

# WORLD & NATION

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## Higher black suspension rates raise questions

BY WILLIAM BURTON  
STAFF WRITER

On Jan. 30, 2015, the News & Record published an article on the disparity between black and white students' suspension rates. According to the article, black students are being suspended at much higher rates than white students in Guilford County schools.

This issue was first brought up at a school board meeting and is now being addressed as a major issue by the board of education and other officials in the school system.

"Locally they have a variety of disproportionalities that has been acknowledged from both staff as well as ... from educational advocates, civil rights attorneys as well as a host of other people," said Lissa Harris, co-founder of Parents Supporting Parents, a grassroots educational advocacy organization based in Guilford County.

This issue appears to have the most impact on black males in particular. They are suspended more than any other group of students in Guilford County. This pattern is seen nationally as well.

"The disparity numbers show that African-American students, in some cases African-American males, are three to four times more likely to be suspended than their white peers," said Lissa Harris.

In Guilford County there are a total of 37,588 males, and 15,269 of them are black. In the first half of the 2014-2015 school year, however, 1,482 black males were suspended where only 421 white males were suspended.

Black females were also suspended more than either white males or white females. 712 black females were suspended compared to only 117 white females.

"(It is) a real problem nationally, not just in North Carolina, but we see that pattern repeated across the country," said Lynden Harris, director of Hidden Voices, a nonprofit organization that works to share personal stories in the public sphere.

Suspending students is very costly to the student and has a negative impact on their education. Once a student is suspended they get behind in their coursework, which in turn makes them more likely to fail and drop out of school entirely.

"The difference in suspension rates between black and white students is one of the most serious issues in American public education," said Sherry Giles, professor of justice and policy

studies, in an email interview. "When students are suspended, they lose valuable instruction time, fall behind in learning and are at greater risk of dropping out of school altogether."

"(Bringing) really effective cultural competency training to the teachers is so very important because teachers do not intend to discriminate, but they do it, and they do it for cultural reasons that they are not aware of," said Lynden Harris.

Both Lissa Harris and Lynden Harris stated that there have been cases where black kids were suspended and white kids where not suspended for committing the same infraction.

"I have come into situations where these white students were not as harshly disciplined as the African-American males for the same incident, as well as various rule violations where white are treated very different as it relates to disciplinary action versus black students that do the same thing," said Lissa Harris.

The disparity between white suspension rates and black suspension rates is an important problem that needs to be addressed. Fortunately steps are already being taken to correct this issue. Lissa Harris and Lynden Harris both work to make sure that issues like this are addressed.

National initiatives like My Brother's Keeper, the White House program aimed at young black males, will also help to solve the problem, not only in Guilford County but across the nation as well.

Another solution would be to get rid of zero tolerance policies, where the punishment is based on teacher or administrative judgment in the school system.

"Zero tolerance discipline policies (are policies) which suspend students according to strict guidelines with predetermined harsh consequences or punishments for a broad range of violation of rules," said Giles. "Some of the categories of violation are based on the subjective judgment of a teacher or administrator, such as 'disruptive behavior' or 'insubordination.' Implicit racial bias inevitably influences these

kinds of subjective decisions."

Regardless of the approach used, the board of education and others in the community will continue to try and address these disparities in Guilford County schools.

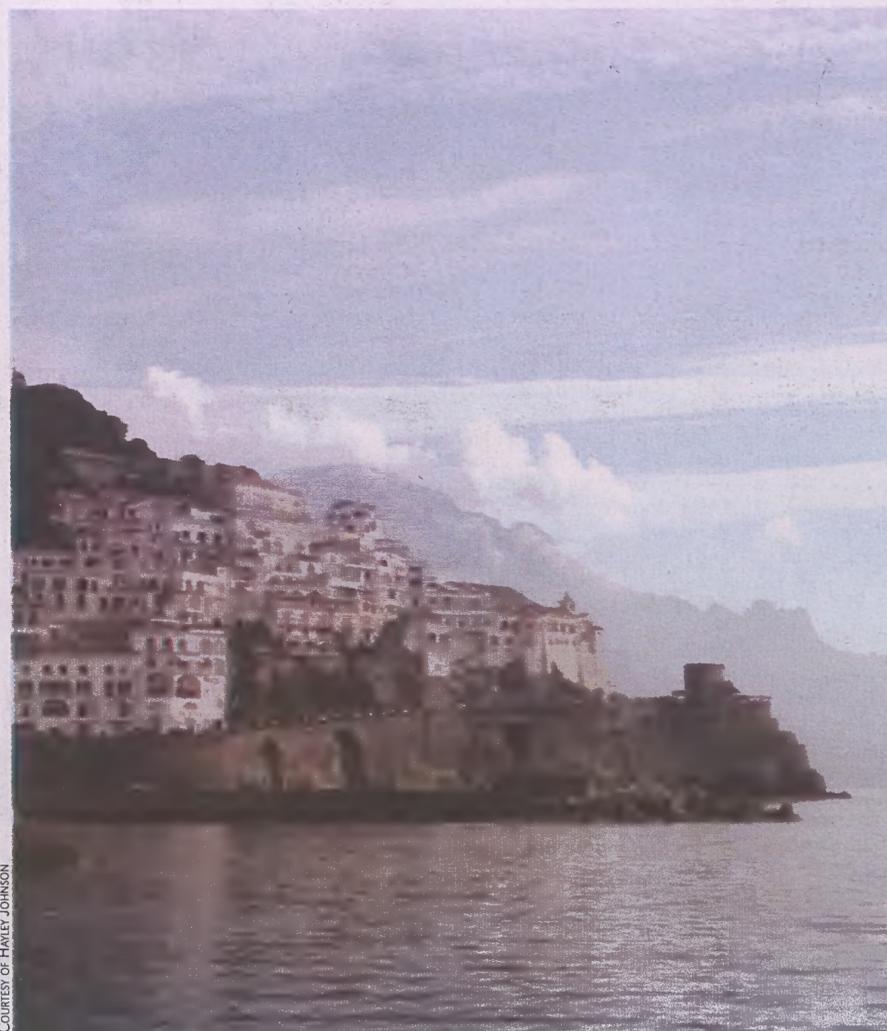
Guilford County Schools Student Suspensions  
Fall 2014



**Female student suspension**  
Yellow & Blue: Black students—712  
Purple & Green: White students—117

**Male student suspension**  
Yellow & Blue: Black students—1482  
Purple & Green: White students—421

STUDY PHOTO OF THE WEEK ABROAD



Amalfi Coast, Italy  
Hayley Johnson '14 visited the Sorrentine Peninsula in Salerno, Italy when she studied in Sienna during the Fall of 2014.

Each week we will feature a picture from students' experiences abroad. Whether you have or are currently abroad, we would love to see photos from your trip. Please email photos to Sara Minsky at [minkysj@guilford.edu](mailto:minkysj@guilford.edu) with information about the subject and where & when you studied.

## SIM card data leak prompts concerns about phone security

BY CORBIN BARWICK  
STAFF WRITER

Gemalto, the largest manufacturer of SIM cards in the world, was recently hacked by American and British spies. Gemalto provides SIM cards, which allow devices to connect to cellular networks, to more than 450 wireless network providers. They produce more than 2 million SIM cards a year under the motto "security to be free."

A joint effort from the National Security Agency and its British counterpart Government Communications Headquarters recovered encryption keys for every SIM card provided by Gemalto all over the world. These keys help bypass the requirement to receive a warrant or any approval from companies or government, as intelligence agencies can now intercept and decode all communications from either voice or text data.

Gemalto had no knowledge of the penetration into its system and is currently in the process of investigating how the hack happened and ensuring that it does not happen again.

In April 2010, the Mobile Handset Exploitation Team, which until now had never been disclosed, was formed. Their main goal when formed was to penetrate the computer networks of corporations that manufacture SIM cards and the wireless network providers. The formation of MHET includes members of both the NSA and GCHQ.

The hack happened when GCHQ spies planted malware into the computer systems of Gemalto. U.S. and British intelligence performed in great stealth to pull off this encryption key heist. No alerts to any wireless network providers, foreign government or individual users were seen.

"As an average user, I feel this could help governments come across information that could cause a serious problem," said sophomore Miranda Martin. "I have

nothing to hide but at the same time I do feel this is somewhat wrong that Gemalto was just hacked and their software was just taken from them."

There is a current gaping hole with the protection of cellphone and network providers as they do not support Perfect Forward Secrecy, which is designed to help with the damage caused by theft of encryption keys. PFS is, however, involved in Internet and social media sites like Google and Twitter. PFS helps prevent hacking by discarding encryption keys after a few minutes and generating new ones.

"The only effective way for individuals to protect themselves from Ki (key) theft-enabled surveillance is to use secure communications software, rather than relying on SIM card-based security," said Jeremy Scahill and Josh Begley in an article for The Intercept.

This hacking is a basic effort to help get one step ahead of the current fight against terrorism. With the current movements of the Islamic state of Iraq, the Levant and Al-Qaeda, this will ultimately help get both foreign governments and the United States ahead by being able to monitor cellular data more progressively.

"I do not feel this will cause any harm whatsoever to Gemalto or its customers. The whole point of this it seems is to help keep people safe," said Assistant Professor of Political Science and former CIA Analyst Robert Duncan. "I am all for the Patriot Act, and I understand the safety it ensures to me and our country. I have nothing to hide, I don't associate with terrorists or those organizations so this does not seem to be a problem to me. These intelligence agencies are doing the right thing to help protect us."

For those who are worried about their personal privacy being invaded, there are applications for your cellular device that can help provide you a more secure network. Applications like TextSecure and Silent Text are secure ways for your SMS messages.