Performance Impact Analysis (PIA)
Flexible Assignments for Certified DAEP Staff
Revised August 2, 2022

I.   **Proposed Action.**

In SY2018-19, the District Alternative Education Program ("DAEP") program had ten budgeted certified teaching staff positions.[1] During that year, DAEP operated five classrooms at four locations. All classrooms operated well below a 1:10 teacher-student ratio for most of the school year. For the first several months of that school year, two middle school classrooms each had <u>less than five</u> students. Indeed, for the period from September 12, 2018 to October 26, 2018, the middle school DAEP classroom at Doolen had no students at all.

During SY2018-19 (and prior years), the DAEP program was substantially overstaffed, with far more teachers than required to meet a 1:10 teacher student ratio.[2] The director of the program dealt with the overstaffing informally, by directing teachers not assigned to a classroom to do other duties (such as intake orientation meetings and data collection and analysis) <u>or</u> to go to other programs and help out. This was the practice in SY2018-19 and for at least two years prior to SY2018-19.

The District Court has ordered the District to return to its pre-COVID operations and staffing for DAEP, and so the DAEP budget for this coming school year once again

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[1] SY2018-19 was the last full year of in-person instruction prior to the COVID pandemic, and is thus used as the baseline for this PIA. District instruction in the final quarter of the 2019-20 school year was fully remote on-line instruction. The District continued with fully remote instruction throughout the first three quarters of the 2020-21 school year. In the final quarter of the 2020-21 school year, the District offered both in-person and remote instruction. In the 2021-22 school year, the instruction was primarily in person, with on-line instruction offered through various District programs, including Project MORE, Catalina Online Learning Experience (COLE), and the Tucson Unified Virtual Academy (TUVA).

[2] In addition to, and not counted in, the teacher to student ratio, there is a Behavior Intervention Monitor in each classroom. In 2018-19, and in subsequent years, the DAEP program had four budgeted positions for Behavioral Intervention Monitors. The District is not proposing to make any change to the budget or staffing for Behavior Intervention Monitors from pre-COVID staffing levels.

will have ten certified teaching staff positions. Again the District will operate DAEP four classrooms at all times, each with a teacher and BIM. The District will assign a fifth teacher and/or open a fifth classroom during peak program enrollment periods if necessary to maintain the court-prescribed ration 1:10 teacher student ratio.

The District proposes to formalize the prior informal flexible teaching assignments by adopting the following flexible assignment plan for certified teachers in the DAEP program:

(a) The District will assign as many teachers to classrooms as necessary for a target 1:10 teacher student ratio, with at least one certified teacher per classroom.[3] Based on DAEP enrollment in 2018-19, the District anticipates that this will require no more than four teachers for most of the coming school year, with the possibility of a fifth teacher assigned to a classroom during the peak enrollment.

(b) The District will direct one certified DAEP staff member not assigned to a classroom to conduct intake orientation meetings with incoming students, to do data collection and analysis, and to be available to cover for absences of certified staff assigned to classrooms.

(c) Any certified staff member not assigned to a classroom, or to other duties within the DAEP program, may be temporarily assigned to other duties outside the DAEP program, subject to recall if needed for classroom assignment or other duties in the DAEP Department. Any program receiving temporary assistance

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[3] The District is not proposing any change from SY2018-19 operations with respect to the number or assignment of Behavior Intervention Monitors.

from DAEP teaching staff will reimburse the DAEP program for personnel costs for the duration of the temporary assignment.

The District proposes to continue the informal flexible assignment plan which has been in use since before SY2018-19 until the Governing Board considers this PIA. If approved, the formalized version of the flexible assignment plan will be implemented immediately, but, as noted, will not make any practical difference in teacher assignment, because the proposed change is merely the codification of the existing informal practice.

II. **Issues**.

Because program enrollment varies substantially during the year, and because total program enrollment almost never exceeds forty students, having ten certified teachers assigned to DAEP results in substantial excess capacity. This issue was dealt with informally in past years, and this proposed change merely formalizes informal practices from SY2018-19 and before.

III. **Objectives**.

The District's objectives for this change are to maintain the court prescribed 1:10 teacher student ratio, while making use of excess capacity in the certified staff budgeted for DAEP, by allowing assignments for DAEP staff to be dynamically adjusted to meet changing enrollment conditions.

IV. **USP Program Background**.

The District Alternative Education Program, which has become known by its acronym DAEP, was established in SY2015-16, as part of a multi-faceted, comprehensive effort under the USP to reduce the number of days a student is removed from classroom instruction through disciplinary suspension. The overall effort included strategies (a) to

reduce the number of long-term suspensions, through more inclusive school environments, positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS), restorative practices, in-school interventions, professional learning, and data monitoring and analysis, and (b) to provide fewer days away from classroom instruction once infractions occurred, through revisions to the Code of Conduct, DAEP and abeyance contracts.

DAEP offers an option for students to continue instruction after committing a violation of the Code of Conduct that requires a long-term suspension away from school as a consequence. The program is voluntary: the student and family make the election to enter DAEP as an alternative consequence to a traditional long-term suspension. Hearing officers are trained to offer the DAEP option to every eligible student. The program is designed to continue the curriculum offered in the student's home classroom, with as little instructional interruption as practicable in the circumstances, until the student is permitted to return to the home classroom under the terms of the disciplinary consequence.

The proposed formalization of the informal flexible assignment practice does not change the instructional model, which remains as it was originally designed. DAEP students work individually on lessons provided by the home school teacher, and the DAEP teacher supervises, supports and facilitates when there are questions from a student. Specifically, the student's work is designed, assigned, and graded by his or her home teacher. DAEP teachers assist through a guided-practice teaching model, where teachers circulate the classroom and support students as they complete assigned work. DAEP is limited to core subjects, as it has been from the start. The DAEP classroom affords a supervised setting to continue lessons from the home teacher, with Wi-Fi,

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technology and other equipment needed for DAEP's small group guided practice model. Students receive individual or small-group support as they work on their assignments.

The target classroom enrollment will not change, operating on a 1:10 teacher to student ratio.

Students are provided breakfast and lunch every day. DAEP periods run from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. (with the exception of Wednesday, where DAEP students are released at 2:00 p.m. to allow for teacher collaboration), actually a small increase in daily program length over past years. The District continues to provide transportation for all students in DAEP.

Students also receive social emotional learning ("SEL") lessons and a behavioral support component in a group setting for at least forty-five minutes per day, to teach DAEP students appropriate behaviors to assist as they re-acclimate into their home school. One exceptional education teacher is assigned exclusively to serve DAEP students.

In SY2018-19, the District operated five DAEP classrooms:

(a)   a high school classroom at Project MORE, which served an average of 8 students at any given time during that school year, with a low of 2 students, and a high of 14 students (on 3 days of the school year);

(b)   a high school classroom at the Southwest Education Center, which served an average of 3 students at any given time during that school year, with a low of zero students, and a high of 8 students;

(c)   a middle school classroom at Southwest Education Center, which served an average of 4 students at any given time during that school year, with a low of 1 students, and a high of 9 students;

(d)   a middle school classroom at Magee Middle School, which served an average of 6 students at any given time during that school year, with a low of 1 student, and a high of 14 students (on 2 days of the school year); and

(e)   a middle school classroom at Doolen Middle School, which served an average of 4 students at any given time during that school year, with a low of zero students, and a high of 12 students (on 3 days if the school year).

In SY2019-20, the District did not operate the middle school classroom at Doolen.

Enrollment in DAEP over the course of the school year varies widely, from very low in the early fall, rising as the fall progresses, dropping again in winter, and rising to its annual peak in March or April each year. SY2018-19 was typical of this pattern: enrollment at the beginning of September was less than 10 students total, across all five classrooms combined; by the beginning of March, program enrollment was approximately 35, and then dropped by the end of the school year in May. The District saw the same general pattern and numbers this past year, SY2021-22.

V.   Impact Analysis: Impact on Protected Classes (AA, LatinX, including EL students).

A. Impact on Effectiveness of USP Program or Activity

As noted above, the 2018-19 school year was the last full year of in-person instruction prior to the COVID pandemic. After the close of the 2018-19 school year, the District conducted a comprehensive evaluation of the efficacy of DAEP, reported in the District Annual Report for that year as Appendix VI-17, appearing in the record as ECF

2305-2, pp. 52-95. A copy of that report is attached hereto as Exhibit A and incorporated by reference.

Pursuant to the Court's recent order, the District has returned to its pre-COVID operational status. Accordingly, the District will assess the impact of any proposed change from operations for that baseline year.

The adoption of flexible assignments for teachers not needed in DAEP classrooms does not involve any change to the DAEP teaching model, curriculum or budgeted staffing levels from the 2018-19 baseline year specified by the Court. All DAEP classrooms will continue to maintain the program's target 1:10 teacher-student ratio. Indeed, the change merely formalizes informal practices in 2018-19 and prior years. Accordingly, the District does not anticipate any impact to the effectiveness of DAEP attributable to the adoption of flexible assignments. There is no impact to program costs or budget allocations, as the budget for DAEP has included the ten certified positions since prior to SY2018-19.

B.   Impact on Other District Programs or Obligations under the USP

1. Compliance

The internal compliance monitoring system regarding USP requirements and Court orders within the District will not be altered. There is no impact on the Compliance requirements under the USP.

2. Student Assignment

The adoption of the flexible assignment plan does not impact attendance boundaries, magnet school programs, mandated integrations plans, or academic achievement plans for magnet or non-magnet schools. Students remain formally enrolled at their home school, and return to the home school after completing their assignment to

DAEP. Accordingly, there is no anticipated effect on the Student Assignment requirements under the USP.

3. Transportation

The adoption of the flexible assignment plan will not affect transportation for DAEP or other students. District will continue to provide transportation for all students to DAEP classrooms, as it did in SY2018–19. The average number of students needing transportation to DAEP classrooms will likely remain the same, and in any event is so tiny in comparison to the District's overall transportation effort as to render even a significant increase in DAEP transportation needs absorbable into the system without measurable impact. The change in locations does not conflict with any requirement under the District's Transportation Plan (last revised in March 2021).

4. Admin/Certified Staff

The adoption of flexible assignments will not change the number of teachers budgeted for the DAEP program, or otherwise remove, eliminate, or otherwise impact obligations relating to administrators and certificated staff under the USP. DAEP is not a school, but rather a program, and thus does not have separate school-based requirements under the USP, but, in any event, the flexible assignment plan proposed in this PIA does not reduce staffing below that needed to maintain a 1:10 teacher student ratio, and allows recall of DAEP teachers from alternate assignments if needed for some reason in the program. The District will continue to comply with all USP requirements for recruiting, hiring, and retention for program staff. Accordingly, there is no anticipated effect on Admin/Certified Staff programs or obligations under the USP.

5. *Quality of Education*

The District does not anticipate that the flexible assignment plan will impact any of its programs or obligations under Section V of the USP. The change in locations will not require additional funding that might impact other programs under Section V.

6. *Discipline*

As set forth above, DAEP remains a part of the District's multi-pronged effort to reduce the impact of exclusionary discipline on target subgroups. Every student facing a long-term suspension will be offered the opportunity to attend DAEP; hearing officers will continue to be trained accordingly. Additionally, as set forth above, neither the instructional model within DAEP nor the target classroom enrollment will change as a result of the adoption of the flexible assignment plan.

7. *Family and Community Engagement*

The flexible assignment plan will not alter or affect the District's compliance with the Family and Community Engagement requirements under the USP.

8. *Extracurricular Activities*

The change in DAEP locations will have no impact on the Extracurricular Activities requirements under the USP.

9. *Facilities and Technology*

The flexible assignment plan will not affect the District's USP programs and commitments in the area of facilities or technology. There will be no impact on the DAEP students regarding the quality of facilities or technology.

10. Accountability and Transparency

The flexible assignment plan will have no impact on the Accountability and Transparency reporting requirements under the USP. There is no impact to program costs or budget allocations.

C.   Data Sources

The District tracks enrollment at each DAEP classroom, including the name of the student, the dates of attendance at DAEP and the home school of the student. This was the primary data used to assess enrollment patterns, class size, number of students attending each class on any given day, and the feasibility of the flexible assignment plan without impacting target class size.

In addition, the District has reported data on long-term suspensions and DAEP enrollment in its annual report each year, from which the following data is taken:[4]

School Year	16–17	17–18	18–19	19–20
Total Long Term Suspensions[5]	415	387	286	226
DAEP Enrollment	266 (64%)	233 (60%)	177 (62%)	138 (61%)
Traditional Suspensions	41	81	84	18
Abeyance Contracts	108	73	25	70

As shown above, students who have received a long-term suspension continue to enroll in the program in approximately the same frequency as in prior years (between 50–60%). It is important to emphasize that the flexible assignment plan does <u>not</u> limit DAEP's availability or increase the number of students serving an out-of-school suspensions. No research based sources were used or needed in this analysis of the proposed flexible

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[4] DAEP has always only been offered as an alternative to a long-term suspension; it has never been used with or offered as an alternative for a short term suspension.
[5] This number includes all students who received a long-term suspension, including those who elected to enter DAEP and those who entered into abeyance contracts.

assignment plan, as it is specifically designed to maintain the 1:10 target teacher to student ratio, and does not change from informal practices in 2018-19 and prior years.

D.   Assumptions

The foregoing analysis assumes that District enrollment in DAEP will continue to operate at or around the same frequency as prior, pre-pandemic years. If DAEP enrollment increases, the District will assign additional DAEP program teachers and/or open additional classrooms at the four proposed DAEP classroom locations. There do not appear to be any adverse impacts that require mitigation.

E.   Research Based Sources

No research based sources were used or needed in this analysis of the proposed flexible assignment plan, as it is specifically designed to maintain the 1:10 target teacher to student ratio, and does not change from informal practices in 2018-19 and prior years. Though there is little national research identifying the best practices for teacher assignment within programs such as DAEP, those sources that do exist suggest teacher to student ratios up to 1:16 are appropriate.[6]

VI.   Conclusion.

Based on the foregoing, the District concludes that the adoption of the flexible assignment plan will not negatively impact the performance of DAEP or its role and

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[6] E.g., J. Owen, J. Wettach and K. Hoffman, *Instead of Suspension: Alternative Strategies for Effective School Discipline*, Duke Center for Child and Family Policy and Duke Law School (2015)(successful programs average a 1:16 teacher to student ratio); American Association of School Administrators, Inc., *Best Practices: In-School Suspension* (September 2014), available at https://www.aasa.org/school discipline.aspx (up to 1:15 teacher to student ratio); L. Aron, *Towards a Typology of Alternative Education Programs: A Compilation of Elements From the Literature*, The Urban Institute (2003)("Ranging from 8-25 students per teacher, successful [alternative education] efforts have an average ratio of 1-16."). Copies of these articles are attached hereto as Exhibit B.

efficacy in the District's overall effort to reduce the impact of exclusionary discipline on

target student subgroups.

Date: August 2, 2022
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Reviewed and Approved: *Kinasha Brown, Assistant Superintendent for EDI*

EXHIBIT A

An Evaluation of the District Alternative Education Program or DAEP over Four Years, 2015-16 to 2018-19

Overview

In 2013, as part of the Unitary Status Plan (USP), Tucson Unified School District agreed to monitor disciplinary data to ensure that school sites were not imposing discipline in a racially or ethnically disproportionate manner or otherwise contrary to District policy. The District also agreed to revise its Guidelines for Student Rights and Responsibilities handbook and to strengthen its implementation of Restorative Practices and the Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) system. Restorative Practices and PBIS are strategies designed to reduce conflict and create supportive school environments. Along with these initiatives, two new programs were introduced in 2015-16, the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program or DAEP and the In School Intervention Program or ISI program.

As evidenced by these initiatives, the District is committed to reduce disparities wherever they exist in our schools. Achieving equity in student discipline is a cornerstone of the USP and a top TUSD priority. Students cannot learn well if they do not feel safe, if they do not feel they belong, and if they do not attend school. TUSD's goal is to provide to all students fair, equitable, and successful educational experiences.

This evaluation will review the impact of DAEP during its first four years of implementation by examining the following variables of the TUSD students who attended the program:

A. Student groups served, including overrepresentation of students from economically disadvantaged families, with ethnic and racial representations, and with a disability who receive special education and limited English proficiency services, grade level
B. Number of DAEP assignments
C. Recidivism rates in discipline
D. Reasons for DAEP assignments
E. Attendance rates
F. Pre- and Post-Tests in ELA and Math
G. Higher Ground's Grit Survey
H. DAEP Exit Student Survey

Program Design

DAEP provides students in grades 6-12 who have committed a level 4 or level 5 violation with an alternative to suspension so that they can continue their education. A level 4 or 5 violation occurs when a student commits an action that puts other students or staff in potential harm or worse. Some examples of a level 4 violation are:

- Assault: causing any physical injury to another person or the apprehension of imminent physical injury
- Alcohol, tobacco, and other drug violations – possession or use
- Arson of a structure or property
- Fire alarm misuse
- Sexual offenses including harassment with contact, indecency
- Theft such as burglary, robbery, or extortion
- Weapons possession such as billy club, brass knuckles, knives, etc.

Some examples of a level 5 violation are:

- Aggravated assault to cause serious physical injury to another
- Alcohol, tobacco, and other drug violations – sale or share
- Arson of an occupied structure
- School threat (bomb, chemical, etc.)
- Theft such as armed robbery, burglary with weapon
- Firearms such as handgun, pistol, revolver, rifle, etc.

With the introduction of DAEP, a student who commits a level 4 or 5 violation, becomes suspended, and subsequently goes through the long-term hearing process will be given the conventional consequence of long-term suspension at home or the alternative, to attend DAEP. To be eligible for DAEP, the long-term suspension must be 20 days or longer but no more than 45 days. Beginning January 2018, any days suspended per incident were counted in calculating the DAEP placement. When a student enrolls in DAEP, the suspension status will be reassigned from long-term and the student's time in DAEP will be recorded as a "DAEP" disposition in TUSD's student information system. If a student refuses to enroll in DAEP, s/he is recorded as a long-term suspension.   The student may return to their school after the allotted suspension period.

If a student chooses to attend DAEP, s/he will continue core courses in small structured environments with certified teachers to stay on track academically and be current with assignments, etc. when s/he returns to his/her home school. Please see Appendix 1 for the program criteria and Appendix 2 for the program mission and vision. A primary function of DAEP teachers is the academic articulation with the home school teachers to facilitate a smooth transition from the suspending school, to DAEP, and back to the home school after the suspension period. Additionally, a support team is provided to ensure that

each student feels valued, underscore that their success matters, and address the constraints inhibiting their school success.

Students who enroll in DAEP receive additional benefits that are denied to students who declined enrollment such as:

- Continuation of services: Students with an IEP, 504 plan, or English Language Learner (ELL) status will continue to receive services during DAEP.
- No need to serve time in a detention center: About half of the enrolled students each year were arrested because they committed Level 4 and 5 offenses and were placed on probation. Without DAEP, these students would be considered in violation of their probation and would need to serve time in a detention facility.
- AzMERIT: DAEP follows the State Assessment calendar and assures that students complete the State Standardized AzMERIT or other mandated testing while enrolled in DAEP.

Staffing and Location of the Programs

Arizona has been struggling with a significant teacher shortage over the last six years or more and TUSD is no exception. Teacher vacancies have remained unfilled across the District, especially in core subjects such as science and math. This lack of certified teachers has also affected DAEP. Over the last four years, DAEP had several teacher and staff vacancies that went unfilled for the entire year including several high school positions. To compensate for the lack of certified teachers, support staff who normally offered wrap-around services, served as substitute teachers in these positions. The lack of certified teachers not only affected the ability to provide academically rigorous and aligned material to students, but may have also had the unintended effect of consigning the wrap-around support services to a lesser function.

Another staffing challenge over the last four years was to the ability to retain the Behavior Intervention Monitors (BIM) once they became trained through DAEP. Other opportunities in the District have attracted BIMs away from DAEP because of higher salaries or other personal reasons.

DAEP sites are located throughout the district, with one on the east side, one central, and one on the west side. Some changes were made to the program staffing in 2018-19 and are noted below. The locations of the DAEP sites with the full time staffing allocations are:

Programs:

A. Middle School Programs
- Southwest Ed. Center - *was fully staffed with 1 teacher and 1 BIM all year. From January to April 2019, the BIM split her time between the middle and high schools. This BIM remained at the high school and a new BIM was hired for the middle school in April.*

- Magee, MS Portable 24 - *1 Teacher and 1 BIM – fully staffed all year*

- Doolen, MS One Classroom – *1 Teacher and 1 BIM – fully staffed all year*

B. High School Program, DAEP
- Southwest Ed. Center, DAEP – *2 teachers, 1 BIM – fully staffed. From January to April 2019, the BIM split her time between the middle and high schools. This BIM remained at the high school and a new BIM was hired for the middle school in April.*

- Project MORE, DAEP - *3 teachers, I BIM – fully staffed until January 2019 when 1 teacher left and was replaced by a long term substitute.*

Results

Multiple variables were examined to assess the impact of DAEP on students who completed the program. This section is divided into demographics, attendance, academics, and discipline.

A. Student groups served – Counts include total participation

- **2015-16:** A total of 250 students were referred to DAEP from grades 6 - 12. Of those students, 157 enrolled into the program and 93 declined their enrollment.   Middle School shows a slightly greater number of students who declined (N=52) when compared to high school (N=41).

- **2016-17:** A total of 365 students were referred to DAEP from grades 6 - 12, a 46% increase in referrals from the last year. Of those students, 266 enrolled into the program and 99 declined their enrollment. Not only did referrals increase in 2016-17, enrollment into DAEP showed with an increase of 69%. Middle School shows a slightly greater number of students who declined (N=52) when compared to high school (N=47).

- **2017-18**: A total of 397 students were referred to DAEP from grades 6 - 12, a 59% increase in referrals since 2015-16. Of those students, 286 enrolled into the program and 111 declined their enrollment. Not only did referrals increase in 2017-18, enrollment into DAEP showed with an

increase of 8% from last year and 82% overall since 2015-16. Middle School shows a slightly lower number of students who declined (N=51) when compared to high school (N=60).

- **2018-19**: A total of 303 students were referred to DAEP from grades 6 - 12, a 21% increase in referrals since 2015-16. Of those students, 203 enrolled into the program and 100 declined their enrollment.   Both referrals and enrollment decreased this year, in large part due to the modifications of the Code of Conduct beginning SY2018-19 for level 4 fighting and Possession or use of drugs/alcohol. Please refer to Char 1 below. Middle School and K-8 (grades 6-8) shows a slightly higher number of students who declined (N=59) when compared to high school (N=41).

Chart 1. Changes to the TUSD Code of Conduct in SY 2018-19 for Levels 4 and 5.

Level 4	Any Action from the prior level(s) **may** also be imposed. • Restorative Conference and/or Restorative Circle (upon re-entry to school) (see page 2). • Out-of-School Suspension and/or Abeyance – Long-term (11-30 Days) (except for violations listed below) **Fighting** *First offense*–Three day suspension with two days waived if student participates in mediation. *Second offense*–Eleven day suspension with eight days held in abeyance if student participates in mediation. **Possession or Use of Drugs or Alcohol** *First offense*–Three day suspension with two days waived if student agrees to attend substance abuse workshop and, upon return to school, an intake interview and to be searched for drugs or alcohol. *Second offense*–Eleven day suspension with eight days held in abeyance if student agrees to attend drug or alcohol use workshop and, upon return to school, an intake interview, and to be searched for drugs or alcohol.
Level 5	Any Action from the prior level(s) **may** also be imposed. • Out-of-School Suspension and/or Abeyance – Long-term (11-180 Days) • Restorative Conference and/or Restorative Circle (upon re-entry to school) (see page 2). • Expulsion

Over the last four years, African American students were more likely to decline DAEP enrollment proportionately when compared to the other ethnicities across the District. Please refer to Table 1 for the breakdown by ethnicity of students who declined enrollment into DAEP.

Table 1. USP Ethnic Breakdown of Students who Declined Enrollment into DAEP compared to the USP District Ethnicity Enrollment Average.								
A student is counted each time s/he is referred								
USP Ethnicity	2015-16 (N=93)		2016-17 (N=99)		2017-18 (N=111)		2018-19 (N=100)	
	Percent who declined	District Average (40th Day)	Percent who declined	District Average (40th Day)	Percent who declined	District Average (40th Day)	Percent who declined	District Average (40th Day)
White	19%	21%	13%	20%	21%	20%	22%	20%
African Am	14%	9%	22%	9%	22%	9%	20%	9%
Hispanic	60%	61%	46%	62%	44%	62%	44%	61%
Native Am	2%	4%	9%	4%	4%	4%	7%	4%
Asian-PI	2%	2%	0%	2%	0%	2%	2%	2%
Multi-Racial	2%	3%	7%	3%	8%	3%	4%	4%
Unknown	1%	0%	3%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%

Students in grades 6 – 8 who chose to enroll in DAEP received services at Magee Middle School, Southwest Education Center, and Doolen Middle School. Additionally, Project MORE Alternative High School provided services to high school students. When compared to 2017-18, enrollment decreased at all sites except Southwest Alternative Middle School. Table 2 shows the distribution of students who enrolled in DAEP by site.

Table 2. Number and Percent of Students Enrolled in DAEP in TUSD								
A student is counted each time s/he participates								
DAEP Site	2015-16		2016-17		2017-18		2018-19	
	N Size	Percent	N Size	Percent	N Size	Percent	N Size	Percent
Doolen	28	18%	13	5%	51	18%	38	19%
Magee	35	22%	68	26%	74	26%	53	26%
SW Alt MS	35	22%	44	16%	27	9%	31	15%
SW Alt HS					44	15%	25	12%
Project MORE	59	38%	141	53%	90	32%	56	28%
Total	157	100%	266	100%	286	100%	203	100%

The ethnic breakdown of students enrolled in DAEP reveal that over the past four years, African American students are somewhat over-represented when compared to the District's overall ethnic distribution. Additionally, students enrolled in DAEP revealed a similar profile as the students who did not enroll in DAEP in terms of ethnic affiliation. In other words, the decision to participate or not in DAEP did not appear to be dependent upon ethnic or racial identification. Also, African American student referrals increased somewhat over the last 4 years, resulting in a higher disproportionality in both the declines to enroll as well as actual enrollment. Conversely, Hispanic student referrals decreased somewhat over the last 4 years, resulting in a lower proportionality in both the declines to enroll as well as actual enrollment.

Table 3. Number of Students Enrolled in DAEP by USP Ethnicity												
A student who participates more than once is counted each time s/he participates												
USP Ethnicity	2015-16			2016-17			2017-18			2018-19		
	N Size	% (Missing not included)	% District (40th Day)	N Size	% (Missing not included)	% District (40th Day)	N Size	% (Missing not included)	% District (40th Day)	N Size	% (Missing not included)	% District (40th Day)
White	24	15%	21%	44	17%	20%	55	19%	20%	31	15%	20%
African American	21	14%	9%	44	17%	9%	53	19%	9%	32	16%	9%
Hispanic	92	59%	61%	147	55%	62%	147	52%	62%	115	57%	61%
Native American	10	7%	4%	17	6%	4%	13	5%	4%	13	6%	4%
Asian-PI	1	0%	2%	1	0%	2%	2	0%	2%	3	2%	2%
Multi-Racial	7	5%	3%	12	5%	3%	13	5%	3%	9	4%	4%
Total	156	100%	100%	265	100%	100%	283	100%	100%	203	100%	100%
Missing	1			1			3			0		

Students in Exceptional Education and with 504 plans were also over-represented in program participation. Across the District, ExEd students make up almost 17% of the District's total population.

- **2015-16:** Students in DAEP requiring specialized services such as the ExEd/504 students made up 36% of the total DAEP enrollment and ELL students added another 3%. Of these students, Hispanic and African American students made up the majority at 80% in 2015-16.

- **2016-17:** Students in DAEP requiring specialized services such as the ExEd/504 decreased to 21% and ELL students added another 2%. Students in ExEd or having a 504 were also more distributed

across ethnicities than the year prior because Native American students, and to a lesser degree Multi-Racial students, showed a higher representation.

- **2017-18:** Students in DAEP requiring specialized services such as the ExEd/504 increased slightly from last year to 23% and ELL students added another 2%. Students in ExEd or having a 504 were distributed across all the ethnicities, although Hispanic students did reveal a decline over the last three years. Conversely, Native American ExEd/504 students showed an increase over three years. African American ExEd/504 students were relatively stable enrollment over the last years. Both Native American and African American students were overrepresented in comparison to the district ethnic breakdowns. Finally White and Multi-Racial ExEd/504 students showed a gradual increase over the last three years.

- **2018-19:** Students in DAEP requiring specialized services such as the ExEd/504 increased slightly from last year to 30% and ELL students added another 1%. Students in ExEd or having a 504 were distributed across all the ethnicities, although White and Hispanic students did reveal a decline over the last four years. Conversely, Native American ExEd/504 students showed an increase over four years. African American and Multi-Racial ExEd/504 students were relatively stable in their enrollment over the last four years. Both Native American and African American students were overrepresented in comparison to the district ethnic breakdowns. .

Please refer to Table 4 to see the number and percent of students requiring specialized services by ethnicity. In terms of program participation over the last four years, the ethnic distribution of the students who receive specialized services is representative of the overall student DAEP enrollment with the exception of Native American students who were over-represented over the last four years.

Table 4. Number and Percent of DAEP Enrolled Exceptional Education Students, 504 Plan Students, and English Language Learner Students by USP Ethnicity											
A student who participates more than once is counted each time s/he participates											
	2015-16			2016-17			2017-18			2018-19		
USP Ethnicity	N Size	ExEd and 504	ELL	N Size	ExEd and 504 Plans	ELL	N Size	ExEd and 504 Plans	ELL	N Size	ExEd and 504 Plans	ELL
White	9	15%		8	13%		16	19%	3%	7	12%	
African American	10	16%		7	10%	1%	11	15%		10	17%	
Hispanic	39	57%	7%	34	51%	5%	30	36%	6%	32	53%	1%
Native American	2	3%		8	13%		8	11%		7	11%	
Asian-Pacific Islander	0	0		0	0		1	1%		3	5%	
Multi-Racial	1	2%		4	7%		5	7%		1	1%	
Total	61			61			72			60		

When examining the home school from which the referrals originated, the five top referring schools in rank order were:

- **2015-16:** Utterback, Palo Verde, Valencia, Doolen, and Vail. Grades 6 – 8 from the middle schools and K-8 schools made up 60% of participants while 40% of participants came from the high schools.
- **2016-17:** THMS, Pueblo, Palo Verde, Doolen and (tie) Secrist/Utterback. Grades 6 – 8 from the middle schools and K-8 schools made up 47% of participants while 53% of participants came from high schools.
- **2017-18**: Secrist, Doolen, Pueblo, Sahuaro and (tie) Santa Rita/THMS. Grades 6 – 8 from the middle schools and K-8 schools made up 53% of participants while 47% of participants came from the high schools.
- **2018-19**: Pueblo, Gridley, Doolen, and (tie) Secrists and Tucson High. Grades 6 – 8 from the middle schools and K-8 schools made up 61% of participants while 39% of participants came from the high schools.

This data indicates that the DAEP program established itself as a viable resource for suspended students across middle and high school by 2016-17 and has continued to be an important district service into 2018-19. All school levels (K-8, Middle, and High Schools) have taken advantage of the program from 2015-16 to 2017-18 with an increase in referrals. Changes to the Code of Conduct implemented in SY 2018-19 channeled Level 4 students into mediation for fighting violations and substance abuse workshops for drugs and alcohol violations rather than into DAEP, effectively reducing the number of referrals into the program. Please see Table 5 for a breakdown of participation by school over four years.

Table 5. Number of Students Enrolled to DAEP by Home School									
(ISI) = In School Intervention Program Original Schools. Available now in all Middle and High Schools and large K-8's									
A student who participates more than once is counted each time s/he participates									
Type	Referring School	2015-16		2016-17		2017-18		2018-19	
		Students		Students		Students		Students	
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Middle School	Dodge					2	1%	2	1%
	Doolen (ISI)	13	8%	21	8%	30	10%	18	9%
	Gridley (ISI)	1	1%	9	4%	14	5%	19	9%
2015-16 (N=83)	Magee (ISI)	5	3%	7	3%	10	3%	11	5%
2016-17 (N=103)	Mansfeld (ISI)	3	2%	5	2%	1	0%	1	0%
	Pistor (ISI)	7	4%	8	3%	10	3%	8	4%
2017-18 (N=123)	Secrist (ISI)	4	3%	15	6%	30	10%	12	6%
	Utterback (ISI)	29	18%	15	6%	3	1%	6	3%
2018-19 (N=92)	Vail (ISI)	11	7%	9	3%	11	4%	9	5%

	Valencia (ISI)	13	8%	14	5%	12	4%	6	3%
K-8 School 2015-16 (N=10) 2016-17 (N=22) 2017-18 (N=29) 2018-19 (N=31)	C.E. Rose							3	2%
	Dietz (ISI)	4	3%			2	1%		
	Fickett (ISI)	2	1%	8	3%	12	4%	9	5%
	Hollinger (ISI)	1	1%	1	0%			2	1%
	Lawrence							4	2%
	M. Maxwell	1	1%						
	McCorkle					2	1%	1	0%
	Pueblo Gardens							1	0%
	Robert-Naylor (ISI)			1	0%	7	2%	3	2%
	Roskruge							1	0%
	Safford (ISI)	3	2%	12	4%	6	2%	7	4%
High School 2015-16 (N=54) 2016-17 (N=141) 2017-18 (N=134) 2018-19 (N=80)	Catalina (ISI)	9	6%	12	4%	5	2%	4	2%
	Cholla (ISI)	8	5%	13	5%	14	5%	4	2%
	Palo Verde (ISI)	15	10%	22	8%	8	3%	7	4%
	Project MORE			1	0%	2	1%	1	0%
	Pueblo (ISI)	8	5%	28	11%	27	9%	20	10%
	Rincon (ISI)	5	3%	12	4%	6	2%	10	5%
	Sabino	6	4%	4	2%	11	4%	10	5%
	Sahuaro (ISI)	4	3%	10	4%	19	7%	11	5%
	Santa Rita (ISI)			7	3%	18	6%		
	THMS (ISI)	3	2%	31	12%	18	6%	12	6%
	University	0	0%	1	0%	5	2%	1	0%
	Missing (UK)	*2*	*1%*			*1*	*1%*		

Table 5 shows the distribution of referring schools and Tables 6a, 6b, and 6c show the same information by school and ethnicity. These tables also indicate the original ISI schools, formalized in 2015-16. The program has expanded over the last four years so that currently it is housed in all middle and high schools and also in the larger K-8 schools. This information reveals that individual schools generally referred a low but consistent number of students from each ethnicity into DAEP with some exceptions:

- **2015-16:** Utterback, Valencia, and Pistor referred the largest group of Hispanic students and Palo Verde that referred the largest group of White students.

- **2016-17:** THMS, Pueblo, Palo Verde, and Utterback referred the largest group of Hispanic students. Doolen referred the largest group of African American students, and Secrist referred the largest group of White students.

- **2017-18**: Pueblo referred the largest group of Hispanic students. Secrist and Doolen referred the largest group of African American students, and Santa Rita and Sabino referred the largest group of White students.

- **2018-19**: Pueblo referred the largest group of Hispanic students. Doolen referred the largest group of African American students, and Gridley referred the largest group of White students.

In summary, over the last four years of the DAEP program, the referrals to DAEP by school by ethnicity tended to be dispersed across the 29 schools in relatively low numbers (generally less than 6 or 7 by ethnicity). Over the last three years, pockets of schools referred higher numbers of Hispanics which may be a reflection of proportionally of their school representation, followed by one or two schools that referred higher numbers of African American and White students.

Table 6a. Number of students enrolled to DAEP by USP ethnicity and home school 2015-16							
A student who participates more than once is counted each time s/he participates							
Referring School	2015-16 USP Ethnicity						
	White	African American	Hispanic	Native American	Asian P/I	Multi-Racial	Total
Catalina (ISI)	0	4	5	0	0	0	9
Cholla (ISI)	1	1	4	1	0	0	7
Dietz	1	1	1	0	0	0	3
Doolen (ISI)	3	3	4	1	1	0	12
Fickett (ISI)	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
Gridley (ISI)	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Hollinger	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Magee (ISI)	1	1	2	0	0	0	4
Mansfeld (ISI)	0	0	2	0	0	1	3
Maxwell	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Palo Verde (ISI)	6	3	5	1	0	0	15
Pistor (ISI)	1	0	6	0	0	0	7
Pueblo (ISI)	0	2	4	1	0	0	7
Rincon (ISI)	1	0	3	0	0	1	5
Sabino	2	1	2	0	0	0	5
Safford (ISI)	0	0	1	2	0	0	3
Sahuaro (ISI)	1	0	3	0	0	0	4
Secrist (ISI)	0	1	3	0	0	0	4
THMS (ISI)	1	0	0	0	0	1	2
Utterback (ISI)	1	1	22	4	0	1	29
Vail (ISI)	2	1	5	0	0	2	10
Valencia (ISI)	2	0	11	0	0	0	13
All Schools	23	20	87	10	1	5	147
Missing Data N=10							

Table 6b. Number of students enrolled to DAEP by USP ethnicity and home school 2016-17							
A student who participates more than once is counted each time s/he participates							
Referring School	2016-17 USP Ethnicity						
	White	African American	Hispanic	Native American	Asian P/I	Multi-Racial	Total
Catalina (ISI)	3	1	4	0	1	3	12
Cholla (ISI)	3	1	8	1	0	0	13
Doolen (ISI)	2	7	9	1	0	2	21
Fickett (ISI)	0	4	4	0	0	0	8
Gridley (ISI)	4	4	1	0	0	0	9
Hollinger (ISI)	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Magee (ISI)	1	4	2	0	0	0	7
Mansfeld (ISI)	2	0	0	3	0	0	5
Naylor (ISI)	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Palo Verde (ISI)	3	3	14	0	0	2	22
Pistor (ISI)	0	0	5	1	0	1	7
PMORE	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Pueblo (ISI)	1	1	22	4	0	0	28
Rincon (ISI)	1	5	6	0	0	0	12
Sabino	3	0	1	0	0	0	4
Safford (ISI)	0	0	9	3	0	0	12
Sahuaro (ISI)	4	1	5	0	0	0	10
Santa Rita (ISI)	5	1	1	0	0	0	7
Secrist (ISI)	6	2	5	0	0	2	15
THMS (ISI)	2	4	23	0	0	2	31
University	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Utterback (ISI)	0	0	14	1	0	0	15
Vail (ISI)	1	4	4	0	0	0	9
Valencia (ISI)	2	0	9	3	0	0	14
All Schools	44	44	147	17	1	12	265
Missing Data N=1							

Table 6c. Number of students enrolled to DAEP by USP ethnicity and home school 2017-18							
A student who participates more than once is counted each time s/he participates							
Referring School	2017-18 USP Ethnicity						
	White	African American	Hispanic	Native American	Asian P/I	Multi-Racial	Total
Catalina (ISI)	1	2	2	0	0	0	5
Cholla (ISI)	2	2	9	1	0	0	14
Dietz (ISI)	1	0	0	0	0	1	2
Dodge	0	0	1	1	0	0	2
Doolen (ISI)	5	8	12	3	0	2	30
Fickett (ISI)	2	3	6	0	0	1	12
Gridley (ISI)	4	3	7	0	0	0	14
Magee (ISI)	3	1	6	0	0	0	10
Mansfeld (ISI)	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
McCorkle	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
Naylor (ISI)	1	1	4	0	0	1	7
Palo Verde (ISI)	2	4	2	0	0	0	8
Pistor (ISI)	0	0	9	1	0	0	10
PMORE	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
Pueblo (ISI)	0	4	21	0	0	2	27
Rincon (ISI)	1	2	3	0	0	0	6
Sabino	7	2	2	0	0	0	11
Safford (ISI)	0	1	4	1	0	0	6
Sahuaro (ISI)	6	4	8	0	1	0	19
Santa Rita (ISI)	8	0	6	1	0	0	15
Secrist (ISI)	6	9	12	0	0	3	30
TAP	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
THMS (ISI)	0	2	12	1	0	2	17
University	1	1	2	0	0	1	5
Utterback (ISI)	0	0	3	0	0	0	3
Vail (ISI)	4	1	5	0	1	0	11
Valencia (ISI)	0	1	6	4	0	0	11
All Schools	55	53	147	13	2	13	283
Missing Data N=3							

Table 6d. Number of students enrolled to DAEP by USP ethnicity and home school 2018-19							
A student who participates more than once is counted each time s/he participates							
Referring School	2018-19 USP Ethnicity						
	White	African American	Hispanic	Native American	Asian P/I	Multi-Racial	Total
Catalina (ISI)	0	2	2	0	0	0	4
Cholla (ISI)	1	0	3	0	0	0	4
Dietz (ISI)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dodge	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
Doolen (ISI)	2	7	9	0	0	0	18
Fickett (ISI)	2	2	4	0	0	1	9
Gridley (ISI)	6	4	6	0	0	3	19
Magee (ISI)	0	3	5	2	0	1	11
Mansfeld (ISI)	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
McCorkle	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Naylor (ISI)	0	0	3	0	0	0	3
Palo Verde (ISI)	2	1	3	0	1	0	7
Pistor (ISI)	2	1	5	0	0	0	8
PMORE	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Pueblo (ISI)	0	0	14	5	1	0	20
Rincon (ISI)	1	4	4	0	0	1	10
Sabino	3	2	4	1	0	0	10
Safford (ISI)	0	0	4	3	0	0	7
Sahuaro (ISI)	4	3	4	0	0	0	11
Santa Rita (ISI)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Secrist (ISI)	3	1	8	0	0	0	12
TAP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
THMS (ISI)	2	0	9	0	0	1	12
University	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Utterback (ISI)	0	0	6	0	0	0	6
Vail (ISI)	2	1	6	0	0	0	9
Valencia (ISI)	0	0	5	0	1	0	6
All Schools	31	32	115	13	3	9	203
Missing Data N=0							

B. Number of assignments

- **2015-16:** Of the 157 students who were assigned to DAEP, 89% successfully completed DAEP and 10% did not. Two students (or 1%) will continue their DAEP enrollment into the 2016-17 school year before returning to their home school. Additionally, 13 students or 8% were enrolled more than once to the program in 2015-16. Only 1 student from the 13 who were enrolled twice did not complete the program.

- **2016-17:** Of the 266 students who were assigned to DAEP, 87% successfully completed DAEP and 13% did not. One student continued their DAEP enrollment into the 2017-18 school year before returning to their home school. Additionally, 23 students or 9% were enrolled more than once to the program in 2016-17. Of those students, 9 did not complete the program largely because they broke the behavior contract that marshaled the program, or to a lesser degree did not show up to participate, withdrew, or became incarcerated.

- **2017-18:** Of the 286 students who were assigned to DAEP, 89% successfully completed DAEP and 10% did not. Two students (or 1%) will continue their DAEP enrollment into the 2018-19 school year before returning to their home school. Additionally, 31 students or 11% were enrolled more than once to the program in 2017-18. Of those students, 5 did not complete the program largely because they broke the behavior contract that marshaled the program, or to a lesser degree did not show up to participate, withdrew, or became incarcerated.

- **2018-19:** Of the 203 students who were assigned to DAEP, 91% successfully completed DAEP and 9% did not. Five students will continue their DAEP enrollment into the 2019-20 school year before returning to their home school and 24 students will start their fall semester in 2019 at DAEP because of incidents that occurred at the end of the 2018-19 school year. Additionally, 6 students or 3% were enrolled more than once in 2018-19 and completed the program both times.

Reasons for not completing the program were varied and complex. For example, some reasons included: student breaking the behavior contract, parent withdrawing student from program early, transportation issues, instability of housing (run away, group home, kicked out of parental home), drug use/rehab etc. Even with the added individualized support from DAEP, some students must contend with significant challenges both inside and outside of school. Because of these challenges, the students were not able to complete the program.

C. Recidivism rates in discipline

Students enrolled in DAEP had repeated discipline incidences throughout the school year which included both in-school consequences and out-of-school suspensions. This data reveals that:

- **2015-16:** Almost half (46%) of students got in trouble just once or twice at their home school, attended DAEP and completed the year without any further discipline incidents. About 29% of students continued to get into trouble 3 or 4 times during the year at their home school resulting in both in school and out of school suspensions.   Finally, about a quarter of students repeatedly got into trouble 5 or more times and attended DAEP one or two times.

- **2016-17:** More than half (58%) of students got in trouble just once or twice at their home school, attended DAEP and completed the year without any further discipline incidents. About 26% of students continued to get into trouble 3 or 4 times during the year at their home school resulting

in both in school and out of school suspensions.   Finally, about 15% of students repeatedly got into trouble 5 or more times and attended DAEP one or two times.

- **2017-18:** More than half (54%) of students got in trouble just once or twice at their home school, attended DAEP and completed the year without any further discipline incidents. About 37% of students continued to get into trouble 3 or 4 times during the year at their home school resulting in both in school and out of school suspensions. Finally, about 9% of students repeatedly got into trouble 5 or more times and attended DAEP one or two times.

- **2018-19:** More than half (63%) of students got in trouble just once or twice at their home school, attended DAEP and completed the year without any further discipline incidents. About 29% of students continued to get into trouble 3 or 4 times during the year at their home school resulting in both in school and out of school suspensions. Finally, about 8% of students repeatedly got into trouble 5 or more times and attended DAEP one or two times.

This data suggests that students who completed DAEP in 2018-19 were less likely to be involved in 4 or more incidents when compared to the three prior years. Table 7a shows the distribution of the total discipline (in school and out of school) of individual students enrolled in DAEP:

Table 7a. Percent of students who had one or more discipline incident (both in-school consequences and out-of-school suspensions)				
Number of Incidents by Student	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
1 Incident	27%	35%	27%	38%
2 Incidents	19%	23%	27%	25%
3 Incidents	12%	16%	26%	20%
4 Incidents	17%	10%	11%	9%
5 or more Incidents	25%	16%	9%	8%

This data suggests that more than half of students who attended DAEP were infrequent offenders who got in trouble once or twice during the school year and went on to attend DAEP at least one time. The other half of students had a longer discipline incident history which included both in-school and out-of-school consequences including DAEP. Additionally, incident and suspension data of the most frequent offending DAEP students with 4 or more incidents and/or suspensions decreased from 42% in 2015-16 to 26% in 2016-17, 20% in 2017-18 to 17% in 2018-19. This data suggests that involvement in DAEP may help to reduce the number of discipline incidents of repeated offenders.

D. Reasons for DAEP assignment

To be invited to participate in DAEP, a student needed to have committed an offense that resulted in a long-term suspension of 20 days or more. Most frequently, these offenses are considered a level 4 or 5 violation according to the Guidelines for Student Rights and Responsibilities (GSRR). Please refer this link to view the entire revised handbook: http://www.tusd1.org/Information/Resources/Student-Guidelines.

- **2015-16:** 6% of enrolled students had level 3 violations (disorderly conduct), 67% had level 4 violations, and 27% had level 5 violations.

- **2016-17:** 9% of enrolled students had level 3 violations (disorderly conduct), 62% had level 4 violations, and 29% had level 5 violations.

- **2017-18:** <1% of enrolled students had level 3 violations (vandalism), 62% had level 4 violations, and 37% had level 5 violations.

- **2018-19:** 2% of enrolled students had level 3 violations (e.g. broken abeyance contract), 51% had level 4 violations, and 36% had level 5 violations and 1% was unknown.

Table 8 shows the type and distribution of infractions that students were involved in. The data indicates that over the last four years, aggression was the most common violation followed by marijuana use and to a lesser degree, other drug use.

Table 8. Number of students by infraction *Infractions listed are not exhaustive but are the most common ones*								
Infraction*	2015-16		2016-17		2017-18		2018-19	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Aggression	59	38%	92	35%	126	44%	179	44%
Drugs	11	7%	59	22%	20	7%	33	8%
Marijuana	43	27%	67	25%	77	27%	76	19%
Sexual Misconduct	5	3%	10	4%	14	5%	19	5%
Arson	5	3%	6	2%	3	1%	4	1%
Theft	1	1%	6	2%	3	1%	6	2%
Weapons	5	3%	6	2%	11	4%	17	4%
Fire Alarm	2	1%	4	2%				
Other or Missing	*26*	*17%*	*16*	*6%*	*32*	*11%*	*71*	*17%*

2015-16: When the infractions were broken down by site, some patterns were revealed and were consistent from year to year. For example in 2015-16, Utterback had the greatest problem with aggression, followed by Valencia and Vail. This data suggests that middle schools need additional PBIS and other positive discipline policies to mediate aggression. This finding aligns to the findings from the *2015-16 Learning supports Coordinator (LSC) Annual Report* where only a quarter of middle schools

teachers felt that positive discipline strategies were effective in reducing conflict at their schools. These results suggest that middle schools may need additional training in restoratives and a wider set of complementary strategies to encourage positive student behavior. On the other hand, drugs and marijuana appear to be more evident at the high school level in 2015-16 such as Palo Verde, Cholla, and Pueblo suggesting that student engagement in high interest in-school and after-school activities are needed to provide alternatives to using drugs. Please see Table 9a for a breakdown of the number of students in 2015-16 by infraction and school.

Table 9a. 2015-16 Number of Individual Students by Infraction and Home School *ISI original schools in Bold and Italicized* *Infractions listed are not exhaustive but are the most common ones*									
Referring School	2015-16 Infraction*								
	Aggression	Drugs	Marijuana	Sexual	Arson	Theft	Weapons	Alarm/ Sch Threat	Totals
Catalina	4	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	8
Cholla	0	1	6	0	0	0	0	0	7
Dietz	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3
Doolen	3	0	3	0	2	0	0	0	8
Fickett	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Gridley	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Hollinger	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Magee	1	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	4
Mansfeld	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	3
Maxwell	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Palo Verde	3	0	9	0	1	1	1	0	15
Pistor	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Pueblo	0	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	6
Rincon	2	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	5
Sabino	1	2	0	1	0	0	1	0	5
Safford	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	3
Sahuaro	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	4
Secrist	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	4
THMS	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2
Utterback	16	1	3	3	0	0	0	0	23
Vail	7	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	8
Valencia	8	0	3	0	0	0	0	1	12
All Schls	**59**	**11**	**43**	**5**	**5**	**1**	**5**	**2**	**131**

In 2016-17, Doolen had the greatest problem with assaults, followed by Vail. Similar to last year, this data suggests that middle schools need additional PBIS and other positive discipline policies to mediate

aggression. Again, similar to last year, drugs and marijuana appear to be more evident at the high school level such as Pueblo and Tucson High. Drugs showed an increase from 2015-16 at 7% to 22% in 2016-17.

Table 9b. 2016-17 Number of Individual Students by Infraction and Home School *ISI original schools in Bold and Italicized* *Infractions listed are not exhaustive but are the most common ones*										
Referring School	2016-17 Infraction*									
	Aggression	Drugs	Marijuana	Sexual	Arson	Theft	Weapons	Alarm/ Sch Threat	Other	Totals
Catalina	6	0	5	0	0	0	1	0	0	12
Cholla	3	3	3	2	0	0	1	1	0	13
Doolen	11	1	4	0	3	0	1	0	1	21
Fickett	4	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
Gridley	4	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	9
Hollinger	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Magee	3	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	7
Mansfeld	3	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	5
Naylor	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Palo Verde	6	9	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	22
Pistor	6	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	8
PMORE	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Pueblo	2	10	11	1	0	1	0	0	3	28
Rincon	4	4	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	12
Sabino	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4
Safford	6	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	12
Sahuaro	2	1	4	1	0	1	0	0	1	10
Santa Rita	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	7
Secrist	6	3	2	2	1	0	0	0	1	15
THMS	4	7	16	1	1	2	0	0	0	31
University	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Utterback	3	5	5	0	0	0	0	0	2	15
Vail	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	9
Valencia	6	5	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	14
All Schools	**92**	**59**	**67**	**10**	**6**	**6**	**6**	**4**	**16**	**266**

In 2017-18, Doolen continued to have the greatest problem with assaults, followed by Secrist. Similar to the data for all three years, this data suggests that middle schools need additional PBIS and other positive discipline policies to mediate aggression. Again, similar to the last three years, drugs and marijuana appear to be more evident at the high school level such as Pueblo and Tucson High. This data suggests that student engagement in high interest in-school and after-school supports and intervention are needed to provide alternatives to using drugs. Additionally, students with behavioral or emotional issues may need access to outside services as an additional support to what is provided in school. Please see Table 9c for a breakdown of the number of students in 2017-18 by infraction and school.

Table 9c. 2017-18 Number of Individual Students by Infraction and Home School *ISI original schools in Bold and Italicized* **Infractions listed are not exhaustive but are the most common ones*										
Referring School	2017-18 Infraction*									
	Aggres sion	Drugs	Mariju ana	Sexual	Arson	Theft	Weap ons	Alarm/ Sch Threat	Other	Totals
Catalina	2	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	5
Cholla	6	0	3	1	0	0	0	1	1	12
Dietz	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
Dodge	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Doolen	14	0	8	1	0	0	0	0	0	23
Fickett	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	2	3	9
Gridley	8	1	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	12
McCorkle	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
Magee	1	1	1	2	0	0	2	0	3	10
Mansfeld	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Naylor	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	3	7
Palo Verde	3	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	5
Pistor	5	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	8
PMORE	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Pueblo	0	4	13	1	0	1	2	0	3	24
Rincon	2	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	5
Sabino	1	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	1	9
Safford	1	0	4	0	0	0	0	1	0	6
Sahuaro	3	2	6	0	0	0	4	1	1	17
Santa Rita	6	3	4	0	0	0	0	0	1	14
Secrist	12	2	5	5	0	0	0	0	0	24
TAP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
THMS	3	1	8	0	0	0	1	0	2	15
University	0	1	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	5
Utterback	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Vail	5	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	9
Valencia	3	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	1	10
All Schools	**80**	**20**	**82**	**14**	**2**	**1**	**11**	**6**	**25**	**241**

In 2018-19, Gridley showed a jump in Assaults this year. Meanwhile, Doolen has continued to show elevated assaults when compared to the other schools. Similar to the trend for all four years, this data suggests that middle schools need additional PBIS and other positive discipline policies to mediate aggression. Again, similar to the last four years, drugs and marijuana appear to be more evident at the high school level such as Pueblo and Tucson High. This data suggests that student engagement in high interest in-school and after-school supports and intervention are needed to provide alternatives to using drugs. Additionally, students with behavioral or emotional issues may need access to outside services as

an additional support to what is provided in school. Please see Table 9c for a breakdown of the number of students in 2018-19 by infraction and school.

	2018-19 Infraction*									
Referring School	Aggression	Drugs	Marijuana	Sexual	Arson	Theft	Weapons	Alarm/Sch Threat	Other	Totals
Catalina	3	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	6
Cholla	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Dietz	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dodge	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3
Doolen	23	2	5	4	2	0	1	0	7	44
Fickett	10	3	1	0	0	0	2	0	12	28
Gridley	33	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	4	40
Hollinger	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	6
Lawrence	4	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Magee	13	0	1	4	0	0	1	1	12	32
Mansfeld	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
McCorkle	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Naylor	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	5
Palo Verde	6	0	2	0	0	3	1	1	0	13
Pistor	10	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	11
PMORE	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
Pueblo	6	9	13	0	0	1	0	1	0	30
Pueblo Gardens	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	3
Rincon	4	2	5	0	0	0	2	0	1	14
Rose	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Roskruge	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Sabino	7	2	3	1	0	0	2	2	1	18
Safford	10	0	6	0	0	0	0	1	2	19
Sahuaro	8	4	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	14
Santa Rita	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Secrist	9	0	1	3	0	0	4	0	8	25
TAP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
THMS	4	4	14	1	0	0	3	0	1	27
University	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Utterback	4	0	2	1	2	1	0	0	3	13
Vail	6	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	3	14
Valencia	7	2	3	0	0	0	1	0	4	17
All Schools	**179**	**33**	**76**	**19**	**4**	**6**	**17**	**7**	**64**	**405**

Table 9d. 2018-19 Number of Individual Students by Infraction and Home School
ISI original schools in Bold and Italicized
Infractions listed are not exhaustive but are the most common ones

When the infractions were broken out by ethnicity, all subgroups were represented in aggression and marijuana categories with the exception of Asian–Pacific Islander students across the last four years. This data shows that students across ethnicities were committing similar level 4 and level 5 violation infractions. Please see Table 10a (2015-16), Table 10b (2016-17), Table 10c (2017-18), and Table 10d (2018-19) for a view of the number of student by infraction and ethnicity.

Table 10a. 2015-16 Number of Individual Students by Infraction and USP Ethnicity									
Infractions listed are not exhaustive									
USP Ethnicity	2015-16 Infraction*								
	Agression	Drugs	Marijuana	Sexual	Arson	Theft	Weapons	Alarm/ Sch Threat	Totals
White	7	1	10	1	0	0	2	0	21
	34%	5%	48%	5%	0%	0%	10%	0%	
Afr. Am	9	2	3	1	1	1	0	0	17
	53%	12%	18%	6%	6%	6%	0%	0%	
Hispanic	34	8	24	3	2	0	3	2	76
	45%	11%	32%	4%	3%	0%	4%	3%	
Nat. Am.	5	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	10
	50%	0%	50%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Asian-PI	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	
MultiR	4	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	6
	67%	0%	17%	0%	17%	0%	0%	0%	
All	59	11	43	5	5	1	5	2	131

Table 10b. 2016-17 Number of Individual Students by Infraction and USP Ethnicity										
Infractions listed are not exhaustive										
USP Ethnicity	2016-17 Infraction*									
	Aggression	Drugs	Marijuana	Sexual	Arson	Theft	Weapons	Alarm/ Sch Threat	Other	Totals
White	16	6	12	2	0	0	1	2	5	44
	36%	14%	27%	5%	0%	0%	2%	5%	11%	
Afr. Am	21	9	2	2	0	4	3	1	2	44
	48%	20%	5%	5%	0%	9%	7%	2%	5%	

Hispanic	43	39	44	6	4	2	2	1	3	147
	29%	27%	30%	4%	3%	1%	0%	1%	4%	
Nat. Am.	4	4	5	0	1	0	0	0	3	17
	24%	24%	29%	0%	5%	0%	0%	0%	18%	
Asian-PI	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
MultiR	7	1	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	12
	58%	8%	25%	0%	8%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
All	92	59	66	10	6	6	6	4	16	265

Table 10c. 2017-18 Number of Individual Students by Infraction and USP Ethnicity										
Infractions listed are not exhaustive										
USP Ethnicity	2017-18 Infraction*									
	Aggression	Drugs	Marijuana	Sexual	Arson	Theft	Weapons	Alarm/ Sch Threat	Other	Totals
White	12	7	17	1	1	0	2	1	5	46
	26%	15%	37%	2%	2%	0%	4%	2%	11%	
Afr. Am	17	1	12	5	0	0	2	0	5	42
	40%	2%	29%	12%	0%	0%	5%	0%	12%	
Hispanic	41	8	47	6	1	1	7	5	13	129
	32%	6%	36%	5%	1%	1%	5%	4%	10%	
Nat. Am.	6	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	12
	50%	17%	33%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Asian-PI	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
	50%	0%	0%	50%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
MultiR	3	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	2	10
	30%	20%	20%	10%	0%	0%	0%	0%	20%	
All	80	20	82	14	2	1	11	6	25	241

Table 10d. 2018-19 Number of Individual Students by Infraction and USP Ethnicity										
Infractions listed are not exhaustive										
USP Ethnicity	2018-19 Infraction*									
	Aggression	Drugs	Marijuana	Sexual	Arson	Theft	Weapons	Alarm/ Sch Threat	Other	Totals
White	11	2	4	1	0	2	1	2	4	25
	44%	8%	16%	4%	0%	8%	4%	8%	16%	
Afr. Am	18	2	3	0	2	0	2	0	0	27
	67%	8%	11%	0%	7%	0%	7%	0%	0%	
Hispanic	51	10	26	7	0	0	3	2	5	104
	49%	9%	25%	7%	0%	0%	3%	2%	5%	
Nat. Am.	8	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	12
	67%	0%	33%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Asian-PI	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	3
	0%	0%	34%	0%	0%	33%	0%	33%	0%	
MultiR	6	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	8
	75%	0%	13%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	12%	
All	94	14	39	8	2	3	6	5	10	179

E.   Attendance rates

Table 11 shows that the attendance rate across the different DAEP campuses.

- **2015-16:** Attendance rates were consistent with all sites showing an average of 78.5% except for SW Alternative Middle School with was slightly lower at 76.91%. Regardless if the student attended middle school or high school, the average attendance overall was low. Although DAEP already required both students and parents to sign a contract agreeing to report absences and not to be tardy, students tended to accumulate consecutive absences more frequently at the end of their allotted time, according to DAEP personnel. Please refer to Appendix 4 to review a copy of the Middle School Contract.

- **2016-17:** Attendance rates showed more variability ranging from 79.67% (Magee) to 84.09% (Project MORE). Nonetheless, attendance improved this year with about a 5% increase. A possible reason for the increase in attendance might be the introduction of a new program called Higher Ground, a program that provided skills to students through engaging social-emotional learning activities.

- **2017-18:** Attendance rates have steadily improved each year. This year showed variability ranging from 78.85% (Southwest Alternative High School) to 89.19% (Southwest Alternative Middle School). Nonetheless, attendance improved this year with almost a 2% increase from the year prior and 6% increase over the last three years. Higher Ground, a program that provides skills to students through engaging social-emotional learning activities was offered again in 2017-18 and it continued to be a desired activity for many DAEP students.

- **2018-19:** Attendance rates showed some variability ranging from 79.77% (Project More) to 86.15% (Magee). Also, attendance showed a small decrease from 2017-18 which was due, in large part, to the attendance at Project More. Overall, attendance has remained relatively stable since 2016-17, ranging from 82.42% to 84.22%.

Table 11. Attendance Rates by DAEP site								
DAEP Site	2015-16 Attendance		2016-17 Attendance		2017-18 Attendance		2018-19 Attendance	
	Means	N	Means	N	Means	N	Means	N
Doolen	78.79%	28	80.31%	13	84.43%	51	83.24%	37
Magee	78.52%	31	79.67%	64	86.79%	71	86.15%	53
Project MORE	78.40%	53	84.09%	138	82.84%	82	79.77%	53
SW Alt MS	76.91%	34	81.86%	44	89.19%	27	81.46%	28
SW Alt HS					78.85%	40	85.57%	23
All Sites	78.15%	146	82.43%	259	84.22%	271	83.11%	194

F.   Pre- and post-assessment results

Students enrolled in DAEP were graded in four core areas: Math, English Language Arts, Social Studies, Science. In addition, a 5th class elective was scheduled. DAEP reported student attendance and grades to their home school. Credit was issued only by the home school utilizing grades sent by DAEP teachers. At the high school level, credit recovery was also offered. Upon enrolling into DAEP, students were given a grade level pre-test in English Language Arts (ELA) and Math.   The same assessment was given as a posttest when they completed their time.   These pre-post tests were intended to measure academic growth of students while enrolled in DAEP. Because of the number of students who did not attend regularly during their final week of DAEP enrollment, the matched results represented a little more than half of participants each year:

- **2015-16:** 62% of students in ELA and 57% of students in math had pre-post results
- **2016-17:** 49% of students in ELA and 49% of students in math had pre-post results
- **2017-18:** 41% of students in ELA and 40% of students in math had pre-post results
- **2018-19:** 71% of students in ELA and 70% of students in math had pre-post results

In the fall 2015, the math pre-post test for grades 6 – 9 was made up of a TUSD math inventory assessment that covered grade level standards.   For grades 10-12, DAEP teachers developed an in-house assessment that covered high school grade level math standards. The ELA pre-post for grades 6-8 was a combination of the McDougal-Little grade level placement test and a reading fluency passage that tracked words read and errors made. The ELA pre-post test for grades 9 – 12 was a placement test from Touchstone Applied Science Associates. To streamline these different assessments, all the DAEP sites transitioned to the District's 4th quarter year-end on-line assessment in ELA and math as the pre-post assessment for all grades in the spring 2016 and into 2016-17. The results were:

- **2015-16:** Matched results from the various ELA assessments showed that students did not demonstrate change greater than 1 point more or less than their pre-test scores at Magee, Project MORE, Southwest Alternative Middle School. However, at the Doolen site, students exhibited a significant gain with an average increase of 6 questions from pre to post test. Please see Table 12a for the mean pre and post test score for ELA by DAEP site.

Table 12a. 2015-16 DAEP Pretest – Posttest results by site for ELA (matched students)						
DAEP Site	ELA Pre-test		ELA Post-test		ELA Gain	
	Means	N	Means	N	Means	N
Doolen	54.24	21	60.48	21	6.238	21
Magee	73.16	19	74.00	19	.842	19
Project MORE	67.80	30	66.90	30	-.900	30
SW Alt MS	75.86	28	76.07	28	.214	28
All Sites	**68.23**	**98**	**69.52**	**98**	**1.286**	**98**

- **2016-17:** Matched results from DAEP's end of quarter on-line assessment in ELA assessments showed that DAEP students did demonstrate measurable change in their pre-post test scores at Magee, Project MORE, and Southwest Alternative Middle School. Also at the Magee site, students exhibited a significant gain with an average increase of 19 questions from pre to post test. Please see Table 12b for the mean pre and post test score for ELA by DAEP site.

Table 12b. 2016-17 DAEP Pretest – Posttest results by site for ELA (matched students)						
DAEP Site	ELA Pre test		ELA Post test		ELA Gain	
	Means	N	Means	N	Means	N
Doolen	15.60	1		0		0
Magee	30.43	46	50.78	41	19.38	41
Project MORE	34.84	112	40.97	73	5.63	72
SW Alt MS	23.49	28	30.81	18	6.27	18
All Sites	**31.95**	**187**	**42.63**	**132**	**10.02**	**131**

- **2017-18:** Matched results from the DAEP's end of quarter assessment in ELA assessments showed that DAEP students did demonstrate measurable change in their pre-post test scores at Doolen, Magee, Project MORE, and Southwest Alternative Middle School. The only school that did not show an increase was Southwest Alternative High School. Also at the Magee site, students exhibited a significant gain with an average increase of 23 questions from pre to post test. Please see Table 12c for the mean pre and post test score for ELA by DAEP site.

Table 12c. 2017-18 DAEP Pretest – Posttest results by site for ELA (matched students)						
DAEP Site	ELA Pre test		ELA Post test		ELA Gain	
	Means	N	Means	N	Means	N
Doolen	30.33%	15	36.33%	15	6.00%	15
Magee	30.58%	32	51.82%	32	22.53%	32
Project MORE	41.07%	42	51.67%	42	10.60%	42
SW Alt MS	25.00%	6	29.17%	6	5.00%	6
SW Alt HS	37.43%	21	35.14%	21	-2.29%	21
All Sites	**35.00%**	**116**	**45.62%**	**116**	**10.67%**	**116**

- **2018-19:** Matched results from the DAEP's end of quarter assessment in ELA assessments showed that DAEP students did demonstrate measurable change in their pre-post test scores at all of the schools. Students across schools exhibited a significant gain with an average increase of 16 questions from pre to post test. Please see Table 12d for the mean pre and post test score for ELA by DAEP site.

Table 12d. 2018-19 DAEP Pretest – Posttest results by site for ELA (matched students)						
DAEP Site	ELA Pre test		ELA Post test		ELA Gain	
	Means	N	Means	N	Means	N
Doolen	28.7%	31	46.8%	30	18.7%	30
Magee	33.8%	43	52.4%	40	18.0%	40
Project MORE	36.7%	44	48.9%	34	11.1%	34
SW Alt MS	33.8%	28	52.6%	23	20.3%	23
SW Alt HS	33.8%	18	46.2%	18	12.4%	18
All Sites	**33.6%**	**164**	**49.7%**	**145**	**16.2%**	**145**

- **2015-16:** In math, the matched gains were more substantial than in ELA. All sites except Southwest Alternative Middle School showed significant gains from pre to post test. At Magee, the students gained, on average about 7 points, at Doolen, the gain was, on average, about 6 points, and at Project MORE, the gain was impressive with about a 9 point increase.

Table 13a. 2015-16 DAEP Pretest – Posttest results by site for Math (matched students)						
DAEP Site	Math Pre-test		Math Post-test		Math Gain	
	Means	N	Means	N	Means	N
Doolen	35.64	22	41.77	22	6.136	22
Magee	35.91	11	43.45	11	7.545	11
Project MORE	44.09	32	52.88	32	8.781	32
SW Alt MS	36.56	25	36.12	25	-.440	25
All Sites	**38.93**	**90**	**44.36**	**90**	**5.422**	**90**

2016-17: In math, the matched gains were equivalent to ELA. At Southwest Alternative Middle School students gained about 7 points, at Project MORE students showed about a 3 point increase, and at Magee, an impressive gain of about 22 points was achieved.

Table 13b. 2016-17 DAEP Pretest – Posttest results by site for Math (matched students)						
DAEP Site	Math Pre test		Math Post test		Math Gain	
	Means	N	Means	N	Means	N
Doolen	21.90	1		0		0
Magee	26.78	46	48.56	40	21.87	40
Project MORE	22.07	106	25.77	72	2.95	68
SW Alt MS	23.66	31	30.12	22	6.52	22
All Sites	**23.51**	**184**	**33.28**	**134**	**9.38**	**130**

2017-18: In math, the matched gains were equivalent to ELA. At Southwest Alternative Middle School students gained about 17 points, at Project MORE students showed about a 6 point increase, and at Magee, similar to last year, an impressive gain of about 25 points was achieved.

Table 13c. 2017-18 DAEP Pretest – Posttest results by site for Math (matched students)						
DAEP Site	Math Pre test		Math Post test		Math Gain	
	Means	N	Means	N	Means	N
Doolen	24.00%	13	23.08%	13	-0.38%	13
Magee	29.97%	32	53.79%	32	24.88%	32
Project MORE	28.05%	41	33.69%	41	5.73%	41
SW Alt MS	27.22%	8	42.50%	8	16.88%	8
SW Alt HS	25.25%	20	25.48%	20	0.50	20
All Sites	**27.51%**	**114**	**37.31%**	**114**	**10.27%**	**114**

2018-19: In math, the matched gains were almost equivalent to ELA with an average gain across schools of 14%.

Table 13d. 2018-19 DAEP Pretest – Posttest results by site for Math (matched students)						
DAEP Site	Math Pre test		Math Post test		Math Gain	
	Means	N	Means	N	Means	N
Doolen	26.7%	31	44.4%	30	17.6%	30
Magee	27.5%	42	50.9%	39	22.9%	39
Project MORE	29.9%	43	33.7%	35	2.9%	34
SW Alt MS	26.9%	28	44.2%	22	17.3%	22
SW Alt HS	21.1%	17	27.1%	17	5.9%	17
All Sites	**27.2%**	**161**	**41.4%**	**143**	**14.1%**	**142**

This academic pre-post data is evidence that students who completed DAEP demonstrated tangible gains in math and ELA, especially after the data collection was streamlined through the use of quarterly benchmarks. Benchmark gains were higher in general throughout the program in 2018-19 than the prior years. The incremental improvement each year indicates that the DAEP program has refined its processes and protocols in targeted academic support to students. The model of small structured academic environments appears to have had a beneficial academic impact on DAEP students.

G. Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which children and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.

The SEL curriculum at DAEP provided a dedicated time during the school day when the SEL skills were taught. At the Middle School sites, the lessons were taught a minimum of 2 days per week; at the High School level they were taught daily. DAEP leadership selected a 40-item Locus of Control (N-SLOC) assessment for adults and youth. (Nowicki, S. & Strickland, B. (1973) "A locus of control scale for children", *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychological 40(1), 148-154*). Please refer to Appendix 5 to review the survey questions. Those students with a high internal locus of control exhibit better control of their behavior than those with a high external locus of control. Because of the scoring methodology, a gain in internal locus of control requires a reduction in the mean value from pre to posttest.

- **2015-16:** The results from this assessment were slight and showed only a gain or loss of about a point at all sites except for Magee that showed a reduced perception of control. Project MORE and Doolen were the only two program sites that displayed a small increase in an internal locus of control.   Please see Table 14a for a summary by DAEP site of the pre-post test results.

Table 14a. 2015-16 DAEP Pretest – Posttest results by site for SEL (matched students)						
DAEP Site	SEL Pre-test		SEL Post-test		SEL Gain	
	Means	N	Means	N	Means	N
Magee	59.78	18	63.50	18	3.722	18
Project MORE	69.37	40	69.23	40	-.150	40
SW Alt MS	64.54	26	65.62	26	1.077	26
Doolen	62.27	22	62.09	22	-.182	22
All Sites	**65.08**	**106**	**65.89**	**106**	**.802**	**106**

- **2016-17:** The results from this assessment were slight and showed only a gain or loss of about a point at all sites except for Magee that showed a reduced perception of control. These results are similar to 2015-16. Southwest Alternative Middle School was the only program site that displayed an increase in an internal locus of control in the last two years.   Please see Table 14b for a summary by DAEP site of the pre-post test results.

Table 14b. 2016-17 DAEP Pretest – Posttest results by site for SEL (matched students)						
DAEP Site	SEL Pre test		SEL Post test		SEL Gain	
	Means	N	Means	N	Means	N
Magee	61.27	48	64.38	44	4.30	44
Project MORE	66.55	119	69.37	79	1.09	78
SW Alt MS	45.83	9	39.58	6	-5.00	6
Doolen	59.81	13	65.50	5	-.50	5
All Sites	**63.76**	**189**	**66.25**	**134**	**1.82**	**133**

- **2017-18:** The results from this assessment were negative and showed only a loss of about 4 points at all sites. Magee showed strong feelings of reduced perception of control with a loss of almost 7 points. Please see Table 14c for a summary by DAEP site of the pre-post test results.

Table 14c. 2017-18 DAEP Pretest – Posttest results by site for SEL (matched students)						
DAEP Site	SEL Pre test		SEL Post test		SEL Gain	
	Means	N	Means	N	Means	N
Doolen	40.60	15	35.33	15	-0.69	15
Magee	36.22	37	28.46	37	-6.58	37
Project MORE	34.00	42	31.93	42	-0.29	42
SW Alt MS	30.44	9	28.56	9	-2.83	9
SW Alt HS	33.10	21	23.24	21	-7.84	21
All Sites	**35.05**	**125**	**29.59**	**125**	**-3.74**	**125**

One reason that this data has consistently shown inconclusive or negative results may be that DAEP enrollment is not long enough in duration to alter a student's state of mind. Other reasons may be that students actually do not have much control over their lives at this juncture. New since 2017-18, the days that students spend waiting for a hearing are now counted as part of the overall suspension time. This change to the program structure effectively reduces the number of days that many students participate in DAEP.   The Locus of Control N-SLOC survey may no longer be relevant to the shortened services provided by DAEP. The Grit Survey administered by Higher Ground has replaced the N-SLOC survey in 2018-19.

This year, students in DAEP were given several pre and post assessments to ensure that the goals are being met and that SEL classes effectively influence youth. Grit Surveys are comprised of a pre and post assessment that Higher Ground utilized. They include:

- o High School: Social Competence for Teenagers survey, and Self-Control and Self Efficacy and Decision Making Skills for High School survey.
- o Middle School: Social Competence Scale for Teenagers survey, and Questionnaire on Self Regulation and Misconduct Scale.

The goal is to help students cope with interpersonal conflicts, develop self-control and contribute to a positive classroom atmosphere. However, we continued to administer the survey along with Higher Ground's assessments to gather multiple data points.

H. Higher Ground's Grit Survey and Behavioral Self-Assessment Survey

Higher Ground administered two pre-post surveys each semester, a Grit Survey and a behavioral self-assessment survey. The Grit survey is based on research by Dr. Angela Lee Duckworth and measures perceptions of success. The behavioral self-assessment survey (source: Goldstein et al, 1980. Skill Streaming the Adolescent) assesses interpersonal conflict and self-control.

2017-18: Higher Ground provided 32 sessions at Magee and Southwest, 15 sessions at Doolen and 29 sessions at Project More during the fall semester. Of the 81 students who participated in DAEP with an exit date of 12/19/17 or before, 45 students participated. Students did not participate because they either left the program or were not enrolled long enough to complete the program (N=36). Results from the survey revealed that:

- 53% improved grit score
- 60% improved their behavioral self-assessment scores
- 98% attended a minimum of 4 sessions

Higher Ground provided 35 sessions at Magee and Southwest, 32 sessions at Doolen and Project More during the spring semester. Of the 177 students who participated in DAEP with an exit date of 5/18/18 or before, 99 students participated. Students did not participate because they either left the program or were not enrolled long enough to complete the program (N=78). Results from the survey revealed that:

- 51% improved grit score
- 58% improved their behavioral self-assessment scores
- 100% attended a minimum of 4 sessions

2018-19: Higher Ground provided 35 sessions at Magee and Southwest, 33 sessions at Doolen and Project More during the fall semester. Of the 116 students who participated in DAEP during the second semester, 100 students participated and completed the pre-post assessment. Students did not participate because they either left the program or were not enrolled long enough to complete the program (N=16). Results from the survey revealed that:

- 55% improved grit score
- 40% improved on social competence
- 38% improved on ability to regulate emotions
- 42% improved on stronger decision making
- 100% attended a minimum of 4 sessions

Higher Ground supported students to reflect and to write about their own behaviors and decision-making. For example, Higher Ground modeled how behaviors can be replaced by thinking about actions before acting. Students reported that strategies such as walking away, talking to a trusted adult or finding an outlet like art and sports (Judo/basketball) are positive alternatives. As one student stated after being involved in the program, 'I have [become] more of a critical thinker and I have been thinking more rationally, but it's hard'.

I.   **DAEP Student Exit Survey Results**

When students completed DAEP, they were asked to fill out a survey about their experiences. A Total of 62 students filled out the survey in 2015-16, 110 students in 2016-17, 110 in 2017-18 and 73 in 2018-19. The results from this survey overall revealed that the best place for these students is enrolled in a school with a structured and supportive environment.

The survey revealed consistent results over the last four years. When students were asked, if they did not have the option to enroll in DAEP, what would they do; the majority stated that they would just hang out at home or with friends (2015-16 = 82%, 2016-17 = 84%, 2017-18 = 80%, 2018-19 = 78%). The remaining students would leave the district altogether either to a charter school (2015-16 = 16%, 2016-17 = 15%, 2017-18 = 16%, 2018-19 = 7%) or simply drop out of school (2015-16 = 2%, 2016-17 = 1%, 2017-18 = 4%,

2018-19 = 3%).   Students felt that they benefitted from the DAEP experience and that the life skills that they were exposed to would help them to avoid future suspensions. Additionally, 84% in 2015-16, 70% in 2016-17, 71% in 2017-18, and 90% in 2018-19 of students agreed that they found their experience in DAEP to be either satisfying or outstanding. The remaining 16%, 30%, 29%, and 10% respectively were more ambivalent about their experiences, with their responses ranging from somewhat satisfied to unsatisfied.

When asked about the program, students appreciated most the respect from the staff (2015-16 = 84%, 2016-17 = 72%, 2017-18 = 61%, 2018-19 = 88%), the small class sizes (2015-16 = 83%, 2016-17 = 83%, 2017-18 = 73%, 2018-19 = 85%), and the information about college and career options/guest speakers (2015-16 = 80%, 2016-17 = 45%, 2017-18 = 57%, and 2018-19 = 63%). For some of these students, it may have been the first time in a while that an adult spent time with them to discuss their future in a positive framework. Additionally, because these students may have a reputation at their home school for being troublesome, the opportunity to develop a respectful relationship with an adult and feel a sense of belongingness was a powerful outcome of the program, and one that is challenging to measure with conventional evaluation tools.

Student responses were mixed about enrolling in a transition program before returning their home school. About half of students in 2015-16 (54%) and more than two-thirds in 2016-17 (67%), 2017-18 (73%), and 2018-19 (62%) felt ready to go back to their home school and their old routines. The remaining students (2015-16 = 46%, 2016-17 = 33%, 2017-18 = 27%, 2018-19 = 38%) were open to the idea because they felt successful in DAEP with the smaller class sizes and responsive teachers. Finally, the majority of students (2015-16 = 86%, 2016-17 = 66%, 2017-18 = 85%, 2018-19 = 90%) felt that their experiences in DAEP would help them avoid further suspensions.

Discussion

Students are re-assigned to DAEP for 20, 30, or 45 days. About half of the enrolled students (N=77 in 2015-16, N=121 in 2016-17, N=160 in 2017-18, and N=74 in 2018-19) were most likely arrested because they committed Level 4 and 5 offenses including drug use, sexual offenses, aggravated assault, etc. and were subsequently placed on probation. Without DAEP, these students would be in violation of their probation and would need to serve time in a detention facility. DAEP, therefore, served as a safe haven for troubled students who otherwise would spend the time at home, in a detention facility, or out on the streets.

The results of data from the DAEP evaluation over the last four years has been very consistent even though program referrals showed a 59% increase between the SY 2015-16 and 2017-18. Additionally, in 2016-17 and 2017-18, the higher number of referrals may have been influenced by a district wide effort from to address the frequency of fighting. In 2018-19, the lower number of referrals may have been influence by the new policies to channel students into mediation or substance abuse workshops in the Student Code

of Conduct, especially with Level 4 violations involving fighting and possession of use of drugs or alcohol. It states:

- Fighting - *first offence*: three day suspension with two days waived if students participates in mediation
- Possession or use of drugs or alcohol - *first offense*: three day suspension with two days waived if student agrees to attend substance abuse workshop, and , upon return to school, an intake interview and to be searched for drugs or alcohol

That DAEP maintained the moderately high level of student attendance and completion rates in 2018-19. The results of data have demonstrated that the profile of students who attended DAEP, the services they received, and the benefits of participation were very similar from 2015-16 to 2018-19. The student profile at DAEP revealed a population in need of full academic support and wrap-around behavioral services. Student needs were both varied and complex: some were deep-rooted from exposure to trauma or instability, some contended with mental or behavior health issues that have been neglected or underserved, some suffered from chemical dependency, some had language and/or cultural barriers, and some did not fit comfortably into the structure of mainstream schooling. Because of these issues, most DAEP students had substantial academic learning gaps.

Despite these challenges, the majority of students complete their DAEP assignment.

- 2015-16: Of the 157 students who enrolled in DAEP in 2015-16, 89% successfully completed the program and the rest either terminated early (10%) or became continuing students (1%) into the 2016-17 school year.
- 2016-17: DAEP expanded its program to 266 participants. Of those students, 87% successfully completed DAEP and 13% did not. One student continued their DAEP enrollment into the 2017-18 school year before returning to their home school.
- 2017-18: DAEP expanded its program again to 286 participants. Of those students, 89% successfully completed DAEP and 10% did not. Two students (or 1%) will continue their DAEP enrollment into the 2018-19 school year. Additionally, 31 students or 11% were enrolled more than once to the program in 2017-18. Of those students, 5 did not complete the program largely because they broke the behavior contract that marshaled the program, or to a lesser degree did not show up to participate, withdrew, or became incarcerated.
- 2018-19:   DAEP's enrolled decreased from the year prior to 203. Of those students, 91% successfully completed DAEP and 9% did not. Five students (or 1%) will continue their DAEP enrollment and an additional 24 students will start their school year at DAEP into the SY 2019-20. Additionally, 6 students or 3% were enrolled more than once to the program in 2018-19.

This data underscores that students were invested in completing the program to be able to return to their home school as smoothly as possible. Student demographics from DAEP included:

- **Ethnicity:** The USP ethnic breakdown of students enrolled in DAEP revealed that African American students were consistently over-represented and increasing each year (14% in 2015-16, 17% in 2016-17, 19% in 2017-18, and 16% in 2018-19) when compared to the District's overall ethnic distribution (9%). Conversely, Hispanic students were under-represented and decreasing each year (59% in 2015-16, 55% in 2016-17, 52% in 2017-18, and 57% in 2018-19) when compared to the District's overall ethnic distribution (62%).   The other ethnic groups were representational of the larger District average.

- **Attendance:** The average attendance rate in the program was about 78.15% in 2015-16, 82.43% in 2016-17, 84.22% in 2017-18, and 83.11% in 2018-19 from program attendance ranging between 16 to 35 days. The program exposure was therefore relatively limited which challenged the program to be able to show sustained change in student behavior. For example, the Social and Emotional Learning Scale (SEL) provided largely inconclusive results from pre to post-test each year from 2015-16 to 2017-18. Altering student's perception of how much control they felt could be exerted over their environment may require more time and services than what DAEP is currently able to offer.

- **Grade Levels:**
  - Middle School: Aggression (assault, disorderly conduct) was the most common violation over the last four years. This data suggests that middle schools may need additional training in restoratives and a wider set of complementary strategies to encourage positive student behavior to mediate aggression.

  - High Schools: Drugs and marijuana were the most common violation over the last four years suggesting that student engagement in high interest in-school and after-school activities are needed to provide alternatives to using drugs. Additionally, increased collaboration with outside behavioral service agencies and TUSD high schools may be desirable to provide strategies to students at-risk to decrease drug dependency.

- **Students with Specialized Needs**: More than a third of students (39%) were classified as ExEd, had a 504 plan, or were English Language Learners in 2015-16. During 2016-17 to 2018-19, students who were classified as ExEd, had a 504 plan, or were English Language Learners decreased to about a quarter (23%, 25% and 30%, respectively) of the participants although a 5% increase was evident in 2018-19 . Without enrollment into DAEP, these students would not have received the school-based services that they and their families rely upon.

- **ELA and Math Pre-Post Assessment Results:** Assessment protocol was formalized in 2016-17 by using grade level comprehensive year-end on-line district benchmark assessment as a pre-post-test. In 2017-18, these assessments were further refined to reflect quarterly academic priorities.

Results indicated that students showed measurable growth in both ELA and math. This growth serves as evidence that students were supported academically in ELA and math during their time at DAEP, especially at the middle school level. Thus, the model of small structured academic environments has had a beneficial academic impact on DAEP students, especially in the last two years.

Students enrolled in DAEP fell into 3 broad categories in terms of their discipline history across the last three years: (1) about half of students got in trouble just once or twice at their home school, attended DAEP and completed the year without any further discipline incidents; (2) about a quarter of students had a longer history of trouble, amounting to 3 or 4 incidents during the year at their home school which resulted in both in-school and out-of-school suspensions and possibility being referred to DAEP more than once; and (3) the remaining students repeatedly got into trouble 5 or more times and attended DAEP one or two times. Additionally, when the four years are compared, incident and suspension data of DAEP students in 2018-19 showed about a 22% overall reduction among students with 4 or more incidents and/or suspensions.

In summary, despite the challenges of unfilled certified teacher vacancies and the turnover of the Behavior Intervention Monitors each year, DAEP provided essential services to high-risk students who otherwise would languish at home or might even drop out of school altogether. Students were largely satisfied with their experience and felt that they received needed support in a respectful environment. Most students (2015-16 = 86%, 2016-17 = 66%, 2017-18 = 85%, 2018-19 = 90%) concurred that their experience in DAEP will also help them avoid further suspensions. Academically, the students who completed the program showed growth, especially in middle school (Magee and SW Alt MS). The smaller learning environments with more individualized attention appear to have improved their learning capabilities. Over the last four years, about a third of students (2015-16 = 46%, 2016-17 = 33%, 2017-18 = 27%, 2018-19 = 38%) requested an extension to DAEP ostensibly because they felt successful in the smaller environment. The results of this evaluation revealed that DAEP was successful in supporting long-term suspended students both academically and behaviorally until they were able to return to their home school.

Recommendations

These recommendations were initially provided in the 2015-16 report and are still relevant to the 2018-19 report. Small inroads have been made in areas such as synchronizing data and alignment to TUSD's infrastructure, but are not complete enough to be removed from this list.   The remaining recommendations call for increased resources, planning, training for DAEP and a more structured system of support for DAEP students.

Staffing: Certified Teachers and BIMs: Similar to other high profile programs in TUSD such as magnet programs or other 'hard to fill' positions in TUSD's at-risk schools, DAEP should receive hiring priorities and/or hiring incentives to recruit and retain teachers.

Alignment to TUSD's infrastructure: In the past four years, most infrastructure issues have been resolved. Addressing academic articulation and grading will continue to be a focus during the 2018-19 school year.

Professional Development: PD for all staff in DAEP should reflect the specific needs of the student population with an emphasis on SEL strategies.   Funded differentiated professional development is recommended during the summer months to prepare DAEP staff for the upcoming school year.

DAEP data in Synergy: Create a flag system within Synergy to facility district departments' abilities to analyze short term and longitudinal trends regarding DAEP students.

Measurable outcomes of DAEP: All stakeholders should agree on what specific criteria will be used to measure the impact of DEAP. The average attendance rate in the program was about 78.15% in 2015-16, 82.43% in 2016-17, 84.22% in 2017-18 and 83.11% in 2018-19 which is translated into program attendance ranging between 16 to 35 days. Using longer term measures such as increased attendance rates, increased performance on the standardized test, increased graduation rates, or decreased drop-out rates may not be appropriate to assess DAEP's impact.

Follow up support for students who complete DAEP: Communication between DAEP and the home school should be institutionalized and documented. For example, in preparation for a returning student who has completed DAEP, middle and high schools need a plan in place with recommendations from the DAEP staff. This plan would help to reintegrate the student and provide continued academic and behavioral support. Schools should be highly encouraged to assist Higher Ground with follow up and check-in processes for students who have transitioned from DAEP back to their respective school. Returning students should be included in their schools MTSS processes. Finally, PBIS and Restorative Justice practices should be available at all TUSD schools. These practices would provide both a common experience and language for students who leave DAEP to return to their home schools.

Training of DAEP services to TUSD personnel: Training school personnel regarding DAEP services at the beginning of each school year needs to be prioritized and provided on a continual bases. Training will impact the speed at which referrals and parent orientations are processed. Training and collaboration with MTSS (Multi-Tier System of Supports) Facilitators at the schools need to be emphasized to align academic articulation efforts of DAEP students.

Appendix 1

Program criteria are:

- A student is eligible for DAEP if they commit a level 4 or level 5 offense and found to be in violation.
- The long-term hearing officer would assign the student into DAEP for a total of 20, 30 or 45 days depending on the severity of the offense.
- A student who chooses to participate in DAEP would be required to attend an orientation with their parents, and sign a contract agreeing to the rules, adhere to a dress code and the attendance requirements of the program.
- A total of 75 seats for grades 9-12 students in Project MORE DAEP

A. A student who violates their contract by committing GSR infractions while enrolled at DAEP will be held accountable.

- If the violation is deemed minor, level one, two or three, there may be an extension of their assignment at DAEP. If there are repeated violations of level one, two or three, the principal at DAEP may petition to raise the violation to a level 4.
- If the violation is a level 4 violation, a long term hearing may be held which may disqualify the student from DAEP and they would then serve the concurrent suspensions at home.
- A student may only be assigned to DAEP no more than twice per school year.

B. Students in DAEP for a level 4 violation who adhere to the rules, thrive, and demonstrate model student behaviors will be rewarded as follows:
- A student who exceeds behavioral and curriculum expectations may have their suspension reduced and returned to their home school. This determination would be made by DAEP principal and staff recommendation.
- A model student shall have their Mojave record reflect they were excellent students.

C. Students assigned to DAEP will have an opportunity to participate in a counseling program. Each student, with the aid of the counselor, will develop:
- A responsible behavior plan to facilitate success at school.
- Decision-making, goal setting, behavioral skills, anger management, peer interaction compliance, authority figure coping
- May provide some drug and alcohol education. The counselor, in conjunction with staff and parents, may help determine the need for any additional referrals.

Services Available are:

A. Juvenile Court:
- DAEP representative meets with Education Consultant Coordinator (court representative).
- When appropriate Education Consultant Coordinator will schedule a meeting with judge.

B. Support for child/teen trauma, homeless support, drug/ substance abuse or Medicaid:
- DAEP Social Worker or counselor in collaboration with TUSD Student Services will make contact/recommend appropriate social service agency.

C. Identify Mentor Networks:
- DAEP Social Worker or Counselor works with Drop Out Prevention staff to identify and assign mentors.

D. Transportation:
- Bus passes will be available for students who qualify.
- Ex Ed services will be provided as they would normally.

Appendix 2

Our mission is to provide a Fair, Equitable, and Successful Educational Experience to long-term suspended middle and high school students throughout the district.

<div align="center">DAEP Vision</div>

Every student matters in TUSD. We have an obligation to reduce disparities wherever they exist in our District. Achieving equity in matters of student discipline is our District's moral calling. TUSD's culture and climate must be rooted in effective and positive relationships with each student. Students cannot learn if they are not in school. Providing students a continuing education is in line with our vision and values. We can and must work with every student to ensure a fair, equitable and successful educational experience.

<div align="center">DAEP Values/Collective Commitments:</div>

Because we, educators and support staff, VALUE equitable access to education for all students, we make a COLLECTIVE COMMITMENT to:

1. Ensure that each student and parent/guardian feels valued in TUSD.
2. Encourage each student to recognize and achieve his/her potential.
3. Address the constraints to each student's home school success.
4. Uphold professional standards.
5. Be loyal to our purpose.
6. Provide consistent supervision of our students to ensure appropriate behavior in and out of the classroom.
7. Deliver a rigorous curriculum, build relationships with students, and give emotional and academic support.
8. Keep open lines of communication between student, parent, home school, and outside agencies.
9. Implement the Wrap Around Concept with follow-up on our part.
10. Apply PBIS and Restorative Practices toward redirection of student behavior and choices.

DAEP Goals

Our goals are below for each student who attends the DAEP Program. Because the students attending the Program are on an individual timeline, the steps toward each goal will be implemented throughout the course of each student's timeline.

❖ We ensure that each student and parent/guardian feels valued in TUSD.
1. Daily implementation of Point Sheets as a communication tool, with a 100% return rate.
2. Weekly parent/guardian contact regarding student success/concerns.
❖ We support each student in recognizing and achieving his/her potential.
1. Administration of pre- and post-tests to help guide instruction.
2. Communication with the home school to coordinate educational standards/materials.
3. Daily tailored instruction with adherence to IEP's and support for diverse learners in the classroom.
4. Twice per week SEL focused curriculum provided by Higher Ground. As needed, providing access to support programs, such as counseling.
❖ We strive to address the constraints to each student's home school success.
1. Emailed "heads-up" to home school teachers, MTSS Facilitator, Counselor, etc. 3 days prior to student's return.
2. Completion/email of Academic and Behavioral MTSS plans to LSC within 1 day of student's return to home school.
3. Emailed exit reports to home school teachers within 1 day of student's return to home school.
4. Re-entry meeting at home school prior to student's return.
5. Transition day in home school ISI program
6. Follow-up with home school and student within 2 weeks of student's return.

Appendix 3

Addressing the Social Emotional Learning Needs of DAEP Students

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. The SEL curriculum at the District Alternative Education Program (DAEP) sites is provided by Higher Ground who visit each site twice per week to deliver their curriculum and emphasize their key concepts of Honor and Respect. These concepts incorporate the CASEL competencies of Self-Awareness and Self-Management. The focus on these two competencies is to develop young people's abilities to be self-aware, to handle both positive and challenging emotions, and to develop the capacity to take action, sustain motivation, and persevere through challenges and work toward an identified goal.

Appendix 4

TUSD

District Alternative Education Program (MS)

Welcome to the District Alternative Education Program! This program will provide you with an opportunity to continue you're education and reflect on the behaviors and circumstances that brought you here. We will assist you in learning appropriate behaviors, and making better choices so that when you return to your home school you can be a successful student.

Our teachers have chosen to work with students who have had difficulty in traditional school programs and are excited to be helping improve student's academic and social success.

Students are graded in five core areas: Math, English Language Arts, Social Studies, Science, and Reading. In addition, we offer a grade in Health. We do not offer elective credits. DAEP will report each student's attendance and grades to their home school. Final grades will be issued only by the home school utilizing grades sent by DAEP teachers. At the high school level, credit recovery may be offered.

Some of our science and social studies classes may take place in the community, as this allows the students to experience real-life applications to the study of these subjects. An example of this is the study of Orienteering, Riparian habitats, and Ecosystems at Agua Caliente Park. Additionally, we may invite guest speakers to address students about a particular skill or hobby they possess, but also to speak about real experiences they have had with violence, crime, drugs, or difficulty in school.

Please be aware of the TUSD retention policy. According to Board Policy IKE-R1: your child must receive a final passing grade in LA, Math, either Science OR Social Studies, AND receive final passing grades in at least four subjects.

We ask that you:
- Come to school with a positive attitude.
- Be here every day, and on time.
- Complete all assigned work without argument.
- Wear appropriate clothing: no hats, gang or drug related apparel, sunglasses, etc.
- Be respectful at all times to, the teachers, guests and other students.
- Behave appropriately when out in the community with the class.
- Respect and be responsible for our electronic equipment.
- Refrain from using profanity or any type of disrespectful behavior.
- Follow TUSD and site rules and policies.

We will provide you with:
- An opportunity to continue your education in a positive environment.
- Curriculum that may be adapted to meet your particular educational needs.
- School Counseling services with an emphasis on goal setting, problem solving, anger management, and life skills.
- An awareness and appreciation of other cultures.
- Open and ongoing communication with your parents/guardians, PO's when applicable via daily behavior point sheets and weekly telephone calls. Parents/guardians may contact the teacher with any concerns they may have.
- Food services will provide breakfast (where scheduling allows) and lunch on a daily basis. Free and reduced lunch status will be honored. No outside food or drink is allowed. Arrangements may be made for students who bring sack lunches.

Teacher's name(s) and School Phone Number: _____
The best time to call: _____
School Hours: **Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday**: _____ **Wednesday:** _____

TUSD

District Alternative Education Program

Student Name _____ Date of
Registration_____   Grade: _____

Address: _____ Date of Birth:
_____Home School_____

 Home Phone: _____ Special Education? _____

Parent Permission

My son/daughter, _____, has my permission to participate in the following school activities and/or services:

- School sponsored trips to include TUSD vehicle and/or staff vehicles
- Talk with school counselor, Transition Specialist, and other support staff
- Attend scheduled academic classes and activities in the community
- Guest speaker events that may be of a mildly graphic nature (i.e. straight talk about drugs and violence)
- I hereby give permission for DAEP staff to contact my student's Probation Officer: _____ (parent initials)

_____   _____
Parent Signature   Date

Student Contract

Student Contract For: _____

1. I agree that I must attend school daily and on time. My school hours are: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday from _____to _____, and Wednesday from _____to _____. I understand that there is a tardy policy in place, which may require me to stay after school to make-up time/work missed. Parents will be notified by student or staff.

2. If for any reason, I will be absent or tardy, my parent or legal guardian will call the teacher by _____a.m.

3. I understand that the <u>DAEP</u> follows all **TUSD's policies** in regard to appropriate behavior, language, attire, and destruction of school property. Violation of these policies may result in **removal from the program**.

4. The DAEP program does not allow **backpacks.** . If a student brings a backpack to school, it will be confiscated, searched and returned at the end of the day. Repeat occurrences will result in discipline consequences.

5. **We strongly discourage students bringing any electronic devices** to schoo<u>l</u>. We will **not be responsible for loss or theft** of these items, <u>even if staff confiscates them</u> or stores them. Girls are only allowed to bring a small, wallet-sized purse and it will be checked daily.

6. I will come to school with a positive attitude and make every effort to complete all assignments in a timely manner to the best of my ability.

7. I recognize that my parent/guardian and/or **probation officer** will be notified immediately if I fail to make progress; am excessively tardy and/or absent. They will also be notified when I am making good progress and following all the rules. Excessive tardiness may lead to removal from the program.

8. **Search Policy**. As per TUSD Policy, searches occur only if there is reasonable suspicion to believe that the student is under the influence of an unknown substance or that he/she may have something they should not have. Searches by the program Director or designee.   ____ Parent Initials

Student Signature _____Date _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____Date _____

EXHIBIT B

INSTEAD OF SUSPENSION:

Alternative Strategies for Effective School Discipline

Duke

CENTER for CHILD
and FAMILY POLICY

Children's
Law Clinic
A legal project of Duke Law School
focused on protecting children

About the Authors

Jenni Owen is the Director of Policy Initiatives at Duke's Center for Child and Family Policy and is on the faculty of the Sanford School of Public Policy. She also co-directs the School Research Partnership at Duke. Her focus is on enhancing interaction among research, policy, and practice. Prior work related to this project includes a legislative education North Carolina Family Impact Seminar on school suspension and a Scholars Strategy Network brief on alternatives to suspension, in addition to an op-ed on the issue. Owen holds B.A. and Masters of Public Administration degrees from Harvard University.

Jane Wettach is a Clinical Professor of Law at Duke Law School, where she directs the Children's Law Clinic and teaches Education Law. As the Director of the Children's Law Clinic, Wettach focuses on both individual legal representation of children in special education and school discipline matters and broader advocacy for children and youth. Of particular interest is the area of school discipline and promoting alternatives to the use of school exclusion as a discipline tool. Wettach is a frequent speaker on issues involving the educational rights of children, including children with disabilities, and has been involved in impact litigation on behalf of school children. Wettach received her B.A. and her J.D. from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Katie Claire Hoffman contributed to this publication while a third-year student at Duke Law School. She is now an Assistant Public Defender at the office of the Mecklenburg County Public Defender.

Instead of Suspension: Alternative Strategies for Effective School Discipline

Table of Contents

Foreword

Across North Carolina and the country, school boards and superintendents, school administrators and teachers, parents and community leaders have acknowledged that suspending children from school for violations of school rules should be a last resort. Many districts are reconsidering their approaches to student discipline.

The reasons for this are many. Among them is compelling evidence that a zero tolerance approach - and suspension generally - is not only less effective than had been hoped, but potentially harmful not only to the students receiving the suspension but to the broader school community. A wide array of education leaders is looking carefully at the research on suspension, which confirms the correlations between suspension and poor outcomes for students. Indeed, since 2011, North Carolina has prohibited mandatory long-term suspensions and expulsions except when required by state or federal law.

Many school districts are striving to implement and embrace alternatives to suspension. They are particularly focused on alternatives that will respond appropriately and effectively when students misbehave, while keeping the students in school and moving forward educationally and behaviorally.

This report includes a compendium of alternatives to suspension and brief profiles of examples of where those alternatives are in place. It is a unique and valuable resource for school boards, school administrators, teachers, and others who are rethinking their approaches to school discipline without compromising the learning opportunities or safety of the school community as a whole. The report will acquaint school districts with a range of approaches to school discipline. Some are proven, others are promising. All have the potential to foster better school climates and better student outcomes.

We invite a wide readership in North Carolina and hope our counterparts in other states will join us in sharing this resource with school districts throughout their states. It is not only educational and informative, but also can serve as a starting point for action or as a source of guidance for policy change. Whether you are in a district that is considering making changes to school discipline, in one that already has committed to or implemented changes, or perhaps a state policymaker considering the important issue of school discipline and suspension, we recommend this resource to you and look forward to the improved outcomes that it will help support.

Edwin E. Dunlap, Jr.
Executive Director
North Carolina School Boards Association

Executive Summary

During the 2013-14 school year, North Carolina students missed more than 650,000 school days due to suspension.[1] Nationally, more than 3.8 million students, about nine percent of the school-age population, are suspended annually.[2] Although suspension is one of the most widely used school discipline techniques, school officials and education experts increasingly criticize suspension and its negative effects on both suspended students and schools as a whole. Fortunately, alternatives exist that can improve student behavior, maintain school safety, and enhance academic achievement. This report describes 11 effective approaches to student misconduct that minimize exclusion of children from school. Many of these approaches are already used in North Carolina schools; others are used in communities around the country. Many have been rigorously studied and shown to have positive results.

Given the strong system of local control of education in North Carolina, individual school boards and administrators have tremendous power to facilitate changes in the approach to school discipline in their districts. With leadership from the top, school discipline can change from a system of punishment to a system of student development. Well-chosen alternatives to suspension can simultaneously diminish the negative outcomes of harmful discipline policies, boost student achievement, reduce student misconduct, and maintain safe and orderly schools.

The approaches described in this report fall into three categories. First are programs that seek to improve the culture within an entire school. They rely on professional development to allow all staff to work together to implement positive behavioral interventions and instructional strategies to replace more punitive measures. The best-known and most thoroughly researched of these programs are Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS) and Safe and Responsive Schools (SRS).

Second are programs that teach individual professionals better skills in behavior management and student discipline. These include research-based programs, such as My Teaching Partner, that target teachers, training them in adolescent development and effective student-teacher interactions. Other programs focus on School Resource Officers, likewise training them in adolescent development and conflict resolution. Yet another program, Objective Threat Assessment, teaches school administrators to better assess purported threats in order to avoid suspending students who do not pose real safety risks.

Third are approaches that change the response of schools to misbehavior by individual students. These approaches either replace school suspension with another type of response to misconduct or offer alternative activities to students during times of suspension. Most aim to help students avoid future misconduct, and some rely on community partners. Examples are Restorative Justice, Substance Abuse Treatment, Community Service, Community-School Partnerships, and Alternative Schools.

The final strategy highlighted in this report, Policies Reducing the Use of Suspension as a Discipline Tool, can complement any of the above approaches. With leadership from the local board of education, often in collaboration with community groups, school districts can rethink the appropriateness of school suspension as the default response to misconduct. Approaches taken by several large metropolitan school districts are described herein.

In selecting programs and strategies to highlight, we considered both costs and whether the program is supported by evidence. While we recognize that funding is always limited, districts may be able to secure support through private philanthropy or find free community support for some programs. Moreover, and particularly important in the context of this report, decision-makers should realize that replacing suspension with other strategies can ultimately yield cost savings while also accomplishing the goal of reducing the reliance on suspensions as a disciplinary practice. Using more effective approaches to problem behaviors can reduce the likelihood of unemployment, court involvement and other negative outcomes with high societal price tags.

Policymakers, practitioners, and funders alike are increasingly asking for "evidence of what works." In compiling this report, we have noted instances where evidence exists about a particular program or approach. As district leaders and others consider which strategies to pursue, we encourage them to consider the evidence of effectiveness as well as the experience of other school districts and the resources needed to implement a particular strategy. Asking the three following questions may be useful:

1. Do the stakeholders of the school and/or school district fully support the strategy or strategies under consideration?

2. Do the experiences of other similar schools and school districts suggest that the strategies will be effective in this school or district?

3. Does the school/district have (or can it secure) adequate resources to support effective and consistent implementation of the strategy or strategies?

This report introduces school board members, school and school district administrators, and other education stakeholders to a range of options for addressing discipline challenges. Identifying alternatives to suspension is a critical step in preventing and reducing suspensions, but it is only a first step. We hope the information and guidance included here will motivate practitioners and policymakers from across the political spectrum to pursue strategies that keep schools and communities safe while also providing all students with the support they need.

-   **Jane Wettach, Jenni Owen, and Katie Claire Hoffman**

Introduction

Though suspension is a widely used disciplinary technique in both general and special education, research has raised serious questions about its effects.[3] Frequent use of suspension has many undesirable and unintended outcomes, including a less healthy school environment, lower academic achievement, higher levels of disruptive or antisocial behavior, and higher school dropout rates.[4]

Particularly troubling is the disproportionate imposition of school suspension on African-American students and students with disabilities. National and state data reveal that African-American students are three to four times more likely to be suspended for school misconduct than are white students.[5] Students with disabilities are suspended at nearly twice their proportion in the overall population. Despite laws that prohibit discrimination against racial minorities and people with disabilities, these patterns have existed for many years.[6] Also of urgent concern is the criminalization of students; in North Carolina nearly half of all referrals to the juvenile system come from schools.[7]

The problem of an overuse of school suspension has garnered the attention of state and national leaders. In 2011, the North Carolina General Assembly passed a new school discipline law stating that

> …removal of students from school, while sometimes necessary, can exacerbate behavioral problems, diminish academic achievement, and hasten school dropout.[8]

The law also encourages school officials

> … to use a full range of responses to violations of disciplinary rules, such as conferences, counseling, peer, mediation, behavior contracts, instruction in conflict resolution and anger management, detention, academic interventions, community service and other similar tools that do not remove a student from the classroom or school building.[9]

In early 2014, the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Department of Education issued policy guidance to assist public schools in meeting their obligations to administer student discipline without discriminating on the basis of race. In the guidance, the departments praised schools that "incorporate a wide range of strategies to reduce misbehavior and maintain a safe learning environment, including conflict resolution, restorative practices, counseling, and structured systems of positive interventions."[10] A 2014 Council of State Governments report likewise strongly supports the use of alternatives to suspension.[11]

This report presents 11 alternatives to suspension. The following chart summarizes each alternative. The report then provides details of each program, and when possible, contact information for individuals who have implemented the approach. Finally, we have included two appendices, one outlining national research on the negative effects of aggressively using suspension as a disciplinary tool, and a second reporting the statistical data on suspensions in North Carolina.

One important cautionary note: When schools and school systems implement suspension alternatives, implementation may be weak and fidelity to the program model may be low.[12] Rigorous, faithful program implementation is critical to successful outcomes. Therefore, whenever possible, this report spotlights schools and districts that have adhered closely to program models by paying careful attention to implementation.

Overuse of suspension is a problem individual schools and districts can address by replacing suspension with alternatives backed by research.[13] When implemented with fidelity to the program model, these alternatives can simultaneously diminish the negative outcomes of harmful discipline policies, boost student achievement, and improve school discipline.[14] When schools and school districts pursue alternatives to suspension with seriousness and rigor, the results can be dramatically positive, both for individual students and for the school community. For schools and districts interested in investigating alternatives, we hope this report serves as a useful starting point.

School-wide Programs That Seek to Improve the Overall Culture Within a School			
Program/Approach	**Overall Objectives**	**Description**	**Resources Needed**
Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) **More information starts on page 13.**	• Create school-wide, positive behavior change • Foster improved school climate • Reduce student misconduct	PBIS is a set of strategies and techniques based in behavioral psychology and implemented by all staff throughout a school. A positive approach is taken to create specific behavioral expectations for all students, and desired behaviors are explicitly taught. More intensive strategies are used for the children who need the most support. Data are kept and monitored to allow for more effective and targeted implementation.	Initially, a team of educators, parents, and community members develop a school's plan. All school staff must be trained and continuously encouraged to employ the chosen strategies. A school-based PBIS team is responsible for day-to-day implementation and data collection. In North Carolina, DPI provides training and support to interested schools.
Safe and Responsive Schools (SRS) **More information starts on page 16.**	• Improve student behavior • Reduce school violence • Improve overall school climate	SRS relies on an instructional rather than a punitive approach to addressing discipline issues. A structured needs assessment helps schools select among various programmatic elements. Students learn problem-solving skills, such as conflict resolution. Students at particular risk receive more intensive support. Schools use alternatives to office referrals, such as behavior support classrooms.	An interested school establishes a school-based team comprised of educators, parents, community members and students. The team is responsible for a data-driven assessment and planning process. All staff and community members must be trained. Day-to-day implementation requires participation from all school staff.

Professional Development Programs			
Program/Approach	**Overall Objectives**	**Description**	**Resources Needed**
Professional Development and Support for Teachers **More information starts on page 19.**	• Improve capacity of teachers to manage behavior and discipline within their classrooms and on the school campus • Enhance teachers' cultural understanding • Reduce student misbehavior and improve classroom and school climate	Many national professional development programs offer teachers training and support in behavior management. The My Teaching Partner program pairs a teacher with a coach for an entire school year. The teacher is videotaped, and the coach and teacher jointly reflect on the teacher's classroom interactions. The Classroom Assessment Scoring System can be used to keep data and foster improvement.	Trained coaches and instructional materials are needed to implement the MTP program. Teachers need time and institutional support to participate in the program. Financial resources are needed to implement teacher development programs.
Limiting the Role of School Resource Officers (SROs) **More information starts on page 21.**	• Improve capacity of SROs to differentiate school misconduct from criminal conduct • Improve SRO knowledge about adolescent behavior • Reduce referrals from school to juvenile and criminal court	A variety of national programs and curricula offer SRO training. The Denver Public Schools implemented a program to reduce court referrals by SROs. Strategies for Youth, a nonprofit organization that focuses on interaction between youth and law enforcement, offers information on this approach.	School boards, school staff, SROs, and juvenile court practitioners must jointly develop a plan for training and implementation of this strategy.
Objective Threat Assessment **More information starts on page 25.**	• Differentiate serious threats from threats that are unlikely to be carried out • Limit school exclusion to students who pose a serious threat • Allow school administrators a flexible approach to deal with threats, rather than a zero-tolerance approach	Within a school or district, a team is identified and trained to engage in threat assessment. Upon report of a threat, staff undertake a multi-step process to make a well-informed assessment of the likelihood that a threat will be carried out. Students whose threats are not likely to be carried out are not excluded.	Threat assessment team members, typically a school counselor, school psychologist, and School Resource Officer, need training. Team members also need time and support on an ongoing basis to carry out the threat assessment process.

Programs Targeting Individual Students Engaged in Misbehavior				
Program/Approach	**Overall Objectives**	**Description**	**Resources Needed**
Restorative Justice **More information starts on page 27.**	• Hold offenders accountable for their actions • Offer an alternative to suspension that provides the offender an opportunity to learn from the misconduct and make reparations to the victim • Provide community involvement in responding to individual misconduct • Foster the mending of relationships	Restorative justice refers to a group of practices that aim to hold an offender accountable for his or her actions, often by requiring the offender to face the victim and engage in restoration of what was lost. Some programs utilize trained "restorative justice practitioners." Others involve peer juries or student restorative circles. The Juvenile Justice Project at Campbell Law School, serving seven schools in Wake County, incorporates restorative justice principles.	If an outside organization runs the project, restorative justice can be free to schools and require only a minimal time and space commitment by school administrators. Programs that are run by school staff can require staff training and support for implementation.
Community Service Programs **More information starts on page 29.**	• Limit out of school time for school offenders • Offer a more meaningful consequence for misconduct • Provide supervision and support during suspension	Community service programs allow students to engage in meaningful community activities, either in lieu of suspension from school or during periods of suspension. Programs often offer students a chance to develop skills.	Frequently, local non-profits work with schools to provide service opportunities. Philanthropies and government grants may fund community service programs.
Community-school Partnerships **More information starts on page 31.**	• Provide at-risk students and their families with support to improve school-family engagement, student learning, student behavior, and overall student outcomes	Partnerships between schools and communities deliver educational, medical, and social support services in an integrated way to high-needs students and their families. A "community school" is both a location and a set of partnerships with local organizations. The partnerships can include programs to deliver mental health care, behavioral, social, and academic support to students.	These partnerships typically involve school personnel, community organizations, and volunteers. Grants are sometimes available to support the partnerships. In N.C., Juvenile Crime Prevention Councils and other community partners provide funding. Community-school partnerships require time and effort from all partners.

Substance Abuse Interventions **More information starts on page 34.**	• Limit school suspension as a consequence of drug use • Intervene before substance use becomes a serious problem • Treat substance abuse to reduce future student use of illegal and harmful substances	Programs provide substance abuse counseling and treatment for students whose misconduct includes use of illegal drugs or alcohol. Often, outside contractors agree to work with students either in lieu of a student suspension or during a student suspension. Some programs reduce the length of suspension upon successful completion of the program or remove the suspension from the student's record.	Programs are typically offered by contracted vendors, not school district personnel. Students/families are usually responsible for payment of services, although Medicaid may cover the costs. Students/families must typically provide their own transportation, although transportation may be provided by the district.
Alternative Schools **More information starts on page 36.**	• Provide supportive and structured school programming for students who are suspended from their regular schools • Offer behavioral instruction to chronic rule breakers to help them develop better behavioral skills	Alternative schools usually enroll students who are suspended from their regular school, are at risk of suspension, or have been suspended in the past. They offer additional services, such as counseling and behavior support. Students return to traditional schools either at the end of the suspension or when staff determines their skills warrant re-enrollment.	Class sizes in alternative schools are typically smaller than in traditional schools. These schools therefore require physical settings that can accommodate smaller classes. Resources are necessary for teachers, counselors, and administrative staff.

School Board Policy Changes			
Program/Approach	**Overall Objectives**	**Description**	**Resources Needed**
School District Policies Reducing the Use of Suspension as a Discipline Tool **More information starts on page 39.**	• Create a new culture in which exclusion from school is no longer the default response to most student misbehavior	School board policy changes may provide alternative responses to suspension or may limit the use of suspension for certain misbehaviors.	Political will is needed to make a significant change. Collaboration with school administrators, teachers, parents, and students is important. Funding for teacher training and additional staff may be needed.

1. Positive Behavior Intervention and Support

Description

Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS), used in North Carolina and in many other states, is a program based on proven behavioral change strategies.[15] Rooted in behavioral psychology, a positive behavior support approach was first used in special education classes and has since expanded into general education classrooms. At its core, PBIS is a behavior management system that recognizes the function of misbehavior and develops interventions to discourage such misbehavior and encourage desired behavior.[16]

A school-wide PBIS program puts the teaching of appropriate student behaviors on par with the teaching of academic subjects. A plan typically is created and implemented by a team comprised of educators, community members, and family members who review the school's discipline policies and data to identify areas of concern.[17] The team then develops positive and support-focused interventions. Schools generally focus on a small number of behavioral expectations, such as "respect yourself, respect others, and respect property," "be safe, be responsible, be respectful," and "respect relationships and respect responsibilities."

After settling on the desired focus behaviors, team members ensure that staff buys into the expectations. Consistency across classrooms is important for effective implementation of PBIS. The PBIS team also creates a matrix that enables tracking of the effects of behavioral expectations on school-wide discipline by documenting decreases in the rate of office referrals, suspensions, expulsions, as well as improvements in school climate and a decrease of administrative time spent on discipline.[18]

The PBIS initiative in North Carolina has grown substantially since its inception in 2005. At the end of the 2011-12 school year, 1,154 schools statewide were trained in or implementing PBIS, representing 46% of the state's 2,512 schools.[19] Most have shown good fidelity to the program model.[20]

In North Carolina, schools implementing PBIS have lower out-of-school suspension rates than other schools.[21] At PBIS "Exemplar" schools – those that have completed all the training modules and met other criteria – the suspension rate is less than half of what it is at other schools.[22] The largest difference is found in middle schools.[23]

PBIS schools also have higher academic performance than non-PBIS schools. Schools with Exemplar status have exceeded the state average on statewide tests for three years in a row. Graduation rates from PBIS schools also exceeded the state average in

2010-11.[24] Schools that implement PBIS with higher fidelity demonstrate more positive behavior and academic outcomes.[25]

One example of a school that experienced dramatic results using PBIS is Bald Creek Elementary School in Yancey County. After implementing PBIS in 2003, Bald Creek saw office referrals decrease by 60% in the next two years, from 161 in 2003-04, to 147 in 2004-05, to 64 in 2005-06. In-school suspensions at Bald Creek also fell by 72%.[26]

The longer students are exposed to PBIS, the more their behavior is positively affected. For example, at Bald Creek students who had been in a PBIS environment the longest had the fewest office referrals for misbehavior. In addition, the school's overall academic performance improved after implementing PBIS.[27]

Where implemented

PBIS is a national program. North Carolina uses PBIS widely, with 1,154 schools participating at some level in the 2011-12 school year. About 80 of those schools earned Exemplar status by completing all the training modules, scoring well on implementation assessments, and providing data on behavior, attendance, and academics for at least two consecutive years. Most (63) of the schools in the Exemplar category are elementary schools; 16 are middle schools and one (Northern Nash) is a high school.

Types of organizations involved

A school-wide PBIS plan is typically created and implemented by a team comprised of educators and family members who review the school's discipline policy and data to identify areas of concern.[28] The team then develops positive and support-focused interventions. After settling on the desired focus behaviors, team members take them to school staff to ensure that they support the expectations.[29]

North Carolina offers training to school systems interested in implementing PBIS programs through the N.C. State Improvement Project, which is funded with federal special education grants.

Types of students involved

PBIS is a school-wide program that affects the entire student body.

Resources needed

PBIS implementation requires an upfront investment of time and effort from the school team and staff. However, costs for PBIS training are generally low. A few hundred dollars are required to post new school rules and to provide substitutes for teachers attending training sessions.[30] Additionally, many schools form partnerships with local businesses, receive grant funding, or collaborate with their PTAs to develop financial support.[31]

Evidence-based?

Yes. A number of studies have found that PBIS programs reduce discipline problems including vandalism, substance abuse, and disruptive behaviors.[32]

Responsible parties

Individual schools and the state of North Carolina. North Carolina provides training to schools interested in PBIS. The program is widely used in North Carolina schools, with 46 percent of the state's 2,512 schools participating in some fashion in 2011-12.

Contacts

Heather Reynolds is the state PBIS consultant. She can be reached at the N.C. Department of Public Instruction, (919) 807-3313 and heather.reynolds@dpi.nc.gov. Information is available at the following website: www.dpi.state.nc.us/positivebehavior/. An additional resource is www.pbis.org.

2. Safe and Responsive Schools

Description

The Safe and Responsive Schools (SRS) Project assists schools in developing a comprehensive and preventive process for addressing school violence and improving student behavior.[33] The program, initially developed with funding from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Programs, rests upon the premise that an instructional approach to school discipline is more effective than a punitive approach. The SRS program focuses on students who require explicit instruction and structure to learn their school's expected behavioral practices. SRS also involves parents and community members and stresses comprehensive planning to design a program that is individualized for a particular school.

Comprehensive SRS plans include three components.[34] First, programmatic prevention efforts, such as conflict resolution, help to establish a violence-free environment by equipping students with alternative ways to resolve problems. Second, screening and assessment processes allow schools to identify at-risk students early and to provide them with support before their problems escalate into violence. Third, schools develop and implement specific responses to disruptive behaviors.[35]

To implement an SRS program, a school must engage in a strategic planning process. This typically takes an entire school year with the programming going into effect the following year. The strategic planning process begins with the formation of a team comprised of professionals, parents, and students. The team gathers data on the strengths and needs of the school, then develops the mission of the project. With an eye on evidence-based best practices in violence prevention and intervention, the team develops a plan that best addresses the safety needs of the school.[36]

Following are examples of the types of SRS programming used at participating schools.[37]

Elementary schools

➢ Life skills: faculty generated list of 10 key life skills taught once a week during class; rewards provided for students who display life skills of the week.
➢ Mentoring program: high school students paired with elementary students who may benefit from a mentoring relationship; support and training provided to mentors.
➢ Bullying prevention: distributed bullying survey; bullying prevention and awareness week at each school.

Middle schools

➢ Safe schools TV show: videotaped role-plays based on Second Step, a violence prevention curriculum; lessons broadcast over school's closed circuit TV system; topics include anger management, drugs, and conflict resolution.
➢ Parent newsletter: newsletter sent home once a month detailing activities and events, especially those relevant to school safety.
➢ Civility code: four principles to guide student behavior; students exhibiting code-following behavior receive school-wide recognition, including postcard sent home and writing their name on "Wall of Fame."
➢ Civility curriculum: curriculum taught to all students during home economics, developed to uphold principles of the code.

High schools

➢ Classroom management training: workshop before the start of the school year for all faculty members featuring presentations on national school discipline strategies.
➢ Beatrice After School Education (BASE): behavior management program for students who chronically violate school rules.
➢ Out-of-classroom Intervention (OCI): cool-down time for students instead of office referral; students complete problem-solving form.

Where implemented
The SRS project was developed as a model project in schools in Indiana and Nebraska. http://www.indiana.edu/~safeschl/about.html

Types of organizations involved
The SRS program uses a team approach involving schools, community members, parents and students. The interventions are primarily school-wide, and are mediated by SRS teams.

Types of students involved
SRS prioritizes using an instructional rather than a punitive approach to school discipline issues. Therefore, the SRS program focuses on students who require explicit instruction and structure to learn the school's expected behavioral norms.

Resources needed
Costs and resources vary depending upon how the SRS components are implemented. Planning, implementing the program, collecting data, and meeting to develop the program require an upfront investment of time, effort and commitment from participating parties.

Evidence-based?

Yes. The SRS project was a model demonstration and technical assistance project funded by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education, Office of Special Education Programs. The project worked with 16 schools in two states to expand the array of options available to schools in preventing and addressing disruptive behaviors.[38] Among four schools studied, the number of suspensions declined by an average of 44% over a period of four years.[39] Among students with disabilities, the decrease in suspensions was even more striking; the average decline was 63%.[40]

Responsible parties

A school-based team of professionals, parents, community members and students develop and implement the school plan.

Contacts

Dr. Russell Skiba, Director, The Equity Project, Indiana University, (812) 855-4438, equity@indiana.edu

3. Professional Development and Support for Teachers

Description

Professional development for teachers can help improve academic instruction and reduce suspension through behavioral interventions.[41] As students become adolescents and move from elementary school to middle school, suspension rates dramatically increase. A wealth of research links effective classroom management with improved outcomes, suggesting that providing support and training for teachers could help reduce suspension rates. Because many behaviors that violate school rules are rooted in adolescent development, teachers working with middle and high school students may need specialized training in this area. Large disparities in suspension rates for minorities and students with disabilities suggest that teacher training on multicultural sensitivity could positively affect the classroom environment and reduce misbehavior.[42]

Two professional development programs developed at the Curry School of Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning at the University of Virginia have been shown to improve teacher effectiveness and improved student outcomes. The My Teacher Partner Program (MTP) relies on a web-mediated coaching cycle in which teachers reflect on interactions with students and meet one-on-one with coaches to develop an action plan to build on strengths and address challenges.[43] As a sustained program – distinguished from one-time workshops – MTP applies a focused and rigorous approach to teacher improvement. The program also offers a video library of best practices and a college course.

Aligned with MTP is the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), an observational tool that defines and measures effective interactions in school classrooms. The tool both effectively measures teacher behaviors linked to student academic gains and offers teachers resources for strengthening the types of interactions that result in positive outcomes.[44]

Where implemented

My Teaching Partner and CLASS have been implemented in schools and Head Start preschool programs across the country.[45]

Types of organizations involved

My Teaching Partner works with schools to provide professional development. The Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning at the University of Virginia's Curry School of Education provides a video library of examples of best practices, offers a college course, and offers web-mediated coaching.

Types of students involved

This alternative affects all students, but particularly those affected by exclusionary discipline practices. Research indicates that in classrooms in which MTP was not used, African-American students were twice as likely to be suspended or expelled than in classrooms where it was used.[46]

Resources needed

The biggest cost associated with the MTP program is payment of mentors. In addition, MTP and CLASS employ manuals, guides, online programs, print resources, score sheets, toolkits and other resources. These resources range widely in cost, from $19.95 to $990.00. For more information, visit http://store.teachstone.org/toolkits/.

Evidence-based?

Yes. Research of both programs showed positive results. A study of MTP involving 78 secondary school teachers with 2,237 teachers showed that improved teacher-student interactions associated with participation in MTP resulted in moving the average student from the 50th to the 59th percentile in achievement test scores.[47] A smaller study showed that teachers in the MTP program suspended students less often than teachers in the control group, and that the MTP teachers who did suspend students suspended African-American students and white students at the same rate.[48] The reduction of racial disparity in discipline was attributed to higher quality teacher-student interactions nurtured by the MTP program.

Research on the CLASS observational tool found that the tool was able to identify teacher characteristics that resulted in higher student achievement.[49] The study isolated a number of teacher characteristics that fostered higher test scores, including the teacher's ability to establish a positive emotional climate, to structure the classroom and meet the needs of adolescents to have a sense or autonomy and control, to allow for active learning, and to provide opportunities for peer interaction. While the study did not report on lower suspension rates, it identified effective methods of encouraging desirable behavior and preventing misbehavior.[50]

Responsible parties

To participate in My Teaching Partner, teachers must agree to be observed, to reflect on interactions with students, and to meet with coaches for an entire school year.[51] In addition, principals must allow staff the necessary time to participate.

Contacts

For more information, visit: http://curry.virginia.edu/research/centers/castl/mtp and http://curry.virginia.edu/research/centers/castl/class.

4. Limiting the Role of School Resource Officers

Description

Some school districts have addressed suspensions and expulsions by working with School Resource Officers (SROs) to change interactions between students and law enforcement in schools. SROs, law enforcement personnel assigned to schools, are increasingly used by schools to respond to student misconduct. After experiencing dramatic increases in referrals to juvenile court for school-based offenses, some districts have rethought how SROs are used in the schools.

One such district is the Denver Public Schools. After the Columbine school shooting in 2000, Denver Public Schools (DPS) increased the presence of SROs in its schools. However, by 2004, the number of students referred to the court system by DPS had increased by over 70%. Forty-two percent of referrals were for minor offenses such as use of obscene language or disruptive appearance. Clayton County, Georgia, a school district of 50,000, had a similar experience. The district started an SRO program in 1995. By 2003, Clayton County courts had experienced a 1,248% increase in referrals from school. Ninety percent of these referrals, according to court officials, were for infractions traditionally handled by school administrators.[52]

Both school districts have since sought to curb the flow of students into the court system by changing their relationship with SROs. Denver Public Schools has placed limits on the role of School Resource Officers and implemented training to increase their effectiveness in these roles. After a campaign by Padres y Jovenes Unidos, a local parent and student-led community organization, and the Advancement Project, a national civil rights organization, DPS collaborated with stakeholders to revise its district-wide discipline code. This collaboration culminated in two intergovernmental agreements, an initial one in 2007 and a subsequent one in 2013, which focus on resolving discipline issues without criminal punishment and on using restorative justice strategies in lieu of harsh punishments.[53] These agreements allow School Resource Officers to intervene with an arrest or citation only when absolutely necessary. Instead, most disciplinary problems are resolved by educators, who can respond with consequences that do not involve suspension or expulsion. The role of SROs is to distinguish between disciplinary and criminal issues and to de-escalate school-based incidents whenever possible. If they do ticket or arrest students, SROs must notify parents and principals as soon as possible. Additionally, SROs are alerted to students' disabilities and are provided with copies of their Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) so that they can make necessary accommodations.

SROs are not precluded from arresting students for severe misconduct, such as drug offenses and assaults. Nevertheless, the goal is to provide holistic support for students and prevent relatively minor or unthreatening student behavior from resulting in criminal sanctions.[54]
School Resource Officers are trained multiple times each year on when to intervene in school-based offenses. Officers are trained on topics such as cultural competence, teenage psychology, age-appropriate responses, restorative justice techniques, special accommodations for disabled students, and the creation of safe environments for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students.[55] DPS also requires SROs to meet with community members at least once a semester and to participate in meetings with school administrators when requested.[56]

After the first intergovernmental agreement was signed, law enforcement referrals dropped from 1,399 in the 2003-04 school year to 512 in 2011-12, despite a 12% increase in enrollment during the same time period.[57] Referrals for African-American students reached their second lowest rate in 10 years and the rate was half that seen in 2012-13, the peak year for referrals.[58] Among Latino students, referrals declined by nearly 75 percent. Referrals of white students also decreased. Since implementing the code revision, DPS reduced its suspension rate by 33% and its expulsion rate by 54%. Furthermore, DPS's four-year graduation rates improved district-wide, from 49% in 2007-08 to 59% in 2010-11.[59] The dropout rate also fell 50% over a six-year period.[60]

In Georgia, the Clayton County School District worked with School Resource Officers to decrease suspension and expulsion.[61] In collaboration with community members, law enforcement, juvenile court officials, and mental health providers, the Clayton County School District developed a "School Offense Protocol" (SOP) to reduce reliance upon law enforcement and court referrals for typical adolescent behaviors.[62] The SOP distinguished between disciplinary incidents that could be effectively handled by school officials and those meriting the involvement of law enforcement. After implementing the SOP in 2005, Clayton County experienced a 68% drop in court referrals from school, an 8% drop in middle school suspensions, and a 73% decrease in possession of serious weapons on campus. The graduation rate increased by 20%. Additionally, after implementing the SOP, Clayton County greatly reduced the number of referrals for African-American students, who previously were referred to court almost three times as frequently as white students.[63] By 2011, the risk of referral for African-American and white students was the same.[64]

The Waco Independent School District (ISD) (student enrollment 15,251)[65] drew upon the Clayton County model. During the 2011-12 school year, Waco ISD implemented a three-tiered system providing school-wide prevention programs, targeted interventions for students who did not respond to the school-wide programs, and more intensive interventions for students requiring additional supports.[66] As part of its program, Suspending Kids to School, Waco ISD also amended its policy to limit the use of ticketing by SROs unless the student posed a threat. Specifically, the policy requires alternatives in lieu of ticketing for disorderly conduct violations unless the student's behavior poses a threat or represents a willful violation after the student had been warned. Limitations on the SRO role are part of a larger program that incorporates a range of alternatives to school suspension.[67] Though this program has only been active for two years, early data analysis by the Texas A&M University Public Policy Research

Institute indicates that suspensions dropped by more than 25% and ticketing dropped by 77%.[68]

Where implemented

Many school districts have recently reexamined the role of SROs, including districts in Denver, Colorado; Waco, Texas; Clayton County, Georgia; Birmingham, Alabama; Wichita, Kansas; Rapides Parish, Louisiana; Columbus, Ohio; Sioux City, Iowa; Broward County, Florida; Bibb County, Georgia; Middlesex County, Massachusetts; Los Angeles County, California; and several jurisdictions in Connecticut.[69] Similar efforts are underway in Charlotte, North Carolina, led by Judge Louis Trosch.

Types of organizations involved

These programs can differ significantly. Typically the juvenile justice system, courts, school district authorities, community members, parents, and School Resource Officers are involved.

Types of students involved

Students most strongly affected are those most disproportionately affected by suspensions and juvenile justice system involvement. However, reforming the SRO role also can affect the entire student population.

Resources needed

Costs will vary. This approach requires an upfront investment of time and effort.

Evidence-based?

Many school districts are collecting data on the impact of this alternative on discipline practices. As reported above, court referrals have declined significantly in school districts with these programs.

Responsible parties

Responsible parties include school officials, law enforcement, community members, School Resource Officers, and court personnel.

Contacts

- Strategies for Youth (www.strategiesforyouth.org) is a national organization focused on improving interactions between police and youth. It can be hired to provide training workshops for SROs within a school district. Examples of police training courses include "Policing the Teen Brain in School" and "Policing Youth Chronically Exposed to Trauma and Violence." Strategies for Youth recently provided training for law enforcement personnel in Charlotte, N.C.
- The Annie E. Casey Foundation's Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (http://www.aecf.org/work/juvenile-justice/jdai) provides a "Help Desk" with support and materials for jurisdictions interested in pursuing approaches similar to the Clayton County, Ga., model.[70]

- [The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges' School Pathways Project](http://www.ncjfcj.org/ncjfcj-selects-16-court-sites-participate-its-school-pathways-juvenile-justice-system-project) (http://www.ncjfcj.org/ncjfcj-selects-16-court-sites-participate-its-school-pathways-juvenile-justice-system-project) is developing a "toolkit" on school offense protocols, and provides training to interested districts.[71]
- [The National Association of School Resource Officers](https://nasro.org/) (https://nasro.org/) provides training to SROs.[72]

5. Objective Threat Assessment

Description

Objective threat assessment is a process that allows school administrators to distinguish between students who make threats and students who are likely to carry out their threats.[73] Threat assessment also includes efforts to prevent threats from being carried out. Thus, carefully assessing student threats ensures that the educational environment is safe and that exclusion is used only in cases where it is truly appropriate. In a study of 600 schools that used threat assessment protocols, 15 percent fewer students received short-term suspensions and 25 percent fewer students received long-term suspensions.[74]

The Youth Violence Project (http://curry.virginia.edu/research/labs/youth-violence-project) at the University of Virginia developed and field-tested a comprehensive set of threat assessment guidelines. At each participating school, the principal or associate principal led a threat assessment team, which included a school counselor, a school psychologist, and a School Resource Officer.[75]

A trained threat assessment team follows a prescribed seven-step process whenever a threat is made. Initially, interviews of the accused, the person threatened, and any witnesses are conducted. From those, the principal categorizes the threat as either a "transient threat" or a "substantive threat." Transient threats are those determined not to post any continuing risk of danger. Students who have engaged in transient threats are required to apologize to those affected by the threat or take other actions to make amends. The student may also be disciplined if the threat was particularly disruptive. If a transient threat was sparked by an argument or conflict, the principal can involve other team members in helping to address or resolve the problem.[76]

If a threat is a serious substantive threat, the team takes actions to protect potential victims by notifying them of the threat. The student who made the threat is cautioned about the consequences of carrying out the threat and his or her parents are contacted.[77] In very serious situations, the team takes immediate action to ensure that the threat is not carried out. The student is suspended from school pending a complete assessment of the threat and determination of the most appropriate school placement. The team conducts a more comprehensive safety evaluation that includes both a mental health and law enforcement component. Ultimately, the principal decides whether the student can return to school or should be placed in an alternative setting. If the student is permitted to return to school, a plan is developed including conditions that must be met and procedures that must be in place to monitor the student upon his or her return.[78]

Threat assessment allows school authorities to respond to threats with flexibility. In the field test performed by the Virginia researchers, 70% of the threats were easily resolved as transient threats.[79] Under a zero tolerance policy, almost all of the students in the field test would have been suspended or expelled.

Objective threat assessment is a promising component of a comprehensive approach toward maintaining safe schools. Threat assessment strategies help identify students who may be in need of extra supports and services. They also help develop a school environment in which discipline is reliable and consistent and where students feel connected to the staff and teachers.[80]

Where implemented
Threat assessment has been implemented in 2,700 schools in 14 states. In 2013, Virginia mandated the formation of threat assessment teams in all of the state's schools.[81]

Types of organizations involved
Threat assessment is conducted by a school team. The team generally includes a school administrator, a school counselor, a school psychologist and a School Resource Officer.[82]

Types of students involved
Any student who makes a threat receives a threat assessment from the team.

Resources needed
To implement this alternative, a school district must provide training to team members and time and support for team meetings. The Virginia Youth Violence Project offers one-day training workshops on threat assessment. The cost is $5,000 for the workshop, plus travel expenses for the trainer, and $50 per participant for training materials.

Evidence-based?
Yes. The Youth Violence Project at the University of Virginia developed, field-tested, and evaluated this program.[83]

Responsible parties
The team, consisting of the principal, a school counselor, school psychologist and School Resource Officer, is responsible for assessing threats. Teachers and other school staff must refer students who make threats for an assessment by the team.

Contacts
Dewey Cornell, Professor of Education, University of Virginia, Curry School of Education, (434) 924-0793, dcornell@virginia.edu; The Virginia Model for Student Threat Assessment, http://curry.virginia.edu/resource-library/the-virginia-model-for-student-threat-assessment

For further information http://www.indiana.edu/~atlantic/briefing-papers/ http://curry.virginia.edu/research/projects/threat-assessment

6. Restorative Justice

Description

Restorative justice practices originate from a criminal justice technique in which people convicted of crimes are held accountable, in part, by facing the people who have been harmed by their actions. In schools, these programs aim to hold students accountable and to change their behavior. Research shows that when implemented on a larger, school-wide scale, use of restorative justice techniques can decrease misbehavior and suspension rates. Furthermore, restorative justice practices can be used in many different situations and can be tweaked to fit the students involved or the behavior targeted.

There are many restorative justice techniques. The peer jury is among the most common. In Davidson Middle School in San Rafael, California, school suspensions dropped from 300 in the 2009-10 school year to 27 in 2011-12 after implementation of a peer court and other restorative justice practices.[84] When Davidson students break the rules, they have a choice between suspension and being disciplined by their classmates. In peer court, students face a panel of five or six students who have been trained to listen and ask questions. Davidson Middle School also employs restorative circles, where students meet to repair their relationships after conflict. When a student returns to school after suspension, the school convenes a re-entry circle including the student and anyone else involved in the incident that led to suspension.

Restorative justice sometimes can be used as an alternative to suspension. In other cases, a child is referred to the restorative justice program upon his or her return to school after the suspension has already occurred. Because so many school-based offenses involve student conflict, hurt feelings and fear of retribution, restorative justice sessions often resolve many of the issues at hand. Victims of the offense may benefit as well, finding healing in the expression of remorse by the offender. This can limit further animosity among those involved, reducing the likelihood of additional offenses[85].

Where implemented

Restorative justice programs have been implemented in many schools around the nation, including schools in Baltimore, Chicago, and Oakland. There are several programs in North Carolina. The Juvenile Justice Project at Campbell Law School offers conflict resolution services that include restorative justice practices in seven Wake County middle and high schools. In some N.C. counties, Juvenile Crime Prevention Councils offer state-funded mediation and conflict resolution services. For example, the Dispute Settlement Center in Carrboro offers student conflict mediation services, as does the Elna B. Spaulding Conflict Resolution Center in Durham.

Types of organizations involved

Generally, the parties involved are school officials and trained restorative justice practitioners.

Types of students involved

Restorative justice can be used in a variety of discipline settings but it is likely most effective for students being disciplined for behavior arising from interpersonal conflicts.

Resources needed

Those implementing restorative justice techniques must receive training, which multiple organizations around the country provide (for example, the International Institute for Restorative Practices in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania). Expertise in restorative justice is available in North Carolina as well through the Campbell Law School Juvenile Justice Project. The Campbell project provides a free restorative justice program, which includes trained facilitators who run the program on site at participating N.C. schools, at no charge. Participating schools need only provide a meeting room and permit students to miss class time, if necessary, to participate.

Evidence-based?

Yes. Although restorative justice practices differ program to program, studies indicate that restorative justice is a useful method of keeping students in school while promoting positive relationships. Research on restorative justice techniques has analyzed individual schools, the types of practices used, and the effect on discipline rates over time. Both anecdotal and qualitative data suggest that restorative justice results in better outcomes for students. In Wake County, data show that students who attended a victim-offender face-to-face meeting were three times less likely to have future conflicts than students who did not have such meetings. For a summary of research on restorative justice practices in the U.S. and internationally, see "Dignity, Disparity and Desistance: Effective Restorative Justice Strategies to Plug the School-to-Prison Pipeline," by Maria Schiff: http://goo.gl/ieLlKU and "Restorative Practices in Schools: Research Reveals Power of Restorative Approach, Part II," International Institute for Restorative Practices, retrieved from http://www.iirp.edu/article_detail.php?article_id=NTUz

Responsible parties

Generally, schools establish partnerships with facilitators and take responsibility for alerting the facilitators when their services are needed to run sessions.

Contacts

Jon Powell, Director, Juvenile Justice Project at Campbell Law School, (919) 865-4692, JPowell@law.campbell.edu.

7. Community Service Programs

Description

Community service programs offer a structured experience for students during long-term suspensions. The programs often incorporate community service experiences, skills training, counseling, mentoring, parental involvement, and reflection. Community service programs were expanded in 2002 when Congress appropriated funding for the Community Service Program Initiative to serve students suspended or expelled from school. With its federal money, the N.C. Department of Public Instruction offered grants to fund activities that used community volunteers to provide instruction, support, and deterrence from delinquency for suspended and expelled students. These programs also offered structure, safe environments, and non-academic learning opportunities for excluded students.[86]

Where implemented

In North Carolina, the initial districts funded were: Beaufort, Carteret, Cumberland, Guilford, McDowell, Rutherford, Wake, and Winston-Salem/Forsyth. In those districts, students who were suspended or expelled partnered with nonprofit and government organizations such as mental health agencies and congregations. Due to eliminated funding, only one of the initial programs remains, The Phoenix Project in McDowell County (now called Phoenix Academy). This program initially provided long-term suspended and expelled students with meaningful activities enabling them to give back to the community and develop skills through volunteering. Now entirely funded by the McDowell County Schools, Phoenix Academy is an alternative school for long-term suspended students with a community service component, allowing students to volunteer at the food pantry and an animal shelter.

Types of organizations involved

Community service programs require partnerships between schools and local organizations. These organizations are typically nonprofit but may also include government organizations.

Types of students involved

Participating students are generally those who have been expelled or are on long-term suspension.

Resources needed

Program costs vary widely depending on the types of services and supervision provided. In North Carolina, many community service projects were funded by a federal grant program, the Community Service Program initiative, administered by the Department of Public Instruction. Currently, DPI is unable to award grants, thus many of the programs initially funded are no longer in operation.

Evidence-based?

There has not been a formal research study of N.C.'s community service programs. The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's 2006 report, "Community Service Programs for Long-Term Suspended Students, Final Report on Best Practices," is available here: http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/communityservice/practices/

Responsible parties

Schools and community organizations typically share responsibility for these programs, with possible additional oversight from the Department of Public Instruction.

Contacts

Becky Scott, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, bescott@dpi.state.nc.us, (919) 807-4011; Phoenix Academy in McDowell County, (828) 652-1040.

8. Community-school Partnerships

Description

Community-school partnerships, such as community schools, and the organization [Communities in Schools](http://www.communitiesinschools.org/), http://www.communitiesinschools.org/, allow schools to provide a broad range of behavioral, health, and family support to help students' improve their success.[87] Schools and community partners work together to combine resources to support children in a holistic learning experience that helps ensure positive academic and non-academic outcomes.[88] The schools form the hub of the community, connecting students with needed resources and support. Schools that have pursued these partnerships have been successful in increasing family engagement and improving student learning, attendance, behavior and development.[89] Community schools work to create five conditions: (1) core instructional curriculum; (2) motivated, engaged youth; (3) services to address youth and families' physical, emotional and mental health needs; (4) respect and collaboration between school and families; and (5) community engagement that connects youth to the community.[90]

A prominent example of community-school partnerships is the Elev8 Initiative, a community school organization partnering with middle schools in Albuquerque, Baltimore, Chicago, and Oakland. Elev8 provides participating schools with resources for the integrated delivery of learning, health, and family support services, as well as resources for family and community engagement.[91] Elev8 is tapped the moment a situation arises that might result in a suspension or other disciplinary consequence. In a Chicago school partnering with Elev8, suspensions dropped 80% in the 2009-10 school year.[92] In Wilson Middle School in Albuquerque, New Mexico, 50 students were arrested on the school campus and in the neighboring community the year before Elev8 was implemented. The following year, just four students were arrested.[93]

Another highly regarded program is Communities in Schools (CIS), a national dropout prevention model with local affiliate programs. The goal of each CIS affiliate is to provide the "Five Basics" to students. The "Five Basics" are: a one-on-one relationship with a caring adult, a safe place to learn and grow, a healthy start and a healthy future, a marketable skill to use upon graduation, and a chance to give back to peers and community. CIS performs an annual needs assessment to determine what services students need most and how the organization can best deliver them.[94]

Local CIS affiliates provide "Level 1" resources to all students in a school, such as clothing, school supplies, field trips, and health screenings. More intensive "Level 2" services are tailored to specific students and require an assessment and plan developed by a school site coordinator and team. Level 2 services may include counseling, mentoring, free or low-cost health and dental care, finding the student a safe place to live, or ensuring the student has transportation to and from school. These services can last weeks, months or an entire school year.[95]

Part of the national CIS network, [Communities in Schools of North Carolina](http://www.cisnc.org/) (CISNC) (http://www.cisnc.org/) offers support to school districts interested in developing community-school partnerships.[96] Based in Raleigh, CISNC currently provides assistance to 37 local affiliates serving 44 counties. It serves students from kindergarten to twelfth grade and strives to reach the most vulnerable students in North Carolina's most dropout-prone school districts. In the 2011-12 school year, CISNC worked with 469 schools across the state, providing Level 1 services to more than 180,000 North Carolina students, and Level 2 individualized services to 21,000 students. In the districts participating, more than 10,000 parents, families and guardians participated in the programming and more than 12,000 volunteers served CISNC students. Of the students served, 99% stayed in school, 94% were promoted to the next grade, and of the seniors eligible to graduate, 95% graduated with a high school diploma.[97]

Individual school districts have also developed their own successful community partnerships. One example is a partnership between the Clinton City Schools and the local First Baptist Church. Known as Structured Day, the program allows students to serve out-of-school suspensions at the church.[98] Church staff provides one-on-one support for students and assist them with their school work. A parent involvement coordinator also meets with parents and students and discusses the student's behavior, makes home visits, and helps parents make connections with local agencies and social workers. Terrace Miller, director of student services at the Clinton City Schools, attributes many positive changes to the partnership. Statistics show that the Clinton City Schools had large decreases in crimes, suspensions, and dropouts in the 2011-12 school year, the year after the program was implemented.[99] All program costs are covered by First Baptist Church or by the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council. The program has been operating for about five years and serves students from the Sampson County School District as well. A similar program operates in Wayne County.

Where implemented

Community-school partnerships are in place around the country (Chicago, Baltimore, New Mexico) and in counties throughout North Carolina. CISNC currently provides assistance to 37 local affiliates serving 44 North Carolina counties. In the 2011-12 school year, CISNC had a presence in 469 schools across the state.

Types of organizations involved

Generally, school officials, parents, and community organizations form a community-school partnership. In North Carolina, CISNC offers assistance with forming the partnerships.

Types of students involved

Community-school partnerships can affect the entire school community, suspended or expelled students, or targeted student groups.

Resources needed

Partnerships for learning and community schools require collaborative strategies. Partners must have a shared vision of learning, shared leadership and governance, effective communication, regular and consistent sharing of information about youth progress, family engagement, and collaborative staffing models.[100] All partners must share ownership for the work and must commit to a cohesive and explicit set of common goals. For example, Elev8 Baltimore created a "set of values" at the outset of its partnership to ensure that all partners clearly understood the larger vision.[101]

Successful partnerships dedicate time and effort to communicating and identifying structures and strategies at the outset of their partnership. For instance, Chicago Elev8 schools hold monthly meetings to update partners and keep staff informed.[102]

Community-school partnerships also rely on data, both at the beginning of the process and later, to track progress. Elev8 New Mexico uses a data specialist.[103] Community schools, such as Oakland Elev8, promote family engagement by reaching out to parents and organizing parent events.[104]

Evidence-based?

Research is forthcoming regarding the Elev8 initiative, which is undergoing evaluation at local sites and nationally.[105]

Regarding CISNC, a national five-year evaluation released in October 2010, which included randomized controlled trials and an economic impact study, found that CIS schools that implemented the model with high fidelity reduced dropout rates and increased graduation rates. There were also improvements in academic performance and attendance. For more information, visit: http://www.communitiesinschools.org/about/publications/.

Responsible parties

Generally, schools, community partners, and parents are necessary parties to a partnership. Organizations, such as CISNC can assist with forming and maintaining these partnerships. CIS becomes involved in a school only at the invitation of the school or school district.

CISNC uses a model of integrated student services. The organization positions a dedicated staff member to serve as a school-based site coordinator, working with school staff to identify students at risk of falling behind or not graduating, and assessing their individual needs. Site coordinators serve on the school's management team, collaborate with staff to identify at-risk students, work to forge community partnerships, and connect students and families with community resources.

Contacts

For further information: contact Arlene Wouters, CISNC Director of Developing Communities at awouters@cisnc.org.

9. Substance Abuse Interventions

Description

Rather than using school suspension to address student substance abuse issues, some school districts offer substance abuse treatment. Without such an alternative, students typically face a "zero tolerance" response to possessing drugs at school or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol at school. "Zero tolerance" policies typically result in long periods of exclusion from school. However, there is little evidence that they are effective. The pediatric and psychological communities recommend that drug and alcohol offenders be offered treatment rather than school suspension or expulsion.[106] Treatment rather than suspension can result in thousands of days spent in the classroom rather than at home.

The Substance Abuse Intervention/Family Strengthening (SAIFS) is one successful model. A six-week program for high school and middle school adolescents, it provides an alternative to suspension for drug-related infractions. Groups are highly structured and psychoeducational in nature. They are designed to provide an early intervention level of care, with students needing more extensive treatment referred to community programs. The content of the groups encourages students to analyze how their substance use may cause problems for themselves, their family, health, and education.[107] The six-week duration allows facilitators to assign homework, lead discussions between the student and his or her parent, and allows the student time to process and apply the information learned.

Several North Carolina counties are using substance abuse classes as an alternative to suspension. In Wake County, for example, students caught in violation of school drug and alcohol policies may be referred to the Alternative Counseling Education (ACE) program. The ACE program is a school board-approved alternative to long-term suspension for first-time infractions that do not involve the distribution or sale of substances.[108] Under the ACE program, the student receives a five-day suspension, instead of a long-term (11 days or longer) suspension, and must attend a 12-hour program offered by a provider approved by the Office of Student Due Process along with a parent or guardian. Durham Public Schools and Chatham County Schools are among other North Carolina districts that offer substance abuse counseling as an alternative to suspension.

Several limitations should be noted in regard to substance abuse treatment. Some programs charge a fee, which can be prohibitive to low-income families. Transportation also can be a challenge. Furthermore, these programs can be both over- and under-inclusive. Some students who could benefit are not offered the option of participating, often for technical reasons; students who are not appropriate candidates may at times be required to participate in order to avoid long-term suspension, despite the lack of a drug abuse problem.

Where implemented

In North Carolina, Chatham, Durham, Charlotte-Mecklenburg, and Wake County school districts are among those that provide the option of substance abuse treatment for students who violate the code of conduct. Many districts around the country offer this alternative.

Types of organizations involved

Schools must identify and partner with substance abuse treatment providers. Many schools will also accept treatment from other providers, with advance permission and approval.

Types of students involved

Students affected are those suspended or expelled for offenses involving substances. In many cases, students are not eligible for participation after their first offense.

Resources needed

Most treatment providers require a fixed fee, paid by the student and/or parents in order for the student to participate. The cost may be covered by private insurance or Medicaid. Additionally, students usually must get transportation to and from the classes. Wake County offers a free option for first-time offenders who have not been charged with distribution; second-time offenders or those charged with sale or distribution must pay for the program.

Evidence-based?

Yes. A recent study of students from a Colorado school district supports the effectiveness of the SAIFS program. Among students who participated in a district-provided alcohol and drug education class, 78% of students and 70% of parents reported that the students' substance use had decreased since beginning the groups. In addition, 65% of the parents reported that they had changed parenting strategies as a result of the program, mostly by improving their communication and increasing supervision. A majority of students reported that they improved their ability to consider consequences when considering using drugs.[109]

Responsible parties

While the programs are typically offered by private vendors, school districts select approved programs to be offered to students. Substance abuse treatment requires a commitment by the students and the students' parents, who frequently must pay for the classes, provide transportation, and participate in some or all of the sessions.

Contacts

Office of Student Due Process, Wake County Public School System, (919) 413-7303, studentdueprocess@wcpss.net.

10. Alternative Schools

Description

Well-designed and well-implemented alternative schools and in-school suspension programs can be productive alternatives to out-of-school suspension. A careful approach with an eye toward meaningful behavioral reform can result in a significant reduction in recidivism. While assigning non-instructional personnel to oversee suspended students is unlikely to produce positive results, using certified teachers and trained behavior specialists to work with suspended students has been shown to be an effective tool.[110] Successful alternative schools are those with a full day of school, small student bodies, small classes, a student-centered atmosphere, alignment of curriculum and assessment, availability of special education services, training and support for teachers, and connections with multiple external agencies.[111]

Effective alternative schools exist in a number of school districts in North Carolina and across the country. For example, the Alternative Education Center (AEC) in McDowell County, N.C., is a successful alternative school with many of the characteristics identified by experts as important. Serving middle and high school students, most of whom have been suspended long-term from regular public school and are involved in the juvenile justice system, AEC limits classes to a maximum of 12 students. It offers a full day of school and all students have a Personal Education Plan that identifies academic needs. The school provides at-risk case management services, working to connect each student with community agencies. The teachers use positive behavior interventions and employ the Circle of Courage model from the Native American tradition in an attempt to break cycles of poverty and drug use. The school also embeds a strong community service component into the program, through which the students are placed either at the local animal shelter or food pantry. Of the 100 students assigned there in the 2012-13 school year, only two returned for similar offenses the following year.[112]

Edenton-Chowan Schools in N.C. also offer an alternative center for suspended students that includes small classes. Students may also take self-paced computerized classes to allow them to recover missing credits. Local officials attribute much of the district's success in decreasing school crime, suspension, and drop-out rates in the 2011-12 school year to the alternative center.[113]

Beyond North Carolina, examples of well-designed alternative schools include Success Academy in Baltimore (http://www.baltimorecityschools.org/Domain/4891). Success Academy is a school-based discipline option for the most serious student offenders - those who have assaulted classmates or staff members or are charged with possessing or distributing guns or wielding weapons. Class sizes are small, just five or six students per class. The cost is high – around $1.2 million for a program that serves about 100 students a year – but the district staff believes it is far less costly in the long-term than the alternative of suspension.[114]

Students attend Success Academy voluntarily and are separated by gender and age. All students must take a behavior-management course as well as academic subjects ranging from remedial instruction to International Baccalaureate classes. Success Academy provides a full day of instruction, counseling, wraparound services, and a safe and structured environment for students who would otherwise be out of school and without school-provided supervision.[115] Before students leave Success Academy, they must present a self-reflective project to peers and school administrators and write a detailed report in which they identify the catalyst for their negative behavior.[116]

Where implemented

Alternative schools and alternative classrooms have been used in lieu of suspension in districts throughout the state and nation. Baltimore and Los Angeles school districts have prominent programs, and many districts in North Carolina also have successful alternative school programs.

Types of organizations involved

Organizations involved can vary. In Baltimore's Success Academy, the district office partners with teachers to provide an alternative setting. In North Carolina, some school districts work with their own teachers and staff members to provide alternative activities for excluded students.

Types of students involved

Students who would otherwise be facing exclusion from school are the primary beneficiaries of these approaches.

Resources needed

The resources needed vary greatly. Success Academy in Baltimore costs around $1.2 million dollars a year, while Eagle Ridge Junior High School in Savage, Minnesota, operated a program for $20,000 a year. North Carolina schools have operated programs by hiring additional staff members and by utilizing existing staff members.

Evidence-based?

Studies of effective alternative programs include The American Institutes for Research "Study of Effective Alternative Education Programs: Final Grant Report" in June 2007.[117] The report identifies eight components of a successful alternative program, most of which involve the philosophical approach of the program administrators and staff. In addition, the report suggests that teachers in such programs need specialized training to work with students who do not succeed in traditional educational settings, and that a low adult-student ratio in the classroom is necessary. Other research on the effectiveness of alternative programs is limited, but growing.[118]

Responsible parties

Development of alternative programs is generally authorized by the school board, to be implemented by district-level staff. Typically, program managers, teachers, and administrators are responsible for the success of these programs.

Contacts

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11. School District Policies Reducing the Use of Suspension as a Discipline Tool

Description

School district policies that limit the use of suspension as a discipline tool have taken hold across the nation. These policies forbid administrators from suspending students in particular situations, requiring alternative responses. Typically, the policies eliminate the use of suspension for less severe disciplinary issues that do not pose a serious threat to the safety of others. To be successful, the policies prohibiting suspension must dovetail with alternatives to suspension - and additional resources to fund them – so that teachers and principals are not left without tools to hold students accountable for misbehavior.

This strategy has recently been employed in Los Angeles, Baltimore, Buffalo, and Denver. In May 2013, the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) school board voted to ban suspensions of students for acts of "willful defiance," directing officials to use alternative disciplinary practices instead.[119] The term "willful defiance" encompasses infractions such as talking back to teachers, using cell phones in class, public displays of affection or repeated tardiness.[120] Of the 700,000 suspensions that were doled out in California during the 2011-12 school year, half were for willful defiance.[121] The LAUSD school board was particularly concerned by the growing number of minority and disabled students who were receiving suspensions for "willful defiance," and were thus on the fast-track to falling behind their classmates, dropping out of school or even ending up in jail.[122]

In the Baltimore, Buffalo, and Denver Public Schools, the school boards eliminated suspensions for less severe infractions.[123] Baltimore's and Denver's new codes, both implemented in 2008, minimize out-of-school suspensions and expulsions, especially for offenses such as disrespect, insubordination, and classroom disruption. [124] Denver's new code limits out-of-school suspensions and expulsions to incidents that pose a "serious and credible threat to the safety of pupils and staff."[125] Baltimore's new code includes graduated consequences that increase with the age of the child, incidents of misbehavior and the nature of the offense.[126] In both districts, principals must take intermediate steps before resorting to out-of-school suspension as punishment.[127] In Buffalo, the school board adopted a new code of conduct in 2013 that eliminated suspension for minor misbehaviors such as truancy, cheating, cutting class, running in the halls, smoking, and dress code violations. The code requires schools to use intervention and prevention strategies that have proven successful, including restorative justice, conflict resolution, and referrals to support staff.[128]

The result of these reforms has been a dramatic reduction in total suspensions. In Baltimore schools, suspensions fell from 16,739 in 2006-07 to 8,620 in 2012-13.[129] Dropout rates for African-American boys decreased by 59%; graduation rates for that group increased by 16 %.[130] In Denver, the district reported a 38% drop in suspensions from 2010-11 to 2012-13.[131]

Examples of individual schools eliminating suspension exist as well. When Jose Huerta became the principal of Garfield High School in East Los Angeles in 2010, he told his team that there would be no more suspensions.[132] Accordingly, suspensions plummeted from 510 in 2008-09 to just two in 2010-12.[133] For Huerta, the key has been to avoid suspending students for behavior that could be better addressed by other means.[134] Teachers and administrators reinvigorated student governance, brought parents into the school as extra hands and eyes, and instituted after-school detention, drug counseling and conflict-resolution training.[135] Huerta also created teacher and staff buy-in at the beginning of the process by meeting with small groups of teachers, allowing them to vote on certain aspects of the new plan, and allotting new professional collaboration time.[136]

Policies to reduce suspensions must be designed and implemented with care to ensure positive impacts on the students and school communities involved and to ensure that the teachers, administrators, and other responsible parties have the training and support they need to be effective. In Denver, teachers have expressed concerns about the burdensome requirements in using a "tiered approach" to student infractions along with too much paperwork and uneven distribution of resources for teachers and students.[137] In many of the affected districts, the message to the board of education is that eliminating suspension alone is not a workable solution.[138] In Los Angeles, training is supported by outside funding. Nevertheless, teachers and administrators have raised questions about whether they have the resources, training, and time to use alternative practices.[139] At Augustus Hawkins High School in South L.A., where a practice of restorative justice has replaced many suspensions, Principal Tony Terry said each mediation takes 45 minutes or more, at a time of major cuts to support staff such as counselors and assistant principals.[140]

Where implemented
In school districts and individual schools around the country.

Types of organizations involved
School boards, local activists, parent groups, and school and district officials are involved in policy advocacy and reform. School and district officials as well as trained practitioners are involved in implementing alternatives to suspension.

Types of students involved
Eliminating suspension can take place district- or school-wide, affecting the entire student body. This strategy especially affects students who commit non-violent behavior code infractions.

Resources needed

Costs and resources vary depending on the approach taken and the alternatives implemented.

Evidence-based?

Some alternatives to suspension that are used in coordination with anti-suspension policies are evidence-based and are described elsewhere in this report.

Responsible parties

Typically, school boards, local activists, parent groups, and school and district officials are responsible for policy advocacy and formation.

Contacts

Ending the Schoolhouse to Jailhouse Track, a program of the Advancement Project: http://safequalityschools.org.

Appendix 1: Research on the Effects of Suspension

Despite the wide use of suspension as a disciplinary technique, research has raised serious questions about its effects. This section summarizes four key research findings about suspension as a tool for responding to student misconduct. First, suspensions make the learning environment less safe and less productive. Second, for the suspended student, out-of-school suspension significantly increases the likelihood of negative life outcomes. Third, suspension disproportionately affects male, African-American students and students with disabilities. Fourth, suspensions are not reserved solely for the most serious violations and offenses.

Suspensions make the learning environment less safe and less productive.

Contrary to expectations, suspensions can make schools less safe. "Research has demonstrated … that schools with higher rates of out-of-school suspension and expulsion are not safer for students or faculty," notes the American Academy of Pediatrics, which has issued a policy statement calling for pediatricians to discourage out-of-school suspensions and expulsions. Punishing students by excluding them from school does not deter future misbehavior, and may in fact increase it, making the overall educational environment less safe. For example, students suspended in early middle school are more likely to be suspended again by the eighth grade, suggesting an increase in misbehavior. Overall, schools with higher suspension rates tend to have lower ratings in academic quality and school climate. Additionally, even when controlling for race and poverty, research has found that high-suspending districts have worse outcomes on standardized tests.

Suspensions do little for the broader community. They are not only an ineffective way of engaging students, but also ineffective at engaging parents. This is particularly true for low-income or single parents.

For the suspended student, out-of-school suspension significantly increases the likelihood of negative life outcomes.

Suspensions diminish academic achievement in students. As would be expected, the more time the student is in school and engaged with learning, the higher that student's academic achievement. The more time the student spends suspended from school, the less time the student will be engaged in the academic endeavor.

For many children, one suspension leads to the next. Thirty to 50% of suspended students are repeat offenders, indicating that suspension does little to discourage misbehavior and may in fact encourage it. Researchers have found strong connections between suspension and the likelihood of dropping out of school and future involvement with the juvenile or criminal justice systems. In fact, the disconnection with school that occurs when a student is suspended is one of the strongest predictors of delinquency. A recent Council of State Governments study, "Breaking School Rules," found that among students from similar demographic, achievement, and socioeconomic backgrounds those with one or more suspensions or expulsions were five times more likely to drop out of school and six times more likely to repeat a grade level than students with no suspensions or expulsions. Furthermore, even students with minimal disciplinary histories – those with just one disciplinary action for a relatively minor offense - were nearly three times more likely to have contact with the juvenile justice system within the year following a suspension.

During the suspension itself, students are often unsupervised. The lack of supervision increases the likelihood that the student will engage in further misbehavior during their exclusion from school. Among children whose parents can provide supervision, suspension can have harmful consequences for the whole family because parents must miss work to watch them.

Suspension disproportionately affects male, African-American students and students with disabilities.

National as well as state-level data show that suspension disproportionately impacts African-American students and students with disabilities. According to the United States Department of Education Office of Civil Rights, African-American students are more than three times as likely as their white peers to be expelled or suspended. Although African-American students represent 15% of students in the public schools sampled, they make up 35% of students suspended once, 44% of those suspended more than once, and 36% of students expelled. Further, over 50% of students who were involved in school-related arrests or referred to law enforcement are Hispanic or African-American. Office of Civil Rights data also reveals that black male middle school students were suspended at three times the rate of white males, and black females are suspended more than four times as frequently as white females. Nationally, 36% of all black male students with disabilities enrolled in middle and high schools were suspended at least once in the 2009-10 school year. In the last forty years, K-12 suspension rates have more than doubled for all non-white students, while the gap between suspension rates of black and white students has more than tripled, rising from a difference of three percentage points in the 1970s to over 10 percentage points in 2006.

Disproportionality also can be attributed to socio-economic status. Students who receive free lunch are at a greater risk of suspension, as are students whose fathers do not have a full-time job.

Research shows that racial disparities in school discipline cannot be explained through higher rates of misbehavior among African-American students. In one study, white

students had a higher rate of misbehavior than black students, yet black students' misbehavior was more likely to be punished. Another study showed that black students often received disciplinary consequences for less serious infractions requiring more subjective judgment from teachers and administrators. Still another study demonstrated that black students are more likely to be sent to the office than white students. In North Carolina, a study of Wake County practices showed that black first-time offenders were far more likely than white first-time offenders to receive suspensions for minor offenses, including cell-phone use, disruption, disrespect, and public displays of affection.

Suspensions are used for many minor offenses.

Rather than being reserved for the most dangerous behaviors, most suspensions result from less serious offenses, such as minor physical aggression, attendance issues, abusive language, disrespectful behavior, and general classroom disruption. In fact, only 5% of all out-of-school suspensions result from offenses typically considered serious or dangerous, such as possession of weapons or drugs. The remaining 95% of suspensions stem from disruptive behavior and other rule violations.[141]

Use of suspension is also extremely inconsistent from school to school, suggesting that student behavior is just one factor leading to high suspension rates. Other factors that contribute to a school's overall suspension rate include teacher attitudes, administrative centralization, school governance, perceptions of achievements, socioeconomic status and racial status. In short, school and non-behavioral student characteristics, particularly race, influence the use of suspension more than do student behavior and attitude.[142]

From one point of view, this conclusion can be seen as empowering. Principals' and administrators' attitudes toward the disciplinary process can influence rates of suspension. At schools where principals do not view suspension as a default consequence, rates of out-of-school suspension are lower and the use of preventive measures is more common.

Appendix 2: Suspensions in North Carolina

In the 2013-14 school year, North Carolina reported a total of 198,254 short-term suspensions and 1,088 long-term suspensions. The suspension rate for high school students was 1.91 suspensions per 10 students. These figures represent a decline in the number and rate of suspensions compared with past years; the suspension rate for high school students was 3.48 in 2008-09. Nevertheless, suspension remains a very common discipline tool in North Carolina.

North Carolina was reported to have among the highest suspension rates for males in the country based on federal data from 2011-12. State figures from 2013-14 show North Carolina to be consistent with the nation in suspending African Americans and students with disabilities disproportionately to their percentage of the school population. Black students comprise 22.5% of the total school population of North Carolina, but received the majority of suspensions: 57% of all short-term suspensions and 55% of all long-term suspensions. Students with special needs represent only 13% of the state's school population, yet they received 22% of total short-term suspensions and 17% of the total long-term suspensions across the state.

Short-term suspensions

The following charts reflect information regarding suspensions in North Carolina contained in the 2013-14 Consolidated Data Report published annually by the N.C. Department of Public Instruction. It is noteworthy that the figures reflect the number of suspensions, not the number of students suspended. Because some students are suspended multiple times, the number of students suspended is lower than the number of suspensions. Students who received short-term suspensions were suspended an average of 1.8 times. The average length of a short-term suspension was five and a half days.

High school students account for a large share of North Carolina's suspended students, representing almost half of all short-term suspensions in the state in 2013-14.

Short-Term Suspensions by Gender [143]		
	Female	Male
2013-14	52,464	145,034
2012-13	66,172	181,623
2011-12	69,123	189,073
2010-11	71,852	194,636
2009-10	74,540	201,089
2008-09	80,784	211,841

Short-Term Suspensions by Race/ Ethnicity [144]							
	American Indian	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Multi-Racial	White	Pacific
2013-14	5,330	716	113,853	18,562	7,616	51,267	154
2012-13	6,242	972	142,869	23,244	9,181	65,133	15
2011-12	6,383	1,043	146,639	23,569	9,510	70,925	18
2010-11	6,387	1,305	149,654	22,654	9,892	76,308	211
2009-10	6,433	1,293	156,411	20,679	9,979	80,635	
2008-09	7,503	1,346	166,844	20,698	9,096	85,897	

Short-Term Suspensions by Race/ Ethnicity (Number of Suspensions per 10 Enrolled) [145]							
	American Indian	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Multi-Racial	White	Pacific
2013-14	2.59	.17	2.91	0.85	1.34	.67	.88
2012-13	3.03	.25	3.67	1.11	1.71	.84	.12
2011-12	3.07	.28	3.78	1.20	1.75	.91	.16
2010-11	2.94	.36	3.86	1.24	1.80	.98	1.93
2009-10	3.14	.35	3.97	1.30	1.70	1.02	
2008-09	3.61	.38	4.15	1.34	1.67	1.08	

Short-Term Suspensions by Special Education or Exceptional Children (EC) Status [146]					
	Serious Emotional Disability (SED)	Intellectual Disability-Mild (IDMI)	Specific Learning Disability (SLD)	Speech/ Language Impairment (SLI)	Other Health Impairment (OHI)
2013-14	6,972	3,745	15,920	1,157	11,574
2012-13	7,336	5,735	21,486	8,493	14,647
2011-12	8,601	6,559	22,426	7,326	14,918
2010-11	11,029	7,842	22,195	6,282	16,294
2009-10	11,769	8,438	22,069	5,066	15,442
2008-09	12,070	8,438	21,380	4,473	14,633

Long-term suspensions

High school students are more likely than other students to be suspended long-term (longer than 10 days); they accounted for 66 percent of the state's long-term suspensions in 2013-14. The suspensions lasted an average of 63 school days. [147] Students receiving long-term suspension missed 68,055 days in the 2013-14 school year.[148]

Number of Long-Term Suspensions by Gender [149]		
	Female	Male
2013-14	176	869
2012-13	277	1,142
2011-12	311	1,298
2010-11	521	2,100
2009-10	765	2,562
2008-09	807	2,772

Long-Term Suspension Rates by Gender (Number of Suspensions per 100,000 Enrolled) [150]		
	Female	Male
2013-14	24	113
2012-13	38	150
2011-12	43	172
2010-11	73	281
2009-10	107	345
2008-09	112	371

Number of Long-Term Suspensions by Race/ Ethnicity [151]							
	American Indian	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Multi-Racial	White	Pacific
2013-14	19	5	595	102	51	271	1
2012-13	28	5	772	185	60	368	0
2011-12	29	9	871	206	64	430	0
2010-11	28	19	1397	279	80	809	7
2009-10	97	14	1869	327	103	914	
2008-09	76	22	2062	331	99	973	

Rates of Long-Term Suspension by Race/ Ethnicity (Number of Long-Term Suspensions per 100,000 Students) [152]							
	American Indian	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Multi-Racial	White	Pacific
2013-14	92	12	152	47	90	35	57
2012-13	136	13	199	89	112	47	0
2011-12	139	24	225	105	118	55	0
2010-11	129	53	360	153	146	103	639
2009-10	473	38	475	206	175	116	
2008-09	366	61	513	215	182	122	

Rates calculated by dividing number of suspensions in race/ethnicity category by membership in that race/ethnicity category and multiplying by 100,000.

Male Rates of Long-Term Suspension by Race/ Ethnicity (Number of Long-Term Suspensions per 100,000 Students) [153]							
	American Indian	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Multi-Racial	White	Pacific
2013-14	144	24	245	79	150	58	0
2012-13	230	15	303	153	167	76	0
2011-12	208	37	352	175	199	86	0
2010-11	182	106	567	246	224	162	923
2009-10	576	54	717	320	273	179	
2008-09	577	100	784	346	268	183	

Rates calculated by dividing number of suspensions in race/ethnicity category by membership in that race/ ethnicity/gender category and multiplying by 100,000.

Number of Long-Term Suspensions by Special Education or Exceptional Children (EC) Status[154]					
	Serious Emotional Disability (SED)	Intellectual Disability-Mild (IDMI)	Specific Learning Disability (SLD)	Speech/ Language Impairment (SLI)	Other Health Impairment (OHI)
2013-14	32	18	69	5	43
2012-13	34	23	86	32	54
2011-12	33	16	71	20	49
2010-11	83	35	123	24	102
2009-10	135	66	146	27	164
2008-09	133	65	122	25	151

Endnotes

[1] Students missed 68,108 days due to long-term suspension and 588,814 days due to short-term suspension. Public Schools of North Carolina State Board of Education Department of Public Instruction. (2013-14). *Report to the North Carolina General Assembly, Consolidated Data Report.* Retrieved from http://www.ncpublicschools.org/research/dropout/reports/.

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[15] Safe and Civil Schools. *Positive Behavior Support (PBS)—A Discussion.* Retrieved from http://www.safeandcivilschools.com/research/papers/pbs.php.

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[18] *Id.*

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[21] *Id.* 6.

[22] *Id.*

[23] *Id.*

[24] *Id.*

[25] *Id.* 7.

[26] North Carolina State Board of Education and Department of Public Instruction. *Positive Behavior Intervention and Support.* Retrieved from http://www.ncpublicschools.org/positivebehavior/background/practices/.

[27] *Id.*

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[34] *Id.* 631.

[35] *Id.* 633.

[36] *Id.* 635-39.

[37] *Id.* 636.

[38] *Id.* 633.

[39] *Id.* 643. The declines over the four years for the four schools were as follows: School A: -26%; School B: -77%; School D: -44%; School E; -28%.

[40] *Id.* For students with disabilities, the declines over the four years for the four schools were as follows: School A: -49%; School B: -100%; School D: -75%; School E; -29%.

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[56] *Id.*
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[58] *Id.*
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[60] *Id.*
[61] Teske, Huff & Graves, "Collaborative Role of Courts in Promoting Outcomes for Students: The Relationship between Arrests, Graduation Rates and School Safety," Retrieved from http://safequalityschools.org/pages/clayton-county-ga; included in *Keeping Kids in School and out of Courts, A Collection of Reports to Inform the National Leadership Summit on School-Justice Partnerships.* Retrieved from http://tinyurl.com/school-justice-partnerships.
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[63] Teske, Steven. "A Study of Zero Tolerance Policies in Schools: A Multi-Integrated Systems Approach to Improve Outcomes for Adolescents" 24 *J. of Child & Adolescent Psychiatric Nursing* 88, 93 (2011). Retrieved from http://www.ncjfcj.org/sites/default/files/Zero%20Tolerance%20Policies%20in%20Schools%20%282%29.pdf. This program was also described in court documents filed in an OCR Complaint filed with the U.S. Department of Education regarding alleged discriminatory ticketing practices in the Bryan Independent School District. "See Less Discriminatory Alternatives" p. 2.
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BEST PRACTICES FOR IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION PROGRAMS

Since the late 1970s, in-school suspension programs (ISS) have been used by schools and districts as an alternative to out-of-school suspension. This document is intended to provide superintendents with information on how to most effectively utilize ISS as an alternative to school exclusion that focuses on continuing the curriculum and providing the opportunity to identify and eliminate the root cause of misbehavior. Many school districts are moving away from viewing and using ISS as a punitive and exclusionary tool, and towards seeing it as an opportunity to support students with varying social, emotional, and behavioral needs in a positive and proactive environment.

ISS Program Planning

A district should have a mission statement explaining the goals of the ISS program that is clearly understood by all school personnel as well students and parents. The ISS philosophy and goals should be developed and agreed to by the same individuals and groups involved in determining other school climate and student disciplinary policies and procedures. All school personnel should have an appreciation of how ISS works and what outcomes are expected. ISS should be a seamless component of a holistic, positive and preventative discipline system. For an ISS program to operate effectively there must be school-wide support for all components of the school discipline plan.

Successful in-school suspension programs require thoughtful planning in order to reconnect students to the school community, address underlying behavioral issues and avoid lost instructional time. An effective ISS program can allow schools to maintain safety and order in the school building and intervene to address behavioral issues without excluding students from school. Exclusion from the classroom should be considered thoughtfully in order to be productive and avoid further disconnecting students from the regular classroom. The first task for school superintendents in examining their ISS program operations is to determine the goals and desired outcomes for the program. Chief among these considerations is to determine whether ISS is an integral part of a school-wide system of positive behavior supports, and whether ISS can provide students with the support necessary for behavior modification to occur. If so, then the superintendent and leadership team should evaluate the structure of the ISS program.

At the most basic level, effective ISS programs have the following components:
- Adequate physical space
- Appropriately placed personnel who can provide students participating in ISS programs with a variety of cognitive and non-cognitive supports
- A consistent referral process
- A comprehensive evaluation process
- Communication with parents
- Data collection and analysis

Adequate Space

Administrators should work to hold ISS in a consistent and separate location that is conducive to learning and that allows students access to services and facilities. If space is unavailable in the school building the student attends, school administrators should exercise discretion to locate the pupil in a structured learning environment, even if this space is in another school building under the jurisdiction of the district. If located away from the student's regular school, transportation may

need to be provided. In order to ensure student safety and age-appropriate supports, students from elementary, middle and high school should not be in the same ISS room. Superintendents should limit the number of students in the room each day to a 15 student to one teacher ratio or less, allowing the staff to give students individual attention.

Continuing the Curriculum

A superintendent should designate an individual to act as the in-school suspension coordinator. ISS coordinators within schools are generally tasked with coordinating assignments and services for students in ISS with administrators, teachers and staff; maintaining communication with parents; managing referral paperwork; collecting data on the student's performance in ISS; and participating in the development of school-wide discipline policies. The ISS coordinator or ISS room supervisor is responsible for ensuring that teachers provide academic content and materials to ensure ISS students can complete their assignments and keep up with the their classmates. The coordinator should also collect completed assignments and ensure they are given to appropriate classroom teachers each day.

Students with disabilities must continue to receive the accommodations and supports they would have otherwise received if they had not been removed from the classroom.

Addressing Root Causes of Behavioral Issues

Each student in ISS should meet with a school counselor, school psychologist, school social worker or other qualified school mental health professional to explore the root causes of their misbehavior. ISS can be an opportunity to bring together students who may have been involved in a conflict to mediate the situation and resolve issues that precipitated the need for disciplinary intervention. If students have more significant mental or behavioral health needs, ISS can be a way to provide appropriate services. In addition to completing classroom assignments, students may benefit from the opportunity to reflect on a behavioral incident in writing.

Referral

Schools should have a system in place for identifying what infractions or misbehaviors qualify a student for ISS. Consistent guidelines for what offenses qualify for ISS and the length of time a student spends in ISS should be developed. ISS should not be a primary intervention for addressing student misbehavior and other less exclusionary measures should be attempted first. Districts should determine whether school administrators are the only school building personnel who can assign students to ISS or if teachers and other staff are able to make this referral. ISS assignment information should be detailed in the code of conduct.

When considering whether a student should be referred to ISS, administrators should determine:
- Is there another way misbehavior could be addressed that would not require lost class time?
- Is the child's presence in the regular classroom a risk to the safety of students or staff?
- What academic services would be needed to ensure the student does not fall behind in school work?
- What non-academic services would be needed to address any underlying mental health or behavioral health concerns?
- If the misbehavior involved conflict between the student and another member of the school community, how can that conflict be addressed while the student is in ISS?

- What is the student's behavioral history?
- Is there a plan for re-entering the classroom and avoiding future misbehavior?
- Does the student have an IEP or other special needs that will need to be addressed in an ISS placement?

If a referral is warranted, the following steps should take place. First, an explanation should be provided to the student and his or her parent/guardian about the reason for ISS referral, and the student and parent/guardian should have an opportunity to respond. Second, a plan should be provided to the student and parent/guardian that ensures the student will not fall behind in class and that underlying behavioral issues will be addressed.

ISS Evaluation
Accurate and comprehensive documentation of the student's referral and experience in ISS and after ISS is critical. A district should maintain a student file which includes an explanation of the student's referral to ISS, including the details of the incident, any other students who were involved and the referring staff member. School level data should be kept which show patterns of student referral from certain teachers, subjects or settings, evidence of student success upon returning to class and the frequency with which individual students are referred to ISS more than once.

Upon completion of ISS, the coordinator or school counselor should continue to track the student's progress and follow up with teachers. The ISS coordinator or a counselor should also meet with the student in the weeks after the ISS has concluded. Notes documenting the student's experience in ISS both from the student and coordinator perspective should be included in the evaluation. Using an ISS student rating sheet or rubric can be an objective way to collect information about student outcomes. If a teacher referred a student to ISS or was involved in the student's referral to ISS, notes on the student's progress in class after ISS should be included as well. In addition, the file should indicate the work that was completed by the student during ISS and evidence of the student's academic progress during ISS.

Family Engagement
Most effective discipline models call for family/parental involvement. Parents should always be notified as to discipline infractions and consequences students are receiving at school, as well as receiving positive news when students are meeting expectations and contributing positively to the school environment. In cases of ISS, parents/guardians should be informed of the ISS plan. Engaging parents also allows for a conversation that may reveal additional risk factors for the student or provide important context for the student's misbehavior. Administrators, staff, students and parents/guardians all have a role to play in building positive school cultures and fostering a climate of respect.

Resources
- The School Discipline Consensus Report: Strategies from the Field to Keep Students Engaged in School and Out of the Juvenile Justice System
- Cleveland Metropolitan School District's Innovative 'Planning Centers' Provide Alternative to Punitive In-School Suspensions

TOWARDS A TYPOLOGY OF ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS:
A COMPILATION OF ELEMENTS FROM THE LITERATURE

Laudan Y. Aron

July 2003

I. Introduction

Public education in the U.S. has undergone a gradual but profound set of changes over the past twenty years. Since the publication of *A Nation At Risk* in 1983 (National Commission on Excellence in Education) and *A Nation Prepared* in 1986 (Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy), parents, legislatures, and school boards have all been demanding better outcomes from primary and secondary public schools. As a result, K-12 schools across the country have been focusing their efforts on adopting high academic standards, improving accountability, and achieving excellence, while at the same time cracking down on serious violations of school disciplinary codes. The main beneficiaries of these changes have been college-bound youth and others who tend to respond well to the organizational culture of traditional schools (Leone and Drakeford 1999).

Non-college-bound youth and others who for a variety of reasons have not done well in traditional public schools have largely been left behind by the high academic standards high-stakes assessment movement. The nation, however, cannot afford *not* to educate these children. About one-quarter of all students drop-out of the traditional K-12 educational system before receiving their high school diploma (Kaufman et al. 2000). High school graduation rates have actually declined over the past 10 years, and in a "last best chance" to succeed academically, American children have been turning to alternative education programs in record numbers. These children need and deserve quality education programs for the same reasons that their traditional school counterparts do: they need the knowledge and skills that quality programs provide in order to succeed in the new global economy of the 21st century.

Although the term "alternative education" covers all educational activities that fall outside the traditional K-12 school system (including home schooling, GED preparation programs, special programs for gifted children, charter schools, etc), this paper focuses on those serving school-aged vulnerable youth who have dropped (or been pushed) out of traditional schools. Ironically, many of these programs are associated with unsuccessful students and are thought to be dumping grounds for "problem" youth, and yet because they represent a departure from

the standard approach to schooling, many alternative education programs of them are known for their innovation and creativity. High quality alternative education programs are generally known for their adherence to youth development principles (Smith and Thomases 2001, NGA Center for Best Practices 2001) such as: (1) physical and psychological safety (e.g., safe facilities, safe ways to handle conflicts between youth, etc.); (2) appropriate structure (limit setting, clear rules, predictable structure to how program functions, etc.); (3) supportive relationships (warmth, closeness etc., with adults and peers); (4) opportunities to belong (meaningful inclusion); (5) positive social norms (expectations of behaviors, etc.); (6) support for efficacy and mattering (empowering youth, challenging environment, chances for leadership, etc.); (7) opportunities for skill building (e.g., learning about social, communication skills, etc., as well as media literacy, good habits of the mind, etc.); and (8) integration of family, school, and especially community efforts (National Research Council and Institute of Medicine 2001). The best programs also address the specific needs of children from various racial and ethnic groups and those with special needs (including students with learning or other disabilities that have not yet been identified).

Given their importance in the public education system, states and communities are increasingly turning their attention to alternative education issues, and are wanting much more information than is currently available (National Association of State Boards of Education 1996, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction [undated]). Even with a general focus on programs serving disconnected and vulnerable youth, most current discussions of "alternative education" quickly turn to the question of "exactly who (or what) are we talking about?" Are we including children in regular K-12 public schools who participate in some type of special programming because they are delinquent, or pregnant, or at risk of dropping out? What about children who are being schooled in juvenile justice facilities or emergency homeless shelters? How about youth for whom the regular public schools simply do not seem to work? Basic questions such as these arise when discussing "alternative education" because there is no commonly-accepted, or commonly-understood, definition of what constitutes "alternative education." In part this reflects the newness of the field (at least as an area that is attracting widespread and mainstream interest), the variety of environments and contexts in which alternative education programming has evolved, and the

many sub-groups of vulnerable youth who might benefit from some type of alternative education, broadly defined.

This purpose of this paper is to synthesize existing knowledge, definitions, and themes about alternative education programs, based on a review of literature and reports.[1] It is intended that this knowledge can serve as a starting point for establishing common terminologies to characterize the various kinds of alternative education programs, and to develop a basic *typology* — that is a classification of the various kinds of alternative education based on certain common characteristics. Ideally, it would be useful to have a single definitive definition of alternative education that is broad and flexible enough to support a variety of purposes (such as conducting needs assessments, educating policymakers, projecting staffing needs, tracking expenditures, etc.) *and* specific enough to be useful for any one of these purposes. Whether such a definition will ever be developed is unclear, but a typology could be extremely helpful in establishing common terminology and for understanding the different kinds of alternative education.

Such a typology could also contribute to the body of knowledge about effective and high qualilty alternative education. Vulnerable youth who are disconnected (or disconnecting) from mainstream schools need and deserve to have high-quality alternative education, as do all youth. By including in a typology factors associated with quality and effectiveness, policy makers, practicners, and funders may be better able to help promote the expansion of high-quality approaches and improve or eliminate low-quality approaches.

Interestingly, many of the very first alternative education programs in this country defined themselves in opposition to the existing educational system. These included schools in the *Free School Movement*, schools that promoted progressive ideals by emphasizing individual child-centered achievement and fulfillment, and *Freedom Schools* that were designed to offer high quality educational opportunities to children who were being poorly served by existing public schools, namely minority students (Lange and Sletten 2002). Many of these schools

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[1] A companion paper addresses the need for alternative education for at-risk youth, J. Zweig and L. Aron, "Vulnerable Youth: Identifying their Need for Alternative Schools," April 2003.

did not survive over time, and this has resulted in a shift in the types of alternative education options available to students: many alternative schools today are more likely to be viewed by public education systems as disciplinary and/or remedial in nature.

Yet, as alternative education programs have evolved and matured, they have provided lessons not only about how to re-connect with disenfranchised youth, but also how regular schools can avoid disconnection in the first place. Indeed as Raywid has pointed out, "many of the reforms currently pursued in traditional schools—downsizing the high school, pursuing a focus or theme, students and teacher choice, making the school a community, empowering staff, active learner engagement, authentic assessment—are practices that alternative schools pioneered" (1994, p.26). The primary focus of this review are those programs designed to serve vulnerable children and youth who have either dropped or been pushed out of traditional schools, or are at risk of doing so. The fact that regular school systems often still consider alternative schools as disciplinary even as some alternative education approaches have been incorporated into some regular schools is important to bear in mind as future policy and practice decisions about expanding high-quality options for disconnected youth are made.

Thus, the main goal of this compilation is to document what is known, and lay the groundwork for developing a more comprehensive and useful framework, or typology, for understanding the many types of alternative education programs that exist and may need to be developed. It is important to take stock of what we know, assessing what we know clearly and realistically, and advance this knowledge to forge effective policies for the future. The review is also intended to contribute to developing a future research agenda around alternative education. Such an agenda can help better direct public and private investments in alternative education, ensure that the research is of use to policymakers and/or practitioners, and help advocates and other youth-serving professionals think more strategically about how they can best support vulnerable youth.

This review begins by considering how alternative education has been defined and described in this literature, including examples of legal definitions from state law, as well as more

general operational definitions. Then some of the many dimensions along which alternative education models/programs have been developed are examined (e.g., *who* is served through the programs, *where* are they located, *what* is their focus or content, *how* are they administered). Next, some of the preliminary "typologies" that have been developed to date are examined. The review concludes by presenting some of the many "lists" of characteristics shared by promising alternative education programs, noting how similar the various lists of desirable features are. Future studies designed to evaluate the effectiveness of alternative education programs would do well to use these common features as a starting point for identifying qualities associated with program effectiveness.

II. Alternative Education Programs Defined

The literature on alternative education programs includes a number of historical, legalistic, and operational definitions. For example:

- Morley (1991) draws on a number of writers to define alternative education in terms of socialization and public good —"Alternative education is a perspective, not a procedure or program. It is based upon a belief that there are many ways to become educated, as well as many types of environments and structures within which this may occur. Further, it recognizes that all people can be educated and that it is in society's interest to ensure that all are educated to at least...[a] general high school... level. To accomplish this requires that we provide a variety of structures and environments such that each person can find one that is sufficiently comfortable to facilitate progress" (p. 8).
  http://www.realschool.org/masterswebsite/alternativeeducationreview.html

- Statutorily, an alternative education program is defined under s. 115.28 (7) (e), Wis. Stats. as "an instructional program, approved by the school board, that utilizes successful alternative or adaptive school structures and teaching techniques and that is incorporated into existing, traditional classrooms or regularly scheduled curricular programs or that is offered in place of regularly scheduled curricular programs. Alternative education does not include a private school or a home-based private educational program." (State of Wisconsin 2001, p. 2)

- There are some definitions that delineate alternative education further to reflect particular purposes, particularly in relation to regular schools. For example, the Iowa Association of Alternative Education's (IAAE) Constitution and Bylaws, Article II states:

"Definitions:

Alternative Education: the study or practice of implementing alternative schools or programs. Public alternative education serves to ensure that every young person may find a path to the educational goals of the community. Alternative schools and programs focus on what they can offer the student, not on what problems the student has had in the past. Alternative education is a vital component of the total educational system.

Alternative School: an established environment apart from the regular school. With policies and rules, educational objectives, staff and resources designed to accommodate student needs, an alternative school provides a comprehensive education consistent with the goals established by the school district. Students attend via choice.

Alternative Program: an established class or environment within or apart from the regular school. An alternative program is designed to accommodate specific student educational needs such as work-related training, reading, mathematics, science, communication, social skills, physical skills, employability skills, study skills, or life skills.

Regular School: an established environment designed to provide a comprehensive education to the general populace to which assignment of students is made more on the basis of geographical location than unique education need."

Interestingly, while regular schools are primarily based on geography, the types of programs, curricula, and schools within the traditional K-12 system have also grown in recent years. Defining what constitutes "regular" schooling has grown more complex, so it should come as no surprise that defining alternative education is a challenge. One description of how alternative education is provided incorporates multiple perspectives about how to define the concept — "Three avenues for presenting alternative education can be identified across school systems:

- Alternative schools - both public and private
- Alternative programs for students using varying approaches for students to pursue common goals with the same school.
- Teaching strategies, beliefs and support services that facilitate growth in academic, personal/social and career development initiatives" (http://www.realschool.org/masterswebsite/alternativeeducationreview.html)

Often states and communities have statutory requirements governing the (minimum and/or maximum) numbers of students an alternative education program or school can have, the

type of curriculum that can be used, who can teach the program, the length of the school day, attendance policies, participation in state-wide student achievement tests, and other similar issues. In practice, alternative education programs and schools are defined and designed along a variety of often overlapping dimensions including *who* is served, *where* it operates, *what* the program offers, and *how* it is structured or administered (including who operates it and how it is funded). Each of these dimensions is discussed further below. Recognizing that there may not yet be a common definition for the distinction between program and school, and acknowledging that alternative education may ideally be considered a "perspective" important in any school, the term alternative education program is generally used in the remainder of this paper.

A. Who: The Population

Many alternative education programs target specific groups of youth, particularly those considered "at-risk," which is the main focus of this paper. The targeting is generally what makes such programs "alternative," and the circumstances or needs of the targeted group are what drive the curriculum or approach. Examples of such target groups for whom alternative education is often established include:

- women/girls
- pregnant/parenting teens
- suspended/expelled students
- recovered drop-outs
- delinquent teens
- low-achievers, and
- all at-risk[2] youth.

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[2] The term "at-risk" encompasses a wide array of youth who either engage in negative or high-risk activities, or who are growing up with disadvantages that "limit the development of their potential, compromise their health, impair their sense of self, and generally restrict their chances for successful lives" (Kids Count 1999). Note that risk factors can come from school- and community-level circumstances, as well as individual- and family-level circumstances. Examples of specific risk factors are poor school attendance, failing grades, family crisis, referred to but did not qualify for special education services, social/emotional/medical issues, free/reduced lunch, below-average performance on assessments, discipline problems, drug and alcohol issues, criminal behavior, poor peer relationships, rated "high" on teacher-generated at-risk profile, retained or considered for retention, and significant deficiencies in credits. For another, more extensive list of circumstances that place students at risk, see Appendix A.

B. Where: Operational Setting

Alternative education programs can be physically (and administratively) located in many different places, and sometimes the location is what makes the program "alternative." Two related operational aspects that describe alternative education programs are first, how the alternative program relates to regular education, and second, where the programming actually occurs.

In relation to regular K-12 schools, alternative education programs may include the following, presented in order of organizational proximity to traditional classrooms in regular K-12 schools:

- resource rooms (separate room/teacher provides additional services like study skills, guidance, anger management, small group/individual instruction)

- pull-out programs (within the day or even after-school, students are pulled out of their "regular" program -- e.g., regular school, juvenile detention center, substance abuse treatment facility -- for special or alternative instruction)

- schools-within-a-school (special-focus program within a school)

- separate self-contained alternative school

The operational setting, or location, where the actual alternative education takes place is somewhat related to the program's connection to a regular school, but there is variation. For example, a school-within-a school may be physically located with a regular K-12 school, or it might be located in a separate building. Separate alternative education programs not under the sponsorship of a school are more likely to be located separately, but some programs have arrangements to operate in school buildings. A few examples of where alternative programs or schools are located, include:

- regular schools during school hours
- school buildings during non-school hours
- community or recreation centers
- former school buildings
- juvenile justice corrections or detention centers
- store-front neighborhood organizations

- public housing projects
- homeless shelters (emergency and transitional)
- medical or mental health facilities
- community college or other post-secondary campuses

C. *What: Content and Objectives*

Alternative education programs also differ from traditional education in *what* types of credentials, services, and programming they provide, and how. Many different types of credentials may be offered, including:

- Regular high school diplomas

- General Educational Development (GED) diplomas, or

- Occupational and skills certification

The content of the programming often varies depending on the type of credential offered (if one is offered) but many of them are focused on relaying to their students basic *skills*. This is because the programs are often short and there is not enough time to cover significant amounts of theory; many students lack basic skills, so that becomes the primary focus of instruction; and specific skills are often what the students want to learn. In addition to basic life skills, many alternative education programs emphasize career development or employment preparation and provide students multiple career pathway options, including:

- Career awareness/choices workshops

- Occupational exploration programs

- Apprenticeships

- Modified work/study programs

- Speakers' bureau

- Work visitations

- Tech-Prep (technical preparation in partnership with a community co llege)

- Vocational/technical training

- School to work programs

- Work experience

- Internships

"What" alternative education programs do or what they offer has been used as a basis for several classifications developed to date. One commonly cited three-level classification is that developed by Dr. Mary Anne Raywid. Raywid's typology has been described (Appalachia Educational Laboratory 1998) as follows:

- **"Type I** schools offer full-time, multiyear, education options for students of all kinds, including those needing more individualization, those seeking an innovative or challenging curriculum, or dropouts wishing to earn their diplomas. A full instructional program offers students the credits needed for graduation. Students choose to attend. Other characteristics include divergence from standard school organization and practices (deregulation, flexibility, autonomy, and teacher and student empowerment); an especially caring, professional staff; small size and small classes; and a personalized, whole-student approach that builds a sense of affiliation and features individual instruction, self-paced work, and career counseling. Models range from schools-within-schools to magnet schools, charter schools, schools without walls, experiential schools, career-focused and job-based schools, dropout-recovery programs, after-hours schools, and schools in atypical settings like shopping malls and museums.

- Discipline is the distinguishing characteristic of **Type II** programs, which aim to segregate, contain, and reform disruptive students. Students typically do not choose to attend, but are sent to the school for specified time periods or until behavior requirements are met. Since placement is short-term, the curriculum is limited to a few basic, required courses or is entirely supplied by the "home school" as a list of assignments. Familiar models include last-chance schools and in-school suspension.

- **Type III** programs provide short-term but therapeutic settings for students with social and emotional problems that create academic and behavioral barriers to learning. Although Type III programs target specific populations—offering counseling, access to social services, and academic remediation—students can choose not to participate."

Raywid's first group of programs, thus, includes many of the original types of alternative education for at-risk youth established in the U.S., and these are often referred to as "popular

innovations" or "true educational alternatives." Programs for high school dropouts or potential dropouts and sponsored by school districts, for example, would fit into this category, as would programs for students unable to pass standardized tests (a new trend within the alternative education field).

The other two types of alternative education developed by Raywid are more correctional in focus, with one being primarily disciplinary ("last chance" or "soft jail" programs) the other, therapeutic ("treatment" programs). Most, but not, all current programs that fall into these two categories operate separately from regular schools, although some are sponsored by a school district.

Raywid finds the first group of programs (the true educational alternatives) to be the most successful, while alternative discipline programs are much less likely to lead to substantial student gains. The outcomes for the last group of therapeutic programs are more mixed with students often making progress while enrolled, but regressing when they return to a traditional school. It may be that therapeutic programs have limited long-term impact on academic gains because they are often short-term. Their effectiveness might be better if youth receive high-quality therapeutic programs well-suited to meet individual needs, while they also receive educational instruction, and they remain in the program for a relatively long period of time (e.g., two years or more).

Interestingly, many experts see the distinctions between some of these types beginning to blur as more alternative education programs are using a mix of strategies and/or addressing multiple objectives. Type I and Type II schools, for example, are increasingly likely to offer clinical counseling, a Type III characteristic. A more recent three-level classification, also advanced by Raywid, therefore, combines Types II and II into a single group whose focus is on "changing the student." A second grouping is focused on "changing the school" and is analogous to the first type described above, and a newly-defined third group is focused on "changing the educational system" more broadly. This last group has been described as follows:

"According to Raywid (1999), 'early efforts at using alternatives as a means of introducing systemwide change' (in Minneapolis, Tacoma, and Berkeley) have generated numerous options and some positive signs of success. Seeing small schools and innovative alternatives as sharing the same characteristics, she says "the small schools and schools-within-schools movement occurring in the nation's cities today is actually a test of whether small alternatives can survive in large systems" and can adapt those systems to support such innovation." (Hadderman undated).

Another classification described by the Wisconsin Department of Instruction is similarly based on what an alternative education program does, and categorizes programs based on their focus on students' behavior, interest, or functional level:

"An alternative education program is often defined by the program's characteristics, such as programs that focus on behavior, interest, or functional level. Behavioral programming might be designed for students who need a structured setting to focus on more appropriate school behaviors to facilitate their learning and the learning of others. Programs designed around student interest might include an environmental program or vocational academies. Functional-level programs might include high school completion, academic, or skill remediation" (State of Wisconsin 2001, p. 2).

A final promising typology is one that centers on students' *educational needs*. Rather than focusing on a student's demographic characteristics or programmatic category, this typology focuses on the educational problems or challenges students present.[3] These include programs for:

- Students who have fallen "off track" simply because they have gotten into trouble (because adolescents tend to be adolescents) and need (short-term) systems of recovery to get them back into high schools. The goal of getting them back into regular high schools is appropriate and realistic for this group.

- Students who are prematurely transitioning to adulthood either because they are (about to become) parents, or have home situations that do not allow them to attend school regularly (e.g., immigrant children taking care of siblings while their parents work, those coming out of the juvenile justice system with many demands on their time, etc.).

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[3] This typology was suggested by Melissa Roderick of the University of Chicago at a daylong roundtable on alternative education sponsored by the C.S. Mott Foundation and held at the Urban Institute in Washington, D.C. on April 16, 2003.

- Students who are substantially off track educationally, but are older and are returning to obtain the credits they need to transition into community colleges (or other programs) very rapidly. These include, for example, older individuals who are just a few credits away from graduation (many of whom dropped out at age 16 or 17), or are transitioning out of the jail system, or have had a pregnancy and are now ready to complete their secondary schooling. (This is the group that is currently populating most alternative education programs in large urban areas—they are very diverse and tend to be well served by the alternative school system.)

- Finally, there is a group of students who are substantially behind educationally—they have significant problems, very low reading levels, and are often way over age for grade. Many of these children have been retained repeatedly and a number of them have come out of special education services. They include 17- or 18-year-olds with third and fourth grade reading levels who have never graduated from 8th grade (or who have gone to high school for a few years but have never actually accumulated any credits). This is a very large group of kids, and most school systems do not have any programs that can serve meet their needs.

With this typology in mind, it is clear that programs targeted at particular demographic group, such as pregnant and parenting teens, could be serving kids with a wide variety of educational needs: those who are two credits away from graduation; those who are wards of child welfare agencies and who have multiple problems such as being far over age for grade, and with only a third and fourth-grade education levels; others who are pregnant and parenting but also involved in the juvenile justice system; and yet others with significant behavioral problems. So a single school or program is being expected to handle too much *educational* diversity (one that regular school are unable to handle well), and this may be setting the programs (and their students) up for educational failure.

How: Administration and Funding

In addition to "who," "where," and "what," some of the literature on alternative education describes "how" alternative education programs are administered or funded. The administrative dimension is somewhat related to other features of alternative education, but considering it separately helps clarify another aspect of what makes alternative education programs "alternative."

Alternative education programs are sponsored or administered by a variety of entities including:

- non-profit and community-based organizations (CBOs)

- state or local education agencies

- charter schools

- adult education divisions or agencies

- juvenile justice agencies

- K-12 public or private schools

- health or mental health institutions

- federally-funded programs and contractors (e.g., for Job Corps)

- private for-profit companies

In addition to serving different types of students ("who") in different locations (where), many alternative education programs have different policies and administrative procedures than those typically found in regular K-12 schools. For example, some maintain hours and schedules that are non-traditional in the context of regular schools, have open admission and exit policies, and tailor instruction to the individual needs of the student. Alternative education programs often also have strong connections to the world of work (NGA Center for Best Practices 2001), which can mean policies and administration that are more similar to those in the workplace (e.g., work teams, supervisors, time cards, or scheduling academic instruction in conjunction with work or apprenticeships). As in regular education settings, alternative programs also vary tremendously in their academic standards, structure and accountability mechanisms, basic goals and objectives, parent and community involvement, disciplinary policies, and crisis intervention procedures (National Association of State Boards of Education 1996).

No specific literature was located that relates specifically to administrative accountability in alternative education. There are, though, special issues to consider in this area, mainly

because accountability and outcome measures used in mainstream schools are not always appropriate for alternative education. For example, using graduation from high school or completion of a degree is not relevant for an alternative education program that is mainly transitional in nature (e.g., aims to transition students back into regular schools or out of a special program such as juvenile detention or a treatment center). Alternative education accountability measures should include shorter-term measures and measures that track continuous "added value" or recognize that some youth may cycle in and out of a program before experiencing steady progress. Other performance outcomes might include measures of student motivation, learning to learn, and ability to master content. Presumably, program administrators and agencies sponsoring alternative education programs do have some type of internal management information, and it can be expected that as the field continues to develop, more reports and documents will be produced on this topic.

Not surprisingly, funding structures among alternative education programs are also highly variable:

> "Most alternative education programs' budgets are based on a variety of unreliable funding sources, such as grants, charitable contributions, and fees for service. Some alternative education programs may also receive state and local education funds— although these funds are often less than the per-pupil funding that traditional schools receive." (NGA Center 2001)

No published reports were found that itemized the costs of programs or the distribution of funds used for particular programs. But here, again, this information undoubtedly exists at the program or agency level, even though no specific studies or literature were found. Questions of interest include: Are the actual costs of educating our most vulnerable youth different than those for other children? How does the multiplicity of funding sources affect the integrity of alternative education programs—does it allow a more flexible use of the funding since restrictions linked to one source may not apply to another, or does it undermine the program by creating fiscal uncertainty and administrative complexity?

This section summarized a few key issues identified in a review of literature about alternative education. Various definitions of alternative education were identified, including distinctions among alternative education schools, programs, and perspectives (for example, towards

differentiated alternative education within a regular school). The review also was used to describe alternative education along four dimensions: (1) "who" programs target, (2) "what" content is included, (3) "where" the programs operate, and (4) "how" programs are administered and funded. A clearer understanding of the many dimensions of alternative education efforts can help in the development of a typology even if the typology does not map onto any one of these dimensions perfectly. These dimensions are important to understand because developing a variety of high-quality alternative education options — options that meet the needs of all youth who are not being well served by traditional public schools — will necessarily include programs and schools that serve children with different needs/characteristics ("who"), are located in different places ("where"), provide different types of certificates, diplomas, and programming ("what"), and are structured, administered, and funded in different ways according to the best needs and interests of students and the community ("how"). Whether a single typology can support the many applications for which it might be used (program development, fundraising, research and evaluation, etc.) is still unclear.

III. Potentially Promising Program Features

There is little rigorous evaluation research documenting the effectiveness of alternative education programs, meaning studies that can link specific program characteristics with specific student outcomes. As with other fields of inquiry in their early stages, much of the literature on alternative education presents features or characteristics thought to be essential to the success of alternative education efforts. In many reports there are lists of important characteristics or "best practices." As Lange and Sletten (2002) note, "whether these points of best practice are, indeed, 'practice' for most existing alternatives is a matter yet to be thoroughly documented. However, the lists do provide a glimpse of elements many researchers and advocates see as important descriptors of effective alternative schools."

Therefore, this section simply presents some of the many "lists" found in the literature, in part because they represent a succinct summary of what some observers and practitioners

believe are the keys to successful alternative education efforts, which may be useful in the future when considering formal evaluation strategies.

There is a high level of overlap among the lists (even for programs of different types), suggesting that there is some degree of consensus about critical features of high quality alternative education. It is also important to note, however, that the lists include many factors that are considered critical to effective education and schools, in general. One challenge will be to distinguish those that are unique to alternative education and those that apply to all education.

Land and Sletton (2002) summarize the essential characteristics of effective alternative education as follows:

- "clearly identified goals to inform both evaluation and enrollment (Gregg, 1999);

- wholehearted implementation without a piecemeal approach to structuring programs (Raywid, 1993);

- autonomy (Gregg, 1999);

- student-centered atmosphere (Frymier, 1987);

- integration of research and practice in areas such as assessment, curriculum, teacher competencies, and integration of special education services (Geurin & Denti, 1999);

- training and support for teachers who work with at-risk populations with or without disabilities (Ashcroft, 1999; Krovetz, 1999); and

- links to multiple agencies, an element that may become increasingly important as alternatives are required to serve students with special education needs (Dynarski & Gleason, 1998; Leone & Drakeford, 1999)."

Based on "a growing body of research pointing to the characteristics shared by successful alternative education programs and schools," the National Association of State Boards of Education (1996) reports that "the success of these programs has been measured in terms of improved grades, school attendance, and graduation rates; decreases in disruptive and/or

violent behaviors and suspensions; and an improved sense of direction and self among participating students." The characteristics they identify include:

- "High Academic Standards/Expectations — Researchers have consistently found that successful programs/schools set clear and high education standards and expectations for their students. The curriculum in these programs is not diluted or "watered down." Furthermore, the curricula is often expanded to enhance the educational and vocational interests of the students.

- High Standards for Interpersonal/Social Interactions — Successful alternative education programs/schools have well defined standards of behaviors. And in addition to having strict and clear expectations that are consistently applied to everyone, successful alternative programs/schools rely on interventions and an expanded curricula that foster the development of interpersonal and social skills. Most address issues such as family life, peer pressure, and conflict resolution.

- Student-Centered Education and Intervention Plans — Successful programs/schools have their structure, curricula, and support services designed with both the educational and social needs of the students in mind. Therefore, it is imperative that alternative programs/schools provide the assessment and support services needed to clearly identify and address the cognitive, emotional, health and socio-economic factors affecting the education and development of participating students.

- Teacher/Student Ratio — Research findings also indicate that low teacher/student ratios are important to the success of alternative education efforts. Ranging from 8-25 students per teacher, successful efforts have an average ratio of 1-16.

- Site-Based Management/Flexibility — While having clear and strong accountability measurements and systems, successful alternative programs and schools are often free from centralized management. Administrators, teachers, support services staff, students, and parents are involved in the different aspects of the programs/schools that they participate in. This work is done through issue/task specific committees or what could be described as "quality circles."

- Parent and Community Involvement — Parent and community involvement is critical for the success of alternative programs/schools. All of the programs and schools identified in various research projects noted that the parents of prospective students must agree to participate in clearly defined ways beyond parent-teacher meetings. Some require that parents volunteer some of their time to the program/school, others that they participate in family life seminars.

- A Program versus a School — Many successful alternative education efforts are designed specifically as either programs or schools. Programs are intended for students who may need short term interventions to get through a particular problem or situation that is having a negative impact on their education. They are designed with

19

the goal of helping the student get back in the "regular" school setting as soon the presenting problem or situation is addressed and corrected. On the other hand, schools are designed for students that for one reason or another are better off obtaining an education outside the traditional school setting. Often, these schools include students who must work to help support themselves and their families, or students who need specialized services and interventions but who can meet high education standards.

- Location — In some instances the location of the alternative education program or school has proven critical to its success. Programs are often set within a traditional school. At times they are located within a community school or agency. On the other hand, most alternative schools have their own facilities, share a facility with a larger school, or are located within community colleges or a university campus. Regardless of the location, successful programs and schools provide healthy physical environments that foster education, emotional well-being, a sense of pride, and safety."

Leone and Drakeford (1999) describe Schorr's (1997) summary of "an emerging consensus about what elements are needed for alternative programs to be successful" as follows:

- **"**Clear Focus on Academic Learning — The most promising schools have a clear focus on academic learning that combines high academic standards with engaging and creative instruction.

- Ambitious Professional Development — Successful schools provide teachers with stimulating, ongoing professional development activities that help teachers to maintain an academic focus, enhance teaching strategies, and develop alternative instructional methods. Properly designed staff development involves teacher input, work with colleagues, and opportunities to visit and observe teaching in other settings. When given opportunities to examine differences between instructional aspirations and actual practice, teachers will achieve what they aspire to do, provided that they have adequate staff development and support.

- Strong Level of Autonomy and Professional Decision-Making — Partly in response to sluggish and inefficient bureaucracies, reformers in education and social services believe that effective service delivery requires decision making at the service delivery level (Schorr 1997; Fullan and Hargreaves 1996). Decisions about staffing, leadership, budgets, scheduling, curriculum, and pedagogy need to be made by teaching and support staff who have direct contact with students. Effective schools provide autonomy that builds trust and loyalty among staff. Further, giving staff a voice in decision making promotes creativity and instructional excellence (Collins and Tamarkin 1990).

- Sense of Community — Research suggests that schools that focus on the creation and maintenance of intentional communities are more likely to succeed than bureaucratically organized schools (Schorr 1997). Within effective school communities, students and staff share expectations for learning, and students are encouraged to take a variety of courses and activities that enable them to pursue their interests and aspirations."

The Coalition for Juvenile Justice (2001) has also developed a list of characteristics of successful education programs in *secure facilities*:

- "Administrators regard education as a vital part of the rehabilitation process.

- Programs help students develop competencies in basic reading, writing and math skills, along with thinking and decision-making skills and character development traits, such as responsibility and honesty.

- Student/teacher ratios reflect the needs of the students.

- Academic achievement is reinforced through incremental incentives.

- Teachers are competent, committed, and trained in current research and teaching methods, rather than relying on old model drill and workbook exercises.

- Instruction involves multiple strategies appropriate to each learner's interests and needs.

- Youth are assessed for learning disabilities and provided with special education in full compliance with federal law.

- When appropriate, parents, community organizations and volunteers are involved in the academic program.

- Opportunities exist for on-the-job training, work experience and mentorships.

- Partnerships are developed with potential employers.

- Students are scheduled for jobs and further education prior to the reentry into the community."

In their report, *Alternative Education Programs, Effective Practices Research Brief* (undated), the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction finds that successful alternative schools share the following characteristics:

- "They are small.

- Both program and organization are designed by those who operate them

- Character, theme, or emphasis is developed from the strengths and interests of the teachers who established them.

- Teachers choose to be a part of the program, with subsequent teachers being selected with the input of present staff.

- Students and families select the program.

- A teacher-director administers the programs. Principal as educational leader

- They are usually housed as mini-schools or buildings once dominated by larger programs.

- The superintendent sustains the autonomy and protects the integrity of the school.

- All programs are relatively free from district interference, and the administration also buffers them from demands of the central office.

- The continuity in leadership has been considerable.

- Considerable attention goes into cultivating a strong sense of connection among students, and between students and teachers.

- The curriculum must be compelling, challenging and inviting.

- Staff roles are broadened to include new responsibilities. Teachers and school administrators must continue to collaborate to improve the image of alternative education.

- City-As-School (CAS) is an alternative program that combines academic learning with the world of work for high school students, including at-risk Students."

In yet another study, Tobin and Sprague (2000) examined effective school-based practices for students who have behavior disorders and/or antisocial behavior. They limited their review to programs that (a) could be applicable to students at risk for antisocial behavior and/or failure in traditional classes, (b) were sufficiently practical to be implemented in local public schools, and (c) showed convincing evidence of positive outcomes. Their list of key

characteristics is as follows:

- "Low ratio of students to teachers
    - More personal time for each student
    - Better behavioral gains
    - Higher quality of instruction

- Highly structured classroom with behavioral classroom management
    - Level systems provide predictable structure
    - Self-management skills are taught
    - High rates of positive reinforcement
    - High academic gains
    - Students are able to move to less restrictive settings

- Positive rather than punitive emphasis in behavior management
    - Rewards for acceptable behavior and compliance
    - Directly teach clear classroom rules
    - Begin with rich reinforcement and then "fade" to normal levels when possible (four positives to one negative)

- Adult mentors at school
    - Mentor must use positive reinforcement
    - Mentor takes special interest in child
    - Mentor tracks behavior, attendance, attitude, grades
    - Mentor negotiates alternatives to suspension and expulsion

- Individualized behavioral interventions based on functional behavioral assessment
    - Identify causes of the behavior
    - Identify what is "keeping it going"
    - Identify positive behaviors to replace problems
    - Interview and involve the student
    - Use multicomponent interventions

- Social skills instruction
    - Problem solving
    - Conflict resolution
    - Anger management
    - Empathy for others

- High-quality academic instruction
    - Direct instruction plus learning strategies
    - Control for difficulty of instruction
    - Small, interactive groups
    - Directed responses and questioning of students

- Involving parents

- o Frequent home-school communication
- o Parent education programs, provided either at school or in the community"

It is intriguing to note how similar many of these lists are, even when very different types of programs or settings are considered. It is also important that many of the features are similar to those considered essential to effective regular K-12 programs and schools. Most of the lists identify high academic standards and expectations as a key feature of successful programs. Other important qualities are small schools and class sizes, and high-quality student-centered programs that actively engage teachers, parents, and other community members. Finally many of them point to the importance of administrative and bureaucratic autonomy for the program or school, so that they can create "intentional communities" often with the requirement that teachers and students be in the program voluntarily. Many of these key qualities will need to be considered further as interest in alternative education programs increases over the coming years, and as evaluation strategies are considered to empirical analyze their effectiveness.

IV. Discussion

For better or worse, the demand for more and better alternative education options is clearly growing across the country. Advancing the field will require progress on multiple fronts, including raising awareness about the need for and benefits of high quality alternative education options, finding ways to fund an adequate number of alternative education programs and schools, and demonstrating and improving on the effectiveness of high quality programs. All of these will require a better understanding of the vast array of alternative education programs that already exist, and a way of classifying these programs so that we can understand which types might be developed and replicated, how many of each high quality type is needed, and whether and how this new "system" of alternative education can best be administered in conjunction with or alongside traditional public schools.

The continuing dialogue about alternative education will benefit from having a common understanding of the various types of programs that exist. The review in this paper suggests a number of dimensions that could be used as a starting point to develop a typology of

programs (see Exhibit 1) to describe the type of program, the operator, instructional content, educational purpose or focus, and funding.

EXHIBIT 1
POSSIBLE DIMENSIONS OF A TYPOLOGY OF ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION

General type of alternative education: • Separate school • Separate program • Perspective/strategy with a regular K-12 school
Target Population: • women/girls • pregnant/parenting teens • suspended/expelled students • recovered drop-outs • delinquent teens • low-achievers • all at risk youth
Focus/purpose (and mix): • Academic completion/credential • Career preparation/credential • Disciplinary • Transitional (e.g., out of treatment or detention, or back to K-12)
Operational setting-proximity to K-12: • resource rooms • pull-out programs • schools-within-a-school • separate self-contained alternative school
Operational setting-location of activity: • regular school during school hours • school building during non-school hours • community or recreation center • former school building • juvenile justice corrections or detention center • store-front neighborhood organization • public housing project • homeless shelter (emergency and transitional) • medical or mental health facility • community college or other post-secondary campus
Educational focus • short-term bridge back to schools for students who are off track • students prematurely transitioning to adulthood • accelerated program for students needing a few credits to move on • students who are *very* far behind educationally
Sponsor or administrative entity: • non-profit and community-based organization (CBOs) • state or local education agency • charter school

• adult education division or agency • juvenile justice agency • K-12 public or private school • health or mental health agency or institution • federally-funded program and contractors (e.g., for Job Corps)
Credentials offered: • Regular high school diploma • General Educational Development (GED) diploma • Occupational and skills certification • No credentialing
Funding sources (and mix): • Federal funds • State funds • Local funds • Private funds

It is also clear if high-quality alternative education is to gain widespread public support, it needs to serve its students well while also meeting high accountability standards. There are now growing calls for more resources for both alternative education programs and for better data and analysis about the programs. There is also increasing interest in how to assess what programs are doing and accountability measurement and about "how to introduce high academic standards in alternative education systems without sacrificing the elements that make alternative programs successful, and without compromising the integrity of the high standards" (NGA Center for Best Practices 2001).[4] To bring high standards to alternative education programs, the NGA Center for Best Practices recommends the following:

- "Strengthen links between traditional and nontraditional education systems

- Invest resources to support the transition to high academic standards and beyond

- Improve "early warning systems" to identify lower-performing students

- Support longer-term alternative education programs

- Develop data-driven accountability measures for alternative education programs

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[4] Interestingly, Oregon recently passed a state law (Senate Bill 258) that requires districts to evaluate the quality of its alternative schools. Others have noted that alternative education programs in urban areas are especially likely to be left out of the high academic standards movement.

- Develop enhanced GED programs

- Collect data."

Similarly, the National Center on Education and the Economy (1998) recommends a *standards-based* alternative education system that includes the following elements:

- "a single high standard for all students whether in traditional schools or in alternative education programs;

- a funding system that ensures that the country spends at least the same amount on students in alternative education programs as in traditional schools;

- an accountability system for both alternative education programs and traditional schools tied to helping students meet high standards; and

- a counseling and referral system in every community that provides students access to the programs best suited to their needs."

Finally, it will be important to continue to conduct research on the effectiveness of alternative education and to address some issues for which there may be strong opinions. For example:

- Do alternative education schools accelerate learning compared to what students would achieve in a regular school setting?

- Do alternative programs that integrate career development with academic instruction have better educational and economic outcomes than those focused mainly on academics?

- Are alternative education programs that operate totally outside of and separate from regular school districts and public schools more effective than alternative education sponsored by school districts?

Promoting high quality options for vulnerable or disconnected youth who are not succeeding in traditional schools is an important part of a nation's commitment to educating its young people. Requiring that these programs also meet high accountability standards ensures that they receive the resources and attention they need to do their job well. Developing a typology of programs that describes the full array of alternatives may be an important element in encouraging the development of the most effective programs.

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Appendix A

Factors that Place Students At Risk

Many aspects of children's lives affect their ability to learn and succeed in school. Wells (1990) has identified a variety of circumstances that can place students at risk. They include individual-, family-, school-, and community-related factors:

School Related
- Conflict between home/school culture
- Ineffective discipline system
- Lack of adequate counseling
- Negative school climate
- Lack of relevant curriculum
- Passive instructional strategies
- Inappropriate use of technology
- Disregard of student learning styles
- Retentions/suspensions
- Low expectations
- Lack of language instruction

Student Related
- Poor school attitude
- Low ability level
- Attendance/truancy
- Behavior/discipline problems
- Pregnancy
- Drug abuse
- Poor peer relationships
- Nonparticipation
- Friends have dropped out
- Illness/disability
- Low self-esteem/self-efficacy

Community Related
- Lack of community support services or response
- Lack of community support for schools
- High incidences of criminal activities
- Lack of school/community linkages

Family Related
- Low socioeconomic status
- Dysfunctional homelife
- No parental involvement
- Low parental expectations
- Non-English-speaking home
- Ineffective parenting/abuse
- High mobility

Source: S.E. Wells, *At-Risk Youth: Identification, Programs, and Recommendations*, Teacher Idea Press, Englewood, Colorado, 1990.