



School Crime 2019



BILL LEE
Governor

TENNESSEE BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

901 R.S. Gass Boulevard
Nashville, Tennessee 37216-2639
(615) 744-4000
Facsimile (615) 744-4500
TDD (615) 744-4001



DAVID B. RAUSCH
Director

March 4, 2021

Ladies and Gentlemen :

The Tennessee Bureau of Investigation is releasing its annual School Crimes Study. This study presents the nature, volume, and extent of reported crimes on school campuses, excluding colleges and universities in 2019.

The study is based on data submitted to the TBI through the Tennessee Incident Based Reporting System (TIBRS) program, which collects data on all crimes occurring in Tennessee. All law enforcement agencies as well as colleges and universities, are mandated to report crime statistics to the TBI. This study is produced from the TIBRS program and includes comparison statistics.

This study will hopefully assist law enforcement, school administrations, and government officials in planning their efforts in the fight against crime and continue to create awareness that crime exists as a threat to our communities. The threats to society by criminal activity must be addressed by efforts from all law-abiding citizens, as well as law enforcement agencies.

Thank you to all participating law enforcement agencies for their hard work and contributions to making this report a thorough and accurate picture of crime in Tennessee. It is only with their support that the state continues to maintain such a successful TIBRS program.

Sincerely,

Director
David B. Rausch



INTERNATIONALLY ACCREDITED SINCE 1994

INTRODUCTION

This study presents information on characteristics surrounding crime in Tennessee schools, focusing upon public and private school systems, excluding colleges, universities and technical schools. The period covered in this study is from 2017 to 2019. This study was completed using data provided to the Tennessee Incident Based Reporting System (TIBRS).

- ❖ This report is based on incidents submitted by law enforcement agencies.
- ❖ Since the offense of Justifiable Homicide is not considered a crime, the offense is excluded from the study.
- ❖ It is important to understand the characteristics surrounding school crime; the offenders who reportedly commit these offenses; and the demographics of the victims. A better understanding of these characteristics will assist law enforcement, policy makers, school administrators, and the public in developing strategies to reduce the amount of crime occurring at schools in Tennessee.

Situations surrounding school crime vary based on the offender's motive and the intended victim. For example, incidents involving student offenders and student victims constitute the stereotypical definition of crime at schools where the offender and victim are present to participate in school related activities. However, there are situations involving adult and/or juvenile offenders and victims where the school serves only as the location of the offense committed. Crimes perpetrated by offenders against victims who are not school students or staff and have no other relation to the school, i.e., a drug deal committed in a school parking lot or an assault involving multiple offenders and victims would be examples of such situations.

INCIDENT-BASED REPORTING

Incident based reporting views a crime and all of its components as an incident. In order to obtain incident data, facts recorded and preserved about the incident are organized into specific categories or segments. The mechanism used for recording these facts is a data element. Data elements provide information about crime and its involvement with victims, offenders, property, arrestees, etc.

TIBRS DEFINED

The Tennessee Incident Based Reporting System (TIBRS) program is designed to collect data on every single crime occurrence and on each incident an arrest within the occurrence. TIBRS differs from the national crime statistics data released by the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting Program (UCR). The most significant difference between TIBRS and the national UCR summary data is the degree of detail in reporting. Unlike the summary system that collects only eight Part 1 crimes (Murder, Forcible Rape, Robbery, Aggravated Assault, Burglary, Larceny, Motor Vehicle Theft, and Arson), TIBRS collects 24 categories made up of 54 specific crimes called Group A offenses. Additionally, arrests are reported for 10 Group B offense categories. Under the summary UCR program, only the most serious offense was

reported. In TIBRS, up to 10 offenses can be reported in an incident, providing a more accurate picture of crime. Because of the differences between UCR summary data and TIBRS data, any cross-comparisons would provide inaccurate results in trend analysis. Additionally, the ability to conduct the type of data analysis found in this report is due in large part to the amount of detailed information collected through an incident-based reporting system.

METHODOLOGY

This study specifically addresses incident characteristics, offender characteristics, arrestee characteristics, offense characteristics, victim characteristics and victim to offender characteristics.

Throughout this study, age groups are used versus individual age. The age groups are: Under 10, 10-11, 12-13, 14-15, 16-17, 18-24, 25 – 34, 35 – 44, 45 – 54, 55 – 64, 65 and Over, and Unknown.

An additional consideration for this study is that Victim to Offender relationships are only collected for those offenses that are considered as Crimes Against Persons and Robbery. Crimes Against Persons consist the following offenses: Murder, Non-negligent Manslaughter, Negligent Manslaughter, Negligent Vehicular Manslaughter, Kidnapping/Abduction, Rape, Sodomy, Sexual Assault with an Object, Fondling, Aggravated Assault, Simple Assault, Intimidation, Stalking, Incest, Statutory Rape, Commercial Sex Acts, and Involuntary Servitude.

QUICK FACTS

- ❖ From 2017 to 2019, 29,940 crimes were reported by Tennessee law enforcement agencies with a location code of School-Elementary/Secondary.
- ❖ The overall number of reported offenses increased 2.8% from 2017 to 2019.
- ❖ Simple Assault was the most frequently reported offense at 38.8%.
- ❖ The month of September had the highest frequency of school crimes.
- ❖ The largest percentage of School Crime offenses occurred between 12:00 pm and 2:59 pm at 33.2%.
- ❖ Thursday was the most frequently reported day of the week for school crimes.
- ❖ The most common weapon type was Personal Weapons (hands, fist, feet, etc.) at 75.5%.
- ❖ Females accounted for 51.4% of total victims and 48.2% of the victims were Male.
- ❖ Males contributed to 61.4% of the offender total compared to 27.8% reported as Female. The remaining offenders were reported as having an Unknown gender (6.8%) or Missing (4.0%).
- ❖ Males aged 16-17 were the most reported offenders comprising a total of 28.0% followed by the age group category of 14-15 at 27.1%.
- ❖ White was the most reported offender's race (44.0%), followed by Black or African American at 43.2%.

SCHOOL CRIME OFFENSES BY YEAR

The overall crimes reported in elementary and secondary schools increased by 2.8 % from 2017 to 2019. Data shown on Table 1 displays a 11.8% increase in Crimes Against Persons. Crimes Against Property, in comparison, decreased by 23.1% from 2017 to 2019. Within the same time frame, Crimes Against Society increased slightly to 11.7%.

SCHOOL CRIMES CLEARED BY ARREST

TABLE 1: SCHOOL CRIMES CLEARED BY ARREST						
GROUP A OFFENSES 2017-2019						
INCIDENTS CLEARED BY ARREST				PERCENT CHANGE		
CATEGORY	2017	2018	2019	2017 to 2018	2018 to 2019	2017 to 2019
Crimes Against Persons Total	1,911	2,154	2,264	12.7%	5.1%	18.5%
Crimes Against Property Total	578	490	529	-15.2%	8.0%	-8.5%
Crimes Against Society Total	1,461	1,462	1,659	0.1%	13.5%	13.6%
TOTAL INCIDENTS CLEARED BY ARREST	3,950	4,106	4,452	3.9%	8.4%	12.7%

- ❖ Crimes Against Persons are those crimes in which victims are always individuals or law enforcement officers, e.g., Murder, Rape, Aggravated Assault, etc.
- ❖ Crimes Against Property are those crimes in which the offender’s intent is to obtain money, property, or some other benefit, e.g., Robbery, Bribery, Burglary, etc.
- ❖ Crimes Against Society are those crimes which represent society’s prohibition against engaging in certain types of activity, e.g., Gambling, Prostitution, Drug Violations, etc.

The offense of Simple Assault accounted for the highest reported offense in 2019 at 38.8% followed by Drug/Narcotic Violations at 13.5%. Findings on data revealed that Theft from a Building decreased by 31.5% from 2017 to 2019. The overall number of Crimes Against Society increased 11.7%. Drug/Narcotic Violations, in particular, increased 13.4%. Further findings also revealed an 3.5% decrease in Weapon Law Violations. The increase of law enforcement personnel in schools could be attributed to the continued decrease in Weapon Law Violations.

SCHOOL CRIME CLEARANCES

Per TIBRS, there are two ways to clear an offense. The offenses can be Cleared by Arrest or Cleared by Exceptional Means. If an arrest has been made in an incident, an exceptional clearance is never applicable and cannot be submitted. From 2017 to 2019, 16,991 of the 29,940 offenses were cleared. More specifically, 41.8% of school crimes were cleared by arrest and 15.0% were exceptionally cleared.

An offense is cleared exceptionally when an element beyond law enforcement control prevents a physical arrest. All four of the following conditions must be met to clear an offense by exceptional means:

1. The investigation must have established the identity of at least one offender. This means the agency knows at least one offender’s sex, race, age, ethnicity, and resident status.
2. Sufficient probable cause must have been developed to support the arrest, charging, and prosecution of the offender.
3. The exact (present) location of the offender must be known so that an arrest could be made.
4. There must be a reason outside of law enforcement control, which prevents the arrest.



School Crime by Clearance Type Continued

Chart 1 breaks down arrests (4,452) and the different reportable exceptional clearance types. Victim Refused to Cooperate was the most common exceptional clearance with 45.9% of all exceptional clearances during the three-year study period.

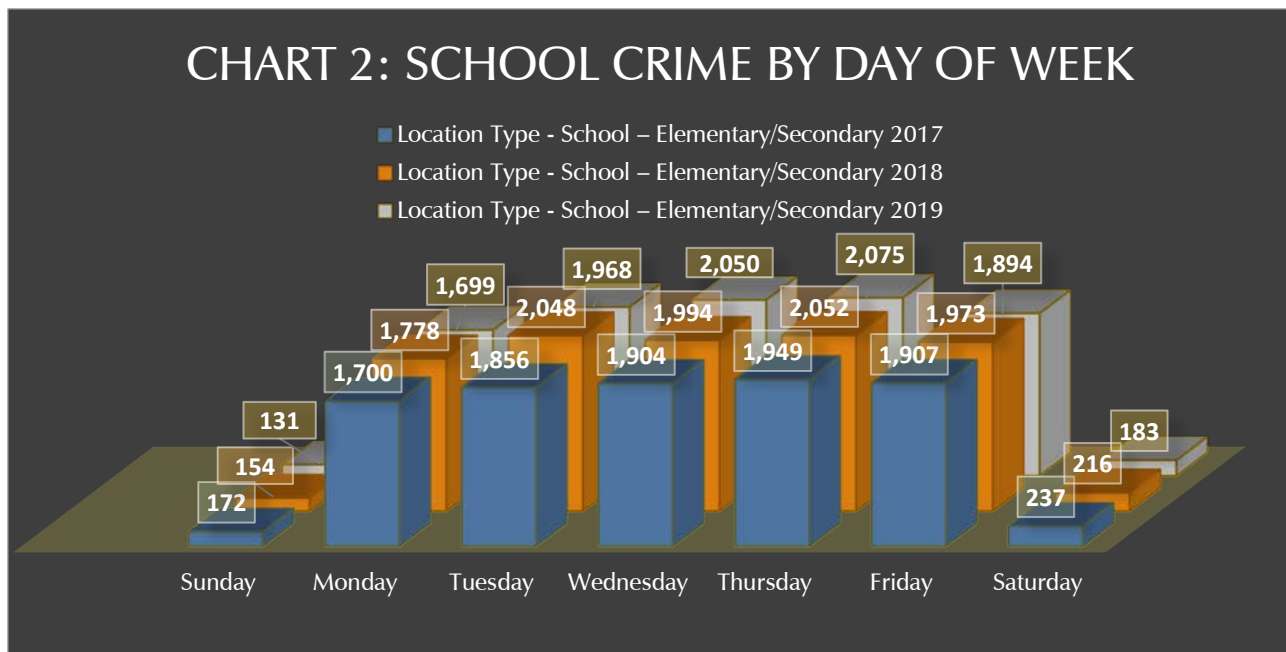
Juvenile/No Custody accounted for the second highest reported at 29.4%. Prosecution Declined accounted for 24.5%. Death of Offender and In Custody of Other Jurisdiction accounted for less than one percent of all reported types and therefore, are not included in Chart 1.

Another point to remember is, in a multiple offense incident the exceptional clearance of any one offense involved clears an entire incident. An incident cannot be cleared exceptionally when an arrest has been made in connection with the incident because the incident will be cleared by arrest.

DAY OF WEEK

Thursday accounted for the highest reported day of week at 20.8%, followed by Wednesday at 20.5%. Additional findings revealed the number of reported offenses increased by 15.8% from Monday to Tuesday. Similarly, school crimes increased 11.5% from Monday to Friday.

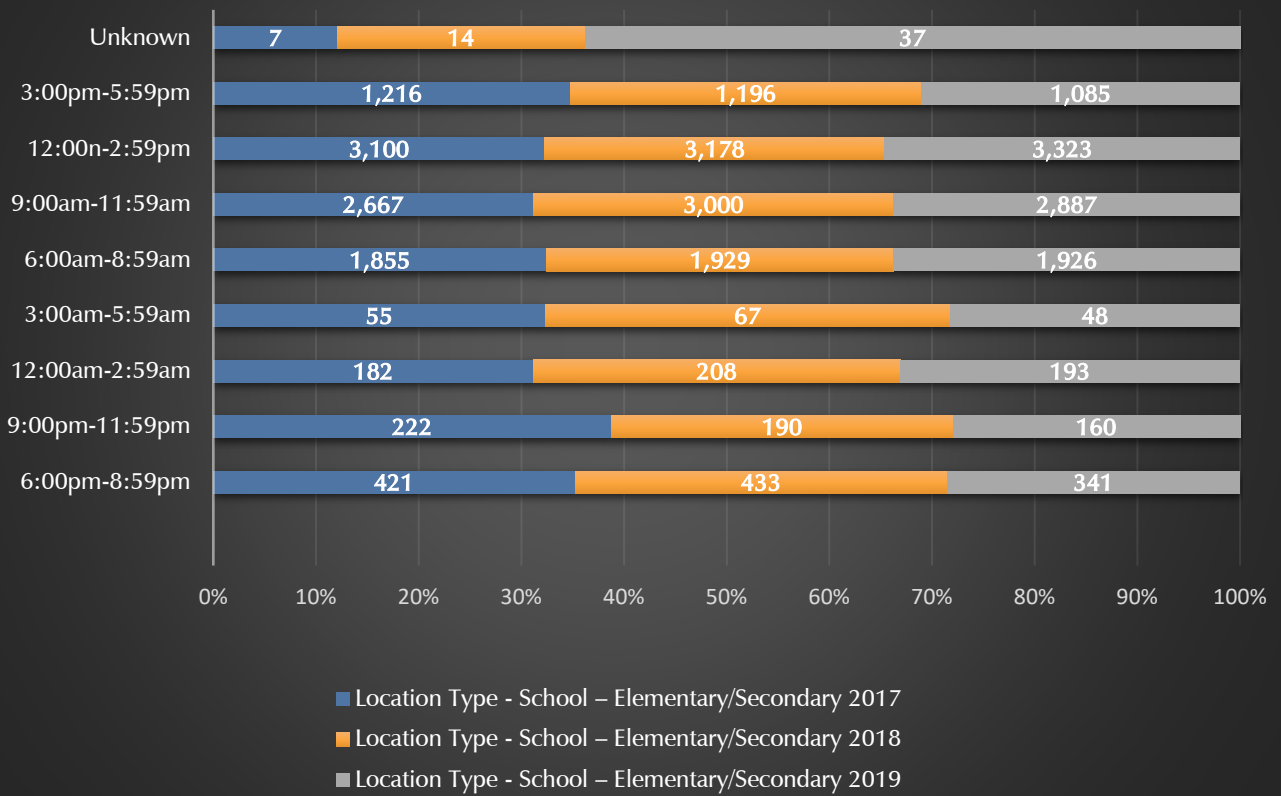
School crime predominately occurred during regular school days.



Thursday, by a narrow margin over Wednesday, was the most common day for school crime. A combined total of 314 school crimes were committed on Saturdays and Sundays.

TIME OF DAY

CHART 3: SCHOOL CRIMES BY TIME OF DAY



Further examination of data revealed the incident period of noon to 2:59 pm was the most common time for offense occurrences at 33.2%, followed by the period of 9:00 am to 11:59 am at 28.9%.

Offenses were less likely to occur during the time frame of 3:00am—5:59 am, when schools are generally closed.

SCHOOL CRIME BY MONTH

CHART 4: OFFENSES REPORTED BY MONTH 2017

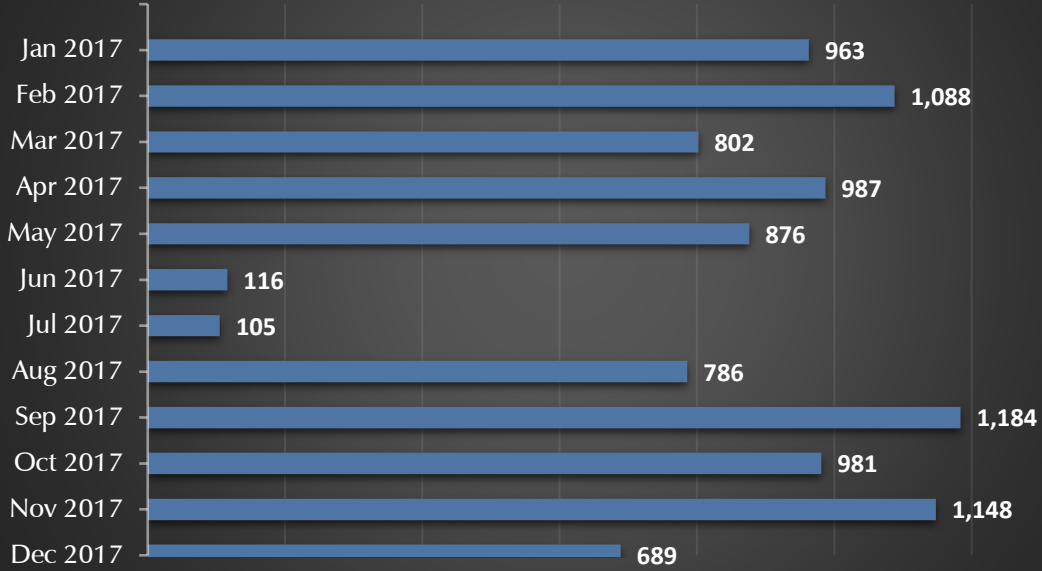


CHART 5: OFFENSES REPORTED BY MONTH 2018

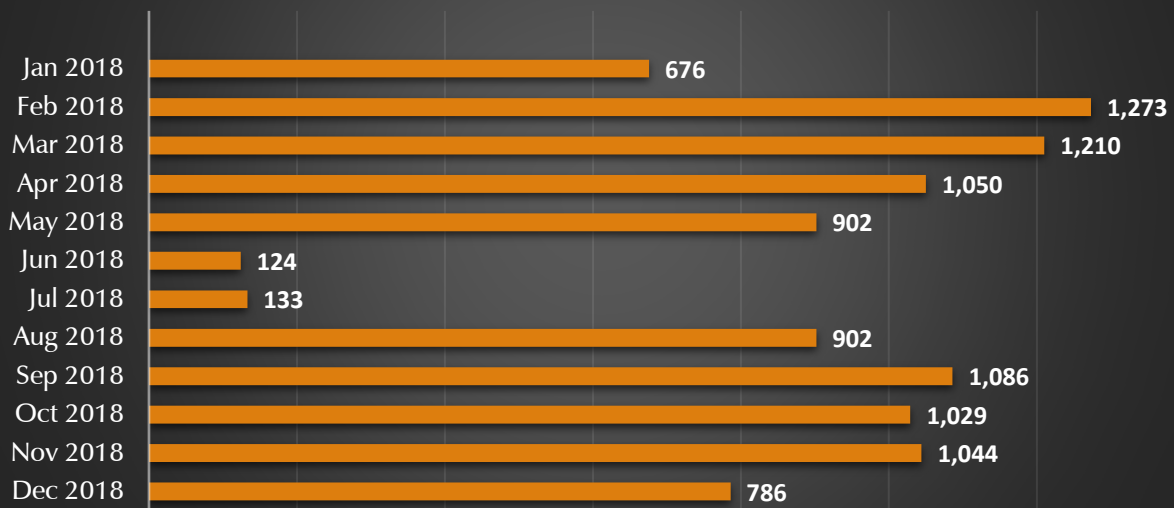
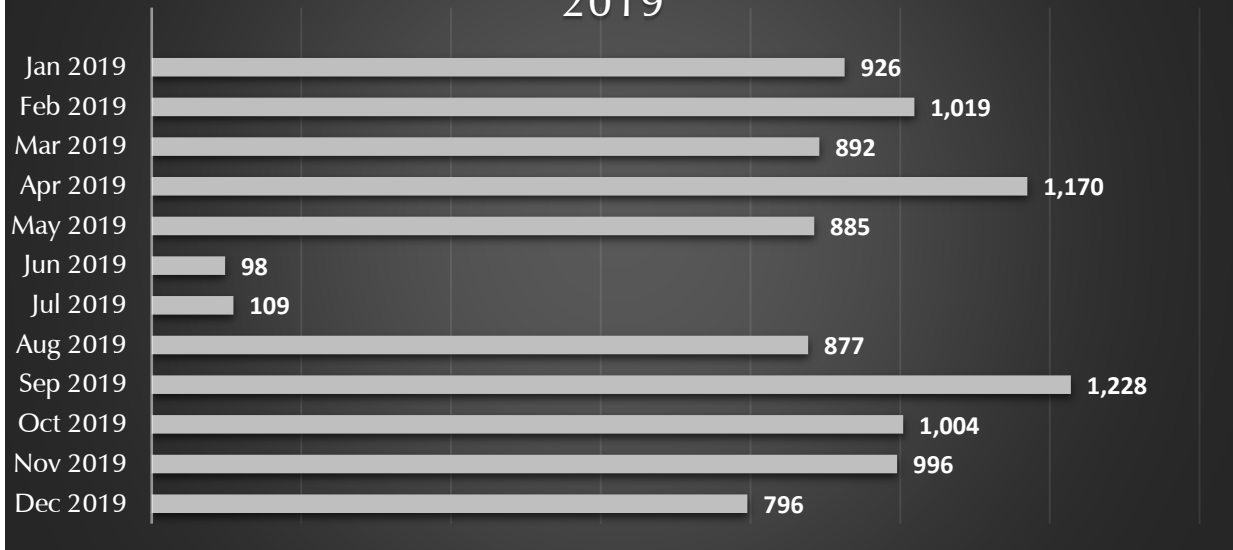


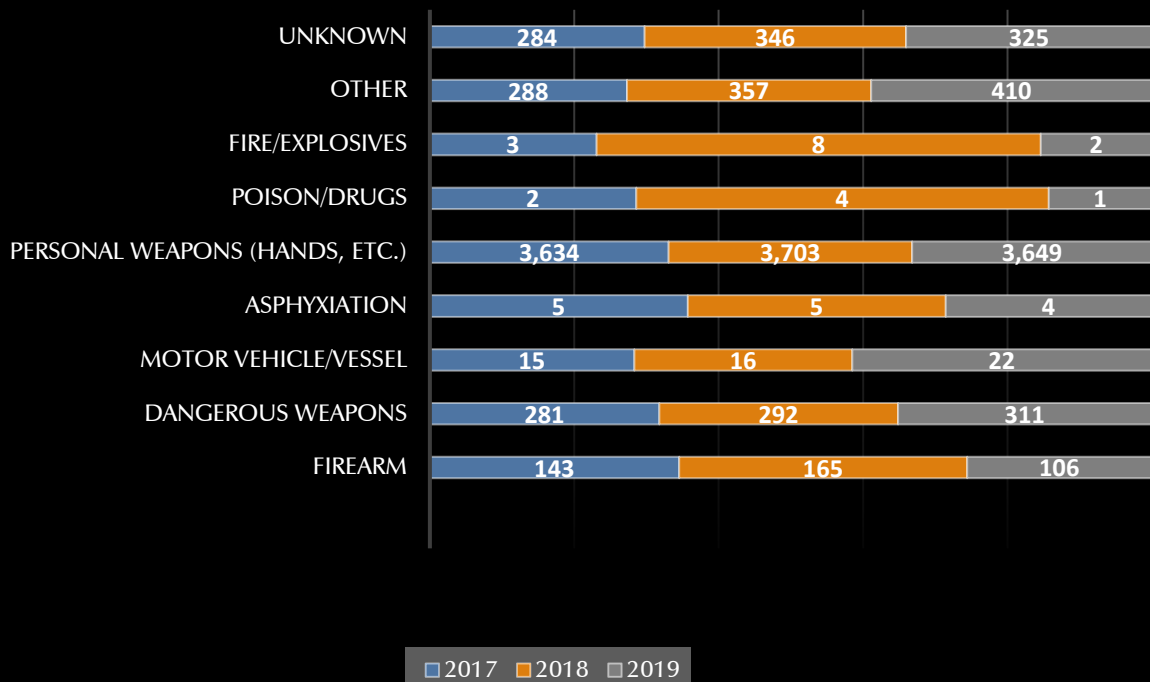
CHART 6: OFFENSES REPORTED BY MONTH 2019



Over the three-year period in this report, September had the highest number of crimes reported (3,498) followed by February (3,380) and April (3,207). As has been consistent in past years, the months of June and July continue to be the lowest due to school being out of session.

WEAPON TYPES

CHART 7: SCHOOL CRIME WEAPON TYPES



Weapon Types Continued

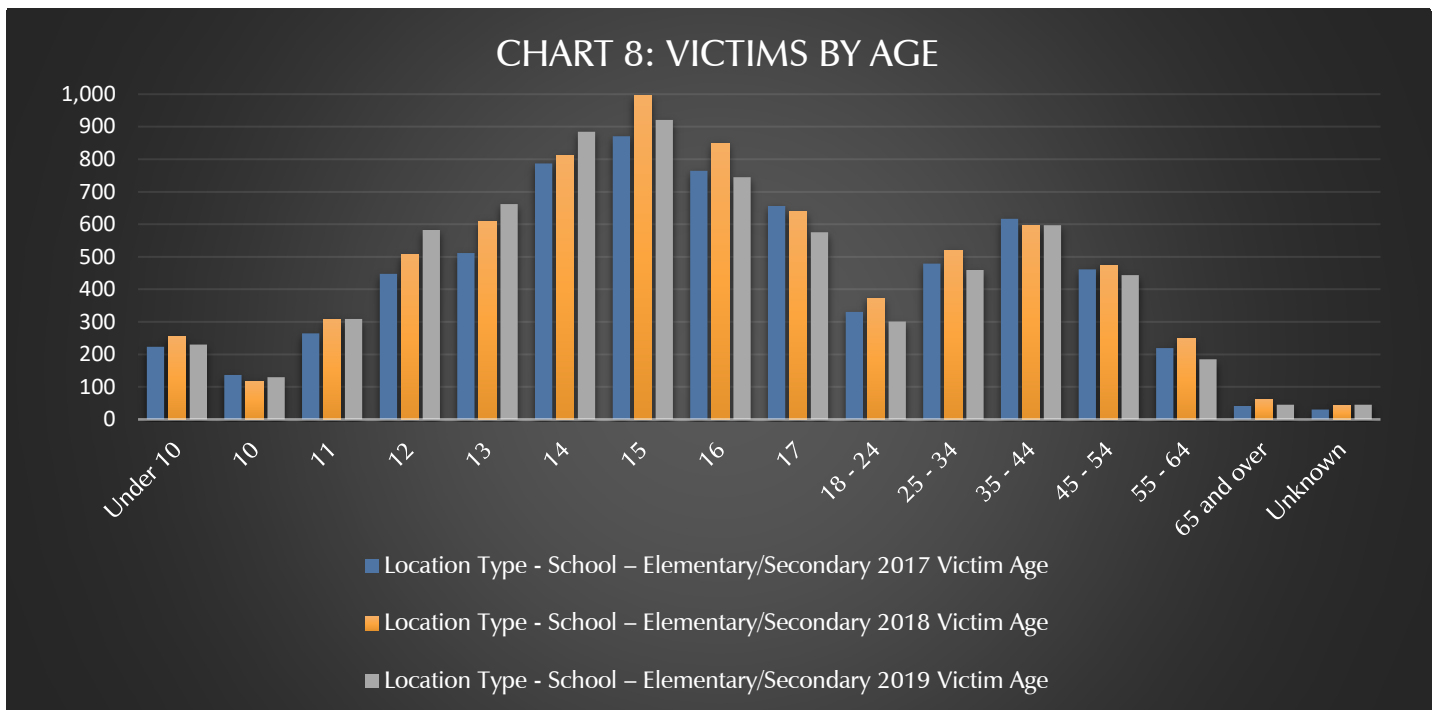
Of the 29,940 reported offenses, 48.0% involved a weapon. Since Simple Assault accounted for the highest reported offense type within the three-year time span, Personal Weapons (i.e. hands, fist, feet, etc.) comprised the largest portion of reported weapon types at 96.8%.

The second most reported known weapon type was Other at 7.3%.

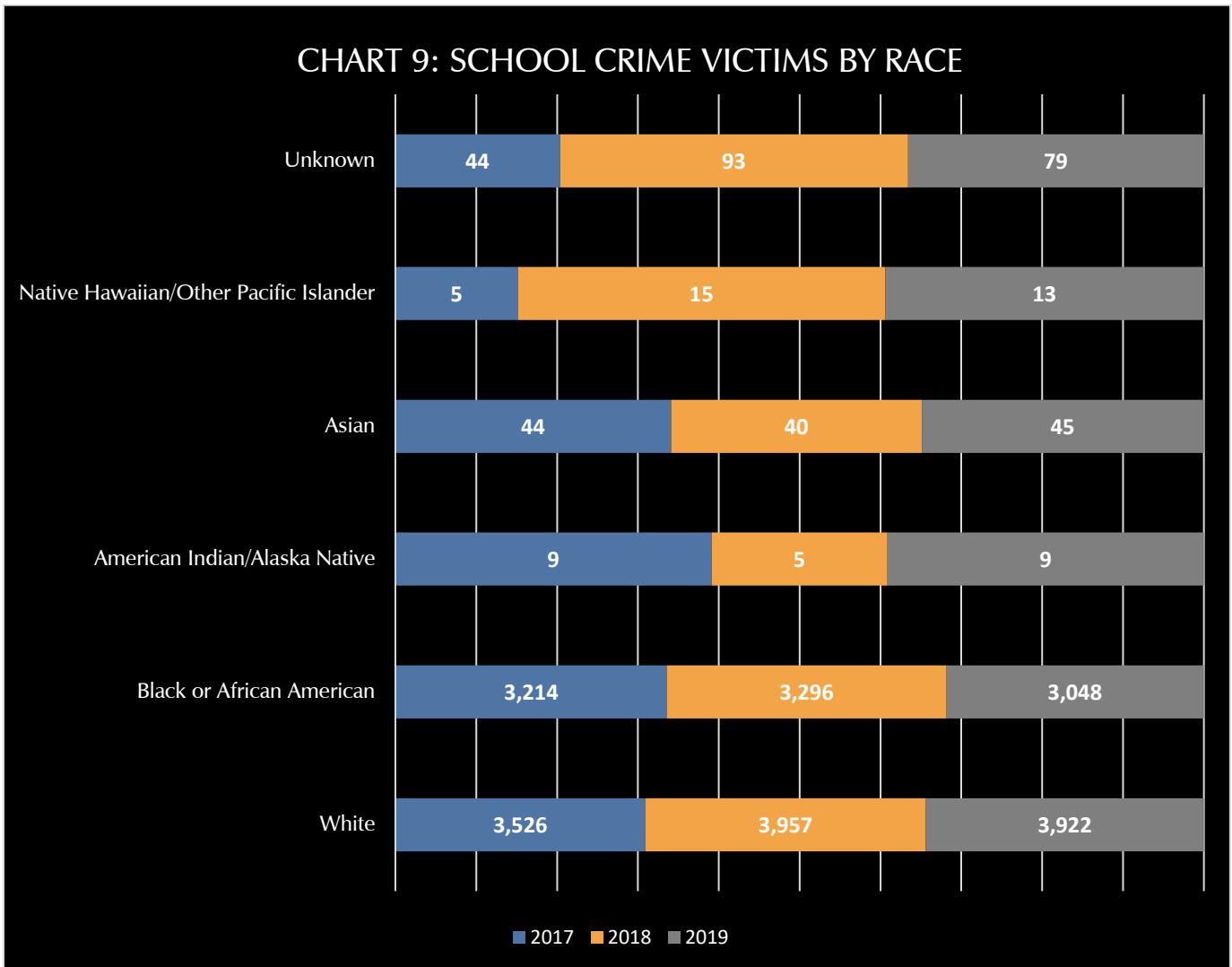
The majority of injuries were reported as None at 62.7%, followed by Apparent Minor Injury at 35.6%. The remaining injury types comprised less than one percent of reported injuries. Each of the remaining injury types represented 1.7%.

VICTIMS BY AGE

From 2017 to 2019, 21,364 victims were involved in a school crime. The overall number of school crime victims increased 4.0% from 2017 to 2019. Females accounted for 52.7% of total victims. Males, in comparison, accounted for 46.9%. Eighty-six victims were classified as an Unknown gender within this timeframe. The most frequently reported victim race was White (53.4%) followed by Black or African-American (44.7%). The remaining 1.9% of victims had a race of Asian, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, Native American/Alaskan Native, or Unknown race and are not included in the chart below.



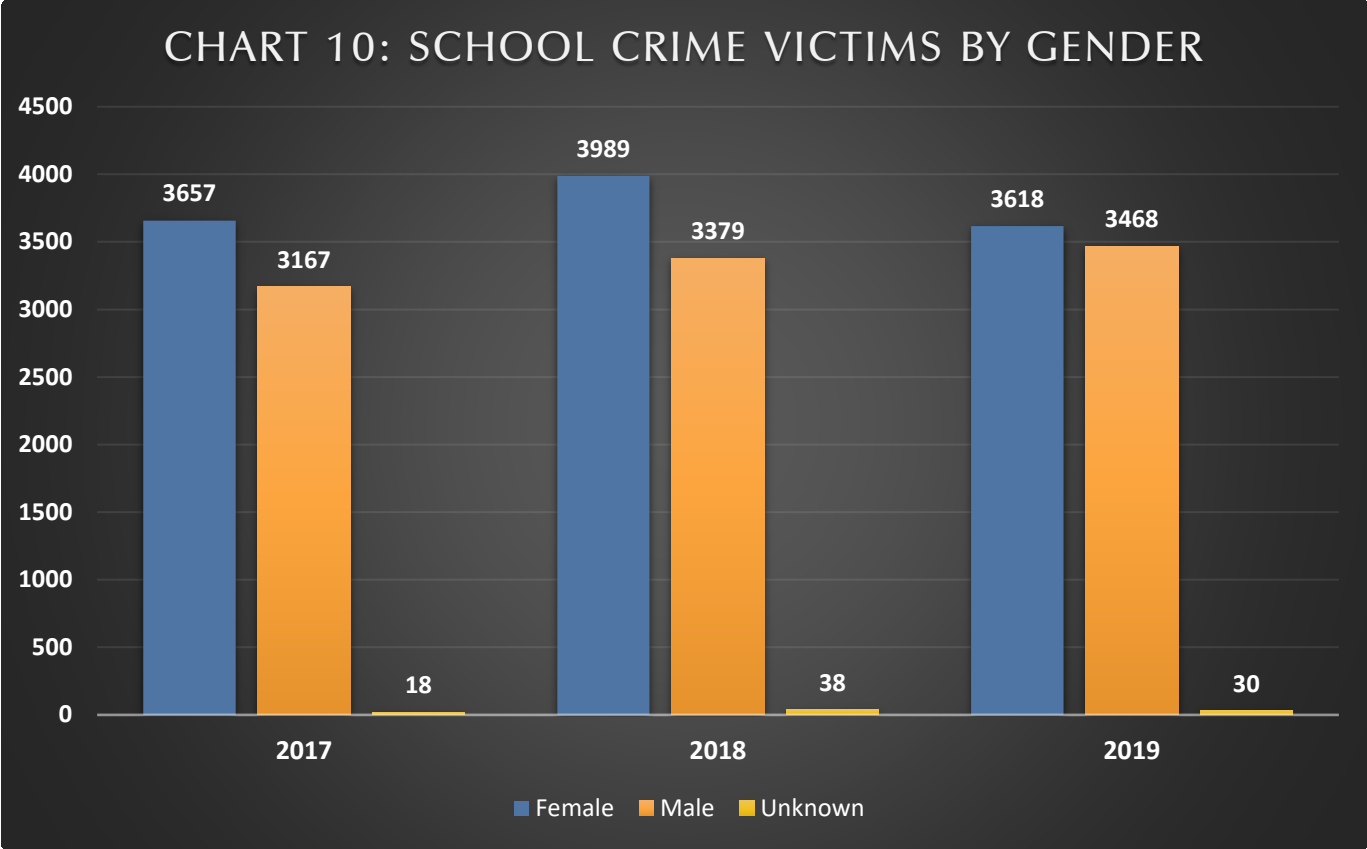
VICTIMS BY RACE



VICTIM ETHNICITY

For 2017 to 2019, agencies reported the Ethnicity of Victims involved in incidents reported to the program. There are three (3) valid selections to report this data. They are: Hispanic or Latino, Not Hispanic or Latino or Unknown. The most frequently reported Victim Ethnicity was Not Hispanic or Latino (91.9%) followed by Hispanic or Latino (5.4%). The remaining Victims were reported with the Ethnicity of Unknown (2.7%).

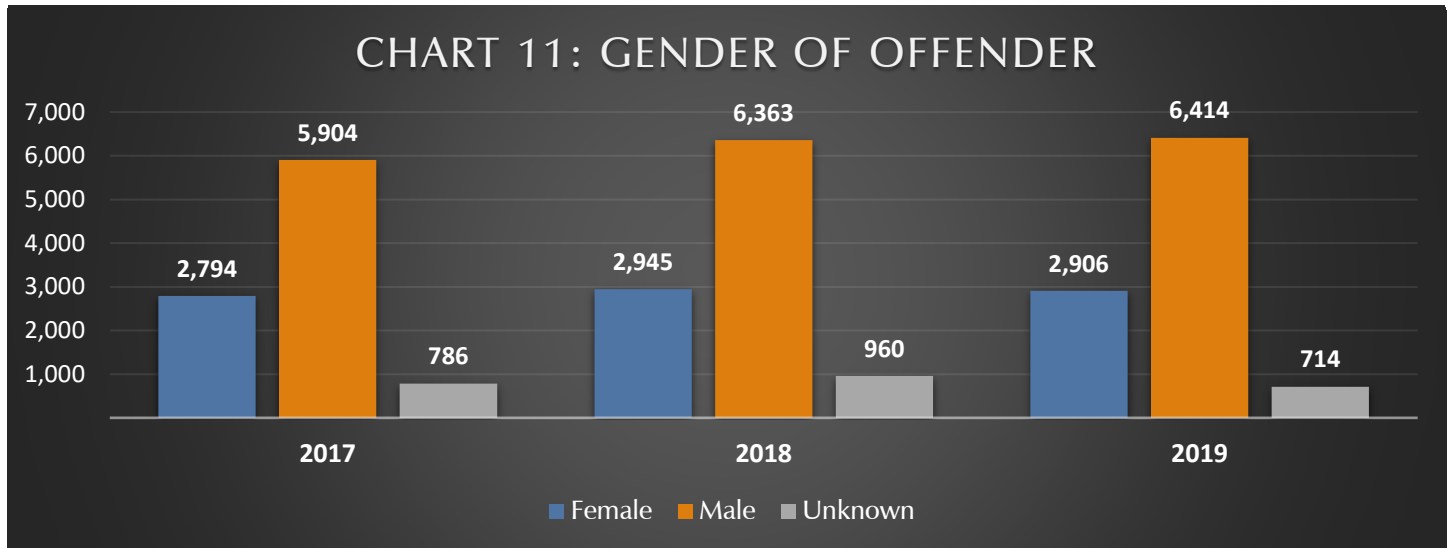
VICTIMS BY GENDER



For 2017 to 2019, the most frequently reported Victim gender was Female at 53.2%. Male Victims comprised 46.4% of the total. There was a total of 0.4% of Victims reported with an Unknown gender.

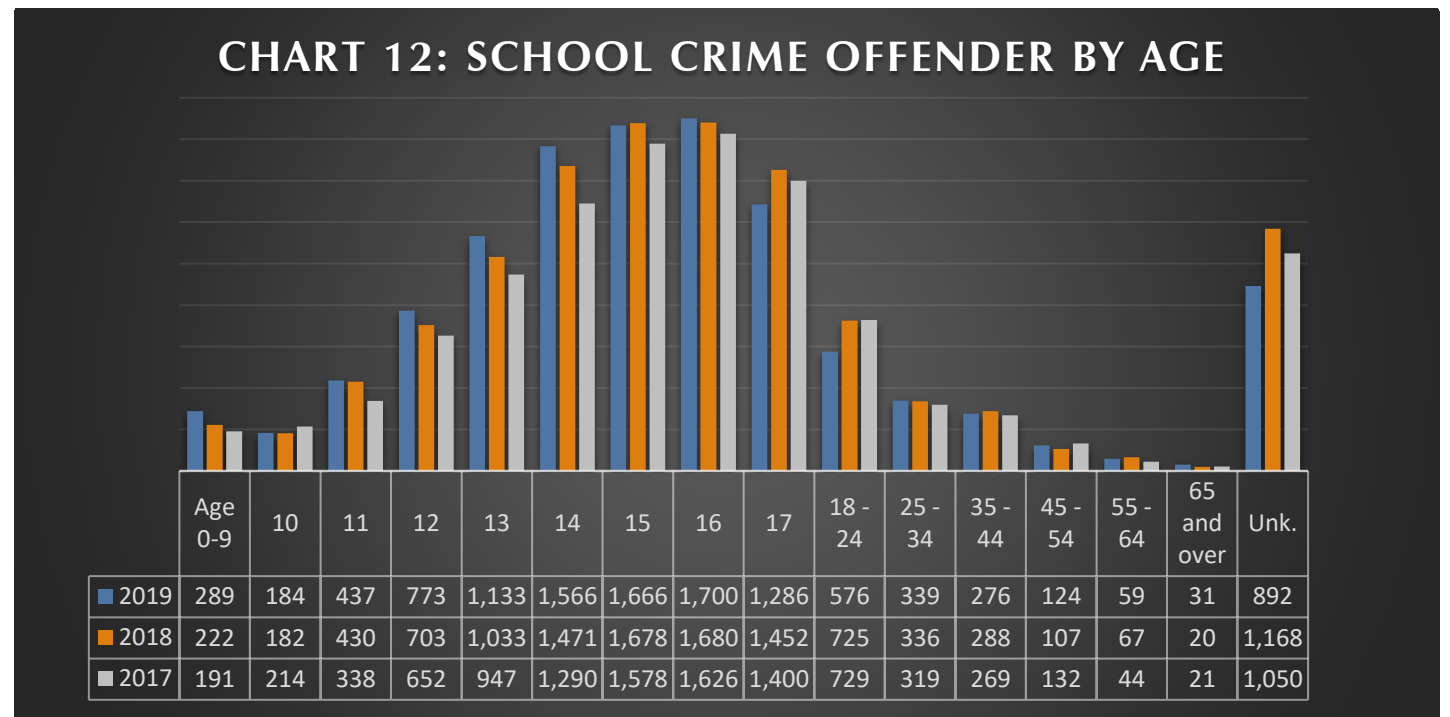
OFFENDERS BY GENDER

From 2017 to 2019, 31,338 school crime offenders were reported. Males contributed to 59.6% of the offender total compared to 27.6% reported as Female. The remaining offenders were reported as having an Unknown gender (7.8%) or Missing (5.0%). The most frequently reported offender race was Black or African-American (44.8%) followed by White (40.4%). Offenders with an Unknown/Missing race comprised 14.1%. Offenders with a reported race of Asian, American Indian/Alaskan Native, and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander accounted for less than one percent of the total.



The age group category of 14-15 accounted for the highest offender age group at 27.5%, followed by the age group category of 15-16 at 27.1%. The category of Unknown accounted for 9.2%.

OFFENDER BY AGE

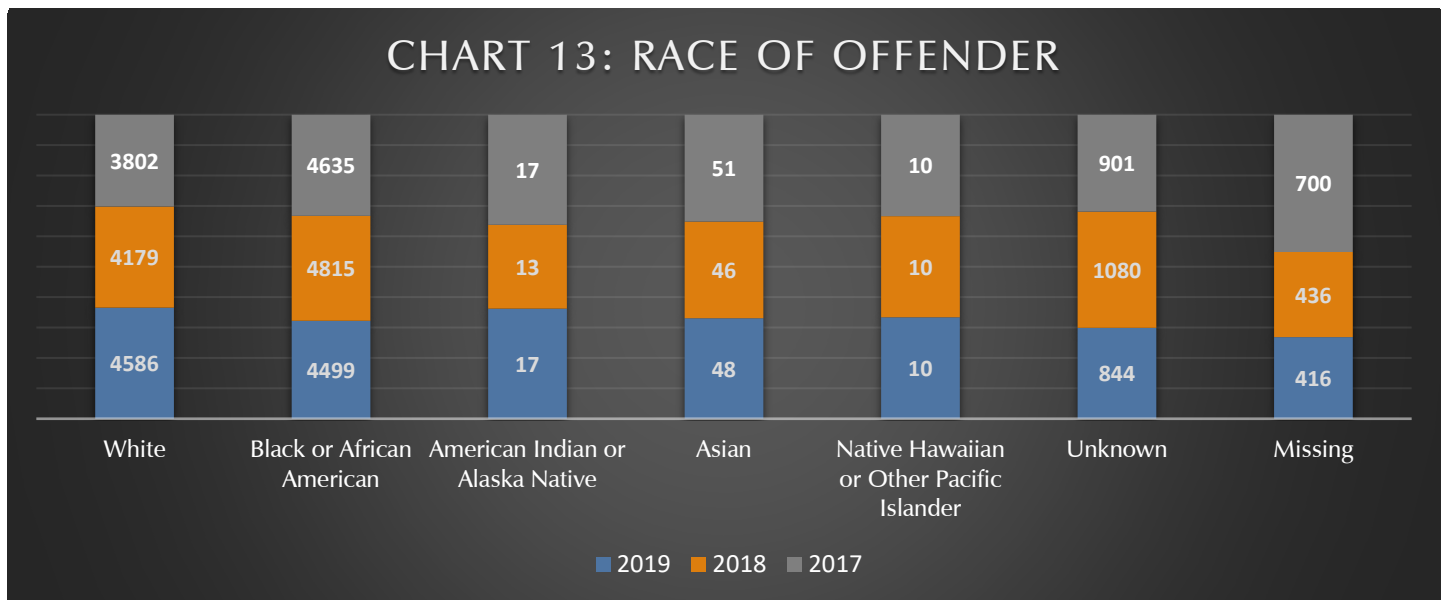


Please Note: One offense can have up to 99 offenders. The number of offenders compared to the number of offenses will rarely match.

Offenders by Age Continued

The Unknown category is reported when the officer is unable to determine the age or age range of an offender. Quality control tools have been established within the TIBRS program to confirm the category of Unknown is properly used. However, in many instances nothing is known about the offender so the Unknown demographic is all that can be reported.

OFFENDER BY RACE



SUMMARY

From 2017 to 2019, 29,940 crimes were reported by Tennessee law enforcement agencies with a school location code of School- Elementary/Secondary. The overall number of reported offenses increased 2.8%. Simple Assault was the most frequently reported offense type at 38.8%. The month of September had the highest frequency of school crimes. The largest percentage of School Crime offenses occurred between 12:00 pm and 2:59 pm at 33.2% with Thursday accounting for the highest reported day of the week for school crimes. The most common weapon type was Personal Weapons (hands, fist, feet, etc.) at 96.8%. Victim data revealed that females accounted 53.2% of the total victim counts. Males between 14-17 comprised the majority of offenders at 54.6%. Offenders in the age group 14-15 were the most frequently reported at 27.5% followed by the age group of 15-16 at 27.1%. Black or African American was the most reported offender's race (44.8%), followed by White at 40.4%.



Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, March 2021. Publication Authorization Number 348515, electronic copies only. This publication was promulgated at a cost of \$0.00 per copy.