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THE IMPACT OF ZERO TOLERANCE ON STUDENT

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND RETENTION

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A Thesis

Presented to the

Faculty of

California State University,

San Bernardino

_____

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

in

Educational Administration

_____

by

Paul Robert Robinson

June 2010

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June 2010

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Date

ABSTRACT

Emerging trends showing zero tolerance policies having

negative effects on school children, especially those of

poor and/or minority background, make an elementary

district's recently implemented zero tolerance style

punishments for fifth and sixth graders an interesting area

of study. Zero tolerance policies have expanded since 1990

for two main reasons, political (pressure to stop school

violence) and legal (harsh new laws/punishments). Research

shows that zero tolerance policies are not modifying

behavior but simply removing students from the educational

environment and on towards a path of failure that many are

ill-equipped to recover from. The district's test scores

and retention data (suspensions, placements, and

expulsions) were surveyed and ten principals were

interviewed. District Principals feel that the policy is

fair increases academic achievement, the data tells a

different story however. The data revealed more

suspensions, placements and expulsions denying students

education. The district failed to meet AYP targets just

after the implementation of this policy. The student

populations failing to make AYP are the same that studies

show are most detrimentally affected by zero tolerance.

More research is needed to pinpoint the reasons for these failures and add longitudinal depth but strong correlations to the literature base exist.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

DEDICATION

To my beloved family, whose love and support saw me through this journey, without you I could not have accomplished this feat- nor would it have been worth it.

To my wife Andrea, you patience, support, unwavering love and devotion are a truly special gift. Thank you for shouldering so much of the burden while this was completed.

To Adrian and Jordan Garbayo and Brooke and Doug Donahue whose weekends of baby sitting and wife hosting allowed me the precious solitude to work on this project.

To the rest of my family who has believed in me and always told me I could achieve my dreams and supported me in the process.

To the many students who have helped me grow as an educator over the years and who make my work worthwhile.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Introduction to the Study

With school safety being a paramount concern for all

stakeholders involved (students, parents, teachers,

administrators and the community) and several high profile

incidents of school violence, most notably the shootings at

Columbine High School, the laws regarding punishments have

grown steadily harsher for students. From 1990 onward the

application of zero tolerance policies at elementary and

secondary education school sites has expanded. This is

mainly due to two reasons, legal and political.

From a legal perspective three main laws have had the

effect of expanding zero tolerance. The Gun-Free School

Zones Act of 1990 (PL 101-647) followed by The Safe Schools

Act of 1994 (PL 103-227) and the Safe and Drug-Free Schools

and Communities Act of 1994 (PL 103-382) (Casella, 2003;

Martinez, 2009; Noguera, 2003; Skiba & Peterson, 2000).

Since the passage of these laws harsh punishments like zero

tolerance have grown in application over the last 20 years

and have been expanded in extreme cases to the carrying of

nail files or Midol (Martinez, 2009). These federal laws

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have had the effect of enhancing punishments for certain violations upon the first offense and endangering schools federal funding if administrators fail to follow through with required discipline.

Combined with the above legal requirements for zero tolerance the political stage adds to the script of zero tolerance because high profile events of school violence create a need for the public to feel that their civic leaders are dealing with the problem and that the nation's children are being provided a safe environment by vigilant school boards and administrators (Casella, 2003; Martinez, 2009; Noguera, 2003; Skiba & Peterson, 2000).

Background

A recent research survey indicates that zero-tolerance, though on the rise, is only part of a comprehensive discipline plan for any educational environment. Some (Martinez, 2009) argue zero-tolerance needs to be abolished all together, while others argue it needs to be incorporated into a systematic progressive discipline system that includes an emphasis on prevention (Casella, 2003; Noguera, 2003; Skiba & Peterson, 2000; Theriot & Dupper 2009) and for others an emphasis on

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positive behavioral interventions and supports or

PBIS(Green, 2009).

While this introduction gives the reader an idea of the variety of discipline models available and the interpretations of those models it should be noted that school discipline is not easy to categorize into one model or another as most schools and districts use a variety of approaches and the law has changed over time. For example zero-tolerance, as defined by the aforementioned public laws, dealt at first with students in possession of a *firearm* on campus in 1990. In 1995 *firearm* was changed to *weapon* and from that point forward a variety of interpretations have been applied leading to an increase in the number of students given a required 1 year expulsion (Casella, 2003; Martinez, 2009).

Despite this growth of "zero-tolerance" one cannot distill a school's discipline procedures down to "zero-tolerance" over say progressive discipline or PBIS. In reality zero-tolerance applies to a small but growing number of infractions- though the violations of those infractions and the students affected by the consequences have grown dramatically. Combined with these zero tolerance infractions schools use other discipline strategies as

well. Essentially it would be improper to label a school as having a zero-tolerance system on one end or a PBIS system on the other end of the scale as in reality many schools might encompass, by law in many cases, components of both models (Skiba & Peterson, 2000).

Those extreme cases aside school administration has a fiduciary duty to provide a safe learning environment, and many studies show that learning either does not occur or occurs at a diminished rate in a disorderly and unsafe environment. In response to this growth in zero tolerance a growing number of students have been suspended or expelled from schools. These students tend to be of poor and minority backgrounds, special needs or both and schools fail to meet their unique needs eventually denying them education (Casella, 2003; Martinez, 2009; Noguera, 2003; Skiba & Peterson, 2000).

Statement of the Problem

Extreme cases aside school administration has a fiduciary duty to provide a safe learning environment, and many studies show that learning either does not occur or occurs at a diminished rate in a disorderly and unsafe environment. In response to this growth in zero tolerance a

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growing number of students have been suspended or expelled from schools. These students tend to be of poor and minority backgrounds, special needs or both and schools fail to meet their unique needs eventually denying them education (Casella, 2003; Martinez, 2009; Noguera, 2003; Skiba & Peterson, 2000). There is a high correlation between exclusion from school, whether through suspension or expulsion, and failing grades. The research shows that as zero tolerance expands, suspensions and expulsions expand as well. This combination creates lower student retention and academic failure for the students affected.

It is under this back drop that I wanted to conduct a survey of the discipline procedures of an elementary district in my local area. The district had recently implemented a much stricter progressive discipline policy in the 2006-2007 school year. This policy applied new consequences for infractions such as fighting in the fifth and sixth grades that involved a five-day suspension for the first offense and expulsion for the second. In lieu of expulsion, and at administrative discretion, parents are often (almost exclusively unless the offense is violence that causes a serious injury or an infraction involving a gun or knife) offered what the district calls placement

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instead of expulsion. Placement is the removal of a student as a punishment for violating the district discipline policy from the student's original school and "placement" or transfer of the student into another school in lieu of expulsion. During the placement of the student at a different school no transportation is provided by the district and the parents must transport the child, or arrange transportation, to and from school and any school events.

I wanted to study this hybrid discipline system that maintains a tough stance on serious infractions but does not throw the idea of progressive discipline out the window and remove a student from the educational environment or strip search her for bringing some Tylenol to school etc. I wanted to discern what was happening to student retention and academic achievement under the new policy.

The research question is: What effect has the district's new discipline policy implemented in the 2006-2007 school year, which now includes zero tolerance punishments, had on the following areas: student retention and academic achievement. In specific I wanted to answer the following questions:

1. Has student retention, as measured by suspensions,

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placements and expulsions increased or decreased since

the implementation of the new policy?

2. Has student academic achievement improved district

wide as measured by scores on standardized tests?

3. Is there a correlation between the two?

While I reviewed data for the entire district, I gave

special focus to fifth and sixth graders since that is

where the harshest of zero tolerance style punishments are.

The discipline policy is attached at the end of this

document as APPENDIX A.

Purpose of the Study

It is well accepted that when established and enforced

with fidelity and consistency students will acclimate to

new rules. (Noguera, 2003) The extreme cases like the

tragic incident at Columbine aside school administration

has a fiduciary duty to provide a safe learning

environment, and many studies show that learning either

does not occur or occurs at a diminished rate in a

disorderly and unsafe environment, but the goal of

discipline should be to modify and correct behavior to

provide an education, not deny it. In response to the

growth in zero tolerance however, a growing number of

students have been suspended or expelled from school. These students tend to be of a poor and/or minority background and schools simply fail to meet their unique needs eventually denying them education (Casella, 2003; Martinez, 2009; Noguera, 2003; Skiba & Peterson, 2000).

I want to know how my local elementary districts new discipline policy is affecting students. Are students being provided a safe and orderly environment for learning to occur by modifying behavior, or are we simply denying education to those too difficult to assimilate to the educational environment? Furthermore in light of the new discipline policy what is happening to test scores? Are they improving? If they are improving is it because we have simply removed our most difficult students, who generally have the worst scores as well? Or are we retaining these students because of modified behavior that allows them to fit into the system? Finally, if we are retaining students are the test scores improving? These questions will help to discern the level of effectiveness of the discipline policy on educating and retaining students.

Theoretical Bases and Organization

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Numerous studies have been done on the effects of zero tolerance. In general, as described above and presented below in the review of literature, zero tolerance is utilized under the hypothesis of creating a safer school environment by creating harsh punishments to either deter crime or remove violent students. However many cases show students being removed from the educational setting for rule violations that are minor or seem to go against the grain of zero tolerance like possession of Tylenol. The research builds a strong case for the discontinuing the use of zero tolerance because of unintended consequences. This study will show whether zero tolerance, combined with progressive discipline, can be used to enhance student academic achievement and retention through the use of a comprehensive system.

Limitations of the Study

This study is limited in the methodology used to investigate the subject. To discern the effects of the district's discipline policy an interview with site Principals and data regarding suspensions and expulsions from each site are used. While this provides a good look at the administrative interpretation of the policy and the

results of applying the policy it does not allow us to make interpretations of student motivators based on student experience. Therefore the correlations drawn from data regarding student retention and academic achievement are inherently limited as they are absent the student interpretation. Furthermore the study is not longitudinal and does not include qualitative data regarding individual students going through the system to identify if the students who are placed become the students who are later expelled.

Definitions

The following terms need to be defined:

1. Discipline policy means the Governing Board authorized matrix defining discipline procedures (punishments or interventions) to be used for rule violations will be used and referenced.

2. Academic achievement will be measured by student performance on state standardized tests (California Standards Tests or CST's) in English Language Arts (ELA) and Math with special focus given to the fifth and sixth grade levels as these are where the zero tolerance measures come in. Overall district

performance on the state Academic Performance Index scale (API), a ranking of how well the school is doing academically will also be surveyed as well as the districts accomplishment of the federal Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Targets, a list of academic and structural goals for the district to meet.

3. Retention will be measured by the increase or decrease in the district wide rate (the total number of incidents divided by the total enrollment) of students who are suspended and expelled from the educational environment. The total number of placements for the district will also be considered since it is an alternative to expulsion, but placements will not used to determine whether retention is increasing or decreasing as the student being placed is still in the educational environment. For this purpose the educational environment will be a school.

4. Suspension will be defined as a temporary removal from school and will be measured on a district wide basis reporting out the rate (the total number of incidents divided by the total enrollment) per

year.

5. Placement is the removal of a student as a punishment for violating the district discipline policy from the student's original school and "placement" or transfer of the student into another school in lieu of expulsion. The raw number of placements per year on a district wide basis will be evaluated.

6. Expulsion is the removal of a student from the school and the school district with no alternative educational setting being provided by the district. Expulsions will be measured on a district wide basis reporting out the rate (the total number of incidents divided by the total enrollment) per year.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The survey of research available provided that Zero

Tolerance policies have grown in scope and application

since their inception in the early 1990's with the primary

effect of excluding, through suspension and expulsion,

large numbers of students who are overwhelmingly poor and

minority. While this is seen as maintaining order by some

and embodies the community with a sense that something is

being done to curb violence it ignores the underlying

reasons as to why students are acting out in the first

place. If we view schools as a social contract we can

easily make connections between those students that are not

being served by the social contract and the same students'

misbehavior. Therefore, a successful discipline program

should keep students in the educational environment unless

completely impossible by employing early intervention and

education that focuses on proactive prevention of

discipline issues vs. reactive punishment of discipline

issues. Furthermore schools that have switched to a

proactive early intervention model have experienced

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positive affects in other areas as well, from staff moral to overall school culture.

A Theoretical Framework

In his book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* Freire (1970) discusses many dichotomies surrounding oppressed people to illustrate his points and advocate for change. In regards to education, Freire uses a student teacher dichotomy, explaining education closely relates to a colonizer/colonized dichotomy pervasive in his work. This colonizer/colonized dichotomy is very Marxian in nature and relates to the power difference between those in power and those controlled and how there is an interdependence between the two and a strengthening of the dichotomy by both. Essentially both sides perpetuate the dichotomy and the existing structure through a variety of reinforcements. A metaphor is drawn for the student/teacher dichotomy that involves a banking system where the teacher deposits information into the student who simply receives the deposit. Freire rejects this view of education claiming it under serves and excludes what he terms the "oppressed" by perpetuating the existing system since the teacher chooses what to deposit and the student has no input or control and

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if the student tries to exert influence or control, the system rejects the student. Freire calls for a new model based on mutual learning where the teacher is also the student and each, student and teacher, strive to enlighten their humanity and struggle to understand the human condition, their condition, either together or with the teacher acting a as facilitator of learning and not a sage.

Smith and Stoval (2008) apply critical race theory to education arguing that exclusion of poor and minority students does not only happen because of discipline but also because of how schools are structured. In the case of one Chicago city school the structure of a magnet school within a revitalized urban community excluded most of the traditional residents that were poor and of color by using test score requirements for entrance. When the data was gathered most of the existing neighborhood schools had test scores below the state average. Closing down a neighborhood school to make way for a magnet school where entrance required advanced test scores effectively excluded neighborhood children.

Casella (2003) discusses *theory* and related policies that support zero tolerance policy in schools, including rational choice theory in criminology and national crime

policies based on deterrence. Potential consequences of

zero tolerance policy implementation in schools are

described. These consequences are shown to involve

outcomes similar to those identified by researchers who

have studied national crime policy, especially in relation

to incarceration. In general Casella describes a process of

punishing "dangerousness" or the idea that we will punish a

student not for misbehavior itself necessarily but for the

capability to misbehave similar to punishing past crimes to

prevent future ones like three strikes laws, registering

sex offenders etc. Casella argues that zero tolerance

disproportionately affects poor kids and kids of color as

they are more likely to engage in confrontations to solve

problems due to their upbringing and then as a consequence

be removed from school. This negatively affects those

already negatively affected by poverty, a double punishment

that does not solve the problem. Furthermore, non-

aggressors who defend themselves are often dealt out

punishment because the school has a "zero tolerance" for

violence even in self defense. Drawing from the

qualitative data, anecdotal evidence, and related research,

Casella concludes with suggestions for violence prevention

based on a model of restorative justice, including a

practical agenda for what schools may do to prevent violence and to discipline students who act aggressively. Casella notes that zero tolerance has a place for serious and dangerous offenses but should simply not be used for minor discipline violations, in these cases the emphasis should be on modifying behavior while keeping kids in school.

Another researcher Pedro Noguera (2003) argues that throughout the United States, schools most frequently punish the students who have the greatest academic, social, economic, and emotional needs. An examination of students most likely to be suspended, expelled, or removed from the classroom for punishment reveals that minorities (especially Blacks and Latinos), males, and low achievers are vastly overrepresented. The enactment of zero tolerance policies related to discipline in school districts has contributed to a significant increase in the number of children who are being suspended and expelled from school. Noguera contends that it is these students with the greatest needs, and the schools inability to meet those needs, that are hurt the most by zero tolerance, they are marginalized further and further till they reject schooling all together. Noguera argues that these students reject

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schooling in the end because the social contract that is inherent in schooling for most students is not providing benefits for them.

Noguera identifies three primary functions he thinks schools play: first schools *sort* students based on academic abilities, second schools *socialize* students teaching values and norms, third schools operate as institutions of *social control* providing a custodial function. Noguera argues convincingly that schools cannot provide any of these functions when students are removed from school through suspensions and expulsions, and that the students who are removed from school rarely change their behavioral patterns. Noguera cites a study he undertook in Oakland, CA where a school's most disruptive students (incidentally all black, even though the school was racially diverse, and 20 of 22 were male) and placed them in a quarantined special class all day. While teachers were thankful for the removal almost all teachers later commented that they still had some disruptive students and that maybe a second class needed to be started. Noguera asserts this as proof that exclusion is not the answer and that the problem is rooted in classroom management and a systematic approach to discipline that focuses on intervention and "kindness"

where educators see themselves as advocates for children and not prison wardens.

Consequences of Zero Tolerance

Martinez (2009) finds that school administrators continue to use zero-tolerance policies as a one-size-fits-all, quick-fix solution to curbing discipline problems with students. According to Martinez zero tolerance policies were originally intended to address serious offenses such as possession of firearms and have evolved into addressing fighting and disrespect which was not the original intent. This evolution is due to ongoing issues of school violence, however zero tolerance intervened in local control over student discipline and other than the seeming popularity of zero tolerance policies, the evidence base is lacking. Martinez contends that the literature suggests that zero-tolerance has flaws and school districts and administrators have misused it. When implemented, it typically equates to exclusion through suspension and expulsion: two disciplinary actions that have well documented negative side effects. Researchers have indicated that there are alternatives to zero-tolerance that school administrators can use to curb discipline problems. Martinez concludes

that there is no place for zero tolerance in schools and that the focus should be on screening, early intervention or prevention and classroom management, not tools to exclude students from the learning environment.

Flanagain (2007) surveyed students regarding their suspension and obtained the following results:

A. Sixty (60%) percent said the teachers did not look at them differently after they returned from suspension while forty (40%) percent did think they were treated differently.

B. Thirty (30%) percent said they were not allowed to make-up the lessons they missed.

C. Twenty (20%) percent returned to class with angry sentiments.

D. Seventy (70%) percent were not offered anger management counseling when they returned from suspension.

E. All ten (10) students missed a minimum of seven (7) days and one (1) student missed twelve (12) days.

F. Twenty (20%) percent of the students admitted to being abused at home.

G. Twenty (20%) percent said their teachers did not
   keep their classrooms under control during teaching
   sessions.

H. Forty (40%) percent were not allowed to participant
   in drawing up the classroom rules of conduct.

I. Fifty (50%) percent had suffered abuse or had been
   involved in a fight.

J. Fifty (50%) percent had been held back a grade.

K. Twenty (20%) percent admitted to threatening or
   bulling a classmate or friend.

L. Twenty (20%) percent admitted to verbally abusing
   someone, and

M. Twenty (20%) percent admitted to breaking school
   property.

Based on his review of literature and the survey he
conducted Flanagin suggests that suspension, whether in or
out of school, needs to be rethought as an effective tool
for discipline. Flanagain bases this on many studies that
point to the correlation between low grades and high
suspension rates, as well as the connection between missing
school and having low grades. Essentially Flanagain argues
that if we remove the students who are discipline problems

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via suspension they are more likely to be in academic trouble as they are excluded from learning and probably have low grades in the first place. Flanagain combines this with the fact that 80% of students had no remorse for what they did and many were repeat offenders. The idea of lack of remorse, combined with repeat offenses in light of some of the statistics above, like 20% being abused at home, gives a picture of a child that needs serious social and emotional help beyond suspension if we are to be effective at behavior modification.

Evenson et. al.(2009) discuss how the discipline systems in many schools have gone from "a prevention and correction model to a reactive and punitive model" in many schools as the popularity of zero tolerance systems has grown. The researchers catalogue how the zero tolerance policy has grown and how it has disproportionately affected minority students and caused a rise in suspensions and expulsions at all levels from Kindergarten to high school. The researchers conclude by proposing the move to a system that is more responsive to student needs with the focus on early identification and correction of behavior vs. reaction to it. These early intervention strategies should decrease suspensions for minor infractions and

theoretically expulsions as well. Furthermore if social competence, or as other researchers have phrased it social capital, is systematically taught to all students the expansion of social competence has the potential to decrease school violence and create a safe and orderly environment for learning.

Tanner (2010) focuses on the implementation of zero tolerance systems as well as uniforms as panacea responses to high profile events of school violence in the nineties like the shootings at Columbine High School. Tanner asserts that one of the highest predictors of whether or not a school has a zero tolerance system is the percentage of minority students present on campus. Essentially the higher the number of minority students the more likely a school is to have a zero tolerance policy. Furthermore, like others Tanner points out research which demonstrates that zero tolerance policies tend to affect minorities the most with suspensions and expulsions highest for minority students.

Nathan L. Essex (2009) reviews zero-tolerance primarily in light of sexual harassment, one aspect usually included in the zero-tolerance realm of infractions/ punishments. Essex covers two cases where young kids, a kindergartener and a pre-kindergartener of the ages of 5

and 4 are suspended and disciplined for inappropriate touching. In the case of the four year old prekindergartener the child hugged a teacher's aide and rubbed his head in her chest. In the case of the five year old kindergartener he pinched another kindergartener's buttocks. Both of these students received a suspension and a mark on their elementary record which would stick with them until middle school. Essex argues that neither student fit the bill for sexual harassment as outlined in title XII and title IX of the federal statutes that affect education or in the recent Supreme Court ruling on sexual harassment in school *Davis v. Monroe County Board of Education.* Furthermore Essex argues that both children are too young to understand the concept of sexual harassment and therefore the severity of the punishment they are being held accountable to is out of line. Essex covers various other high profile incidents in regard to zero-tolerance policies that have dealt out harsh punishment for minor offenses beyond the sexual harassment ones detailed above. Essex details 11 recommendations in his article that range from carefully crafting zero-tolerance policies to constant monitoring of the affects of the policy and readjusting where necessary to ensure fairness and desired outcomes.

Schachter (2010) discusses how many schools and school
districts have implemented zero tolerance policy since
about 1994 with the implementation of the federal Gun Free
Schools Act. Schachter discusses how these zero tolerance
policies have had unintended consequences including
expulsions for minor offenses or in some cases non-offenses
where a student has turned in a small knife sent by mom to
cut an apple in her lunch. Stories like these combined with
a study from the American Psychological Association
documenting no increase in school safety as a result of the
implementation of zero tolerance policies has led to a
movement towards positive behavioral interventions and
restorative justice in many districts and schools.
Schachter highlights one of these districts, Los Angeles
Unified School District (LAUSD), where the district has
moved towards alternatives to suspension including:

- Alternative programming

- Behavior monitoring

- Appropriate in-school alternatives

- Community service

- Counseling

- Parent supervision in school

- Mini-courses

- Restitution

- Problem solving and contracting

Schachter is careful to highlight that these efforts require more effort from classroom teachers and inherently more training to be implemented with fidelity. Furthermore Schachter notes that if they are not implemented with fidelity they often do not work. Schachter further quotes another researcher, Ronald Stephens, executive director, National School Safety Center, to emphasize that safety must still be a priority and teachers cannot spend 20-30% of their time on discipline or they will not be able to teach content, a balance has to be struck and it will be hard one. Given that safety must still be a priority suspensions and expulsions must still exist for our more violent students according to Schachter but a middle ground must be found for others to prevent exclusion and continue education while administering discipline.

Theriot and Dupper (2009) discuss how the transition from elementary to middle school is difficult for many students. They claim that the association between such transitions and changes in the types and frequencies of student discipline problems has not been adequately investigated. Using data from two school years, infractions

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and dispositions for all 5th-grade students, a total of

4,196, from one school district are followed from the final

year of elementary school through the first year of middle

school. Results show a substantial increase in reported

student discipline problems and the use of in-school

suspension in middle school. This increase is most dramatic

for subjectively defined infractions like "class

disturbance" and "failure to follow rules" compared to more

concrete, objective infractions. Implications drawn from

Theriot and Dupper's work include that the number of

referrals dealt out at the middle school level for

subjective infractions needs to be studied more to discern

whether it is student action or teacher bias. Theriot and

Dupper do suggest however those infractions for peer

conflict could be dealt with through concrete early

intervention programs that put the emphasis on proactive

de-escalation, intervention and mentoring rather than

reactive punishment.

Brownstein (2010) takes on zero tolerance arguing that

it is very effective at excluding kids from the learning

environment, many times for minor offenses. Brownstein also

highlights research that attempts to show a "school to

prison pipeline" by demonstrating that zero tolerance

policies rely heavily on the juvenile justice system and refer kids to the justice system earlier and more often than before zero tolerance policies were in place. Brownstein quotes a 2006 Arizona study stating "a first-time arrest during high school nearly doubles the odds of a student dropping out, and court appearance quadruples those odds." Furthermore minority students tend to be affected by these policies more with African American students being suspended and expelled at 3 & 3.5 times the rate of white students, with similar results for Latino students. Brownstein connects this hostile environment to teacher attrition as well expounding on a 2005 national survey that 39-44% of teachers who left the classroom cite student discipline as a reason. Brownstein concludes that either a new system like PBIS needs to be used or more alternative methods, many that already exist, like inschool suspension with academic help, or mentoring atrisk students should be tried.

Kupchik (2009) studied four schools over a vastly different geographic, political and social region from the southwest United States to the Mid Atlantic and found that…

> the four schools studied here have qualitatively
>
> similar discipline policies and approaches but

disparate disciplinary results. Each of the schools

displays a willingness to intervene punitively by

suspending students or referring them to police

without inquiring into students' substantive problems,

even if suspension rates vary considerably across the

schools. By making within-school comparisons that

focus almost entirely on what punishments are given

and to whom, rather than how they are given out or

what policies are in place, the prior research has

largely missed this point. (p. 310)

Kupchik goes onto argue the difference that causes more

lower socioeconomic students and students of color to be

suspended and expelled is not the discipline policy as much

as it is cultural capital. Kupchik argues that middle class

families teach their kids coping and negotiation strategies

that allow them to navigate the disciplinary world of

schools and essentially get the school to tailor itself to

their needs. Essentially, the low SES student and the

student of color do not understand how to navigate the

system and are more likely to be suspended and or expelled

not because of their class or their color, but because of

their cultural capital. This is evidenced by the highly

punitive nature of all school discipline and the schools

willingness in Kupchik's observation to dole out that
discipline at any time to anyone.

Skiba and Peterson (2000) surveyed discipline in
schools contending that there is a dramatic increase in the
use of zero tolerance procedures and policies for a variety
of reasons, even though there is little evidence
demonstrating that these procedures have increased school
safety or improved student behavior. Faced with disruptive
and aggressive behavior, a typical response has been the
punishment and exclusion of students exhibiting challenging
behavior (Skiba & Peterson, 1999). Skiba and Peterson argue
a preventive, early response disciplinary model increases
the range of effective options for addressing violence and
disruption across both general and special education
populations and is most desirable. According to Skiba and
Peterson the ultimate judge of the effectiveness of any
disciplinary system should be the extent to which it
teaches students to solve interpersonal and intrapersonal
problems without resorting to disruption or violence. Well-
defined disciplinary requirements and attention to school
security have a place in schools in maintaining order and
ensuring safety. Yet harsh and punitive disciplinary
strategies have not proven sufficient to foster a school

climate that can prevent the occurrence of school violence.

Rather, a broader perspective, stressing early

identification, comprehensive planning, prevention, and

instruction in important social skills, is necessary if

schools are to prevent the tragedies that happen too often

in our schools.

The APA commissioned a task force to review the

available literature and data on zero tolerance and found

that in general, despite 20 odd years of implementation,

there was little research detailing the effects of zero

tolerance to validate or invalidate the theory. The task

force came up with the following recommendations:

1. Practice

    1.1. Apply zero tolerance policies with greater

        flexibility, taking school context and teacher

        expertise into account.

    1.2. Teachers and other professional staff who have

        regular contact with students should be the first

        line of communication with parents and caregivers

        regarding disciplinary incidents.

    1.3. Carefully define all infractions, whether major or

        minor, and train all staff in appropriate means of

        handling each infraction.

1.4. Evaluate all school discipline or school violence prevention strategies to ensure that disciplinary interventions, programs, or strategies are having a beneficial impact on student behavior and school safety.

2. Policy

2.1. Reserve zero tolerance disciplinary removals for only the most serious and severe of disruptive behaviors.

2.2. Replace one-size-fits-all disciplinary strategies with graduated systems of discipline, wherein consequences are geared to the seriousness of the infraction.

2.3. Require school police officers who work in schools to have training in adolescent development.

3. Research

3.1. Develop more systematic prospective studies on the outcomes of children who are suspended or expelled from school due to zero tolerance policies.

3.2. Expand research on the connections between the education and juvenile justice system and, in particular, empirically test the support for a hypothesized school-to-prison pipeline.

3.3. Conduct research at the national level on the extent to which school districts' use of zero tolerance disproportionately targets youth of color, particularly African American males.

3.4. Conduct econometric studies or cost- benefit analyses designed to show the relative benefits to school climate of removing students from school compared with the costs to society of such removal.

4. Alternatives to Zero Tolerance

4.1. Practice

4.1.1. Implement preventive measures that can improve school climate and improve the sense of school community and belongingness.

4.1.2. Seek to reconnect alienated youth and reestablish the school bond for students at-risk for discipline problems or violence. Use threat assessment procedures to identify the level of risk posed by student words.

4.1.3. Develop a planned policy of effective alternatives for those students whose behavior threatens the discipline or safety of the school.

4.1.4. Improve collaboration and communication between schools, parents, law enforcement, juvenile justice, and mental health professionals in order to develop an array of alternatives for challenging youth.

4.2. Policy

4.2.1. Legislative initiatives should encourage schools and school districts to provide an array of disciplinary alternatives prior to school suspension and expulsion and, to the extent possible, increase resources to schools for implementing a broader range of alternatives, especially prevention.

4.2.2. Increase training for teachers in culturally responsive classroom behavior management and instruction.

4.3. Research

4.3.1. Conduct systematic efficacy research including quasi-experimental and randomized designs to compare outcomes of programs with and without zero tolerance policies and practices.

4.3.2. Increase attention to research regarding the implementation of alternatives to zero

tolerance. What are the best and most
logistically feasible ways to implement
alternative programs in schools?

4.3.3. Conduct outcome research focused on the effects
and effectiveness of various approaches to
school discipline, not only in terms of effects
on school climate, but also for families and
the long-term functioning of children.

While these recommendations are lengthy they are also
very pointed and are reflected in many of the other
sources. Furthermore each of these recommendations is
supported by other sources in the Taskforce's review.

A New Direction

Given the concerns with zero tolerance you find a
growing number of schools implementing, and a growing body
of research documenting, positive behavioral support (PBIS)
as a way to combat discipline problems.

Green (2009) finds that addressing the constant
challenge of improving student discipline in educational
settings is a strenuous task that needs to involve all
stakeholders to be successful. It is especially strenuous
for district-level administrators who must address the

educational and social needs of all students. Green

participated in a study of a mid-western district of

elementary (preschool-8th grade) administrators and school

board members implementing district-wide change surrounding

discipline. Through extensive collaboration and creativity

among various stakeholders, the planners developed and

implement a district-wide student discipline plan based on

positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS). The

general concerns in the district ranged around consistency

of discipline models, especially between elementary and

middle school, and consistency of application of the model

between sites and between student groups. Through a year

long process the stakeholders identified the following

expectations:

Elementary Expectations

    1) Be Respectful

    2) Be Responsible

    3) Be Safe

Junior High Expectations

    1. Be Respectful

    2. Be Responsible

    3. Be Peaceful

    4. Be Positive

5. Be There/Be Ready

The stakeholders identified six key concepts for
implementing these behavioral expectations:

1. a common purpose and approach to discipline,

2. a clear set of positive expectations and behaviors,

3. procedures for teaching expected behavior,

4. a policy of procedures for encouraging expected
   behaviors,

5. a policy of procedures for discouraging inappropriate
   behaviors, and

6. procedures for ongoing monitoring and evaluation.

The preliminary accomplishments from this study was a
decrease in referrals from 21%-44% at various school sites.
In addition the district gained a common language, unified
approach, increased teacher visibility (teachers in
hallways enforcing the new behavioral expectations), a
decrease in problem behaviors, and an increase in
educational time.

Covell (2009) discusses a new way to educate students
being used in the county of Hampshire, England. It is
titled The Rights Way, and is similar to PBIS in that it
involves character education and responsibility taught
through positive interaction. In this case the interaction

is through student councils, in fact students are given a say in just about everything from hiring staff to school rules. This empowerment comes through the idea of rights. This idea is then reinforced, and the positive school outcome is achieved, by advocating good citizenship and respect for other's "rights." Covell states in the article:

> The better the children's understanding of rights, the more likely they were to understand responsibilities in terms of respecting the rights of others: "The most important responsibility is making sure others have their rights." And as one child so eloquently stated, responsibilities mean always doing the right thing, however unpleasant: "If there's a dead rat, don't leave it." (p. 56)

The empowerment has not just been of students, teachers are reporting fewer classroom disruptions, higher academic achievement and less burnout.

Cregor (2008) gives a very informative overview of implementing a Positive Behavioral Intervention Support (PBIS) system, including the shortcomings of the system. By using an elementary and a middle school as an example Cregor effectively covers some of the challenges of implementing a PBIS system. Cregor notes a few things other

advocates of PBIS seem to overlook, especially when contrasting PBIS systems to zero tolerance, which is that PBIS systems can still see higher referral and suspension rates of minorities as noted in the schools covered by Cregor. While over all suspension rates decreased in Cregor's sample schools by half or more, very respectable, there were still noticeably higher referral and suspension rates for minorities-predominately African Americans. This highlights the same discrepancies that exist in most other systems as well in terms of race. Furthermore Cregor notes that as much 80% staff buy in is needed to implement a PBIS system as it has a heavy teacher component and is very teacher-driven being a systems wide approach. This complicates obtaining a sustainable outcome. These hurdles aside PBIS does show a dramatic improvement over other systems in decreasing referral and suspension rates and therefore increasing student retention. Another myth that is dispelled is that PBIS systems do not involve consequences. The article cites several practitioners that discus that discipline is part of the system; it is simply not the focus.

In "School-wide Positive Behavior Support Programs in Elementary Schools" Chelsea T. Siegel (2008) covers the

implementation of a PBIS system in her school and then concludes the following:

> PBIS is far more than a program that reduces office discipline referrals. In my professional opinion as an educator and psychologist, PBIS improves the behavior of school staff, creates a more positive school culture, and goes a long way to address school violence. Further, PBIS creates additional time for academic instruction along with student academic gains. (p. 35)

Like others Siegel conclude this because PBIS strengthens the bonds between staff during the formation and implementation stages, and puts the focus on positive vs. negative interaction with students. The result is that the staff's focus and attitude are changed, towards the school, the students, and discipline. Behavior issues recede, referrals go down and academic time on task goes up.

In the unique report "General Education Teachers' Perceptions of Behavior Management and Intervention Strategies," researchers Amy Dutton Tillery, Kris Varjas, Joel Meyers and Amanda Smith Collins used open ended qualitative questioning to decipher general education teachers perceptions of behavior management. The authors

found that many of the participants in the study lacked knowledge of PBIS and RTI (response to intervention) strategies despite the fact that they are both well supported in literature and were the focus of ongoing training in the district being studied. This led the authors of the study to feel that despite a wide literature base one cannot expect that the practices espoused in literature are practiced in the classroom. Furthermore, even though the district was providing ongoing training many teachers were still unaware of the two strategies; calling into question the efficacy of the training and the obvious need for more training. That being said, many teachers reported the use of what are considered best practices in behavior management in their classrooms despite their lack of knowledge of PBIS and RTI. Many of the best practices mentioned by the teachers were PBIS practices, however no systemic use of PBIS was found. In their research the authors found a hierarchy of behavior management expressed by the teachers in their qualitative open-ended interviews which is presented in figure 1 below. Each of these perceptions is dealt with in detail in the report but in general each need more study and most can be integrated into a PBIS and RTI system.

```
┌─────────────────────┐          ┌──────────────────────┐
│ Teacher Perceptions │────┬────→│ Development/Causes   │
│ of Behavior         │    │     └──────────────────────┘
└─────────────────────┘    │     ┌──────────────────────┐
                           ├────→│ Positive Behavior    │
                           │     └──────────────────────┘
                           │     ┌──────────────────────┐
                           ├────→│ Negative Behavior    │
                           │     └──────────────────────┘
                           │     ┌──────────────────────┐
                           └────→│ Developmental Stages │
                                 └──────────────────────┘
```
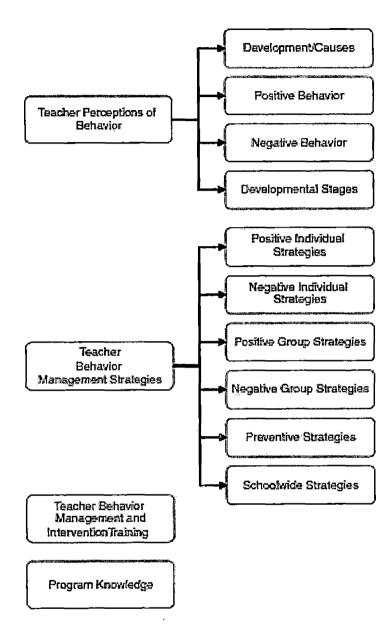
Figure 1. Teacher Perceptions Flowchart.

In "Implementation of School-Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) in Elementary Schools: Observations from a Randomized Trial" a study measured the fidelity with which PBIS was implemented at 21 schools using an evaluation tool called SET (school-wide evaluation tool) developed by the originators of PBIS and designed to measure the degree to which schools are implementing the core features of PBIS. Overall the authors found very high fidelity of implementation within the first two years at all schools. While the developers of PBIS indicate it can take from three to five years to reach fidelity the authors found this accomplished in 1-2, however the authors are careful to note that the desired student outcomes may take longer.

In "The Impact of School-Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) on the Organizational Health of Elementary Schools" the researchers of this study examined the effects of the implementation of a PBIS system in an elementary district of 37 schools. 21 schools were randomly chosen to undergo PBIS training and implementation and 16 schools were chosen by the district to refrain from implementation of PBIS until after the study. The researchers theorized that staff responses on an

organizational health inventory (OHI) survey would improve.
The OHI survey asks staff about five aspects of
organizational health: 1) institutional integrity, 2) staff
affiliation, 3) academic emphasis, 4) organizational
leadership and 5) resource influence. Participants rate the
school on a 1-4 scale ranging from "rarely occurs" to
"frequently occurs," the higher the score the better the
participants feel their school is doing. Participants were
scored prior to training in PBIS and then in May of every
year (prior to re-training over summer). In all five areas
the schools implementing PBIS had an increase over the
schools not implementing PBIS. The authors attribute this
to the collegial nature of implementing the PBIS program
where staff are trained and have to work together to
implement the new system on small group and then school
wide level. This builds relationships and strengthens the
team. Furthermore staff is allowed to take ownership of the
program adding to the collegial aspect of leadership and
possibly helping the scores in the organizational
leadership category. Overall the authors admit it is
impossible to tell how much PBIS specifically influenced
the growth of each area though anecdotal evidence is strong

and comparison schools stayed steady over the same period of time.

Again, the survey of research available provided that Zero Tolerance policies have grown in scope and application since their inception in the early 1990's with the primary effect of excluding, through suspension and expulsion, large numbers of students who are overwhelmingly poor and minority. While this is seen as maintaining order by some and embodies the community with a sense that something is being done to curb violence it ignores the underlying reasons as to why students are acting out in the first place. If we view schools as a social contract we can easily make connections between those students that are not being served by the social contract and the same students' misbehavior. Therefore, a successful discipline program should keep students in the educational environment unless completely impossible by employing early intervention and education that focuses on proactive prevention of discipline issues vs. reactive punishment of discipline issues. Furthermore schools that have switched to a proactive early intervention model have experienced positive affects in other areas as well, from staff moral to overall school culture.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

In an attempt to answer the research question two

methods were used. The first method was an interview with

principals in the district to get a first hand practitioner

perspective using open ended qualitative questioning. The

interview Questions are attached as APPENDIX B. Out of 17

schools I was able to schedule and complete interviews with

10 principals for a response rate of 59 percent. The data

is provided in chart form below.

The second method used was a historical review of the

district's discipline procedures included conducting a

meta-analysis of the following data: enrollment, suspension

rates, placements, expulsion rates, academic performance

index, adequate yearly progress, percent of students at or

above proficiency in english language arts (ELA) and math

(district wide and for just fifth and sixth grade), parent

education level, mobility, and socioeconomic status (SES)

as determined by the percentage of the student population

that is entitled to free or reduced lunch. The meta-

analysis attempted to discern at first the trends in

individual data and then correlations amongst the data. The data was queried from the California Department of Education website, the district office, and the School Accountability Report Cards.

Design of the Investigation

This investigation was designed to figure out what effect the new discipline policy employed by the school district is having on student academic achievement and retention and whether or not there was a correlation. To measure academic achievement I used publicly available data on test scores from the California standards test (CST) for 5th and 6th grades as well as interviews from principals. For retention data I also used publicly available data from the California department of education and the districts central office. I then studied and compared this data to see what the trends were and if there is a correlation between the two.

Population Sample

Due to the limitations on human subjects students were not interviewed or surveyed. The focus of this research was on Principals and publicly available quantitative data on

suspensions, placements and expulsions for all students which was sourced from the California department of education's website.

Treatment

I queried information, when and where available, from the California Department of Education website, the District Office and the School Accountability Report Cards. The data is reported out in its entirety in APPENDIX C at the end of this document and in individual tables below. Retention and academic achievement data are reported and presented below with some aggregation and disaggregation presented, the analysis of data is concluded at the end in the conclusion and recommendation section.

Data Analysis Procedures

The tests scores, suspension and expulsion data were analyzed from year to year to see if increases or decreases could be seen. The data was disaggregated by sub-groups and different minorities and low socioeconomic status students were compared to see if any sub-groups results were different from the trends.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND RESULTS

Results and Discussion

Through my study of the districts data and interviews
with principals it became clear that the district
discipline policy was clearly supported by the principals
and academic progress was trending in the right direction.
While most data shows an improvement in both ELA and math
scores the district failed to meet AYP goals for two
targeted subgroups, students with disabilities and African
American students. This points to exactly what the research
says, namely that the students affected the most by zero
tolerance are minority students and students with
disabilities. While principals indicated that they found
the discipline policy very straightforward and fair and
indicated in their experiences they felt behavior was being
modified spike in suspensions and expulsions from last year
tells another story. More work is still needed as is
detailed below after the findings.

Presentation of the Findings

The two methods used during the research were
interviews with principals and analysis of data, each are
presented below.

Principal Interview

It was possible to interview 10 out of 17 principals
in the time available. The level of similarity in both
answers and overall message was remarkable. In answering
the questions many principals answers were almost verbatim
in their similarity, the same vocabulary was heard again
and again. When speaking to the purpose and outcomes of the
discipline policy and the placement process the principals
gave remarkably similar answers as well and the message
regarding purpose was unanimous. Below are the results.

Question One. To what degree do you think that the
Victor Elementary discipline policy has helped to increase
student achievement?

All respondents indicated that the discipline policy
had a strong positive effect on student achievement. All
indicated that the policy helped to create a safe and
orderly environment where learning could occur. There was a
dual focus in all answers, the first being that of the
environment being safer and allowing for learning and the

second being that students responded very well to clear and consistent expectations.

Question Two. To what degree do you think that the Victor Elementary discipline policy has helped to increase student retention?

All respondents indicated that there was a strong correlation between the discipline policy and student retention. Three major reasons were cited by all:

1. Clearly communicated behavior expectations with known consequences lower discipline problems. The second year of implementation suspensions and expulsions dropped.

2. There is another step before expulsion (i.e. placement) that is very beneficial in effectuating behavior change.

Clearly communicated behavior expectations with known consequences create a safe learning environment that students will want to remain in so student flight is down.

Question Three. Is the Victor Elementary discipline policy excessively prescriptive?

Resoundingly the answer was no. All cited the discipline policy as a guideline and not a hard line rule. There were some caveats that a few through in though which

included big infractions like weapons on campus, drugs, or fights. In these cases several were quick to point out that California Education code and federal law prescribe certain punishments that must be doled out however so the discipline policy was prescriptive in these areas to the effect that the law itself is prescriptive.

Question Four. Is the Victor Elementary discipline policy excessively punitive?

All of the respondents stated the discipline policy was not punitive because before a student would be brought up for suspension in most cases (weapons, drugs and fighting excluded) multiple interventions and progressive discipline would be used. The child would have several opportunities to correct behavior prior to exclusion from school or severe punishment like placement or expulsion.

Question Five. Is the Victor Elementary discipline policy overly complicated?

All respondents answered no. All said it was very simple and straight forward.

Question Six. Do you feel it is difficult to implement the discipline policy with fidelity?

All respondents found this question difficult or as some termed it "tricky" to answer. All expressed to some

degree that by nature of the fact that the discipline policy was a guideline and each student and situation is different fidelity is hard to come by. All expressed they felt they were consistent at their site, most expressed you would probably find some variance between sites however.

Question Seven. What are the discipline procedures teachers use in the classroom?

Answered varied the most to this question. Each site develops its own discipline plan for classroom discipline. About half of the sites had a school wide discipline plan and about half had classroom or grade level discipline plans that could vary across campus. All of these plans had to fit within the district guideline, comply with education code, and be progressive. Without fail each principal stated that before a student was sent to the office (weapons, drugs and fighting excluded) documentation of interventions and parent contact had to be provided. Most principals used the analogy that misdemeanors were handled in the classroom and felonies in the office.

Question Eight. To what degree do you think the Victor Elementary placement process has increased student achievement?

All respondents thought that student achievement had been increased due to two main factors:

1. A safe and orderly environment has been created where learning is the focus and being a rule breaker is not accepted or tolerated.

2. Students who are rule breakers have a step before expulsion, placement, that is a serious shock that wakes up most students and gives them a fresh start allowing them to break old patterns and become successful.

Question Nine. To what degree do you think the Victor Elementary placement process has increased student retention?

All respondents stated that they thought the placement process increased retention as it made campuses safer, keeping existing students from leaving for feeling unsafe and allowing students a chance to start over and have one more chance at success prior to expulsion. Furthermore all principals noted that placement students rarely want to go back to their old school as usually do better at their new school for a variety of factors.

Question Ten. Do you feel the placement process is fair and equitable to the student being placed? Please explain.

All respondents answered yes stating that placement was an arduous process where interventions had to be proved and due process honored prior to a student be removed from a school, much like an expulsion. Furthermore all respondents indicated that the placement panel attempts to ensure that the student is placed at a school where he or she will be a good fit and in an environment that will provide the best opportunity for that child to grow and succeed.

Question Eleven. Do you feel the placement process is fair and equitable to the receiving school where the student is placed? Please explain.

All respondents answered yes. A few indicated one school may receive a higher share of the burden at times due to a variety of factors like space etc. but all indicated that if you were going to place a child you had to be willing to receive one as well, in this sense all respondents viewed this as a team effort.

Question Twelve. Do you feel the placement process is successful in maintaining a safe school environment? Please explain.

All respondents answered yes citing clear behavior expectations that are backed up by well known and clearly communicated consequences creating a safe and orderly learning environment where academics is the core focus.

Question Thirteen. Do you feel the placement process is successful in creating a climate of high expectations for students? Please explain.

All respondents answered yes citing clear behavior expectations that are backed up by well known and clearly communicated consequences creating a safe and orderly learning environment where academics is the core focus.

Question Fourteen. Do you feel the placement process is successful in reforming student behavior? Please explain.

All respondents said yes as none could remember a placement student that they pushed on to expulsion. While none would say this had never happened each stated they had never had to expel a placement student. That being said the violations that were occurring to get the student placed in the first place were obviously no longer an issue, or

substantially less of one so behavior must have been modified for the better.

Question Fifteen. Do you feel the placement process helps students to become successful academically, socially? Please explain.

All respondents said yes and each clarified that this happened to varying degrees depending on the child. All agreed that social behavior was modified first and academics usually, though not always followed.

Retention

As Table 1 below makes clear expulsions went up from 2003 to 2009 seven fold or in other words the number of students expelled increased from 7 in 2003 to 58 in 2009. While the number of students may or may not sound dramatic given one's background the percentage is flooring. However expulsions were already on the rise from 2003-2004 to the 2005-2006 school year, the year prior to implementation, rising 4.3 times (7 students in 2003-2004 to 34 students in 2005-2006). The increase from the implementation year (2006-2007) to the last year data is available (2008-2009) however increased 2.5 times (23 students in 2006-2007 to 58 students in 2008-2009). While the overall numbers of students expelled remains at only half a percent this is

significant in a district of 11,525 students, furthermore the percentage increase in expulsions is tremendous, and no matter how you look at it expulsions have more than doubled.

Placements (the step before expulsion) have skyrocketed as well, more than doubling since the implementation year and increasing about 550% since the 2003-2004 school year. Recall that with placements students are still in the educational environment, they have just been transferred, or placed, in another school. The only area you do not see a wholesale increase is in suspensions. While there has been an increase in suspensions, about 25%, it is not as dramatic as expulsions. In fact if you measure from the year just prior to implementation to the last year data is available the increase is negligible.

Table 1. Retention Data.

Criteria	2003 to 2004	2004 to 2005	2005 to 2006	2006 to 2007	2007 to 2008	2008 to 2009	2009 to 2010
Enrollment	9805	10605	11303	11705	11982	11525	N/A
Placements	9	13	16	26	23	59	N/A
Placement Rate (as % of enrollment)	0.09	0.12	0.14	0.22	0.19	0.51	N/A
Suspension Rate (as % of enrollment)	N/A	9.7	11.8	9.7	9.4	12.1	N/A
Expulsion Rate (as % of enrollment)	0.07	0.05	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.5	N/A

Academic Achievement

As table 2 below demonstrates academic achievement in all measurable areas that were surveyed except AYP increased. API scores increased from 727 to 804 from the 2003-2004 school year to the 2008-2009 school year. API rose from 760 to 804 from implementation year to the most current data, either way an impressive climb for a district API. The district barely missed AYP making 32 out of 35 targets. The three targets that were missed though were students with disabilities whom did not make their targets for ELA or Math and African American students did not make their ELA target for a total of three targets missed-all minority groups.

ELA scores rose district wide and in 5th and 6th grades. District wide ELA rose 12 percentage points or about 30% from the 2004-2005 school year to the 2008-2009 school year. From the 2006-2007 implementation year to 2008-2009 the last year with data the District wide ELA scores increased by 9.9 percentage points or 23%. In 5th grade the ELA scores rose 11 percentage points from the 2003-2004 school year to the 2008-2009 school year or 27%. 5th grade ELA rose 1 percentage, after a drop, from the 2006-2007 school year to the 2008-2009 school year or about 2%. 6th

grade ELA score rose as well, by 20 points from the 2003-2004 school year to the 2008-2009 school year or 62%. 6th grade ELA scores rose 14 points from the 2006-2007 school year to the 2008-2009 school year or about 37%. No matter how the math is done the scores have risen in ELA though the growth rate has slowed.

Math scores tell a similar story to the ELA scores, again district wide or by 5th or 6th grade scores rose from the 2003-2004 school year to the 2008-2009 school year. District wide scores rose 11 points from the 2004-2005 school year to the 2008-2009 school year or 22%. If we again take a look at the implementation year for the new district discipline policy, 2006-2007, up to the most recent years 2008-2009 we find that Math scores increased 8 points or 16%. At the 5th grade level math scores increased 18 points from the 2003-2004 school year to the 2008-2009 school year or 47%. From the 2006-2007 school year to the 2008-2009 school year the 5th grade scores increased 9 points or 19%. For 6th Grade the overall increase from the 2003-2004 school year to the 2008-2009 school was 14 points or 42%. From the 2006-2007 school year to the 2008-2009 school year 6th grade scores increased 11 points or 31%.

Again no matter how you do the Math scores have increased though, like ELA, the growth rate has slowed.

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Table 2. Academic Data.

Criteria	2003 to 2004	2004 to 2005	2005 to 2006	2006 to 2007	2007 to 2008	2008 to 2009
API Growth	727	742	746	760	781	804
AYP	N/A	33/33	35/35	35/35	35/35	32/35
District ELA at or above Proficiency	N/A	41.1	42.1	43.4	47.6	53.3
District Math at or above Proficiency	N/A	49.2	49.9	51.8	55.2	60.1
5th Grade ELA at or above Proficiency	41	38	38	51	47	52
5th Grade Math at or above Proficiency	38	40	46	47	49	56
6th Grade ELA at or above Proficiency	32	40	36	38	48	52
6th Grade Math at or above Proficiency	33	39	34	36	40	47

Discussion of Findings

In considering the validity of the data from the district it is appropriate to check for other factors that may have influenced, positively or negatively, any of the trends deciphered above. While it is impossible to examine every factor there are a couple of major indicators that influence student achievement and coincide with student behavior that can be checked. In Table 3 the data for socioeconomic status, as measured by the percentage of students on free or reduced lunch, parent education level, as measured on the home survey when students enroll, and mobility, as measured by students who enter the school system and leave before finishing a grade are all listed. This data is tracked by the California Department of Education and available on their website listed in the reference section. From the data it is clear that SES has increased 7 points from the 2004-2005 school year to the 2008-2009 school year or 11.3%, not overwhelming but a discernable change. Mobility, an indicating factor in regards to student academic achievement, trended up a couple of points and then down one point to remain relatively stable. Parent education level has stayed in a range from 2.62-2.66 fairly constant.

Table 3. Other Factors.

Criteria	2003 to 2004	2004 to 2005	2005 to 2006	2006 to 2007	2007 to 2008	2008 to 2009
Parent Education Level	N/A	N/A	2.66	2.62	2.63	2.65
Mobility	N/A	N/A	86	86	89	87
Free or Reduced lunch	N/A	N/A	62	61	67	69

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

While the data reflects that academic achievement has increased at all levels the rate of growth appears to be slowing. Anecdotal data received through colleagues and educational administration courses here at California State University San Bernardino leads one to believe that many districts are experiencing a slowdown in their proficiency rates as they approach 50%, furthermore many schools are starting to fail to meet there academic proficiency goals set forth in AYP as the targets increase steadily every year. This taken into account it is hard to fault the district for a slowing academic growth rate. More analysis needs to be done to compare VESD with other districts of similar demographics to establish whether VESD's academic trends are in line with other districts or not.

While academic achievement is trending in the right direction suspensions, placements and expulsions certainly are not. No matter how the math is done all three are increasing. While it can be argued that placements keep students in school receiving an education they are still

disruptive to the educational environment and only done in
lieu of an expulsion, therefore the student may be in
school still but has had a serious disruption in schooling.
Furthermore there has been a dramatic increase in
suspensions, placements and expulsions meaning more
students are spending more time out of class at all levels.
When we connect this to the AYP targets that have been
missed we easily see that African Americans and students
with disabilities are the students failing first in this
district. While suspension and expulsion data is not
publicly available broken down by race a postulation based
on research would be that the students affected the most by
the suspensions, placements and expulsions would be African
Americans and Hispanic/Latinos by race and poor students by
SES. This is a topic for further study and should be
addressed. Despite the lack of disaggregated data for
suspensions, placements and expulsions by race two things
are clear: students are spending more time out of school as
a result of this policy and for the first time in years AYP
targets have not been met.

The district suspension, placement and expulsion data
needs to be thoroughly examined to decipher which student
populations are being most affected by the new discipline

policy. This will require interaction with human subjects
and going through student cumulative files however. A
further topic for investigation would be the success rates
of students on placement after their placement year. This
data is not publicly available but could easily be gathered
through student cume files and interviews with past
students and should be investigated.

Recommendations

Further study needs to be completed in four areas.
First placements to expulsions of individual students need
to be correlated to evaluate the effectiveness of
placements. The students placed at new schools need to be
tracked to evaluate whether or not they become academically
successful in terms of grades and whether or not they are
retained by the system. The interviews with principals seem
to indicate that students are retained after placement but
no hard data exists to substantiate the claim. This data
needs to be tracked.

Second, more investigation is also needed to ascertain
the students understanding and evaluation of the process.
No data exists to express the student, or parents, thoughts
on the placement process and its effectiveness at modifying

behavior, increasing academics or retaining students. Further study should include interviews with students and parents of students who have undergone the placement process to find out their interpretation of the discipline policy and their motivations for changing if change occurred.

Third, further study in a longitudinal manner is also needed. Interviews with principals indicated that suspensions and expulsions increased the first year of implementation of the policy but have since receded now that behavior expectations have been clearly communicated and students, parents, and staff understand the new, harsher rules.

Fourth, further investigation is needed to determine why the district missed its AYP targets for students with disabilities and African Americans. This is a serious concern that seems to validate much of the literatures claims of the results of zero tolerance.

These four recommendations each present very poignant questions regarding the efficacy of the discipline policy that need to be addressed for to validate or invalidate the conclusion that minorities seem to be disproportionately affected, academically, in the district. Furthermore the

district recently placed emphasis on some positive behavioral supports that are not reflected in any of this data as the implementation is to new. Programs like character counts, decision pyramids and other PBIS style programs may complement the discipline system and help to add the cultural capital so stressed in the literature. Any future study, especially one involving student interviews or questionnaires, would ideally attempt to assess the student perceptions of not only the discipline policy but also of the PBIS systems in place. Again a longitudinal look at this would be most effective, especially given the early results. The interviews with principals indicate that many interventions are in place to foster student success, however AYP targets for two high risk minorities are not being met and this should be investigated and tracked along with the recommendations above to gain a full understanding of why this is occurring.

APPENDIX A

DISTRICT DISCIPLINE POLICY

VICTOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT
GUIDELINES FOR SEVERE DISCIPLINE

As the name implies, severe discipline covers acts that are serious in nature, such as fighting, violations of the Penal Code, misdemeanors, and felonies. In addition, certain behaviors which could be harmful to others, disturb the normal conduct of school or classes, or which violate "off limits" areas is considered severe discipline.

All sites will use these guidelines for discipline, taking into account the history and severity of each incident.

REGULAR ED STUDENTS = MAY BE SUSPENDED FOR NO MORE THAN 20 DAYS PER YEAR AND LIMITED TO NO MORE THAN 5 DAYS PER INFRACTION

SPECIAL ED STUDENTS = MAY BE SUSPENDED FOR NO MORE THAN 10 DAYS PER YEAR AND NO MORE THAN 5 DAYS PER INFRACTION

| | 1st Offense | | | 2nd Offense | | | 3rd Offense | | |
	K-3	4 - 5	6	K-3	4-5	6	K-3	4-5	6
THREATENED OR CAUSED PHYSICAL INJURY - MUTUAL COMBAT EC 48900 (a)(1)	Conference with Student and Parent Referral for Behavior SST 1 day suspension	Conference with Student and Parent Referral for Behavior SST 3 days suspension	Conference with Student and Parent Referral for Behavior SST 5 days suspension	Follow up SST Meeting 3-5 days suspension	Follow up SST Meeting 5 days suspension	Referral for Placement 5 days suspension	Referral for Placement or Expulsion 3-5 days suspension	Referral for Placement or Expulsion 5 days suspension	Referral for Expulsion 5 days suspension
USE OF FORCE OR VIOLENCE AGAINST ANOTHER PERSON EC 48900 (a)(2)	Conference with Student and Parent Referral for Behavior SST 3 days suspension	Conference with Student and Parent Referral for Behavior SST 5 days suspension	Conference with Student and Parent Referral for Behavior SST 5 days suspension	Referral for Placement 3-5 days suspension	Referral for Placement 5 days suspension	Referral for Placement 5 days suspension	Referral for Placement or Expulsion 3-5 days suspension	Referral for Placement or Expulsion 5 days suspension	Referral for Expulsion 5 days suspension
POSSESSED/SOLD DANGEROUS OBJECT EC 48900 (b)	Parent and Sheriff Involvement - 5 day suspension Firearm/brandishing a knife - EXPULSION REQUIRED								
POSSESSED/SOLD CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE EC 48900 (c) OR (d)	Parent and Sheriff Involvement - 5 day suspension EXPULSION REQUIRED								
ROBBERY EXTORTION EC 48900 (e)	Parent and Sheriff Involvement, Conference, Restitution, Referral for Behavior SST 1-3 days suspension	Parent and Sheriff Involvement, Conference, Restitution, Referral for Behavior SST 3 days suspension	Parent and Sheriff Involvement, Conference, Restitution, Referral for Behavior SST 5 days suspension	Follow up SST Meeting 3 days suspension	Follow up SST Meeting 5 days suspension	Referral for Placement 5 days suspension	Referral for Placement or Expulsion 3-5 days suspension	Referral for Placement or Expulsion 5 days suspension	Referral for Expulsion 5 days suspension

* Per Education Code, K-3 excused, conference with parent to educate.

VICTOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT
GUIDELINES FOR SEVERE DISCIPLINE

	1st Offense			2nd Offense			3rd Offense		
	K-3	4-5	6	K-3	4-5	6	K-3	4-5	6
DAMAGED PROPERTY EC 48900 (f)	Conference, Restitution, Parent Involvement, Sheriff Involvement Optional, Referral for Behavior SST 1-3 days suspension	Conference, Restitution, Parent Involvement, Sheriff Involvement Optional, Referral for Behavior SST 3 days suspension	Conference, Restitution, Parent Involvement, Sheriff Involvement Optional, Referral for Behavior SST 5 days suspension	Follow up SST Meeting 3 days suspension	Follow up SST Meeting 5 days suspension	Referral for Placement 5 days suspension	Referral for Placement or Expulsion 3-5 days suspension	Referral for Placement or Expulsion 5 days suspension	Referral for Expulsion 5 days suspension
THEFT EC 48900 (g)	Parent Involvement, Restitution, Sheriff Involvement, Referral for Behavior SST 1-3 days suspension	Parent Involvement, Restitution, Sheriff Involvement, Referral for Behavior SST 3 days suspension	Parent Involvement, Restitution, Sheriff Involvement, Referral for Behavior SST 5 days suspension	Follow up SST Meeting 3 days suspension	Follow up SST Meeting 5 days suspension	Referral for Placement 5 days suspension	Referral for Placement or Expulsion 3-5 days suspension	Referral for Placement or Expulsion 5 days suspension	Referral for Expulsion 5 days suspension
USED/POSSESSED TOBACCO EC 48900 (h)	Parent Involvement, Referral for Behavior SST 3 days suspension-possession 5 days suspension-using	Parent Involvement, Referral for Behavior SST 3 days suspension-possession 5 days suspension-using	Parent Involvement Referral for Behavior SST 5 days suspension - possession or using	Referral for Placement 3-6 days suspension	Referral for Placement 5 days suspension	Referral for Placement 5 days suspension	Referral for Expulsion 5 days suspension	Referral for Expulsion 5 days suspension	Referral for Expulsion 5 days suspension
PROFANITY/ VULGARITY EC 48900(i)	Conference, Parent Involvement, Referral for Behavior SST 1-3 days suspension	Conference, Parent Involvement, Referral for Behavior SST 3 days suspension	Conference, Parent Involvement, Referral for Behavior SST 5 days suspension	Follow up SST Meeting 3 days suspension	Follow up SST Meeting 5 days suspension	Referral for Placement 5 days suspension	Referral for Placement or Expulsion 5 days suspension	Referral for Placement or Expulsion 5 days suspension	Referral for Expulsion 5 days suspension
POSSESSION/SALE OF PARAPHERNALIA EC 48900 (j)	Parent and Sheriff Involvement, Referral for Behavior SST 1-3 days suspension	Parent and Sheriff Involvement, Referral for Behavior SST 3-5 days suspension	Parent and Sheriff Involvement, Referral for Behavior SST 5 days suspension	Follow up SST Meeting 3-5 days suspension	Referral for Placement Follow up SST Meeting 5 days suspension	Referral for Placement 5 days suspension	Referral for Expulsion 5 days suspension	Referral for Expulsion 5 days suspension	Referral for Expulsion 5 days suspension

* Per Education Code, K-3 excused, conference with parent to educate.

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VICTOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT
GUIDELINES FOR SEVERE DISCIPLINE

| | 1st Offense | | | 2nd Offense | | | 3rd Offense | | |
	K-3	4 - 5	6	K-3	4-5	6	K-3	4-5	6
DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR/ DEFIANCE EC 48900 (k)	Parent Conference, Referral for Behavior SST 1 day suspension	Parent Conference, Referral for Behavior SST 3 day suspension	Parent Conference, Referral for Behavior SST 5 day suspension	Referral for Placement Follow up SST Meeting 3 days suspension	Referral for Placement Follow up SST Meeting 5 days suspension	Referral for Placement 5 days suspension	Referral for Placement or Expulsion 5 days suspension	Referral for Expulsion 5 days suspension	Referral for Expulsion 5 days suspension
RECEIVED STOLEN PROPERTY EC 48900 (l)	Conference, Parent Involvement, Restitution if applicable, Sheriff if severe, Referral for Behavior SST 1-3 days suspension	Conference, Parent Involvement, Restitution if applicable, Sheriff if severe, Referral for Behavior SST 3 days suspension	Conference, Parent Involvement, Restitution if applicable, Sheriff if severe, Referral for Behavior SST 5 days suspension	Follow up SST Meeting Sheriff Optional 3 days suspension	Follow up SST Meeting Sheriff Optional 5 days suspension	Referral for Placement Sheriff Optional 5 days suspension	Referral for Placement or Expulsion 5 days suspension	Referral for Placement or Expulsion 5 days suspension	Referral for Expulsion 5 days suspension
POSSESSION OF AN IMITATION FIREARM *(Replica so similar in physical properties to lead a reasonable person to conclude that the replica is a firearm)* EC 48900 (m)	Referral for Behavior SST 1-3 days suspension	Referral for Behavior SST 3 days suspension	Referral for Behavior SST 5 days suspension	Follow up SST Meeting Referral for Placement 3-5 days suspension	Follow up SST Meeting Referral for Placement 5 days suspension	Follow up SST Meeting Referral for Placement 5 days suspension	Referral for Placement or Expulsion 5 days suspension	Referral for Expulsion 5 days suspension	Referral for Expulsion 5 days suspension
SEXUAL ASSAULT EC 48900 (n)	Conference with student and Parent								
HARASS, THREATEN, OR INTIMIDATE A WITNESS EC 48900 (o)	Conference with student and Parent Referral for Behavior SST 1 day suspension	Conference with student and Parent Referral for Behavior SST 3 days suspension	Conference with student and Parent Referral for Behavior SST 5 days suspension	Follow up SST Meeting 3 days suspension	Follow up SST Meeting 5 days suspension	Referral for Placement 5 days suspension	Referral for Placement or Expulsion 5 days suspension	Referral for Placement or Expulsion 5 days suspension	Referral for Expulsion 5 days suspension
OFFER, ARRANGE SALE Rx DRUG SOMA EC 48900 (p)									
Act of Bullying Including electronic as defined in ED Code 32261	Conference with student and Parent Referral for Behavior SST	Conference with student and Parent Referral for Behavior SST	Conference with student and Parent Referral for Behavior SST	Follow up SST Meeting	Follow up SST Meeting	Referral for Placement	Referral for Placement or Expulsion	Referral for Placement or Expulsion	Referral for Expulsion

* Per Education Code, K-3 excused, conference with parent to educate.

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VICTOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT
GUIDELINES FOR SEVERE DISCIPLINE

	1st Offense			2nd Offense			3rd Offense		
	K-3	4 - 5	6	K-3	4-5	6	K-3	4-5	6
EC 48900 (r)	1 day suspension	3 days suspension	5 days suspension	3 days suspension	5 days suspension	5 days suspension	5 days suspension	5 days suspension	5 days suspension
AID OR ABET INFLICTIONOF PHYSICAL INJURY EC 48900 (s)	Referral for Behavior SST	Referral for Behavior SST	Referral for Behavior SST	Follow up SST Meeting	Follow up SST Meeting	Referral for Placement	Referral for Placement or Expulsion	Referral for Placement or Expulsion	Referral for Expulsion
	1 day suspension	3 days suspension	5 days suspension	3 days suspension	5 days suspension	5 days suspension	5 days suspension	5 days suspension	5 days suspension
SEXUAL HARASSMENT * *(Any unwelcome physical, verbal or nonverbal behavior that make a student uncomfortable)* EC 48900.2	Conference with student and Parent	Conference with student and Parent	Conference with student and Parent	Referral for Behavior SST	Referral for Behavior SST	Referral for Placement	Follow up SST Meeting	Referral for Placement or Expulsion	Referral for Expulsion
		1-3 days suspension	5 days suspension	1 day suspension	3-5 days suspension	5 days suspension	3 days suspension	5 days suspension	5 days suspension
HATE VIOLENCE * *(Willfully injure, intimidate, deface damage or destroy real or personal property because of any person's race, color, religion, disability, gender or sexual orientation, etc)* EC 48900.3	Parent Conference Referral for Behavior SST	Parent Conference Referral for Behavior SST	Parent Conference Referral for Behavior SST	Follow up SST Meeting	Follow up SST Meeting	Referral for Placement	Referral for Placement	Referral for Placement or Expulsion	Referral for Expulsion
		3 days suspension	5 days suspension	1 day suspension	5 days suspension	5 days suspension	3-5 days suspension	5 days suspension	5 days suspension
HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT/ HARASSMENT * *(Engage in harassment, threats or intimidation, sufficiently sever or pervasive to disrupt classwork, create disorder, or invade the rights of pupil or group of pupils by creating a hostile environment)* EC 48900.4	Referral for Behavior SST	Referral for Behavior SST	Referral for Behavior SST	Follow up SST Meeting	Follow up SST Meeting	Referral for Placement	Referral for Placement or Expulsion	Referral for Placement or Expulsion	Referral for Expulsion
	Parent Conference	3 days suspension	5 days suspension	1-3 days suspension	5 days suspension	5 days suspension	3-5 days suspension	5 days suspension	5 days suspension
TERRORIST THREATS AGAINST SCHOOL OFFICIALS OR PROPERTY OR BOTH EC 48900.7	Conference with student and Parent Referral for Behavior SST	Conference with student and Parent Referral for Behavior SST	Conference with student and Parent Referral for Behavior SST	Referral for Placement	Referral for Placement	Referral for Placement	Referral for Expulsion	Referral for Expulsion	Referral for Expulsion
	1-3 days suspension	3 days suspension	5 days suspension	3 days suspension	5 days suspension	5 days suspension	3-5 days suspension	5 days suspension	5 days suspension

* Per Education Code, K-3 excused, conference with parent to educate.

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VICTOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT
GUIDELINES FOR SEVERE DISCIPLINE

	1st Offense			2nd Offense			3rd Offense		
	K-3	4 - 5	6	K-3	4-5	6	K-3	4-5	6
MAKING A FALSE REPORT AGAINST A STAFF MEMBER EC 48900 (K)									
ASSAULT UPON DISTRICT EMPLOYEE			EXPULSION REQUIRED						
POSSESSING, SELLING OR OTHERWISE FURNISHING A FIREARM EC 48915 (C)(1)			EXPULSION REQUIRED						
BRANDISHING A KNIFE AT ANOTHER PERSON EC 48915 (C)(2)			EXPULSION REQUIRED						
SELLING A CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE EC 48915 (C)(3)			EXPULSION REQUIRED						
COMMITTING OR ATTEMPTING TO COMMIT A SEXUAL ASSAULT EC 48915 (C)(4)			EXPULSION REQUIRED						
POSSESSION OF AN EXPLOSIVE EC 48915 (C)(5)			EXPULSION REQUIRED						

DEFIANCE - When a student overtly challenges the authority of any adult in the performance of their duties within the school setting and refuses to do as directed. (k) A student shows complete disregard for a rule, law or person in authority.

FIGHT - An incident in which 2 or more students are engaged in mutual physical combat (a)(1). When 2 or more students use violent physical means such as blows with fists or a weapon to overpower somebody.

SELF-DEFENSE - Forcible resistance to immediate unforeseen physical harm. A student may protect themselves form an "unexpected" attack when there is no avenue of escape and "no way" to get adult help.

* Per Education Code, K-3 excused, conference with parent to educate.

APPENDIX B

PRINCIPAL INTERVIEW

1. To what degree do you think that the Victor Elementary discipline policy has helped to increase student achievement?

2. To what degree do you think that the Victor Elementary discipline policy has helped to increase student retention?

3. Is the Victor Elementary discipline policy excessively prescriptive?

4. Is the Victor Elementary discipline policy excessively punitive?

5. Is the Victor Elementary discipline policy overly complicated?

6. Do you feel it is difficult to implement the discipline policy with fidelity?

7. What are the discipline procedures teachers' use in the classroom?

8. To what degree do you think the Victor Elementary placement process has increased student achievement?

9. To what degree do you think the Victor Elementary placement process has increased student retention?

10. Do you feel the placement process is fair and equitable to the student being placed? Please explain.

11.   Do you feel the placement process is fair and equitable to the receiving school where the student is placed? Please explain.

12.   Do you feel the placement process is successful in maintaining a safe school environment? Please explain.

13.   Do you feel the placement process is successful in creating a climate of high expectations for students? Please explain.

14.   Do you feel the placement process is successful in reforming student behavior? Please explain.

15.   Do you feel the placement process helps students to become successful academically, socially? Please explain.

APPENDIX C

RETENTION AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT DATA TABLE

Criteria	2003 to 2004	2004 to 2005	2005 to 2006	2006 to 2007	2007 to 2008	2008 to 2009
Enrollment	9805	10605	11303	11705	11982	11525
Placements	9	13	16	26	23	59
Placement Rate (as % of enrollment)	0.0009	0.0012	0.0014	0.0022	0.0019	0.0051
Suspension Rate (as % of enrollment)	N/A	9.7	11.8	9.7	9.4	12.1
Expulsion Rate (as % of enrollment)	0.07	0.05	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.5
API Growth	727	742	746	760	781	804
AYP	N/A	33/33	35/35	35/35	35/35	32/35
ELA at or above proficient.	N/A	41.1	42.1	43.4	47.6	53.3
Math at or above Proficient.	N/A	49.2	49.9	51.8	55.2	60.1
Parent Education Level	N/A	N/A	2.66	2.62	2.63	2.65
Mobility	N/A	N/A	86	86	89	87
Free or Reduced lunch	N/A	N/A	62	61	67	69
5th Grade ELA at or above Proficiency	41	38	38	51	47	52
5th Grade Math at or above Proficiency	38	40	46	47	49	56
6th Grade ELA at or above Proficiency	32	40	36	38	48	52
6th Grade Math at or above Proficiency	33	39	34	36	40	47

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