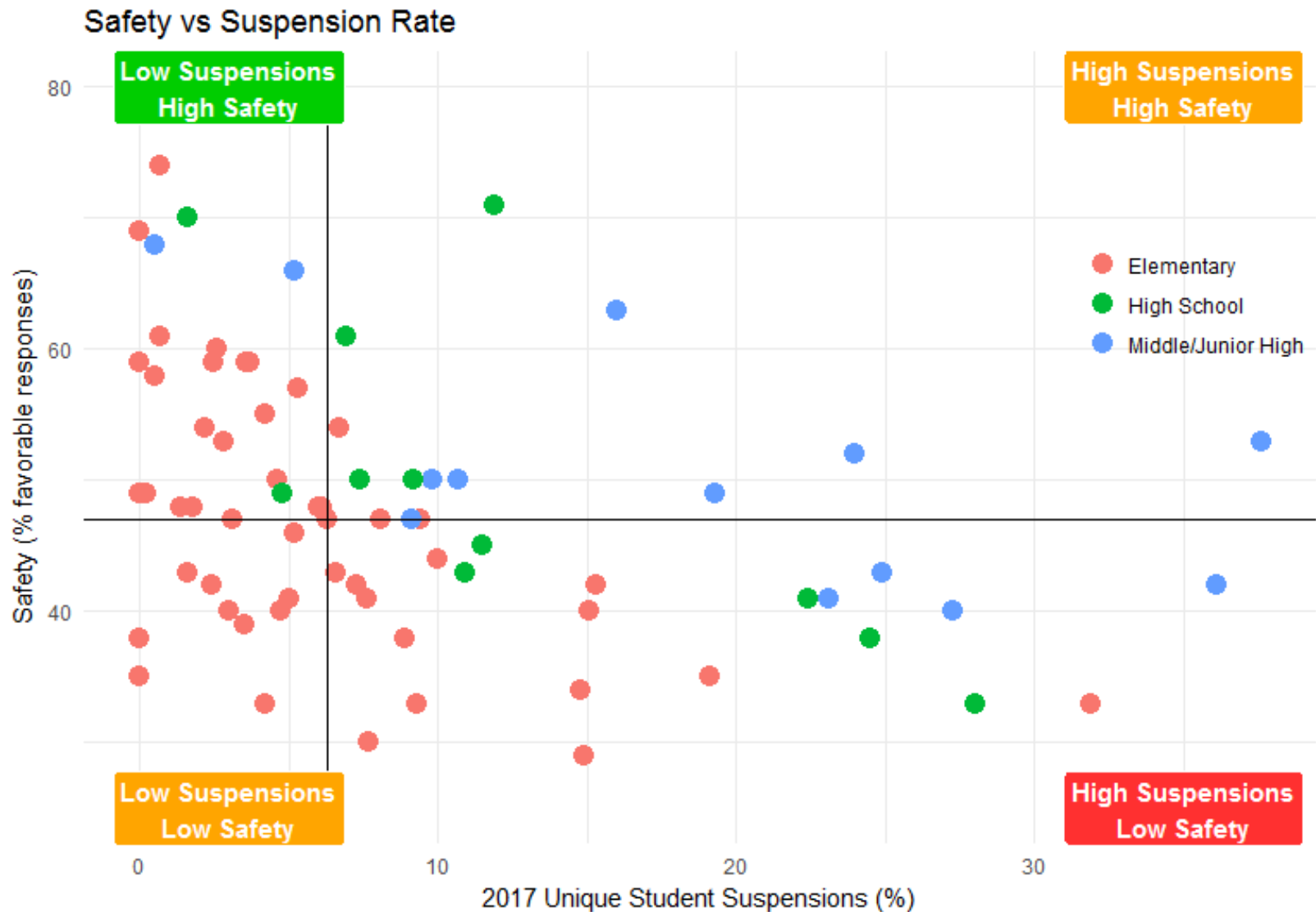




Students in 7th, 8th and 9th grades are suspended the most and have a higher number of severe infractions.

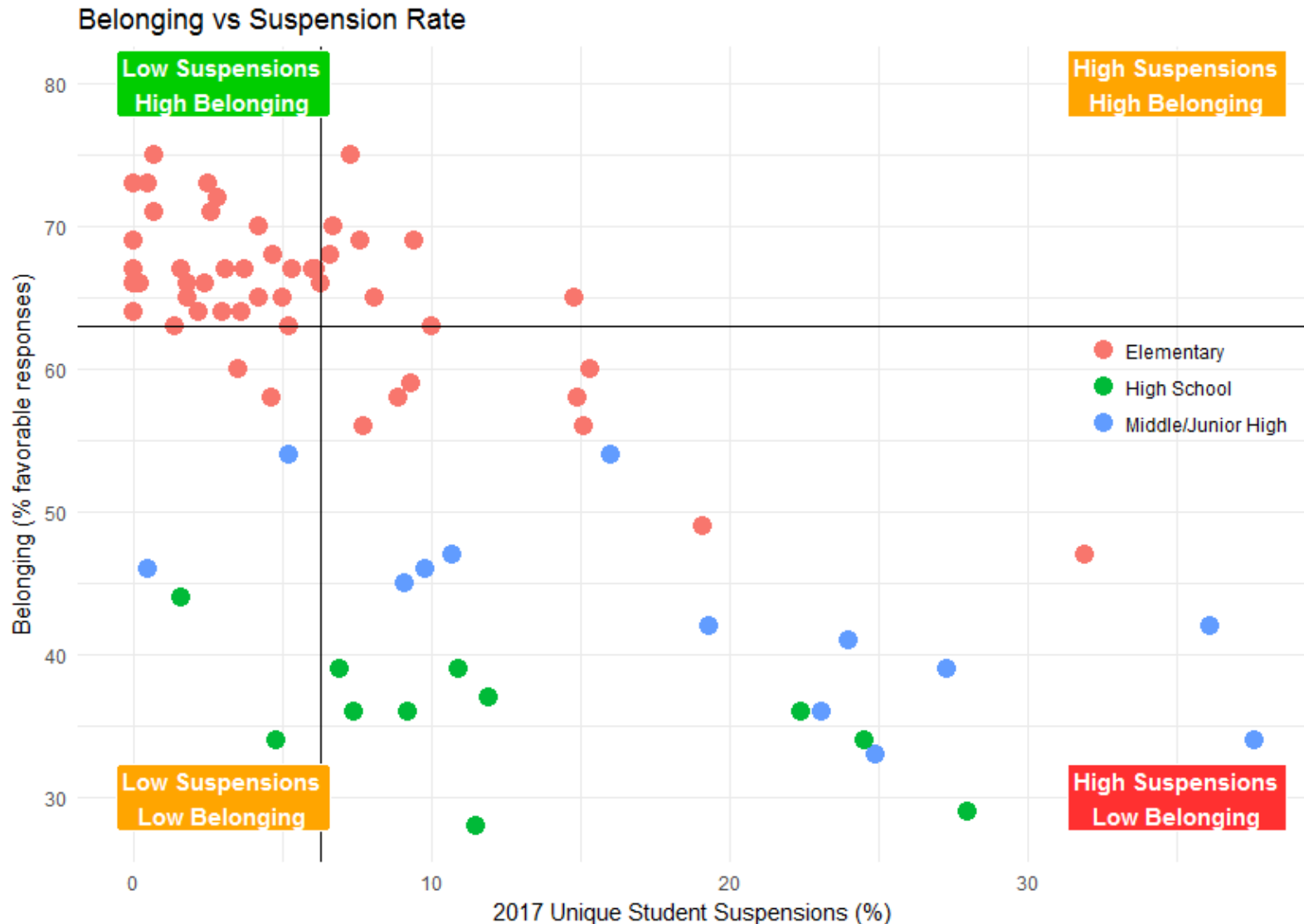


Students' perceptions of safety are fairly related to their schools' suspension rates, but there is a wide range of school contexts.





Elementary students reported feeling a strong sense of belonging at their schools and typically are suspended less often, but this changes once they reach middle and high school.







## Future Plans



# What are our next steps?

2018-2019

Future implementation includes:

- direct support for teachers and staff regarding restorative practices,
- establishment of a cross-functional team with a focus on clear implementation,
- guidelines for restorative practices for all school related settings, and
- site level support teams that increase internal capacity.





## Reflections and Questions