NYC 9/11 Public Portal Document

NEW YORK POST, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2001

School behavior better since 9/11

By CARL CAMPANILE
Education Reporter

Like crime on the streets, mayhem in the schools has dropped since the World Trade Center attacks.

The number of students suspended from school has plummeted 79 percent, Schools Chancellor Harold Levy said yesterday.

From September through the end of October, 1,455 students were suspended. During the same period last year, 6,910 students were suspended.

The dramatic drop comes after years of increases in rowdy kids getting booted from school — including an 8 percent jump last year.

A top aide to the chancellor attributed much of the reduction to students being shell-shocked by terrorism.

"It's really impacted the students. There's been a change of behavior in students across-the-board," said Vincent Giordano, executive director of the Board of Education's Division of Student Support Services.

"This is an extremely unique year.. We didn't start the last school year off with a national tragedy."

Giordano said students have a whole new take on the meaning of life after the tragedy, and many are scared. They're more concerned about the welfare of their families than pouncing on classmates.

"These are very difficult, stressful and tragic times for everyone," he said.

He added that the board has boosted guidance services in the schools, and teachers and principals are on "high alert" to detect any problems with their students.

Giordano and school district superintendents also stressed that before Sept. 11, they already instituted alternative programs to reduce suspensions.

A new state law requires schools to find alternatives for unruly students.

"The focus has been on prevention and intervention programs," he said.

Bronx District 8 Superintendent Betty Rosa said suspensions are down significantly this year. Last year, the district, covering schools in Hunts Point, Soundview and Throgs Neck, had one of the highest rates in the city.

"There's been a big difference. There's a downward trend in suspensions," said Rosa.

"We've put in place a better structure for students who are having difficulty."

New measures include expanded guidance services, Saturday training classes for teachers, and a video program cautioning students about inappropriate sexual behavior.

Rosa agreed that the Twin Towers tragedy also has made students more sensitive and less anti-social.

"Sept. 11 has given a new meaning to peoplehood. Everyone has put on a different lens," she said.

CITY_21MC100_011832955

NYC-WTC_000414922