

MAINSTREAM SUCCESS FOLLOWING PLACEMENT IN A
MODIFIED TYPE II SETTING

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The topic of alternative schools is widely available in the literature; however, once a student has been labeled a “troublemaker” and has been placed in a District Alternative Education Program (DAEP), a Type II setting, there is limited information about the overall success of students upon their return to the mainstream. This study compared the success of students formerly placed in a *modified* disciplinary Type II setting, once they have returned to the mainstream, with their success prior to disciplinary placement. The purpose of the study was to examine if disciplinary measures that remove students from the mainstream environment negatively impact the variables that measure school success, despite legislative mandates such as No Child Left Behind, which advocates success for every student.

The population for this study was 86 7th- through 11th-grade students assigned to a DAEP in Texas during the spring of 2003. A comparison of pre- and post-placement dependent variables measuring school success—attendance, passing core courses, behavioral achievement, standardized test score achievement, recidivism, and dropout rates—comprised this study. The independent variables—gender, ethnicity, grade level, socioeconomic status, and disciplinary offense—were used to compare and analyze each dependent variable. The dependent variables of attendance, passing core courses, and behavior demonstrated a decline in the measurement of school success across time. The only dependent variable that demonstrated improvement between the pre- and post-placement periods was achievement on standardized test scores. From the number of

students who withdrew from the mainstream during the post-placement semesters, large recidivism and dropout rates were determined, which reflected the large percentage of students who were not successful in the district's mainstream.

The comparisons of dependent variables by independent variables resulted in significance only in the analyses of attendance by grade level. This interaction was determined to be significant since $p < .05$. During both post-placement semesters, 11th-grade attendance increased by 20.2 points. Students in the seventh, eighth, and ninth grades maintained a slight increase in attendance between the pre-placement and first post-placement semester yet experienced an attendance decline in the second post-placement semester. This decline was seen in all three grade levels between the pre-placement and the second post-placement semesters. Attendance among tenth graders declined throughout all semesters of the study.

The comparison of attendance by disciplinary offense resulted in a large effect size (η^2). The η^2 reported within 29.8% accuracy in variability when attendance was compared by disciplinary offense. Students placed for assault demonstrated a 27.7 point increase in attendance by the second post-placement semester. Despite the comparison of attendance by the grade level of students being the only significant result, and the comparison of attendance by disciplinary offense resulting in a large effect size, several specific conclusions were drawn from the analyses of the pre- and post-placement data measuring school success. All dependent variable measurements, with the exception of standardized test score achievement, resulted in an overall reduction of mean scores across time. This decline indicates that students do demonstrate a decline in school success following a removal from a mainstream setting.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background

In 1983 *A Nation at Risk* provided insight into the needs for reform in the American educational system. In addition, this report, which was issued during the Reagan administration, insisted that the overall system had to improve (Goldberg & Harvey, 1983). The focus on excellence may be traced back to this document, which stated that the inferior qualities of America's public schools were undermining the nation's world leadership position. *A Nation at Risk* continues to be viewed as the foundation for the current "back-to-basics" and "tougher-standards" movements, which are both fueled by political demands on schools. In an effort to reform, the challenges for schools increased and included the following: (a) standardized test results, (b) attendance rates, (c) dropout rates, (d) student pregnancies, (e) mobility, (f) cultural diversity, and (g) growing concern about school safety and student violence.

One of the goals of the reform movement was to hold schools more accountable for their results (McDonnell, 1989). Some believed that the reform effort was not successfully reaching the goals it had established through its efforts. Kohn (1999) stated that, despite the new age of accountability and school reform, schools have remained basically unchanged and are being operated the same ways they have been for years.

According to Brandt (1994), “reformers continue to call for restructuring schools, but the number of schools that are markedly different from the norm remains very small” (p. 3).

Some researchers and advocates for alternative schools believed that non-traditional schools were the leaders in the reform effort: “Most of those engaged in restructuring are not ordinary public schools; they are alternatives” (Brandt, 1994, p. 3). Raywid (1994) noted: “Amid all the current talk of school restructuring, alternatives were the clearest example we have of what a restructured school might look like. They represent our most definitive departure from the programmatic, organizational, and behavioral regularities that inhibit school reform” (p. 1). Alternatives to the traditional educational pathway have resulted in the “advent of a number of initiatives such as ‘choice programs,’ national charter school legislations, and legislation either proposing or supporting alternative learning centers and/or programs” (Mottaz, 2002, p. vii).

Although current alternative schools may owe some of their credit to the reform efforts of the 1980s, the alternative school movement first surfaced within U.S. educational communities in the 1960s, during the height of the civil rights movement. The call for overall educational reform followed the original focus of the alternative school movement. Early alternative schools were designed for minorities and the poor (Brandt, 1994; Lange & Sletten, 2002; Morley, 1991; Raywid, 1998). In addition, early alternative schools “became innovative programs seeking to invent and pursue new ways to educate” (Raywid, 1998, p. 11). The original goals of alternative schools are still in existence, and the following described their legacy:

Early alternatives appeared so successful that alternative schools were adopted to serve all sorts of purposes, including as an answer to juvenile crime and delinquency, a means of preventing school vandalism and violence, a means of dropout prevention, a means of desegregation, as well as a means of heightening school effectiveness. (Raywid, 1998, p. 11)

Raywid (1994) noted that alternative schools preceded traditional schools in many reform efforts such as “downsizing the high school, pursuing a focus or theme, student and teacher choice, making the school a community, empowering staff, active learner engagement, authentic assessment” (p. 1). Regardless of the reform practices pioneered throughout alternative campuses, there were some misperceptions about the role of the alternative schools. Some people believed alternative schools were serving only one purpose: to change students, either through punitive or therapeutic measures (Raywid, 1998).

Despite the public’s viewpoint about the role of alternative schools, Raywid (1994) identified three types of alternative schools or programs. Type I schools “reflect programmatic themes” (p. 2), which were usually schools of choice with a different structure than traditional mainstream schools. Type II programs served students with disciplinary issues “and have nothing to do with options or choice” (p. 2). This second type included “in-school suspension programs, cool-out rooms, and longer-term placements for the chronically disruptive” (p. 2). Type III provided remedial and rehabilitative services to students. These services may focus on either academic or social/emotional needs. In some settings the focus was on both needs and “the

assumption is that after successful treatment students can return to mainstream programs” (p. 2). Raywid noted that schools usually are one of the three types of programs, yet they can also be a combination of types where one program’s philosophy influences that of another program such as “a compassionate staff . . . [giving] a Type II program Type III overtones” (Raywid, 1994, p. 3).

Morley (1991) described alternative education as “a perceptive [*sic*], not a procedure or program” (p. 7). Different types of alternative programs have different missions; therefore, the needs of their students are perceived to be different. Students may be enrolled by “choice, sentence, or referral” (Raywid, 1994, p. 3), depending on the type of alternative setting. A Type I setting focused on changing the overall program from the mainstream for its students while Types II and III focused on changing students. Raywid noted: “By altering a school’s program and environment, one can alter student response, performance, and achievement. It is this assumption that calls for responsiveness, hence school creativity” (p. 3).

During this time of reform, a grave concern arose about the safety of traditional school settings. The topic of school violence rose to the forefront. In 1990 Congress introduced The Gun-Free School Zones Act (GFSZA) (Case, n.d.; Feinstein, 1994; GFSZA, 1990; Texas Education Agency [TEA], n.d.b.) and enacted it in 1994 (Hanahan & Pierce, 1996). This act required “each state receiving federal funds under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)” (Sinclair, Hamilton, Gutmann, Draft, & Bolcik, 1998, p. 1) to create a law to have a 1-year expulsion for any student

possessing a firearm on school property (Education Commission of the States [ECS], 1999).

The legislators in Texas complied with GFSZA through a revision in the state's Education Code, which had undergone repeal in 1993 (Portner, 1996). This repeal led to a rewriting of the Texas Education Code (TEC). Chapter 37 of the Code "is a very complex web of statutory provisions, which interweaves procedure with substantive legal issues" (Hanahan & Pierce, 1996, p. 1). In addition, one of the key components of Chapter 37 required every school in Texas to establish a Discipline Alternative Education Program (DAEP) (Hanahan & Pierce, 1996), which is a Type II alternative setting described by Raywid (1994). Hanahan and Pierce (1996) noted that the Texas Legislature was "propelled by public dissatisfaction with violence in society as a whole and the growing level of danger and violence in the public schools" (p. 1). This dissatisfaction led to them creating "a new disciplinary system for the Texas public schools" (Hanahan & Pierce, 1996, p. 1).

Chapter 37.008 of the TEC required the following criteria to be met in each DAEP:

1. A setting other than a student's regular classroom
2. A location on or off of a regular school campus
3. Provisions for the students who are assigned to the alternative education program to be separated from students who are not assigned to the program
4. Focus on English language arts, mathematics, science, history, and self-

discipline

5. Provisions for students' educational and behavioral needs

6. Provisions for supervision and counseling (TEA, 2004b, p. 207)

Many school districts in Texas complied with DAEP requirements by following the Type II guidelines outlined by Raywid (1994) and offer "usually one last chance prior to expulsion" (p. 2). As noted previously, discipline programs are often the public's only perception of alternative schools, which may be misleading. Loflin (2000) stated that Type I schools are the only true alternative schools. Alternative schools that focused on "changing the school and the experience it provides for those within it, are quite different from those seeking to modify the behavior of students" (Raywid, 1998, p. 11). A Type II program was one that "sentenced" students and focused on behavior modification despite contentions that these programs cannot fulfill their mission to "fix" students and successfully return them to mainstream campuses (Loflin, 2000; Raywid, 1994, 1998).

The success of a Type II program was analogous to a "revolving door" (Loflin, 2000; Morley, 1991; Raywid, 1994, 1998; Stone, 2003). Florida's Office of Planning and Budgeting reported in 1981 that Type II programs in that state "made no difference in dropout or referral rates, corporal punishment, suspension, or expulsion. . . . The Type II programs contributed nothing toward resolving the problems they were launched to solve" (Raywid, 1994, p. 3). During the 1979-1980 school year, more than 53,000 students were placed into Florida's punitive alternative programs (Raywid, 1994). Discipline students often "revolved" back into an alternative setting that was

more comfortable for them than the mainstream. Often the Type II student preferred the alternative setting that did not “shape them up” or “fix them” to the mainstream school from which they had become disengaged (Raywid, 1998).

A survey of literature supported that not all students are “shaped up” or “fixed” while in a Type II program. Officials in Oklahoma analyzed the following data about the state’s non-disciplinary and disciplinary settings for the 1993-1994 school year: number of credits earned, number of classes failed, grade point average, number of absences (truancy), standardized test scores, number of discipline referrals (suspensions) (Oklahoma Technical Assistance Center, n.d., p. 1). The Oklahoma Technical Assistance Center (n.d.) reported the following: “In most cases, students in alternative education programs [non-disciplinary] improved substantially, while students in disciplinary programs [Type II settings] (e.g., in-school suspension) declined” (p. 1). In a 1995 article, Cox, Davidson, and Bynum utilized a meta-analysis “to assess the findings of alternative education programs in an effort to provide a more comprehensive summary of the literature than that found in prior reviews” (p. 229), and it was determined that “alternative schools have been unable to affect delinquent behavior” (p. 229).

Although the missions of alternative programs may differ based on type, students have provided the following reasons for their satisfaction with alternative settings: size of school, flexibility of schedules, and teacher care and concern (Lange & Sletten, 2002, p. 16). As referenced earlier, the ingredients of one program may influence the makeup of another if more than one program is offered on an alternative

campus (Raywid, 1994). Even if a student is placed for punitive measures, he/she may identify with some of the school's satisfying qualities noted by students who chose the campus—as long as the campus emphasized reforming the program over reforming the student (Raywid, 1998).

Regardless of alternative program type, the need for public alternative schools has evolved. Kleiner, Porch, and Farris (2002) reported 612,900 students enrolled in public alternative schools and programs in the US during the 2000-2001 school year. These 612,900 students were specifically identified as at risk of academic failure. During the 1996-1997 school year, 98,233 students in the state of Texas were removed to DAEPs for disciplinary purposes (“Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs in Texas,” n.d.).

Research on alternative schools has been limited in both numbers and scope, yet it has focused on the following three areas: “1) student response to choice and flexibility, 2) students’ sense of belonging, satisfactions and changes in self-esteem, and 3) academic achievement” (Lange & Sletten, 2002, p. 16). The Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) (“Discipline Alternative,” n.d.) reported that “too often, DAEP successes are reported through collections of anecdotes, with little or no ‘hard data’ collected, tabulated or analyzed” (p. 8).

Few studies have addressed the “success” of mainstream students who were once placed in a Type II DAEP in Texas. Galloway (2003) studied mainstream school success by analyzing grades and attendance of students formerly placed in a Texas DAEP. Galloway (2003) did not identify the DAEP in her study as traditional or

modified. She stated: “The primary objective of DAEP placement is for the student to demonstrate continued success in school” (p. 71). The objective of continual school success may be supported in most DAEPs throughout Texas, but the purpose of the state’s legislators in establishing DAEPs was to punish students and sentence them for behavioral infractions (Hanahan & Pierce, 1996; TEA, 2004b).

Continued success in school is not referenced in the literature about DAEPs in Texas other than to provide an alternative to expulsion (TEA, 2004b). Galloway (2003) did find that the students within her study produced “no consistent pattern of improvement or decline . . . in overall student performance” (p. 71). Galloway (2003) provided only a partial analysis of mainstream school success following DAEP placement. No analysis of student behavior, the single factor that led to placement in a punitive setting, was offered.

Student success is the major goal of all schools, yet success can have a variety of interpretations, and the steps required for attainment might not all be along the same pathway. To many educators and parents, a school’s primary focus should be academic achievement. But in a time when reform and accountability have risen to the forefront of school conversations, the word success has taken on new meaning. Academic success of students when considered in isolation does not reveal all the factors that may influence overall school success. The effort to reform school safety may be counterproductive to student success upon reengagement into the mainstream following DAEP placement. “With so many young people going through alternative programs,

questions arise about why the ‘regular’ schools are not working for so many” (Kelly, 1993, p. xvi).

Statement of the Problem

The topic of alternative schools is widely available in the literature; however, once a student has been labeled a “troublemaker” and has been placed in a DAEP, a Type II setting, there is limited information about the overall success of students upon their return to the mainstream. The problem to be examined in this research is to compare the success of students formerly placed in a modified disciplinary Type II setting, once they have returned to the mainstream, with their success prior to disciplinary placement.

In the US, there are three distinct types of alternative programs with distinct missions, and some schools offer programs that combine philosophies, such as the school in this study (Raywid, 1994). Type I programs provide families and students with a choice about enrollment and reflect “organizational and administrative departures from traditional schools, as well as programmatic innovations” (Fizzel & Raywid, 1997, p. 7). Type II programs are punitive in nature and focus on “fixing” the student. Students “are sentenced usually as one last chance prior to expulsion” (Raywid, 1994, p. 2). In most circumstances, the goal of Type II programs is to return students to the mainstream. Type III programs focus on providing a therapeutic environment through remediation and rehabilitation, which includes academics, counseling services, and a nurturing staff. The goal is to return students to the mainstream (Raywid, 1994).

The school selected for the study is a modified Type II setting. Elements of a Type I program are evident in the school since the school's academic program and environment focus on altering student responses, performance, and achievement, rather than blaming the student and focusing solely on behavior modification. In addition, the school incorporates the elements of a Type III setting by providing a nurturing, compassionate staff to work with students who had been punitively placed for behavioral infractions.

Research Question

This study addresses the following research question: Do students formerly placed in a modified Type II setting show a decrease in the variables that measure school success once they return to the mainstream?

Variables of school success as outlined in No Child Left Behind (NCLB) (TEA, n.d.a.) and Texas' Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) (TEA, 2004a) include the following: (a) attendance, (b) passing core courses (English, social studies, science, and math), (c) behavioral achievement, (d) standardized test score achievement, (e) recidivism rate, and (f) dropout rate.

Research Hypothesis

This study addresses the following research hypothesis:

H1: Students formerly placed in a modified Type II setting will achieve less success in the mainstream than the success they experienced prior to entry in the Type II program.

HO: Students formerly placed in a modified Type II setting will achieve more success in the mainstream than the success they experienced prior to entry in the Type II program.

Limitations

The school selected for this study was chosen for a variety of reasons, yet the selection did create some limitations. The principal of the school was the researcher of the study. Convenience for the researcher and accessibility of student data were both factors in selecting the particular school that provided a modified Type II setting for its district. Steps to prevent bias were outlined in the application to the International Review Board by using a third party to collect data and prevent student identification to the researcher. The school adhered to all policies and statutes regarding DAEPs in Texas, which supported the accuracy of the study and also prevented bias for the researcher.

The expansiveness of the term philosophy became the greatest limitation for this study. Instead of adhering strictly to the definition of a Type II punitive setting described by Raywid (1994), the school was a modified Type II setting because it practiced an overlap of Type I and III philosophies. The subjectivity of a school's philosophy can impact various areas of an educational setting. Attitudes of teachers, interpretations of state statute, implementation of programs, and attitudes of administrators were all influenced by the hybrid philosophy practiced at the modified Type II setting in this study.

The attitudes of teachers working with discipline students became a limitation to generalizing the findings of this study to all DAEPs in Texas. M. A. Raywid (personal communication, March 24, 2004) noted: “I have found that some programs designed to be Type II sometimes (though not always) tend to become Type III because of a compassionate staff who lean toward understanding and empathizing with their charges rather than punishing them.” The school in this study incorporated the elements of a compassionate staff described by Raywid (1994). In addition, the school adhered to the Type I assumption “that difficulties may be explained by the school-student match—and that by altering a school’s program and environment, one can alter student response, performance, and achievement” (Raywid, 1994, p. 3).

As previously noted, the selected school followed the same guidelines as other Type II DAEPs in Texas, yet interpretations of some state statutes present their own limitations. Not all school districts entertain the same philosophy about what constitutes a DAEP placement and how to work with students once they were placed in an alternative setting. The TEC is precise in what constitutes a mandatory placement from the mainstream to a DAEP, yet there is much room for inconsistencies in administrative interpretation of the Code for discretionary placements. Type II settings often become “dumping grounds” (J. Mintz, personal communication, June 1, 2004) because of the many interpretations about discretionary placements from the mainstream to DAEPs. The article, “Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs in Texas—What is Known; What is Needed” (n.d.), concurred with the belief held by Mintz (2004): “For the most part, alternative educational programs are being used as dumping grounds for

‘undesirable’ students,’” and “the most critical concern is that we know very little about these new alternative programs” (p. 3).

Some Type II DAEPs in Texas are dissimilar based on the size of the counties in which they are located, which may impact the implementation of programs. Although every Texas DAEP must follow the same guidelines for receiving students for specific behavioral infractions, some districts are required to offer additional services if the county population in which they are located exceeds 125,000. A Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program (JJAEP) must be available in larger counties as a step beyond a DAEP.

Most of the districts in Texas are similar to one in this study: counties without JJAEPs. For these smaller districts located in counties with a population less than 125,000, school administration may be limited in the disciplinary consequences that can be meted out to students, which can impact a district’s philosophy about “giving up on” and expelling students. Schools in larger counties can expel to JJAEPs; however, smaller programs are limited to their own resources when dealing with certain behavioral infractions. The DAEP within this study is not located in a county with a JJAEP. Because of county and district sizes in Texas, most DAEPs are not associated with JJAEPs, so this school is representative of the majority of Type II programs in Texas (TEA, 2001, 2004b).

Variance in the attitudes of administrators was the final limitation identified for this study. Some administrators in Texas DAEPs may lead through militaristic style, requiring students to follow strict dress codes and limiting in-school socialization

privileges, which alters the school climate. These environments are punitive and explicitly follow Raywid's definition of Type II settings (Raywid, 1994). Other DAEPs, such as the one in the study, incorporated the philosophies of Types I and III settings, creating a modified Type II environment focusing on open and positive interactions between students and staff.

Definition of Terms

Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) "is a comprehensive reporting system defined in state [Texas] statute" (TEA, 2004a, p. 4). The history of this accountability system follows:

In 1993, the Texas Legislature enacted statutes that mandated the creation of the Texas public school accountability system to rate school districts and evaluate campuses. . . . Following a statewide curriculum update in 1997, the process began to develop a new assessment, the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS). This assessment includes more subjects [core] and grades [grade levels]. . . . 2003 was the first year of implementation of new federal legislation related to accountability, the No Child Left Behind of 2001 (NCLB). Provisions of this statute required Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) status to be assigned to all districts and campuses for the first time in summer 2003. (TEA, 2004a, p. 1)

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) "refers to the minimum level of improvement that states, school districts and schools must achieve each year as they progress toward the ESEA [Elementary and Secondary Education Act] goal of having all students

reading the proficient level on state tests by 2014” (National Education Agency [NEA], n.d., p. 1).

Alternative settings can be categorized into three distinct types. Raywid’s definitions of these types are widely accepted.

1. Type I programs “virtually always reflect organizational and administrative departures from the traditional, as well as programmatic innovations” (Raywid, 1994, p. 2). Raywid (1990) noted the following:

Type I alternative schools tend to concentrate a fair amount of attention on revitalizing conventional classes and devising innovational teaching strategies. Many of them feature non-traditional arrangements such as interdisciplinary approaches, schools-without-walls, action learning, and independent study. For the Type I variety, voluntary affiliation on the part of all—teachers as well as students—is the key ingredient of school revitalization and educational commitment. (p. 30)

2. Type II programs are referred to as “last chance” programs because they are the “programs to which students are sentenced—usually as one last chance prior to expulsion” (Raywid, 1994, p. 2).

Raywid (1990) noted the following:

A Type II alternative program doesn’t necessarily require much removal from a host school (although most may prefer it), and it can be as small as a single class. The requirements consist largely in a relatively confined space and student-staff ratios low enough to sustain highly structured instructional and

control patterns. . . . A Type II alternative is likely to concentrate as heavily on behavioral change as on academics, and the instructional program is likely to be limited to “the basics.” . . . For the Type II program, the *denial* of choice is equally salient. In the minds of their sponsors, these programs are for youngsters who need shaping up, and no one could be masochistic enough to want to choose them. (p. 30)

3. Type III programs focus on remedial or rehabilitative issues: “academic, social/emotional, or both” (Raywid, 1994, p. 2).

Raywid (1990) noted the following characteristics about Type III alternative settings:

Requires assigning a teacher a very small number of students (ranging from 4 or 5 to 10-12 at most). A single classroom is adequate for operating such a therapeutic community whose goal is to eliminate so far as possible the incapacity handicapping performance in the regular school. Thus the focus is on intensive remediation or counseling or both. . . . Although it is not typical, Type III alternatives *may* reflect curricular modification or simplification designed to render schools’ academic dimensions simpler or more palatable to the students. One model, for instance, converts the high school curriculum into more than 100 separate competencies, each of which can be reached by completing a set of assignments and obtaining a satisfactory score on a test looking only at that single competency. (p. 30)

Type III settings are also distinguished by a nurturing and compassionate staff focused on building relationships with students that will lead to rehabilitation and a return to the mainstream environment (Raywid, 1994).

4. Modified Type II Settings can be viewed as a programmatic hybrid. Raywid (1994) noted that alternative programs can overlap in philosophies of type:

Alternative schools are usually identifiable as one of these three types [Types I, II, or III], but particular programs can be a mix. A compassionate staff, for example, may give a Type II program Type III overtones. But even so, the genre determines an alternative school's most formative features. It determines the grounds upon which the school will be evaluated; whether student affiliation is by choice, sentence, or referral; and perhaps most fundamentally, what is assumed about school and students. Both Type II and Type III set out to fix the student on the assumption that the problems lie with the individual. But Type I assumes the difficulty may be explained by the school-student match—and that by altering a school's program and environment, one can alter student response, performance, and achievement. It is this assumption that calls for responsiveness, hence creativity. (p. 5)

The selected school for the study was a modified Type II setting. It incorporated the elements of a Type III setting by providing a nurturing, compassionate staff working with students who have been punitively placed for behavioral infractions. In addition, elements of a Type I program were also evident in the school since the school's academic program and environment focused positively on altering student response,

performance, and achievement, rather than blaming the student and focusing solely on behavior modification.

Four core course teachers at the selected school provided instruction for the seventh through twelfth graders assigned to the school. Home campus (mainstream) teachers provided the elective work, and the core teachers served as facilitators during the elective periods. An outside agency was contracted for the self-discipline course taken by all students placed in the DAEP. The school counselor coordinated the self-discipline program, which addressed social skills, anger management, and decision-making.

An *at-risk student* is defined by the TEC as a student who is “at-risk” of dropping out of school before obtaining a high school diploma (TEA, 2004b). To be labeled at-risk the student would meet one of the following criteria:

For purposes of this section, students at risk of dropping out of school includes each student who is under 21 years of age and who:

- Was not advanced from one grade level to the next for one or more school years
- Did not maintain an average equivalent to 70 on a scale of 100 in two or more subjects in the foundation curriculum during a semester in the preceding or current school year or is not maintaining such an average in two or more subjects in the foundation curriculum in the current semester (if the student is in grade 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, or 12)

- Did not perform satisfactorily on an assessment instrument administered to the student under TEC Subchapter B, Chapter 39, and who has not in the previous or current school year subsequently performed on that instrument or another appropriate instrument at a level equal to at least 110 percent of the level of satisfactory performance on that instrument
- Did not perform satisfactorily on the readiness test or assessment instrument administered during the current school year (if the student is in prekindergarten, kindergarten, or grade 1, 2, or 3)
- Is pregnant or is a parent
- Has been placed in an alternative education program in accordance with TEC section 37.006 during the preceding or current school year
- Has been expelled in accordance with TEC section 37.007 during the preceding or current school year
- Is currently on parole, probation, deferred prosecution, or other conditional release
- Was previously reported through the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) to have dropped out of school
- Is a student of limited English proficiency, as defined by TEC section 29.052
- Is in the custody or care of the Department of Protective and Regulatory Services or has, during the current school year, been referred to the depart-

ment by a school official, officer of the juvenile court, or law enforcement official

- Is homeless, as defined by 42 U.S.C. section 11302 and its subsequent amendments
- Resided in the preceding school year or resides in the current school year in a residential placement facility in the district, including a detention facility, substance abuse treatment facility, emergency shelter, psychiatric hospital, halfway house, or foster group home (TEA, 2004b, p. 181)

Behavioral achievement represents the improvement or lack of improvement of behavior as determined by the Student Code of Conduct. A decline in documented misbehaviors indicates an improvement in behavioral achievement. An increase in documented misbehaviors indicates a worsening of behaviors.

Chapter 37 of the TEC was adopted in 1995 in part to the response to the Safe Schools Act, which resulted from the “public dissatisfaction with violence in society as a whole and the growing level of danger and violence in the public schools (Hanahan & Pierce, 1996, p. 1). The portion of the Code pertaining to the Act and student discipline is found in Chapter 37, which required every district in Texas to adopt a student code of conduct that would provide guidelines for removing students from the mainstream and for removal to a DAEP for disciplinary infractions.

Discipline Alternative Education Program (DAEP) is a disciplinary alternative education program that meets the guidelines outlined in Chapter 37 of the TEC.

Final post-placement semester is the 2004 spring semester, which was the last semester included in the study when students returned to the mainstream.

Initial post-placement semester is the 2002 fall semester, the first semester upon the students' return to the mainstream. The fall semester of 2003 was the initial post-placement semester.

The *Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program* (JJAEP) is a setting that provides disciplinary consequences for students expelled from DAEPs. JJAEPs must be developed by the juvenile board of a county with a population greater than 125,000. These settings are subject to the approval of the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission (TEA, 2001, 2004b).

PEIMS (Public Education Information Management System) is the statewide data collection system for public schools in Texas. The system is used to collect and consistently organize data from all districts within the state. Data include attendance, dropout, and DAEP placements (PEIMS, n.d.).

Persistent misbehavior indicates repeated documented violations of the Student Code of Conduct.

Pre-placement semester is the 2002 fall semester, the semester immediately preceding the semester of placement into the DAEP.

Reengagement is the process of reestablishing a successful daily routine on a mainstream school campus following placement in a DAEP.

Success for students is meeting the minimum criteria to remain continuously enrolled on a campus with an academic performance that culminates in graduation. The

variables of school success used for measurement in the study are: (a) attendance, (b) passing core courses, (c) behavioral achievement, (d) standardized test score achievement, and (e) the recidivism and dropout rates.

The *2002 Alternative Education Accountability Manual* is published by the TEA to provide the procedures for evaluating the performance of public school campuses registered as dedicated schools that serve students who are at risk of dropping out.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study is multifaceted. Haynes and Chalker (1993) noted that “the United States has the dubious distinction of leading the developed world in youth violence” (p. 1), which has placed both financial and safety constraints on public schools. Type II discipline settings described by Raywid (1990, 1994, 1995, 1998) have increased due to the “concern among the public, educators, and policy makers about violence, weapons, and drugs on elementary and secondary campuses” (Kleiner, Porch, & Farris, 2002, p. 1). Congress’ reaction to the violence in the public schools resulted in the passage of the *GFSA*, which eventually led to every state developing a Type II alternative setting. In 1995 the Texas Legislature complied with the growing level of concern about school violence by requiring every district to establish at least one DAEP. The purpose of the DAEP was twofold: “Promote student safety and improve the classroom learning environment” (Hanahan & Pierce, 1996, p. 15).

The federal government’s concern addressing school safety led to states creating laws to remove students from the mainstream for certain behavior. Congress, in 2001, issued NCLB, which focused on guaranteeing school success, particularly academic

success, for all students. That federal law made “substantial changes to state standards and testing and it brings far-reaching changes to how states measure student progress” (National Education Agency, n.d., p. 1). The goal of the NCLB is to have “all students performing at a ‘proficient’ level or above on state reading and math assessments by 2013-2014” (National Education Agency, n.d., p. 1). All students, regardless of an at-risk label, are supposedly guaranteed a level of proficiency to attain school success, which culminates in graduation (TEA, n.d.a.).

Much of the previous research about students transitioning from alternative school settings back to the mainstream have described negative results. Previous research has been limited in number, yet the State of Texas continues to mandate that districts provide DAEP services. With the requirements for all students to be proficient and ultimately graduate from high schools across America, this study adds to the current research about student reengagement and school success following placement in a Type II setting, specifically on the topic of Texas’ DAEPs.

Stone (2003) noted: “There is a void in the literature that seeks to address what happens when students leave the alternative high school setting and return to the regular high school setting” (p. 7). Chalker and Brown (1999) noted that middle school students experienced the worst success following an alternative “quick-fix” placement. Many alternative programs are temporary placements designed to return students to the mainstream (Chalker & Brown, 1999). Stone (2003) noted: “This [returning students to the mainstream from alternative campuses] may be widely practiced due to budget constraints, space limitations, and small pupil/teacher ratios. As a result, alternative

programs often release students in a ‘ready-or-not fashion’ after applying short-term interventions strategies to long-term problems” (p. 18).

Every district in Texas was required to fund a Type II DAEP setting, and current studies need to be available about the success of students following such placement (Hanahan & Pierce, 1996). In “Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs in Texas,” (n.d.) it was noted that “many programs [DAEPs in Texas] collect little data on effectiveness” (p. 7). Previous research in other states has shown that Type II programs where students were sentenced “contributed nothing toward resolving the problems they were launched to solve” (Raywid, 1994, p. 3). Type II programs were punitive in nature and focused on “fixing the student” (Loflin, 2000; Raywid, 1994, 1998) unlike a Type I program, which focused on systemic improvement different from the mainstream (Raywid, 1994).

Current studies relating specifically to the guidelines and outcomes of Texas DAEPs can be critical in addressing both the effectiveness of DAEP placements and the need for transition services for students once placed in Type II settings who return to the mainstream environment. Additional studies would add to the findings of researchers such as Galloway (2003), who focused only on two areas of school success: attendance and grades. There are approximately 1,040 school districts in Texas (*Texas Almanac 2004-2005*, n.d.), and there are approximately 100,000 referrals each year to DAEPs (“Disciplinary Alternative,” n.d.). Every district could benefit from conducting similar studies of their students in an effort to evaluate the effectiveness of their disciplinary programs. From such studies, the state would ultimately benefit by attaining

relevant data to evaluate the effectiveness of mandated discipline programs in maintaining success for all students.

Organization of the Study

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter I provides the introduction, background of the study, statement of the problem, research question, research hypothesis, definition of terms, limitations, significance of the study, and organization of the study. Chapter II provides a review of previous empirical studies, methodologies, cases studies, and theories covering the following: (a) history of alternative schools, (b) types of alternative settings, (c) the demand for alternative programs, and (d) transitional challenges to the mainstream environment. Chapter III outlines the methodology for the study. A review of alternative school programs and school success introduces the chapter, and the research design, population, data collection, and data analysis are presented. The chapter closes with a summary. Chapter IV contains the interpretation of the results of the study through analysis of the research question. Chapter V provides the discussions and conclusions of the study as well as recommendations for future research related to this topic.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

A review of the literature indicated that alternative schools have a variety of definitions since they were created to serve many different needs. Not all schools that bear the label “alternative” are identical. Some schools are designed with innovative curricula and flexible schedules, whereas others are designed to be either punitive or rehabilitative. Some schools are places that students freely choose to attend, and others are places where students are placed for disciplinary infractions. Regardless of the type of programs offered, the term “alternative” has become the moniker for many schools in nontraditional categories (Raywid, 1994). The history of alternative schools, types of settings, the demand for alternative programs, and transitional challenges to the mainstream environment determined the parameters for each section of this chapter.

History of Alternative Schools

Although alternative programs can be traced back many years in American history, African Americans in both the North and South created some of the first alternative schools during the 1960s (Lange & Sletten, 2002; Loflin, 2000; Raywid, 1998; Young, 1990). These early schools were built to protest the public schools’ refusal to admit students of color (Brandt, 1994; Lange & Sletten, 2002; Loflin, 2000;

Morley, 1991; Raywid, 1998). These schools were designed to “reintroduce the disenchanted students, most of them non-white and from low-income families back to the education process. These schools proved that underserved students could be better educated in different and more sensitive environments” (Loflin, 2000, p. 7).

In addition to the focus in the 1960s on racial and ethnic issues in public schools, there was also “a war on poverty that made schools the battlefields” (Young, 1990, p. 9). The U.S. Congress passed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in 1965, which, according to Young (1990), allowed President Johnson to address the raging battle: “The answer for all our national problems—the answer for all the problems of the world—come down to one word, that word is *education*” (p. 9).

Because of the focus in the United States during the 1960s and early 1970s on the needs of socially disadvantaged students, some educational writers encouraged schools to provide more relevance and meaning to its clientele (Young, 1990). Young (1990) stated: “Schools and teachers were being increasingly encouraged to experiment with alternative programs and teaching strategies to reach the more diverse student population” (p. 9).

The turbulence of the 1960s and 1970s brought disillusionment with the schools in the United States, and “public education underwent one of the most critical institutional reassessments” (Young, 1990, p. 10). Many of the writers known as “romantic critics” attributed the country’s social, political, and economic ills to the ineffectiveness of public schools. Young (1990) described the arguments of these writers as follows:

Kozol (*Death at an Early Age*, 1967), Hentoff (*Our Children are Dying*, 1967), and Kohl (*36 Children*, 1967) portrayed public schools as racist. Holt (*How Children Learn*, 1967; *How Children Fail*, 1964) criticized the predetermined curriculum of school and students' dependence on the teacher as the complete intellectual authority. Holt attacked the emphasis on producing right answers at the expense of reflection and curiosity. Postman and Weingartner (*Teaching as a Subversive Activity*, 1971; *The School Book*, 1973) maintained that traditional teaching was authoritarian. Teachers told students what they thought students ought to know and think and rarely encouraged student-initiated questions or responses. Postman and Weingartner pointed out that the information schools transmitted was in large part obsolete because of the knowledge explosion. They argued that students needed to learn how, not what. Illich (*Deschooling Society*, 1971) decried the institutional dependency that public education fostered and proposed to abolish schools altogether. (p. 10)

Over time, the “romantic critics” separated their opinions about public education. Some became the reformers who wanted to change the overall educational system to meet the needs of society. However, “others, such as Graubard (*Free the Children*), became radicals rejecting public schools and proposed free schools in their place” (Young, 1990, p. 10). According to Young (1990), Graubard believed that schools reflected the ills of society, and as long as society had problems, schools could not resolve them.

As their name suggests, free schools focused on the freedom from authority and allowed for a more nontraditional approach to its instruction and curriculum. About free schools, Young (1990) noted that “teachers were guides rather than authorities” (p. 10) and served as facilitators of a curriculum that “was likely to include folk dancing, history of drugs, guerilla theater, jewelry making, black and women’s liberation as well as more traditional subjects” (p. 10). Although the free schools were never widely embraced, they did serve as an early example of alternative education in the United States.

The concept of open education provided a path for reform rather than a radical departure for rejecting traditional schooling. Young (1990) noted the following:

Featherstone introduced informal or open education to Americans in a series of articles written for *The New Republic*. Featherstone described and praised the education he had observed in England’s infant, or primary schools. In these schools children worked at their own pace and frequently on their own. Progress was evaluated in terms of individual improvement rather than by comparison to a standard or to the performance of others. Students were allowed some choice in the subjects they studied. Teachers assisted student learning rather than controlling it. (p. 11)

According to Young (1990), open education replicated much of the same philosophy of the progressive education movement that “assumed children were curious, responsible, and motivated to learn and should be allowed to develop at their own rates. Both [philosophies] advocated a child-centered approach that built on

students' interests" (p. 11). Open education reform efforts also emphasized the following characteristics: (a) non-graded programs, (b) cross-age homogeneous grouping, (c) 3-year blocks with the same teacher, (d) progression based on individual ability, and (e) individualized instruction (Young, 1990).

The concept of open education was primarily attempted at the elementary level, and there were a few ripples felt at the secondary level. However, other types of public alternative schools arose from the concept of open education. These alternative schools were led by the reformers of the late 1960s and early 1970s and included "schools without walls, schools within a school, multicultural schools, continuation schools, and learning centers" (Young, 1990, p. 12). Lange and Sletten (2002) provided the following description of the most popular public alternative schools described by Young:

- Schools without walls—emphasized community-based learning; individuals within the community were brought in to teach students
- Schools within a school—intended to make large high schools into smaller communities of belonging; individual groups were designed to meet the educational needs and interests of students
- Multicultural schools—designed to integrate culture and ethnicity into the curriculum; some had a diverse student body and some catered to a specific ethnic group

- Continuation schools—used as an option for those who were failing in the regular school system because of issues such as dropout, pregnancy, failing grades; these schools were less competitive and more individualized
- Learning centers—intended to meet particular student needs by including special resources, such as vocational education, in the school setting (pp. 4-5)

By the mid-1970s, more alternative schools emerged. Fundamental schools provided more conservative alternative approaches than some of the liberal counterparts. They “emphasized a back to basics approach in reaction to the lack of academic rigor perceived in free schools” (Lange & Sletten, 2002, p. 5). Magnet schools emerged in response to school desegregation. These schools “offered a curriculum that emphasized themes meant to attract diverse groups of students from a range of racial and cultural backgrounds” (Lange & Sletten, 2002, p. 5).

By the 1980s alternative education began a transformation that had a more limited focus than in previous years despite the increase in the numbers of alternative schools. In a national survey, many districts responded that their alternative schools were serving students who were either academically or behaviorally challenged, which was a change from the focus during the 1960s (Young, 1990). Although accurate data are unavailable about the exact numbers of alternative schools that emerged during this decade, the following may be correlated from statistics at Washington State:

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction in cooperation with the Washington Alternative Learning Association publishes a directory of the state’s

alternative schools biannually. In 1981 the directory listed 52 public alternative education schools with combined enrollment of 6,274 students. In 1988 the number of schools had risen to 104 and enrolment to 9,945, a growth rate of over 60 percent. During the same time period total enrollment in Washington's public schools increased less than 5 percent. If other states experienced only half of Washington's growth in alternative education, the number of public alternative students grew from 3 million in 1981 to some 4 million, or nearly 7 percent of the public school population in 1988. (Young, 1990, p. 21)

The 1980s can be summarized as a time when alternative schools increased while the "parents, students, and school districts . . . embraced the concept of choice and institutionalized it" (Young, 1990, p. 21).

By the 1990s it was evident that "alternative schools and programs . . . evolved . . . to mean different things to different audiences" (Lange & Sletten, 2002, p. 4). By the 1990s, many students were opting to leave the educational environment "without earning their high school diploma or a GED" (De La Rosa, 1998, p. 1). Loflin (2000) noted that "traditional schooling [of the 90s] was not meeting the needs of the students—in fact, it was turning them off" (p. 10).

The need for alternative schools today has evolved and changed from the romantic, child-centered departures from the traditional educational path (Loflin, 2000, p. 12). Since the devastating legacy created by student violence at Colorado's Columbine High School in 1999, legislators and "educators throughout the country have turned their attention to making schools more secure" (DeBlois, 2000, p. 1). As "a

reaction to the increase in violence, drugs, gangs, and other issues associated with family, decreased urban school enrollment, and student dropout rates” (Loflin, 2000, p. 11), alternative schools have evolved to meet the demands of “chronically disruptive, suspended, or . . . students that the schools said lacked effort or who needed a ‘change of attitude’” (p. 11).

Types of Alternative Settings

Although the definition of alternative schools has not reached a consensus among researchers, educators, and the general public, Raywid (1990) stated that the 1960s and 1970s was a period when there seemed to be the most agreement about what an alternative setting should be, which was a protest against the “mass processing conducted by conventional schools and of their bureaucratic organization” (p. 26). However, despite the lack of agreement about the “true” definition of alternative programs or schools, the definition of program types provided by Raywid (1990) was supported in literature (Appalachia Educational Laboratory, 1998; Gregg, 1999; Lange, 1998; Lange & Sletten, 2002; Loflin, 2002).

Raywid (1990, 1994, 1995, 1998) has extensively documented the observable differences in programs and noted that the legacies and missions of the early alternative schools are still in existence today. Raywid (1990) stated: “There are people who are still trying to design new schools, and they are responsible for what [Raywid] called Type I alternatives” (p. 26). These programs were designed to be “more humane, more responsive, more challenging, and more compelling to all involved” (Raywid, 1990, p. 26). Raywid (1994) stated the following about Type I programs:

Type I alternatives seek to make school challenging and fulfilling for all involved. Their efforts have yielded many innovations, a number of which are now widely recommended as improvement measures for all schools. Type I alternatives virtually always reflect organizational and administrative departures from the traditional, as well as the programmatic innovations. (p. 2)

Aronson (1995) referred to Type I programs as “true educational alternatives” and stated the following: “Based on the theory that all students can learn if provided with the right educational environment, these programs strive to meet students’ needs in order to help them succeed” (p. 4).

A Type I program that focused on changing the overall program from the mainstream for its students embraced the following criteria:

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

schools, dropout recovery programs, after-hours programs, and schools in atypical settings like shopping malls and museums. (Appalachia Educational Laboratory, 1998, p. 3)

Unlike Type I settings that enroll its students through choice, the second type of alternative setting is punitive in nature and a place where students are “sentenced” (Raywid, 1990, 1994, 1995, 1998). “Discipline is the distinguishing characteristic of Type II programs, which aim to segregate, contain, and reform disruptive students” (Appalachia Educational Laboratory, 1998, p. 3). Students are usually placed in Type II settings because of behavioral infractions. Their length of stay is for a specified amount of time based on the infraction, and “the curriculum is limited to a few basic, required courses or is entirely supplied by the ‘home school’” (Appalachia Educational Laboratory, 1998, p. 3). Type II programs are “last-chance programs” focusing on “behavior modification . . . [with] little attention . . . [being] paid to modifying curriculum and pedagogy” (Raywid, 1994, p. 2) and are more like “soft jails” where students need to be “fixed” (Raywid, 1990, 1994, 1995, 1998). “Instead of the ‘liberation’ theme of the early alternative schools, [Type II programs] are likely to be highly structured, tightly regulated and supervised programs that are expected to employ behavior correction strategies, along with firm and aggressive disciplinary policies” (Raywid, 1990. p. 27). Programs that emphasize punishment attempt to change students and return them to their traditional schools or classrooms (Aronson, 1995, p. 4).

The third alternative setting supported in the literature is the Type III program identified by Raywid (1990, 1994, 1995, 1998). Types II and III settings are similar in that both programs contend that students are “flawed in some important respect” (Raywid, 1990, p. 28) yet differ in “climate and approach” (Raywid, 1998, p. 10). Whereas Type II settings are punitive in nature, Type III programs are therapeutic (Raywid 1990, 1994. 1995, 1998). The following are characteristics of Type III alternative programs:

They are designed for students presumed to need extra help, remediation, or rehabilitation—usually academic and/or social/emotional. If jail is the best metaphor for Type II alternatives, therapy is appropriate for Type III programs. In theory, after sufficient treatment, successful students will be able to return to the mainstream and continue in the regular program. Predictably, then, Type III alternatives often focus on remedial work with high-structure tasks. They frequently also attempt to generate the conditions that will stimulate social and emotional growth. (Raywid, 1995, pp. 125-126)

Therapeutic programs “assume that students need to change to succeed in traditional schools. They elicit change through counseling, rather than behavior modification” (Aronson, 1995, p. 4). “Perhaps the bulk of the nation’s dropout prevention programs are illustrative of the therapeutically-oriented programs” (Raywid, 1998, p. 11).

The purpose of an alternative school has a greater impact than the types of programs offered. “The purpose . . . as defined by law or policy, remains critical to program implementation, evaluation, effectiveness, and even equity” (Gregg, 1999,

p. 108). Oftentimes, alternative schools are asked to perform conflicting purposes: “improve outcomes for students with different education needs . . . [and] separate disruptive students from mainstream classrooms” (Gregg, 1999, p. 108). While one purpose is to educate, the other is to discipline, which sends mixed signals.

The purpose of a school may impact its overall success. Gregg (1999) noted the following:

A punitive purpose may cause schools to adopt ineffective models for improving learning or behavior. . . . Research shows that education-oriented Type I schools—and not punishment—had positive effects on both behavior and achievement for students at-risk. Their individualized approach helped students succeed academically; their small size and family atmosphere kept students connected and in school; and their voluntary enrollment policies boosted student motivation and goal setting.” (p. 109)

Despite the type of alternative setting, the school’s purpose may incorporate more than one program’s philosophy. “The distinction between the three types [of programs] was not rigid, and some schools showed characteristics of more than one type” (Gregg, 1999, p. 108). A mixture of program types is described as follows: “A compassionate staff, for example, may give a Type II program Type III overtones. Or a committed Type III staff may venture into programmatic innovations that mark a Type I” (Raywid, 1994, p. 3).

The Demand for Alternative Programs

The past decade marked a time in the United States when alternative schools were addressing the needs of discontented students. The discontented (De La Rosa, 1998, p.1) emerged as a group who were referred to by many other names including: (a) troublemakers (Kelly, 1992, p. 90), (b) disadvantaged (Lange & Sletten, 2002, p. 9; Raywid, 1994, p. 1) (c) marginal (Raywid, 1994, p. 1), (d) disenfranchised, (Lange & Sletten, 2002, p. 20), and (e) disengaged (Kelly, 1992, p. *xvi*). All these labels may be incorporated into the term at-risk (Lange & Sletten, 2002, p. 1; Mottaz, 2002, p. 11): (a) at risk in an educational system that was already embroiled in debates about “discipline, standardized test scores, teacher qualifications, funding, vouchers, charters, and so on” (Brady, 2000, p. 647); (b) at risk due to a dissatisfaction with an educational path that does not lead to success for all students (Griffin, 2002; Guerin & Denti, 1999; Phelan, Yu, & Davidson, 1994); (c) at risk of dropping out of formal education completely (De La Rosa, 1998), which was “an unwelcome educational outcome” (Lee & Burkam, 2003, p. 357).

Because of “the nation’s concern over the continuing dropout dilemma, which presents staggering and economic repercussions,” (De La Rosa, 1998, p. 2), the need for school reform increased during the mid-1980s and early 1990s. Wehlage, Smith, and Lipman (1992) noted the following: “Restructuring of America’s schools . . . caught the attention of a broad audience. The word *restructuring* . . . reverberated through governors’ mansions, legislative halls, and board rooms as well through the schools” (p. 52). The price of societal problems created by dropouts was greater than the cost of

schools to accommodate the potential dropouts (De La Rosa, 1998). In the following, Novak (1994) quoted Darling-Hammond about the equality of schools:

I think we've seen a realization that the demands on education are changing substantially from what they were when we invented the system nearly a century ago. I think the *Nation at Risk* report, released in 1983, was wrong in arguing that schools have gotten worse, which was much of the implication. In fact, schools have gotten a lot better, but the demands on schools have increased even more. (p. 1)

Alternative schools evolved in an effort to meet the needs of many of the identified "at risk" students "at a time when the high school as an institution was under great scrutiny and a fever of restructuring had taken hold" (Kelly, 1993, p. xv). Alternative, or "continuation" (Kelly, 1993), schools were often the final educational destinations of students who are at risk of dropping out.

In an attempt to better understand the problems created by students not graduating, the following questions emerged: "Why do students drop out of high school? [and] Who should be responsible for the unfortunate event?" (Lee & Burkam, 2003, p. 353). De La Rosa (1998) and Loflin (2000) agreed with the following perception held by Barth (1991) about why students drop out:

But the major factor in students' lives that leads to depression, dropping out, drugs, jail, and suicide appears to be the school experience: ability groups, grade retention, college pressures, working alone, denial of strengths and focus on

weaknesses, learning that is information-rich and experience-poor, and an irrelevant curriculum that students must endure and frequently ignore. (p. 126)

It is estimated that approximately 30% of America's students will drop out before receiving their high school diplomas, and there is indication that the numbers will only increase (Druian & Butler, 1987. Barr and Parrett (1995) provided the following answers to the question of why students drop out of school:

1. Low value of high-school diploma
2. Competing responsibilities
3. Undermined self esteem
4. Push-out schools
5. Pregnancy (p. 13)

Darling-Hammond (2002) noted the following about the current status of dropouts in America today:

A high school drop out [*sic*] today has less than a 5% [chance] of getting a job. If that drop out [*sic*] is African American or Latino, the chance is less than one in four. That job earns less than half of what it earned 20 to 30 years ago. Wages are only increasing for people with a college education and what we see happening is this huge divide as lack of education is strongly correlated with incarceration. The prison population of California has increased many, many times in the last decade. The population has increased by 600%. The expenditures increased by about 900% and the expenditures for public schools went up 25%. The odds of a young Black man between 18 and 24 being in the

criminal justice system are greater than the odds of being in the higher educational system. More than half of the inmates are functionally illiterate, cannot engage the literacy skills needed in the labor market. More than 40% of the adjudicated juvenile delinquents have learning disabilities not diagnosed in school. So that the more we fail to educate a segment of the population, the greater the chance that they will not be able to access the economy and will basically go directly into the criminal justice system. (pp. 2-3)

In 1989 Phi Delta Kappa produced a national study focusing on at-risk factors in students. Barr and Parrett (1995) noted: “Frymier and Gansneder . . . developed a matrix of . . . at-risk factors and ranked them from most serious (attempted suicide during the past year) to least serious (changed place of residence during the past year)” (p. 13). The following list identifies the students who are potentially at risk of dropping out of school:

1. Attempted suicide during the past year
2. Used drugs or engaged in substance abuse
3. Has been a drug “pusher” during the past year
4. Sense of self esteem is negative
5. Was involved in a pregnancy during the past year
6. Was expelled from school during the past year
7. Consumes alcohol regularly
8. Was arrested for illegal activity
9. Parents have negative attitudes toward education

10. Has several brothers or sisters who dropped out
11. Was sexually or physically abused last year
12. Failed two courses last school year
13. Was suspended from school last school year
14. Student was absent more than 20 days last year
15. Parent drinks excessively and is an alcoholic
16. Was retained in grade (i.e., "held back")
17. One parent attempted suicide last year
18. Scored below 20th percentile on standardized test
19. Other family members used drugs during past year
20. Attended three or more schools during the past five years
21. Average grades were below "C" last school year
22. Was arrested while driving while intoxicated
23. Has an IQ below 90
24. Parents divorced or separated last year
25. Father is unskilled laborer who is unemployed
26. Mother is unskilled laborer who is unemployed
27. Father or mother died during the past year
28. Diagnosed as being in special education
29. English is not language
30. Lives in an inner city, urban area
31. The mother is the only parent living in the home

32. Is year older than other students in the same grade
33. Mother did not graduate from high school
34. Father lost his job during the past year
35. Was dropped from athletic team the past year
36. Experienced a serious illness or accident (Barr & Parrett, 1995, p. 14)

Educators realized they were responsible for dealing with “this unfortunate event,” (Lee & Burkam, 2003, p. 353)—the critical issues facing students—but were overwhelmed by the long list of at-risk factors (Barr & Parrett, 1995, p. 13). The list of 36 potential challenges to schools became more manageable once they were grouped into the following problem areas: (a) personal pain, (b) academic failure, (c) socioeconomic situation of the family, (d) family instability, (e) family budgeting (Barr & Parrett, 1995, pp. 14-15)

In addition to addressing the problems of potential dropouts and students at risk of academic failure, alternative settings evolved because of violence within schools in the United States. Type II discipline settings described by Raywid (1990, 1994, 1995, 1998) increased due to the “concern among the public, educators, and policy makers about violence, weapons, and drugs on elementary and secondary school campuses” (Kleiner, Porch, & Farris, 2002, p. 1). The focus became to rid mainstream schools of dangerous and disruptive students (Appalachia Educational Laboratory, 1998; Bickerstaff, Leon, & Hudson, 1997; Bushweller, 1998; Cox et al., 1995; Ferrara, 1993; Gregg, 1999; Haynes & Chalker, 1993). According to Haynes and Chalker (1993), “the

United States has the dubious distinction of leading the developed world in youth violence” (p. 1).

Congress addressed the seriousness of violence in the American schools by passing the Gun-Free Schools Act (GFSA) of 1994 (Feinstein, 1994). This Act mandated that all states receiving federal funding address expulsion of students possessing guns at school. Some states used the congressional directive as a platform to focus on other offenses and established a “zero tolerance” policy, which would result in mandatory expulsions or placements in an alternative disciplinary setting (Yell & Rozalski, 2000).

Following the GFSA of 1994, the response to both school violence and the resulting legislation addressing safe schools encouraged almost every state to develop a Type II alternative setting (Yell & Rozalski, 2000). In 1995 the Texas’ Legislature responded to school violence by revising the state’s education code, which mandated that every school district in Texas adopt a student code of conduct and establish a Discipline Alternative Education Program (DAEP) (Hanahan & Pierce, 1996). Texas met the challenge of school violence as follows:

The state . . . adopted the Safe Schools Act (generally Chapter 37 of the Texas Education Code [TEC]) designed to allow disruptive students to be removed from class and to provide a safety net assuring that students removed from classrooms or suspended or expelled from public schools in the state would remain within the education system and would continue to have an opportunity for public education. The legislation provided for a system of alternative

education programs . . . [DAEPs] operated by the school districts
(Bickerstaff, Leon, & Hudson, 1997, p. 1)

According to Bickerstaff, Leon, and Hudson (1997), Texas may be the first state to address the removal of students from the mainstream and the continuation of their education. The practice of removing difficult students countered the advice of Goodlad (1984):

How well suited to the young people of today is the school that was hardened into shape during a previous era? Some of our data suggest a poor fit. Other studies and statistics on absenteeism, truancy, and interpersonal tensions—sometimes leading to violence—raise serious questions about the appropriateness of schools, as conducted, for many of the older students in attendance. But merely to remove the most troublesome may be to obfuscate the basic problems. (pp. 321-322)

Specifically, Chapter 37 of the TEC allowed district administrators to place students in DAEPs. Bickerstaff, Leon, and Hudson (1997) wrote: “A key component of Chapter 37 is the objective of ‘zero tolerance’ for disruptive conduct in the classroom and the authority of a teacher or principal to remove a disruptive student and to prevent that student’s return” (p. 4).

Chapter 37 of the TEC addressed both “mandatory” and “discretionary” removals from regular classroom settings (TEA, 2004b). The more severe behaviors result in mandatory placements in a DAEP and include the following offenses com-

mitted by a student within 300 feet of school property or committed during a school-sponsored or school-related activity:

- Engages in conduct punishable as a felony
- Engages in conduct that contains the element of assault that causes bodily injury or a terroristic threat
- Sells, gives or delivers to another person, or possesses or uses, or is under the influence of marihuana, a controlled substance or a dangerous drug
- Sells, gives, or delivers an alcoholic beverage to another person, or possesses, uses, or is under the influence of an alcoholic beverage
- Engages in conduct with the elements of an offense relating to abusable glue or aerosol paint or relating to volatile chemicals; or
- Engages in conduct with the element of the offense of public lewdness or indecent exposure; or
- Engages in conduct that contains the elements of the offense of retaliation against a school employee (Bickerstaff, Leon, & Hudson, 1997, p. 6)

In addition to the guidelines for mandatory placements into DAEPs, Chapter 37 allows teachers “to remove from class a student who seriously or repeatedly interferes with the teachers’ ability to communicate effectively with other students or with the ability of other students to learn” (Bickerstaff, Leon, & Hudson, 1997, p. 7). Teachers were guaranteed a voice in allowing student reentry into classrooms following discretionary removals for seriously invasive behaviors.

Morley (1991) stated that there are many ways to be educated. The goal of both mainstream and alternative schools is for students to receive high school diplomas and avoid being expelled to the street with little hope for a successful future. The removal of the disruptive students from the regular classrooms has created a variety of voices, concerns, and problems in its effort to educate all students. Regardless of student outcomes, which have been researched very little, many policymakers, educators, parents, and students have embraced alternative education as the answer for meeting the dual goal of increasing graduation rates and removing disruptive students (Aronson, 1995).

Whether the purpose of an alternative school is to emphasize “choice” or “punishment” to its students, the questions remains about why school reform efforts are not reaching their goals (Kohn, 1999), and why most restructuring occurs on alternative campuses and not the mainstream (Brandt, 1994). Bauman (1998) provides the following response to these questions, which also offers an explanation for the dual, and often-times conflicting, roles of alternative schools:

Whereas historically alternative schools connoted choice, now many are seen as “last chance” (Raywid, 1994) before dropping out. . . . It is important to examine, within a greater social context, the function of alternative schools in the “unequal formation” of a large section of society. Instead of directly challenging traditional structures of the public schools, the existence of alternative schools allows legislators, policy makers, and many educators to avoid the necessity of making any significant reforms to the institution of schooling. The

result is that policy makers are able to attribute academic failure to characteristics of the students (e.g., at risk students' maladaptive behavior) and fosters sympathy for the home school's decision to remove these disruptive voices. Ultimately we need to examine why certain groups do not have the institutional access to acquire the cultural capital necessary to succeed in the existing schools. (pp. 2-3).

Transitional Challenges to the Mainstream Environment

To some people, alternative schools appear to provide a panacea for what ails American public schools. The removal of the behaviorally and academically challenged from the mainstream campuses results in an improved environment for the majority of students. Some alternative settings allow the students to finish school and graduate through alternative programs. These Type I programs are quite different from Types II and III, for they "are schools of choice and are usually popular" (Raywid, 1994, p. 2). Type I programs are also "more pronounced and more long lasting" (Raywid, 1994, p. 5) than the other two types.

Mainstream schools may deal with behavioral problems by the temporary removal of disruptive students, but the literature supports that Type II programs embracing the concept of punishment have short-term success rates (Aronson, 1995). The goal of punitive programs was usually to return the student to the mainstream following behavioral interventions (Raywid, 1994), yet "problems often arise when students must transition back to their base school" (Aronson, 1995).

Type III programs maintain a goal similar to Type II settings, which is to return students to the mainstream. The focus of a Type III setting, however, is to provide a supportive environment, remediate and rehabilitate, and provide academic, social, and emotional support as needed (Raywid, 1994). The success rate of Type III settings has been reported to be short-term for students returning to the mainstream. About the success rates of Type II and III settings, Raywid (1994) wrote the following:

They are costly, because they usually represent low student-teacher ratios; and they are often only temporarily successful. When students return to their regular schools, the problems of disruptive behavior, truancy, or lack of effort recur. The typical conclusion is that the program has failed to fix the students. (p. 3)

If the goal of an alternative school were for students to return to the mainstream at some point in time, it would have been important for the mainstream to provide assistance in transitioning. The literature supported transition services at various school levels: elementary to middle, middle to high school (especially ninth grade), and from alternative to the mainstream (Alspaugh, 1998; Alspaugh & Harting, 1995; Chalker & Brown, 1999; Eccles, et al., 1993; Quint, Miller, Pastor, & Cytron, 1999; Stone, 2003). However, the research revealed limited transition services being provided in public schools for students returning from alternative settings to the mainstream (Chalker & Brown, 1999). Stone (2003) wrote the following about transitional successes from alternative schools to mainstream settings: “It is important to find ways to sustain positive gains when students leave the alternative school. Data regarding this issue is lacking in the literature about alternative schools” (p. 3).

Stone (2003) noted that the limited research about transitional services “reported negative consequences such as decrease in self-esteem, social challenges associated with a move to a new school, and disruptions in friendships” (p. 4). Although the goal of removing disruptive or academically challenging students from the regular environment provided a temporary solution to the problem, the future transition back to the mainstream may be quite unstable, as described below:

The combination of loss of support, a return to the environment that failed the student initially (including negative peer influences), and potential labeling and stigmatization by both peers and teachers, at best may prevent the student from continuing to progress and, at worst, may cause a regression to prior behavior and performance. This regression, or “fade-out,” is associated with many short-term interventions and is clearly detrimental to the student. It also poses a potential threat to the alternative school: if student gains do not survive the transition, base-school faculty and administration may perceive the alternative schools as ineffective and withdraw support. (Aronson, 1995, p. 5).

As evidenced throughout the literature, alternative schools serve a variety of needs, but “there is no ‘one best’ model” (Stone, 2003, p. 4). Students enroll in alternative settings either by choice or by administrative placement. In many instances these same students must return and reengage into the mainstream from which they left. As previously noted, the limited number of studies about students who were temporarily removed to either a Type II or Type III setting have shown little student success in reengagement with the mainstream (Raywid, 1994, 1995, 1998). Research supported

that student reengagement can be enhanced through appropriate transitional services that include the following: (a) case management; (b) reintegration planning; (c) needs assessment; (d) mentoring, counseling; (e) parental involvement; (f) tracking; (g) collaboration with community services; and (h) collaboration between home and alternative schools (Barr & Parrett, 1995; Caudle, 1999; Myers & Kline, 2002; Stone, 2003). Stone (2003) indicated that the greater number of strategies “implemented in a program, the greater the chance of sustaining success” (p. 4).

Stone (2003) also noted that most studies showed that students experienced negative consequences during the transition back in to a mainstream environment, “such as a decrease in self-esteem, social challenges associated with a move to a new school, and disruptions in friendships” (p. 4). Stone added: “Most literature has been vague about what happens when students leave the alternative schools” (p. 4).

Raywid (1994) reported that students often regress upon their return to the mainstream environment, and Stone (2003) explained:

Two alternative school evaluation reports (Alternative Learning Programs Evaluation and Case Studies of Best Practices) submitted by the North Carolina State Board of Education in March 2000 revealed the following: There is a lack of coordination and communication between the home or referring school and the alternative school, and home schools assume no accountability and limited if any transition support when students return to the home school. As a result, students who enroll in alternative schools and apply themselves to improve

behavior and catch up academically, often return to the same conditions in their home school schools that caused them to fail in the first place. (p. 5)

Summary

This chapter presented information pertaining to the history of alternative schools, types of alternative settings, the demand for alternative programs, and transitional challenges to the mainstream environment. Alternative schools have evolved since the 1960s, when they emerged to address racial conflicts over the under-education of minority populations (Brandt, 1994; Lange & Sletten, 2002; Loflin, 2000; Morley, 1990, Raywid, 1998). By the end of the 20th century, alternative schools and programs were defined in a variety of ways and served a variety of needs.

The definitions of three alternative settings provided by Raywid (1990, 1994, 1995, 1998) have been widely accepted in the literature, and the demand for distinct programs following those definitions is clearly documented throughout the United States. The literature provided limited documentation about student success in three programs bearing the “alternative” label, especially about mainstream success for students following placement in any punitive Type II setting.

With America’s efforts to reform schools and make them more accountable for student success, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) has placed specific emphasis on educating every student, regardless of the challenge for educators. Texas’ Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), which as of today, has aligned with NCLB, holds every campus accountable for student performance. The following are some of the major areas assessed through the AEIS annual district and campus reports:

1. State assessment on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) test consisting of five tests based on the core statewide curriculum
2. Attendance rates
3. Dropout rates
4. High school completion/graduation rates
5. Number of disciplinary placements (TEA, 2004a)

Regardless of existing legislative mandates to educate all children, not all students are experiencing variables of school success within the educational system. The United States Department of Education reported: “Five out of every 100 students enrolled in high school in October 1999 left school before October 2000 without successfully completing a high school program” (Kaufman, Alt, & Chapman, 2000, p. iii). Black (2002) received the following responses to the question, “Why do kids drop out of school?”:

One mother said, “My boy quit school when he was 16 because there was no justice in his school. I saw the unfairness for myself. He got suspended for some minor things, but a boy who started a fire never got expelled. . . . A student who dropped out in the 11th grade confided, “I started thinking about dropping out when I was in the ninth grade because I failed two classes. The day my history teacher called me a “loser with no future,” I left for good. (p. 50)

In addition to the preceding responses about why students drop out of school, Black (2002) cited suspensions and expulsions as factors that lead to students eventually dropping out. High-stakes testing such as Texas’ Texas Assessment of Knowledge and

Skills (TAKS) contributed to a higher dropout rate in states mandating high school graduation exams. Other risk factors Black (2002) cited as contributing to dropping out included:

- Social background, including race and ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, family structure, and geographic residence.
- Academic performance, including scholastic ability, test scores, and grade level retention.
- Academic behaviors, including school engagement, grades, course failures, truancy, and discipline problems. (p. 51)

Black (2002) quoted Lee and Burkam:

Students from poor, disadvantaged families and neighborhoods are likely to stay in school when they perceive their interactions with teachers and administrators as positive. Exit interviews with dropouts indicated that half decided to leave schools because they didn't get along with teachers and other students. Many said their teachers didn't care about them, weren't interested in whether they succeeded or failed in school, and weren't willing to provide extra help even when asked. (p. 51)

Since the Texas Legislature adopted policies creating DAEPs, little documentation has been provided detailing the success of students who were placed in these alternative settings. The following concern was cited in "Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs in Texas" (n.d.):

We actually know very little about these alternative programs. The pendulum has swung. For the most part, alternative educational programs are being used as dumping grounds for “undesirable” students who, once they get there, get little or no support. . . . The danger we must avoid is that, in isolating “problem” students rather than improving the climate of regular schools, we may be giving up too easily on the promise of equal opportunity for all. The solution does not lie at either end of the dilemma; it lies somewhere in between. As a nation and in the state of Texas, we can have both. We can find the best way to deal with violence and crime in our schools, and we can have excellence and equity in education for all children. We can and we must. (p. 3)

The results of this study add to the small body of research about student outcomes following placement in disciplinary alternative settings. Galloway (2003) did find that students formerly placed in a Texas DAEP produced “no consistent pattern of improvement or decline [in grades and attendance]” upon their return to the mainstream (p. 71). The present study is focused on variables of school success for students returning to the mainstream environment following punitive placement in a modified Type II setting. If this study about a modified DAEP in Texas follows the trends of previous studies related to disciplinary settings, variables measuring school success are expected to decline during post-placement despite the positive philosophies of a modified Type II setting. These negative expectations are based partially on the fact that administrators and teachers within a nurturing, student-centered alternative setting have no control over the mainstream environment. Existing studies—limited in both number

and scope—are inconclusive about the impact of disciplinary setting on mainstream school success, specifically behavioral achievement (King, Silvey, Holliday, & Johnston, 1998).

Denti and Guerin (1999), Groves (1998) and Raywid (1994) have found that caring and nurturing environments such as the modified Type II setting found in the present study—rather than larger, impersonal environments—have better rates of success due to honoring of the individuality of students. Goodlad addressed Kohn (1999) regarding the status of America’s educational mainstream environment and the possibility of predicting at-risk student success in a traditional mainstream setting. In his comment Goodlad said: “Almost everywhere I go, individuals endeavoring to bring about change report that teachers are paying less and less attention to the needs of individual children and more and more to the ‘standards’ imposed on them” (p. 240). The findings of the present study aid in filling in gaps in the existing data about what is happening to the thousands of students in Texas DAEPs once they are labeled as “troublemakers” and return to the mainstream (“Disciplinary Alternative,” n.d.).

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Alternative School Programs and School Success

School districts throughout Texas are mandated to provide Type II alternative disciplinary settings. The literature supported through a limited number of studies that punitive settings, those focused on “fixing” the student, produced no long-term gains (Cox et al., 1995; Fizzel & Raywid, 1997; Galloway, 2003; Oklahoma Technical Assistance Center, n.d.; Raywid, 1994, 1998; Gregg, 1999). The term “fixing” refers to correcting those imperfections by providing a behavioral or disciplinary rehabilitation so the student attains success within the parameters of the mainstream. “Fixing” means problems lie within the student, not the institution (Raywid, 1994).

Integrating the philosophies of other alternative programs to influence a modified Type II setting can positively affect student success. Raywid (1994) noted: “Student behavior often improves in the supportive environments . . . as does student attendance and credits accumulated” (p. 5). Incorporating the elements of Types I and III programs into a modified Type II program can have benefits for students. As noted in Chapter 2, the most effective programs have been described as caring and nurturing environments that set clear limits that honor the individuality of all students (Denti & Guerin, 1999; Groves, 1998, Raywid, 1994). The following three factors were

determined by Wehlage, Rutner, Smith, Lesko, and Fernandez (1989) and Raywid (1994) to be critical to the success of any alternative school program: “A sense of community, engaging instruction, and the organizational structure to support them” (Appalachia Educational Laboratory, 1998, p. 6). Students assigned to a Type II Discipline Alternative Education Program (DAEP) setting in which they are exposed to the elements of successful alternative programs would find the environment more student-centered than punitive in nature.

As previously noted, the selected school in the study was a modified Type II setting. The school’s academic program and environment positively focused on altering student responses, performance, and achievement rather than blaming the student and focusing solely on behavior. Focusing on student responses, performance, and achievement provided elements of a Type I setting. A nurturing compassionate staff working with students who had been punitively placed for behavioral infractions provided elements of a Type III setting.

This study addresses the following research question: Do students formerly placed in a modified Type II setting show a decrease in the variables that measure school success once they return to the mainstream?

The variables of school success as outlined in No Child Left Behind (NCLB) (TEA, n.d.a.) and Texas’ Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) (TEA, 2004a) are: (a) attendance, (b) passing core courses (English, social studies, science, and math), (c) behavioral achievement, (d) standardized test score achievement, (e) recidivism rate, (f) dropout rate.

Research Design

Type II settings were designed to be places where students were “sentenced” for behavioral infractions in an effort to “fix” them. Once students serve their time, they are returned to the mainstream where they often repeat similar behaviors that led to their initial placement in the Type II setting (Raywid, 1994). The literature supports that alternative schools focusing on systemic changes, such as those within a Type I program, benefit their students and “are quite different in type from those seeking to modify the behavior of students” (Raywid, 1998, p. 11), such as those within a Type II program. Because of curricular and instructional differences from the mainstream, Type I settings are innovative with “atypically positive school climates” (Raywid, 1998, p. 11). However the previous studies have found “very different success rates from the alternative schools focusing on changing students [Type II] and those concentrating on changing schools [Type I]” (Raywid, 1998, p. 11).

The variables of school success were analyzed for students who were formerly placed in a modified Type II setting in an alternative school. Although the students were placed for Chapter 37 violations of the TEC and for district violations of the Student Code of Conduct, the philosophy of the staff was summed up in the school’s Type III professional motto: “If students are not successful, we are not successful.” All the staff of the school supported attitudes found in both Type I and III programs. Almost all of the teachers were selected by the principal because of their focus on helping students regain their educational directions rather than concentrating on continual punishment for the offenses, which caused the students to be placed on the discipline campus.

Connecting with the students and establishing a rapport with each individual are essential elements of the modified Type II setting. The small size of the modified DAEP setting supported the effort for improved student-teacher relationships better than most larger mainstream environments. The attitude of the disciplinary teacher and the focus on the individual are also crucial elements in making the connection with each student.

Four certified teachers taught small core classes. Home campus teachers provided elective assignments, and the alternative school's DAEP instructional staff facilitated the instruction. A Type III nurturing relationship was established through this effort. Some of a Type I program could be found in the interdisciplinary instruction and integration of technology as instructional components.

Students in grades 7 through 11 were included in the study. The sample group included students who were enrolled in a modified Type II program in the spring semester of 2003. Students were placed in the modified Type II program for a minimum of 10 days and a maximum of the entire semester. The inclusion of all students placed in the DAEP regardless of length of stay was needed to ensure a viable sample size. The length of student placement was not selected as an independent variable because the study focused on the success of all students placed in the DAEP during spring 2003. Data were collected for these students for the semester prior to their placement, which was fall 2002, also referred to as the pre-placement semester. Placement in the DAEP occurred in spring 2003. Data for the two subsequent semesters—fall 2003 and spring 2004—following placement were compared to the pre-placement semester data. Two

post-placement semesters were needed in order to provide complete data for this 2-year study.

The analysis of data determined whether the student group demonstrated a significant difference between their post-placement semesters and their pre-placement semester based on the following variables of school success: (a) attendance, (b) passing core courses (English, social studies, science, and math), (c) behavioral achievement, (d) standardized test score achievement, (e) recidivism rate, and (f) dropout rate. Variables of school success data were compared and analyzed by each independent variable: (a) gender, (b) ethnicity, (c) grade level, (d) socioeconomic status (SES), and (e) disciplinary offense.

Population

The purpose of this study was to compare pre-placement variables of school success in a modified Type II setting with post-placement variables of school success in a group of 86 7th- through 11th-grade students. Selecting the population solely from one school provided the researcher accessible data that would not have been available due to confidentiality guidelines required by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB approved the Human Subjects Application No. 04-147 for this study on June 1, 2004, in which the researcher guaranteed the confidentiality of student identities and reliance on archival data accessible through district means.

An alternative school in a rapidly growing school district in north Texas was selected for this study. This alternative school housed two types of alternative programs and complied with both the state's guidelines for non-disciplinary (Type I) and

disciplinary (modified Type II) programs. Type I programs are outlined in the *2002 Alternative Education Accountability Manual* (TEA, 2001), which also specified the rating systems for such schools and the DAEP (Type II) requirements enumerated in the Texas Education Code (TEA, 2001, 2004b).

The modified Type II program in the study was representative of all other DAEPs in Texas since it followed the same state guidelines for other mandated discipline programs. As noted, access to the school's data was a determining factor in site selection. The school had served as a model for developing and improving programs in surrounding districts. Educators from both larger and smaller districts have participated in staff development on the campus.

The district in which the alternative school is located is comprised of approximately 10,000 students. The district has 1 high school, 1 9th-grade center, 2 middle schools, and 10 elementary schools. A second high school is currently under construction. The alternative campus serves only secondary students and offers two separate programs: (a) a Type I program, which is non-disciplinary and comprised of students who choose to enroll in an effort to obtain a high school diploma, and (b) a modified Type II disciplinary program for students removed from the mainstream for disciplinary infractions.

Data Collection

Data for the study were derived from the school district's primary data collection system: Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS). From PEIMS, data were obtained for student attendance, behavior, DAEP recidivism rate, and dropout rate (PEIMS, n.d.). Data for passing core courses were attained through the district's data collection system for grades. All data were collected during the pre-placement semester as well as during the two post-placement semesters.

Data Analysis

The study compared pre-placement data with post placement data. Data were measured and analyzed using the dependent variables for school success: (a) attendance, (b) passing core courses, (c) behavioral achievement, (d) standardized test score achievement, (e) recidivism rate, and (f) dropout rate. Each dependent variable was analyzed by the following independent variables to determine relationships:

1. Gender: A comparison of male and female students
2. Ethnicity: A comparison of students by their ethnicity
3. Grade level: A comparison of students in grades 7-11
4. Socioeconomic status (SES): A comparison was made based on the socioeconomic status of the student. SES was determined by students who qualified for, or did not qualify for, monetary assistance through the school meals program. (TEA, 2004a, 2004b).

5. Disciplinary offense: A comparison was made based on the disciplinary offense that led to the DAEP placement

A twofold process was utilized to compare the data. Since data from the same subjects were studied over a period of time, five separate repeated measures Analyses of Variance (ANOVAs) for three of the dependent variables were used to compare changes in attendance, passing core courses, and behavioral achievement across time—from the one pre-placement to the two post-placement semesters. Specifically, means for the one pre-placement semester were compared to two post-placement semesters for each of these variables. Results were considered significant if $p < .05$. Standardized test score achievement, recidivism rate, and dropout rate were reviewed as descriptive data.

Repeated Measures ANOVAs

Student attendance was calculated to compare student attendance during the one pre-placement semester with student attendance during the two post-placement semesters, for a total of three semesters. Attendance was reported as a proportion, which reflected the total number of days attended compared to the total possible number of days that a student could attend during both the pre-placement semester and the two post-placement semesters; therefore, the total number of days attended divided by the total number of days possible for student attendance determined the proportion of attendance for each student. Each student had three attendance proportions determined: one for the pre-placement semester and one for each of the two post placement semesters. Once the three attendance proportions were determined for each student, a repeated measures ANOVA was utilized to compare them.

A mean score represented semester grade averages for the four core courses: English, social studies, science, and math. A second repeated measures ANOVA compared mean scores from the one pre-placement semester with the two post-placement semesters. Mean scores from the pre-placement semester were compared to two mean scores from the two post-placement semesters in order to compare student transitional progress.

Behavioral achievement for the one pre-placement and two post-placement semesters were compared in the third repeated measures ANOVA. A requirement of PEIMS is that behavioral violations removing students from the classroom must be reported as part of the district's disciplinary record keeping. PEIMS data were utilized to determine the number of incidents for each student (PEIMS, n.d.). The number of behavioral infractions for each student—from the pre-placement semester to the post-placement semesters—was compared. A decrease in violations indicated an improvement in behavior. Conversely, an increase in violations during the post-placement semesters indicated a worsening of behaviors.

Descriptive Data

Other dependent variables of school success for the pre-placement and post-placement semesters of this study—standardized test score achievement, recidivism rate, and dropout rate—were discussed through descriptive data in the following manner:

1. Standardized test score achievement was compared for two years: (a) the year of the placement in the DAEP, 2003; (b) and the following year, 2004, which was the

school year containing both post-placement semesters when students returned to the mainstream. Achievement comparisons were based solely on passing or failing the standardized test as defined by state regulations.

2. Recidivism rate was determined by DAEP placements for any student included in this study during one of the two post-placement semesters.

3. Dropout rate was determined from the number of students within the study who withdrew from the district's mainstream.

As noted previously, each dependent variable was analyzed by independent variables: (a) gender, (b) ethnicity, (c) grade level, (d) socioeconomic status, and (e) disciplinary offense. Students within the population of the study who experienced previous DAEP placements beginning with fall 2000 and prior to pre-placement semester, spring 2003, were represented on a descriptive table. Analyses of these repeating disciplinary students were also disaggregated by the five independent variables.

All data collected in this study were relevant to understanding student success in the mainstream following placement in a DAEP. Alternative schools have been created to serve a variety of purposes, yet previous studies involving Type II programs and their impact on students returning to the mainstream have been limited both in the numbers of studies that have been conducted as well as the number of schools and students studied. Earlier studies in Oklahoma (Oklahoma Technical Assistance Center, n.d.) and Florida (Raywid, 1994) found that punitive programs designed to punish students and return them to the mainstream produced little positive results. As noted previously,

Galloway (2003) found that the students within her study in Texas produced “no consistent pattern of improvement or decline . . . in overall student performance” (p. 71) on two variables measuring school success: grades and attendance; yet her study provided no statistical analyses of student behavior.

Summary

Alternative schools reflect expenditures from a district’s mainstream budget. Type II programs are mandated programs designed to keep mainstream environments safe. Students do not have a choice about attending these programs, and they are placed in them because of behavioral infractions. The goal of many Type II programs is to “fix” the students who have not been successful in the mainstream, then return them after a period of time (Raywid, 1994). Oftentimes, students are returned to the mainstream without any transitional services or accommodations, so students reenter the same environment from which they were removed (Raywid, 1994, 1998). This study compared the pre- and post-placement variables of school success—attendance, passing core courses, behavioral achievement, standardized test score achievement, recidivism rate, and dropout rate—for 7th- through 11th-grade students formerly placed in a modified Type II setting.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This study compared the pre-placement variables of school success in a modified Type II setting with post-placement variables of school success in a group of 86 7th-through 11th-grade students. Students were placed in a north Texas school district's Discipline Alternative Education Program (DAEP) during spring 2003. Student placement ranged from 10 days to the entire semester. The pre-placement semester was fall 2002, and the two post-placement semesters were fall 2003 and spring 2004, which resulted in the study overlapping two consecutive school years.

Not all of the original 86 students remained in the mainstream during the two post-placements semesters, which resulted in excluded data that are presented later in this chapter. The excluded data reflects the students from the original 86 students who withdrew from the mainstream during one of the post-placement semesters. Descriptive data for this group consists of withdrawal information and dropout rates. Students who withdrew from the mainstream were not compared through statistical testing to those students who remained enrolled in the mainstream throughout the 2003-2004 school year.

This chapter presents: (a) the repeated measures Analyses of Variance (ANOVAS) for the dependent variables of attendance, passing core subjects, and

behavioral achievement; and (b) descriptive statistics for standardized test achievement, recidivism rate, and dropout rate.

Analysis of Sample

A comparison of pre- and post-placement dependent variables measuring school success—attendance, passing core courses, behavioral achievement, standardized test score achievement, recidivism and dropout rates—comprised this study. The independent variables—gender, ethnicity, grade level, socioeconomic status, and disciplinary offense—were used to compare and analyze each dependent variable. Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), the statewide data collection system for public schools in Texas, was utilized to collect and organize the following data for this study: attendance, dropout rate, and behavioral incidents resulting in DAEP placements (PEIMS, n.d.).

Three of the dependent variables—attendance, passing core courses, and behavioral achievement—were compared to note changes in pre- and post-placement semester data by each of the identified independent variables listed in the previous paragraph. The analyses consisted of five repeated measures ANOVAs that analyzed these three dependent variables across time—totaling fifteen repeated measures ANOVAs. In order to utilize this statistical procedure, data must be available at each measurement point. This study had three measurement points. Measurement points occurred during the one pre-placement semester and the two post-placement semesters (Gall et al., 1996). If student data were available during each of the semesters within the study, the data were considered eligible to remain within the study. The three remaining

dependent variables—standardized test score achievement, recidivism rate, and dropout rate—were only analyzed by each independent variable descriptively.

Another aspect of using repeated measures ANOVAs regarded sphericity, which states that independent variables have no correlation. If independent variables are converted to z scores and graphed, the points would fall in a circular or spherical pattern around the origin (origin = 0). When sphericity assumption is not met, it is assumed that the points fall outside the theoretical sphere. Adjustments were made to ANOVA results using the Greenhouse-Geiser epsilon when Mauchly's sphericity assumptions were violated ("An Introduction to Sphericity," n.d.; Hampton, n.d.). Two other assumptions of repeated measures ANOVAs—indepenence of observation and data from a normally distributed population—were also met, as indicated by skewness and kurtosis values all within normal range (Huck, 2003).

Repeated Measures ANOVAs

Dependent Variables: Attendance, Core Courses, and Behavior

The research hypothesis for this study stated that students formerly placed in a modified Type II setting will achieve less success in the mainstream than the success they experienced prior to their entry into the modified Type II program. Results were considered significant if $p < .05$. Descriptive data comparing means from the pre- and post-placement semesters for the three dependent variables—attendance, behavior, and core courses—are provided in Tables 2, 3, and 4, respectively.

Of the original 86 students placed in the study's DAEP during spring 2003, 53 students had data available for calculating both pre- and post-placement attendance proportions (Table 2). Attendance data do not reflect full-semester attendance for every one of the 53 students during the post-semester. If students attended any time during the post-placement semesters, their time was calculated as a proportion. The same 53 students comprised the sample for calculating and comparing the number of pre- and post-placement behavioral incidents (Table 3). Data for behavior were derived from the number of incidents violating the Student Code of Conduct. A greater mean for the semester indicates a worsening of behavior across time. Conversely, a lower mean for behavior indicated an improvement in behavior. Since passing core courses was measured by semester averages, only those students who attended and attained semester grade averages for all pre- and post-semesters were considered part of the data sample. Only 47 of the original 86 students were considered for this comparison (see Table 4). Students who had incomplete data for core course averages were excluded from the study. The incomplete data provided the recidivism and dropout rates, which are discussed later in this chapter.

Table 1 provides the demographics for the original 86 students who were placed in the DAEP for spring 2003. The majority of students (57) were male. There were 29 female students. The majority of students were white, followed by Hispanic and African American. Almost half of the students were in the tenth grade at the time of placement, followed by eighth, eleventh, ninth, and seventh grades. Only five of the students received monetary assistance in the school lunch program, and the majority of students

were placed in the DAEP for behavioral infractions involving persistent misbehavior.

Violation of drugs was the second leading offense resulting in DAEP placement.

Table 1

Demographics of the Original Sample of 86 DAEP Students

Independent Variable		<i>n</i> = 86	% of Total <i>n</i>
Gender	Male	57	66.3%
	Female	29	33.7%
Ethnicity	African American	5	5.8%
	Hispanic	16	18.6%
	White	65	75.6%
Grade Level	7	6	7.0%
	8	20	23.3%
	9	8	9.3%
	10	42	48.84%
	11	10	11.6%
SES (meal assistance)	No	81	94.2%
	Yes	5	5.8%
Disciplinary Offense	Drugs	23	26.7%
	Alcohol	4	4.7%
	False alarm	4	4.7%
	Assault	5	5.8%
	Theft	3	3.5%
	Persistent misbehavior	47	54.7%

Demographics of the original sample of 86 DAEP students. The means for attendance for those 53 students attending portions of the pre- and post-placement semesters is provided in Table 2. Student attendance increased during the first post-placement

semester and dropped in the second post-placement semester. Overall, attendance declined by the end of the study in comparison to the pre-placement semester.

Table 2

Comparison of Pre-placement with Post-Placement Semester Attendance Proportions

<u>Attendance Proportions: $n = 53$</u>		
<u>Dependent Variable</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Standard Deviation</u>
Attendance Fall 2002	91.89	13.63
Attendance Fall 2003	94.06	8.60
Attendance Spring 2004	88.94	3.55

As noted, students considered in the passing core courses dependant variable had to achieve semester grade averages. Only 47 of the original 86 students remained in the mainstream during the two post-placement semesters (see Table 3 for these averages). Averages for both of the two post-placement semesters reflects a decline in averages for core courses following the placement semester in the district's DAEP.

Table 3

Comparison of Pre-placement with Post-Placement Semester Core Course Averages

<u>Core Course Averages: $n = 47$</u>		
<u>Dependent Variable</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Standard Deviation</u>
Core Averages Fall 2002	75.66	8.69
Core Averages Fall 2003	73.34	9.86
Core Averages Spring 2004	72.11	10.03

Table 4 displays the average number of behavioral incidents incurred by the 53 students who attended all or portions of each of the three semesters. The number of behavioral incidents increased overall during both post-placement semesters in comparison to the pre-placement semester.

Table 4

Comparison of Pre-placement with Post-Placement Semester of Behavioral Incidents

<u>Behavioral Incidents: $n = 53$</u>		
<u>Dependent Variable</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Standard Deviation</u>
Behavioral Incidents Fall 2002	1.96	2.39
Behavioral Incidents Fall 2003	2.58	3.53
Behavioral Incidents Spring 2004	3.25	4.45

Note. Independent variables: gender, ethnicity, grade level, SES, and disciplinary offense.

The three dependent variables—attendance, passing core courses, and behavior—were compared across time by the five independent variables: gender, ethnicity, grade level, Socioeconomic Status (SES), and disciplinary offense. Descriptive data tables and figures for line graphs are provided for each comparison, and repeated measures ANOVAs were utilized to determine if there were significant effects placed on dependent variables by each of the independent variables. The first comparison for the three dependent variables was by gender.

Analysis of sample by gender. Table 5 displays the semester grade averages for the four core courses analyzed by gender for each of the pre- and post-placement

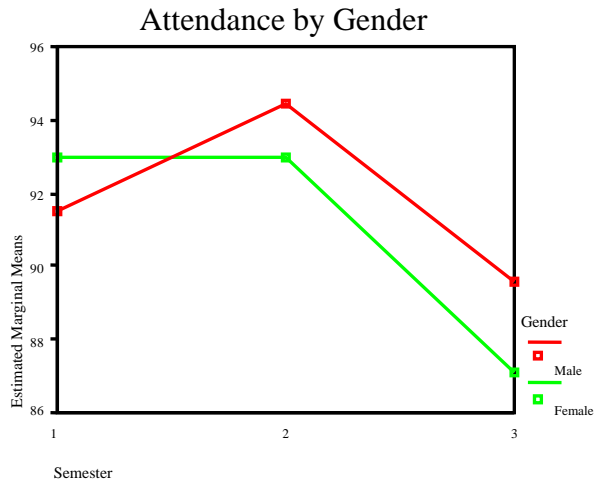
semesters. Males showed an increase in core course averages during the first post-placement semester, and females experienced a slight decline. Both genders experienced a decline in core course averages during the second post-placement semester.

Table 5

Descriptive Comparison of Attendance by Gender

Attendance Proportion	Gender	<i>n</i> = 53	Mean	Standard Deviation
Fall 2002	Male	39	91.49	15.55
	Female	14	93.00	5.87
Fall 2003	Male	39	94.46	8.99
	Female	14	92.93	7.58
Fall 2003	Male	39	89.59	11.24
	Female	14	87.14	18.99

Figure 1 illustrates the effect of gender on attendance. Male students demonstrated an increase between the pre-placement semester and the first post-placement semester, yet sustained a decline between the first post- and second post-placement semesters. Female students maintained basically the same attendance proportions between the pre-placement semester and the first post-placement semester; however, they experienced a drop in their second post-placement period.



*

Figure 1. Attendance by gender.

Table 6 provides the results of the two-factor repeated measures ANOVA, which revealed a nonsignificant main effect for attendance, $F(1.40, 71.46) = 2.91$, $p > .05$, and a nonsignificant interaction effect between gender and attendance, $F(1.40, 71.46) = .41$, $p > .05$. The effect size (η^2) reported within 1% accuracy in variability when attendance was compared by gender.

Table 7 reveals that females maintained higher core course averages throughout the study, and both group's averages remained within a small range throughout the pre- and post-placement semesters.

Table 6

Comparison of Attendance Proportions by Gender

Source	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	η^2
Gender	20.90	1	20.90	.089	.77	
Error (between)	19990.87	51	235.12	2		
Attendance	625.47	1.40	446.39	2.91	.08	
Gender*Attendance	88.57	1.40	63.21	.41	.59	.001
Error (within)	10948.64	71.46	153.22			
Total	23674.45					

Table 7

Descriptive Comparison of Passing Core Courses by Gender

Core Subject Average	Gender	<i>n</i> = 47	Mean	Standard Deviation
Fall 2002	Male	35	70.66	8.70
	Female	12	78.50	5.63
Fall 2003	Male	35	72.63	10.57
	Female	12	75.42	7.44
Spring 2004	Male	35	70.94	10.11
	Female	12	75.50	9.35

Figure 2 displays the effect of gender on core course averages. Male students demonstrated an increase between their first pre-placement semester and the first post-placement semester; however, they experienced a decline between their second post-placement semester and the final semester in the study. Although females maintained

slightly higher semester averages, they maintained a decrease in the averages for core courses throughout the study.

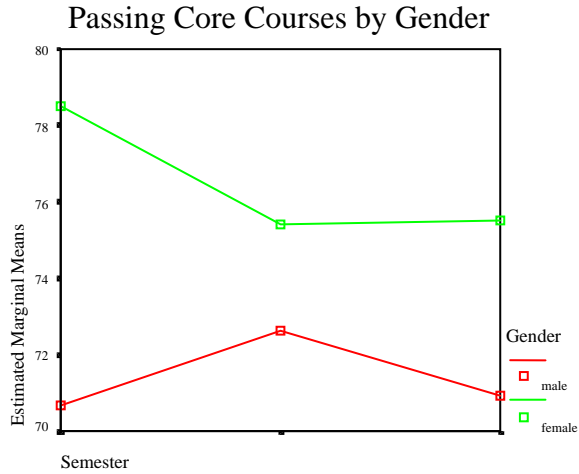


Figure 2. Passing core courses by gender.

Table 8 provides the results of the two-factor repeated measures ANOVA, which revealed a nonsignificant main effect for passing core courses, $F(2, 90) = .50$, $p > .05$ and a nonsignificant interaction effect between gender and core courses, $F(2, 90) = 1.78$, $p > .05$. The η^2 reported within 9.3% accuracy in variability when core courses were compared by gender.

Table 9 provides the descriptive comparison of behavioral incidents by gender. Throughout the study, males experienced a greater number of behavioral incidents than did females in each of the pre- and post-placement semesters.

Table 8

Comparison of Passing Core Courses by Gender

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p	eta ²
Gender	687.13	1	687.13	3.52	.067	
Error (between)	8796.36	45	195.48			
Core Courses	33.27	2	16.64	.50	.61	
Gender*Core						
Courses	117.59	2	58.79	1.78	.17	.093
Error (within)	2972.49	90	33.03			
Total	147413.93					

Table 9

Descriptive Comparison of Behavioral Achievement by Gender

Behavioral Incidents	Gender	n = 53	Mean	Standard Deviation
Fall 2002	Male	39	2.25	2.60
	Female	14	1.14	1.46
Fall 2003	Male	39	2.87	3.85
	Female	14	1.79	2.36
Fall 2004	Male	39	3.87	4.93
	Female	14	1.50	1.95

Figure 3 displays the effect of gender on behavioral achievement. As previously noted, an increase in averages for behavioral infractions indicated a worsening of behaviors throughout the time of the study. Males demonstrated an increase throughout

the study of behavioral incidents. Female students also demonstrated an increase in behavioral incidents, but not as substantially as the male students within the sample.



Figure 3. Behavioral achievement by gender.

Table 10 provides the results of the two-factor repeated measures ANOVA, which revealed a nonsignificant main effect for behavioral achievement, $F(1.67, 84.97) = 1.11, p > .05$ and a nonsignificant interaction effect between gender and behavioral achievement, $F(1.67, 84.97) = .60, p > .05$. The η^2 reported within 2.3% accuracy in variability when behavioral achievement was compared by gender.

Analysis of sample by ethnicity. The three dependent variables were compared by the ethnicity of students comprising the sample of the study. The ethnic makeup of the study consisted of African American, Hispanic, and White students.

Table 10

Comparison of Behavioral Achievement by Gender

Source	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	η^2
Gender	71.76	1	71.77	3.85	.06	
Error (between)	949.81	51	18.627			
Behavior	20.55	1.67	12.34	1.11	.33	
Gender*Behavior	11.12	1.67	6.67	.60	.52	.023
Error (within)	941.92	84.97	11.09			
Total	1995.16					

Table 11 displays the descriptive comparison of attendance compared by the three ethnic groups. African American students demonstrated an increase in attendance during the first post-placement semester. Although they experienced a decrease in the second post-placement semester, they concluded the study with a very slight increase in overall attendance. The Hispanic group experienced a decrease in attendance in the two post-placement semesters in comparison to the pre-placement semester. Overall, White students had the lowest attendance, which further decreased by the end of the study.

Table 11

Descriptive Comparison of Attendance by Ethnicity

Attendance Proportions	Ethnicity	<i>n</i> = 53	Mean	Standard Deviation
Fall 2002	African American	4	92.25	6.45
	Hispanic	9	95.00	3.04
	White	40	91.15	15.48
Fall 2003	African American	4	99.00	1.15
	Hispanic	9	93.11	7.32
	White	40	93.78	9.21
Spring 2004	African American	7	92.50	3.11
	Hispanic	9	90.11	7.13
	White	40	88.33	15.22

Figure 4 displays the effect of ethnicity on attendance. African American students demonstrated an increase in attendance between the first pre-placement semester and the first post-placement semester, but showed a decrease in attendance between the first post-placement semester and the final semester of the study. White students followed a similar pattern of attendance demonstrated by the African American students; however, Hispanic students demonstrated a continual decrease in attendance across time between the pre- and post-placement semesters.

Table 12 provides the results of the two-factor repeated measures ANOVA, which revealed a nonsignificant main effect for attendance, $F(1.39, 69.36) = 1.33$, $p > .05$, and a nonsignificant interaction effect between ethnicity and attendance, $F(2.77, 69.36) = .28$, $p > .05$. The η^2 reported within 4.1% accuracy in variability when attendance was compared by ethnicity.

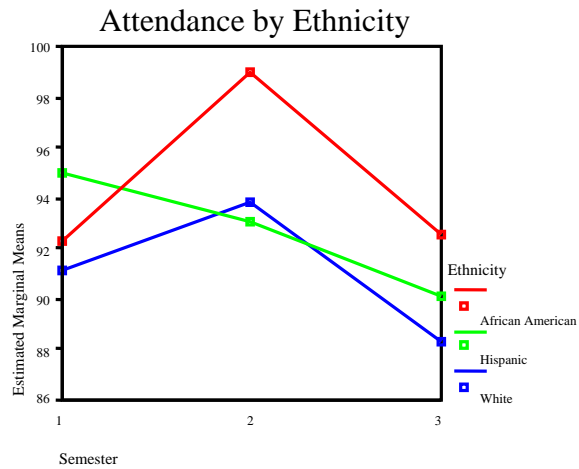


Figure 4. Attendance by ethnicity.

Table 12

Comparison of Attendance by Ethnicity

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p	eta ²
Ethnicity	173.84	2	86.92	.37	.69	
Error (between)	11837.94	50	236.76			
Attendance	289.43	1.39	208.64	1.33	.26	
Ethnicity*Attendance	122.77	2.77	44.25	.28	.82	.041
Error (within)	10914.44	69.36	157.36			
Total	23338.41					

Table 13 reveals a reduction in core course averages in the two post-placement semesters for African American students, yet an increase for Hispanic students. White students' grades were basically unchanged from pre- to post-placement semesters.

Table 13

Descriptive Comparison of Passing Core Courses by Ethnicity

Core Courses	Ethnicity	<i>n</i> = 47	Mean	Standard Deviation
Fall 2002	African American	4	69.50	6.08
	Hispanic	7	69.00	11.60
	White	36	73.72	8.21
Fall 2003	African American	4	61.00	5.47
	Hispanic	7	74.00	12.44
	White	36	74.58	8.93
Spring 2004	African American	4	63.50	11.56
	Hispanic	7	73.00	13.33
	White	36	72.89	8.99

Figure 5 displays the effect of ethnicity on core course averages. African American students demonstrated an overall decline across time in grades. The greatest decline for those students is evidenced between the pre-placement and first post-placement semester. Overall, Hispanic student core course averages increased across time. White student core course averages experienced a slight overall decrease from the beginning of the study to the end despite a slight increase during the first post-placement semester.

Table 14 provides the results of the two-factor repeated measures ANOVA, which revealed a nonsignificant main effect for passing core courses, $F(2, 88) = .19$, $p > .05$ and a nonsignificant interaction effect between ethnicity and passing core courses, $F(4, 88) = 2.08$, $p > .05$. The η^2 reported within 20% accuracy in variability when core courses were compared by ethnicity.

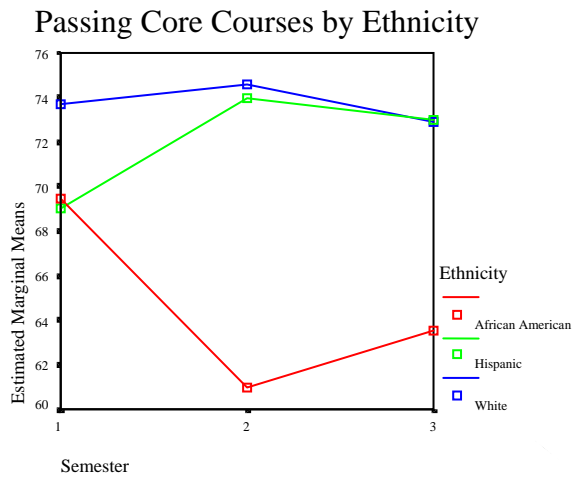


Figure 5. Passing core courses by ethnicity.

Table 14

Comparison of Passing Core Courses by Ethnicity

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p	eta ²
Ethnicity	899.61	2	449.81	2.31	.11	
Error (between)	8583.88	44	195.09			
Core Courses	11.91	2	5.96	.19	.83	
Ethnicity*Core Courses	266.44	4	66.61	2.08	.09	0.20
Error (within)	2823.65	88	32.09			
Total	12585.49					

Table 15 displays the comparison of behavioral achievement by ethnicity throughout the pre- and post-placement semesters. The African American students experienced the largest increase in behavioral infractions during the post-placement

semesters in comparison to the pre-placement semester. All three groups showed an increase in behavioral infractions following placement in the DAEP.

Figure 6 displays the effect of ethnicity on behavioral achievement. As previously noted, a higher average for behavioral infractions indicated a worsening of behavior when compared across time. African American students experienced the greatest increase in behavioral infractions, which was evidenced throughout all semesters of the study. Like the African American students, both the Hispanic students and White students demonstrated an increase in behavioral incidents throughout the study.

Table 15

Descriptive Comparison of Behavioral Achievement by Ethnicity

Behavioral Incidents	Ethnicity	<i>n</i> = 53	Mean	Standard Deviation
Fall 2002	African American	4	3.75	2.50
	Hispanic	9	2.22	1.86
	White	40	1.73	2.46
Fall 2003	African American	4	5.25	4.65
	Hispanic	9	3.44	5.00
	White	40	2.13	2.95
Spring 2004	African American	4	7.00	5.94
	Hispanic	9	3.67	4.39
	White	40	2.78	4.25

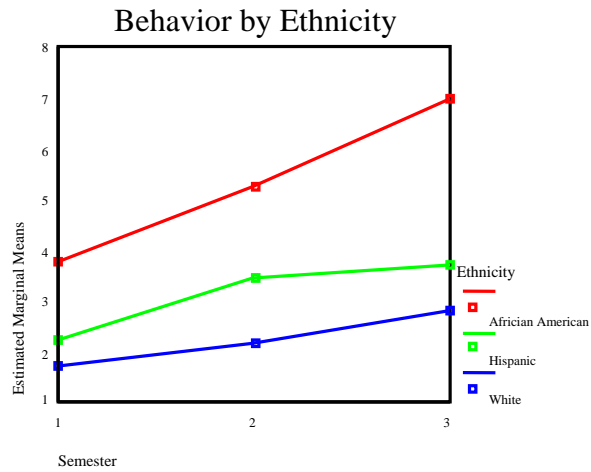


Figure 6. Behavioral achievement by ethnicity.

Table 16 provides the results of the two-factor repeated measures ANOVA, which revealed a nonsignificant main effect for behavioral achievement, $F(1.65, 82.64) = 2.27, p > .05$ and a nonsignificant interaction effect between ethnicity and behavioral achievement, $F(3.54, 82.64) = .29, p > .05$. The η^2 reported within 3.4% accuracy in variability when behavioral achievement was compared by ethnicity.

Analysis of sample by grade level. Students comprising the sample were in grades 7 through 11 during their placement in DAEP. Table 17 shows a marked improvement in 11th-grade students from the pre-placement semester throughout both post-placement semesters. Tenth graders continually declined in attendance throughout the study, and seventh, eighth, and ninth graders experienced initial increases during post-placement, then a decline during the second half of post-placement.

Table 16

Comparison of Behavioral Achievement by Ethnicity

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p	eta ²
Ethnicity	115.11	2	57.56	3.18	.05	
Error (between)	906.46	50	18.13			
Behavior	42.84	1.65	25.92	2.27	.12	
Ethnicity*Behavior	10.89	3.54	3.08	.29	.85	.034
Error (within)	942.14	82.64	11.40			
Total	2017.44					

Table 17

Descriptive Comparison of Attendance by Grade Level

Attendance Proportion	Grade During Placement	Level DAEP	n = 53	Mean	Standard Deviation
Fall 2002	7	5		93.00	2.74
	8	15		91.07	10.07
	9	6		95.00	3.69
	10	22		94.82	6.89
	11	5		76.60	37.78
Fall 2003	7	5		95.40	2.97
	8	15		92.60	13.03
	9	6		96.67	3.14
	10	22		93.41	7.73
	11	5		96.80	1.09
Spring 2004	7	5		88.00	3.16
	8	15		90.33	11.22
	9	6		94.50	3.78
	10	22		84.90	17.96
	11	5		96.80	1.92

Figure 7 displays the effect of grade level on attendance. During the pre-placement semester, eleventh graders had the lowest attendance of all the grade levels. During post-placement, those eleventh graders demonstrated a significant increase during the first semester of post-placement and maintained that rate throughout the second post-placement semester. Initially, 7th-, 8th-, and 9th-grade students improved slightly from their pre-placement semester and experienced a decline in the final post-placement semester, resulting in lower attendance across time. Tenth graders showed a decline in attendance following their return to the mainstream during both post-placement semesters.

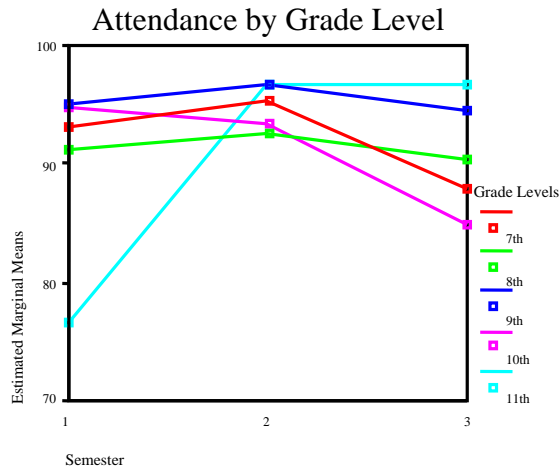


Figure 7. Line graph comparing attendance by grade level.

The only significant interaction found in the comparison of the three dependent variables by the five independent variables was a significant interaction effect between grade level and attendance noted in Table 18. Table 18 provides the results of the two-

factor repeated measures ANOVA, which revealed a nonsignificant main effect for attendance, $F(1.47, 84) = 2.71, p > .05$ and a significant interaction effect between grade level and attendance, $F(5.89, 84) = 2.86, p < .05$. The η^2 reported within 27.8% accuracy in variability when attendance was compared by grade level.

Table 18

Comparison of Attendance by Grade Level

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p	η^2
Grade Level	321.29	4	80.33	.330	.86	
Error (between)	11690.47	78	243.55			
Attendance	503.26	1.47	341.99	2.71	.09	
Grade Level*						
Attendance	2124.57	5.89	360.94	2.86	.02	.278
Error (within)	2927.14	84	34.85			
Total	17566.75					

Table 19 displays the comparison for core subject averages from pre- to post-placement semesters. All grade levels maintained passing averages for core courses when measured across time. Seventh and eleventh graders demonstrated an increase in grades during post-placement in comparison to pre-placement. Ninth and tenth graders demonstrated a lower core course average during the second post-placement semester than during pre-placement. Eighth graders demonstrated a decline in core course averages throughout the study.

Table 19

Descriptive Comparison of Passing Core Courses by Grade Level

Core Averages	Subject	Grade Level During DAEP Placement	$n = 47$	Mean	Standard Deviation
Fall 2002		7	4	74.00	13.04
		8	14	73.29	6.56
		9	5	71.40	7.89
		10	19	72.53	8.32
		11	5	71.60	14.89
Fall 2003		7	4	75.75	13.94
		8	14	72.14	8.66
		9	5	71.60	10.41
		10	19	73.16	9.69
		11	5	77.20	12.83
Spring 2004		7	4	78.00	11.97
		8	14	71.43	6.99
		9	5	70.60	12.42
		10	19	71.00	11.64
		11	5	75.80	7.89

Figure 8 displays the effect of grade level on core course averages. Seventh and eleventh graders demonstrated an increase in core course averages across time. Ninth and tenth graders experienced an increase between the pre-placement semester and the first post-placement semester. Both declined during the second post-placement semester, resulting in lower core course averages at the conclusion of the study than during pre-placement. Core course averages for eighth graders declined throughout the study.

Passing Core Courses by Grade Level

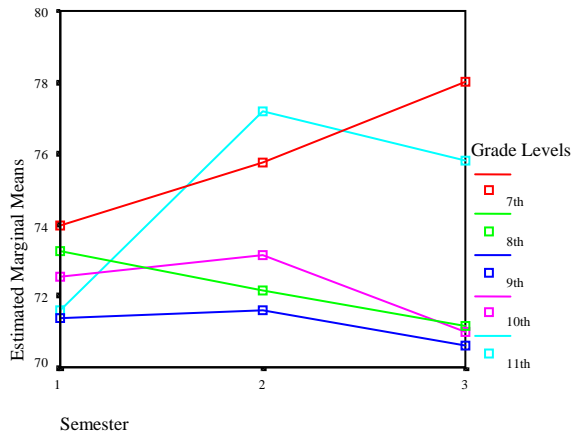


Figure 8. Passing core courses by grade level.

Table 20 provides the results of the two-factor repeated measures ANOVA, which revealed a nonsignificant main effect for passing core courses, $F(2, 84) = .46$, $p > .05$ and a nonsignificant interaction effect between grade level and passing core courses, $F(8, 84) = .59$, $p > .05$. The η^2 reported within 10.6% accuracy in variability when core courses were compared by grade level.

Table 21 displays a comparison by average number of behavioral incidents throughout the pre- and post placement semesters by grade level. The incidents of behavioral infractions decreased for eighth and eleventh graders across time yet increased for seventh, ninth, and tenth graders.

Table 20

Comparison of Passing Core Courses by Grade Level

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p	eta ²
Grade Level	251.93	4	62.98	.29	.89	
Error (between)	9231.56	42	219.79			
Core Courses	32.04	2	160.02	.46	.63	
Grade Level*Core Courses	162.95	8	20.37	.59	.79	.106
Error (within)	2927.14	84	34.85			
Total	12605.62					

Table 21

Descriptive Comparison of Behavioral Achievement by Grade Level

Behavioral Incidents	Grade Level During DAEP Placement	n = 53	Mean	Standard Deviation
Fall 2002	7	5	1.20	2.68
	8	15	2.33	2.56
	9	6	2.33	1.37
	10	22	1.95	2.63
	11	5	1.80	2.17
Fall 2003	7	5	2.80	3.83
	8	15	1.87	2.88
	9	6	2.17	2.71
	10	22	3.18	3.94
	11	5	2.40	4.83
Spring 2004	7	5	2.60	2.07
	8	15	1.73	7.24
	9	6	4.50	5.95
	10	22	4.64	5.41
	11	5	.80	1.30

Figure 9 displays the effect of grade level on behavioral achievement. Across all semesters, seventh, ninth, and tenth graders demonstrated an increase in behavioral

infractions. Seventh graders experienced an increase during the first post-placement semester and a small decline in the second post-placement semester; however, their overall average increased throughout the study. During the first post-placement semester, ninth graders experienced a decline in infractions; however, those students experienced an increase during the final semester of the study that resulted in an overall increase from the initial pre-placement mean. Tenth graders demonstrated an increase in means, indicating a worsening of behavior throughout the study. Behavioral averages for the eighth grade declined slightly throughout the study. Eleventh graders initially experienced an increase during the beginning of the post-placement period, yet experienced a decline in the second semester of post-placement that resulted in an overall reduction of behavioral incidents.

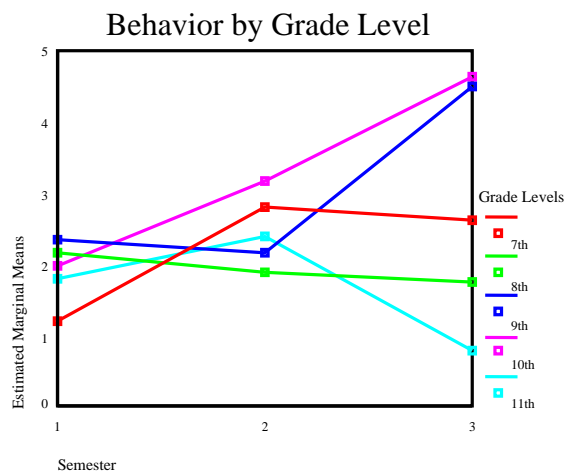


Figure 9. Behavioral achievement by grade level.

Table 22 provides the results of the two-factor repeated measures ANOVA, which revealed a nonsignificant main effect for behavioral achievement, $F(1.61, 77.26) = .96, p > .05$ and a nonsignificant interaction effect between grade level and behavioral achievement, $F(6.44, 77.26) = .97, p > .05$. The η^2 reported within 19.2% accuracy in variability when behavioral achievement was compared by grade level.

Table 22

Comparison of Behavioral Achievement by Grade Level

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p	η^2
Grade Level	68.24	4	17.06	.86		
Error (between)	953.33	48	19.86			
Behavioral Grade Level*Behavioral	17.64	1.61	10.96	.96	.37	
Error (within)	71.38	6.44	11.09	.97	.45	.192
Total	881.65	77.26	11.41			
	1992.24					

Analysis of sample by SES. Student SES is determined by the qualifications for monetary assistance in the public schools' meals programs. Qualifying students are considered economically disadvantaged by both state and federal accountability systems (TEA, n.d.a., 2004a). A comparison was made between students who were eligible for the meal program during the time of the DAEP placement and students who were not eligible. No indicates ineligibility; yes indicates eligibility.

Table 23 shows that both student groups—those receiving federal assistance and those not receiving federal assistance—experienced an increase in attendance during the first pre-placement semester and a decline in attendance during the second post-placement semester.

Table 23

Descriptive Comparison of Attendance by Socioeconomic Status (SES)

Attendance Proportion	SES	<i>n</i> = 53	Mean	Standard Deviation
Fall 2002	No	49	91.63	14.11
	Yes	4	95.00	4.24
Fall 2003	No	49	93.76	8.86
	Yes	4	97.75	2.63
Spring 2004	No	49	89.08	14.08
	Yes	4	87.25	2.06

Figure 10 displays the effect of SES on attendance. Students eligible for monetary assistance for the school's meals program and those students ineligible for the program were compared for attendance throughout the study. Both groups demonstrated an increase in attendance during the first post-placement semester; however, both groups demonstrated an overall decline during the second post-placement semester, which resulted in a decrease in attendance across time for both groups. The students receiving assistance through the meals program demonstrated a greater decrease in attendance throughout the study.

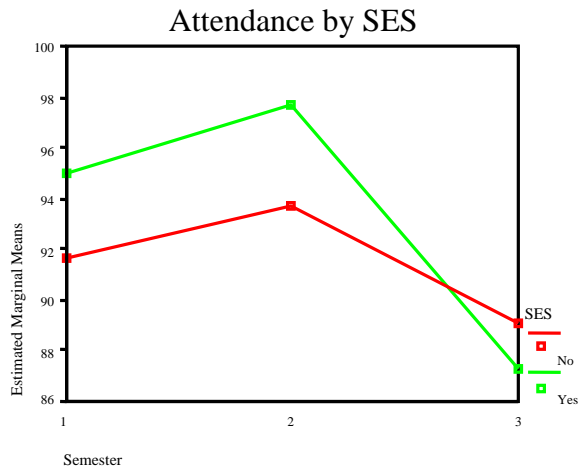


Figure 10. Attendance by socioeconomic status (SES).

Table 24 provides the results of the two-factor repeated measures ANOVA, which revealed a nonsignificant main effect for attendance, $F(1.39, 71.00) = 2.07$, $p > .05$ and a nonsignificant interaction effect between SES and attendance, $F(1.39, 71.00) = .35$, $p > .05$. The η^2 reported within 2.4% accuracy in variability when attendance was compared by SES.

Table 25 reveals that those students in the study receiving monetary assistance for the school meals program did not experience passing averages for core courses in any of the pre- and post-placement semesters. Despite the lack of passing averages, there was a slight increase in the scores during the post-semesters. Students who did not receive assistance in the meals program retained passing averages for the core courses throughout both pre-and post-placement semesters.

Table 24

Comparison of Attendance by Socioeconomic Status (SES)

Source	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	η^2
SES	327.71	1	37.71	.16	.69	
Error (between)	119794.07	51	234.79			
Attendance	443.88	1.39	318.83	2.07	.15	
SES*Attendance	75.65	1.39	54.34	.35	.63	.024
Error (within)	10961.55	71.00	154.38			
Total	131602.84					

Table 25

Descriptive Comparison of Passing Core Courses by Socioeconomic Status (SES)

Core Averages	Course	SES	<i>n</i> = 47	Mean	Standard Deviation
Fall 2002		No	43	73.30	8.57
		Yes	4	65.75	7.80
Fall 2003		No	43	73.72	9.85
		Yes	4	69.25	10.47
Spring 2004		No	43	72.58	10.12
		Yes	4	67.00	8.29

Figure 11 displays the effect of SES on core course averages. Students not participating in the meal assistance program maintained higher grade averages but showed a slight decrease in core averages across time. Students participating in the meals program demonstrated an increase in grades during the first post-placement

semester and a decline during the second post-placement semester, which resulted in a slight increase in grade averages across time.

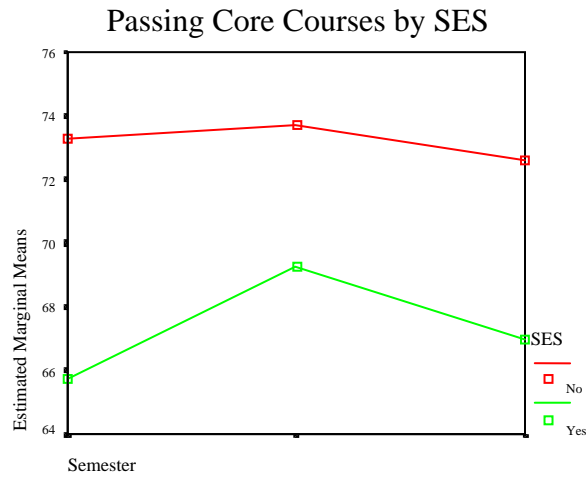


Figure 11. Passing core courses by socioeconomic status (SES).

Table 26 provides the results of the two-factor repeated measures ANOVA, which revealed a nonsignificant main effect for passing core courses, $F(2, 90) = .49$, $p > .05$ and a nonsignificant interaction effect between SES and passing core courses, $F(2, 90) = .26$, $p > .05$. The η^2 reported within 1.4% accuracy in variability when passing core courses were compared by SES.

Table 27 displays the means of behavioral incidents compared by SES. Overall, students identified as economically disadvantaged experienced a greater number of behavioral incidents than those who were not identified as economically disadvantaged.

Table 26

Comparison of Passing Core Courses by Socioeconomic Status (SES)

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p	eta ²
SES	378.06	1	378.06	1.87	1.78	
Error (between)	9104.43	45	202.34			
Core Courses	33.09	2	16.54	.49	.62	
SES*Core Courses	17.83	2	8.91	.26	.77	.014
Error (within)	3072.26	90	34.14			
Total	12605.40					

Table 27

Descriptive Comparison of Behavioral Achievement by Socioeconomic Status (SES)

Behavioral Incidents	SES	n = 53	Mean	Standard Deviation
Fall 2002	No	49	1.86	2.27
	Yes	4	3.25	3.77
Fall 2003	No	49	2.69	3.62
	Yes	4	1.25	1.89
Spring 2004	No	49	3.18	4.61
	Yes	4	4.00	1.41

Figure 12 displays the effect of SES on behavioral achievement. Both groups of students—those students receiving monetary assistance for meals and those students not receiving assistance—demonstrated an increase in behavioral incidents across time. Both groups accumulated higher means during the second post-placement semester than during the first post-placement semester. The means for students not receiving meals assistance increased throughout the study, whereas the students receiving assistance

experienced a decline in behavioral infractions during the first post-placement semester and then an increase in the second post-placement, which resulted in the overall increase in behavioral infractions.

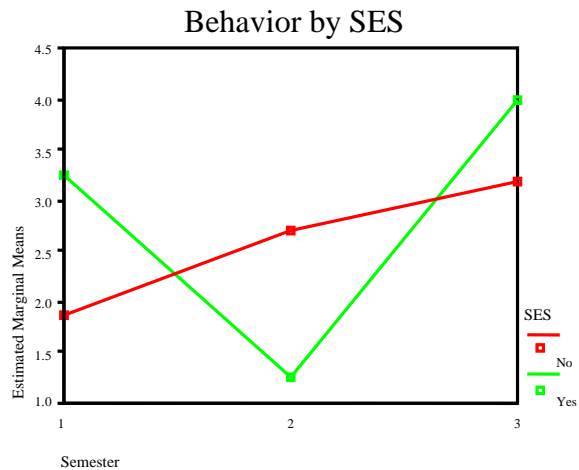


Figure 12. Behavioral achievement by socioeconomic status (SES).

Table 28 provides the results of the two-factor repeated measures ANOVA, which revealed a nonsignificant main effect for behavioral achievement, $F(1.66, 84.61) = 1.09, p > .05$ and a nonsignificant interaction effect between SES and behavioral achievement, $F(1.66, 84.61) = .91, p > .05$. The η^2 reported within 4.0% accuracy in variability when behavioral achievement was compared by SES.

Table 28

Comparison of Behavioral Achievement by Socioeconomic Status (SES)

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p	eta ²
SES	.72	1	.72	.04	.85	
Error (between)	1020.85	51	20.02			
Behavioral	19.92	1.66	12.01	1.09	.33	
SES*Behavioral	16.63	1.66	10.02	.91	.39	.040
Error (within)	936.41	84.61	11.07			
Total	1994.53					

Analysis of sample by disciplinary offense. During spring 2003, students were placed in the DAEP for committing an offense involving one of the following: (a) drugs, (b) alcohol, (c) false alarms, (d) assault, (e) theft, or (f) persistent misbehavior. Table 29 shows that students who were placed for drugs, false alarms, theft, and persistent misbehavior demonstrated a decline in attendance across time. Students placed for alcohol offenses demonstrated a 2.5 point increase in attendance during the first post-placement semester and a 2.5 point decline in the second post-placement semester. Overall by the second post-placement semester, student attendance was lowest for students who committed assaults or who were involved in persistent misbehavior offenses. Students placed for assault demonstrated a 27.7 point increase in attendance by the second post-placement semester.

Table 29

Descriptive Comparison of Attendance by Disciplinary Offense

Attendance Proportions	Disciplinary Offense	<i>n</i> = 53	Mean	Standard Deviation
Fall 2002	Drugs	18	94.89	5.21
	Alcohol	2	92.50	6.36
	False alarm	1	98.00	.
	Assault	3	68.67	50.85
	Theft	2	99.00	1.41
	Persistent misbehavior	27	91.67	8.90
Fall 2003	Drugs	18	95.94	3.70
	Alcohol	2	95.00	2.83
	False alarm	1	97.00	.
	Assault	3	96.33	1.15
	Theft	2	88.67	.00
	Persistent misbehavior	27	91.93	11.29
Spring 2004	Drugs	18	93.06	5.48
	Alcohol	2	92.50	6.36
	False alarm	1	96.00	.
	Assault	3	96.33	3.79
	Theft	2	83.50	7.78
	Persistent misbehavior	27	85.26	17.47

Figure 13 displays the effect of disciplinary offenses on attendance. Overall, students placed in the DAEP for drugs, false alarms, theft, and persistent misbehavior demonstrated a decrease in attendance across time. Attendance for students placed for alcohol offenses remained basically unchanged except for a slight increase during the first semester of post-placement. Students placed for assaults demonstrated the greatest increase in attendance.

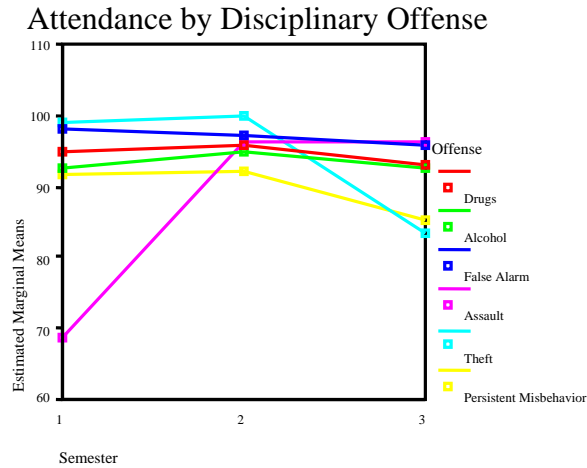


Figure 13. Attendance by disciplinary offense.

Table 30 provides the results of the two-factor repeated measures ANOVA, which revealed a nonsignificant main effect for attendance, $F(1.44, 67.87) = 1.34, p > .05$, and a nonsignificant interaction effect between disciplinary offense and attendance, $F(7.22, 67.87) = 2.12, p = .05$. The reported variance accounted for η^2 indicates that 29.8% of the variability in attendance was explained by group membership (disciplinary offense). According to Thompson (2002) an η^2 value of this magnitude may be considered a “large” effect.

Table 30

Comparison by Attendance by Disciplinary Offense

Source	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	η^2
Disciplinary offense	1140.32	5	228.07	.99	.44	
Error (between)	10871.45	47	231.31			
Attendance	256.72	1.44	177.79	1.34	.26	
Disciplinary offense*Attendance	2032.45	7.22	281.51	2.12	.05	.298
Error (within)	9004.75	67.87	132.68			
Total	23305.69					

Table 31

Descriptive Comparison of Passing Core Courses by Disciplinary Offense

Core Subject Averages	Disciplinary offense	<i>n</i> = 47	Mean	Standard Deviation
Fall 2002	Drugs	18	74.33	6.38
	Alcohol	2	70.50	16.26
	False alarm	1	81.00	.
	Assault	3	83.00	5.9
	Theft	2	73.50	12.02
	Persistent misbehavior	21	69.48	9.09
Fall 2003	Drugs	18	75.67	8.64
	Alcohol	2	73.00	4.24
	False alarm	1	76.00	.
	Assault	3	86.00	8.66
	Theft	2	69.50	6.36
	Persistent misbehavior	21	69.81	10.29
Spring 2004	Drugs	18	73.44	10.79
	Alcohol	2	70.50	2.12
	False alarm	1	76.00	.
	Assault	3	79.00	10.82
	Theft	2	67.00	8.49
	Persistent misbehavior	21	70.43	10.07

Figure 14 displays the effect of disciplinary offenses on core course averages. Students placed for drugs and alcohol offenses demonstrated consistency in grades across time. Both groups experienced an increase in grade averages during the first post-placement semester; however, students who were placed for drug offenses concluded the study with a slight decline in core course averages during the second post-placement semester. Students placed for the offenses of false alarms, assaults, and theft demonstrated a decline in grades across time, yet students placed for persistent misbehavior demonstrated a slight increase in core course averages.

Passing Core Courses by Disciplinary Offense

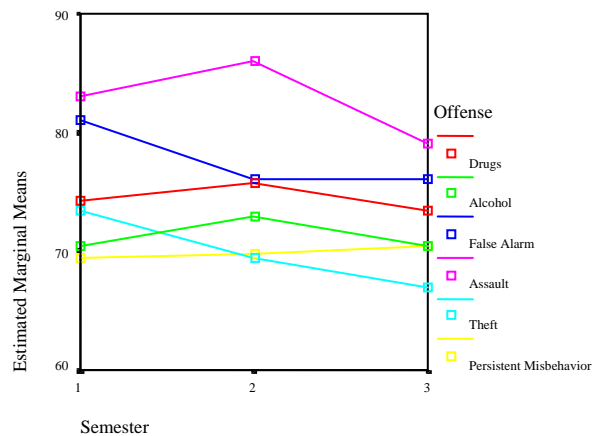


Figure 14. Passing core courses by disciplinary offense.

Table 32 provides the results of the two-factor repeated measures ANOVA, which revealed a nonsignificant main effect for passing core courses, $F(2, 82) = .82$, $p > .05$ and a nonsignificant interaction effect between disciplinary offense and passing

core courses, $F(10, 82) = .45, p > .05$. The η^2 reported within 10.0% accuracy in variability when passing core courses were compared by disciplinary offense.

Table 32

Comparison of Passing Core Courses by Disciplinary Offense

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p	η^2
Disciplinary Offense	1686.58	5	337.32	1.77	.14	
Error (between)	7796.91	41	190.17			
Core Subject Discipline	58.38	2	29.19	.82	.45	
Offense*Core Subject	160.93	10	16.09	.45	.92	0.1
Error (within)	2929.15	82	35.72			
Total	12531.95					

Table 33 compares the average number of behavioral infractions by disciplinary offense to the pre- and post-placement semesters. Overall, students who were originally placed in the DAEP for the offenses of drugs, alcohol, theft, and persistent misbehavior experienced the highest number of behavioral infractions during post-placement.

Table 34 provides the results of the two-factor repeated measures ANOVA, which revealed a nonsignificant main effect for behavioral achievement, $F(1.64, 77.06) = .81, p > .05$, and a nonsignificant interaction effect between disciplinary offense and behavioral achievement, $F(8.19, 77.06) = .24, p > .05$. The η^2 reported within 7.3% accuracy in variability when behavioral achievement was compared by disciplinary offense.

Table 33

Descriptive Comparison of Behavioral Achievement by Disciplinary Offense

Disciplinary Incidents	Disciplinary Offense	<i>n</i> = 53	Mean	Standard Deviation
Fall 2002	Drugs	18	1.33	1.78
	Alcohol	2	.50	.71
	False alarm	1	.00	.
	Assault	3	1.00	1.00
	Theft	2	.00	.00
	Persistent misbehavior	27	2.81	2.75
Fall 2003	Drugs	18	2.17	2.98
	Alcohol	2	.50	.70
	False alarm	1	.00	.
	Assault	3	.00	.00
	Theft	2	3.00	2.83
	Persistent misbehavior	27	3.37	4.08
Spring 2004	Drugs	18	2.39	2.62
	Alcohol	2	3.50	3.54
	False alarm	1	.00	.
	Assault	3	.33	.588
	Theft	2	4.00	2.83
	Persistent misbehavior	27	4.19	5.61

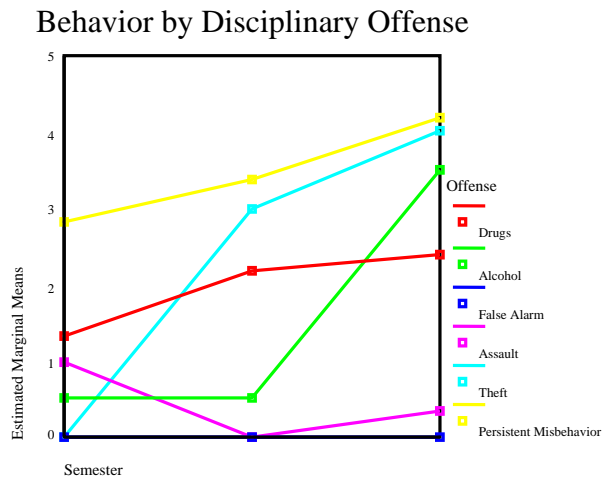


Figure 15. Behavioral achievement by disciplinary offense.

Table 34

Comparison of Behavioral Achievement by Disciplinary Offense

Source	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	eta ²
Disciplinary offense	151.16	5	30.23	1.63	1.70	
Error (between)	870.41	47	18.52			
Behavioral	16.08	1.64	9.81	.81	.43	
Disciplinary offense*Behavioral	24.06	8.19	2.94	.24	.98	.073
Error (within)	928.98	77.06	12.06			
Total	1990.69					

*Descriptive Statistics**Dependent Variable: Standardized Tests*

Standardized tests are only administered once per year to test core course content, which is developed around the state's curriculum. Table 35 displays the two means—one from each testing year—to demonstrate student success on the state-administered tests.

Table 35

Descriptive Comparison of Standardized Test Means for 2003 and 2004

<u>Standardized Tests: <i>n</i> = 47</u>		
Dependent Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Standardized Tests 2003	0.51	0.51
Standardized Tests 2004	0.72	0.45

The comparison of the dependent variable, standardized test score achievement, which was represented through mean scores, was made by each of the five independent variables previously identified for the study. Table 36 displays the comparison of standardized test score means for the two school years within the study, 2003 and 2004.

1. Gender: The comparison by gender demonstrated that male students showed an increase during the post-placement period in mean scores in 2004 whereas females remained the same, which reflected neither a decline nor increase in their success in passing standardized tests.

2. Ethnicity: The comparison by ethnicity demonstrated that, from 2003 to 2004, African American students experienced a decline in achievement on standardized tests. Hispanic students maintained the same average each year, and White students experienced an increase during the second year of testing, which was the post-placement period.

3. Grade level: The comparison by grade level demonstrated an increase in standardized test achievement across all grade levels during the post-placement period. This increase indicated that the grade level of students at the time of testing had no impact on the passing rate.

4. Socioeconomic status: The comparison by SES—those students who qualified for the school meals program and those who did not qualify—showed an increase in mean scores for passing standardized tests during the post-placement period.

Table 36

Descriptive Comparison of Standardized Test Scores by Independent Variables

Standardized Tests for 2003 and 2004					
Independent Variable		<i>n</i> = 47	Mean	Standard Deviation	% of Total <i>n</i>
Gender	Male 03	35	.43	.50	74.5%
	Male 04	35	.71	.46	74.5%
	Female 03	12	.75	.4	25.5%
	Female 04	12	.75	.45	25.5%
Ethnicity	African American 03	4	.25	.50	8.5%
	African American 04	4	1.0	.00	8.5%
	Hispanic 03	7	.71	.49	14.9%
	Hispanic 04	7	.71	.49	14.9%
	White 03	36	.50	.51	76.6%
	White 04	36	.69	.47	76.6%
Grade Level	7th 03	4	.25	.50	8.5%
	7th 04	4	.75	.50	8.5%
	8th 03	14	.50	.52	29.8%
	8th 04	14	.64	.49	29.8%
	9th 03	5	.40	.55	10.6%
	9th 04	5	.60	.55	10.6%
	10th 03	19	.58	.51	40.4%
	10th 04	19	.74	.45	40.4%
	11th 03	5	.60	.55	10.6%
	11th 04	5	.72	.45	10.6%
SES (meal assistance)	No 03	43	.51	.51	91.5%
	No 04	43	.72	.45	91.5%
	Yes 03	4	.50	.58	8.5%
	Yes 04	4	.75	.50	8.5%
Disciplinary Offense	Drugs 03	18	.39	.50	38.3%
	Drugs 04	18	.78	.43	38.3%
	Alcohol 03	2	.50	.71	4.3%
	Alcohol 04	2	1.00	.00	4.3%
	False alarm 03	1	1.00	.	2.1%
	False alarm 04	1	1.00	.	2.1%
	Assault 03	3	1.00	.	6.4%
	Assault 04	3	1.00	.	6.4%
	Theft 03	2	1.00	.	4.3%
	Theft 04	2	1.00	.	4.3%
	Persistent misbehavior 03	21	.48	.51	44.7%
	Persistent misbehavior 04	21	.57	.51	44.7%

5. Disciplinary offense: The comparison by disciplinary offenses showed no negative effects. All students, regardless of disciplinary offense, demonstrated an increase in passing rate during the post-placement period.

Dependent Variable: Recidivism Rate

Of the original 53 students who attended all or portions of the two post-placement semesters, 22 students were removed from the mainstream for behavioral infractions and returned to the DAEP during the post-placement period, indicating a recidivism rate of 41.5%. The data in Table 37 are analyzed in rows by each of the five independent variables according to means, standard deviations, and the percentage of students who returned to the district's DAEP during post-placement:

1. Gender: Male students demonstrated a higher rate of recidivism than females
2. Ethnicity: White and Hispanic students demonstrated a higher rate of recidivism than African American students
3. Grade level: Middle school students—seventh and eighth graders—demonstrated a higher rate of recidivism than their older counterparts
4. Socioeconomic status: Students considered eligible for the monetary meals assistance program demonstrated a higher rate of recidivism than those students not receiving assistance
5. Disciplinary offense: Students who were originally placed in the DAEP for drugs, persistent misbehavior, and alcohol demonstrated the highest rates of recidivism

Table 37

Descriptive Comparison of Recidivism Rate by Independent Variables

Students Who Returned to DAEP Following Initial Placement in Spring 2003					
Independent Variable		<i>n</i> = 22	Mean	Standard Deviation	% of Total <i>n</i>
Gender	Male	15	1.60	.83	68.2%
	Female	7	1.57	.79	31.8%
Ethnicity	African American	2	1.50	.78	9.1%
	Hispanic	5	1.6	.89	22.7%
	White	15	1.60	.83	68.2%
Grade Level	7	3	2.33	1.57	13.6%
	8	5	2.00	1.00	22.7%
	9	1	1.00	.	4.5%
	10	11	1.27	.47	50.0%
	11	2	1.50	.71	9.1%
SES (meal assistance)	No	18	1.44	.70	81.8%
	Yes	4	2.50	.96	18.2%
Disciplinary Offense	Drugs	3	1.67	1.15	13.6%
	Alcohol	2	1.50	.71	9.1%
	False alarm	0	0	0	0
	Assault	0	0	0	0
	Theft	2	1.00	.00	9.1%
	Persistent misbehavior	15	1.67	.82	68.2%

Dependent Variable: Dropout Rate

Students assigned to the DAEP during spring 2003 had the opportunity to return to a home campus in fall 2003. After leaving the DAEP, 39 of the original 86 students withdrew from the district's mainstream environment, resulting in a withdrawal rate of 45.3%. Table 38 lists the specific reasons the 39 students left the district's mainstream. Not all of these withdrawals were considered dropouts as defined by PEIMS, yet they

represented a lack of district mainstream success, which was the purpose of this study (PEIMS, n.d.). A total of 10 students were coded *dropout* according to the PEIMS accountability process, resulting in an 11.6% dropout rate for the original students placed in the DAEP during spring 2003.

Table 38

Reasons for Withdrawing From the Mainstream During Post-Placement Semesters

Reason for Withdrawal	Number of Students
Enrollment in District's Alternative School for Non-disciplinary Students	9
Poor Attendance	1
Enrollment in another Texas Public School	13
Enrollment in Private School	1
Enrollment in Home School	3
To Take the GED	1
Dropped Out or No Show	10
Moved Outside Texas	1
Total	39

Table 39 presents a comparative analysis of the 39 students who withdrew (dropped out) from the mainstream during the post-placement portion of the study.

Analyses were made by each of the five independent variables as follows:

1. Gender: The comparison by gender demonstrated that the majority of students who withdrew from the mainstream were male.

2. Ethnicity: The comparison by ethnicity demonstrated that almost three fourths of the withdrawals were white students. Almost one-fourth of the withdrawals were Hispanic students.

3. Grade level: The majority of the withdrawals were tenth graders, as demonstrated in the comparison by grade level. Students in the eighth grade withdrew at the second highest rate during the post-placement period.

4. Socioeconomic status: Analysis by SES demonstrated that the vast majority of withdrawals were students who did not qualify for the school meals program.

5. Disciplinary offense: The comparison by disciplinary offense demonstrated that 66.7% of the withdrawals were students who were formerly placed for persistent misbehavior. Withdrawals of students formerly placed for drugs were the second highest number of withdrawals followed by those students who had been placed for false alarms. Students placed for the offenses of alcohol and assault tied for the third highest withdrawal group, and students who had committed theft were least likely to withdraw during the post-placement period of the study.

Table 40 details the 10 students who dropped out of the mainstream during the post-placement period and compared them by the five independent variables. Of the original 86 students, there was an 11.60% dropout rate during the post-placement period of the study.

Table 39

Descriptive Comparison of Withdrawal Percentages by Independent Variables

Independent Variable		<i>n</i> = 39	% of Total <i>n</i>
Gender	Male	22	56.4%
	Female	17	43.6%
Ethnicity	African American	1	2.6%
	Hispanic	9	23.1%
	White	29	74.4%
Grade Level	7	2	5.1%
	8	6	15.4%
	9	3	7.7%
	10	23	59.0%
	11	5	12.8%
SES (meal assistance)	No	38	97.4%
	Yes	1	2.6%
Disciplinary Offense	Drugs	5	12.8%
	Alcohol	2	5.1%
	False alarm	3	7.7%
	Assault	2	5.1%
	Theft	1	2.6%
	Persistent misbehavior	26	66.7%

Table 40

Descriptive Comparison of Student Dropouts by Independent Variables

Independent Variable		<i>n</i> = 10	% of Total <i>n</i>
Gender	Male	6	60.0%
	Female	4	40.0%
Ethnicity	African		
	American	0	0.0%
	Hispanic	2	20.0%
	White	8	80.0%
Grade Level	7	0	0.0%
	8	1	10.0%
	9	1	10.0%
	10	6	60.0%
	11	2	20.0%
SES (meal assistance)	No	10	100.0%
	Yes	0	0.0%
Disciplinary Offense	Drugs	1	10.0%
	Alcohol	1	10.0%
	False alarm	1	10.0%
	Assault	2	20.0%
	Theft	0	0.0%
	Persistent		
	misbehavior	5	50.0%

Previous DAEP Placements

Table 41 displays the descriptive data for students who had encountered previous placements in the DAEP prior to the snapshot semester detailed in the study. These students are labeled “repeaters” for repeating behavioral infractions that had previously placed them outside the mainstream and into the DAEP for punitive measures. Twenty-four students, or 27.9% of the 86 students placed in the DAEP during spring 2003, experienced previous DAEP placements.

Table 41

Descriptive Comparison of Previous DAEP Placements by Independent Variables

Students with Previous DAEP Placements Prior to Spring 2003					
Independent Variable		<i>n</i> = 24	Mean	Standard Deviation	% of Total <i>n</i>
Gender	Male	18	1.56	.98	75.0%
	Female	6	1.67	1.03	25.0%
Ethnicity	African American	0	0	0	0
	Hispanic	8	1.75	1.04	33.3%
	White	16	1.50	.97	66.7%
Grade Level	7	2	1.50	.71	8.3%
	8	4	2.50	.17	16.7%
	9	2	1.00	.00	8.3%
	10	13	1.23	.59	54.2%
	11	3	2.33	.58	12.5%
SES (meal assistance)	No	23	1.57	.99	95.8%
	Yes	1	2.00	.97	4.2%
Disciplinary Offense	Drugs	3	1.00	.00	12.5%
	Alcohol	1	1.00	.	4.2%
	False alarm	1	1.00	.	4.2%
	Assault	0	0	0	0
	Theft	0	0	0	0
	Persistent misbehavior	19	1.74	.97	79.2%

Summary

As demonstrated in this chapter, a comparison of pre- and post-placement dependent variables measuring school success—attendance, passing core courses, behavioral achievement, standardized test score achievement, recidivism and dropout rates—comprised this study. The independent variables—gender, ethnicity, grade level, socioeconomic status, and disciplinary offense—were used to compare and analyze

each dependent variable. The dependent variables—attendance, passing core courses, and behavior—demonstrated a decline in the measurement of school success across time. The only dependent variable that demonstrated improvement between the pre- and post-placement periods was achievement on standardized test scores. From the number of students who withdrew from the mainstream during the post-placement semesters, large recidivism and dropout rates were seen, which reflected the large percentage of students who were not successful in the district's mainstream.

The comparisons of dependent variables by independent variables resulted in significance only in the analyses of attendance by grade level. This interaction was determined to be significant since $p < .05$. During both post-placement semesters, 11th-grade attendance increased by 20.2 points. Students in the seventh, eighth, and ninth grades maintained a slight increase between the pre-placement and first post-placement semester yet experienced a decline in the second post-placement semester. This decline resulted in declining attendance for all three grade levels between the pre-placement and the second post-placement semesters. Attendance in the tenth grade declined throughout all semesters of the study.

The comparison of attendance by disciplinary offense resulted in a large effect size (η^2). The η^2 reported within 29.8% accuracy in variability when attendance was compared by disciplinary offense. Students placed for assault demonstrated a 27.7 point increase in attendance by the second post-placement semester.

CHAPTER V
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND
IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION

Summary

The purpose of this study was to compare the school success of 86 students formerly placed in a Discipline Alternative Education Program (DAEP) by examining both pre- and post-placement semester data which are indicative of school success. This study utilized dependent variables (attendance, passing core subjects, behavioral achievement, standardized test score achievement, recidivism, and dropout rates) to measure school success. Independent variables (gender, ethnicity, grade level, socioeconomic status, and disciplinary offense) were used to make the comparative analyses.

Texas is one of many states that legislatively mandates punitive settings for students who violate specific behavioral codes (TEA, 2004b). Currently, there are few studies that have focused on the success of students once they returned to the mainstream following DAEP placements. Galloway (2003) concentrated on variables impacting mainstream success following placement in one district in Texas, but the study did not measure improvement in behavior. Behavioral improvement—the factor that was the basis for creating the statewide DAEP system—was measured in this study.

Overall attendance for students in this study reflected a decline across time. Of the three semesters when attendance was measured, the first post-placement semester, when students returned to the mainstream, reflected a 2.1% increase above the pre-placement semester. However, by the end of the year, which was the second post-placement semester, attendance had declined by 8.9%.

Core course averages for semester grades declined during both of the post-placement semesters once students returned to the mainstream. The first post-placement semester showed a 2.3% decline in grade averages from the pre-placement semester, and a 3.5% decline by the second post-placement semester.

Behavioral infractions reflected worsening behaviors during both of the post-placement semesters in comparison to the pre-placement semester. Behavioral infractions increased by 6.2% during the first post-placement semester and by 1.2% during the second post-placement semester.

The only dependent variable that demonstrated improvement once students returned to the mainstream was standardized test score achievement. Student scores improved by 0.21 during the post-placement period of the study.

Of the 53 students who remained enrolled in the mainstream for all semesters or portions of the post-placement semesters of the study, 22 of them were removed from the mainstream and returned to the DAEP during the post-placement period, indicating a recidivism rate of 41.5%.

After leaving the DAEP, 39 of the original 86 students withdrew from the district's mainstream environment, resulting in a withdrawal rate of 45.3%. Not all of

the withdrawals were considered dropouts as defined by Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS)., yet they did represent a lack of district mainstream success, which was the purpose of this study (PEIMS, n.d.). A total of 10 students were coded *dropout* in the PEIMS accountability process, resulting in an 11.6% dropout rate for the original students placed in the DAEP during spring 2003.

Conclusions

As noted in Chapter 1, the researcher for this study served as principal of the DAEP program where the students were placed in spring 2003. The on-the-job experience as administrator of the discipline school provided the researcher with the concept for this particular study.

Both subjective and objective data were instrumental in assisting the researcher in making decisions and drawing conclusions about the results of the study. Objectively, as previously noted in the summary section of this chapter, all dependent variable measurements, with the exception of standardized test score achievement, resulted in an overall reduction of mean scores across time. The increase in standardized test scores may be a reflection of the reduced number of students who remained in the study. Additionally, and statistically insignificant, the maturation of students may be a factor in the increase in test scores. The decline in all the other dependent variables supports previous research done outside of the state of Texas by Aronson (1995), Raywid (1990, 1994, 1995, 1998), Stone (2003), and the Oklahoma Technical Assistance Center (n.d.). Subjectively, through conversations with students, parents of former DAEP students, and mainstream educators, the researcher identified attitudes from the mainstream about

the “bad kids” who returned and why many were not finding school success as measured by the dependent variables identified for this study.

Despite the negative outcome of the study, one might ask why the findings resulted in such a decline across time on so many variables that measure school success. As noted in Chapter 2, Aronson (1995) indicated that a decline in the variables measuring school could be attributed to students returning to mainstreams that do not offer the same nurturing support offered in the smaller, student-centered modified Type II setting.

Even though the comparison of attendance by grade level of students proved to be the only significant result with $p < .05$, and the comparison of attendance by disciplinary offense resulting in a large effect size (η^2) with $p = .05$, several objective conclusions can be drawn from the analyses of the pre- and post-placement data measuring school success. Additionally, the results of this study support the study’s hypothesis: Students formerly placed in a modified Type II setting will achieve less success in the mainstream than the success they experienced prior to entry in the Type II program.

A correlation may be made between the overall results of this study and the information presented in “Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs in Texas—What is Known; What is Needed” (n.d.). In the article, the following was noted: “For the most part, alternative educational programs are being used as dumping grounds for ‘undesirable’ students,” and “the most critical concern is that we know very little about these new alternative programs” (p. 3). Even in a modified Type II setting, as in this

study, which provided a nurturing, caring environment, student success could not be managed once students left and returned to their home campuses. Overall, with the exception of achievement on standardized tests for those students who remained in the study, the post-placement semesters in the mainstream environment demonstrated that the variables measuring school success declined.

During post-placement semesters, 39 students withdrew from the mainstream and 22 students returned to the DAEP. Transitional services such as the ones outlined by Stone (2003), had they been offered, might have improved the success rates of the returning students. Simply stated, when DAEP students returned to the mainstream, the researcher did not observe a caring and nurturing environment that emphasized close teacher-student connections.

The large percentage of students who withdrew from the mainstream during the post-placement period of the study presented the greatest concern for the researcher of this study since it was easily concluded that the majority of the returning students did not find school success in their original mainstream environments. Of the 39 students who withdrew, 13 enrolled in other public schools in Texas, which may suggest successful reengagement in a mainstream environment. One student moved out of Texas, which may suggest reenrollment in another public school and may also be interpreted as school success for that student. However, 9 of the original 86 students left the mainstream and enrolled in the district's non-discipline alternative program, 10 were reported as no shows or dropouts, 3 enrolled in home schools, 1 withdrew to take the GED, 1 enrolled in a private school, and 1 was withdrawn from school altogether for

poor attendance. In summary, 64.10% of the students who withdrew during the post-placement portion of this study did not experience school success in the district's mainstream environment on any of the variables measured in this study during the post-placement period.

Another conclusion that can be drawn from this study—in the absence of research on the topic of student success following DAEP placement—is that most districts are not tracking the success of their former discipline students. What is known about Texas' DAEPs dates back to 1997, when the following was documented about conventional schools not adequately serving *all* their students:

Only one-fourth of the students sent to DAEPs were sent for serious offenses.

The majority of students sent to DAEPs were minority students. The number of DAEP students whose racial or ethnic origins were classified as “unknown” increased. Low-income students and students in special education were more likely to be sent to DAEPs. At least 841 of the 1,044 school districts removed students to DAEPs. (“Disciplinary Alternative,” n.d., p. 1)

The same article also noted the following about mainstream environments not successfully serving all students:

At least a quarter of the students who entered the nation's high schools as freshmen in 1994 never got the chance, four years later, to don a cap and gown. Before they could march across the stage to receive their diplomas, they either dropped out, or were pushed out, of public schools ill equipped to cope with

such wrenching problems as family dysfunction, domestic violence, poverty and homelessness. (p. 7)

The preceding findings lead to the overarching conclusion that No Child Left Behind (NCLB) may be extremely difficult to implement for every student when there is a 41.5% recidivism rate and an 11.6% dropout rate evident in one study. NCLB guarantees school success for all students. As noted previously, this federal law “makes substantial changes to state standards and testing and it brings far-reaching changes to how states measure student progress” (NEA, n.d., p. 1). By 2013-2014, NCLB intends to have “all students performing at a ‘proficient’ level or above on state reading and math assessments” (NEA, n.d., p. 1). Regardless of an at-risk label, all students are guaranteed a basic level of proficiency to attain school success culminating in graduation (TEA, n.d.a.). The conclusion is that students failing to experience school success as outlined by the variables in this study will not meet the variables of success outlined by NCLB.

The absence of documentation about student outcomes during and following DAEP placements illustrates the difficulty in meeting the requirements of NCLB. In “Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs in Texas” (n.d.), it was noted that “TEA and local school districts collected only minimal data: numbers of students referred, limited information on student characteristics (e.g., age, ethnicity) and reasons for removal from regular campuses” (p. 8). The Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) voiced the following concern about DAEPs and other punitive settings: “These programs will become warehouses where students who are having

academic or disciplinary difficulty are exiled; subjected to unequal, substandard educational opportunities and eventually forced out of school” (“Disciplinary Alternative,” n.d., p. 7).

A final objective conclusion made from this study relates to the nine students who opted to withdraw from the mainstream and enroll in the district’s non-disciplinary alternative program. The same article suggested that large mainstream populations may be too dynamic to embrace the needs of all at-risk students, yet “a growing body of research . . . [shows] that students labeled as troublemakers or dropouts in traditional schools can thrive in smaller, more individualized settings” (pp. 7-8). These students returned to the same school that exhibited a climate of respect for the individuality of every student.

Why did most of the variables measuring school success in this study decline across time? To fully answer this question, the researcher believed that other data might provide the best insight. The objective reasons why the students in the study were not successful have been noted previously, yet subjective responses may be the most important clues to understanding and “fixing” the problem.

Specifically, without proper transition services such as the ones identified by Stone (2003) and a unified systemic approach focusing on success for all students, the *at-riskness* of at-risk students only increases. Students need to be respected as individuals and perceived as having productive futures. Educators must make the necessary adult-student connections to identify “where” students are in their lives

before they can assist and lead them to “where” they need to be in the educational system and beyond in the “real world.”

The researcher of this study documented his interactions with students, parents, and mainstream educators during his tenure as principal of the DAEP. The following comments may not pertain specifically to the original 86 students in the study, but they represent an attitude the researcher/DAEP principal has encountered about former DAEP students once they return to the mainstream. Student comments included:

“That school wants to get rid of me.”

“That teacher hates me.”

“Nobody will help me.”

“I’m 18 so I’m just going to quit [school].”

“They just said, ‘Go back to the alternative school’ the first time I did anything.”

To the researcher, parents have made the following comments about the mainstream:

“That school has been trying to get rid of my child since day one.”

“Thank you for listening to our side. No one there will listen to us.”

“They don’t care if my child graduates or not.”

“My child doesn’t have a chance in that teacher’s class.”

“Thank your staff for saving my child. He would have never made it there.”

Some of the most troubling and haunting voices for the researcher came from the comments made by mainstream educators about DAEP students:

“He [about a particular student] doesn’t deserve to breathe air.”

“He’s just a jerk.”

“That’s the worst one I’ve ever seen.”

“That one’s headed for prison.”

“That one just needs to quit school and get a job.”

“If you [to the DAEP student] come back [to the mainstream from DAEP] you won’t make it.”

Certainly, these comments by students, parents, and educators do not provide an all-inclusive rationale for why so many students are not successful upon their return to the mainstream after a DAEP placement. Many students are truly not motivated to attain school success. However, the lack of motivation is not always an indicator of a lack of desire. Many students who experience problems with school success are also dealing with other, oftentimes greater, problems. Many of the students this researcher met during this study and during his time as administrator have experienced difficult home lives, been sexually promiscuous or mistreated, been chemically dependent, been in and out of drug treatment centers, been hospitalized for depression and other mental issues, and/or been required to take prescription drugs to manage their daily lives. Many challenges have been imposed upon at-risk students beyond the one challenge to be successful in school. Getting through the day may be the most important challenge some students have. Simply stated, it is difficult to focus on getting a diploma tomorrow when one sees no hope for today.

The key to understanding school success and how it impacts all students is to first understand students as individuals. To know the “big” challenges individuals face

allows educators to make necessary connections with students. Typical mainstreams are much bigger environments than most DAEPs. DAEP teachers have a better opportunity to get to know the whole child because of the lower student-teacher ratio. Mainstream educators are faced with a vast number of challenges, including the sheer number of students, which impedes one-on-one connections between students and teachers. However, once the variables that measure school success indicate that students are not being successful, positive interventions must be implemented systematically. It is not logical to expect a student to return to the same mainstream environment after DAEP placement and have school success.

Recommendations for Further Research

Chapter 37 required every school in Texas to establish a DAEP (Hanahan & Pierce, 1996), which is a Type II alternative setting described by Raywid (1994). The conclusions of this study add to the findings of the small number of previous studies that have examined student success following placement in mandated punitive settings. However, much more research is needed throughout the state of Texas and across the nation where punitive settings are mandated. Stone (1993) stated: “It is important to find ways to sustain positive gains when students leave the alternative [discipline] school. Data regarding this issue is lacking in the literature about alternative school” (p. 3).

Additional research is needed about the reformation of mainstream environments in order to meet the needs of all students. As described previously, many potential dropouts flourish better in smaller, nurturing environments as opposed to

environments found in many traditional campuses. Kelly (1993) stated: “With so many young people going through alternative programs, questions arise about why the ‘regular’ schools are not working for so many” (p. xvi). Traditional school environments learning from alternative programs may benefit those students who are not finding school success. Yet, as indicated previously, Brandt (1994) stated that the focus on restructuring traditional schools in an effort to address the needs of contemporary students has produced little change. Kohn (1999) wrote that schools have remained basically unchanged and are being operated the same ways they have been for years.

Research on proactive intervention strategies that focus on working with students who are continually disruptive or behaviorally at-risk can only benefit the educational process for all students and staff members. More than half, or 54.7%, of the students in this study were placed in a DAEP for persistent misbehavior. Of the 22 students who returned to the DAEP during the post-placement semesters, 15 were originally placed for persistent misbehavior. Of the 10 students who dropped out of the mainstream during the post-placement semesters of this study, 5 were students who were originally placed in the DAEP for persistent misbehavior. Of the 24 students who experienced previous DAEP placement, 19 were placed in spring 2003 for persistent misbehavior.

Implications for Education

The results of this study support that not all students are currently being successful in the public school environment. As stated in Chapter 2, Goodlad (1984) advised

against attempting to “fix” students through removals from unsuccessful mainstreams.

Ten years after making the preceding statement, Goodlad (1994) stated:

Today’s clash of mixed expectation makes it difficult for schools to set and stay with a clear mission. To do so, they must be educationally self-conscious—acutely so—in a context of contradictory expectations, many of which are only marginally educative. (p. 198)

Again in 1994, Goodlad stated:

School improvement finds itself in a virtually no-win situation. In equating education with schooling, we push the educative role of other agencies aside. Indeed, in some settings, these agencies have become adversarial, blaming the schools for shortcomings for which home and church, for example, should share some responsibility. Yet the home remains protective of its turf in regard to the teaching of values and civility—while often doing little about either—and remains suspicious of proposals for schools to step into the breach. And so the school gets blamed for not doing or not doing well what it is clearly asked to do, what it probably should do, and what it never has been told clearly to do. (p. 200)

The timeline of NCLB will be impossible to meet as long as future studies about at-risk students produce results such as this one. The words of Goodlad (1984, 1994), Kelly (1993), Morley (1991), Mottaz (2002), Loflin (2000), Raywid (1990, 1994, 1995, 1998), Stone (2003) and many other writers and researchers continue to support the restructuring of traditional public school campuses—a restructuring that embraces

positive interventions for working with at-risk students—if all students are to find success. If the goals of NCLB are to be met by the 2013-2014 school year, the words that Goodlad (1984) wrote almost 20 years ago about removing the difficult students must be revisited.

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