

2001

A Study of the In-service Needs for the In-school Suspension Coordinators in the Middle Schools of the City of Virginia Beach

Glenn W. Forsythe
Old Dominion University

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A STUDY OF THE IN-SERVICE NEEDS FOR THE
IN SCHOOL SUSPENSION COORDINATORS IN THE MIDDLE SCHOOLS
OF THE CITY OF VIRGINIA BEACH

A RESEARCH STUDY
PRESENTED TO
THE GRADUATE FACULTY
OF THE DEPARTMENT OF OCCUPATIONAL AND TECHNICAL STUDIES
OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY

THIS RESEARCH STUDY IS SUBMITTED
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
OF
MASTERS OF SCIENCE IN OCCUPATIONAL AND TECHNICAL STUDIES

BY
GLENN W. FORSYTHE

December 14, 2001

SIGNATURE PAGE

This research study was conducted to determine the need for in-service for In School Suspension Coordinators in the middle schools of the City of Virginia Beach. Dr. John Ritz, my advisor, directed this study in OTED 636, Problems in Occupational and Technical Studies. It was presented as partial fulfillment for the degree of Master of Science in Occupational and Technical Studies.

Approved by: John M. Ritz
Dr. John Ritz
Advisor
Graduate Program Director
Occupational and Technical Studies

Date: ~~8-19-01~~
12-6-2001

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The need for improvement in the “in-school suspension” program (which will be referred to as “ISS”) has become more apparent in the past four years. The program’s operation has gone from a licensed teaching position to an unlicensed para-professional position. The teacher’s position has been phased out over a six-year period. After the change, there was no longer a structured training program in place that would help the ISS Coordinators with the task of making behavioral modifications for students as effective as possible. Instead, unlicensed, untrained personnel have done what ever they deemed reasonable or appropriate per student situation.

The proposal that established the school wide program called for a more structured program, with the emphasis on guidance and rehabilitation. However, the growth in the number of students that have been placed in the program was not apparently forecast according to its author, Dr. David Harvey. In a phone interview he stated, “The program’s operation has declined to the point of becoming a holding pen for students today” (April 6, 2000). ISS Coordinators are viewed as “glorified baby-sitters” and they are asked to perform work that has been designed for a licensed teacher. Today’s tasks include: reviewing other teacher assigned work to make sure that the student has completed the work properly while out of class, tutoring and teaching subjects that may not be familiar to the coordinators, helping with homework, administering tests, monitoring work assignments, and providing counseling.

These assignments have all been done, without any training, formal or informal, for most coordinators. The ISS Coordinator position does not require an undergraduate degree. Therefore, to ensure the coordinators are functioning in the best interest of schooling, training for the ISS Coordinator should be mandatory and could be provided in the form of “in-service” programs.

School principals have the responsibility of planning, organizing and providing in-service training programs for all faculty and staff. ISS Coordinators are paid to work on scheduled in-service days; however, there are no “in-service” programs for them. To schedule in-service for the 13 middle school ISS Coordinators would not cost any additional funds. Consequently, if an administrator were put in charge, professional development programs could be designed and made available for the ISS Coordinators.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem of this study was to determine the in-service program needs of Virginia Beach Middle School ISS Coordinators. This research paper was designed to establish an in-service program for ISS Coordinators to meet their educational and professional development needs. If programs were developed which would address these needs, they could have a direct effect on the quality and structure of the program. Coordinators could then more appropriately provide students with behavioral modifications and improve the overall teaching/learning situations. In-service is important to the improvement in the consistency of discipline and counseling of students and the improvement of the educational procedures for the operation of the program. ISS Coordinators see the need for training as a way to improve their effectiveness in accomplishing their jobs, by

improving their relationship with the students, teachers and administrators. This would greatly improve the quality of the program as a whole. These issues must be addressed if improvements are to occur and students are taught the importance of self-discipline in today's society.

RESEARCH GOALS

The research goals presented give specific meaning and direction to the problem under study. The data collected in this study will provide answers to these research goals.

1. Is there a need for in-service education for ISS Coordinators?
2. Who should arrange in-service education for ISS Coordinators?
3. What part should the ISS Coordinators play in the planning of an in-service program?
4. What should the topics for in-service be?

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

The value of this study has become increasingly important. Within the last decade, new developments in the behavior of students in the school setting have changed in many ways. These include violence in the class, truancy, and the fear factor of not knowing what to expect when entering the once sacred and secure halls of the school building. This has increased the efforts of keeping all students safe from these problems. With this increase in behavioral problems comes an increased pressure on ISS Coordinators to deal with behavioral problems and increased frustration by the lack of support and necessary skills needed to do their jobs effectively and efficiently. According to Dr. David Harvey, the author of the original ISS Proposal for the City of Virginia Beach (1974), "the entire

program needs to be reviewed and redesigned for today's school environment, also reevaluating its effectiveness and its feasibility." ISS Coordinators no longer have the support of continuing in-service education programs.

Today's classroom has changed from the classroom just ten years ago according to Bosch (1997):

"Students are dying in American schools. They are mugged, harassed, abused, and threatened daily. Eight-year-olds are afraid their lunch money will be stolen. Teenagers keep a watch out for the next drive-by shooting. Young people boast of violent actions. Drug use and sales are rampant. Gangs rule the corridors. Weapons are everywhere. Teachers are scared. Classrooms are tension filled. Administrators are forced into running schools that resemble prisons."

This in itself should be enough to show a need to establish an in-service for the In-School Suspension Coordinator; this apparently is not enough.

However, Marks (1978, pp. 163-210) writes about a need for in-service training, and views in-service education as a necessity for all school personnel. This training should include activities that could assist in growing professionally and increasing in competency. The programs must include recent developments such as research and advances in education and must include the input of the entire school's personnel to obtain total cooperation and improve the quality of education provided.

Principals and supervisors should attempt to create an interest and a desire on the part of faculty and staff for valuable personal growth through in-service education. ISS Coordinators can gain personal growth through such activities. By facilitating an in-service program for ISS Coordinators, the coordinators would be able to compare, evaluate and revise their methods of discipline and counseling. Principals and Supervisors

must take a significant role in not only facilitating the program but building a genuine interest in the program and allowing positive input from the teachers and staff.

The need for greater support is pointed out in Blumberg's, *Supervisors and Teachers, a Private Cold War*. Blumberg (1974) writes about supervisor-teacher relationships and makes reference to the relationships as a type of "cold-war." Adequate means for helping teachers improve is not always provided by supervisors, and principals and supervisors are sometimes received with hostility during their visitations, because of the possible animosity that occurs. If coordinators of teachers are to be made aware of their importance to the educational system, they must exhaust their efforts to make available all the necessary means for coordinating teachers to become better educators. This could raise the levels of communication, as well as improve the relationships between teachers, supervisors and principals. This could cause a significantly positive change in the instructional and learning process.

Focusing on new programs in education and the necessity for more accountability, ISS Coordinators and teachers must keep abreast of new advances in behavioral modification. The in-service program could be very valuable in keeping both parties aware of current issues affecting discipline. This study will reveal the need for in-service to be provided for ISS Coordinators in the Virginia Beach schools. Knowing the ISS Coordinators' needs could improve education only with the assistance of the school faculty and staff. The coordinators of teachers must prepare effective in-service programs that will meet the anticipated needs of the ISS Coordinator under their leadership.

LIMITATIONS

There are several limitations that must be considered in this study:

1. The study has been restricted to the 13 middle school ISS Coordinators employed by the City of Virginia Beach.
2. The instrument used to collect data from the ISS Coordinators may not actually reveal all of the in-service needs.
3. Since ISS Coordinators are not trained educational personnel, they may not be aware of their disciplining and counseling needs.

ASSUMPTIONS

The following statements are assumed to be true during the time this research study was being conducted.

1. The ISS Coordinators do not always share common views on the need for in-service education.
2. The ISS Coordinators do not currently have in-service programs available to address their specific needs.
3. In-service training is needed for all ISS Coordinators.
4. The ISS Coordinators/para-professionals have some specific in-service needs different from professional teachers.
5. Coordinators and administrators need to work cooperatively to provide opportunities to increase competency and professional development through the use of in-service education.

PROCEDURES

A population of 13 middle school ISS Coordinators in the City of Virginia Beach will be surveyed to determine their in-service needs. The questionnaire will require each coordinator to respond to several statements using a response code measuring how strongly they agree or disagree with the statements. Tabulations will be done to show the frequency and strength of each response concerning the need for in-service training for ISS Coordinators. The response for in-service availability and frequency will be identified and will be made available to those involved in this study, in addition to their administrative supervisors.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following definitions will serve to make this study more meaningful to those reviewing it.

1. **In-School Suspension Coordinator** - a para-professional who monitors and maintains in school suspension programs.
2. **In-service training/education** - the training activity provided to teachers during their actual employment, which may help improve their growth in instructional competence.
3. **Para-professional** - a worker who is not a member of a given profession, but who assists a professional.
4. **ISS program** - a program that targets students' transgressions or breaches of public school rules and regulations and is designed to deter truancy by

suspending the student and keeping them in the physical school building segregated from the other students.

5. **Supervisor** - an educational manager whose job is to provide leadership, professional development, evaluation, and assistance to teachers for improvement in the instructional process.
6. **Evaluation** - the procedures used to determine the effectiveness of instruction (usually done by supervisors and principals).

SUMMARY

In this chapter the researcher has briefly described the area to be studied. Information on the need for in-service is presented as viewed by the In School Suspension Coordinators.

The problem of this study was to determine the need to establish an in-service program for Virginia Beach Middle School ISS Coordinators. It is believed that all teachers' improvement and professional growth should be encouraged through informative in-service education.

The direction of this study has been established by means of research goals. Throughout this study these goals will be addressed.

Chapter I has established the need for the research and how the results can be used to benefit the ISS Coordinators as well as the entire middle school staff. All problems are not expected to be solved as a result of this study, however, in-service needs will be discussed and a better understanding will occur as a result of the data analysis in subsequent chapters. Limitations of this research have been restricted to Virginia Beach

Middle Schools. The questionnaire may be limited in scope and may not include the full range of in-service needs. Due to the lack of training, ISS Coordinators may not be fully aware of their needs.

ISS Coordinators were asked to respond to a questionnaire in order to obtain data pertinent to this study. The results of the questionnaire were tallied, calculated and studied. The researcher's final results are interpreted in Chapter IV and V.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Chapter II is a review of literature. In this chapter the author will review the definition of in-service programs, providing a historical analysis of in-service education and the basic concepts of such programs. The researcher will also discuss the importance of in-service programs to the educational system and professional development of its staff. In-service education/information is provided for teachers, principals and supervisors, however, some para-professionals, such as ISS Coordinators, are not provided in-services specifically designed for their needs.

DEFINING OF IN-SERVICE EDUCATION

Pucel (1979) answers the question – “What is in-service education?” He states:

“In-service education refers to educational activities engaged in by practicing professionals to improve their professional competency. In-service education may be formal or informal; may or may not provide university credit; may or may not provide license or relicensure credit; and may or may not provide pay scale increments.” (p. 39)

In-service education, when designed and implemented skillfully, has and can continue to provide opportunities for teachers, administrators and ISS Coordinators to vastly improve their skills. Constant improvement is needed for those who will be training students to meet the challenging environment of today’s society, including behavioral and educational classrooms. Harris and Bessent (1969) cite that in-service education is most often seen as a distinctively different form of education from pre-service education since the time and order of this presentation also differs. Some authors hold that in-service is

commonly confused with supervision and a similar definition needs to be presented to bring about a line of distinction.

“In-service education is concerned with much more limited tasks, namely the development of instructional staff members as professional practitioners, in such ways as to have a reasonably direct impact upon the quality of instruction offered in the school or college. It is the emphasis upon instruction which separates supervision from many other facets of the school operation, but it is the emphasis on the professional development of instructional staff members as practitioners which distinguishes in-service education from the larger function of instructional supervision.” (pp. 1-2)

Although it may be apparent that in-service education can provide professional development, there must be a distinction between instructional supervision and in-service education. In order to examine the distinction, a historical analysis of in-service education is necessary.

HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF IN-SERVICE EDUCATION

This analysis assumes that in-service education takes its character from some fundamental concepts about schooling, learning, teaching, and human motivations and relationships. Their historical roots remain the force with which leaders in ISS Education must be concerned. Edelfelt and Lawrence (1975) identify 12 concepts that have been historically important in shaping in-service education. These concepts are as follows:

1. The primary role of the school is the giving and receiving of information.
2. Learning is the receiving of information to be stored and used later.
3. Curriculum and teaching are relatively fixed elements in the school.
4. The main business of teacher education is the quest for mastery of some relatively stable subject matters and methods of teaching.

5. In-service education is training that is designed, planned and conducted for the teacher by persons in authority.
6. The central purpose of in-service education is the remediation of teachers' deficiencies in subject matter.
7. Leadership is "direction from above," and motivation is "direction from outside."
8. Supervision is diagnosis, prescription, modeling, inspection and rating.
9. Teacher education in teacher preparation institutions and teacher education in schools are separate and discontinuous processes.
10. Intellectual leadership in goal setting and planning for in-service education appropriately comes from outside the school.
11. The teacher is a sole practitioner (rather than a group member involved in cooperative planning of common goals and related actions).
12. Prescriptive legislation is an appropriate vehicle for improving the quality of teaching standards.

These 12 concepts can and should add stability to any in-service education program, and they are also essential parts of an effective in-service program.

CHARACTERISTICS OF AN EFFECTIVE IN-SERVICE PROGRAM

The implementation of in-service education and continuous training programs are needed to reach a high level of competency. Edelfelt and Lawrence (1975) believe:

"In order to plan and hold an in-service training program, an organized comprehensive plan for the career guidance is of utmost importance. Most teacher training programs do not prepare their teachers for such behavioral problems, therefore supervisors and area universities must hold in-service programs to prepare their teachers to meet the challenges that develop in the area of guidance."

A training program started by Hohenshil and Ryan (1977), in the Ohio Department of Career Development Services, was implemented to improve career guidance skills. The committee set out to identify those needs that were vital to the program along with educational needs, program development needs, and an evaluation plan. Shylo (1979) observed the apprehensiveness in many teachers. She stated that some felt too inadequate to design the program for their students. The committee proposed hosting an all-day teachers' in-service seminar that would assist in developing a positive self-concept in instructors and administrators and providing knowledge on methods and procedures for improving the self-concept of students. She noted specifically that:

“The staff development seminar proved to be the impetus in the career development plan needed to really start moving.”

This type of committee planning would make it easy for the ISS Coordinator to make the transition from the untrained para-professional to a confident and supported para-professional, enabling the ISS Coordinator to be trained and kept up-to-date on what is working and what is not working in today's classroom.

The people that are hired to facilitate the ISS programs in many cases do not have any formal or informal training in the area of discipline, guidance and education. And in many cases, these personnel are not cognizant of whose responsibility it is to establish guidelines and keep them aware of the critical changes in the school system of today. Questions then arise as to who must be responsible.

IN-SERVICE EDUCATION: WHOSE RESPONSIBILITY?

Porter (1978) states that most school board officials recognize the importance of improving those teachers already employed rather than hiring new ones. Hiring new personnel would not solve the problem of improving teacher competence. Continuous retraining of teachers and all school personnel to maintain and to develop their maximum degree of skillfulness should and must become an educational priority of the school districts. To accomplish this, the state educational agencies will take a more important role in developing appropriate and effective in-service education programs. Porter (1978) also states that in-service programs:

1. Can enhance state and federal funding for programs designed and implemented at the district level to meet locally identified needs.
2. Can extensively involve classroom teachers in all aspects of in-service program planning and evaluation.
3. Can involve a rational program development process, which will link staff needs to student achievement needs, and increase the utilization of existing training programs.
4. Can improve the coordination of many funding sources, institutional resources, and approaches to in-service education operating independently in districts.

The in-school suspension program will take on a more significant role in the school system as it maximizes its staff. Blumberg (1998) pointed this out when he stated that schools are becoming increasingly violent and unpredictable. The ISS Coordinators are tasked with taking this disruptive portion of the student body and separating them from

the general school population. It must be restated that according to Harvey (personal interview, March 9, 2000), the author of the original Virginia Beach ISS program proposal, the entire program needs to be reviewed from top to bottom, and reevaluated for its effectiveness and its usefulness. He also feels that administrators could be more knowledgeable about the program stating that “most principals are unaware of the entire concept of the program.”

SUMMARY

The literature supports the need for all personnel in the educational field to have in-service education. In-service programs must be developed in a skillful and meaningful manner. In-service for the sake of in-service is not good enough. ISS Coordinators must deal with and monitor some of the most troubled population of students at the middle school level. All personnel involved in the educational process need in-service education. ISS Coordinators are in a unique position. Their jobs are critical; however, the in-service training is lacking. Schools have changed and the student population is faced with more violence in today's society. Training programs that would focus on specific areas of concern, such as guidance and rehabilitation for students, have been viewed by experts as a need to be conducted. Disciplinary actions are being conducted everyday in the middle schools of Virginia Beach. A key component of this disciplinary action is the ISS Coordinator. These para-professionals are essentially left to fend for themselves in these highly volatile situations. The next chapter will include the methodology and procedural techniques used by this researcher.

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

This study was conducted to identify the in-service needs for ISS Coordinators in the middle schools of the City of Virginia Beach. The results of this study can serve to assist the administration by providing examples of quality in-service education programs that could increase the effectiveness of the ISS Coordinators and provide better parameters for the city's disciplinary programs. This chapter will provide information on the research method used, including population, instrumentation, and statistical information employed.

POPULATION

In School Suspension Coordinators from the 13 middle schools in the City of Virginia Beach comprised the population of this study. None of the other Tidewater school systems were surveyed. Permission had been granted by the City of Virginia Beach Public School System to contact the ISS Middle School Coordinators. See Appendix A.

INSTRUMENT DESIGN

The questionnaire was developed with the assistance of Dr. David Harvey, now retired from the Virginia Beach Public Schools Board of Education, Dr. John Ritz, Professor at Old Dominion University, and Dr. E. Sidney Vaughn, Director of the Office of Accountability of the Virginia Beach Public School System. Each of the above authorities gave suggestions as to the construction of the questionnaire and agreed that the items used could elicit the response necessary to identify the in-service needs of ISS Coordinators and achieve the goals of this study. A Likert Scale was the attitudinal

measuring technique used to measure the strength of response to the list of items and employed (SA) Strongly Agree, (A) Agree, (U) Undecided, (D) Disagree, and (SD) Strongly Disagree. The employment of this rating technique should provide a more meaningful response than a simple yes-no type instrumentation.

The questionnaire consists of (17) close-ended questions and (3) open-ended questions, a total of (20) questions. The respondents will be informed that any data provided will be totally confidential. A copy of the survey is found in Appendix B.

METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

The researcher followed the procedure of obtaining permission to conduct the study from the Virginia Beach Public School System. Having obtained permission, questionnaires and cover letters were mailed to the 13 middle school ISS Coordinators in the City of Virginia Beach on July 1, 2000. The subjects were asked to respond within two weeks upon receipt of the questionnaire. Those not responding by the assigned date were mailed a follow-up letter and a second copy of the questionnaire. A copy of the survey letter is found in Appendix C.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The data were tabulated for each item listed on the questionnaire. Data were analyzed by the mean and frequency of each response. Data showed the need to establish an in-service program for ISS Coordinators in the middle schools of Virginia Beach.

SUMMARY

The third chapter of the study is an explanation of the methods and procedures used. An introduction to the methodologies followed in this study is presented. The research, population, instrumentation and method of data collection and analysis are discussed. The findings of the study are provided in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The purpose of this research study was to determine whether there is a need for ISS Coordinators to have an in-service education program in the City of Virginia Beach. The instrument used in obtaining data was a questionnaire consisting of 20 questions. There are 13 middle schools; 10 middle schools responded to the questionnaire.

The following research goals provided direction to this study:

1. Is there a need for in-service education for ISS Coordinators?
2. Who should arrange in-service education for ISS Coordinators?
3. What part should the ISS Coordinators play in the planning of an in-service program?
4. What should the topics for in-service be?

The data collected provided answers to these research goals.

Table I shows the middle schools in Virginia Beach that were contacted during this study. Table II shows the Responses to the Questions using the Likert Scale, also an analysis of the data numerically. Table III rated the responses using the Likert Scale. The number of ISS Coordinators surveyed were 12 out of 13. One disqualified due to a conflict of interest and one did not respond. Ten were returned for an 83.3% rate of return.

The researcher has disqualified himself for the sake of impartiality, being an ISS Coordinator at Lynnhaven Middle School. Two other coordinators did not respond; one coordinator has resigned his position and the other chose not to participate. Therefore,

the analysis and tabulations were based on 10 respondents. A response return of 83.3% was arrived at once the calculations were completed.

Table I shows the middle schools in Virginia Beach that were contacted during this study. The number of ISS Coordinators contacted were 12. Ten were returned for an 83.3% rate of return.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

ISS MIDDLE SCHOOL COORDINATORS IN VIRGINIA BEACH

Table I
Virginia Beach Middle School Participation

List of Schools	No. Distributed	No. Returned
Bayside Middle School	1	1
Brandon Middle School	1	1
Great Neck Middle School	1	1
Independence Middle School	1	1
Kempsville Middle School	1	0
Landstown Middle School	1	1
Larkspur Middle School	1	1
Plaza Middle School	1	1
Princess Anne Middle School	1	1
Salem Middle School	1	1
Virginia Beach Middle School	1	0
Corporate Landing Middle School	1	1

ISS Coordinators Return Percentage - - 83.3%

Total Sent - - 12

Total Returned - - 10

In Table II, questions 1, 2, 5 and 16 were designed to provide responses to research goal number 1. The majority of the answers were strongly agreed and agreed to the question: Is there a need for in-service education for ISS Coordinators? There was one individual that remained undecided and two individuals that disagreed.

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

LIKERT SCALE NUMERICAL ANALYSIS THE MEANS

Table II

Questions Number	(Strongly Agree) 5	(Agree) 4	(Undecided) 3	(Disagree) 2	(Strongly Disagree) 1	MEANS
1	9		1			4.8
2	8	2				4.8
3	5	5				4.5
4		8		2		3.6
5	5	4		1		4.3
6	4	4		1	1	3.9
7	5	4		1		4.3
8	5	4			1	4.2
9	3	5	1	1		4.0
10	6	3		1		4.4
11	5	2		3		4.4
12	2	7		1		4.0
13	4	3	2	1		4.0
14	2	4	3	1		3.7
15	2	1	6		1	3.3
16	3	5	1	1		4.0

Questions 3 and 4 addressed research goal number 2: Who should arrange in-service education for ISS Coordinators? The majority agreed that both ISS Coordinators and School Administrators should participate in establishing the in-service program. Only four disagreed to Question 4 which read do not feel the school administrators should be a part of setting up the in-service program.

The four open-ended questions, 17-19, referred to research goal number 3: What part should the ISS Coordinator have in an in-service program? This gave the ISS Coordinators a chance to respond in their own words.

In response to Question 17, several believe the ISS Coordinator should decide on the problem areas that occur in the classroom and construct a standard of consistency to be used in the entire school system. ISS Coordinators in the Virginia Beach School System should work together to establish the most effective methods to be used.

In response to Question 18, many believe former ISS Coordinators would be valuable in coordinating the training procedures for an in-service program, using their experience as Coordinators, teachers and administrators. Several felt school security officers, as well as police officers, should also assist in coordinating a training program to handle the unruly student.

Questions 6-15 relate to research goal number 4: What should the topics for in-service be? The majority of the responses were strongly agreed and agreed. Two disagreed and one strongly disagreed to Question 6, and they do not feel that the ISS Coordinator needs to be instructed in test evaluations. Two also disagreed to Question 7, and they do not believe the ISS Coordinator should be provided instruction in handling disadvantaged and handicapped students. One person strongly disagreed to Question 8, and he did not feel the ISS Coordinator should be provided assistance in developing instructional activities to support student learning. There were three undecided responses and two disagreements to Question 9: Should ISS Coordinators be provided instruction in the implementing of an effective safety program? Questions 10, 12, 13 and 14 had two responses that disagreed to each of them. Question 10 related to whether the ISS Coordinator should be provided instruction in guidance skills; Question 12 related to ISS Coordinators receiving training to support academic teachers. They also did not feel that

the ISS Coordinator should be provided techniques to assist teachers with suspended students, as referred to in Question 13 or provide instruction with current trends and issues effecting the overall school programs as referred to in Question 14. The greatest number of disagreements was in response to Question 11. Six disagreed that the ISS Coordinator should be trained in working with parents or guardians.

Table III gives a numerical analysis of the responses to the questions in percentage.

LIKERT SCALE NUMERICAL ANALYSIS (%)

Table III

Questions Number	(Strongly Agree) = 5	(Agree) = 4	(Undecided) = 3	(Disagree) = 2	(Strongly Disagree) = 1	%
1	90		10			100
2	80	20				100
3	50	50				100
4		80		20		100
5	50	40		10		100
6	40	40		10	10	100
7	50	40		10		100
8	50	40			10	100
9	30	50	10	10		100
10	60	30		10		100
11	50	20		30		100
12	20	70		10		100
13	40	30	20	10		100
14	20	40	30	10		100
15	20	10	60		10	100
16	30	50	10	10		100

SUMMARY

According to the research data, there is a need for an in-service education program for the ISS Coordinators in the Virginia Beach Middle Schools.

In response to research goal number 1, the majority of the ISS Coordinators expressed the need for an in-service education program for ISS Coordinators.

In response to research goal number 2, the majority also agreed that ISS Coordinators, principals, vice-principals and other school administrators should participate in establishing the in-service program. Several suggested using workshops to bring the ISS Coordinators and Administrators together. Brainstorming or roundtable discussions would provide an excellent way to share ideas and establish standards to use in the ISS classroom. Some suggested a committee or board with qualified professionals should be responsible for establishing the in-service program.

In reference to research goal number 3, the data shows the ISS Coordinators want to play an integral part in the planning of the in-service program, as well as receive assistance from school professionals such as principals, teachers, guidance counselors, administrators, school security, and outside resources such as police officers and social service workers. One of the coordinators suggested that a liaison be available to help communicate between the ISS Coordinator, school administrators and counselors to help meet the needs of the students and ISS Coordinators and teachers.

The survey data concerning research goal number 4 reveals the majority of the ISS Coordinators would like to discuss a wide range of topics. Disciplinary issues, as well as the academic needs of the students, instruction in test evaluations, instructional activities,

and handling the disadvantaged and handicapped. Broader topics that deal with new trends and techniques that affect the student's overall education, should be discussed in order to help the ISS Coordinator be more effective in the classroom. This will be discussed further in Chapter V. Chapter V will give the summary, conclusion and some recommendations.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to determine whether there was a need for ISS Coordinators in Middle Schools in the City of Virginia Beach to have in-service education programs. This study also attempted to assist ISS Coordinators and principals in recognizing the need for in-service programs.

SUMMARY

This study has reviewed the need for and in-service school program for ISS Coordinators, and the improvement of the in-school suspension program originally developed by Dr. David Harvey in 1974 for the City of Virginia Beach school system. The in-school suspension program was first designed for licensed teachers to review assigned homework, tutor, and provide counseling to students having behavioral problems in the classroom. The ISS program separated these students, keeping them in a learning and structured environment, with an emphasis on guidance and rehabilitation.

The in-school suspension program is now in the hands of unlicensed, untrained paraprofessionals, whom are unprepared to handle the tasks mentioned above. ISS Coordinators are in need of an in-service program, to provide them with the tools and skills necessary to perform their jobs more efficiently and effectively, and should be supported by the Principals, counselors, and administrators. ISS Coordinators need to be able to offer their students the proper educational support and also be able to deal with the disciplinary problems they are faced with in their classrooms each day.

In reviewing the historical background of the in-service program, it was designed to provide opportunities to teachers, administrators, counselors, and supervisors. This study contends that the para-professional should be included in these training programs, reevaluating the needs of the program, subject matter, and methods of teaching. Specific concepts of learning identified by Edelfelt and Lawrence in 1975 should be introduced to the ISS Coordinator such as: developing a positive self-concept, motivational skills, goal setting, fixed curriculum, prescriptive legislation to improve quality of teaching standards, mastering stable subject matters, and methods of teaching. These are only a few of the concepts that could be taught to the ISS Coordinators in the Middle Schools of Virginia Beach by conducting staff developing seminars, providing the ISS Coordinator the proper support and information needed to make the transition from an untrained para-professional to the confident and knowledgeable para-professional. It would not only benefit the educational system, but would also improve the professional development of the ISS Coordinator, as well as the entire staff.

In order to study the views of the ISS Coordinators in the Middle Schools of Virginia Beach, a questionnaire was developed, with the assistance of Dr. David Harvey, Dr. John Ritz at Old Dominion University, and Dr. E. Sidney Vaughn, Director of the Office of Accountability of the Virginia Beach Public School System. The questionnaire was sent to 12 ISS Coordinators, with permission from the Virginia Beach Public School System, however only 10 participated. (At the time of the study, the researcher was an ISS Coordinator at Lynnhaven Middle School and disqualified himself due to a conflict of interest.) The results proved that all of the ISS Coordinators believed there is a need for

an in-service program, specifically designed to provide them with better parameters to control students with behavioral and disciplinary problems, as well as advising them on teaching and counseling skills.

The questionnaire was based on four research goals: determining a need for an in-service education program for ISS Coordinators, who should arrange the in-service education program, what part should the ISS Coordinator play in planning the program, and what topics should be included in the program. The responses were positive and innovative with 90% agreeing that there is a definite need for an in-service program for ISS Coordinators and approximately 80% agreed that both ISS Coordinators as well as Administrators should participate in the planning of the program. A few of the responses mentioned security and police officers as excellent resources to assist with the professional development of the ISS Coordinators.

As far as the role the ISS Coordinator should play, 95% felt that the ISS Coordinators should work together to decide on the problem areas and determine which corrective measures they should use. A few coordinators indicated they would also welcomed help not only from professionals inside the school system (teachers and counselors), but from outside of the school system, such as social workers and psychologists. One of the questionnaires mentioned the participation of retired ISS Coordinators, feeling their personal experience would be invaluable to a training program.

A variety of topics were mentioned in the responses, mainly assistance in developing instructional activities, instruction on current teaching trends, as well as providing instruction in guidance counseling. Although the participants disagreed on some of the

methods and topics, the questionnaire supported the need for an in-service training program for the ISS Coordinator in the Virginia Beach Middle Schools.

CONCLUSION

The following conclusion examined the four Research Goals as they pertained to the study.

Research Goal # 1 - Is there a need for in-service education for ISS Coordinators?

Questions 1, 2, 5, 16 and 20 pertain to this Research Goal.

1. I.S.S. Coordinators should be provided in-service educational programs? (90% Strongly Agree, 10% Agree)
2. Should a formal training program be developed to provide work skills related to your duties as an ISS Coordinator? (80% Strongly Agree, 20% Agree)
5. I.S.S. Coordinators should be provided formal training through in-service? (50% Strongly Agree, 40% Agree, 10% Disagree)
16. Should there be advanced educational requirements for the continued hiring of I.S.S. Coordinators? (30% Strongly Agree, 50% Agree, 10% Undecided, 10% Disagree)
20. Is there a need for in-service education for I.S.S. Coordinator (open ended)? All I.S.S. Coordinators agreed that there should be in-service for them.

Research Goal # 2 - Who should arrange in-service education for ISS Coordinators?

Questions 3 and 4 pertain to this Research Goal.

3. I.S.S. Coordinators should have input in establishing the educational programs for their professional development? (50% Strongly Agree, 50% Agree)

4. The school administration should have input in establishing the in-service educational program for I.S.S. Coordinators? (80% Agree, 20% Strongly Disagree)

Research Goal # 3 -What part should the ISS Coordinators play in the planning of an in-service program? (open ended questions)

Questions 17, 18 and 19 pertains to this Research Goal.

17. What role should I.S.S. Coordinators play in the development of their in-service programs?

ISS Coordinator's surveyed strongly agreed that they must have a great part to do with the input in developing the in-service program. Also they should have a direct role in the formation and design of the in-service program.

18. Who should coordinate the training of I.S.S. Coordinators?

ISS Coordinator's felt that the training and coordinating should come from the administration within each school. Principal, Assistant Principal, Guidance Counselor and School Psychologist must all play a part in the input process of coordinating the in-service program.

19. Who should determine the skills needed to be an effective I.S.S. Coordinator?

The ISS Coordinator's surveyed stated several factors that must contribute to determine the skills needed to be an effective ISS Coordinator. These skills should be academic as well as administrative in nature. Colleges and Universities can provide the knowledge and discipline to enhance the ISS Coordinator's skills. The administration can structure the programs liability and regulatory boundaries which would give the ISS Coordinator a sense of support as well as structure.

These factors were expressed by the Coordinators in the survey to affect skillful coordination.

Research Goal #4 - What should the topics for in-service be?

Questions 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15 pertains to this Research Goal.

6. I.S.S. Coordinators should be instructed in test evaluations. (40% Strongly Agree, 40% Agree, 10% Disagree, 10% Strongly Disagree)

7. I.S.S. Coordinators should be provided instruction in handling disadvantaged and handicapped students? (50% Strongly Agree, 40% Agree, 10% Strongly Disagree)

8. I.S.S. Coordinators should be provided assistance in developing instructional activities to support student learning? (50% Strongly Agree, 40% Agree, 10% Disagree)

9. I.S.S. Coordinators should be provided instruction in and implementing of an effective safety program? (30% Strongly Agree, 50% Agree, 10% Undecided, 10% Disagree)

10. I.S.S. Coordinators should be provided instruction in providing effective guidance for students? (60% Strongly Agree, 30% Agree, 10% Disagree)

11. I.S.S. Coordinators should be trained in working with parents or guardians? (50% Strongly Agree, 20% Agree, 30% Disagree)

12. I.S.S. Coordinators should be trained to support academic teachers? (20% Strongly Agree, 70% Agree, 10% Disagree)

13. I.S.S. Coordinators should be provided techniques to assist other teachers in working with suspended students? (40% Strongly Agree, 30% Agree, 20% Undecided, 10% Disagree)

14. I.S.S. Coordinators should be provided instruction on current trends and issues that effect the overall school programs, i.e., violence, site-based management, etc. (20% Strongly Agree, 40% Agree, 30% Undecided, 10% Disagree)

15. I.S.S. Coordinators should be provided with modern philosophies relevant to disciplinary management? (20% Strongly Agree, 50% Agree, 10% Undecided, 10% Disagree)

The preceding examination of the four Research Goals as they pertain to the Questionnaire showed very clearly that the I.S.S. Coordinators strongly agree that there is a need to establish an in-service program.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The writer of this research recommends the following procedures be undertaken in the middle schools of the City of Virginia Beach:

1. In-service training for ISS Coordinators be set as a priority and implemented at its earliest possible date.
2. ISS Coordinators must and should be provided an effective and fully sponsored in-service education program.
3. Accountability and timely review of the program must be in place in order to give the in-service program effectiveness and the ability to change and upgrade as needed.
4. Additional studies should be conducted to:
 - a. Seek teachers and guidance counselors opinions for improving the ISS program.

- b. Ask the high school ISS Coordinators to participate in similar studies and research programs.
- c. Standardize the ISS program statewide.

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APPENDICES

- Appendix A. Application to Conduct Research.
- Appendix B. Survey Questionnaire.
- Appendix C. Letter to In-School Suspension Coordinator to Obtain Information.

Appendix A

Application to Conduct Research



VIRGINIA BEACH CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

AHEAD OF THE CURVE

TO: Research Applicant

FROM: E. Sidney Vaughn, III, Ed.D., Research Specialist
Office of Accountability - 427-4381 *ESV*

SUBJECT: Application to Conduct Research

DATE: 2/3/00

Approved

You recently requested permission to conduct a research study in the Virginia Beach City Public Schools; in reply, I am sending you this memorandum and an enclosed application form. Please read the memorandum and return the completed application to me.

Personnel in our school division have been asked to await approval from this office before responding to any research requests. We shall process your application after we have received all of the required information.

In reviewing research requests, we abide by certain principles. These principles are as follows:

- School time should be reserved for teaching students. *ESV*
- Students and staff have a right to privacy. *ESV*
- Studies must be relevant to public education. *ESV*
- Studies should relate to the priorities of the school division. *ESV*

As we review requests to conduct research, we shall use the following questions as guidelines:

- Is the application complete?
- Will the study generate new information?
- Is the study relevant for the school division?
- Are the results of this study limited in scope, size of sample, and amount of time required?

We will review your proposal thoroughly; you may be asked to make revisions. We shall, however, notify you as soon as possible.

ESV/mm
Enclosure

F. Dates of Data Collection

1. Preferred 7 FEB 2000
2. Alternate 8 FEB 2000

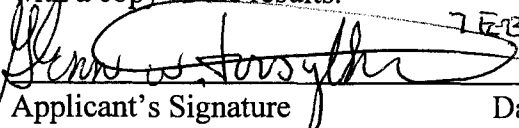
IV. Attachments

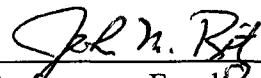
- A. Provide a detailed description of your purpose, the review of literature, research design, sampling, data collection, data analysis, time line, and value to the school system.
- B. Attach a copy of the data collection instrument(s) you plan to use (surveys, tests, questionnaires).

I understand that acceptance of this request for approval of a research proposal in no way obligates the Virginia Beach City Public Schools to participate in this research. I also understand that approval does not constitute commitment of resources or endorsement of the study or its findings by the school system or by the School Board.

I acknowledge that participation in research studies by students, parents, and school staff is voluntary. I will preserve the anonymity of all participants in all reporting of this study. I will not reveal the identity or include identifiable characteristics of schools or the school system unless authorized by the Assistant Superintendent for the Department of Accountability and Technology.

If approval is granted, I will abide by all the policies and regulations of the Virginia Beach City Public Schools and will conduct this research within the stipulations accompanying any letter of approval. At the completion of the study, I will provide the Virginia Beach City Public Schools with a copy of the results.


Applicant's Signature _____ Date 7 FEB 2K


Professor or Faculty Advisor's Signature _____ Date 2-9-00

Old Dominion Univ. 683-4305
Address Phone

FORWARD ALL REQUESTED MATERIAL TO:

E. Sidney Vaughn, III, Ed.D., Research Specialist
Office of Accountability
Virginia Beach City Public Schools
P.O. Box 6038
Virginia Beach, Virginia 23456-0038

Appendix B

Survey Questionnaire

A NEED FOR IN-SERVICE EDUCATION FOR I.S.S. COORDINATORS

Purpose: The problem of this study was to determine the in-service program needs for ISS Coordinators in Virginia Beach.

Direction: Please respond to the following questions. Utilize the technique below for responding to the items listed. If there is something that you feel strongly about, please write your responds in the open ended questions, provided at the end of this questionnaire, then return your questionnaire by pony mail to Lynnhaven Middle School - attention Glenn Forsythe.

RESPONSE CODE

Strongly Agree	(SA)	Agree	(A)
Undecided	(U)	Disagree	(D)
Strongly Disagree	(SD)		

Circle your response

- | | | | | | |
|--|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1. I.S.S. Coordinators should be provided in-service educational programs? | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 2. Should a formal training program be developed to provide work skills related to your duties as an ISS Coordinator? | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 3. I.S.S. Coordinators should have input in establishing the educational programs for their professional development. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 4. The school administration should have input in establishing the in-service educational program for I.S.S. Coordinators? | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 5. I.S.S. Coordinators should be provided formal training through in-service? | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 6. I.S.S. Coordinators should be instructed in test evaluations. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 7. I.S.S. Coordinators should be provided instruction in handling disadvantaged and handicapped students? | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 8. I.S.S. Coordinators should be provided assistance in developing instructional activities to support student learning? | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 9. I.S.S. Coordinators should be provided instruction in and implementing of a effective safety program? | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 10. I.S.S. Coordinators should be provided instruction in providing effective guidance for students? | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 11. I.S.S. Coordinators should be trained in working with parents or guardians? | SA | A | U | D | SD |

12. I.S.S. Coordinators should be trained to support academic teachers? SA A U D SD
13. I.S.S. Coordinators should be provided techniques to assist other teachers in working with suspended students? SA A U D SD
14. I.S.S. Coordinators should be provided instruction on current trends and issues that effect the overall school programs, i.e., violence, site-based management, etc. SA A U D SD
15. I.S.S. Coordinators should be provided with modern philosophies relevant to disciplinary management? SA A U D SD
16. Should there be advanced educational requirements for the continued hiring of I.S.S. Coordinators? SA A U D SD
17. What role should I.S.S. Coordinators play in the development of their in-service programs?
18. Who should coordinate the training of I.S.S. Coordinators?
19. Who should determine the skills needed to be an effective I.S.S. Coordinator?
20. Is there a need for in-service education for I.S.S. coordinator ?

Thank you for your assistance in this research. Return completed survey to Glenn Forsythe at Lynnhaven Middle School, 757-496-6790 ext. 1534.

Appendix C

Letter to In-School Suspension Coordinator to Obtain Information

V.B.M.S.-I.S.S. QUESTIONNAIRE

May 20, 2000

«Title» «FirstName» «LastName»
«Company»
«Address1»
«City», «State»

Dear «Title» «LastName»

My name is Glenn Forsythe; I am the In School Suspension Coordinator at Lynnhaven Middle School in Virginia Beach. The reason I am writing is to get your opinion on whether or not you feel In School Suspension Coordinators should have an in-service educational program. I am completing a research paper on this issue, and your valuable experience and expertise is greatly needed in order to complete the data portion of this research paper. As a fellow colleague that has been an I.S.S. Coordinator for the past four years, I feel I need your opinions to provide recommendations to the school administrators. Did you know, at the time of this research there are only 13 middle school I.S.S Coordinators in the City of Virginia Beach's Pubic Schools? After talking to a number of you in the I.S.S. program, I've discovered that there is an interest for an in-service educational program. I would greatly appreciate your cooperation in this study. Your opinions will show if there is a need to establish an in-service for us.

Please return this survey in our pony mail by July 1, 2000; I am at Lynnhaven Middle School.

Sincerely,

Glenn W. Forsythe
I.S.S. Coordinator
Lynnhaven Middle School

(757) 496-6790 ext.1534

GWF

Enclosure