



# School Justice Partnership Toolkit: Overview

A Step-By-Step Guide to Implementing a School Justice Partnership

August 12, 2019



School Justice  
Partnership  
NORTH CAROLINA



# What is a School Justice Partnership?

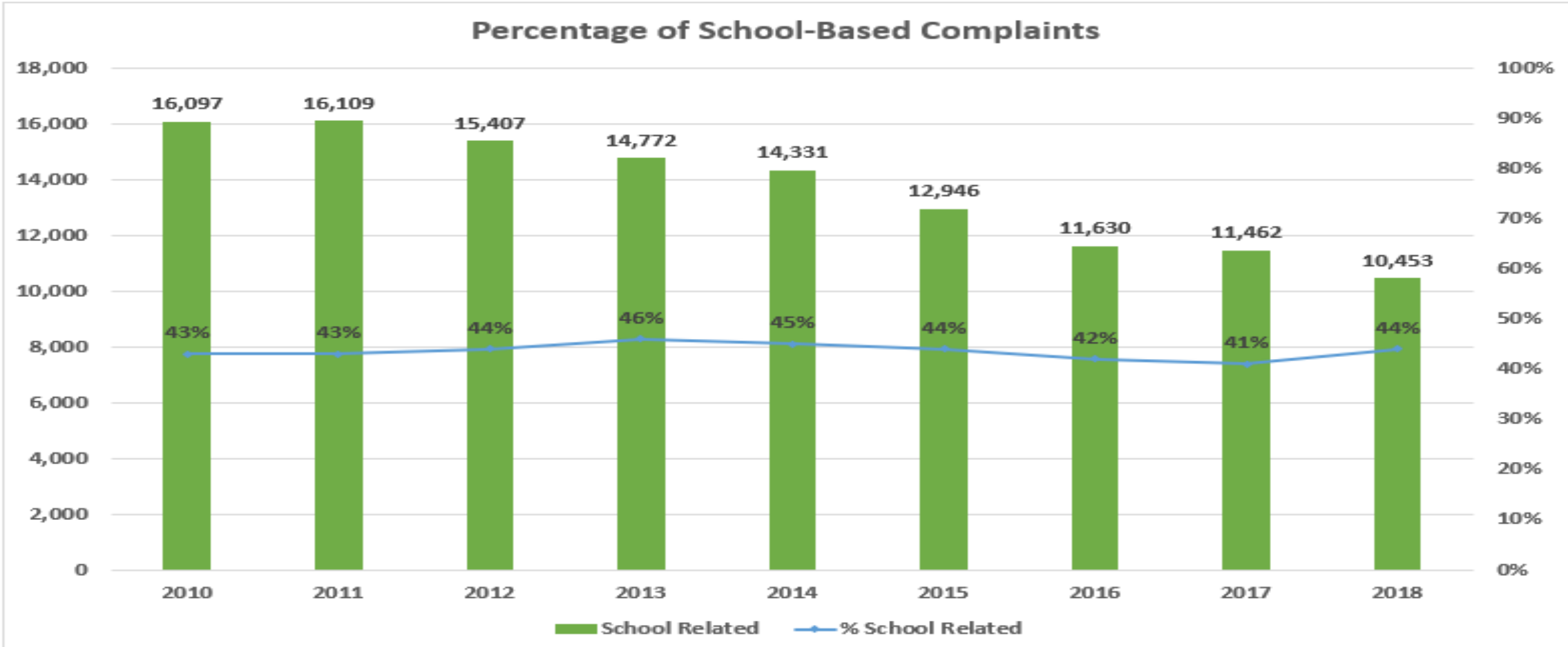
- Collaboration among local stakeholders to help students succeed in school and prevent negative outcomes for youth and communities.
- **Main Goal** = keeping kids in school and out of court for minor misconduct.

# Brief Background



- November 2015
  - New Hanover County established the first SJP in North Carolina
    - 47% reduction in school-based referrals to juvenile court in its first year
- March 2017
  - NC Commission on the Administration of Law and Justice (NCCALJ) recommended statewide expansion of SJPs as a key component of “Raise the Age”
- July 2017
  - NC Juvenile Justice Reinvestment Act (S.L. 2017-57, Sec. 16D.4) required the NC Judicial Branch to establish “policies and procedures” for the expansion of SJPs
- August 2019
  - SJP Toolkit was completed with input from a collaborative working group of stakeholders

# NC School-Based Referrals



# the School to Prison Pipeline



# Sending Kids to Court



- Lower academic achievement
- Higher recidivism
- Exclusion from high school sports
- Public housing barrier
- Disproportionate impact on certain student groups
- Permanent criminal record for 16 & 17-year-olds
  - Until effective date of Raise the Age law
- Immigration consequences

# Keeping Kids In School



- Provides accountability without harmful collateral consequences of court involvement
- Improves school safety and school climate
- Reduces disparate impact on certain groups of students
- Helps students succeed by keeping them in the classroom

# The Toolkit



- A resource for convening stakeholder meetings with tools designed to help local communities establish an SJP.
- What's included?
  - Research on effective school discipline
  - Evidence based strategies and programs
  - Model MOU and other templates
  - Sample graduated response model
  - Sample data collection and monitoring plan



# NCAOC Policy on SJPs



- Requires chief district court judges (or designee) to act as “conveners.”
- As conveners, judges will gather the relevant stakeholders and chair meetings but are equal participants in the process.
- Key Stakeholders include but are not limited to:
  - Juvenile Justice Personnel
  - Law Enforcement Officials
  - School Administrators
  - School Board Attorneys
  - Prosecutors and Juvenile Defenders
  - Parents and Family Partners

# The Goal



- To adopt an SJP Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that:
  - Sets clear guidelines for the roles of law enforcement and school officials in responding to student misconduct
  - Limits the use of court referrals and suspension for minor student misconduct
  - Implements a **Graduated Response Model**
  - Meets the needs of the local community
  - Includes input from all community partners
- The Model SJP MOU is simply a starting point, if needed.

# NC Counties with an SJP



- Brunswick County (July 2017)
- Greene County (March 2018)
- Lenoir County (March 2018)
- Mecklenburg County (January 2016)
- New Hanover County (November 2015)
- Stanly County (July 2018)
- Wayne County (April 2018)
- Whiteville City Schools (July 2019)

❖ *Several more counties are in the process of establishing SJPs but have not yet adopted an MOU.*

# Access the Toolkit



- Visit [SJP.NCCOURTS.GOV](https://www.sjp.nccourts.gov) to obtain a copy of the Toolkit and other SJP resources, such as:
  - SJP Fact Sheet
  - List of existing SJPs with links to each county's MOU
  - Statewide data on school-based offenses
  - News articles and videos
- To learn more about SJP North Carolina, you may also contact the NCAOC at [SJP@NCCOURTS.ORG](mailto:SJP@NCCOURTS.ORG).



LaToya B. Powell

Assistant Legal Counsel

NC Administrative Office of the Courts

[LaToya.B.Powell@nccourts.org](mailto:LaToya.B.Powell@nccourts.org)