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A SCHOOL DISCIPLINE PLAN

By
Thomas J. Campo

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the
Master of Arts Degree in The Graduate School of
Rowan University
April, 2000

Approved by Professor _____

Date Approved May 2000

Abstract

Thomas J. Campo

A School Discipline Plan
2000
Ronald L. Capasso, Ed.D.
Educational Administration

The purpose of this study is to develop and evaluate a comprehensive school discipline plan in an elementary school setting where no definitive discipline plan previously existed. This study will take place at the Charles L. Spragg School in Egg Harbor City. C.L. Spragg is a Pre-K to grade 4 school with approximately 375 students from diverse multi-cultural backgrounds. The study will focus around the development and use of a comprehensive disciplinary referral form. This form will serve as the research instrument as data analysis will be based on the total number of forms completed by teachers during the time frame of the study.

Development and use of "The Behavior Report Form" proved to be quite successful at the Charles L. Spragg School. Data analysis showed that student behavior improved based on a steady decline in the number of behavior report forms completed on a weekly basis during the time frame of the study. Consistent use of the form in a fair and fair manner reduced student discipline problems.

Mini-Abstract

Thomas J. Campo

A School Discipline Plan
2000
Ronald L. Capasso, Ed.D.
Educational Administration

The purpose of this study is to develop and evaluate a school discipline plan in an elementary school. The study will focus around the development and use of a disciplinary referral form.

Consistent use of “The Behavior Report Form” was effective in reducing student discipline problems.

Acknowledgments

There are several people who the intern must acknowledge for assistance and support during the development, conduction, and completion of this study.

First, the intern thanks Mr. L. David Rhine, Superintendent of Schools, for permitting the intern to perform the study in The Egg Harbor City School District. Support from the top is essential in a study of this nature.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

In today's dynamic, multicultural school environment, discipline leaps out as the single most problematic roadblock encountered in schools. The impact of an increasingly violent society, coupled with declining family values, continually creep into our schools. For students to be successful, they must be afforded the opportunity to receive education in a school community that is conducive to learning. This type of school community can only exist where there is discipline that is firm, fair, and consistent. Student behavior must be managed before student learning can occur.

The intern plans to develop a comprehensive school discipline plan in a Pre-K to 4th grade multicultural setting of approximately 400 students. Through the development of a comprehensive discipline referral form, better and more thorough communication can occur among teachers, students, child study team, administration, and parents. This form will enable a step by step disciplinary process that emphasizes firmness, fairness, and consistency. The form will also serve as the device for documentation of student discipline for school records.

It is the intent of the intern to study the impact of this structured discipline plan in this school where no specific discipline has existed before. It is the belief of the intern that this structured plan, with discipline that is firm, fair, and consistent, will trigger a chain reaction that brings about: 1) Improved student management and increased time on task in the classroom, 2) Improved communication and positive moral among staff, students, and parents, and 3) An improved school environment which is more conducive to learning.

Focus of Study:

Through this study, it is the intention of the intern to develop and implement a comprehensive school discipline plan in an elementary setting where there is no existing discipline plan in place. The construction of a detailed, yet user/reader friendly discipline referral form will be the major step in creating effective school wide discipline. This form will serve two purposes. First, it will serve as a communication device among teachers, students, child study team, administration, and parents. Second, it will provide documentation of student behavior for school records.

It is the belief of the intern that improving communication is a vital element in maintaining discipline that is firm, fair, and consistent. Detailed documentation of student behavior will allow all the players to be on the same page. The form will provide a complete description of a behavior incident to all those in need of it. A parent copy will cause parent accountability to respond to the incident, therefore improving parent/school communication. Student responsibility will heighten, as they become aware that behavior issues will be addressed and documented. Teachers will become more consistent with discipline as they use the referral, realizing that their actions are also documented and communicated to students, parents, administration, and child study team. Administration and child study team will now have documented descriptions of behavior incidents, making it easier for them to react or make decisions involving students and teachers.

The focus of the study is to use firm, fair, and consistent discipline to create a school environment where improved communication leads to an atmosphere more conducive to learning.

Purpose of the Study:

The purpose of this study is to develop, implement, and evaluate a comprehensive school discipline plan in an elementary setting where there is currently no structured plan in existence. The study will result in the determination of whether improving discipline in a firm, fair, and consistent manner will help in creating a more positive school environment, which is more conducive to learning.

Through the design and use of a user friendly, readable discipline referral form, consistency will immediately occur. This form will serve as a communication device among teachers, students, administration, child study team, and parents. It will also serve as documentation of student behavior for school records. Documentation of student behavior is essential if discipline is to be firm and fair.

Every time a teacher must deal with student disruption, learning ceases until the situation is handled in some way. A comprehensive school discipline plan will aid teachers in keeping students on academic task and increasing instructional time in the classroom. A plan that is understandable to all involved, emphasizing firmness, fairness, and consistency, and improves communication, will be a powerful tool in building a school community that is safe and conducive to learning.

The purpose of this study is to improve student discipline, improve communication, improve teacher moral, and help in creating a school environment that is more conducive to learning.

Definitions:

The following terms will be used throughout this study.

Behavior – all actions of students.

Character Education – instruction of social skills to students.

Communication – the interaction of all persons involved in school business.

Consistency – always handling discipline in the same manner.

Discipline – the manner in which student behavior problems are handled.

Documentation – the written record of student behavior problems.

Environment – the complete school setting for school.

Fairness – treating discipline issues correctly.

Firmness – treating discipline issues swiftly and authoritatively.

Intern – the person conducting this study.

Management – how students are handled in school.

Moral – the feelings of students and staff in school.

Referral – a form describing a student behavior problem.

Limitations of the Study:

This study will take place in the Charles L. Spragg Elementary School in Egg Harbor City, New Jersey. The Spragg School is a Pre-Kindergarten through 4th grade building servicing approximately 400 students of diverse multicultural backgrounds. The community has undergone rather dramatic socio-economic change during recent years. This change can be mostly attributed to the construction of several low-income apartment house developments. With the casino construction boom in Atlantic City, the urban environment is moving to neighboring rural communities like Egg Harbor City. The school has witnessed a steady increase in student discipline problems. The need for a comprehensive school discipline plan is quite evident.

It is the belief of the intern that the findings of this study, if favorable, can easily be used in just about all school settings. A discipline plan stressing firmness, fairness, and consistency, is a valuable asset in any school. Good communication and a thorough referral system with documentation are needed pieces to solving the discipline puzzle in every school. Structured discipline is the key to student management, which in turn leads to increased student time on task in the classroom. Creating a school environment more conducive to learning is the goal in every school.

Setting of the Study:

Egg Harbor City is a small community located twenty minutes west of Atlantic City. The current population is approximately 7,000 residents. Though the setting would be termed rural in nature, Egg Harbor City has taken on dramatic urban overtones in recent years. Based on discussions with long time residents, the intern has determined that the casino boom in Atlantic City is the reason for the community's dramatic change. Due to casino development, inner city residents were forced out of the city. This exodus lead to the construction of several low-income housing apartment developments in Egg Harbor City. A multicultural population increase has also accompanied the recent changes. Though the Caucasian population still predominates, this is due to the large number of long time residents. The majority of the newer generations of Egg Harbor City residents, within the past ten years, are mostly African American and Hispanic.

The urban overtones have brought a dramatic increase in criminal activity to Egg Harbor City. Drug trafficking and the related criminal activity that accompanies it have followed the inner-city way of life that exists in low-income housing developments. In a

discussion with a county drug and alcohol counselor, the intern learned that Egg Harbor City ranks second to only Atlantic City for number of drug related arrests in the county.

Economically, Egg Harbor City is definitely a blue-collar community. Though there are many small, family owned businesses lining the streets, there are no large businesses employing any great number of the city's residents. The unemployed population has risen steeply in recent years, coinciding with the increase in low-income residents. The majority of the working population of Egg Harbor City are employed in the near by Atlantic City casinos. Conveniently, the New Jersey Transit train stops in Egg Harbor City, providing easy access to and from Atlantic City for the many residents working there.

Politically, the City of Egg Harbor has a council form of government. There are nine elected council members. All city council positions are held for three years. The mayor is an elected official. The mayor is elected to serve a four-year term. This form of government has been in existence since 1908, and will remain so due to a special charter written at that time. Presently, the mayor is Republican. Sitting on city council are six Democrats and three Republicans (DeBow, 1999).

The Board of Education in Egg Harbor City existed as a Type-1 Board until 1992. As a result of that year's election, the board became a nine member Type-2 Board beginning in 1993. The current board is compromised of five females and four males, all of course being Egg Harbor City residents. Since the inception of the Type-2 Board, relations between the board and city council have been somewhat strained. In fact, 1999-2000's school budget was the first to pass in election since 1992 (Mangiello, 1999).

The Egg Harbor City School District services approximately 650 students in two schools, grades Pre-Kindergarten through 8th. High school students are sent to Absegami High School of the Greater Egg Harbor Regional School District. The students reflect the composition of the community, representing a dynamic multi-cultural background. Egg Harbor City is a District Factor Group-B school district. With Group-A being the poorest of school districts, there is not very much money available for spending in Egg Harbor City. The per-pupil expenditures in Egg Harbor City are slightly over \$6000.00. This falls far below the state average of approximately \$7200.00. Egg Harbor City would qualify as an “Abbot” school district, but does not because “Abbot” districts must be Kindergarten to 12th grade in composition. Presently, the district is part of a class action suit, attempting to obtain “Abbot” status (Rhine, 1999). A high student mobility rate continues to be among the major obstacles to the district. Students who frequently change school settings are placed at a disadvantage, as they are challenged to adjust to different curriculums.

There are presently one female and three male administrators working in the Egg Harbor City School District. They are the Superintendent of Schools, the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, and the Principals of each of the two buildings, one of who also serves as Director of Special Services. The Board of Education office and the two schools are located within 100 yards of each other. Face to face communication among administrators is quite common in Egg Harbor City.

The Hammonton Family Center provides special services to the school district and community. The center, co-sponsored by the county and Atlanticare Behavioral Health, provides a variety of needed case management services to the students of Egg

Harbor City and their families. Atlanticare Behavioral Health, in conjunction with the Hammonton Family Center also provide an after school enrichment program for the students of Egg Harbor City. The program, funded through the New Jersey “Family Friendly Center” grant, is in its second year of operation at The Charles L. Spragg School. The program runs daily until 5:30 PM and provides enrichment and recreational activities for up to 40 students, ages five to thirteen.

The Charles L. Spragg School, the site of the study, is an elementary school for grades Pre-Kindergarten through 4th. There are 17 regular education classes, 2 self-contained special education classes, and a special education resource center. Approximately 360 students attend the Spragg School.

In 1994, an addition to the original Spragg School was constructed, nearly doubling the building’s size. The new section houses 3 Kindergarten classrooms, 2 self-contained special education classrooms, the special education resource center, a multi-purpose room (gymnasium, cafeteria, auditorium), art and music rooms, a library, a speech/language therapy room, an English as a second language room, health suite, guidance office, principal’s office, and 1 regular education classroom. The remaining classrooms, teacher’s lounge and district child study team offices are located in the original section of the school. Prior the new construction, all of the classrooms existed in the original section. Physical education, art, music, all special education services, English as a second language services, and lunch took place directly in the classrooms.

The Fanny D. Rittenberg School is a middle school for grades five through eight. Approximately 260 students attend the Rittenberg School. The 77-year-old building is quickly becoming too small and outdated to accommodate the current needs of today’s

students. There are 14 regular education classes, 2 self-contained special education classes, 2 special education resource centers, a computer room, a library, and a gymnasium/cafeteria. Art, music and health teachers service the students in their homerooms due to a lack of classroom space.

The 1999-2000 school year is the first during which the students will be eating lunch in a daily makeshift cafeteria located in the gymnasium. During all years prior, students ate lunch in their respective classrooms. The new principal is responsible for eliminating the out dated procedure.

Students have their first opportunity to compete in athletics at Rittenberg, as the school fields cross-country and basketball teams for girls and boys. The teams compete in the county middle school league.

The Egg Harbor City School District employs a total of 100 staff. Along with the 4 administrators, there are 62 teachers, 18 teacher aides, 5 secretaries/clerks, 2 clerical aides, 7 custodians, 1 nurse aide, and 1 computer technician. 51 of the staff work at the Spragg School, while 40 occupy Rittenberg. There are 4 staff members working at the board office and the remaining 5 staff members split time at all three buildings (Rhine, 1999).

Among the professional staff, there are nine members possessing Master's Degrees. The rest hold Bachelor's Degrees. Presently, there are five staff pursuing Master's Degrees and one, who happens to be the intern, completing a second Master's (Rhine, 1999).

Ethnically, the Egg Harbor City School District is predominately Caucasian. The 4 administrators are Caucasians. Of the remainder of the professional staff, 5 members

are African Americans, 1 member is Hispanic, and all others are Caucasian. There are all Caucasians, with the exception of two Hispanics and one African American among the rest of the district staff.

The teaching staff of the Egg Harbor City Public Schools can easily be deemed a veteran staff. With the average over 18 years of experience, many of the teachers have been doing what they do for a long time. Over 60 percent of the teaching staff have spent their entire professional careers in the district. Many of the district's entire staff, more than half, are residents Egg Harbor City. The term "home grown" school district is quite fitting in this circumstance (Rhine, 1999).

Egg Harbor City is the second school district in which the intern has been employed. Coming from the large district of Atlantic City, the small district presented many differences and many similarities. The major difference was the district wide familiarity with procedures that accompany the small district. Working in a smaller school, with far fewer students allows the intern to learn more about the individual students. Accomplishments through guidance counseling have been more attainable. The major similarity is that students have the same problems everywhere. The situations that occur, though in a much smaller setting, are the same that the intern encountered in Atlantic City. The intern is hopeful that the smaller setting will be an asset in making this a successful study.

Significance of the Study:

The intention of this study is to determine if improving student behavior can be accomplished through the development and implementation of a thorough school discipline plan. It is the belief of the intern that firm, fair, and consistent discipline will

indeed bring about more positive student behavior. The plan will enhance communication, a vital element for success in all areas of the school setting.

This study can prove to be quite significant, because this setting has lacked a definitive discipline plan and student behavior has declined significantly in recent years. It is the belief of the intern that this study will yield positive results. Structure and discipline are vital elements in a successful school. Positive results from this study will have a broad range of significance reaching beyond just this school. As stated earlier, the intern believes that the findings of this study, if positive, can be applied in any school setting. The importance of a structured discipline overshadows its simplicity. Firmness, fairness, and consistency, along with good communication, are not components that are difficult to understand. They simply must always be applied when dealing with student behavior. The use of user/reader friendly referral form will be the tool that will make this discipline plan flow and be successful. The intern is quite passionate about this study and truly believes that it will show significant results.

Organization of the Study:

The remainder of this thesis will consist of four chapters. Chapter Two will be a review of literature on school discipline. It will discuss the increasing problem of student discipline problems in our schools. It will also discuss “what works” in solving this common problem facing educators. Chapter Three will give a detailed account of the of the intern’s study design for the development, implementation, and evaluation of the school discipline plan. Chapter Four will present the results of the intern’s study on the school discipline plan. Chapter Five, will yield the intern’s conclusions from the study,

implications based on the results, and any type or possibility of further study based on conclusions and implications.

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

Problem:

In a speech to 4,000 delegates to the annual convention of the American Federation of Teachers on July 29, 1998, President Clinton specifically mentioned the shooting tragedy in Columbine, Oregon. His comments came in the course of calls for stricter school discipline as a means of preventing such tragedies (Jackson, 1998). For over a quarter of a century, the number one concern facing public schools in this country has been discipline. During most of its twenty-two year existence, the Annual Gallup Poll of the Public Attitudes toward the Public Schools has identified “lack of discipline” as the most serious problem facing the nation’s educational system. It came out on top 19 times in the last 27 years of Gallup Polls. Approximately one half of all classroom time is taken up by activities other than instruction, and discipline problems are responsible for a significant portion of the lost instructional time (Cotton, 1990).

There is little disagreement that the violent and disruptive behavior of youth, whether at home, shown in the media, or on our streets, is a matter of national concern. Our schools do not escape this problem. Many students and teachers reported that they were less eager to go to school because of violent and disruptive behavior (Lowry et al., 1995). According to a National Education Association survey (Sautter, 1995), on any given day as many as 160,000 students stayed home for fear of such behavior at or on the way to school. Nationwide, 24% of all students in Grades 3 through 12 reported having been assaulted by another student (Lowry et al., 1995). In addition to extreme acts of violence, schools and classrooms were frequently disturbed by less severe forms of

disruptive behavior such as off-task, defiance, noncompliance, harassment, and intimidation (Nelson, 1996). Not only did many teachers feel that they were unprepared to deal with disruptive behavior, they also believe that this behavior substantially interfered with their teaching. It appears clear that schools must identify strategies that effectively address violent and disruptive behavior (Nelson et al., 1998).

Since the early 1950's, there has been a steady, incremental increase in various forms of other destructive and self-destructive conduct among adolescents- -as measured by objective measures, all of which have been corrected to allow for changes in the size of the youth population. Such disorder includes the rates of youth death by suicide and homicide, rates of out-of-wedlock births, and rates of arrest. In general, these measured changes have all increased at faster rates than equivalent conduct by adults. Many of these forms of adolescent disorder have occurred largely outside of schools. Still, it is inevitable that the increases have also affected the nature of student in-school conduct. And, in many schools where overt disorder is uncommon, minor delinquencies- -class-cutting, cheating, questionable sexual explorations among students, drug abuse- -are often routine. It is true that some principals are not "troubled" by these activities. However, many students evidently are. In a Gallup survey of a national sample of students, respondents were asked to designate the major problem in schools from a list of twelve choices (e.g., overcrowding, busing, poor teachers); 53 percent checked either "lack of discipline" or "use of drugs" as the major problem (Wynn, 1994).

These observations about current school practices are supported by research managed by Edward A. Wynn, Professor of Education, University of Illinois at Chicago. Since 1972, his students, both graduate and undergraduate, have surveyed and described

hundreds of schools in the Chicago area consisting of both public and private, elementary and secondary, urban and suburban, secular and religious, and (evidently) of good, bad, and indifferent quality. In addition to these studies, he remains in frequent contact with many teachers through the graduate education courses he teaches. From both sources (reports and personal contacts) it has long been evident that school discipline policies - - in theory and in practice - - have become and remain a key topic of concern.

Based on his data sources, Professor Wynn makes two generalizations about discipline policies applied in all schools throughout the Chicago area. First, a high proportion of schools (perhaps those enrolling 50-60 percent of all Chicago area students) follow relatively lax discipline policies. In many cases, there are no written rules about student conduct, or vaguely phrased rules. Other schools have rules, which ignore many antisocial acts frequently committed by students, or rules, which are not widely distributed. In many schools teachers or administrators do not enforce the rules, either, or enforcement is difficult since the rules which contain no clear provisions for punishment, or the punishment provisions which provide ineffectual punishment. In addition, discipline policies which do not enlist parental help by notifying the individual parents of persistent violators, and administrators who fail to support teachers who consistently try to enforce discipline (Wynn, 1994). Professor Wynn's second finding will be reviewed in the Solution portion of this chapter.

Nationwide polls, like the Gallup Poll referenced earlier, consistently show that Americans consider lack of discipline the biggest problem in public schools. A San Jose' Mercury News survey of 70 discipline policies from schools in San Jose', Palo Alto, Fremont and Newark, California revealed that more than half of the schools surveyed

provide only vague notions about what will happen when students misbehave. Those policies that do contain clear rules and consequences are often sporadically enforced. At times, misbehavior is dealt with swiftly and forcefully. Other times it is ignored. The resulting ambiguity, many experts believe, confuses students, erodes authority and makes it difficult for teachers to curb unruliness. Discipline in California schools has traditionally often been a matter for each community to decide based on student needs and parent desires. Most experts agree that local control should continue. But clear and concise local discipline policies that spell out rules, list specific consequences for infractions and are consistently enforced are rare (Kleffman, 1996).

“Most discipline policies aren’t worth the paper they’re printed on,” said Celia Lose, a spokeswoman for the American federation of Teachers, an 875,000-member national union. “Enforcement is atrocious in many schools. If you really put teeth into a discipline program, you’re going to have students who are disciplined and parents who are angry. It can be an administrative nightmare.” The American Federation of Teachers recently took the unusual step of launching a national campaign to push for discipline codes that are fairly and consistently enforced. Nearly two-thirds of AFT teachers say the chief obstacle to maintaining order are inconsistent or lenient punishment and having no place to put disruptive students. Teachers waste far too much time dealing with unruly student behavior, the AFT said. Nationwide, 81 percent of teachers say they lose a half-hour or more each day dealing with discipline problems, to the detriment of the vast majority of their students (Kleffman, 1996).

Yet, discipline remains an issue many are reluctant to tackle head-on. Teachers say they are thwarted by stubbornly defiant students who remain in their classrooms,

apathetic parents and principals who often send a child right back to the classroom with the admonition, “Can’t you motivate your students?” Principals say their hands are tied by angry parents who threaten, and sometimes follow through with lawsuits. And parents complain about ineffective teachers. This leads to inconsistency, which sends a terrible message to students and dramatically reduces teacher moral, said AFT President Albert Shanker. “They see another child in their classroom behaving atrociously and they are all sure that something is going to happen to that youngster. They look and wait for the fire to come from heaven, or someone to come from the principal’s office, because they have a sense of justice. But what happens? Often nothing. But something has happened,” he added, “and soon the teacher is no longer the leader in the classroom, that disruptive youngster is. And if you didn’t do anything when one kid got out of line, what will you do if all the kids get out of line? Now you’ve got a real problem” (Kleffman, 1996).

Professor William K. Kilpatrick of Boston College cites a 1993 national study of 1,700 sixth to ninth graders that revealed a majority of boys considered rape “acceptable” under certain conditions. Astoundingly, many of the girls agreed. He goes on to note that there are many reasons for the immorality of these young people, “but none more prominent than a failed system of education that eschews teaching children the traditional moral values that bind Americans together as a society and a culture.” He adds that “Teaching right from wrong via discipline has as much bearing on a cultures survival as teaching reading, writing, math, or science” (Wallis, 1995).

The bad behavior and loss of respect exhibited daily in America’s public schools indicate an institution in deep trouble. Problem-plagued school systems and schools with poorly written and poorly enforced policies on student behavior typically exhibit an

education mission that seems amorphous, allowing an erosion of tradition and sensible expectations over time. Codling disruptive individuals is a disservice to earnest, hard-working students, faculty, and staff - - all of whom must face the resulting intolerable working conditions. The academic culture has been subverted by a kind of silent chaos. William J. Bennett, former U.S. Secretary of Education and a Distinguished Fellow at the Heritage Foundation, maintains that education has deteriorated in America because “our schools were systematically, culturally deconstructed. They were taken apart. Many of the things which mattered most in our schools were removed, and they were set adrift.” This would include the notion that schools teach and enforce positive behavior that encompasses a moral dimension. Yet, the tolerance of bad behavior indicates that too many school officials have bought into this deculturalization (Wallis, 1995).

American public school students continue to score lower than their counterparts in other industrialized nations on nearly every level of educational attainment. Employers, colleges and universities, and professional schools find graduates to be shallow, poorly trained, and lacking in the skills and abilities they need. Since education at all levels is the single most important charge on the public purse, this situation cries out for reform. It is not a matter of doling out additional funds; if it were, the corporate community across the U.S. would have seen evidence of improvement from its support of schools. In fact, research has shown very little connection between dollars spent per pupil and educational performance of those pupils. The education crisis requires no more national reports, Congressional commissions, or ad hoc education task forces. What the school system does need is renewed self-respect and a sense of integrity gained from decisive action against the breakdown of civilized behavior in many schools. Disruption steals learning.

The schools continue to forsake the individual rights of far too many conscientious students and teachers who deserve an environment conducive to teaching and learning, devoid of disruption and chaos (Wallis, 1995)

Based on the literature reviewed, the intern finds that “lack of discipline” is a common problem in public schools across the nation. The common threads, which this problem dangles from, seem to be weak or nonexistent discipline plans and inconsistency in dealing with discipline problems. The literature also reveals that the public, those in the education profession, national polls, and even students cite “lack of discipline” as the number one problem concerning public schools.

In the second portion of this chapter, the intern plans to review literature revealing solutions to this problem plaguing the nation’s public schools, “lack of discipline.”

Solution:

Essentially, “school discipline” implies that students know that bad behavior will be costly for them. What made it costly a generation ago was that schools were orderly; students knew that teachers cared whether they misbehaved or not and might give bad academic grades or unfavorable disciplinary reports when they observed such misbehavior. An orderly school was one in which students were wary of all teachers, not just their own but of any disapproving teacher whom they encountered in hallways, stairs, cafeterias, or schoolyards. The basis for school discipline lay at least as much in the student’s awareness that teachers were vigilant and capable of invoking penalties as in such teacher characteristics as charisma or physical strength. The possibility of sanctions was threatening to students because most of them considered success in school important. Order in school is precarious because small numbers of adults are outnumbered by larger

numbers of children who may wish, at least initially, to do things other than learn. This has always been the case (Jackson, 1998).

Discipline is an art. There are no quick fixes, no paint-by-numbers strategies that work for all teachers all the time. Indeed, the approaches successful teachers use vary as widely as the excuses students devise for failing to turn in homework. But, there are common themes in much of the advice. The tone for an entire school year is set during the first few weeks, when children test their teachers: Are they deaf or blind? Will they ignore minor annoyances such as talking, poking my neighbor and wandering out of my seat? Skilled teachers answer these questions immediately by dealing swiftly and firmly with misbehavior. A key mistake is for a teacher to ignore minor misdeeds when tired or busy with other students, because unchecked problems often escalate, said Greg Aslanian, assistant superintendent of California's Eureka City Schools, who trains teachers in Lee Canter's assertive discipline approach, one of the most widely used classroom management systems. He urges teachers to set up a discipline system that begins with a warning and escalates with successive disruptions (Kleffman, 1996). Consistency is the key.

Given that children may come to school with a learning history that sets them up for further behavioral problems, schools must respond proactively and consistently. Although the types of behavior observed, particularly at the elementary level are less dramatic than severe forms of antisocial behavior observed in adolescence, research indicates that unless the behavior is addressed at an early age, the pattern is likely to continue and possibly escalate (Walker et al., 1995). Reviews of the literature on preventing and reducing problem behavior indicate that schools can be successful in

reducing challenging behavior. Recommended educational strategies include social skills training, academic and curricular restructuring, proactive management, early intervention, and individual behavioral interventions. Increasingly, researchers and educators are advocating for the development of school-wide systems that incorporate preferred practices because their use is associated with reduction and prevention of challenging problem behavior (Lewis et al., 1998).

As the research literature clear shows, well disciplined, smooth running environments are not the products of chance. What is known about the organization of orderly schools is that they are characterized by commitment to appropriate student behavior and clear behavior expectations for students. Rules, sanctions and procedures are discussed, debated, and frequently formalized into school discipline and classroom management plans. Research further shows that the “school culture” – the atmosphere and tone for everything that happens in the school – has a significant influence on student behavior. In order to achieve a more positive atmosphere, researchers agree that principals and teachers must present a “united front” on discipline matters. They can then develop, with student contributions, a school disciplinary code that is enforced firmly, fairly, and consistently (Daly and Flowers, 1988).

While there are different variations of school wide systems of behavioral support, most have certain features in common. The emphasis is on consistency – both throughout the building and across the classrooms. The entire school staff is expected to adopt strategies that will be uniformly implemented. Moreover, recent reviews of intervention research indicate that the most effective interventions are social skills training, academic and curricular restructuring, and behavioral interventions (Lewis, 1997).

Timothy J. Lewis, George Sugai, and Geoff Colvin conducted a study as part of a larger school-wide behavioral support system targeting proactive instructional-based interventions at the building-wide, specific setting, classroom, and individual student level. School staff formed an effective behavioral support (EBS) team that was responsible for development, training of other staff, and implementation of proactive school discipline policies and procedures. The EBS team was comprised of five grade level teachers (1-5), a special educator, and a school psychologist. Prior to implementing the features of the study, the school staff had focused primarily on the establishment of a consistent school-wide program. The EBS team established a set of school rules, taught the rules to students, and initiated a token reinforcement system to increase compliance. The school rules were “be kind,” “be safe,” “be cooperative,” “be respectful,” and “be peaceful.” If staff observed students engaging in targeted behaviors related to school rules, they gave students “chance tickets” and verbal praise. Students then placed their signed chance tickets into classroom boxes. Each month at an award assembly, classroom teachers pulled a ticket from the box and the selected student could choose an award (eg., certificate for ice cream, small toys).

From a practical standpoint, this study demonstrates that practitioners, through a team process, can reduce problem behaviors in school. In building a system of effective behavioral support, the study points to several key features that contribute to its success. First, the use of a unified team with a common goal was essential. The team spent a large amount of time establishing consistent procedures and ensuring that all staff were aware and fluent in the use of the procedures. Second, the building administrator provided necessary support to the team. The administrator allowed in-service and faculty meeting

time to be devoted to effective behavioral support training and implementation issues. The administrator also was an active participant in the interventions (eg., active supervision). Third, all procedures reflected unique needs. While the essential features of the program should be common across all schools (eg., focus on clearly articulated expectations, teach expectations, reinforce compliance), the specific school rules, targeted behaviors, social skills lesson examples, and targeted setting interventions should reflect the unique composition of the school staff, student body, and physical configuration of the school building. In addition, the results clearly point to the need to develop strategies to promote generalized responding (Lewis et al., 1998)

Corpus Christi, Texas was one of the first districts to make good use of a new Texas law that gives teachers the right to remove chronically disruptive students from the classroom – a law which the Corpus Christi American Federation of Teachers (CCAFT), the Texas Federation of Teachers and other AFT locals in the state had lobbied hard for. This district has quietly been building a reputation as a leading-edge system when it comes to student discipline. Most agree that the process began two years ago, when the district established a task force to study discipline problems in the middle schools. Largely as a result of the task force’s recommendations, and the publicity it generated surrounding discipline issues, Corpus Christi has gone on to implement alternative learning centers for violent and disruptive youths and to establish a student code of conduct that is one of the best in the nation (Rose, 1996).

Corpus Christi became the first district in Texas to formally endorse the AFT’s nationwide campaign for high standards of achievement and conduct, “Responsibility, Respect, Results: Lessons for Life.” Perhaps the most important asset the community

brings to the fight, explained CCAFT president Linda Bridges, is a willingness to tackle discipline problems head-on and for new opportunities to improve. “We’re clearly beyond the denial stages now,” Bridges says, “ People are starting to feel that orderly schools are within reach, and the momentum is clearly driving us in that direction.” Bridges believes a powerful message is being sent to both the schools and the community. The days of lax, uneven enforcement of school rules are numbered in Corpus Christi. The message was unmistakable in the district’s code of conduct, which was widely distributed to students, parents, and staff. The one-page brochure concisely spells out misbehaviors and their consequences. Behaviors are classified in degrees, from “minor” infractions such as inappropriate attire (for which a parent conference, detention, or loss of privilege may be prescribed) to serious offenses, such as assault or drug possession (calling for suspension, removal to an alternative education program, or expulsion). “We’ve always known that the key to the problem was building widespread community support for safe, orderly schools,” explains Bridges. “The next step is hard-nosed implementation that’s consistent throughout the district, and we’re doing that” (Rose, 1996).

In the DeKalb County (Georgia) School System, juggling of discipline problems exist no more. Thanks to a system wide program that standardizes discipline procedures – and publishes these procedures in a handbook that’s distributed to parents and students – DeKalb has taken the arbitrariness out of school discipline, put due process front and center and turned wary (and weary) jugglers back into school executives with a workable system to follow. What makes the program so successful? Two things: a disciplinary brochure that spells out the who, what, where, when, why, and how of some 27 offenses,

and a hierarchical hearing process that gives a student ample opportunity to present his side of things to school officials (Arnold, 1989).

To provide for changes being implemented in the Chicago Public Schools, a study examined the effect of teachers' attitudes on student discipline problems and classroom management strategies. Questionnaires were distributed to 50 elementary and secondary teachers soliciting their views regarding the characteristics of problem students, effective classroom management strategies, the most frequently occurring and major causes of discipline problems, and strategies to improve student discipline. Study findings included the following results: the top four ways to improve student discipline were counseling and guidance, administrative procedures, more consistent discipline, and better communication between the school and the community (Greenlee and Ogletree, 1993).

The second of Professor Edward A. Wynn's findings from twenty plus years of research in the Chicago area schools shows that in recent years, there has been an increasing tendency for schools to change patterns of indifference to discipline, and to move toward creating more effective systems of deterrence. The revised systems include elements such as:

- School-wide written rules that clearly cover all foreseeable acts of wrong conduct
- Rules that are prepared after consulting with key teachers, parents, and (in high school) informed students.
- Each year, the rules are explained to students in a school wide assembly, and/or by individual classroom teachers.
- Rules that are examined annually by a faculty committee, and necessary appropriate changes are made.

- Rules that provide clear, unpleasant, progressive systems of punishment.
- Rules that provide that all criminal acts in schools, (e.g., possessing or dealing drugs, bringing in a weapon) will be automatically reported to the police, in addition to applying the prescribed school punishment. Being in school does not shield criminal acts by students from the operation of the criminal law.
- Rules that are annually distributed to all students, and signed receipts and promises regarding obedience are obtained from all students and parents, i.e., “I have read these rules over with our child, and each of us understand them and agree to try our best to see they are obeyed.”
- Teachers are invited to develop specific sets of rules for their classes, complementing the outstanding school-wide rules.

In addition to such formal actions, many schools are also reconsidering the informal elements of their discipline systems. Such considerations deal with matters such as: whether administrators back up teachers in the face of strong parent resistance to justified discipline; and what measures schools take when parents do not adequately cooperate with school discipline procedures. Essentially, we are seeing a gradual shift back to the “deterrence approach” to student discipline (Wynn, 1994).

An elementary school in a medium –size city in the U.S. Pacific Northwest was selected for participation in a four year study which evaluated how establishing, teaching, and reinforcing school-wide rules and routines and systematically responding to disruptive behavior affected the number of office disciplinary referrals. This approach focused on school practices rather than on the children themselves and was both preventative and remedial; preventative, in that it helped ensure that school practices did

not cause or reinforce disruptive behavior; remedial, in that it sought to reduce disruptive behavior. University support was minimal, consisting of one 3-hour training session on general guidelines for establishing, teaching, and reinforcing school-wide rules and routines and in the systematic response to disruptive behavior (Nelson, et al., 1998).

The dependent measures for the study included two types of formal office disciplinary referrals: office referrals for rules violations and for rights violations. The procedures for implementing the formal disciplinary responses were held constant throughout the study period. The administrative and teaching staff remained stable over the 4-year period. Seven disruptive behaviors represented rules violations: (a) late from recess/assembly, (b) running, (c) misuse of ground/equipment, (d) throwing items/spitting, (e) gum/candy/food consumption, (f) possession of inappropriate items (e.g., weapons, illicit substances, and materials), and (g) interruption of learning environment. Six behaviors represented rights violations: (a) harming/threatening others, (b) using verbal abuse/inappropriate language, (c) acting in a disobedient/disrespectful manner, (d) destroying property/stealing, (e) fighting/pushing, and (f) harassing others. A continuous intervention time series design (Glass, Willison, & Gottham, 1975) over 4 years was used to determine the overall relative effects of establishing, teaching, and reinforcing school-wide rules and routines versus the systematic response to disruptive behavior on formal office disciplinary referrals across Grades 1 to 6. Rules and routines of the school were systematically designed, taught and reinforced. The process of establishing behavioral guidelines was based on Project PREPARE (Colvin et al., 1993) and included (a) identifying specific routines for what students were to accomplish, (b)

task-analyzing the routines, and (c) teaching and maintaining the routines. The school staff actively supervised students to maintain the rules and routines (Nelson, et al., 1998)

Data based on the number of formal office referrals during the 4 - year study yielded positive results. Following the implementation of the school-wide organizational program, the mean number of formal office disciplinary referrals for rules violations per academic quarter increased for Grades 1 to 6. Following the implementation of the systematic response to disruptive behavior, the mean number of formal office disciplinary referrals for rules violations per academic quarter decreased for Grades 1 to 6. Following the implementation of the school-wide organizational program, the mean number of formal office disciplinary referrals per academic quarter for rights violations decreased for Grades 1 to 6. Following the implementation of the systematic response to disruptive behavior, the mean number of formal office disciplinary referrals per academic quarter for rights violations decreased for Grades 1 to 6 (Nelson et al., 1998).

The primary purpose of this study was to assess the overall and relative effects of establishing, teaching, and reinforcing school-wide rules and routines and of a systematic response to disruptive behavior. The overall outcome of establishing, teaching, and reinforcing school-wide rules and routines and a systematic response to disruptive behavior seemed to be positive. Over the course of the 4 – year study period, the number of formal office disciplinary referrals decreased. These findings are consistent with previous research that demonstrated that establishing, teaching, and reinforcing school-wide rules and routines seems to reduce the levels of disruptive behavior in elementary (Nelson, 1996, Nelson et al., 1998) and middle schools (Colvin et al., 1993). This study supports the findings of Nelson (1996) that establishing, teaching, and reinforcing school-

wide rules and routines along with a systematic response to disruptive behavior seems to reduce the level of disruptive behavior in elementary schools (Nelson et al., 1998).

The primary importance of this study is the demonstration that the incidence of disruptive behavior can be reduced with the application of relatively straightforward strategies, with little university support and no additional fiscal resources. The consistent use of formal office disciplinary referrals across the school year suggests that teachers and other staff respond more consistently to students' violations of rules and routines. One possible explanation is that the environment was more predictable for teachers and students across the school year. Although there are many other factors (e.g., family needs) that must be addressed to reduce disruptive behavior in schools, the results of this study, along with previous research (e.g., Nelson, 1996), suggest that school environment may play a large role in managing disruptive behavior. This is critical, because school personnel are in control of the school and classroom organizational practices, whereas they have no control over factors external to the school (Nelson, et al., 1998).

Another implication of this study concerns policy and training issues. Educators must establish policies and practices to insure that the school environment is conducive to learning and enhances the safety of students and staff alike. Furthermore, staff development concerning disruptive behavior should be focused on the particular organizational practices of each individual school, rather than solely on generic strategies regarding management, motivation and discipline. Researchers, educators, and other professionals must accept the idea that using consequences to reduce disruptive behavior is "not a bad thing" for children. Although it helps to have rules and routines clearly established, taught, reinforced, and discussed with students, teachers and administrators,

like parents, must use consistent consequences to reduce disruptive behavior in school (Nelson et al., 1998).

As part of the OSEP-funded primary prevention project, Bob Algozzine and Richard White, at the University of North Carolina-Charlotte, are studying a school-wide approach to behavioral management, Unified Discipline. Four objectives drive the efforts to implement Unified Discipline: 1) Unified attitudes: Teachers and school personnel believe that instruction can improve behavior, behavioral instruction is part of teaching, personalizing misbehavior makes matters worse, and emotional poise underlies discipline methods that work. 2) Unified expectations: Consistent and fair expectations for behavioral instruction are a key to successful discipline plans. 3) Unified consequences: When classroom rules are broken, teachers respond consistent correction procedures. Using a warm yet firm voice, teachers state the behavior, state the violated rule, state the unified consequence, and offer encouragement. 4) Unified team roles: Clear responsibilities are described for all school personnel. Unified Discipline is being implemented at Windsor Park Elementary School in Charlotte with promising results. Teachers report positive attitudes toward its use, and there is preliminary evidence that suggests reductions in the nature and extent of office referrals (Lewis, 1997).

There is a need for the establishment of a climate for effective school discipline. To establish such a climate, discipline must be perceived from a total school perspective. The crucial key to an effective total school discipline program is shared values among students, teachers, parents, and administrators about what is acceptable, appropriate behavior in the particular school setting. There are certain organizational characteristics that relate to climates that are conducive to good student behavior. These characteristics

include having a commitment to a plan of action, attention to teacher and principal role, and indication of strong student accountability. A school-wide emphasis on improvement of student behavior is necessary in rallying commitment of both students and faculty. It is critical also that an actual plan be developed for implementation of strategies for improving student behavior. Schools that have a plan of action for guiding decision making can be successful in establishing good behavior. Wayson (1985) suggests that effectively disciplined schools maintain a total school effort (Short & Short, 1994).

In development and implementation of the new discipline plan, the attempt will be to, as the research shows, establish firm, fair, consistent and thorough guidelines. By improving communication school-wide, the intent will be that staff and students develop a better understanding of behavior management issues. A uniform behavior report form will be constructed and used as a communication piece which spells out behaviors, corrective action by teachers and principal, and serves as concrete documentation for students, teachers, child study team, parents, and administration. The intention, via this new discipline plan is to create a school environment, which is more conducive to learning. Research will continue and evaluation will determine if a thorough system, using firm, fair, and consistent discipline, has a positive effect on student behavior.

Chapter 3

Design of the Study

Description of Research Design:

This study was designed to improve student behavior in an elementary school setting. The centerpiece of the study is the development and implementation of a discipline referral form for school-wide use. By designing a form that is thorough and user/reader friendly, it is the belief of the intern that this study will impact significantly on student discipline. Due to the fact that no consistent discipline referral form or process has previously existed, communication among staff and between the school and parents has become poor in relation to student behavior. The use of this form will improve this communication problem by being an information device for all involved. It will also serve as a documentation piece for the school, the teacher, the child study team (when necessary) and, the parents.

Development and Design of Research Instrument:

The major research instrument of this study is the actual discipline referral form. The development of the instrument began in the summer with research by the intern on school discipline. Through an extensive review of literature, the intern became quite familiar with problems and solutions related to student discipline.

Establishment of a school discipline committee was the next step in the process. To provide for a sampling of all staff, this committee included one teacher from each grade level (Pre-K to 4th), one special education teacher and, one specialist (Phys. Ed.). After several quite productive meetings, the intern was able to develop a form that would

include the following components beginning at the top and proceeding down the page in this order:

- District and school name.
- The title as **“BEHAVIOR REPORT”**.
- Date, Student’s Name, Student’s Class and, Teacher/Aide/Substitute who is sending the form.
- A. Description of the Incident.
- Check off boxes for the following infractions: Failure to Observe School Rules, Destructive to School Property, Running in Hall/Class, Disrespectful to Authority Figure, Annoying to Classmates, Hitting Another Student, Rude/Discourteous, Restless/Inattentive, Excessive Talking/Loudness, Late to Class and, Other, with space to describe an incident if necessary.
- A mid-page title: **“CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN”**.
- The statement: “as a result of the incident(s) described above, the following action(s) has been taken to correct the student’s behavior.
- B. Corrective Action by the Teacher.
- Check off boxes for the following actions: Conference with Student, Letter Home, Phone Call Home, Teacher Detention, Behavior Modification Plan, Parent Conference and Other, with space to describe an action if necessary.
- Check off boxes for the following administrative actions with lines for corresponding dates: Conference with Principal, Restricted Activities, Parent Conference, Suspension, CST Referral and Other, with space to describe an action if necessary.

- Principal's Comments, with ample space for the Administrator to write whatever deemed necessary.
- Principal's Signature, with a line for it.
- C: Parent, Teacher, Principal, Case Manager.

The form exists on NCR paper in quadruple. It is color coded in the following manner:

- * White Parent's Copy
- * Yellow Teacher's Copy
- * Pink Principal's Copy
- * Gold Child Study Team's Copy (if necessary)

The intern truly believes that the form is thorough, comprehensive and an excellent device for both communication and documentation. Through the use of this form, ongoing meetings with the discipline committee and discussions about discipline at all staff meetings; the intern will be able to study the effects on student behavior.

Sample and Sampling Technique:

The sample for this study will be the entire student population in grades Pre-Kindergarten through 4th at the Charles L. Spragg School in Egg Harbor City.

The sampling technique for this study will be a review of material culture. The Behavior Report Form will be the instrument used. All Behavior Reports completed by teachers during the time frame of the study will be the data.

Data Collection Approach:

As previously discussed, the Behavior Report Form exists on color coded NCR paper in quadruple. The intern will maintain a discipline file holding all Behavior Reports completed by teachers during the time frame of the study.

Data Analysis Plan:

The intern's plan for data analysis is to review and chart the total number of Behavior Reports completed by teachers on a weekly basis during the time frame of the study. The number of Behavior Reports for each category, based on boxes checked under "Description of the Incident" will also be analyzed on a weekly basis during the time frame of the study.

Based on this method of data analysis, the intern will be able to determine if the consistent use of the Behavior Report Form reduces student discipline problems at the Charles L. Spragg School.

Chapter 4

Research Findings

What information was found?

This study was conducted during a five-month period, beginning on October 4, 1999 and concluding on March 3, 2000. The findings were as follows:

October 1999:

<u>Week 1 (10/4 – 10/8):</u>	23 behavior reports
<u>Week 2 (10/12 – 10/15):</u>	17 behavior reports (4-day week following Columbus Day holiday)
<u>Week 3 (10/18 – 10/22):</u>	17 behavior reports
<u>Week 4 (10/25 – 10/29):</u>	14 behavior reports

November 1999:

<u>Week 1 (11/1 – 11/5):</u>	12 behavior reports
<u>Week 2 (11/8 – 11/10):</u>	7 behavior reports (3-day week preceding NJ Teacher's Convention)
<u>Week 3 (11/15 – 11/19):</u>	9 behavior reports
<u>Week 4 (11/22 – 11/24):</u>	6 behavior reports (3-day week preceding Thanksgiving Recess)

December 1999:

<u>Week 1 (11/29 – 12/3):</u>	9 behavior reports
<u>Week 2 (12/6 – 12/10):</u>	10 behavior reports
<u>Week 3 (12/13 – 12/17):</u>	10 behavior reports

December 1999:

Week 4(12/20 – 12/22): 3 behavior reports (3-day week preceding Winter Recess)

January 2000:

Week 1 (1/3 – 1/7): 6 behavior reports

Week 2 (1/10 – 1/14): 11 behavior reports

Week 3 (1/18 – 1/21): 8 behavior reports (4-day week following M.L.K. Holiday)

Week 4 (1/24 – 1/28): 8 behavior reports

February 2000:

Week 1 (1/31 – 2/4): 7 behavior reports

Week 2 (2/7 – 2/11): 6 behavior reports

Week 3 (2/14 – 2/17): 5 behavior reports

Week 4 (2/22 – 2/25): 3 behavior reports (4-day week following President's Day Holiday)

Week 5 (2/28 – 3/3): 4 behavior reports

What did it mean?

The intern was quite pleased with the results of this study. Based on the data collected during the time frame of the study, the new discipline plan was a success at the Charles L. Spragg School. In reviewing the data, it is clear that the number of behavior reports completed by teachers declined on a monthly basis. The "Behavior Report Form", used in a firm, fair, and consistent manner, proved to be an effective device in reducing student behavior problems.

Although official data collection and analysis has concluded for the purposes of this study, use of the behavior report form will continue at the Charles L. Spragg School. As with any type of school program, academic, behavioral, or otherwise, success and merit are measured over the course of time. In the school setting, the course of time means years. This is the only way that effectiveness can be proven.

Chapter 5

Conclusions, Implications & Further Study

Conclusions:

The development and use of “The Behavior Report Form” proved to be successful at the Charles L. Spragg Elementary School in Egg Harbor City, New Jersey. Consistent and appropriate use of the form brought about a reduction in student discipline problems, resulting in school-wide improvement in student behavior. Based on the data collected during the time frame of the study, the number of behavior report forms completed and submitted by teachers declined on a weekly basis.

Improvement in communication was another result of the study. The behavior report form served as a communication device between and among teachers, students, parents, the child study team, and the office. The report form allowed all parties involved to be aware all incidents, stating who was involved, what occurred, and what the resulting administrative action taken was in relation to the incident.

Documentation was another positive result of the study. The behavior report form served as a documentation instrument. The four color-coded copies of the report form provided documentation to teachers, parents, the office, and, when relating to special education students, the child study team. Documentation lead to accountability of all involved. Students were held accountable for their actions as documented on the form and held responsible for bringing the white copy home to their parents. Parents were held accountable to respond to incidents related to their children, if deemed necessary, on their copy of the form. Teachers were held accountable because they had to carry out the actions, which they documented on the form, as displayed on their yellow copy. When

necessary, in relation to special education students, the child study team was held accountable for actions documented and displayed on their goldenrod copy of the form. Finally, administration was accountable for actions in relation to every form completed. The type of disciplinary action taken, the correct distribution of the copies of the form, the follow up on every incident and the result, as documented on the pink copy, made administration (in this study, the intern), ultimately the most accountable.

The intern was incredibly pleased with the results of this study and the positive impact that it had on student behavior at the Charles L. Spragg School.

Implications:

As stated in the literature and reviewed in Chapter 2, firm, fair and, consistent discipline is effective in improving students' behavior in school. This study has reinforced the research by showing an improvement in student behavior at the Charles L. Spragg School in Egg Harbor City, New Jersey.

Based on the data collected, and the observations of the intern during the time-frame of the study, the following implications can be made and supported:

1. Discipline that is firm, fair, and consistent is effective in improving student behavior.
2. A comprehensive behavior report that is user/reader friendly is a valuable tool in an effective school discipline plan.
3. Communication among and between teachers, students, parents, the child study team, and administration is essential in an effective school discipline plan.

4. Documentation of all incidents is essential in an effective school discipline plan.
5. Accountability of students, teachers, parents, the child study team, and administration is essential in an effective school discipline plan.

Further Study:

Although data collection as displayed in Chapter 4 ceased due to time constraints in relation to the intern's presentation of the final thesis, use of the behavior report form continues and will continue at the Charles L. Spragg School. Data will continue to be collected, simply because data collection is part of the school discipline plan. There will always be documentation that can be referenced at any time.

As far as further study goes, the intern would be curious to study the effectiveness of "The Behavior Report Form" if used in different settings. Would the report form be as effective in a much larger school? How would junior high school or high school students respond to a form of this nature? The intern believes that a behavior report form, or discipline referral, or any type of device of this nature can be effective in any school setting. The keys to success are firmness, fairness, and consistency. The process must begin in the classroom, emanate throughout the school, and be reinforced and supported by the building's educational leader. The process must continue over time. Discipline is not difficult. It is not something that is difficult to learn. It is simply something that must be maintained with firmness, fairness, and consistency in the best interest of students.

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Appendix A
“The Behavior Report Form”

EGG HARBOR CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
C. L. SPRAGG SCHOOL

BEHAVIOR REPORT

Date: _____

Student: _____

Class: _____

Teacher/Aide/Substitute: _____

A. Description of the Incident:

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Failure to Observe School Rules | <input type="checkbox"/> Annoying to Classmates | <input type="checkbox"/> Restless/Inattentive |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Destructive to School Property | <input type="checkbox"/> Hitting Another Student | <input type="checkbox"/> Excessive Talking/Loudness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Running in Hall/Class | <input type="checkbox"/> Rude/Discourteous | <input type="checkbox"/> Late to Class |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disrespectful to an Authority Figure | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN

As a result of the incident(s) described above, the following action(s) has been taken to correct the student's behavior:

B. Corrective Action by the Teacher:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conference with Student | <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Detention |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Letter Home | <input type="checkbox"/> Behavior Modification Plan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Phone Call Home | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent Conference |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: | |

- | | <u>Dates</u> |
|--|--------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conference with Principal | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted Activities | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parent Conference | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Suspension | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CST Referral | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | _____ |
| | _____ |

Principal's Comments: _____

Principal's Signature _____

c: Parent, Teacher, Principal, Case Manager

Appendix B

“Staff Quotes”

- * “This is the best thing we’ve had in years.” Pat Bernard, Grade 3 Teacher
- * “The kids really understand the importance of this form.” Rita Ritzel, Grade 4 Teacher
- * “I use it as a way to prevent bad behavior.” Donna Fiedler, Kindergarten Teacher
- * “It definitely works.” Barb Poley, Grade 2 Teacher
- * “The kids have never been this good.” Mr. Rick, Head Custodian
- * “You’ve really turned allot of the students around.” Cathy Bubeck, School Nurse
- * “I like the fact that so many parents are made to come to school.” Jane Thompson, Grade 1 Teacher
- * “More than one copy prevents the kids from getting away with things.” Ruth Dye, Spanish Teacher
- * “My kids fear that paper.” Veronica Warrakah, Special Education Teacher
- * “Mrs. Bass uses it as a way to get parents to come in.” Betty White, Special Education Teacher’s Aid
- * “I’m going to color code my form that way for next year.” John Gilly, Rittenberg Principal
- * “Good job Tom, your consistency paid off. The thoroughness and documentation are excellent.” Dave Rhine, Superintendent

Biographical Data

Name	Thomas J. Campo
High School	Holy Spirit High School Absecon, NJ
Undergraduate	Bachelors of Science Biology Stockton State College Pomona, NJ
Graduate	Master of Arts Student Personnel Services Rowan University Glassboro, NJ Master of Arts School Administration Rowan University Glassboro, NJ
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