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## **A Research Based District Wide Discipline Policy, from Goal to Approval**

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A RESEARCH BASED  
DISTRICT WIDE DISCIPLINE POLICY,  
FROM GOAL TO APPROVAL

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A Project Report  
Presented to  
the Graduate Faculty  
Central Washington University

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Education

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by  
Timothy Craig Morello  
June, 2002

## **ABSTRACT**

### **A DISTRICT WIDE DISCIPLINE POLICY, FROM GOAL TO APPROVAL**

by  
**Timothy Craig Morello**  
**June, 2002**

In the late 1990's the Wenatchee School District realized that the community and staff were dissatisfied with the state of discipline in the district. The schools, as is the case in the community at large, could no longer rely on traditional approaches to dealing with a growing number of incidents of anti-social behavior. A lack of discipline appeared to be at the root of the problem in the home and subordinately the root of the problem in the schools (McEvoy & Welker, 2000). In addition, disciplinary practices in many schools are inconsistent and ineitable (Skiba & Peterson, 2000).

The District Discipline Policy Task Force was formed to develop a new research based district-wide policy that would address this problem plaguing our schools. This author, as a member of the task force, did extensive reading leading up to the meetings held on the policy. Books, professional journals, packaged plans, existing programs, and existing policies were studied for examples that could be adapted for use by the Wenatchee School District. The data collected was synthesized into the new research based discipline policy via the committee process. This project takes the reader through the process, from initial research to the finished, and approved, policy.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter One:	BACKGROUND OF THE PROJECT	
Introduction.....		1
Purpose of the Project.....		4
Significance of the project.....		5
Limitations of the Project.....		7
Definitions of Terms.....		7
Overview of the Remainder of the Project.....		8
Chapter Two:	REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	
Introduction.....		9
Definitions of Terms.....		9
The Importance of Discipline.....		11
Training.....		12
Punishment.....		14
Prevention .....		22
Multicultural Considerations.....		28
Summary ..		34
Chapter Three:	PROCEDURES	36

Chapter Four:	RESULTS OF THE PROJECT	
Introduction.....		39
Description of the Project.....		39
Chapter Five:	SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATION	
Summary.....		42
Conclusions.....		43
Recommendations.....		45
References.....		55
Appendix A.....		67

# Chapter One

## Background of the Project

### Introduction

The school of the past, represented by quiet classrooms, happy playgrounds, well organized and safe halls, is a pleasant but fading memory. Students of today have become unruly, disorderly, and disrespectful in school and during school functions. The perception of an unsafe school environment is pervasive among stake holders. Disruptions to the teaching and learning process are common place. Incidences of serious problems such as antisocial behavior, the challenging of authority, open defiance, noncompliance, aggressiveness, and acting out behaviors have reached crisis proportions (Bullock, Reilly, and Donahue, 1983; Evans and Evans, 1985; Hranitz and Eddowes, 1990; U.S. Dept. of Justice, 1991; U.S Dept. of Ed., 1995; Kachur, et al., 1996).

The National Center for School Safety reports that 28,200 students and 5,200 teachers are physically assaulted by students monthly in secondary schools. Of these attacks, 19% require hospitalization (Greenbaum and Turner, 1989). Students and teachers understandably report that they are seriously concerned for their safety at school. . To avoid the aggression occurring in classrooms, and

due to the fear of conflict, approximately 8% of high school juniors and seniors report missing some school (Hranitz and Eddowes, 1990).

The management of serious problem behaviors and the lack of discipline has been identified by the public as the most persistent and troublesome issue facing American schools today (Center and McKittrick, 1987; Cotton, 1990; Elam, Rose, and Gallop, 1992; Jones, 1993; Rose and Gallop, 2000). In short, public school personnel are facing problem behaviors that occur more frequently, significantly affect staff and student safety, and disrupt the teaching and learning process (Greenbaum and Turner, 1989).

As a classroom teacher and veteran observer of adolescent behavior, it has come to this author's attention that antisocial behavior is on the rise in the local community and the Wenatchee Schools as well. As a personal concern and point of vocational interest, this trend has caused many teachers to refocus their attention on the area of discipline. Parents, teachers, administrators and even the students voice their concerns regarding discipline and safety issues in school. In late 1995 a meeting was held at each school in the Wenatchee School District. The purpose of this meeting was to set goals for the schools. It quickly became apparent that other concerns were on the minds of those in attendance. When asked to complete a survey listing areas of concern, parents overwhelmingly picked discipline as the number one challenge facing their neighborhood

schools. This documented feelings that had surfaced several months earlier in parent committees, staff meetings, and school board hearings. After repeated complaints by teachers which were echoed by a growing number of parents, the district included discipline in the list of responsibilities for the newly established Shared Decision Making Team (SDMT) at Orchard Middle School and the other schools in the district. This team was made up of parents, teachers, classified staff, and the building administrator. The charter for this committee empowered it to make decisions affecting the daily operations of the school in several arenas. Of importance to this project was the area of discipline. This author was elected to the SDMT and quickly became the discipline expert as a result of the work being done on this project and the involvement in another committee to be discussed later.

The SDMT, among other responsibilities, reviews Orchard Middle School's discipline issues and during the monthly meetings provides a regularly scheduled forum for discussing behavior concerns and safety issues at the school. The team established the following goals for an effective discipline policy:

- \* Outline clear expectations for students in our school which protect the rights of the individual as well as the group.
- \* Provide appropriate incentives for students who follow the rules and meet the expectations of the school.
- \* Outline and consistently reinforce reasonable consequences



for students who don't follow the rules.

- \* Communicate and work with parents or guardians of students who are having difficulty at school.
- \* Use suspension from school when behavior poses a serious safety threat or disruption to the school learning environment.
- \* Regular training of teachers and staff is conducted regarding discipline and safety issues.

### **Purpose of the Project**

The purpose of this project is to present a model for establishing a research based district-wide discipline plan. The author will accomplish this by studying the following question. If the trend toward antisocial behavior and classroom disruptions can be reversed by a district discipline policy, what would the product, the recommendations for a new policy made by the task force, look like and would the process involved in arriving at those recommendations be valid and acceptable to those directly influenced by this issue?

As most vehicles of change, the process is as important, if not more so, than the end product. With this in mind the process involved and the steps taken to establish a widely accepted new policy will be an integral part of the following paper. This author was involved in the development of the new policy as a member of the task force from its inception and was a major contributor in the process and to the final

product. This work will be discussed in detail in this project.

### **Significance of the Project**

State law in Washington provides for each school district to determine policy related to student discipline. The purpose of this policy is to determine expectations that create a safe, appropriate, and positive learning environment for students while they are at school. Each school enacts procedures for carrying out those policies. To encourage and validate this process, the district's central administration formed the District Discipline Policy Task Force. This task force was to review current district level policies and procedures to determine and clarify precisely what is expected of students in the school district from kindergarten through grade twelve.

The 1995 annual goal statement by the school board also addresses this issue in Major Goal #5. It states; "MAJOR GOAL #5: Implement and evaluate revised policy in student discipline. Work with principals, staff/parent advisory boards to distribute information regarding revised policy on student discipline. Work with curriculum department to develop and implement K-12 curriculum considerations related to revised student policy on discipline. Work with principals to implement new deterrents as outlined in the student discipline policy."

The 'revised policy' mentioned in this goal was to be formulated by the District Discipline Policy Task Force, a committee formed by the central administration in response to the continued and growing

concerns being voiced by parents and community members regarding the perceived deteriorating state of discipline in the Wenatchee schools. This task force was made up of teachers, administrators, parents, a union representative, a school board member, community members, and law enforcement personnel. The purpose of the District Discipline Policy Task Force was two-fold. First, to determine whether or not current district policy on discipline meets the current needs of the Wenatchee School District. Secondly, if improvements are necessary, the task force will draft recommendations regarding a district discipline policy that better meets the needs of students, parents, staff, and the community. Included in these recommendations will be procedures that will provide for a safe and orderly learning environment. The district asked for interested participants to join this task force and as a member of the Orchard SDMT and being involved with discipline on several levels, this author was selected to represent the middle schools on the committee.

Once the task force was established the local newspaper, The Wenatchee World, took notice. In an editorial by Tracy Warner, the editorial page editor, the formation and purpose of the task force was shared with the community. Mr. Warner's investigation for this editorial also revealed a nationwide trend rating discipline as one of the most serious problems facing the public school system today. He went on to say, "Tolerance for antisocial behavior and classroom disruption

is driving the quality of education down and forcing concerned parents to consider private schools or home schooling. This is a trend that must be reversed unless we intend to abandon public schools to the deviants and malcontents who have little or no interest in learning” (Warner, 1995). When analyzing the formation of the task force Mr. Warner added: “This is a step in the right direction, if the committee comes up with concrete recommendations the district’s administrators will follow.” *ibid.*

### **Limitations of the Project**

While the project presents the goals and methods used to establish a district wide discipline policy, it is based on the initial goal setting done by Wenatchee School District stake holders. It will outline the process used by the District Task Force to arrive at a product that can address those goals. Districts or buildings interested in modeling this study would first need to establish local district goals as they relate to discipline concerns.

While every attempt was made to generalize the procedures for this study, much of its information is specific to the Wenatchee School District. Readers should keep this in mind and tailor the procedures to fit their own set of goals.

### **Definition of Terms**

Throughout this paper terms are defined as part of the

procedures and understandings shared. It is this author's contention that the definition of terms and explanation of processes and procedures, as well as the purpose and make-up of committee and teams, fit best in the body of the paper. Therefore, these definitions will be found where they are used.

### **Project Overview**

Chapter one includes the purpose, significance of the project, and limitations. Chapter Two consists of a literature review on the topic of discipline. Chapter Three describes the procedure involved in the project. Chapter Four describes the procedures used to develop a district wide policy by of a District Discipline Policy Task Force. Finally, Chapter Five offers a summary, conclusions, and general recommendations for any discipline plan.

## Chapter Two

### Review of Related Literature

#### Introduction

“For over a quarter of a century, the number one concern facing America’s public schools has been discipline” (Fitzsimmons, 1998, p.1). Discipline is on the minds of all teachers and administrators. In the Wenatchee School District, it was also on the minds of parents and the community at large. But this is not a new phenomenon. Discipline has certainly been an issue that humankind has struggled with for as long as we have inhabited this earth as social groups. From the beginning, advice on discipline has been offered to those interested in maintaining harmony in group situations. Man’s nature, it would seem, necessitates dealing with inappropriate and antisocial behaviors. As you will read, literature related to discipline can be found as far back as the beginning of recorded history.

#### Definition of Terms

As part of the early stages of this work, a literature review was needed. To start this search a definition of discipline needed to be elucidated. According to the American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, discipline is defined as “training that is expected to

produce a specific character or pattern of behavior” or “controlled behavior resulting from such training.” In addition, discipline is defined as “punishment intended to correct or train”(1995, p.375).

F. H. Jones said that “discipline, most simply, is the business of enforcing simple classroom rules that facilitate learning and minimize disruptions” (1979, p.26)

Skiba & Petersen describe discipline as “a set of themes that should be included in a schools plan for preventing youth aggression and violence” (2000, p. 340).

The definition on The Master Teacher web page is “Discipline is the changing of unacceptable behavior to acceptable behavior” (DeBruyn, 2002, p.13).

These definitions pointed out that disciplining is a process with three distinct areas of concern. Given these three areas, (a) prevention, (b) training, and (c) punishment, it seemed evident that a successful discipline plan would have to encompass each concept.

Discipline as training is equated to classroom instruction of the subject of behavior. “Like academic content materials, our expectations of students’ behavior must be taught to students and reviewed frequently” (DeBruyn, 2002, p.13).

The term prevention is often included in many discipline plans (Bellingham, 1994; Mead, 1995; Evergreen, 1995; Walla Walla, 1994; Moses Lake, 1994; Wilson Creek, 1994; Richland, 1993; Kennewick,

1992). While some speak of prevention in terms of deterrents, another way of saying punishment, the emphasis of this review was on the theory that preventing misbehavior by providing alternatives that would preclude or head off the unwanted actions (Hyman, 1994; Hyman, 1996; Tomczyk, 2000; Lantieri 1997). The terms used to redirect the search down another avenue were incentives, reinforcements, inducements, motivation, and rewards.

While punishment, as a concept, is considered a part of most discipline plans, the word 'punishment' is often avoided. To expand the review of literature in this area, additional words were included. These terms included: consequences, the most popular synonym, retribution, outcomes, ramifications, repercussions, reparation, restitution, and negative reinforcement (another popular and widely used substitute).

### **The Importance of a Discipline Policy**

For a district-wide policy to be successful over an extended period of time, the student population must be educated in proper and acceptable behavior. It was found that training was not being done at home for a growing number of students. "What educators are finding, however, is that the root of the problem goes beyond rule breaking. Many of today's students need more than just sound and consistent discipline policies they also need positive behavioral instruction" (Fitzsimmons, 1998, p. 1).



## **Training**

It had been suggested that if an educational environment is to be maintained and schools are to be orderly and safe, a curriculum item would need to be added that is aimed at molding children into well behaved and respectful citizens (Weber, 1982).

In contrast to current trends the aspect of training in a discipline plan could be a strong component because in teaching discipline and behavior teachers can use the same steps that are used to teach academic subjects. In general, teachers develop a lesson plan, with objectives and rationale, to teach a skill that involves explanations, modeling, rehearsal, practice, correction procedures, feedback, and review (Walker, Colvin, and Ramsey, 1995).

In one study, a similar comprehensive instructional approach to school wide and classroom management was implemented at a junior high school. According to the findings a significant reduction in disciplinary actions was noted. The number of office referrals for serious problem behavior was reduced by 50% over the reporting period. In addition there was a noticeable decrease in administrative conferences, suspensions, detentions and parent meetings (Colvin, Sugai, and Kameenui, 1994; Horner, Sugai, and Horner, 2000).

A proactive approach to discipline that encompasses actively planning and teaching students the common routines necessary for appropriate behavior must also be accompanied by a well developed

maintenance plan. The maintenance plan will insure that students continue to follow the routines taught in the early part of the year. A full year maintenance plan would have three phases. Students are taught and supervised closely in phase one. This supervision would continue for several weeks and include both social reinforcement and corrective feedback. Reviews on a periodic and systematic basis for several months would make up the second phase. Reduced levels of supervision and higher levels of freedom would accompany this phase. After this period, during times of special need and after vacations, reviews would be done as reminders and refreshers. This third phase would last the rest of the year (*ibid.*).

The American Federation of Teachers, in their online document, Five Promising Discipline and Violence Prevention Programs, state that, "Although school staff cannot entirely reverse the deep-seated social and emotional problems of some students, there are many things that can be done to help schools become safe havens for learning" (American Federation of Teachers, 2000, p.1).

The document goes on to list the following important elements of a prevention program. Ensure that all members of the school staff have access to professional development in effective classroom and behavior management. Enact a strong, fair discipline code in which the rules of student behavior, as well as the consequences for particular violations, are clearly stated. Take steps to ensure that the code is

fairly and consistently enforced. Authorizing all school staff, not just administrators, to enforce discipline. Implement policies and programs to help improve student behavior. Establish a continuum of quality short, medium, and long term alternative settings in which chronically disruptive or violent students can be placed (*ibid.*).

### **Punishment**

The third element of discipline is punishment. Popular philosophy suggests that punishment only teaches that violence is an appropriate way to solve problems and in a violent society added institutional violence would only fuel the fires of rage and revenge (Stop School Beatings, 2000; Butera, 1998; Bernstein, 2000). When yearly statistics were compiled on violence in schools, the numbers continue to climb even though corporal punishment has been banned in schools for years (*ibid.*).

This fact does not escape the attention of the proponents of reinstating physical forms of punishment. This camp suggests also that the tactile experience of corporal punishment is the only way to transfer feelings and the deeper understanding required to convince offenders that physical abuse such as hitting other students, kicking, pushing, fighting, etc. is not acceptable (*ibid.*).

A learning environment that is structured to promote appropriate behavior is one of the most effective ways to manage behavior of students. When the environment is positive and accepting,

behavior problems seem to be reduced. However, regardless of the structure in the school and the efforts of the staff to create a positive environment, inappropriate behavior, noncompliance, and conflict will occur (Butchart, 1998).

A historical perspective on punishment may provide an understanding of the issue as this debate has gone on for centuries. As in the past, children tend to misbehave for countless reasons. From *The Old Testament* we read that; “Folly is bound up in the heart of a child.” (Proverbs, 22:15)

Discipline is not a necessary evil that comes with the job of teaching, but an integral part of the function of educating youth at school as well as at home and in the community. Discipline concerns and problems associated with ineffective behavior management are not new. Law and order, crime and punishment, and behavior and discipline have long been an important part of society as well as education. Thomas Aquinas, in his work *Summa Theologica*, (1952) wrote: “... a man should reprove his brother out of zeal for justice,... Now admonition is a kind of counsel, which is an act of prudence, and a prudent man is one who is a good counselor. ... The correction of the wrongdoer is a remedy which should be employed against a man’s sin. Now a man’s sin may be considered in two ways: first as being harmful to the sinner; secondly, as conducting to the harm of others, by hurting or scandalizing them, or by being detrimental to the common

good, the justice of which is disturbed by that man's sin" (p. 276).

As Aquinas pointed out, an educator (counselor) has an obligation to correct (discipline) a wrong doer to help that person and also maintain an orderly society, or in this case an orderly school. His writings above were a response to a *New Testament* admonition in Matthew, 18:15.

The *Old Testament* provides additional admonitions that reflect concern for discipline. "Discipline your son and he will give you rest, he will give delight to your heart. Where there is no prophecy the people cast off restraint" (Proverbs, 29:17). And, "Discipline your son while there is hope: do not set your heart on his destruction" (Proverbs, 19:18).

The opinions about whether to punish or not to punish and who has the right to inflict this punishment have been argued over for most of recorded time. As Mill (1952) wrote many years ago, "For instance, there are some who say, that it is unjust to punish any for the sake of example to others; that punishment is just, only when intended for the good of the sufferer himself. Others maintain the extreme reverse, contending that to punish persons who have attained years of discretion, for their own benefit, is despotism and injustice, since if the matter at issue is solely their own good, no one has a right to control their own judgment of it; but that they may justly be punished to prevent evil to others, this being the exercise of the

legitimate right to self defense” (Mill, p. 471-472).

Today’s social and behavioral ills are a reflection of the training that is intermittent or nonexistent in schools and in many homes across America (Fitzsimmons, 1998). This is a reoccurring problem that has to be addressed regularly over generations. In Mill’s essays, he narrows the focus of the penalty phase of discipline to dealing with crimes or misbehaviors which cause harm to or are against society as a whole. In school that would relate to offenses that are against other students or interfere with the learning process. Failing to learn, or not accomplishing a task, would be considered a crime against one’s self and not punishable. “That the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others. His own good, either physical or moral, is not a sufficient warrant” (Mill, 1952, p. 271).

A distinction in school discipline then needs to be made. For acts that can be defined as against others or school, as an environment, those who govern it, or those who maintain the learning culture, punishment of some sort can be justified. For acts against one’s self, for example the failure to do homework, study for tests, listen in class, etc., counseling and guidance can, and should be provided, but penalties should not be imposed.

He cannot rightfully be compelled to do or forbear because it will be better for him to do so, because it will make him happier,

because, in the opinions of others, to do so would be wise, or even right. These are good reasons for remonstrating with him, or reasoning with him, or persuading him, or entreating him, but not for compelling him, or visiting him with any evil in case he do otherwise. To justify that, the conduct from which it is desired to deter him must be calculated to produce evil to someone else. The only part of the conduct of anyone, for which he is amenable to society, is that which concerns others (ibid.).

It has long been established that punishment, the penalty phase of discipline, is needed to effectively deal with inappropriate behavior, noncompliance with safety issues, and conflict. Punishment is defined in the American Heritage Dictionary (1995) as “subjecting one to a penalty for a crime, fault, or misbehavior.”

Given the need for penalties, one must find common ground that will be both acceptable and effective when administering punishment. But what is acceptable and effective? Kant suggests that appropriate penalties have a degree of balance. That the penalty should fit the crime, if you will.

But what is the mode and measure of punishment which public justice takes as its principle and standard? It is just the principle of equality, by which the pointer of the scale of justice is made to incline no more to the one side than the other. It may be rendered by saying that the undeserved evil which any one

commits on an other is to be regarded as perpetrated on himself. Hence it may be said: 'If you slander another, you slander yourself; if you steal from another, you steal from yourself; if you strike another, you strike yourself; if you kill another, you kill yourself.' This is the right of retaliation (jus talionis); and properly understood, it is the only principle which in regulating a public court, as distinguished from mere private judgment, can definitely assign both a quality and the quantity of a just penalty. All other standards are wavering and uncertain; . . . (Kant, p. 447).

Modern educational scholars have leaned away from punishment. Dinkmeyer, McKay, and Dinkmeyer (1980), for example, wrote that using logical consequences instead of punishment was important. They contrast logical consequences with punishment, defining punishment as the imposing of authority and logical consequences as teaching the students to make responsible decisions.

They also suggest that consistent use of logical consequences that make sense to the student will teach a student to evaluate a situation, learn from his or her experience, and make responsible decisions. When applying logical consequences Dinkmeyer, McKay, and Dinkmeyer (1980) offer the following steps: "Provide Choices. Pose alternatives that fit the situation and let students decide either verbally or through their behavior. Offer choices firmly but



respectfully. As you follow through with a consequence, assure students they'll have an opportunity to change the decision later. If students continue to misbehave, extend the time that must elapse before they try again" (Dinkmeyer, 1980, p. 144).

One has to be careful in defining and administering logical consequences because the nature of man has been shown, over time, to be less idealistic than one would like. If logical consequences are not painful, they do not produce desired results. To be punishment, some pain must be felt. That pain need not be physical, but must be felt. Again from the Old Testament, "For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant: later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it" (Hebrews, 12:11).

On the other hand, if a penalty is too severe it produces negative returns. Hobbes touches on this issue when stating his theory on the measurement of penalties. "... if the harm inflicted be less than the benefit of contentment that naturally followeth the crime committed, that harm is not within the definition, and is rather the price or redemption than the punishment of a crime: Because it is of the nature of punishment to have for the end the disposing of men to obey the law; which end (if it be less than the benefit of the transgression) it attaineth not, but worketh a contrary effect. . . . if a punishment be determined and prescribed in the law itself, and after the crime committed there be a greater punishment inflicted, the excess in not

punishment, but an act of hostility.” (Hobbes, 1952, p. 157)

Some authors appear to be read widely and adaptations of their work in one form or another are the bases of many established discipline programs. In 1970 J. S. Kounin wrote Discipline and Group Management, a presentation on the results of observational studies of classrooms from kindergarten through college. In his classic work, Kounin identified strategies and processes used in both effectively and ineffectively managed classrooms. These findings have consistently been validated by subsequent researchers. During the past twenty years Kounin’s findings have been upheld by the work of Moskowitz and Hayman (1976), Ornstein and Levine (1981), Emmer (1981), Docking (1982), Cotton and Savard (1982), Evertson (1983), Bowman (1983), Weber (1983), Strother (1985), Brophy (1986), Gettinger (1988), Doyle (1989), Gottfredson, Karweit, and Gottfredson (1989), and Luke (1989). Additional authors have found that behavior modification techniques can be effective in the school environment for prevention of misbehavior. These authors include Bandura (1969), Cobb and Richards (1983), Crouch, Gresham, and Wright (1985), McNamara, Harrop, and Owen (1987), and Cotton (1988).

Developers of specific educational programs have prepared and marketed packages that purport to bring positive changes to schools with discipline problems. Of these, William Glasser (Reality Therapy,

and Control Theory, 1986), James Dobson (Dare to Discipline, 1970), and Lee Canter (Assertive Discipline, 1976) are well respected and widely read.

Other popular approaches are Teacher Effectiveness Training, Positive Approach to Discipline, Adlerian Approaches, Transactional Analysis, and Student Team Learning.

### **Prevention**

More recently it has been found that while no single program appears to be the answer to school discipline, effective schools generally do not use packaged programs, but instead either develop their own or modify available programs, incorporating research based concepts of good discipline practices that meet the needs of the particular school district under the current circumstances (Best Practices, 1999, p. 27). With this in mind, various discipline policies from districts in the region were requested. These policies were broken down and studied for the purpose of evaluating and comparing both structure and philosophy. Each district policy was analyzed for its research foundation, and phone interviews were conducted to ascertain the effectiveness of various facets of each plan.

These districts were:

Yakima Public School District #7	Yakima, Washington
Bellingham School District	Bellingham, Washington
Mead School District #354	Spokane, Washington

Evergreen School District #114	Vancouver, Washington
Walla Walla Public Schools	Walla Walla, Washington
Housel Middle School	Prosser, Washington
Moses Lake School District	Moses Lake, Washington
Wilson Creek School District	Wilson Creek, Washington
Richland School District	Richland, Washington
Kennewick School District	Kennewick, Washington

Recent articles have been obtained to get accurate information on current trends. These include; *Discipline Review* (NEA Today, 1996), "*The Principal and Discipline for Special Needs Students*" (Assoc. of Washington School Principals, 1995), "*Standing Up to Violence*" (Sautter, 1995), "*Playing by the Rules*" (Ruenzel, 1994), "*Facts on Antisocial Behavior*" (Walker, 1994), "*Seven Steps to Discipline*" (Avellar-Fleming, 1994), "*Making Schools Safe for Students*" (Malesich, 1994), "*The Principal and Discipline: Working with School Structures, Teachers, and Students*" (Hartzell and Petrie, 1992), "*Developing a successful Schoolwide Discipline Plan*" (MacNaughton and Johns, 1991). These articles show a concern for current behavioral problems and a need to return to proven procedures that give control back to the teacher and put sanity back in the school.

When analyzing the research on school wide and district-wide discipline, it was found that the studies done were most often

conducted by comparing well disciplined schools with those that were not so well disciplined. The goal was to identify critical differences in the overall school wide atmosphere and specific discipline practices. A list can be compiled of elements that are common in the well disciplined schools and that are often absent in the schools that are classified as unsafe or disorganized. One such component is an effort to establish some form of proactive or preventive discipline. Preventive discipline, as its name infers, attempts to prevent misbehavior and reduce the need for other forms of discipline. In the work of Duke (1989), Short (1988), Wayson and Lasley (1984), and others, certain identifiable characteristics were present in schools that were successful in maintaining an orderly school (Newcomb, 1998; Oliva, 1989; Ornstein, 1981; Owens, 1987; Pross, 1988; Purkey, 1997).

As Duke states: "... what is known about the organization of orderly schools is that they are characterized by commitment to appropriate student behavior and clear behavioral expectations for students. Rules, sanctions, and procedures are discussed, debated, and frequently formalized into school discipline and classroom management plans. To balance this emphasis on formal procedure, the climate in these organizations conveys concern for students as individuals. This concern manifests itself in a variety of ways, including efforts to involve students in school decision making, school goals that recognize multiple

forms of student achievement, and de-emphasis on homogeneous grouping” (Duke, 1989, p. 47).

Short (1988) had also found similarly: “Research on well disciplined schools indicated that a student centered environment, incorporating teacher-student problem solving activities, as well as activities to promote student self-esteem and belongingness is more effective in reducing behavior problems than punishment” (Short, 1988, p. 3).

Wayson and Lasley wrote that in a well disciplined school: “...rather than rely on power and enforce punitive models of behavior control, [staff] share decision making power widely and so maintain a school climate in which everyone wants to achieve self-discipline” (Wayson and Lasley, 1984, p. 421).

As outlined in the research, the following elements need to be established if a school or school district is to become or remain well disciplined.

- \* Clear and broad based rules
- \* High expectations
- \* Commitment to appropriate behavior by all
- \* A climate of acceptance and caring
- \* Leadership that supports and is involved in discipline
- \* Teachers empowered to discipline
- \* Community support

When punishment was used, it was found to be effective in changing individual behavior and subsequently improving school order if it was fair and firm. If the punishment fits the crime, so to speak, it was effective (Cotton and Savard, 1982; Docking 1982). Another requirement for punishment to work is that it needs to be understood to be punishment. In other words, it has to "hurt," or be unpleasant in some way. Some examples would be to deprive a student of things of value to them like privileges, freedom of movement or access, denial of participation in activities, or the company of friends. Punishment, without the support of education, though, will not produce desired results. Encouragement, directions, and simple reinforcement go a long way in producing support for punishment. Some students need more in-depth support in the form of counseling. These students are in the sector of the population that doesn't recognize their actions as negative or understand the ramification of their misbehavior. Teaching awareness of their behavior, setting limits, and insisting that students be held accountable for their misbehavior and its consequences is all part of counseling and educating students engaged in troublesome behavior (Brophy, 1986).

According to Best Practices (1999) a common resource used in schools is "in-school suspension" (ISS). Unfortunately, because of reduced funding, lack of conceptual knowledge of the program, or insufficient space, many of these programs have departed from the

research based systems that worked so well in the past. To be effective in improving student behavior, in-school suspension needs to meet four criteria. First, guidance needs to exist as a required part of the detention. Planning for a change of behavior and the opportunity to acquire new skills, such as study skills, is also essential. The fourth element that is required to make ISS programs viable and successful in improving student behavior is the perception and feeling of punishment these facilities convey. If the ISS environment imitates the regular classroom where those isolated get similar attention and recognition for misbehavior, the desired results are not achieved. Too many ISS programs have become 'social clubs' where misbehaving students can take a break from the rigors of the classroom. As with other forms of punishment, these programs must be perceived as punishment by being uncomfortable in nature (Cotton and Savard, 1982; Doyle 1989; Gable, 1999).

Behavior contracts were sighted by Cotton and Savard (1982) as effective tools used in school discipline. The cooperation and collaboration between students and administrators in the development of the contract was suggested as important to the contract's success. Specified sanctions that would result from non-compliance with the contract or misbehavior were agreed upon and strictly enforced. These contracts could be viewed as lessons on behavior in miniature.



The organizational development approach presented by Gottfredson (1988, 1989) shows that significant improvement in student behavioral and academic outcomes can be accomplished when discipline and instructional programs are restructured. School teams were established and curriculum and discipline policies were reviewed and revised. Students, teachers, and administrators were given input opportunities before completion of the process. Academic innovations were implemented to complement the discipline improvements. The school wide climate was considered and improved with the help of special services. Parent involvement was increased and community support was fostered through career exploration and job seeking and performance improvement programs.

### **Multicultural Considerations in Discipline Policies**

Providing minorities, males especially, with an effective public school education has proven to be a nearly unmanageable problem. Frequently attending under funded, overcrowded schools, they are apt to feel alienated from, rather than engaged in, the education process. Some do indeed express their discontent through antisocial behavior (Hrabowski, Maton, & Greif, 1998). U.S. society has long been characterized by ignorance about multicultural social styles, denigration of unfamiliar traditions, and persistent negative and fear inducing media images of ethnic minorities. Thus, as products of this society, educators may project negative attitudes about culturally

diverse students and avoid, rather than mentor, them. For example, some teachers try to control ethnic minority students more tightly than Whites, believing that they are not sufficiently disciplined at home (McCadden, 1998). School practices may fail to account for the knowledge, cognitive abilities, culture, and values of minority students (Sandler & others, 2000).

It was found in one study that the reasons for the differential treatment of students from other cultures and students from families of this culture are many and complex, but the result is often the same: Minority students may feel encouraged to act out (Fremon & Hamilton, 1997).

Racial and cultural differences in the definition of good behavior, along with miscommunications, frequently lead to the inequitable punishment of students from other cultural backgrounds by school personnel who do not understand or respect their style of classroom participation. Further, arbitrary and excessive consequences for minor offenses can develop in all students a sense of powerlessness, dependence on authority, and anger that leads to further misbehavior (Gathercoal, 1998). They are, in fact, far more likely than Whites to be suspended (Gordon, Della Piana, & Keleher, 2000).

Minority students believe they are triply disadvantaged: "Unjustly accused, unfairly silenced, and unnecessarily punished" (Sheets & Gay, 1996, p. 89).

Many ethnic minority youth also believe that even if they manage to excel in school, despite the obstacles, racism will limit their ability to reap the advantages available to anglo achievers. So, the students often manage their anxiety by being resistant to cultural norms or even dropping out, thereby confirming for schools the legitimacy of their low expectations for these students (Mahiri, 1998).

When considering the role of cross-cultural competence in the student-school relationship as it relates to discipline several things have to be addressed. According to a study done by the Latin American Research and Service Agency (LARASA) school discipline measures vary from classroom to classroom, school to school, district to district, and ethnic minority to ethnic minority. In this study it was found that many student problems were never address and a disproportionate number of Hispanic students are expelled from school in Colorado (Pappas, 1995).

In a nationwide study (Keleher, 2000) findings indicate that in every district studied, there are significant racial disparities in student suspensions and expulsions. Keleher also concluded that by increasing expulsions, zero tolerance policies have a disproportionate adverse impact on minority students.

Earlier researchers observed that students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds sometimes need more detailed instruction regarding classroom rules and procedures than other students, in

order to insure understanding and compliance (Sanford & Evertson, 1981) Ruby Payne found similarly and went on to list the following statistics from the 1990 census to link poverty and ethnicity; African American children in poverty 39.8%, Native American children in poverty 38.8, and Hispanic children in poverty 32.2% (Payne, 1995).

Research also indicates that individual learning styles vary and that learning styles may be related to ethnicity in some ways (Hale-Benson, 1982).

It has been suggested that the development of cross-cultural competence in discipline programs can be accomplished by communicating the expectation that all students can succeed; providing them with the opportunity to do so; fostering their development of social skills and self-control strategies; setting criterion based achievement objectives; and evaluating students for their strengths, not their weaknesses. Schools can also train existing staff, regardless of race, to master cross-cultural communication skills and teaching strategies and change entrenched ways of dealing with minority students (Brookover, Erickson, & McEvoy, 1996; Dandy, 1990; Ferguson, 2000; Sheets & Gay, 1996).

Schools that have good conduct policies and are successful in dealing with discipline issues in a multicultural environment have written and widely circulated codes of conduct that all students, staff, and parents understand. Their rules are culturally sensitive and

developmentally appropriate. These rules also promote student safety, allow adults to model responsibility and respect, reflect democratic principles, and provide for positive reinforcement of good behavior as well as suitable and neutrally applied sanctions for misbehavior. The message in these schools project clearly that students are responsible for their actions (Beyer, 1998; Brookover, Erickson, & McEvoy, 1996; McCadden, 1998).

According to Gathercoal (1998), contextualization of misbehavior has been found to be an invaluable tool in setting up and handling culturally sensitive rules. While disciplining students, educators who elicit and consider the reasons for their misbehavior, particularly as they relate to racial differences between teachers and students, experience less escalation in disruptive behaviors.

Students may engage in certain challenging behaviors common to the ethnic minority male adolescent community, not because they want to disrupt the classroom but because they want to demonstrate their rebellion against what they consider a teacher's asserting of power; lessons they consider irrelevant, racist, or too simplistic; their perception that teachers believe them incapable of achievement; or their inability to keep up with White classmates because of learning or developmental differences (Dandy, 1990; Sheets & Gay, 1996).

Some aspects of discipline transcend culture. For example, the goals of discipline, once the need for it is determined, should be to help

students accept personal responsibility for their actions, understand why a behavior change is necessary, and commit themselves to change. The disciplinary measures that model good behavior, not retribution and humiliation, and students having some control over the nature of the consequences facilitates their ownership in the policy. Students can help determine discipline policies in general, but specific punishments are customized (Gathercoal, 1998; Gottfredson, 1990).

According to Nimmo (1998), in explaining the theory of democratic education, punishment for misbehavior should fit both the infraction and the student's self-esteem, academic, and personal development needs and involves restitution and an apology.

Democratic education further stresses that a great many, but not all, incidents of misbehavior can be dealt with by student centered strategies. However, rules of conduct are specific about incidents whose seriousness requires immediate action (Nimmo, 1998).

An option for students who cannot be helped to assimilate into a regular school is an alternative school with both good academic and counseling programs (Gottfredson, 1990).

Parent involvement strategies, regardless of the cultural background of the parents are often the same. Successful schools keep parents apprised of their children's behavior, both good and bad, so they can work together when improvement is needed. The staff can provide culturally diverse parents with ideas for promoting their

children's development and assimilation through: (1) encouraging their children's learning and self respect; (2) setting behavior limits and disciplining appropriately; (3) establishing high expectations; (4) maintaining strong communication lines; (5) promoting positive gender and ethnic identity; (6) teaching them to resist violence and other urban temptations; and (7) taking advantage of community resources (Hrabowski et al., 1998).

### **Summary**

With the rich availability of research on the subject of discipline, developing a well supported and research based discipline policy seemed to be an easy goal to accomplish. As this project unfolded, however, it was found that getting consensus on a policy would not be as easy. Even though strong discipline in schools is generally supported, the consequences of a policy that deals with the behavior of children are not so widely supported, especially by the parents of the child being disciplined. As noted in this chapter, answers to such fundamental questions as "Should students be punished, and to what extreme?" and "Who is responsible for the behavior of young people?" and "What is the role of the school in all of this?" have been sought for centuries.

The research had to be adapted to a policy that would be learner centered and fair for all students, regardless of background, ethnicity, or past behavioral history. What has to be kept in the forefront in all policies related to the classroom, the school, or the district at large is

what's best for students. This encompasses their academic education, their development as a citizen, and their growth as an individual. A research based, district wide discipline plan is no exception. With this as a overriding principle, the District Discipline Task Force would proceed with the task at hand, the develop of a research based district wide discipline policy that would ensure success for the students in the Wenatchee School district.



## Chapter Three

### Procedures

The author became interested in discipline early in his career when he realized that control of behavior in the classroom was a fundamental element of creating a meaningful and effective learning environment. In addition to extensive research and study on the subject, the author took every opportunity to be involved in workshops and committees in which discipline was the main topic. Over fifteen years in the classroom and countless discussions, both in and out of group settings, culminated in this author's involvement in the establishment of a district wide discipline policy for the Wenatchee School district.

The focus of this project was to document the procedures involved in the development of a district wide discipline policy and synthesize the related research. Joining the District Discipline Policy Task Force was just the first step in this project. As will be seen in this paper, each step the task force took was analyzed and justified by the application of information gathered for this paper through research as it applies to discipline and the various phases and elements of the policy making process.

The project offers a chronicle of a process and the resulting

product. It is intended as a tool and guide to interested parties who might be in the position to develop a district wide or school wide policy governing the behaviors of students in an educational setting. The use of a wide range of models from other school districts and the inclusion of research relating to discipline from a wide range of sources has made this project useable by many interested readers.

To establish a foundation of research on successful and acceptable discipline plans, a review of pertinent literature was conducted. An examination of abstracts and documents was done on the references listed in the bibliography. Relationships between disciplinary practices and behavioral outcomes were looked for to determine successful methods and policies that could be adapted to the Wenatchee School District. Some of the documents were studies and research, while others were reviews of research. Both were included in this author's review to provide as much depth as possible and to establish an adequate background in discipline theory to develop a comprehensive plan. To gain a broader base of knowledge on discipline practices, classroom level discipline methods (the most widely written about subject) as well as school wide and district-wide practices were studied. Both elementary school students and secondary school students were the subjects of studies used. The disciplinary practices used with special education students were carefully studied to find adaptable techniques. It should be noted that

the different nature of both the behavior and the handling of special needs students precluded the consideration of much that was found in this area.

## Chapter Four

### Results of the Project

#### Introduction

The administrators of the school system in Wenatchee, Washington realized that the community and certified staff were dissatisfied with the state of discipline in their district. The schools could no longer rely on traditional approaches to dealing with a growing number of incidents of anti-social behavior. A lack of discipline appeared to be at the root of the difficulties at home and subordinately the foundation for the challenges in the schools. The need for a district-wide policy to address this issue has been voiced by the local community.

#### Description of the Project

By examining the literature on the subject and carefully piecing together proven programs and methods, a research based comprehensive plan could be developed. Involvement with the District Task Force provided this author the opportunity to take part in formulating a workable and successful district-wide discipline plan. A District Discipline Policy Task Force was formed to develop a new district-wide policy that would address the problems plaguing the schools.

This author, as a classroom teacher and appointed member of the task force, did extensive reading prior to the meetings held to develop the policy. A comprehensive literature review was conducted to get a perspective on successful methods used to improve school wide discipline in other districts. Books, professional journals, packaged programs, existing plans, and current policies were studied for examples that could be adapted for use by the Wenatchee School District.

To write a successful district-wide policy, all aspects of the discipline plan need to be well thought out and research based. It was decided that the literature available involving classroom discipline and management, school wide discipline and district-wide policies would have to be studied to provide a broad enough base to insure that the final product would be well grounded in research and accepted practices.

An array of classroom management practices, as well as policy structures and specific programs, were available for study. Counseling programs, teaching pro-social behavior, management systems, cooperative learning, peer tutoring, various forms and durations of suspension, and reward programs have been examined and are all available for review in professional journals and periodicals. The behaviors of concern in research include on-task and off-task time, classroom disruption, delinquency, drug use, violence, reactions to

referrals, behavior upon return after suspensions or expulsion, dropout causation, attendance impact, truancy, alternative education, attitudes and self destruction.

A record of the data collected and synthesized for presentation to the committee is included. Major components of the policy are detailed and the specific elements, where possible, are referenced to related research. A research based discipline policy is presented that resulted in the acceptance and support of those in the district that were to implement it. The end result consists of a policy that addresses all major infractions and assigns each with a fair and logical consequence. This project takes the reader through the procedure, from the initial review of literature to the finished guidelines. The implementation of this policy is not within the scope of this paper. The project record is attached in Appendix A. The actual district policy is now public record and available for review upon request.

## Chapter Five

### Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

#### Summary

Dealing with unacceptable behavior in school is not pleasant. It causes stress and anxiety. Teachers become frustrated, angry and depressed and often react in negative ways. Ineffective discipline policies and procedures magnify the problems being caused by misbehavior. However, if dealing with inappropriate behavior is looked upon as an integral part of the job of teaching and staff members are trained and supported in their efforts to discipline students, it can be a rewarding portion of the daily routine because results will be witnessed. Discipline provides an opportunity to teach proper behavior, to “bring up” students “in the way they are to go.” Correcting inappropriate behaviors, like correcting errors on assignments, offers the chance to provide guidance and motivation for the student to correct his or her mistakes. Using punishment as well as logical consequences provides students with the opportunity to learn to make choices and accept responsibility for their actions. When schools approach discipline from an instructional model, there is less friction and irritation. When negative consequences are carefully planned and consistently implemented, misbehaviors and the subsequent

punishment become less of a personal issue and more a part of the total curriculum of teaching, modeling, and correcting behaviors. The effective use of fair and logical consequences, coupled with appropriately administered punishment, becomes an essential part of creating and maintaining a positive school climate and constructive learning environment (Mayer, 1999).

### **Conclusion**

Since the management of serious problem behaviors and the lack of discipline are arguably the most persistent and troublesome distractions to the educational process, it is no wonder that public school students are enduring interfering behaviors more frequently. This behavior significantly affect and disrupt the teaching and learning process.

The District Discipline Policy Task Force was formed in response to the persistent and growing concerns being voiced by parents and community members regarding the deteriorating state of discipline in the Wenatchee schools. Since the District Discipline Policy Task Force determined that the current policy on discipline did not meet the needs of the Wenatchee School District, recommendations regarding a new policy were generated. Included in these recommendations were procedures that would provide for a safe and orderly learning environment.

If the trend toward antisocial behavior and classroom disruptions



could be reversed by a district discipline policy, what would the product look like, based on the recommendations for a new policy made by the task force? Furthermore, would the process involved in arriving at those recommendations be valid and acceptable to those directly influenced by this issue?

The findings from a literature study were included in this project to establish a base for influencing the committee process, and the SDMT reviews. It was believed by this author that any policy, to be effective and successful, had to be grounded in research and proven practices. As well as academic literature which provided a theoretical framework, actual programs and policies from other schools were utilized to provide a practical framework.

The conclusion reached by this author and colleagues who have reviewed the appended documents is that the District Discipline Policy Task Force has completed its assignment with commitment and integrity, and the finished product is a workable, well constructed document that stands a good chance of reversing the current trends that have concerned the school district. The task force, and this author, will be monitoring the progress of the improvements experienced by the Wenatchee School District and its students in their learning environment. The actual success or failure of this policy, while of great interest to all concerned, is beyond the scope of the present work.

## **Recommendation**

The Discipline Task Force for the Wenatchee School district has built into the framework of its policy these attributes. Commitment by all concerned staff, parents, administrators, students, and the community was solicited. The importance of learning and a zero tolerance for interruption to the learning process was consistently found in well disciplined schools. Coupled with high behavioral and academic expectations, this commitment is an essential precondition to success.

Clear rules and a well defined specific range of sanctions are an integral part of a successful policy. Communicating these rules and consequences to students, parents, and the community is done to insure that all know and understand the expectations. The teachers are the key ingredient to success or failure of any school program. They should be given the authority to deal with discipline problems with full backing of the administrator. Teachers should also be given the responsibility for the widespread dissemination of the rules and procedures that make up the school community. Teaching is an important prevention tool in this mix.

Support from the principal is required, not only in discipline decisions made by teachers but by being visible and involved in student's academic and extracurricular activities. The administrator must take an active role in all school functions and be in classrooms

and the hallways in both an official and informal capacity. Visibility, involvement, caring and interest communicate a concern and commitment to the health of the school wide environment. The principal also needs to communicate with parents and the community. This communication is required to involve parents and community members in school functions and extracurricular activities. Well disciplined schools have active parents and both parents and the community are kept informed of school activities and behavioral goals set by the district and individual buildings.

Another component of well disciplined schools is clear, well communicated consequences used when rules are not followed. Even in schools with supported preventive discipline plans that work well, misbehaviors will occur. When this misbehavior does occur, it must be addressed fairly and firmly. Many practices are in use but some are identified by researchers as more effective in dealing with school discipline problems. Research supports the following practices.

- \* Punishment, in some form
- \* Counseling
- \* In-School Suspension
- \* Behavior Contracts
- \* Home involvement in reinforcement and increased parent involvement

- \* Restructuring of programs into an Organizational Development Approach

The following guidelines are recommended to improve the quality of discipline in a school district.

- \* Set and communicate high expectations for behavior and academics.
- \* Develop clear rules and procedures governing behavior and communicate them to students, parents, and staff.
- \* Solicit parent and community support to establish appropriate behavior in school and school sponsored events.
- \* Include students in decisions and planning.
- \* Adapt and modify available programs to fit each school's unique needs.
- \* Involve the principal informally in daily routines to raise visibility and personal interaction with students.
- \* Make each student an individual with unique interests and goals.
- \* Empower teachers to handle classroom discipline problems and support their decisions.
- \* Offer staff development in management and discipline skills on an ongoing basis.

- \* Define and make clear to all students the consequences of misbehavior.
- \* Intervene quickly and enforce rules promptly, consistently, and equitably.
- \* Devote time to develop self monitoring skills and teach self-discipline.
- \* Monitor activities and give feedback and reinforcement to students regarding their behavior.
- \* Develop reinforcement schedules for the most needy students and put them in place early.
- \* Teach misbehaving students pro social skills, cooperation, and other skills that seem lacking.
- \* Use peer tutoring when appropriate with students who are misbehaving.
- \* Use reasonable and well thought out punishments as a tool to correct inappropriate behavior.
- \* Establish and use counseling services for students with identified behavior problems.
- \* Develop a research based in-school suspension program which includes guidance, planning for changed behavior, and skill building that is supported on a district level.

- \* Develop and follow through on behavior contracts in collaboration with students, teachers and administrators to stimulate behavior change.
- \* Involve parents through home based reinforcement in school based agreements and directives.
- \* Use the broad based organizational development approach in schools with major problems and negative climates.

These guidelines are implicit in the discipline research sighted and referenced in this paper. The agreement among various authors over an extended period of time suggests that by implementing these guidelines on a district wide basis, the school district, its teachers, and the community would achieve the ultimate goal of successful and effective school discipline. Wayson and Lasley (1984) rightly expressed that goal to be "to teach students to behave properly without supervision" (p. 419)

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**APPENDIX A**



## The Project Record

The need for a districtwide review of the Wenatchee Schools' discipline policies had come out of expressed concern by staff, parents, and community members alike. This concern was due to the growing number of problem behaviors witnessed in the schools, and the publicized deterioration of schools and education nationally. When reviewing and subsequently proposing changes in discipline policies and plans, the first step is to determine which approach will be used to deal with management and discipline problems. This, by itself, is no small problem. With the development and use of a range of approaches to deal with schooled and district-wide discipline, the choice of a particular theory or approach was not clear.

The various approaches to management and discipline in schools can be classified according to the psychological and philosophical bases from which they are derived. This information is important if a district is to match the approach to the personality of the community involved in developing the new policy.

The possible models to choose from can be classified as classroom management designs, behavior management models, socioemotional models, and group process models. As defined by MacNaughton and Johns they are:

Classroom Management Designs - This model is supported by observational research of effective teachers who show skills in maintaining a high degree of on-task behavior in their classrooms (Kounin 1970, and Emmer and Evertson 1981).

The Behavior Management Model - These models come from theories in behavioral psychology. They first determine the appropriate or accepted behaviors desired and apply a systematic set of positive and negative reinforcers to achieve these behaviors. Familiar programs like *Token Economies* (Langstaff and Volkmar 1975), Assertive Discipline (Canter 1976, McCormack, 1987), and Dare to Discipline (Dobson 1970) are examples of this approach.

Socioemotional Models - These models originate from the counseling profession. They rely heavily on psychotherapy research and personality theory. Sometimes called the 'warm, fuzzy' approach to discipline, these models are dependent on a strong interpersonal relationship between the students and the teacher and/or the existence of a positive learning environment. Socioemotional models are found in Glasser's Reality Therapy, Dreikurs' Maintaining Sanity in the Classroom, Curwin's Discipline with Dignity, and Gordon's T.E.T.: Teacher Effectiveness Training.

Group Process Designs - These models are developed using social

psychology and developmental psychology theories. Group process is the primary force that is used to develop and maintain order in the school. The better known examples of this model are from School Discipline (Alschuler 1980), and Control Theory, (Glasser 1986).

It was believed by the district and interested staff members that no one program would address all needs of the district. While uniformity was desired, the need for program diversity to meet the needs of individual teachers (the union position), the demand for parent and the community input, and the hope for a sound research based program had to be juggled.

The Wenatchee School District chose to open the process to parents and community members by involving them in a task force with teachers and administrators. As will be demonstrated later, this approach did not facilitate a purely research based policy.

The District Discipline Policy Task Force was established. To insure the task force had an appropriate mix of members a recruiting call was sent out through various district committees, parent groups, the teachers' union and in each school building's staff room for anyone interested in serving on a task force with discipline as its concern. This author expressed an interest in the work of the task force and was notified in mid November of membership on the committee as the middle school representative. Shortly after this notification a preliminary statement of purpose was issued for the task force. This

purpose statement indicated that the District Discipline Policy Task Force would be reviewing the current district policy regarding student discipline and making recommendations about possible improvements in this policy to the Board of Directors. These improvements would focus on the student behaviors that negatively influence the safe and orderly learning environment of the public schools in Wenatchee. In addition, a draft of the proposed meeting schedule was attached with a tentative time frame for completion of the above mentioned purpose. The target goal for completion of the initial recommendations was set for three months after the start of meetings. These recommendations would be reviewed by various groups and then final recommendations for any proposed changes would be delivered to the Board of Directors for consideration.

It soon became apparent that this time table would not be met if a quality document was to be prepared and presented. This concern was brought to the committee's attention and it was agreed that the quality product was the driving force in the process, not the time table. Later in this work the actual time frame will be shared.

As in any committee, some members were new to the committee process. Other members were nonprofessionals whose only reason for being on the committee was emotional. They had personal agendas that could, if unrecognized or unchecked, jeopardize the process or taint the end product. Because of this, some ground rules needed to

be spelled out. Not only would the understandings reached here prevent communication obstacles, but preplanning would eliminate several problems and move the process along more smoothly.

The ground rules established for this committee can be found below. These ground rules are presented here to give a representation of the types of considerations a mixed committee of professionals and non-professionals must take into account.

#### Committee Meeting Ground Rules

- Start on time; end on time
- Attend all meetings and be on time
- Work to accomplish agenda
- Listen to and show respect for views of other members
- Criticize ideas, not people
- The only stupid question is the one that isn't asked
- Pay attention, avoid disruptive behavior
- Carry out assignments on schedule
- Avoid disruptive side conversations
- Resolve conflicts constructively
- Every member is responsible for the team's  
progress/success
- Communicate within the meeting the views of the people we  
represent

- All need to participate; let no one individual dominate or bully
- We will strive for decisions by consensus
- Stay on task
- Don't allow single issues to stop progress

These ground rules are not included in this paper for any academic value, but are presented to give a representation of the types of considerations a mixed committee must take into account. The make-up of the committee is an important part of the process. Not only does inclusion of parents and community members add validity to the process by soliciting divergent views, but it offers an opportunity to get a different perspective on procedures and conventional professional beliefs. In future meetings, emotional issues were raised and discussed at length. At times there was little or no theoretical base to the discussions or research to back up the decisions made. These issues will be noted and the relevant research will be shared as a point of interest.

After the ground rules were formulated, discussed, and agreed upon at the beginning of the first meeting, the committee was initiated and ready for the task at hand, the development of an effective discipline policy for the Wenatchee School District that could be used by all buildings consistently.

What follows is a description of the committee process. In addition, a philosophical and/or theoretical discussion of relevant issues raised during this process will be shared. When possible, the major component of the policy will be correlated to research.

In addition to the specific tasks and purpose of the committee, a Task Force needs to describe the desired changes and improvements that need to be made and develop strategies for accomplishing the desired changes.

As outlined in research, the following elements need to be established if a school, or school district, is to become well disciplined.

- \* Clear and broad based rules
- \* High expectations
- \* Commitment to appropriate behavior by all
- \* A climate of acceptance and caring
- \* Leadership that supports and is involved in discipline
- \* Teachers empowered to discipline
- \* Community support

Discussions on this topic established the need to develop some consistency in discipline on a district-wide basis and provide all staff with a set of important common rules with a range of consequences for violations of each.

The origins and specifics of proper behavior may be debated, but most people will agree on the need for some common universal laws or

principles, such as fairness, equity, justice, integrity, honesty, and trust. These common laws or principles are consistently enforced officially or unofficially in any social setting.

Several of the previously listed elements address consistency and should be included in a discipline plan. These are:

- \* Clear rules
- \* High expectations
- \* Commitment by all
- \* Leadership involved in discipline

The Discipline Task Force for the Wenatchee School District built into the framework of its policy these attributes: commitment by all, including staff, parents, administrators, students, and the community, the importance of learning and a zero tolerance for interruption to the learning process, and high behavioral and academic expectations. These attributes are considered essential preconditions to success. Clear rules and a well defined and specific range of sanctions are also an integral part of a successful policy.

Communicating these rules and consequences to students, parents, and the community is done to insure that all know and understand the expectations. The teachers are the key ingredient in this component. When they are given the authority to deal with discipline problems with full backing of the administrator, as well as the responsibility for the widespread dissemination of the rules and range



of sanctions, they buy into the discipline policy and programs and make them work.

To insure that students and staff understand and remember the rules and range of sanctions, a model or framework is needed to present consequences in a logical and visually comfortable way. A copy of the discipline policy from Bellingham School District was offered to the committee on Consequences and Enforcement to be used as such a model. This particular format appeared to exemplify a comprehensive discipline policy and lent itself to the needs of the task force and the district. Many members found it reasonable to go with an established format and save the time required to design a new one. The strengths and weaknesses were discussed and it was decided to use the form as a skeleton for structure but not for content. The Wenatchee School District Discipline Policy would be modeled after this existing policy with modifications that took into account the unique nature of Wenatchee and its students.

The committee also recognized the Bellingham model as a resource from which good ideas could be drawn and adapted. The modifications made to fit the circumstances of the Wenatchee community could easily be pieced into the framework of this model.

A sub-committee on consequences, deterrents, and enforcement was formed to study this issue before the larger full committee began discussions related to this topic. Because of the amount of research

on these subjects and the professional nature of the required ground work, this author was involved in the work of the sub-committee.

The initial sub-committee conference was a discussion on philosophy in which little was accomplished materially, but the members had, by the end of the session, a fundamental understanding of where each member was in reference to discipline. While frustrating at times, this process is an essential foundation for subsequent work. This same process would have to be done with the whole group later, but it would take more time before everybody felt that their attitudes and beliefs were expressed and understood fully. It was decided that in this small group there was an imbalance that was not representative of the general population. With the exception of the parent, who shared our views on discipline, each member was an educator directly involved in the discipline of students.

With this in mind, the sub-committee made every effort to temper its disciplinarian tendencies and consider the attitudes of others on the task force. After discussing this situation, however, and evaluating the task force's general attitude in relationship to the population at large, the sub-committee believed that holding a hard line was the best approach to take in setting limits. The general mood of public opinion at this time in history seemed to support this belief. After this lengthy discussion, the group was ready to begin accomplishing its task. Because the first meeting was unproductive in

regards to actual writing, three additional meetings were scheduled.

Future discussions were devoted to establishing specific offenses that were to be considered unacceptable on a district-wide level. Each offense was evaluated for its seriousness and assigned a range of consequences. The range of consequences would be different for elementary school, middle school, and the high school as well as allowing choices which offer administrators at all levels some flexibility. The range of consequences theory had to be reviewed on a regular basis because, from time to time, a member would challenge the 'softness' of a punishment and have to be reminded that the starting place might be for first offenses or special circumstances and the administrator could, and would, accelerate the consequence when deemed appropriate.

At a later time a philosophy statement was incorporated into the final policy addressing the issue of the progression of sanctions. This flexibility in assessing consequences depending on the individual circumstances was insisted on by the administrators. The administrators in the group shared the need to evaluate not only the behavior, but the student, on a case by case basis. They explained that a student's past behavioral history, current attitude, and the seriousness of the offense all played a part in the decision made about the forthcoming consequence. Without an adequate range and the flexibility to move laterally within the range, those who deal with

discipline on a continual basis feared a breakdown in the system due to either too harsh a punishment or too lenient a consequence.

This discussion was supported by this author and previous analysis done for this project was shared to validate these conclusions. A paradox was created by this flexibility, however. Most teachers surveyed wanted consistency in consequences. This was, in fact, the crucial change they were encouraging the district to make. As noted earlier, the first order of business of the task force was to decide if the current policy needed to be rewritten because it was too vague, with inconsistent consequences. Most members of the sub-committee, and the task force as a whole wanted consistency in penalties but understood the need to evaluate each instance of inappropriate behavior separately. By setting the beginning consequence on the range too low, the committee could send a message indicating a lack of concern over that particular offense. By setting the lower limit of consequences too high, the policy would appear to be far too harsh and get little or no support from the students or the parents. The seriousness of certain offenses needed to be demonstrated, however. For example, it was agreed that Wenatchee, as well as Washington State, had a zero tolerance for weapons at school. Automatic expulsion was the only consequence on the chart for this offense. Likewise, a zero tolerance for dealing drugs would require a narrowed range of consequences that starts at

expulsion and notification of police agencies.

Another behavior that the committee wanted the students and parents to know was going to be taken very seriously was assault on a staff member. The seriousness of this particular offense and the zero tolerance the district would adopt was demonstrated by the narrow range afforded it. The other offenses, on the other hand, were not quite so clear cut. The sometimes heated debate of the sub-committee in this area would be later echoed in the whole task force. It seemed that even the hard liners at times could see the need to be flexible and their roles as disciplinarians would be reversed on certain issues. Changes in attitudes were becoming common as more concerns were communicated and research was presented.

A major concern for the teachers on the task force continued to be consistent, documented consequences for behaviors that were unacceptable and inappropriate. Interested teachers continually shared this feeling in conversations with this author and others on the task force when asked for feedback regarding the progress of the work being done on discipline and the new policy. They wanted to eliminate the vague, arbitrary, and sometimes confusing responses by administrators when students were referred for serious behavior problems. The administrators, on the other hand, did not want their hands tied, or to be held accountable for every discipline decision they made. They expressed the need (or desire) to make these decisions

regarding consequences on a case by case basis, with the flexibility to change the consequence when deemed necessary. There seemed to be no room for concession here. The parents on the Sub-Committee on Consequences and Enforcement could not understand why educators allowed any of the listed behaviors to occur. Here were the poles that a consensus had to be derived from. And so it went, ebbing and flowing until after many hours of debate, arguments, and compromise a draft was prepared for presentation to the task force. The draft recommendations of the sub-committee follow.

Sub-Committee on Consequences and Enforcement Recommendations:

- Recommend that long-term suspension and expulsion appeals be heard,  
both at the district and building level by an administrator, counselor and one designated staff member.
  
- Recommend that the district provide parent/student workshops on a continuing basis in areas of anger management, parenting 'needs', drug/alcohol counseling, etc. These services could be contracted or manned by special district counselor. If these are chosen in lieu of other discipline, a cost would be assessed.
  
- Recommend that the district adopt a 'Dress Code' that is specific - that the high school be allowed to phase this in by plan, and - that the middle school and elementaries begin this fall.
  
- Recommend an additional staff member for high school discipline.
  
- Recommend the high school phase in the new policy.

### Saturday School

- Supervised by a certified teacher
- Hours 8:30 - 4:00 p.m. Middle School
- 8:30 - 4:00 p.m. High School
- 9:00 - 3:00 p.m. Elementary
- Held in a neutral site
- Short term suspension if student does not attend/follow rules.
- A student who receives a long-term suspension at the middle level may not attend another Wenatchee middle school.

### In-School Suspension

- Within building
- Manned by a certified staff member
- ISS to go all day (8:00 to 4:00 p.m.)
- Copy Evergreen Model

### When returning from long-term suspension the following is required:

- Parent/student conference required at elementary and middle level
- Parent/student conference recommended at high school level
- Re-entry contract written and agreed upon
- Restitution required when applicable



The above draft was discussed by the Task Force, and because of the obvious problems that were going to arise, the draft by the Sub-Committee on Consequences and Enforcement was tabled until all members would have a chance to review it. A special meeting would be called with only the draft discussion as the agenda item.

The list of discipline actions on the following page were also shared by the sub-committee. These actions needed to be discussed and agreed upon before they could be recommended for inclusion in the final draft of the Range of Sanction.

Discussion on the list of discipline actions was segmented into discipline concerns and other concerns. It was agreed upon that the discipline concerns would be held until the full committee discussion on the range of sanctions the following week. One of the other concerns brought up was in reference to the correlation between the listed actions of related sanctions resulting from other policies that were currently in force or being worked on in other committees such as the tobacco policy or extra curricular activities contracts. To be consistent these actions would need to be cross referenced and verified as to their uniformity.

RECOMMENDED DISCIPLINE ACTIONS

- a. Parent contact / conference
- b. Conference / counseling session
- c. Restitution / Service work
  - 1. Elementary - classroom service
  - 2. Middle School - building service
  - 3. High School - community service
- d. School discipline
- e. In school suspension / time out
- f. Evening school
- g. Saturday school
- h. Short term suspension
- i. Long term suspension
- j. Expulsion
- k. Loss of eligibility, including ASB involvement
- l. School agency referral
- m. Emergency expulsion
- n. Non school agency referral

The discipline file will be maintained K-12 as part of the student record.

One relevant issue discussed by the Task Force was the influence of risk and protective factors on the problem behavior of students. Research has clearly shown that adolescent problem behaviors such as alcohol, drug use, violence, delinquency, and dropping out are associated with individual and family characteristics known as risk factors (Andrews 1999). The evidence indicated that young people who experience many of the risk factors are more likely to develop the serious problems listed above. In communities, norms for acceptable standards of behavior such as drinking, fighting, and school performance have been shown to influence the actual prevalence of the behavior.

In families where there are unclear expectations, few and inconsistent rewards for positive behavior, or conflict among family members, there is a higher occurrence of these problem behaviors in adolescent members. Young people associating with peers who engage in these problem behaviors are more likely to copy these behaviors themselves either due to pressure or admiration. It appears that the earlier these behaviors are started, the more likely they are to become serious problem behaviors later.

Research has also focused on other factors, called protective factors, that reduce the likelihood that these problem behaviors will occur, even when risk factors are present (RCM Research 1994). Strengthening the bonds with positive individuals who have pro social

influences on the family, at school, or in the community seems to be the most effective way to reduce the influence of risk factors on students. Providing opportunities for young people's meaningful positive involvement with the family, at school or in the community also reduces the risk factors. Rewarding students for successes has been shown to reduce the risk of their engaging in problem behaviors.

Incorporating the concepts of risk and protective factors into policies and discipline plans is a good strategy for districts to use in working to reduce serious behavior problems in school. The first step is to identify the risk factors that are most prevalent in the school or community. Programs can be designed to lower the strongest risk factors and strengthen the weakest protective factors. Community programs were suggested and a sub-committee was assigned to investigate. A report was presented that outlined the availability and nature of various programs.

Community outreach programs were discussed as a result of the report offered by the sub-committee on community involvement. The discussion led to a consensus that the current community programs, were valuable but were so crowded and in demand that access to them would be unavailable on a timely basis. Some of the programs also had a cost attached. Therefore, these programs could not be required by the district. Because of these factors, it was decided that the district policy could not refer students to outside agencies. Any actions taken

with regard to sanctions had to be administered by the district.

During this discussion it was pointed out that involvement by a school counselor was important to the substance and integrity of the process. The counselor's part in the development of a discipline plan would be to discuss the role of the counselor in the discipline routine. It was evident that counseling could play an important part in the process if it was used at the right time in the right way. The use of a counselor as an alternative consequence was not acceptable. The consequence, if fair and appropriate, was enforced regardless of the reasons for the behavior. This is the only way that students can take responsibility for their actions. Counseling should be offered in addition to consequences. It can be offered on a voluntary basis in the case of minor offenses, and on a mandatory basis if the behavior is serious, or threatening to the student or others. The Task Force, whenever appropriate, tried to incorporate this philosophy.

Although student behavior is influenced by factors outside the school, it is suggested, and research on schooling has demonstrated, that problem behavior does not have to be tolerated. Schools, in fact, have a substantial impact on how student's personal problems reveal themselves while in school (Gottfredson 1994).

It is this author's position that almost all students can behave and learn in a school environment. If expectations are high and the reasons for misbehavior are not considered in the discipline plan, most

students adapt to the situation and behave the way they are expected to behave.

Another question that would turn out to be much more of a controversy than anticipated was the need for a dress code. Students are driven by their maturation process to seek power. They recognize the lack of power in many aspects of their lives, but quickly realize the three primary avenues in which they can exercise control. Movement, attitude, and appearance gives them the power they need. If that need is thwarted, as it is in many other areas of their world, they are likely to engage in behaviors that will otherwise afford them attention. The conflict over dress code arises out of this theory. If a dress code is enforced, students will either fight that code or turn their energies toward non conforming behavior. An attempt to control the students in this way will work against the establishment of an orderly school. It is believed that for students to develop self-esteem, they need to develop self-confidence, competence, and significance in the classroom. This involves the need to develop a sense of identity. To deny the expression of identity would cause conflicts that may deter the students and the teachers from the task of learning.

Contrast this with the need for order and cooperation and the responsibility for accepting the environment in which the students find themselves. Students are also held accountable for behaving in a manner that does not interfere with the attempts of others to gain

what attention they need from the teacher and fellow students.

Everyone in the school is also ultimately responsible for the maintenance of the learning environment.

Within these two opposing views, right to a free identity verses right to a distraction free learning environment, lies the conflict that a dress code would create.

The concept of an enforced dress code, even uniforms, was strongly debated with no resolution. Even though most were in favor of some form of dress code, the administrators present agreed that it would be an enforcement nightmare. This author, along with the majority of members, argued that enforcement problems should not dictate our decisions relating to policy. This was accepted but after much discussion it was apparent that the resolution we hoped for would not come from this committee. The task force agreed to recommend to the board that a dress code be implemented and that a separate task force be formed in the future to write the policy and procedures required to make this a reality. In some areas, due to clothing that signified gang involvement, administrators and staff had to implement a building dress until the district-wide code could be approved. The following dress code was obtained, with permission to reproduce, from Wilson Creek School District. It was introduced by this author to the committee as a possible temporary building policy to be used until the 'Dress Code Task Force' could be formed to make

recommendations. Presenting its structure and principle to the board as part of this committee's recommendations was also suggested.



### Clothing Policy

In general, students should dress in neat, clean appropriate clothing that does not disrupt the educational process. This specifically excludes the following:

1. No bare midriffs or styles that show one's underwear, spandex, or tank tops.
2. Shoes must be worn at all times.
3. No clothing advertising alcohol, tobacco, drugs, or insinuating sexual or discriminatory messages.
4. Shirts and tops must be worn at all times.
5. Shorts may be worn in September and after Spring Break at the Principal's discretion.
6. Clothing must fit -- 'saggies,' 'slouchies,' or extremely oversized clothing is not to be worn. Pants or shorts are to be worn at the waistline.
7. Bandanas, headbands, hair nets and hanging belts are not allowed.
8. No personalized messages, inappropriate nicknames, 'In Memory of,' or 'smile now, cry later' logos are permitted on clothing.
9. Hats (caps) may be worn to school. They must be removed at the first bell in the morning and remain off until the last bell in the afternoon.
10. All tattoos deemed gang related must be covered.

Students found to be violating this policy will be asked to immediately conform to the policy and will be subject to disciplinary action according to the School District discipline policy.

**Recommended Sanctions:**

The following sanctions will be imposed for violations of the District dress code:

1. 1st offense - the student will be asked to change clothes (get clothes from home, change into other clothes he/she might have at school that are appropriate, turn shirts inside out, or change into clothing that might be available at the school).
2. 2nd offense - student is sent home for the day OR placed in In-School Suspension OR isolated for the day.
3. 3rd offense - Parent Conference and In-School Suspension for 3 days.
4. 4th offense - Short term suspension.
5. 5th offense - Suspension.

### Process for Formulation of Recommendations

At the first meeting of the District Discipline Policy Task Force, each member of the committee introduced themselves and shared with the group the population they were representing. This introduction helped to highlight the broad base the committee was working from and validate the process in the eyes of any skeptics in attendance. To see a well represented segment from both teachers and parents alleviated the community concern that parents did not have a say in the operation of the schools and in particular the disciplining of their children. The Wenatchee School District Mission statement was shared. As a district committee responsible to the Board of Directors and entrusted with the development of a district-wide policy, the District Discipline Policy Task Force needed to reconcile its work with this mission statement on an ongoing basis. It reads:

“Our Mission... to provide the students of Wenatchee with a quality education that will prepare them for their successful futures, enabling all students to reach their full potentials.”

As required by state law the Wenatchee School District had in place an existing discipline policy. This existing policy was reviewed by the committee and discussed with regard to the purpose and the effectiveness of the stated procedures. The consensus of the group was that the current policy was too vague to be of value.

One of the purposes of the committee was 'to determine whether or not the existing district policy on discipline met the needs of the school district.' It was obvious from records of referrals and teacher complaints that this policy did not meet the needs of the School District in its present form. The second purpose of the District Discipline Policy Task Force was:

"If improvements are necessary, develop a draft recommendation regarding district discipline policy that better meets the needs of the Wenatchee School District [e.g. the need of students, parents and community]."

Because the first purpose of the committee had been quickly accomplished, the second purpose became the primary mission of the task force. The committee's purpose was then expanded to include more specifics. The new statement of purpose read:

"...to develop a district policy and procedure recommendations regarding student discipline that would provide for a safe and orderly learning environment."

The tasks for the committee were further delineated into primary tasks and secondary tasks. The primary tasks included several individual items that needed to be developed. First, the committee would need to determine the policy format. Several formats were looked at and discussed. (see list of school district policies in chapter 2)

Additional time would be needed in order to give members adequate time to review and digest the various forms before they had to make a decision on their preference. Secondly, an introduction and purpose statement was to be discussed, agreed upon and then written. Following this, the development of a statement of philosophy regarding student rights and responsibilities was to be agreed upon and written. These two items were done relatively quickly and were to guide the committee in its future efforts. A documentation of each statement follows.

## STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY

### I. WENATCHEE SCHOOL DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Wenatchee School District is to provide the students of Wenatchee with a quality education that will prepare them for their successful futures, enabling all students to reach their full potentials.

### II. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:

The Wenatchee School District has put into place this district discipline policy in direct support of our District Mission Statement. A standardized discipline policy is needed to insure that all students are provided with the opportunity to learn, free from fear, and distraction, and having full District resources available to enhance learning.

It is the responsibility of the District to adopt, publish and make available to all students and parents or guardians written rules which state with reasonable clarity the types of misconduct for which discipline, suspension, and expulsion may be imposed.

Parents and students share with the District the responsibility of establishing the best possible environment for learning.

This policy will be distributed annually to all district staff, students and parents or guardians of District students.

All student discipline issues not specifically addressed by this document are left to the discretion of the individual school principal and staff for formulation of school policy and enforcement.

### III. STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Students have the right to:

- FREEDOM OF SPEECH and expression of their personal opinions. That freedom of speech and expression of opinion shall not interfere or disrupt the educational process through the use of slander, obscenity or personal attack, or demean any race, religion, sex, or ethnic group in a classroom or any school setting, or violate any other limitation imposed by law.
- ASSEMBLE PEACEABLY so long as the gathering does not interfere with the operation of the school, classroom, or orderly and efficient educational process.
- PETITION appropriate District authorities when they feel that they have been treated unfairly.
- FREEDOM OF THE PRESS and expression of their personal opinions in writing. Students must take full responsibility for the content of their publications by identifying themselves as authors and editors of the publication. Materials may not be libelous, obscene or profane; cause substantial disruption of the school; invade the privacy of others; demean any race, religion, sex or ethnic group; advocate the violation of the law; advertise tobacco products, liquor, illicit drugs, or drug paraphernalia; or violate any other limitation imposed by law.

- **FREEDOM FROM UNREASONABLE SEARCH AND SEIZURE** while at school. For the protection of all, however, general searches of school property, including lockers and desks, may be conducted and items that are a threat to safety or security, or disruptive to the educational process may be seized and removed from a student's possession. Students shall be free from searches of their persons, clothing, personal belongings, and other property unless reasonable grounds exist to suspect that the search will yield evidence of a student's violation of the law, regulations, and/or District or school rules.
- **EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY** and the right to be free from unlawful discrimination because of national origin, race, religion, economic status, sex, pregnancy, marital status, previous arrest, previous incarceration, or physical, mental or sensory handicap.

Students have the responsibility to:

- Attend all classes every day on time, ready to work and with the necessary learning materials, books, pencils, etc.
- Respect the rights of others and exercise self discipline.
- Conduct themselves in a manner which will not disrupt their education or disrupt or deprive others of their education.
- Know and obey the rules of the District, individual schools, and co-curricular activities when applicable.



- Accept reasonable consequences for breaking school or District rules.
- Identify him or herself if asked to by District employees.
- Dress appropriately for school and school activities in a manner which neither disrupts the educational process nor threatens the health and safety of themselves or others.
- Respect the property of others, of the school, and the District, and be willing to make restitution for property that they have damaged.

Students may be disciplined if they fail to fulfill any of these responsibilities while at school; on the school grounds; on District sponsored transportation; at any school sponsored event; traveling to and from school; or in any other setting having a real and substantial relationship to the operation of the District. disciplinary action may include suspension; expulsion; losing the privilege of attending District sponsored activities; loss of riding privileges on District sponsored transportation; and loss of privileges to publicly represent the District.

Legal References: RCW 28A.305.160  
RCW 28A.600.210-.240  
RCW 28A 600.010-040  
Chapter 180-40 WAC

**DRAFT**

As it worked out, the next task would elicit the most discussion, cause the most disagreement, and set the time frame back considerably. This task was to develop a table of uniform consequences for predetermined violations of the discipline policy. Working through the philosophical differences of individual members of the committee would consume hours of meeting time and unfortunately did cause some hard feelings.

The last of the primary tasks was to develop recommendations regarding availability of discipline consequences or deterrents that would be used district-wide. Some examples included In-house Suspension, Saturday School, Wednesday Night School, additional supervisory personnel, and new curriculum resources. Since most of these were new and unfunded, the board would have to approve the recommendations and fund them on a separate line of the district budget. For this reason these recommendations had to be separated and presented as new considerations.

The secondary tasks that had to be completed included cross referencing the policy and procedures to ensure that they were consistent with district contracts currently in place. These contracts included certified employee contracts, classified employee contracts, and administrative contracts.

State law and federal law coupled with other established district-

wide policy, such as the athletic codes and drug and alcohol policies, had to be cross referenced to ensure compliance and coordination. The issue of enforcement was raised by an administrative representative. With budget constraints and manpower stretched to its limit, it was feared that added consequences would overload the current staff responsible for enforcing the discipline policy. Adequate and timely enforcement was considered important enough to recommend an additional staff member at the high school. This added staff member would be given administrative responsibilities for discipline and enforcement. The success of the program was considered and the members felt strongly that if the district was serious about controlling the educational environment in Wenatchee, the board would need to fund the added administrator. (This additional staff member was recently added by the board upon adoption of the policy.)

Program and curriculum considerations were included in the committee's concerns. The present curriculum was to be evaluated, and new curriculum and restructuring of existing programs was discussed. It was felt that the committee would need to recommend changes, through educational efforts, in program and curriculum to insure the ongoing success of the new discipline policy . Writing a unique program for Wenatchee was also discussed. This author was to present a paper later that addressed this very issue. It will be included

in this chapter on later pages.

Finally, the committee was to identify individual building expectations such as building discipline plans, distribution of handbooks and parent information, meetings to share building plans, annual review processes and the likelihood of acquiring board approval.

Resources were made available to all members of the task force for study and review. Some articles were copied and distributed by this author, while others were supplied by the District Curriculum Department. A list of those articles was included in the earlier chapter titled *Review of Literature* , and are referenced in the bibliography. These resources included articles from professional journals and district policies and procedures from other schools in the state.

The last task of this beginning meeting was to brainstorm the current concerns of the represented populations. The committee members, remembering they were speaking for a group and not individually, listed concerns that had been expressed in schools, at home, and in the community regarding discipline in the Wenatchee Schools as it existed at the time. The present state of the schools, either actual or perceived, was the target of this brainstorming. A secondary purpose of addressing the concerns at this point was to get a feel for the personality of the committee, and allow the expression of each member's personal concerns. The process also revealed the amount and nature of the communications that had gone on in the area

of discipline. These concerns were numerous and covered a wide spectrum of topics. The lines of communication between committee members and the general populations that they represented had obviously been opened and active prior to the gathering of the group. The list on the following page was recorded for future reference.

**CONCERNS/IDEAS**

- Curriculum connections / behavior patterns part of curriculum
- Policy may distract from primary mission / student learning
- Clear consequences / which infractions / specific behaviors/ zero tolerance
- How much latitude / support for staff / district
- How to deal with volume of referrals
- Are deterrents effective?
- Limited deterrents / ineffective deterrents / we need other alternatives
- What do we owe students who aren't problems?
- How do we deal with problems without being handcuffed by the law?
- Who will enforce this policy? Are we going to need more staffing?
- Is the policy going to be consistent?
- Is the enforcement going to be consistent?
- Is behavior corrected?
- No toleration for disrespect
- Need parent support and cooperation

- Can't cure all of society's ills
- Current policy is not consistent district-wide
- Do we start early enough in assessing problems? / Early intervention and instruction
- Referral process / Does everyone understand the referral process?
- Level of knowledge regarding discipline policy and procedures among students / staff / parents
- Speed / timeliness of assistance to parents / students / staff
- Timeliness of consequences
- What is the community's role?
- Clear role for parents, students, and administration
- Ownership of policy?
- Student safety
- Do we teach good behavior?

After the brainstorming was completed to the satisfaction of all present, a discussion followed. Each item was read and the participant responsible for the listed item was allowed to expand the idea or clarify it to the satisfaction of the audience. Questions were raised and answered if possible. The list was extended when the discussion brought up new ideas. After the concerns and concepts on the list were understood by the committee, it was prioritized in an effort to narrow the focus. No items were discarded but the prioritizing allowed the group to focus on the main ideas, and the direction the process would take.

There was a lot to think about and the task force now had a better feel for the problems facing the school district. The teachers on the committee felt that their perspectives were well represented and finally the parents and community were taking notice. The parents were becoming better informed with regard to the types of problems teachers had to deal with on a daily basis.

A sub-committee was formed to investigate programs which were discussed as a result of the report offered by that group. The county probation officer was very supportive and offered an available program called Early Intervention. This program is now being used by the Juvenile Detention Agency. This is a program that offers classes in various subjects being taught by mental health professionals and counselors. Classes on peer pressure, social, peer, and ethical



behaviors, drug and alcohol use and abuse, anger management, self-esteem, gang intervention and positive relationships are offered. These classes are attended by youths of all ages as well as entire families. It was shared that currently the Detention Agency pays for the program but the probation officer suggested that an arrangement might be made between the district and the Detention Agency similar to the agreement now in existence in which the District provides texts and curriculum materials to Juvenile Center.

One suggestion was that the district pay for part of the cost so the school could refer students to these classes. Another suggestion was for the district to contract with the Juvenile Center to provide services for students needing them. It was suggested that the district set an amount to be charged for the class. The student's family would pay this cost as part of the disciplinary action taken. Incorporating this requirement with suspension and mandatory attendance was presented. Proof of attendance would then be required for readmittance to school.

Currently it is state law that while on probation, a student must attend school. If they fail to attend school they are in violation of their probation, so it was the feeling of one member that a suspended student that has already had problems and is in a probation program would be motivated to attend classes and return to school.

Another program brought up was taught through Chelan County

Public Utility District. It is called the 'DWI Victims Survivor Panel'. It is offered to students caught using alcohol or drugs. The objective is to help these students understand their responsibility to themselves, their family, and the community. The use and abuse of alcohol or drugs is related to the resulting problems created for families and the student.

These discussions lead to a consensus that the current community programs which did not cost the participants, while valuable, were so overloaded and in demand that access to them would be limited, if not unavailable. By law, the programs that had a cost attached could not be required by a district unless the district paid for the service. Because of this law it was decided that the District policy could not refer students to, or depend on, these outside agencies for assistance. Any actions taken with regard to sanctions had to be administered by the district. Recommendations and referrals to outside agencies could be offered, but a requirement that work with an outside agency be completed by a student would not be possible. This was the point in the process that illustrated the need for involvement in the discussions by a school counselor. With all of the issues being discussed regarding behavior, it was decided that the inclusion of a counselor on the task force was a must.

A concern was shared that feedback on discipline issues was needed from teachers and others dealing with this matter on a daily

basis. According to the outlined time frame, this feedback was not called for until late in the process, after most of the work was completed. This was accepted by most of the committee, but this author agreed that some input was needed for guidance and direction. Feedback from colleagues was solicited on the current status of our progress and on concerns that were of importance to them. Some of the concerns of staff members were as follows:

LEVELS OF INTERVENTION: - School districts, in collaboration with their Educational Service Districts (ESD) have a gradient of options to deal with disruptive students and discipline. With the wealth of talent and experience in the region, it would be beneficial to communicate with those concerned to tap into the resource.

DISTRICT WIDE UNIFORMITY: - It was questioned whether something that can be applied to all levels is worth the effort. Since a student's maturation, responsibility level and number of offenses are significant variables, each case seems to need separate consideration and discretionary consequences.

A general statement regarding fairness, due process, etc., is reasonable, however, each grade or building should have options appropriate to the students in that environment. From the research studied it was understood that to be successful in establishing a positive school climate each school needs to have flexibility in dealing with unique student populations and professional expertise.

Uniformity and consistency could be obtained if all students have a discipline record that follows them. The practice of dumping records between levels or schools is confusing and dangerous to the safety of students and school personnel. Second chances are one thing, but staff ignorance is not acceptable. This issue deals with professionalism and trust. If teachers are not in the communication loop, an important part of the solution is missing and each counseling or guidance restart by a new teacher is a waste of time and damaging to the student.

ESD/STATE CONTINUITY: - It was requested that representatives from this discipline committee contact other school and community organizations such as the regional committee looking at schooling delinquents and incarcerated youth. This outreach will help define the levels of resources available or needing to be developed. The school cannot undertake this mission alone. It is a community responsibility. It would involve the mayor, police, ESD and other government agencies in the dialog, definition and execution.

This concern was presented to the task force even though the concept had previously been discussed and resolved. It was this author's intent to demonstrate that the lack of communication with District personnel obstructs the process by limiting the dissemination of good ideas. Soliciting feedback as an ongoing procedure, instead of providing one opportunity at the end of the process, seems more

productive. This suggestion had been made on other occasions without this object lesson.

BEST PRACTICES: - A concentrated effort needs to be made to research innovative strategies that will replace the ineffective practices we have had in the past. Our schools are becoming increasingly fragmented in the management of students. We have mainstreamed special needs students and included everyone into the regular program. Special Education has been in the process of being dismantled for the last five years. We now are starting to build 'alternative programs' to isolate certain kinds of kids in different learning environments. This is no more than the same solution with a different title.

We have several problem populations that need to be addressed in the regular school setting. The first is the disruptive student. The present revolving door model of intervention - suspension - intervention - suspension is growing increasingly ineffective. The present 'in-house' suspension and 'at-home' suspension simply places a further burden upon teachers who must prepare lessons for these students when they are out of class. They then must attempt to help the student catch up when they return. At the present time the student is not even required to complete the assigned work as a condition of reentry. This consequence is perceived as a time-out or vacation and for many students simply a means of gaining further

respect from their peer group. It does not solve the problem and in some cases it exacerbates it.

Schools need a viable model in dealing with aggressive, threatening and/or chronically disruptive students. Many feel that these children need to be removed from the classroom and placed at an alternative site. The purpose of such a site is strictly isolation. When a student demonstrates an interest in and motivation to reenter the regular school setting, a trial period of monitoring would be established. If they do not, then they remain indefinitely at the alternative site. Glasser suggests that the student develop a plan and demonstrate a commitment during this time in his Reality Therapy model. Each school should have such a site staffed with a paraprofessional with training and support. The counselor could serve as an intervention specialist and resource to assist the students in defining or redefining a plan and monitoring reentry if and when that occurred. Unsuccessful students who continued to disrupt even in this setting would be sent home until they chose to manage themselves at even this base level of compliance.

INEFFECTIVE PRACTICES: - The existing practice of placing students back into the system a few weeks, or months, after suspension for major safety violations needs to be revisited. Placement in an unknown culture in a neighboring district would make more sense. Reentry the following year would also send an important

message to students that might be considering this type of offense.

COMMUNICATION: - The committee needs to be continually sharing its discussions and decisions with interested staff. The conclusion and policy decisions need to be addressed for dissemination and implementation at an inservice before they are expected to be enforced.

These concerns would be brought up at a later time and resolution on most concerns was achieved. These concerns were again echoed during the scheduled presentations to building staff representatives and answered to the satisfaction of those offering them.

It was evident that the proposed time line was not possible to meet. Because of the desire to do a quality job on this project, the task force agreed to push the completion date back by two months. This would require the teachers on the committee to be willing to continue work into the summer if necessary. Without objection, the time line was altered. This offered much relief and assured many on the task force that their time and effort would not be wasted by a hurried final product. The committee's role was reviewed again as a way of re-focusing the efforts because it had become common in the discussions to revert to talking about program development which was not part of the process the committee was engaged in. It was reiterated that recommendations for district policy and procedures

was the area to be addressed. Because of concerns that had to be tabled do to lack of consensus, like dress code and types of consequences, it was decided to investigate the possibility of conducting a survey that would poll parents and teachers in the district. The hope was that this survey would provide additional information regarding these and other concerns. This survey would also give the committee an idea of how much support it could expect from parents and the community. A draft survey was presented by the writing committee for consideration. The discussion of the possible use of the survey took several directions.

First, some members were concerned that the survey would only get the responses that it was designed to solicit. The ability to write a survey that was not biased was beyond the scope of this group. It was also felt that the only responses that would be received would be from those interested in the outcome of the committee work. If this were the case, the information would only be reinforcing the comments that had already been heard and expressed. The attending board member informed us that the school board would not approve the cost of a mailing that would reach the whole community. Without that wide distribution the results would not be valid. Since the usefulness of the survey was in question and no consensus could be reached, the idea of a survey was abandoned.

The remainder of this meeting was spent on discussions related



to the Range of Sanctions chart. These discussions took a familiar direction. An item would be brought up and the committee would discuss the range suggested by the sub-committee. It would be argued that it was too strict by one group and not strict enough by another group.

After two such debates, and because of time constraints, the Range of Sanctions was set aside until the next meeting. It was hoped that this would give everyone a chance to review the chart again and give the Sub-Committee on Consequences and Enforcement the opportunity to bring a rationale for each range. Additional changes might also be required based on feedback from other members and outside sources. The offenses were complete and acceptable but much work remained on the range of consequences.

The entire next meeting was devoted to the Range of Sanctions issues. After much discussion, compromise and debate, only half of the items were completed and accepted. It was going to take additional work, but the committee felt it would be worth the effort and that it would be able to finish this piece of the policy by the end of the next meeting. The results of these two meetings was a revised Range of Sanctions. The committee reviewed its accomplishments to date and put the time frame in perspective. The primary purpose for the committee was restated as follows: "To develop a district policy and procedure recommendations regarding student discipline that will

provide for a safe and orderly learning environment.”

Review of the process at this point revealed substantial progress. Determining a policy format had been finished. An introduction and purpose statement was completed. Student rights and responsibilities were outlined. Recommendations regarding availability of discipline consequences and district-wide deterrents (i.e. in-house suspension, Saturday School, Evening School, etc.) were written. The primary task left to finish was the development of a table of uniform consequences for predetermined violations of the discipline policy. The issues remaining did not appear problematic given the above accomplishments.

The process to bring the final recommendations forward to approval was discussed and reviewed. After finalization, the committee would present its draft to the Parent Advisory Board, the Staff Advisory Board, the Management Team (administrators) and student groups from the middle schools and the high school. The input gathered from these various groups were to be correlated with the existing recommendations for inclusion where needed. Revisions were to be made and the completed document would be presented to the Board of Directors for final approval at an open meeting with the public. With this in mind the committee proceeded to the task at hand which was the review and discussion of the consequences. After some discussion it was suggested that the chart be broken down into small

segments and the task force be divided up according to grade level. Each group would evaluate the chart from the perspective of either elementary school buildings, middle school buildings, or high school buildings. Two questions were to be asked by each group. Does the chart have everything on it that it should? Does the chart have anything on it that shouldn't be there? This author offered one more important question to be considered. Are the consequences on the chart appropriate for the offense committed, based on grade level. These were agreed to and the small groups were ready to tackle the assignment.

After a discussion period the committee as a whole reconvened and shared the findings of the evaluation groups. Consensus was reached, no new issues were introduced and the task force was adjourned with the understanding that each member, after receiving a new copy of the range of sanctions from the District secretary, would study it thoroughly and bring back ideas for a final meeting on the Range of Sanctions chart.

### Recommendations

At the next meeting this author presented a paper for consideration before the committee finalized its recommendations. This paper was a look at student discipline as an educational tool and

the form and substance this curriculum might take. The paper that follows was also offered to the committee to introduce additional research into the process.

## STUDENT DISCIPLINE AS EDUCATION

(Presented to the Wenatchee District Discipline Policy Task Force)

Most school discipline policies, both district-wide and schooled, typically reflect three major areas for student behavioral compliance. First and foremost is the need to ensure safety for self and others (i.e. all students and staff). Second is to establish and maintain an orderly learning environment free of distractions so that all students can maximize learning opportunities. Finally, to encourage respectful relationships among students, among staff, and between students and staff.

School discipline can be approached in an instructional manner similar to instruction for academic skills whereby various strategies are used to ensure that students learn targeted skills. Like academic instruction, behavioral instruction can be utilized to teach expected behaviors, prevent and manage errors, and correct problem behavior (Colvin 1994).

The first step in ensuring appropriate student discipline and behavior is to prevent problem behaviors and to establish district and schooled expected behaviors consistent with the district's and the school's student discipline policies. Various strategies can be utilized to establish expected behaviors and prevent problems, for example:

1. Establish district/schooled structures for acknowledging and reinforcing expected behaviors such as weekly, monthly, quarterly, and semester student awards, classroom and schooled events for compliance with expected behaviors, token rewards for appropriate behaviors, student clubs, etc.

2. Provide instruction for the expected behaviors consistent with district discipline policies (i.e. safety, disruption, peer/teacher relations) on a frequent, regular and consistent basis (e.g. at beginning of school year, beginning of each quarter, after extended school holidays, etc.) using a variety of methods such as schooled assemblies for all grade levels or a specific grade level, classroom instruction on behavior as a specific unit or infused in the normal curriculum, guest speaker, etc.

Suggested curriculum topics for prevention of inappropriate behavior and establishing expected behaviors should reflect discipline policies addressing safety, disruption, and social relations. These could include:

1. Violence Prevention
2. Harassment
3. Drug, Alcohol, and Tobacco Education
4. Social Skills and Peer Relations
5. Cultural Diversity: Respect and Tolerance
6. Conflict Management

7. Managing School Transitions Successfully (i.e. before, after & between class behaviors)
8. Expected School Wide and Classroom Behaviors
9. Decision Making Skills

According to Colvin, effective behavioral instruction should include the following:

1. Specify behavioral expectations
2. Explain or demonstrate behavioral expectations
3. Provide opportunities to practice behavioral expectations in mock and real situations
4. Provide pre correction reminders for problem settings  
and identified individual students
5. Strongly reinforce demonstrations of expected behaviors
6. Correct demonstrations of unacceptable behaviors
7. Monitor results and provide feedback
8. Review, modify, or maintain behaviors

**DRAFT**

After focusing on prevention and establishment of expected behaviors as an integral component of discipline policies, a progressive strategy is needed for intervening and correcting the three major categories of problem behavior: minor infractions, serious school infractions, and illegal behavior. In keeping with a teaching model, all attempts should be made to provide corrective behavioral instruction whenever possible, including assessment, restitution and district, school, or community service.

Behavioral instruction may include classroom instruction, small group instruction, video instruction with written responses, written programmed text pertinent to the infraction and expected behavior, conferences with student, teacher, principal, and parents, meeting with counselor, restitution (i.e. making amends by demonstrating appropriate behavior and 'making it up' to the people who were affected by his or her inappropriate behavior), district, school, or community service, etc.

Behavioral instruction, restitution, assessment, and district, school, or community service should always be coupled with 'punishment' (loss of privilege or opportunity) whenever possible; thus, in accordance with a teaching model, students are given the opportunity to identify difficulties, learn and demonstrate appropriate behaviors, and make amends for a reduction (not elimination) in 'punishment.' The goal for student discipline should always be focused



on establishing appropriate behavior and providing correctional experiences for inappropriate behavior rather than solely focused on punishment.

After a brief discussion on the above paper, it was agreed that a statement would be included in the final recommendations that a K-12 curriculum would be established concerning behavioral education.

Another paper was presented to the group for review and consideration. The new tobacco policy was offered to support the above recommendations. What follows is only that portion relating to the work being discussed. Issues of philosophy and substance were discussed and correlations were drawn on the fundamental agreements between the existing tobacco document and the recommended discipline policy. As can be seen, progressive consequences are used and a zero tolerance policy is enforced for behaviors that are deemed totally unacceptable. A distinction is also made based on grade level and age appropriateness of consequences. It was recognized that the ability of a district or school policy to influence student behaviors off school grounds would not achieve consensus.

**DISTRICT TOBACCO POLICY TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Wenatchee School District shall adopt a no tolerance policy that prohibits student use and/or possession of tobacco or tobacco products on all school property, at school events on non school property, in school vehicles dispatched by school officials.

**SUPPORTING RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Tobacco prevention information shall be integrated with the District's K-12 drug and alcohol curriculum.
- In addition to the health dangers of smoking and the use of other tobacco products, the curriculum shall address the health issues of second-hand smoke and shall include efforts that counteract advertising and media messages promoting tobacco use. The District shall work to cooperate with other public and private agencies in this area such as the American Cancer Society.

**CONSEQUENCES/DETERRENTS:****Elementary level discipline recommendations:****First Offense:**

- Violators may receive up to a five day suspension from school.
- The student shall be eligible for reinstatement to school upon enrollment in an approved tobacco cessation class.
- Discipline shall be determined on an individual basis.
- A meeting shall be held with parents/guardian.
- A referral shall be made to the school counselor.

**Second Offense:**

- Violators may receive up to a ten day suspension from school.
- The student shall be eligible for reinstatement to school upon enrollment in an approved tobacco cessation class.
- Discipline shall be determined on an individual basis.
- A meeting shall be held with parents/guardian.
- A referral shall be made to the school counselor.

**Third Offense:**

- Violators may be suspended for the remainder of the semester.
- Discipline shall be determined on an individual basis.
- A meeting shall be held with parents/guardian.
- A referral shall be made to the school counselor.

## Recommendations for Middle School:

### First Offense:

- Violators shall receive a 1-5 day suspension from school.
- The student shall be eligible for reinstatement to school upon enrollment in an approved tobacco cessation class.
- Parent/guardian meet with school representative.

### Second Offense:

- Violators shall receive a 6-10 day suspension from school, but will be eligible for reinstatement after five days upon enrollment in an approved tobacco cessation class.
- Parent/guardian meet with school representative.
- Review incident with District Prevention/Intervention Specialist for evaluation and pre assessment.
- Establish Health Plan.

### Third Offense:

- Violators shall be suspended from school for the remainder of the semester.
- Parent/guardian meet with school representative.
- Review incident with District Prevention/Intervention Specialist for evaluation and pre assessment.
- Review/Revise Health Plan.

## Recommendations for High School:

### First Offense:

- Violators shall receive a 1-5 day suspension from school.
- The student shall be eligible for reinstatement to school upon enrollment in an approved tobacco cessation class.
- Parent/guardian meet with school representative.

### Second Offense:

- Violators shall receive a 6-10 day suspension from school, but will be eligible for reinstatement after five days upon enrollment in an approved tobacco cessation class.
- Parent/guardian meet with school representative.
- Review incident with District Prevention/Intervention Specialist.
- Establish Health Plan.

### Third Offense:

- Violators shall be suspended from school for the remainder of the semester.
- Parent/guardian meet with school representative.
- Review incident with District Prevention/Intervention Specialist.
- Review/Revise Health Plan.

**DRAFT**

Also discussed, but were unable to achieve consensus on the following:

“This policy also prohibits student use and/or possession of tobacco products within 1000 feet of school property during the school day or when the student is going to or from school. For the purpose of this policy, the school day shall be defined as 7:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.”

The final meeting before the presentation of the completed recommendations to the various groups was to review the Range of Sanctions chart for a last time and reach consensus. The initial Task Force recommendations were approved in Final Draft form and ready for presentation. The time line was reviewed for presentations and this author was selected to present the final recommendations to the Elementary Principals, to the Parent Advisory Board, to the Staff Advisory Board (for dissemination to teachers), and to the Secondary Principals. These groups were given a week to review the document and offer feedback in another meeting. Due to the thorough discussions and character of the committee, the concerns collected through feedback were all questions that had been discussed previously and were quickly answered. The District Discipline Task Force recommendations were presented to the school board for consideration. (As of this writing, the board has approved the policy with no changes)