



# La Crosse County Juvenile Justice Best Practices Stakeholder Group

Updated Data Report—January, 2018

Report Submitted to:  
Mandy Bisek  
Supervisor  
Justice Support Services

Prepared by:  
Dr. Nicholas Bakken and Dr. Lisa Kruse

Final Draft Submitted:  
January 9, 2018

## **Acknowledgements**

This report is the product of the collaborative work and effort of many individuals and organizations. The authors would like to acknowledge the work and commitment of all members of the Task Force and the Wisconsin Department of Justice and the Governor's Juvenile Justice Commission for their support and funding for technical assistance. We would also like to thank Mandy Bisek, Curt Teff, and Jason Witt for their continued leadership and support. Finally, we would like to extend our appreciation to the La Crosse Police Department, especially Sgt. Randy Rank and Rebecca Smith, for their assistance in securing data for all analyses in the report.

## About the Authors

**Nicholas Bakken** is an Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology and faculty coordinator of the Criminal Justice Program at the University of Wisconsin–La Crosse. He received his Ph.D. in Criminology from the University of Delaware. His research interests include offending across the life course, evaluation of strategies for crime control and prevention, desistance from crime, substance use, and juvenile health and delinquency.

**Lisa Kruse** is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse. She received her Ph.D. in Sociology from Western Michigan University. Her research interests include the use of surveillance for controlling and monitoring offenders and more recently, the use of surveillance by individuals in the course of their daily life. Lisa is a citizen member on the Criminal Justice Management Council and is the chair of the Evidence-Based Decision Making Group for La Crosse County.

## Table of Contents

A Note on National Data Trends .....	1
Juvenile Justice Arrest Rates: National, State, and County Comparisons .....	1
City of La Crosse: Juvenile Populations and Arrest Trends .....	3
Disproportionate Minority Contact.....	6
Types of Charges .....	10
Juvenile Arrests and School.....	16
Focus Acts.....	17
Suspensions .....	22
Juveniles with Multiple Arrests .....	25
Recommendations .....	32

## List of Tables and Figures

Table 1: FBI UCR Crime Statistics on Arrest for 2014, per 1,000 citizens .....	3
Table 2: Total Number of Charges, Arrests, and Juveniles Arrested by Year .....	4
Table 3: Juvenile Population for City of La Crosse, 12 to 17 Years of Age .....	5
Table 4: Arrest Rate Disparities by Race (Black, Non-Black) per 1,000, 2012 UCR Data .....	6
Table 5: Arrest Rate, per 1,000 for city of La Crosse .....	7
Table 6: Gender and Race of Total Juvenile Arrests by Year .....	8
Table 7: Gender and Race of Juveniles Arrested by Year .....	8
Table 8: Top 10 Charges in 2012.....	10
Table 9: Top 10 Charges in 2013.....	10
Table 10: Top 10 Charges in 2014.....	10
Table 11: Top 10 Charges in 2015.....	10
Table 12: Top Ten Charges Comparison, 2012-2015.....	11
Table 13: Top Charges by Race, 2012.....	12
Table 14: Top Charges by Race, 2013.....	12
Table 15: Top Charges by Race, 2014.....	13
Table 16: Top Charges by Race, 2015.....	13
Table 17: Arrests by Month .....	15
Table 18: Top 10 Arrest Locations for 2012 and 2013.....	16
Table 19: Top 10 Arrest Locations for 2014 and 2015.....	16
Table 20: Arrest Rates for La Crosse District Schools, Per 1,000 for 2012-2015.....	17
Table 21: Number of Charges for Focus Acts, By Year .....	18
Table 22: Focus Act Charges by Race/Ethnicity, 2012 .....	19
Table 23: Focus Act Charges by Race/Ethnicity, 2013 .....	19
Table 24: Focus Act Charges by Race/Ethnicity, 2014 .....	19
Table 25: Focus Act Charges by Race/Ethnicity, 2015 .....	20
Table 26: Focus Act Charges by School, 2012.....	20
Table 27: Focus Act Charges by School, 2013.....	20
Table 28: Focus Act Charges by School, 2014.....	21
Table 29: Focus Act Charges by School, 2015.....	21
Table 30. Suspensions for La Crosse County, by Race and School District w. Comparison to State of Wisconsin .....	23
Table 31: Juveniles with Multiple Arrests by Gender, Race, and Number of Arrests, 2012-2013 ....	25
Table 32: Juveniles with Multiple Arrests by Gender, Race, and Number of Arrests, 2014-2015 ....	26
Table 33: Focus Act Offenses Among Juveniles with Multiple Arrests, 2014.....	27
Table 34: Number of Charges for Focus Acts, all Juveniles with Arrests in 2014 .....	28
Table 35: Number of Charges for Focus Acts, all Juveniles with Arrests in 2015 .....	28
Table 36: Focus Act Offenses Among Juveniles with Multiple Arrests, 2015.....	29
Table 37: Proportion (%)* of Focus Acts Committed by Juveniles with Multiple Arrests by Gender and Race, 2014 .....	30

Table 38: Proportion (%)* of Focus Acts Committed by Juveniles with Multiple Arrests by Gender and Race, 2014 .....	30
Figure 1: Original Black to White Arrest Rate Disparity Ratio, 2008-2012 .....	9
Figure 2: Updated Disproportionate Minority Contact Ratios, 2012-2014 .....	9

## **A Note on National Trends**

The arrest and incarceration of individuals in the United States, and the racial disparity within these practices, is of significant concern to practitioners and academics. The U.S. is in a period of “mass incarceration,” with 1 in 31 individuals currently under some form of correctional supervision, and the highest rate of incarceration in the world (International Centre for Prison Studies, 2015)<sup>1</sup>. The racial differences in incarceration is particularly striking. It is expected that 1 in 3 black men born in 2001 will spend time in prison during their lifetime compared to 1 in 17 white men. One in 18 black women and 1 in 111 white women are incarcerated in their lifetime. In 2014, the rate of incarceration nationally was 275 per 100,000 for the white population compared to 1,408 per 100,000 for the black population at a ratio of 5.1 to 1 (The Sentencing Project, 2017)<sup>2</sup>.

In 2015, the state of Wisconsin incarcerated 33,913 individuals at a rate of 377 per 100,000 for prison and 270 per 100,000 for jail. This is lower than the national average of 458 per 100,000 for prison and 310 per 100,000 for jail. However, the racial disparity in incarceration is much higher than the national average. In the state of Wisconsin, the black incarceration rate is 2,542 per 100,000 (U.S. = 1,408) and the white incarceration rate is 221 per 100,000 (U.S. = 275). The ratio of incarceration for the black population in the state of Wisconsin is 11.5 to 1. (The Sentencing Project, 2017).

There were 816 juveniles in custody in the state of Wisconsin in 2013 at a rate of 156 per 100,000. The national rate of juvenile incarceration is 173 per 100,000. The Black juvenile rate of incarceration in the state is 946 per 100,000 compared to 59 per 100,000 for their white peers.

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.prisonstudies.org/country/united-states-america>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.sentencingproject.org/issues/racial-disparity/>

The national rates of incarceration are 464 per 100,000 for the population of Black juveniles and 100 per 100,000 for the White juvenile population (The Sentencing Project, 2017). Overall, the state of Wisconsin when compared nationally, has similar, if not lower rates of incarceration for the white juvenile and adult populations but much higher rates of incarceration for the black juvenile and adult populations. These rates coupled with poor outcomes in graduation rates, school performance, high rates of poverty, and other indicators<sup>3</sup> has resulted in Wisconsin ranking worst in the nation for black people (Wisconsin Council on Children and Families, 2014)<sup>4</sup>.

*Juvenile Justice Arrest Rates: National, State, and County Comparisons*

Further, federal statistics on arrests show some alarming differences in rates of arrests among juveniles and adults in the state of Wisconsin, and specifically, in the county of La Crosse. Table 1 outlines a comparison of La Crosse County to Milwaukee County,<sup>5</sup> the state of Wisconsin, and the national arrest rate per 1,000. Wisconsin's arrest rate is higher than the national average for all ages and subcategories of adults and juveniles, and La Crosse is significantly higher than both the state and the county of Milwaukee for each of the age breakdowns. Further, there is a particularly high rate of arrest for juveniles. Therefore, it is incredibly important for the county of La Crosse to continue efforts to reduce the arrest rate for juveniles and tackle the significant disparity in arrests by race. Arrest is a considerable place to

---

<sup>3</sup> Index in report consisted of: graduation rates, delayed childbearing, % in school or employed, living in low poverty areas, living above 200% of poverty line, birthweight, two-parent households, math and reading proficiency, holding an associates degree, living with someone with a high school degree, and preschool enrollment

<sup>4</sup> Wisconsin Council on Children & Families. 2014. "Race for Results: Wisconsin's Need to Reduce Racial Disparities."

<sup>5</sup> Milwaukee County was selected because it is a county that was recognized at the time of collecting this data (June 2015). Also, in the state of Wisconsin, Milwaukee is often seen as having the highest rate of crime.

begin reducing the numbers incarcerated and is a key part in preventing future criminal activity and incarceration.

**Table 1: FBI UCR Crime Statistics on Arrest for 2014, per 1,000 citizens**

	All Ages	Adults Only	Juveniles
United States	35.14	41.51	30.84
Wisconsin	51.08	53.69	92.91
Milwaukee	59.25	65.85	92.73
La Crosse	85.06	87.25	171.97

Source: FBI UCR data, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)  
[http://www.ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/ezaucr/asp/ucr\\_display.asp](http://www.ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/ezaucr/asp/ucr_display.asp)

### City of La Crosse: Juvenile Populations and Arrest Trends

This report serves as a follow-up to the original task force report released in September of 2014. Data has been updated to reflect the most recent years (2012-2015) of arrests for juveniles in La Crosse County. Some specific questions that were focused on for this round of data collection and analysis were: 1) how is arrest defined?; 2) how does the city of La Crosse compare to others?; and 3) is the specific geographical focus on the city of La Crosse or La Crosse county? These questions often overlapped and led to significant changes between the data used in the current report and that used in the original 2014 task force report, and initiated new questions and inquiries for the updated data.

First, an arrest for juveniles is defined as an actual arrest *or* a municipal citation. It was important to preempt this report with distinguishing definitions of arrest as the term may be misleading for non-criminal justice professionals and citizens. Therefore, discussions of arrests of juveniles includes all citations and charges given to a juvenile. It is also important to distinguish an arrest as a point of data collection as opposed to the number of individuals arrested and the number of charges accrued. Each can provide a different picture of the problem:

1. *Number of Arrests*: the number of arrests/municipal citations given over the period of one year. Number of arrests is used to calculate arrest rates so both frequency and rate of arrests will capture the number of arrests and/or municipal citations made.
2. *Individuals Arrested*: While the majority of juveniles arrested in a given year have only one arrest, there is a significant portion of juveniles who end up with more than one arrest. Individuals arrested will count an individual only once in a year even if that individual accrues multiple arrests.
3. *Charges*: A juvenile may garner multiple charges in a single arrest. Counting the number of charges is tallying the total charges, independent of the number of arrests/citations and the number of individuals. For example, a juvenile may have one arrest but three different charges.

Each is useful for specific questions but can be misleading if not properly contextualized. Table 2 compares charges to arrests to juveniles. In 2015, 392 different juveniles were arrested, however there were 1,099 total arrests comprised of 1,384 charges.

**Table 2: Total Number of Charges, Arrests, and Juveniles Arrested by Year**

Year	Total Charges		Total Arrests		Total Juveniles	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
2012	1,590	28.2	1,370	29.6	423	26.5
2013	1,338	23.7	1,107	23.9	388	24.3
2014	1,324	23.5	1,048	22.7	396	24.8
2015	1,384	24.6	1,099	23.8	392	24.5
Total	5,636	100.0	4624	100.0	1,599	100.00

Note: May not add to 100% due to rounding.

Asking “what constitutes an arrest” also led to the realization that the data in the original report was only considering referral arrests, or those arrests that resulted in a referral to Health and Human Services. In the current analysis, municipal citations are included for a more comprehensive picture of the phenomenon of juvenile arrests in La Crosse and what acts should be the focus of diversionary measures.

Related to defining arrest is the notion of comparisons to other counties, states, and national rates. One significant point of conversation during our time with the Juvenile Justice Task Force was how La Crosse’s definition of arrest may vary from other counties. Understanding how arrest is defined and coming up with a standard is important if true comparisons are to be made. If arrest rates are different partially due to definition, better standardization of definitions of arrest will aid in proper comparisons.

Finally, all of the data on arrests comes from the city police department.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, a meaningful analysis of the data means that it is necessary to focus on city trends. The original report from 2012 provided overly conservative numbers in that it utilized the number of arrests in the city with the much larger county population numbers. The current report provides updated population figures to more accurately reflect the city population. Table 3 presents the population of juveniles age 12 to 17 for the city of La Crosse from 2010 to 2015. Data for the city

**Table 3: Juvenile Population for City of La Crosse, 12 to 17 Years of Age<sup>6</sup>**

	2010		2011		2012		2013		2014		2015	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
White	2311	79.4	2318	78.3	2067	77.3	1980	78.9	2144	78.9	1958	77.1
Black	160	5.5	184	6.2	182	6.8	136	5.4	120	4.4	124	4.9
Asian	250	8.6	249	8.4	243	9.1	186	7.4	201	7.4	234	9.2
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2911</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2960</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2674</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2510</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2717</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2,539</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey:  
<http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>

<sup>6</sup> Population figures for the 12 to 17 age range was calculated from percentages—total population of juveniles in La Crosse is given in numbers, the rest (age breakdown and race) is given in percentages. The total population of 12 to 17 year olds is an accurate reflection. The race (White, Black, Asian) is calculated by taking the percentage of the total population of these races and multiplying this proportion into the total population for 12 to 17 year olds. Therefore, these numbers are estimates assuming that there are no vast deviations of percentage of race by age group.

<sup>7</sup> In collaboration with the La Crosse Police Department, updated data from 2012 to 2015 that included both juvenile arrests and municipal citations were provided to the committee.

populations was obtained from the U.S. Census’ American Community Survey. The White and Asian populations have seen increases in numbers to couple the decreases, notably in 2014. However, the Black juvenile population continues to see a decline. This, coupled with increases in arrests of black juvenile youth has led to a jump in the rates of arrest for this group in 2015.

**Disproportionate Minority Contact**

A primary emphasis of the task force initiative is to reduce the disproportionate minority contact (DMC) among juveniles in the city of La Crosse. An examination of racial disparities in arrest by FBI UCR data in Table 4 shows significantly higher disparities in Black versus non-Black arrests in La Crosse County when compared to closest counterparts, Eau Claire and Fond du Lac Counties.

**Table 4: Arrest Rate Disparities by Race (Black, Non-Black) per 1,000, 2012 UCR Data (All Ages)**

	Black	Non-Black
La Crosse Police Dept.	2055.4	253.8
Eau Claire Police Dept.	917.6	134.1
Fond du Lac Police Dept.	757.3	109.7

Disproportionate minority contact is present across the U.S. for the adult and juvenile population and is of concern for La Crosse County. When comparing county level data from the UCR to city data made available from the La Crosse Police Department and the American Community Survey, we see that there are significant disparities in the arrest rates for racial minorities. The column titled “2012 Original” in Table 5 references the data from the task force’s first report in which county population estimates were used to calculate city arrest rates.

**Table 5: Arrest Rate, per 1,000 for city of La Crosse**

	<b>2012 Original</b>	<b>2012 Updated</b>	<b>2013 Updated</b>	<b>2014 Updated</b>	<b>2015</b>
Total	----	512.34	441.04	385.72	432.85
White	17.2	443.64	372.73	326.03	362.10
Black	131.5	1,434.07	1,705.88	2,391.67	2,806.45
Asian	36.5	732.51	591.39	154.23	94.01

Source: La Crosse Police Department and U.S. Census Population Data. Rates are calculated using the formula: actual number of arrests divided by the number of arrests possible and multiplied by some factor of 10, here it is multiplied by 1,000.

Table 5 then also presents the updated arrest rates thought to be more reflective of the reality of arrest rates in the city of La Crosse. These rates were calculated using the number of juveniles arrested in the city of La Crosse divided by the total population of juveniles aged 12 to 17 that reside within the city limits.

The overall arrest rate for juveniles decreased from 2012 to 2014 and increased in 2015. This pattern is consistent for the White and Asian juvenile populations. However, we are seeing a significant, and consistent increase in the arrest rates of Black juveniles in the city of La Crosse, with the most notable change from 2013 to 2014. This increase was nearly matched from 2014 to 2015. This is occurring because the number of arrests of Black juveniles is increasing while the population of Black youth is decreasing (see Table 3).

Table 6 presents information on the race and gender of all juveniles arrested from 2012 to 2015. Male youth were expectedly and consistently arrested more than their female counterparts. The proportion of arrests was similar for males and females in 2012 and 2013, however a greater proportion of females were arrested in 2014 and 2015. A similar pattern can be seen concerning the race of juveniles arrested. White youth had the highest proportion of arrests, which is

**Table 6: Gender and Race of Total Juvenile Arrests by Year**

Gender	2012		2013		2014		2015	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Male	71.0	973	68.7	760	60.1	630	57.8	635
Female	29.0	397	31.1	347	39.9	418	42.2	464
Total		<b>1,370</b>		<b>1,107</b>		<b>1,048</b>		<b>1099</b>
<b>Race</b>								
White	66.9	917	66.7	738	66.7	699	64.5	709
Black	19.1	261	21.0	232	27.4	287	31.7	348
Asian	13.0	178	9.9	110	3.0	31	2.0	22
Native American	0.7	9	1.4	16	2.7	28	1.5	17

Note: May not add to 100% due to rounding.

expected given that this group accounts for roughly 80% of the juvenile population within the city of La Crosse (see Table 3), followed by Black, Asian, and Native American youth respectively. Consistent with arrest rates, the proportion of arrests was similar in 2012 and 2013 across youth across race, however there were a greater proportion of Black youth arrested in 2014 and 2015, while the proportion of Asian arrests has decreased since 2012.

Table 7 illustrates the number of individuals arrested by race and gender. Whereas Table 6 includes all arrests and therefore, multiple arrests for single individuals, Table 7 only counts those juveniles that were arrested and not the total number of arrests. For example, in 2015 a

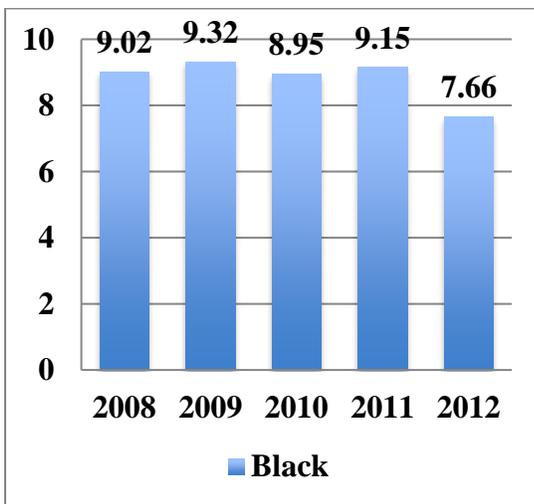
**Table 7: Gender and Race of Juveniles Arrested by Year**

Gender	2012		2013		2014		2015	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Male	63.4	268	62.9	244	55.8	221	55.1	216
Female	36.6	155	37.1	144	44.2	175	44.9	176
Total		<b>423</b>		<b>388</b>		<b>396</b>		<b>392</b>
<b>Race</b>								
White	71.4	302	68.3	265	72.2	286	70.7	277
Black	15.6	66	20.1	78	20.7	82	23.7	93
Asian	10.6	45	8.2	32	4.8	19	2.8	11
Native American	1.2	5	2.3	9	1.8	7	2.3	9

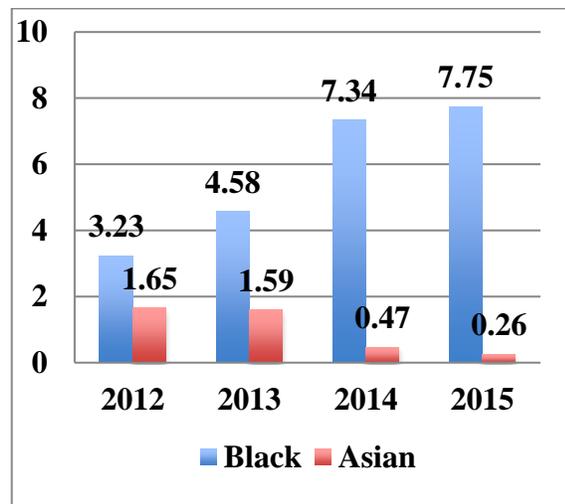
Note: May not add to 100% due to rounding or due to race being listed as 'Unknown'.

total of 392 juveniles were arrested. Males had the highest proportion of arrests each year, although there was an increase in females arrested in 2014 and 2015. White juveniles also account for roughly 70% of all arrests across all years, followed by Black and Asian juveniles. It should be noted that while Black juveniles accounted for 23.7% of those arrested in 2015, they accounted for only 4.9% of the juvenile population (age 12-17) in the city of La Crosse.

**Figure 1: Original\* Black to White Arrest Rate Disparity Ratio, 2008-2012**



**Figure 2: Updated Disproportionate Minority Contact Ratios, 2012-2015**



Note: White is the reference group.  
 \* Refers to 2014 report

The DMC ratios were also updated to reflect the more accurate city of La Crosse population figures. Figure 1 comes from the original 2014 report and Figure 2 reflects the updated DMC ratios using the more accurate city population estimates. This significantly changed the disparity of arrest rates for Black juveniles to their White counterparts, lowering the ratio of Black juvenile arrests to White juvenile arrests. From 2013 to 2015, as the number of arrests increased for the Black population (while the Black juvenile population decreased), the DMC ratio rose significantly to levels reminiscent of the original report.

## Types of Charges

We also looked for patterns present in the arrests. Identifying the most common charges was helpful in determining the “focus acts,” or those delinquent behaviors that would be the focus of intervention for the task force team. Tables 8, 9, 10, and 11 break down the top ten charges by year. Both disorderly conduct and possession or purchase of tobacco by a minor were the top charges for 2012 and 2013, and disorderly conduct and truancy for 2014 and 2015.

**Table 8: Top 10 Charges in 2012**

	%	<i>N</i>
1. Possess/Purchase Tobacco	22.9	364
2. Disorderly Conduct	15.1	240
3. Pick Up Order	8.2	131
4. Truancy	7.4	117
5. Juvenile Custody	6.1	97
6. Battery	3.9	62
7. Criminal Damage to Property	3.1	49
8. Theft/Truancy 2 <sup>nd</sup> Offense	3.0	48
9. Retail Theft	2.9	46
10. Possess Drug Paraphernalia	2.5	40

Note: There were 1,590 charges in 2012

**Table 9: Top 10 Charges in 2013**

	%	<i>N</i>
1. Disorderly Conduct	21.6	289
2. Possess/Purchase Tobacco	15.8	212
3. Truancy	8.1	108
4. Pick Up Order	6.5	87
5. Battery	5.6	75
6. Juvenile Custody	4.6	61
7. Truancy – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Offense	4.3	57
8. Retail Theft	4.0	54
9. Criminal Damage to Property	3.6	48
10. Curfew	3.1	41

Note: There were 1,338 charges in 2013

**Table 10: Top 10 Charges in 2014**

	%	<i>N</i>
1. Disorderly Conduct	22.8	302
2. Truancy	8.8	117
3. Possess/Purchase Tobacco	7.6	100
4. Pick Up Order	6.1	81
5. Battery	5.8	77
6. Criminal Damage to Property	5.4	72
7. Retail Theft	5.2	69
8. Juvenile Custody	5.1	67
9. Theft	4.4	58
10. Truancy 2 <sup>nd</sup> Offense	3.6	48

Note: There were 1,324 charges in 2014

**Table 11: Top 10 Charges in 2015**

	%	<i>N</i>
1. Disorderly Conduct	19.8	273
2. Truancy	8.3	114
3. Juvenile Custody	7.3	101
4. Retail Theft	6.1	84
5. Truancy – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Offense	5.2	72
6. Curfew	5.2	72
7. Battery	5.1	70
8. Criminal Damage to Property	5.0	69
9. Possess/Purchase Tobacco	4.3	59
10. Theft	4.0	55

Note: There were 1,384 charges in 2015

Table 12 provides a comparison of the top charges from 2012-2015. Disorderly conduct has been the top charge for the last three years while tobacco has consistently dropped down the list and is near the bottom of the list of top ten for 2015. Truancy has consistently been in the top 5 for all years compared. Theft and retail theft show up in different years and should be treated as separate types of offenses.

**Table 12: Top Ten Charges Comparison, 2012-2015**

	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
1.	Tobacco	Disorderly Conduct	Disorderly Conduct	Disorderly Conduct
2.	Disorderly Conduct	Tobacco	Truancy	Truancy
3.	Pick Up Order	Truancy	Tobacco	Custody
4.	Truancy	Pick Up Order	Pick Up Order	Retail Theft
5.	Juvenile Custody	Battery	Battery	Truancy – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Offense
6.	Battery	Juvenile Custody	CDTP	Curfew
7.	CDTP	Truancy – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Offense	Retail Theft	Battery
8.	Truancy – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Offense	Retail Theft	Custody	CDTP
9.	Retail Theft	CDTP	Theft	Tobacco
10.	Drug Paraphernalia	Curfew	Truancy – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Offense	Theft

Types of charges were also broken down by race for the years 2012 through 2015. Table 13, 14, 15, and 16 outlines the top five charges by race for each respective year including the frequency and percent of the total charges. For example, white juveniles received 242 charges of “possessing or purchasing tobacco” or 22.9% of all charges received by white juveniles in 2012 (1,059). There were 917 arrests made of white juveniles in 2012 and 302 White juveniles were arrested at least once in 2012 (see table 7).

In 2012 and 2013, the dominate charges for white juveniles were for tobacco and disorderly conduct with disorderly conduct replacing tobacco as the top charge in 2013. The top two charges, tobacco possession and disorderly conduct make up the bulk of charges for white juveniles, nearly 40 percent of all charges for 2012 and 2013. Truancy is consistently third but the percentage of total charges drops considerably to 7.6 and 8.1 respectively.

**Table 13: Top Charges by Race, 2012**

<b>White Juveniles (n = 917; 1,059 charges)</b>		
	%	<i>N</i>
1. Possess/Purchase Tobacco	22.9	242
2. Disorderly Conduct	16.5	175
3. Truancy	7.6	80
4. Juvenile Custody	7.3	77
5. Pick Up Order	6.0	64
<b>Black Juveniles (n = 261; 321 charges)</b>		
	%	<i>N</i>
1. Disorderly Conduct	17.1	55
2. Pick Up Order	14.0	45
3. Possess/Purchase Tobacco	13.1	42
4. Truancy/Battery	5.9	19
5. CDTP/Curfew/Juvenile Custody	4.7	15
<b>Asian Juveniles (n = 178; 196 charges)</b>		
	%	<i>N</i>
1. Possess/Purchase Tobacco	40.8	80
2. Pick Up Order	10.7	21
3. Truancy	7.1	14
4. Alcohol Violation 1 <sup>st</sup> Offense	4.6	9
5. Disorderly Conduct	4.1	8

**Table 14: Top Charges by Race, 2013**

<b>White Juveniles (n = 738; 1,338 charges)</b>		
	%	<i>N</i>
1. Disorderly Conduct	21.1	184
2. Possess/Purchase Tobacco	18.1	158
3. Truancy	7.7	67
4. Pick Up Order	6.5	57
5. Truancy 2 <sup>nd</sup> Offense	4.6	40
<b>Black Juveniles (n = 232; 301 charges)</b>		
	%	<i>N</i>
1. Disorderly Conduct	29.6	89
2. Battery	10.0	30
3. Truancy	8.0	24
4. Pick Up Order	6.3	19
5. Possess/Purchase Tobacco	6.0	18
<b>Asian Juveniles (n = 110; 124 charges)</b>		
	%	<i>N</i>
1. Possess/Purchase Tobacco	29.0	36
2. Truancy	11.3	14
3. Pick Up Order	8.1	10
4. Truancy – 2nd Offense	6.5	8
5. CDTP/Retail Theft	5.6	7

In comparison, disorderly conduct made up nearly 30 percent of all charges for black juveniles in 2013. For 2012, disorderly conduct also tops this list but at 17.1 percent with pick up orders and possession of tobacco making up the bulk of charges at around 45 percent of all charges for 2012. This comparison shows a marked increase in disorderly conduct charges for black youth in La Crosse. For Asian juveniles in La Crosse, possession of tobacco is nearly 30 percent of all charges for this population in 2013 and 40 percent of all charges in 2012. Due to population decreases in 2014 and 2015, there was not sufficient enough data to show comparisons of top charges for the Asian population.

<b>Table 15: Top Charges by Race, 2014</b>		
<b>White Students</b> (n = 699; 881 charges)	%	<i>N</i>
1. Disorderly Conduct	21.5	189
2. Possess/Purchase Tobacco	9.8	86
3. Truancy	9.0	79
4. Retail Theft	6.2	55
5. Battery	5.4	48
<b>Black Students</b> (n = 287; 369 charges)	%	<i>N</i>
1. Disorderly Conduct	26.8	99
2. Pick Up Order	8.1	30
3. Truancy	7.6	28
4. Battery	6.8	25
5. Theft/CDTP	6.2	23

<b>Table 16: Top Charges by Race, 2015</b>		
<b>White Students</b> (n = 709; 878 charges)	%	<i>N</i>
1. Disorderly Conduct	16.7	147
2. Criminal Damage to Property	11.5	101
3. Theft	9.7	85
4. Truancy	9.5	83
5. Possession of Tobacco	5.9	52
<b>Black Students</b> (n = 348; 369 charges)	%	<i>N</i>
1. Disorderly Conduct	26.0	119
2. Criminal Damage to Property	10.1	46
3. Battery	9.4	43
4. Pick Up Order	9.4	43
5. Theft	7.4	34

Finally, disorderly conduct tops the list in 2014 and 2015 for both white and black youth in La Crosse. There is a decrease in the percentage of all charges disorderly conduct occupies for both populations however, the decrease is more substantial for the white juvenile population compared to the black juvenile population. In 2015, 21.9 percent of charges for black students were for disorderly conduct compared to 11.5 percent for white students. With the exception of white juveniles in 2015, disorderly conduct is between 21 and 30 percent of all charges for the white and black youth and makes up a greater proportion of the total charges than the other top five charges.

Disorderly conduct has faced increased scrutiny, both nationally and locally, for its potentially ambiguous and discriminatory application. The task force has spent considerable time discussing the use of disorderly conduct, particularly as it relates to DMC. It is important to note that disorderly conduct is consistently the top charge for the Black juvenile population and is used at a higher percentage than the White population, even in years where this is the top charge for White juveniles. However, disorderly conduct does not appear in the top charges list for Asian juveniles in the years where data was available.

For a more specific exploration into the disparity of disorderly conduct charges, we calculated the DMC ratios by year. The ratio of charges for disorderly conduct in 2012 was 1.04 meaning that Black and White juveniles received disorderly conduct charges at the same rate.<sup>8</sup> The disorderly conduct charge ratios increased in 2013 to 1.37 citations of disorderly conduct to Black juveniles for every one charge issued to White juveniles. In 2014, there was a slight decrease in this ratio to 1.25 disorderly conduct charges to Black juveniles for every one

---

<sup>8</sup> White is the reference group, meaning that Black juveniles received disorderly conduct charges 1.04 times for every one charge of disorderly conduct issued to White juveniles.

disorderly conduct charges for White juveniles. Finally, in 2015 the ratio has increased to 1.56. Black juveniles have higher rates of disorderly conduct charges than their White counterparts, particularly among juveniles with multiple offenses. This has been an increase from 2012 when the ratio of disorderly conduct charges was nearly equal for these two populations.

We also compared the proportions of arrests by month to determine when juveniles appear to be most likely to engage in behavior that warrants a citation. Table 17 breaks down the number of arrests and the percentages by month. October and May are consistently high from 2012-2014 and March is in the top four for all years except 2013. October is the only month consistently high for the years compared. The summer months are the consistently low for arrests. This suggests that targeting students for diversionary programs during the school year may be the most effective in addressing the high rates of arrest for this population.

	2012		2013		2014		2015	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
January	6.6	105	11.1	148	6.6	87	9.2	127
February	13.1	208	7.8	105	9.0	119	9.5	131
March	11.1	176	5.6	75	9.7	129	10.6	147
April	9.2	147	13.8	184	8.5	113	7.9	110
May	12.0	191	12.7	170	11.3	150	8.6	119
June	5.2	82	5.5	74	6.3	84	8.2	113
July	4.3	68	6.6	88	7.0	93	7.0	97
August	3.8	60	4.4	59	4.6	61	2.6	36
September	8.6	137	6.3	84	8.5	113	8.1	112
October	11.3	180	9.8	131	11.9	157	10.1	140
November	8.3	132	9.3	125	6.5	86	9.5	132
December	6.5	104	7.1	95	10.0	132	8.7	120

## Juvenile Arrests and Schools

Additionally, arrests were compared by locations to determine where offenses are taking place. Tables 18 and 19 identify the top ten locations for arrests for 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015 respectively. La Crosse District Schools are consistently top locations for arrests. In frequency, Central High School tops the list of locations. Further, locations surrounding Central High, 2500 Travis St., 1900 Allen, the Village Shopping Center, and Midwest Dental, also make the top ten in several of the years. A qualitative content analysis of the charges for these periphery locations revealed a strong pattern of citations for tobacco, littering, and drug possession.

	2012			2013		
	Location	F	%	Location	F	%
<b>1</b>	Central H.S.	292	18.3	Central H.S.	193	14.4
<b>2</b>	Logan H.S.	135	8.5	Family & Children's Center	162	12.1
<b>3</b>	Family & Children's Center	107	6.8	Logan H.S.	119	8.9
<b>4</b>	2500 Travis St.	81	5.1	Logan Middle	96	7.2
<b>5</b>	Logan Middle	66	4.2	Lincoln Middle	76	5.7
<b>6</b>	Midwest Dental	52	3.2	Midwest Dental	43	3.2
<b>7</b>	Longfellow Middle	30	1.9	Village Shopping Center	20	1.5
<b>8</b>	Coulee Montessori	30	1.9	Gaming Generations	19	1.4
<b>9</b>	Village Shopping Center	25	1.6	Longfellow Middle	18	1.3
<b>10</b>	726 Ferry	25	1.6	1900 Allen	15	1.1

	2014			2015		
	Location	F	%	Location	F	%
<b>1</b>	Central H.S.	172	12.9	Central H.S.	190	13.7
<b>2</b>	Family & Children's Center	131	9.2	Logan H.S.	112	8.1
<b>3</b>	Logan H.S.	85	6.4	Logan Middle	79	5.7
<b>4</b>	Logan Middle	77	5.8	2507 Weston	69	5.0
<b>5</b>	Lincoln Middle	54	4.1	Lincoln Middle	38	2.7
<b>6</b>	Valley View Mall	20	1.6	Coulee Connection	38	2.7
<b>7</b>	Longfellow Middle	19	1.4	Health and Human Serv.	35	2.5
<b>8</b>	2922 George St.	15	1.1	Longfellow Middle	25	1.8
<b>9</b>	2500 Barlow	13	1.0	Family & Children's Center	24	1.7
<b>10</b>	Health and Human Serv.	12	0.9	Walmart	19	1.4

**Table 20: Arrest Rates for La Crosse District Schools, per 1,000 for 2012-2015**

	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
Central High	<b>268.88</b>	172.32	165.07	<b>182.34</b>
Logan High	160.14	145.83	105.72	139.30
Logan Middle	151.72	<b>246.15</b>	<b>177.01</b>	181.61
Lincoln Middle	----	215.91	150.84	106.15
Longfellow	60.48	38.88	37.55	49.41

Because of the differences in population between the schools, arrest rates were calculated for each of the five La Crosse District Schools to standardize for meaningful comparisons. Table 20 lists the arrest rates for each of the schools per 1,000 for 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015. While Central High School tops the list in terms of frequency, the arrest rate reveals that Logan Middle has the highest arrest rate for 2013 and 2014. In 2012 and 2015, Central High School had the highest arrest rate. An arrest rate for Lincoln Middle School was not calculated for 2012 because the school did not appear in the top 10 locations for that year and they recorded very low frequencies of arrests. It is notable that in 2013, Lincoln Middle ranks second in arrest rate. The rate has significantly decreased in 2015. Further, there seems to be significant differences between the schools even when standardizing the values for meaningful comparison. Finally, arrest rates vary within schools for the four years compared. A future goal of the task force, and one recommended at the conclusion of this report, is to explore potential reasons for the disparities between the schools and the changes in arrest rates over years.

### **Focus Acts**

The Task Force identified several focus acts, charges that would be of special interest to diversionary measures. These are possession of tobacco, disorderly conduct, battery, criminal damage to property (CDTP), theft<sup>9</sup>, and second truancy offenses. Table 21 outlines the frequency

---

<sup>9</sup> Theft and retail theft were differentiated and are treated as separate acts in this report.

of these focus acts, ranked in order from highest to lowest for 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015. The percentage corresponds with the proportion that particular focus act comprises for all charges, not just focus acts.

<b>Table 21: Number of Charges for Focus Acts, By Year</b>		
	<b>Number of Charges (%)*</b>	
<b>2012</b>	Possession of Tobacco	364 (22.9)
	Disorderly Conduct	240 (15.1)
	Battery	62 (3.9)
	CDTP	49 (3.1)
	Theft	48 (3.0)
	Truancy (2 <sup>nd</sup> Offense)	48 (3.0)
<b>2013</b>	Disorderly Conduct	289 (21.6)
	Possession of Tobacco	212 (15.8)
	Battery	75 (5.6)
	Truancy 2 <sup>nd</sup> Offense	57 (4.3)
	CDTP	48 (3.6)
	Theft	38 (2.8)
<b>2014</b>	Disorderly Conduct	302 (22.8)
	Possession of Tobacco	100 (7.6)
	Battery	77 (5.8)
	CDTP	72 (5.4)
	Theft	58 (4.4)
	Truancy (2 <sup>nd</sup> Offense)	48 (3.6)
<b>2015</b>	Disorderly Conduct	273 (19.7)
	Truancy (2 <sup>nd</sup> Offense)	72 (5.2)
	Battery	70 (5.1)
	CDTP	69 (5.0)
	Possession of Tobacco	59 (4.3)
	Theft	55 (4.0)

\* Note: indicates the percentage of *all* charges (not just focus acts) that act represents

With the exception of 2012, disorderly conduct is the most common of the focus act charges and comprises about 20 percent of all charges. Possession of tobacco tops the list for 2012 at 22.9% of all charges and continues to be a substantial portion of the focus act charges until 2015 where the instances of this charge decreases significantly to 4.3 percent. It is unclear why the change was so significant.

Focus act charges were also broken down by race and ethnicity for 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015 in Tables 22 through 25. White juveniles make up the majority of focus act charges, which is not surprising given that they represent nearly 80 percent of juveniles 12 to 17 in the city of La Crosse (see Table 3). Black students are overrepresented in every focus act category for all years compared.

	White (%)	Black (%)	Asian (%)	Native Amer. (%)
Disorderly Conduct	73.2	23.0	3.3	0.4
Battery	69.4	30.6	0	0
CDTP	65.3	30.6	4.1	0
Theft	66.7	20.8	12.5	0
Truancy (2 <sup>nd</sup> )	66.7	20.8	12.5	0
Tobacco	66.5	11.5	22.0	0

Note: Indicates the percentage of total focus act charges.  
May not add to 100% due to rounding.

	White (%)	Black (%)	Asian (%)	Native Amer. (%)
Disorderly Conduct	64.8	31.3	2.1	1.8
Battery	50.7	40.0	5.3	4.0
CDTP	54.2	27.1	14.6	4.2
Theft	52.6	34.2	13.2	0
Truancy (2 <sup>nd</sup> )	70.2	15.8	14.0	0
Tobacco	74.5	8.5	17.0	0

Note: Indicates the percentage of total focus act charges.  
May not add to 100% due to rounding.

	White (%)	Black (%)	Asian (%)	Native Amer. (%)
Disorderly Conduct	62.8	32.9	2.0	2.3
Battery	63.2	32.9	1.3	2.6
CDTP	63.9	31.9	1.4	2.8
Theft	56.9	39.7	1.7	1.7
Truancy (2 <sup>nd</sup> )	70.8	25.0	2.1	2.1
Tobacco	86.0	11.0	2.0	1.0

**Table 25: Focus Act Charges by Race/Ethnicity, 2015**

	White (%)	Black (%)	Asian (%)	Native Amer. (%)
Disorderly Conduct	54.4	44.1	0.4	1.1
Battery	35.7	61.4	0.0	2.9
CDTP	66.0	30.1	1.3	2.6
Theft	68.5	27.4	0.8	3.2
Truancy (2 <sup>nd</sup> )	69.4	22.2	6.9	1.4
Tobacco	88.1	11.9	0.0	0.0

Note: Indicates the percentage of total focus act charges.

May not add to 100% due to rounding.

Tables 26, 27, 28, and 29 list focus acts by school for 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015 respectively. There were a total of 811 focus act charges in 2012. Of the 811 focus act charges, 305 occurred at the schools (37.61%). For disorderly conduct, 88 of the 240 charges for 2012 occurred in the schools (36.67%). 11 of the 62 Battery charges (17.74%), 19 of the 48 Theft charges (39.58%), 7 of the 49 criminal damage to property (14.29%) charges, and 136 of the 364 charges for tobacco possession (37.36%) occurred at the schools. The vast majority of the second offense truancy charges occurred at the schools, 44 of the 48 (91.67%).

**Table 26: Focus Act Charges by School, 2012**

	DC	Battery	Theft	CDTP	Truancy (2 <sup>nd</sup> )	Tobacco
Central HS	14	0	9	4	15	117
Logan HS	13	1	2	1	22	17
Lincoln MS	13	0	2	0	2	2
Logan MS	37	7	1	1	2	0
Longfellow MS	11	3	5	1	3	0

**Table 27: Focus Act Charges by School, 2013**

	DC	Battery	Theft	CDTP	Truancy (2 <sup>nd</sup> )	Tobacco
Central HS	23	1	9	2	24	38
Logan HS	35	5	2	0	20	6
Lincoln MS	33	13	8	2	1	0
Logan MS	36	4	2	1	10	1
Longfellow MS	8	0	3	0	1	0

There were a total of 719 focus act charges in 2013. Of the 719 focus act charges, 288 occurred at the schools (40.06%). For disorderly conduct, 135 of the 289 charges for 2013 occurred in the schools (46.71%). 23 of the 75 battery charges (30.67%), 24 of the 38 theft charges (63.16%), 5 of the 48 criminal damage to property (10.42%), and 45 of the 212 charges for tobacco possession (21.23%) occurred at the schools. The vast majority of the second offense truancy charges occurred at the schools, 56 of the 57 (98.25%).

**Table 28: Focus Act Charges by School, 2014**

	DC	Battery	Theft	CDTP	Truancy (2 <sup>nd</sup> )	Tobacco
Central HS	27	3	1	1	24	18
Logan HS	10	1	2	0	16	1
Lincoln MS	18	5	4	1	4	0
Logan MS	25	5	8	1	3	4
Longfellow MS	7	0	2	0	0	2

There were a total of 657 focus act charges in 2014. Of the 657 focus act charges, 193 occurred at the schools (29.38%). For disorderly conduct, 87 of the 302 charges for 2014 occurred in the schools (28.81%). 14 of the 77 battery charges (18.18%), 17 of the 58 theft charges (29.31%), 3 of the 72 criminal damage to property (4.17%), and 25 of the 100 charges for tobacco possession (25.0%) occurred at the schools. The vast majority of the second offense truancy charges occurred at the schools, 47 of the 48 (97.92%).

**Table 29: Focus Act Charges by School, 2015**

	DC	Battery	Theft	CDTP	Truancy (2 <sup>nd</sup> )	Tobacco
Central HS	19	1	7	2	37	12
Logan HS	11	3	0	0	21	3
Lincoln MS	9	3	1	2	5	0
Logan MS	21	8	4	0	8	2
Longfellow MS	10	1	4	2	1	1

There were a total of 598 focus act charges in 2015. Of the 598 focus act charges, 198 occurred at the schools (33.11%). For disorderly conduct, 70 of the 273 charges for 2015 occurred in the schools (25.64%). 16 of the 70 battery charges (22.86%), 16 of the 55 theft charges (29.09%), 6 of the 69 criminal damage to property (8.70%), and 18 of the 59 charges for tobacco possession (30.51%) occurred at the schools. All of the truancy 2<sup>nd</sup> offense charges occurred at the schools (72 of 72).

Overall, between 29.38% and 40.0% of focus acts were committed at school between the years of 2012 and 2015. With the exception of Truancy 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense, the majority of focus acts are being committed in the community. As will be mentioned in the recommendations, significant attention should be placed in the school however targeting diversion in the community at large should be a focus in the future.

## **Suspensions**

Data on school suspensions was collected from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) and is presented in Table 30. The purpose of collecting this data is to work toward avoiding what Judge Teske describes as “data shifting.” As diversionary measures are put in place to reduce the number of arrests, a significant concern is that these diversionary measures could include suspensions and detentions. Research suggests that these practices do not result in desistance from delinquent or criminal behavior and further, can contribute to harms the county is trying to avoid, such as increased dropout rates (Teske and Huff 2011)<sup>10</sup>. The data is available for the school years 2008-2009 through 2015-2016 by race and ethnicity. We also compared La Crosse School District to the State of Wisconsin. District data was incomplete, particularly in the

---

<sup>10</sup> Teske, Steven C., and J. Brian Huff. 2011. “When Did Making Adults Mad Become a Crime? The Court’s Role in Dismantling the School-to-Prison Pipeline.” *Juvenile and Family Justice Today*, Winter: 14-17.

Table 30. Suspensions for La Crosse County, by Race and School District w. Comparison to State of Wisconsin <sup>11</sup>												
La Crosse School District												
White				Black			Asian					
Year	Total Enroll.	Total Susp.	%	Enroll.	Suspen.	%	Enroll.	Suspen.	%	Enroll.	Suspen.	%
12-13	6737	339	5.03	5116	-	-	332	47	14.16	642	25	3.89
13-14	6,829	289	4.20	5,127	194	3.80	313	49	15.7	643	3	0.50
14-15	6,814	219	3.20	5,055	137	2.70	307	33	10.7	654	4	0.60
15-16	6,790	340	5.00	4,934	-	-	316	67	21.2	665	2	0.3
State of Wisconsin												
White				Black			Asian					
Year	Total Enroll.	Total Susp.	%	Enroll.	Suspen.	%	Enroll.	Suspen.	%	Enroll.	Suspen.	%
12-13	871,551	39,037	4.48	637,312	14,387	2.26	84,571	18,034	21.32	31,027	342	1.10
13-14	873,531	33,944	3.90	632,684	13,387	2.10	84,645	14,484	17.10	31,651	249	0.80
14-15	870,652	31,167	3.60	625,614	12,713	2.00	83,475	12,578	15.10	32,029	241	0.80
15-16	867,137	33,736	3.90	617,796	12,562	2.00	81,787	14,415	17.60	32,715	266	0.80

Source: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

<sup>11</sup> The suspension data was incomplete in the DPI data for certain racial categories. Where possible estimates were calculated and these estimates are indicated with an asterisk. These estimates are within 3 suspensions of the true number. It was only possible to calculate estimates where the racial category Native American and one other racial category were missing. Because there were only 3 to 4 Native American students, it was possible to subtract the entire population of this racial category from the remaining suspensions to determine how many students in the other racial category were suspended.

breakdown in race/ethnicity categories and there were some years where the number of suspensions for certain racial categories was not recorded. For a couple of these years and racial categories, we were able to estimate the number of suspensions (the White population for 2008-2009 and 2011-2012 school years and the Asian population for the 2010-2011 school years) within 3 suspensions. These estimations are marked with an asterisk in the table. More information on how these estimations were made can be found in footnote 11 that accompanies the table.

It is clear from the table that at both the state and district level, Black students are suspended at a much higher proportion than the White or Asian students. We also see that suspension rates have stayed pretty consistent over the years. With research confirming the correlation between suspension and arrest rates and the dropout rates, the higher suspension and arrest rates for the state of Wisconsin and in the city of La Crosse likely contribute to the discrepancies in graduation rates for Black students in the state compared to all other students. The Wisconsin Council on Children & Families (2014) reported that the overall graduation rates for the state of Wisconsin for the 2009-2010 school year was 66% for Black students, compared to 96% for the White Non-Hispanic students, 78% for Latino students, 95% for Asian students, and 79% for Native American students.

In La Crosse, the graduation rate for black students was 80.0% in the 2009-2010 school year and 89.5% for white students. In the 2015-2016 school year, the rates have decreased slightly to 78.3% for black students and increased slightly to 92.3% for white students. Of note is that very few black students graduate in any year making the rate particularly susceptible to significant fluctuations. Further, while the rate of graduation

for black students needs to be much higher, the county has a higher rate of graduation for black youth compared to the state of Wisconsin (Wisconsin DPI, 2018<sup>12</sup>).

### ***Juveniles with Multiple Arrests***

A common question within the larger task force meetings was the overall impact that juveniles with multiple offenses or arrests were having on the updated DMC ratios. For the purposes of this analysis and report, juveniles with *four or more arrests* in a single calendar year were examined, and accounted for 21% to 24% of all juveniles arrested from 2012 to 2015. Tables 31 and 32 provide pertinent information on this specific group of juveniles, including the number of juveniles that meet this criterion, the proportion of juveniles with multiple arrests relative to the entire juvenile population of those arrested, and the range in the total number of arrests by year among all juveniles. For example, in 2015 there were a total of 392 juveniles arrested. Of these 392 juveniles, 91 (or 23.2%) had four or more arrests. The maximum number of arrests of a juvenile

**Table 31: Juveniles with Multiple Arrests by Gender, Race, and Number of Arrests, 2012 and 2013**

	2012				2013			
	Total N	4+ Arrests			Total N	4+ Arrests		
		N	%	Max		N	%	Max
<b>Total</b>	<b>423</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>24.3</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>22.4</b>	<b>28</b>
Male	269	78	29.0	47	245	62	25.3	28
Female	154	25	16.2	41	144	25	17.4	14
Race								
White	303	66	21.8	47	260	55	21.2	28
Black	66	25	37.9	31	79	21	26.6	10
Asian	46	12	26.1	21	34	9	26.5	14
Native American	4	0	0.0	3	9	1	11.1	5

<sup>12</sup> Data was retrieved from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction on January 9, 2018 using the WISEdash Public Portal: <http://wisedash.dpi.wi.gov/Dashboard/portalHome.jsp>. The 4-year graduation rate is used.

during this year was 21, which is notably lower than 47 and 28 maximum arrests that occurred in 2012 and 2013 respectively. Overall, juveniles with multiple arrests account for about a quarter of all arrests.

When examining these juveniles by gender, it can be seen that males (compared to females) have a slightly higher proportion of those with four or more arrests compared to their respective population of juveniles with a record of at least one arrest. Examining the 2014 data, 50 (22.6%) of the 221 males and 34 (19.4%) of the 175 females arrested during that year had been arrested 4 or more times. By race, 18.5% of White juveniles and 29.3% of Black.

**Table 32: Juveniles with Multiple Arrests by Gender, Race, and Number of Arrests, 2014 and 2015**

	2014				2015			
	Total N	4+ Arrests			Total N	4+ Arrests		
		N	%	Max		N	%	Max
<b>Total</b>	<b>396</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>21.3</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>392</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>23.2</b>	<b>21</b>
Male	221	50	22.6	18	216	52	24.1	21
Female	175	34	19.4	13	176	39	22.2	19
Race								
White	286	53	18.5	13	277	57	20.6	21
Black	82	24	29.3	18	93	30	32.3	21
Asian	19	3	15.8	7	11	2	18.2	5
Native American	7	4	57.1	9	9	2	22.2	4

Table 33 illustrates the frequency (*F*) in which the juveniles with multiple arrests committed focus act offenses by gender and race. Using 2014 as an example, the 84 juveniles meeting the requisite criterion (defined as 4 or more arrests) accounted for 175 disorderly conduct charges, which accounted for 45.2% of all charges among those juveniles with multiple arrests. This was followed by the purchase or possession of

tobacco by a minor (68 charges; 17.6%), battery (43 charges; 11.1%), and criminal damage to property (36 charges, 9.3%). Among both males and females with multiple

**Table 33: Focus Act Offenses Among Juveniles with Multiple Arrests, 2014**

	Total		Male		Female		White		Black	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Total N	84		50		34		53		24	
Dis. Conduct	175	45.2	119	44.6	56	46.7	104	42.6	65	50.8
Battery	43	11.1	30	11.1	13	10.8	27	11.1	14	10.9
CDTP	36	9.3	29	10.9	7	5.8	21	8.6	14	10.9
Theft	31	8.0	25	9.4	6	5.0	12	4.9	18	14.1
Truancy, 2 <sup>nd</sup>	34	8.8	18	6.7	16	13.3	25	10.2	7	5.5
Tobacco	68	17.6	46	17.2	22	18.3	55	22.5	10	7.8

Note: May not equal 100% due to rounding.

arrests, disorderly conduct again accounted for the largest proportion of focus act charges among this select population (44.6% and 46.7% respectively), followed by possession of tobacco and battery for males and possession of tobacco and truancy (2<sup>nd</sup>) for females. Given the small number of Asian and Native American juveniles with multiple arrests, only White and Black juveniles were examined. Again, disorderly conduct made up the largest proportion of focus act charges among both White (42.6%) and Black (50.8%) juveniles with multiple arrests. This was followed by tobacco (22.5%) charges for the White juveniles, while theft (14.1%) charges were more common among the Black juveniles.

To examine this population even further, the frequency of focus act charges among those with four or more arrests were compared to the focus act charges among all juveniles arrested in 2014 to better understand if juveniles with multiple arrests were responsible for a disproportionate amount of focus act charges. Table 34 indicates the frequency of *all* focus act charges among all juveniles arrested at least one time in 2014,

and is broken down by the total number of charges, gender, and race. For instance, there were 302 disorderly conduct charges among *all* juveniles arrested in 2014, whereas males accounted for 195 charges while females accounted for 107 charges.

<b>Focus Act</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Black</b>
Dis. Conduct	302	195	107	189	99
Battery	77	51	26	48	25
CDTP	72	56	16	46	23
Theft	58	48	10	33	23
Truancy, 2 <sup>nd</sup>	48	23	25	33	12
Tobacco	100	67	33	86	11

Note: Indicates the frequency of *all* focus act charges.

Asian and Native American juveniles were not included due to a small *N* size.

By using the frequency of focus act charges among juveniles with multiple arrests in Table 32, 33, and 36 (by total, gender, and racial groups) and dividing it by the total number of focus act charges among all juveniles arrested in 2014 and 2015 illustrated in Table 34 and 35, a proportion (or percentage) of the total number of focus act charges committed by juveniles with multiple arrests could be calculated (illustrated in Table 37 and 38 on page 30).

<b>Focus Act</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Black</b>
Dis. Conduct	273	169	104	147	119
Battery	70	45	25	25	43
CDTP	69	45	24	44	23
Theft	55	37	18	42	13
Truancy, 2 <sup>nd</sup>	72	38	34	50	16
Tobacco	59	45	14	52	7

Note: Indicates the frequency of *all* focus act charges.

Asian and Native American juveniles were not included due to a small *N* size.

To fully understand what this means, the focus act of battery will be used as an example. Among the 77 battery charges among all juveniles with at least one arrest in 2014 (see Table 33), 43 of these battery charges can be attributed to juveniles with four or more arrests (see Table 32). This means that juveniles with multiple offenses accounted for 55.8% of all battery charges in 2014 ( $43 \div 77 = 55.8\%$ ). This was also calculated for males and females as well as White and Black juveniles. Using the same

**Table 36: Focus Act Offenses Among Juveniles with Multiple Arrests, 2015**

	Total		Male		Female		White		Black	
	<i>F</i>	%								
Total N	91		52		39		57		30	
Dis. Conduct	173	45.2	100	42.0	73	50.3	85	38.8	86	54.1
Battery	42	11.0	25	10.5	17	11.7	14	6.4	28	17.6
CDTP	44	11.5	27	11.3	17	11.7	25	11.4	18	11.3
Theft	35	9.1	28	11.8	7	4.8	27	12.3	8	5.0
Truancy, 2 <sup>nd</sup>	47	12.3	25	10.5	22	15.2	31	14.2	14	8.8
Tobacco	42	11.0	33	13.9	9	6.2	37	16.9	5	11.9

Note: May not equal 100% due to rounding.

formula as above, males with multiple arrests accounted for 58.8% of all battery charges, while females accounted for 50%. White and Black juveniles with multiple arrests were similar in accounting for 56.2% and 56% of all battery charges respectively. Black juveniles with multiple arrests account for a higher proportion of juveniles with multiple offenses compared to White juveniles confirming concerns of disproportionate minority contact.

For 2015, juveniles with four or more offenses accounted for 45.2% of all the disorderly conduct charges for this year (see table 36) and juveniles with multiple offenses made up 63.4% of the population that received disorderly conduct charges in 2015 (see table 38). Using specific populations as an example, females with four or more

offenses accounted for 50.3% of all disorderly conduct charges for this year (see Table 36) and made up 70.2 percent of the females who were charged with disorderly conduct for 2015 (see Table 38). Further, Black youth with multiple offenses accounted for 54.1% of all disorderly conduct charges (Table 36) and made up 72.2% of the black youth charged with disorderly conduct in 2015.

**Table 37: Proportion (%)\* of Focus Acts Committed by Juveniles with Multiple Arrests by Gender and Race, 2014**

Focus Act	Total	Males	Females	White	Black
Dis. Conduct	57.9	61.0	52.3	55.0	65.7
Battery	55.8	58.8	50.0	56.3	56.0
CDTP	50.0	51.8	43.8	45.7	60.9
Theft	53.4	52.1	60.0	36.4	78.3
Truancy, 2 <sup>nd</sup>	70.8	78.3	64.0	75.8	58.3
Tobacco	68.0	68.7	66.7	64.0	91.0

Note: \* Percentages calculated by taking frequencies of juveniles with multiple arrests/total frequency of focus acts among entire juvenile arrest population

**Table 38: Proportion (%)\* of Focus Acts Committed by Juveniles with Multiple Arrests by Gender and Race, 2015**

Focus Act	Total	Males	Females	White	Black
Dis. Conduct	63.4	59.2	70.2	57.8	72.2
Battery	60.0	55.6	68.0	56.0	65.1
CDTP	63.7	60.0	70.8	56.8	78.2
Theft	63.6	75.7	41.2	64.3	61.5
Truancy, 2 <sup>nd</sup>	65.3	65.8	64.7	62.0	87.5
Tobacco	71.2	73.3	64.3	71.2	71.4

Note: \* Percentages calculated by taking frequencies of juveniles with multiple arrests/total frequency of focus acts among entire juvenile arrest population

In terms of overall arrests, 68.3% of the Black juvenile population was arrested in 2014 (82 individuals ÷ 120; the population of 12-17 year olds) compared to 13.3% (286 individuals ÷ 2144) of the White juvenile population. Among Black juveniles, 29.3% of the offending population had four or more arrests while 18.5% of the white juvenile offending population had four or more separate arrests. It is clear that a significant

disparity exists in the contact between juveniles and the criminal justice system. Therefore, the disparities in juvenile arrest rates and DMC ratios cannot solely be explained by looking at a problem of multiple arrests among minority populations. In general, however, it does warrant exploring as to why we see a higher proportion of minority juveniles with multiple arrests compared to the White population in La Crosse, particularly concerning the charges of disorderly conduct and criminal damage to property.

## **Recommendations**

### *1. Reduce the prevalence of disorderly conduct*

Disorderly conduct charges have increased in 2015 and there is a significant disparity in charges by race. Additionally, disorderly conduct makes up a large proportion of charges that juveniles receive. Reducing the arrest rates and disproportionate minority contact of juveniles in La Crosse likely starts with addressing disorderly conduct.

### *2. Diversionary measures in the community*

The schools are an excellent place to start in approaching the problems of juvenile delinquency and the use of formal sanctions for this behavior. However, given that the data suggests that the majority of focus acts occur in the community coupled with research that suggests that poverty and family supervision are significant contributors to delinquency, the next step is to look towards implementing diversionary programs in the community at large.

### *3. Work on school suspension rates*

In addition to promoting diversionary measures for juvenile arrests, significant time and energy should be devoted to understanding the use of suspensions and detentions in the schools. First, it is imperative to continue monitoring suspension rates to ensure that data shifting does not occur as a result of lowering the arrest rate. Second, schools should ensure consistent, objective suspension policies. Given the research on the correlation between suspensions and dropout rates and the data on the disproportionate use of suspensions for the Black student population, further harm reduction could come

from diversionary measures and cultural competency focused on the use of suspensions in the schools.

4. *Continue efforts of cultural competency training.*

Reducing disproportionate minority contact also demands extensive training in recognizing implicit bias. All relevant staff in schools and the juvenile justice system should continue their efforts in cultural competency training.

5. *Explore standardization of definitions of offenses*

Based on conversations with the larger task force, it is unclear whether part of La Crosse's high arrest rates are due to inconsistency with other counties in defining delinquency. It seems that it would be helpful in approaching the problems of ambiguity and making meaningful comparisons to explore how other counties define juvenile offenses and working towards standardization of definitions.