

HIGH SCHOOL DISCIPLINE PRACTICES AND ASSOCIATED FUTURE STUDENT
INFRACTIONS

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY

OF
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF APPLIED AND PROFESSIONAL PSYCHOLOGY
OF
RUTGERS,

THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

BY
JENNIFER LAUREN GEREWITZ
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

OF
DOCTOR OF PSYCHOLOGY

NEW BRUNSWICK, NEW JERSEY

OCTOBER 2015

APPROVED:

Anne Gregory, Ph.D.

Susan Forman, Ph.D.

DEAN:

Stanley B. Messer, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT

Zero tolerance policies are commonly implemented in school districts across the United States. These policies utilize punitive consequences such as in-school and out-of-school suspensions. There is some research to suggest that these practices may be more likely to promote future misconduct and increase student risk of poor academic achievement, antisocial behavior, and dropping out of school. Despite the recent research documenting deleterious correlates of punitive consequences, inquiry about the relative benefits of varying types of consequences is sparse. Specifically, few studies have compared consequences that exclude students from instruction (e.g., suspension) versus those that are more student-centered (e.g., conferences). Student-centered approaches in particular, tend to foster student skillsets that aid in student self-management and behavior regulation. Following a sample of 9th grade students from two diverse Northeastern high schools over nine months, the current study examined whether conferences relative to exclusionary consequences, such as in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension, were linked to fewer future infractions. It was hypothesized that students who received student-centered disciplinary actions, such as restorative conferences, would receive fewer future disciplinary referrals when compared to peers who received more punitive consequences, such as in-school and out-of school suspensions. However, multiple regression analyses did not support the hypothesis. Results indicated that the type and frequency of consequence received did not significantly impact future rates of office discipline referrals, out-of-school suspension, or in-school suspension. There was, however, a noteworthy finding: when students were referred for reasons related to missing class (e.g., tardiness, unexcused absence), they tended to receive more frequent

future disciplinary referrals, relative to their peers who did not receive referrals for these reasons. This suggests that missing class may be an early indicator of serious underlying challenges that contribute to the development of negative discipline trajectories in the first years of high school. Future directions and implications for practice are discussed.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I have been fortunate to have many people by my side, encouraging and supporting me through this process. I would like to thank just a few for their immeasurable patience, guidance, and support, for without them, this would not have been possible.

First and foremost, I owe my deepest, heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Anne Gregory. Since the very beginning of my graduate school journey, Dr. Gregory has challenged me intellectually, guided me academically, and supported me emotionally. Throughout the dissertation development, Dr. Gregory worked tirelessly with me to determine the most motivating course of action, and remained involved in every aspect of the process. She provided me with continual, thoughtful feedback and endless encouragement. Anne, you have been a true inspiration to me professionally and personally.

I would also like to thank Dr. Susan Forman for her words of wisdom and thought-provoking observations. My dissertation would not be as fine-tuned, yet comprehensive without her advice.

To my family: words cannot express how grateful I am for all of your endless patience, support and reassurance. To my husband, Eric, I would not have been able to accomplish all that I have without you. Your unconditional love and understanding enabled me to focus on my work and career, even as you concentrated on your own. To my parents, this accomplishment is as much your own as it is mine. In true Gerewitz fashion, you once quoted Warren Buffet, saying, “Someone is sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago.” You planted the tree; I now sit in its shade. To my sisters, Debbie and Rebecca, in your own ways, you have both taught me

the meaning of true perseverance and working to reach your goals. And last, but certainly not least, to my in-laws, Rena and Jerry: although I entered your life only a few years ago, you have supported and encouraged me as you would your own. I am truly blessed to have you in my life.

I am lucky to have an extensive list of people in my life that I would like to thank. While this does not do it justice, I wish to thank all of my friends, family, teachers and mentors that have helped me reach this significant achievement. This accomplishment belongs to each of you as well.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
ABSTRACT.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
LIST OF TABLES.....	viii
LIST OF FIGURES	x
INTRODUCTION	1
Current Disciplinary Practices	5
Theory Behind Consequences.....	7
A Different Type of Intervention.....	12
Summary	17
METHODS	20
Participants.....	20
Procedures	22
Measures.....	22
Data Analytic Plan.....	24
RESULTS	25
Descriptive Findings.....	25
Differences Between Groups.....	27
Correlations	31
Linear Regression.....	33
DISCUSSION.....	38
Limitations.....	49

Future Directions	52
Implications for Practice	54
Conclusion.....	58
REFERENCES	60
APPENDICES	74

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Descriptive analysis of future referrals, future conferences, future OSS and future ISS.....	26
Table 2 Results of T-tests and descriptive statistics for race and referral outcomes.....	28
Table 3 Results of T-tests and descriptive statistics for gender and referral outcomes.....	28
Table 4 Results of T-tests and descriptive statistics for free/reduced lunch status and referral outcomes.....	28
Table 5 Results of Chi-square test and descriptive statistics for first consequence by race.....	29
Table 6 Results of Chi-square test and descriptive statistics for first consequence by gender.....	30
Table 7 Results of Chi-square test and descriptive statistics for first consequence by free/reduced lunch status.....	30
Table 8 Correlations among future ODRs, OSS, ISS and student demographics.....	31
Table 9 Correlations among future ODRs, OSS, ISS and the number and reason for prior referrals	32
Table 10 Correlations among future ODRs, OSS, ISS and the first consequence received.....	32
Table 11 Regression analysis for student demographics, discipline history, and first consequences as predictors of future referrals	35

Table 12 Regression analysis for student demographics, discipline history, and first consequences as predictors of future out-of-school suspensions (OSS).....	37
Table 13 Regression analysis for student demographics, discipline history, and first consequences as predictors of future in-school suspensions (ISS).....	38

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 Number of students that received OSS, ISS, or conferences as a first consequence	26
--	----

Introduction

Current disciplinary practices in schools typically consist of negative consequences for the students such as parent phone calls, detentions, suspensions, and expulsions (Osher et al., 2010). These practices may only provide a short-term solution for more chronic problems. Moreover, there is little evidence to support the efficacy of punitive and exclusionary methods (Mayer, 1995; Skiba, Peterson, & Williams, 1997). Zero tolerance policies became more widespread in the 1990's, which utilize more stringent and exclusionary disciplinary practices in order to maintain order and seemingly create an environment more conducive for student learning. In 2008, an American Psychological Association Task Force (APA) reviewed literature related to 20 years of implemented zero tolerance policies to determine whether there was evidence to support their use (APA Zero Tolerance Task Force, 2008). The task force concludes that rather than reduce the frequency of future misbehavior, school suspensions may actually increase the rate of misbehavior and suspension (APA Zero Tolerance Task Force, 2008). In fact, such practices may lead to increased antisocial behavior among students, an increase in vandalism, and a greater likelihood of students dropping out or failing (Raffaele-Mendez, 2003; Tobin, Sugai, & Colvin, 1996). This may be especially true when students perceive the consequences to be unfair (APA Zero Tolerance Task Force, 2008; Bowditch, 1993; Dishion & Dodge, 2005; Ekstrom, Goertz, Pollack, & Rock, 1986; Gottfredson, Gottfredson, Payne, & Gottfredson, 2005; Mayer & Butterworth, 1995; Wehlage & Rutter, 1986). In light of the negative consequences associated with exclusionary practices, racial disparities in discipline suggests students from some groups are at even greater risk for negative outcomes relative to students from other groups (Carter, Fine & Russell, 2014).

During the 2009-2010 school year, just over 39% of administrators in public schools reported taking serious disciplinary actions for student misbehavior (Robers, Kemp, & Truman, 2013). These serious disciplinary actions include out-of-school suspension lasting five days or longer, transfers to specialized schools, and expulsion. Notably, the percentage of schools with serious disciplinary actions increased by school level, such that middle schools (67%) had a higher percentage than elementary schools (18%), and high schools had the highest percentage (83%) of serious disciplinary actions (Robers et al., 2013). In a national report by the Center for Civil Rights at UCLA, Losen and Martinez (2013) estimate that over two million students were suspended during the 2009-2010 school year. According to the authors, this means that in high schools across the U.S., approximately one out of every nine students was suspended at least once (Losen & Martinez, 2013).

Ethnic minority groups are at an even greater risk for exclusionary discipline. Approximately one-quarter (24.3%) of enrolled African American students and 12% of enrolled Latino students at the secondary school level received a suspension in 2009-2010. In contrast, only 7.1% of European American students in secondary schools received suspensions. Students with disabilities were also significantly more likely to receive a suspension (11%) in high school than students without disabilities (Losen & Martinez, 2013; Robers et al., 2013).

Student misbehavior and the subsequent disciplinary actions may disrupt school functioning. Due to procedures and paperwork, school discipline takes time away from administrators' other duties and teachers' instruction (Osher et al., 2010). Teachers are also likely to burn out more quickly if they report struggling with frequent classroom disruptions (Kendziora & Osher, 2009; Osher et al., 2010). Beyond the administrative

and teacher time and effort, student discipline impedes student learning. This is true for the individuals exhibiting misconduct, as well as others in the same classroom (Balfanz, Byrnes, & Fox, 2013; Lannie & McCurdy, 2007). During the 2007-2008 school year, 34% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that student behaviors, specifically tardiness, class cutting, and misconduct, negatively impacted their instruction (Robers et al., 2013). Other negative consequences resulting from current, and possibly ineffective, disciplinary measures include disciplined students' greater probability of incarceration and increased risk of school dropout (Balfanz et al., 2013; Fabelo et al., 2011; Lee, Cornell, Gregory, & Fan, 2011; Losen & Martinez, 2013). For example, according to Balfanz et al. (2013) a student's odds of graduating decrease by 20% with each additional suspension.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) committee on school health issued a policy statement highlighting the negative outcomes associated with exclusionary discipline practices, and advocating for greater support for mental health support services in the schools (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2013) with other national organizations following suit (e.g., National Association of School Psychologists). However, the number of students being sent out of class and school remains extremely high. In most states, while some disciplinary infractions legally require certain actions be taken, such as aggravated or sexual assault, often schools make discretionary decisions for discipline infractions. This means that the decision to implement these disciplinary actions is not mandated by law, but rather at the discretion of administrators based upon their interpretation of the policies in place (Fabelo et al., 2011). Therefore, administrators can make decisions about whether to send students home or engage in a conference with students. Although little research exists on administrator's impact on disciplinary decisions, research does suggest that administrative decisions do have a unique influence

on disciplinary consequences (Skiba et al., 2011). Skiba and colleagues have hypothesized that this may be in part due to a mismatch between what minority students perceive as “appropriate behavior” and the expectations teachers and administrators have for students (Bradshaw et al., 2010; Skiba et al., 2011). In a report examining disciplinary practices in Texas, it is noted that 54.7% of students without disabilities received a suspension or expulsion due to discretionary actions, and 74.6% of students with disabilities received a suspension or expulsion based on discretionary actions. The percentage of students with disabilities suspended or expelled because of an administrative decision is further broken down according to disability type, with 90.2% of students with Emotional Disturbance receiving discretionary suspension or expulsion, in contrast to the 37.0% of students with other disabilities (such as Autism and Cognitive Impairments) receiving suspension or expulsion (see Fabelo et al., 2011). The high percentage of discretionary actions demonstrates that administrators are deciding to rely on exclusionary consequences, despite it not being mandated to do so by law.

As previously mentioned, based on data collected from over 26,000 middle and high schools in the United States, it is estimated that over two million students were suspended during 2009-2010 (Losen & Martinez, 2013). Yet, we know little about the potential differential effect of school exclusionary practices versus problem-solving, relationship-based procedures (e.g., conferences) on future student disciplinary referrals. Given the recent critique of exclusionary discipline practices and school districts’ search for alternative practices (Gregory, Bell, & Pollock, 2014), it is important to empirically examine the relative value of a range of disciplinary consequences, namely exclusionary practices (e.g., in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension) versus more “person-centered” approaches (e.g., conferences). Conferences vary with regard to student input,

but one conference format is part of the “Restorative Practices (RP)” school-wide change program. Restorative Practices includes two types of conferences, one to address minor incidents, and another to manage more severe incidents. Both types of conferences include all students involved in an incident and are designated as “safe spaces” for the wrongdoer to problem-solve and attempt to right his or her wrong (Wachtel, 2012). The current study examined student discipline trajectories based on first consequence type to determine whether “person-centered” consequences (e.g., conferences) in comparison to exclusionary consequence (e.g., suspension) reduced the probability of students’ future discipline referrals.

Current Disciplinary Practices

Schools often rely upon student handbooks or codes of conduct to outline expected behavior and the assigned consequences when students do not abide by the rules. One such code of conduct for a school district in Pennsylvania states that the purpose of rule following includes: “[the] imperative [is] that each student understand that one’s life is governed by rules... it is a basic responsibility of citizens in a democracy to know and follow the rules” (BASD Code of Conduct, 2011, p. 1). Thus, by introducing rules and regulations early in a student’s life, the student will become accustomed to abiding by rules in the future, thereby fostering law-abiding citizens. Most rules therefore, focus on treating others with respect, acting appropriately, and listening to teachers and administrators. If these rules are not followed, students are then issued consequences based on the offense, as outlined in the code (BASD Code of Conduct, 2011). This particular code of conduct is representative of other school codes of conduct nationwide (Fenning et al., 2008).

The U.S. Department of Education, in its Guiding Principles, states: “schools should [...] create a continuum of developmentally appropriate and proportional consequences for addressing ongoing and escalating student misbehavior” (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). Thus, schools across the nation have attempted to follow this recommendation by creating a typology of infractions in a tiered level system. Using this tiered system, student consequences become harsher based upon severity of the infraction. Despite the tiered nature of the system, most of the consequences remove students from the classroom and therefore instructional time. Since students are being taken out of the learning environment, these consequences can be considered “exclusionary.”

Students who commit “Level I Infractions” typically receive less punitive consequences, such as meetings and detentions. Level I infractions include any behavior in the classroom that disrupts the learning environment. “Level II Infractions” include any prohibited behaviors or actions that occur during any school-sanctioned function, whether on or off school property. Such infractions may be continued classroom misconduct, dress code violations, selling of unauthorized objects, or defiance, defined as “the willful failure or refusal to follow instructions or directions of an adult of authority” (BASD Code of Conduct, 2011, p. 17). Level II infractions often lead to consequences such as detention as well. However, if the misbehavior occurs repeatedly, it becomes a “Level III” offense, for which students are given suspension. Level III infractions also consist of prohibited behaviors on school property or during any school-related event, including transportation related to school activities. Activating false fire alarms, continued defiance and disrespect, destruction of school or personal property, drug or alcohol related offenses, cheating, extortion, endangerment of others, physical assault,

theft, harassment and bullying, and insubordination are all included in Level III infractions.

After a Level III offense occurs, an administrator is required to speak to the student (unless the student poses a threat to himself or others) so that he or she has an opportunity to respond to the accusation. Suspension is any “exclusion from school for a period from one to ten consecutive school days...students suspended will be removed from the regular school program, and assigned to a designated location in school, or assigned to a designated location out of school during term of the suspension” (BASD Code of Conduct 2011, p. 22). A disciplinary action sequence chart explicitly states the consequences for each violation, dependent upon the behavior and the number of times the student has been cited for the same offense. This chart will also determine whether a student received in-school suspension (ISS) or out-of-school suspension (OSS).

Expulsion occurs if a student possesses a weapon, assaults a district employee, or is a habitual offender, defined as: “exceeding the level of 5-10 days suspension consequence during the current school year for a specific Level III infraction [or] exceeding five (5) separate suspensions during the current school year for any combination of infractions” (BASD Code of Conduct, 2011, p. 21). This progressive discipline model, in which punitive sanctions become harsher in accordance with the severity of the infraction, is a common framework for disciplinary consequences (e.g., New York City public schools). As can be seen based upon the number of infractions that may result in detention, suspension (ISS or OSS), or expulsion, most consequences result in student removal from the classroom, and therefore instruction time. These actions can be considered a more exclusionary approach, given students are being taken out of the classroom.

Theory Behind Consequences

In order to understand the reason schools have selected varying disciplinary consequences for student misbehavior, it is necessary to review broad theories about what drives human behavior. This can be understood best through the use of an example. For instance, if one wishes for a child to eat a certain food, if one removes all other foods, eventually, the child will eat the food that remains. The question becomes, “Why?” (Skinner, 1974).

Methodological behaviorists view behavior simply as a series of inter-related, contingent events. In such an instance as the example provided above, it could be assumed that the child needs food to survive. After a period of time, physiological needs will cause the child to become hungry, thus pressuring him to eat the only source of food available. This view of behavior avoids the complication of mental processes, focusing only on survival instincts and needs to compel behavior (Skinner, 1974).

In contrast, psychological behaviorists, or radical behaviorists, view behavior as responses to stimuli (Skinner, 1974). Such behaviorists claim that over time, organisms learn from previous experiences and alter their behavior according to past consequences. Thus, psychological behaviorists would not dispute the series of events that lead to the child eating the food, but rather, they would add mental processes and learned behavior to the example. For instance, it may be that the child has learned through past experiences that when he or she is hungry, the only way to make his or her stomach pains go away would be to eat and fill his or her stomach with food. He or she would therefore eat to fill his or her stomach, thereby removing the hunger sensation (Skinner, 1974).

This phenomenon is known as “operant conditioning”, whereby an organism learns to effectively deal with new environmental situations through actions and subsequent consequences. B.F. Skinner (1974), the father of radical behaviorism, coined

this term to describe how an organism operates, which is dependent upon the environment and the consequences it receives. Based upon environmental conditions, an organism provides a response, or a behavior in reaction to the stimulus. The likelihood of the organism repeating this same response if presented with the same situation, depends upon the consequences of the response. If the response is reinforced, this means that the likelihood of the same response occurring again increases. Rewards are examples of *positive reinforcers*. These are consequences that are present that improve the chances of a given response re-occurring. For example, if the child eats the food and then receives a reward, such as a sweet treat, he will be more likely to eat the given food again. *Negative reinforcers* remove unwanted stimuli as a way of increasing the likelihood that a response will be repeated. Thus, if the child eats the undesirable food, something undesirable may be taken away, such as an extremely bright light or a loud noise. Thus both types of reinforcers increase the likelihood of the behavior, or response, occurring again. Similarly, environmental stimuli can serve as *conditioned reinforcers*. These can be any stimuli that become associated with a reward, thereby increasing the likelihood of a behavior as well. This occurs over time, as an organism learns an association between a stimulus and a reward (Skinner, 1953).

If, however, one wishes to decrease the likelihood of a response occurring, a *punishment* may be introduced. This involves either introducing something undesirable, or removing something desirable. Therefore, if the child is not eating his food, the removal of more desirable food, forcing him to eat something undesirable, could be considered a punishment. Additionally, if the child refuses to eat the undesirable food, a loud noise or bright light could be introduced to punish the child (Skinner, 1953).

This idea of punishment is likely the implicit theory utilized for supporting exclusionary discipline in the school systems. When a student is caught committing an offense, any of the resulting consequences may be seen as a form of punishment, especially suspension, which may be viewed as a harsher punishment than detention. For some students, the shame or guilt associated with being caught and punished may be enough for suspension, whether in- or out-of-school, to deter them from repeating the offense. For other students, it may be missing class and work which will, in turn, increase anxiety, and thereby decrease the likelihood of them repeating future offenses. For some, being separated from friends and peers may be enough to decrease future incidents. Others still, may worry about the consequences at home if and when their parents or caregivers learn of their misconduct in school. Out-of-school suspension is likely seen as more punitive than ISS due to the fact that students are prohibited from attending school. This means that the student will certainly miss his work, decreases his chance of seeing any teachers or peers, and increases the chance of parents learning about the student's misbehavior. Thus, in theory, ISS and OSS are being presented as undesirable consequences (or punishments), thereby leading to the decreased likelihood of students repeating their offenses. Yet, it is important to note that although this may be a punishment for some, in practice some of these consequences could be reinforcing. The American Psychological Association Task Force (APA) report on zero tolerance found that schools with zero tolerance policies, meant to deter future misbehavior by punishing (e.g., suspending) students immediately upon school disruption, does not appear to have this intended effect. Instead, several studies have shown that school suspension rates generally appear to predict a higher incidence of future student misbehavior (APA Zero Tolerance Task Force, 2008; Costenbader & Markson, 1998; Tobin et al., 1996). Tobin et

al. (1996) demonstrated this pattern by following a small group of sixth-grade middle school students referred to the office for disciplinary infractions. If ISS and OSS were effective as punishments, they hypothesized that students who received a suspension (ISS or OSS) would receive fewer subsequent discipline referrals. However, they found the opposite to be true: of the 17 students who received a consequence for a referral that did not involve a suspension, subsequent referrals over the next four school terms ranged from two to seven, with an average of 3.85 referrals. Conversely, of the 10 students who received a suspension (ISS or OSS), future referrals over the four school terms ranged from four to 25, with an average of 14 referrals. However, while the authors state that the students had some similar offenses (including physical aggression and insubordination), reasons for referral were not controlled for, and may be a confounding factor (Tobin et al., 1996). Given the small-scale nature of this study, further research is needed to examine student response patterns to suspension.

In order to better understand how secondary students view suspension, Costenbader and Markson (1998) conducted a study on suspension, with students as the primary source of information. Of the students that received OSS, 26% felt, “angry at the person who sent [him] to suspension,” whereas 31% responded that they were, “happy to get out of the situation.” In fact, students wrote in responses such as, “[It’s] a good excuse to stay home” and, “It’s just a vacation” (Costenbader & Markson, 1998). Additionally, approximately one-third of students that received OSS indicated that they did not think that the suspension had helped, and that it is likely they will be suspended again. Instead, 29% of students felt that “giving [them] someone to talk to about problems” would be more helpful (Costenbader & Markson, 1998). This supports the idea that being suspended may actually be seen as negative reinforcement by removing

the student from school, or even as a positive reinforcement by enabling the student to enjoy a day off from school, perhaps playing video games or watching television, rather than having to complete work.

Costenbader and Markson (1998) conclude that if externally suspended students most frequently report being angry and feeling aggressive, this likely perpetuates a cycle of violence, potentially leading to additional OSS suspensions. However, there are some mixed results regarding the efficacy of suspension as a punishment. Atkins et al. (2002) suggest that certain groups of students respond to suspensions differently and suspensions may be an appropriate deterrent for some students. They showed that students who received a detention or suspension during the fall term, but not during the spring, received a similar number of discipline referrals as the “never referred” group during the spring term. This suggests that for the students who received one detention or suspension during the fall only, this consequence served as a deterrent for future misconduct. In contrast, students who received one detention or suspension during the fall term, *and* one during the spring term, showed an increase in disciplinary referrals over the course of the year. This implies that the consequences did not act as a punishment as intended, by decreasing future misbehavior. Thus, for students that received only one suspension in the fall, the suspension appears to have discouraged students from future misconduct, whereas students that received a suspension in the fall and spring did not seem to be dissuaded from future misbehavior. These results imply students respond differently to certain consequences, such as suspensions (Atkins et al., 2002). Due to the mixed results across studies and age groups, more research is necessary to examine a link between suspension and future risk for referrals.

A Different Type of Intervention

Due to the potentially undesirable results that stem from exclusionary practices, researchers and educators have sought out alternative interventions to discourage student misconduct. One popular approach is to introduce practices that engage social and emotional skill building. These interventions aim to improve student behavior and academic success by teaching students important problem-solving skills. Advocates for more social and emotional based approaches argue that, “intrinsically, schools are social places and learning is a social process” (Zins, Bloodworth, Weissberg, & Walberg, 2004, p. 3) and it is through social and emotional factors that students learn how to respond and behave in different situations, ultimately leading to their success or failure. It is because of this idea, that “social and emotional learning” (SEL) was brought forth to help teach students the skills necessary to successfully navigate through school and life. This suggests that behavior is shaped not by consequences alone, but rather by consequences in combination with skills and competencies. Thus, skill deficits may decrease desirable behaviors and increase undesirable behaviors, since students may be unequipped to choose appropriate actions. Osher et al. (2010) point out the distinction between teacher-centered and student-centered approaches to classroom management and discipline. With teacher-centered approaches, the focus of behavior management is on school rules and behavioral techniques such as positive reinforcement and punishment as a means of managing the classroom. In contrast, student-centered approaches focus on teaching and supporting student skillsets that aid in student self-management and behavior regulation. Social and emotional learning is an example of a student-centered approach (Osher et al., 2010).

Social and emotional learning helps students learn to recognize and manage emotions, make good decisions, behave in an ethically responsible manner, develop

positive relationships, care about others, and avoid negative behaviors (Elias et al., 1997; Zins et al., 2004). Social emotional learning includes five core components to support healthy development: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making (Collaborative for Academic Social Emotional Learning, 2013). Self-awareness focuses on students' ability to accurately assess personal interests, feelings, and strengths, while maintaining self-confidence. Self-management addresses students' ability to regulate their emotions, appropriately express emotions, control impulses, and utilize goal setting as a tool for monitoring progress. Focusing on social awareness helps students understand others' perspectives and empathize with others. This includes, accepting and embracing differences among people and recognizing and appreciating family, friends, and communities. Building relationship skills aids students in establishing and maintaining healthy relationships in different areas of their life. Specific relationship skills include, cooperation, peer pressure resistance, appropriate conflict resolution, and assistance seeking when necessary. Students are also taught responsible decision making, which involves considering ethics, safety, respect for others, and potential consequences of actions. These skills facilitate development in a variety of domains, including academic and social domains of functioning (CASEL, 2008).

Social emotional learning skills are meant to increase students' adaptive skills given that some students may lack this knowledge. Ideally, this decreases undesirable behaviors resulting from a lack of appropriate adaptive skills. Social emotional research has shown that incorporating SEL strategies into the classroom increases academic achievement, increases student attendance, and decreases disruptive behavior (CASEL, 2005). A recent review of 213 school-based SEL programs ranging from kindergarten

through high school, found students who received the intervention significantly improved their social and emotional skills, behavior, attitude, and academic achievement (Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor & Schellinger, 2011). Additionally, students who receive SEL-based curricula are less likely to receive suspensions and expulsions (CASEL, 2005).

Social and emotional learning can be fostered through a range of means. For example, teachers facilitate such learning by fostering a positive climate in the classroom, and integrating SEL components into lesson plans (Zinsler, Weissberg, & Dusenbury, 2013). In order to support a more systematic implementation of SEL teaching techniques, multiple programs have been developed to incorporate SEL into structured curricula. Such programs with extensive research supporting program efficacy include Positive Action (Flay, Allred & Ordway, 2001), Second Step (Committee for Children, 2011), and Steps to Respect (Committee for Children, 2001, 2005). Each of these programs is supported by evidence of a reduction in conduct problems and an increase in prosocial behaviors. Other programs, such as PATHS (Providing Alternate THinking Strategies; Greenberg, Kusche, Cooke & Quamma, 1995) also show an improvement in student achievement (CASEL, 2013).

Although not based in social and emotional learning theory, other effective interventions overlap with SEL concepts. These interventions, similar to SEL, attempt to increase supportive relationships, increase engaging and supportive teaching, and improve social decision-making. For example, School-Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS), though based in behavioral theory, also focuses on more active teaching of behavioral expectations, by using engaging materials and facilitating regular discussion with students, while decreasing disruptive behavior. Furthermore, Osher et al. (2010)

identify four main components important for learning: physical and emotional safety, connectedness, challenges, and a positive peer climate. They conclude that while SWPBS and SEL have roots in different learning theories, both interventions address these core issues and the supports provided by each intervention are interrelated (Osher et al., 2010; Osher et al., 2008). This suggests that the specific interventions may be less critical than the core issues being addressed by the interventions. Therefore, schools that create policies to reflect these important factors for students may be equally effective in creating an atmosphere more conducive to learning. Please see Appendix A for an additional review of promising school interventions.

By utilizing student-centered approaches and incorporating them into the current disciplinary system in schools, consequences such as parent-teacher meetings and student conferences may also help students be more successful in school, and dissuade them from future misbehavior. For example, a conference that applies SEL strategies is likely to involve the student in the problem-solving process and to collaboratively decide on an appropriate consequence. For instance, if a student misbehaves, instead of receiving a punitive punishment immediately, the teacher will likely try to engage the student in a conversation to learn more about the student's mindset and reason for deciding to engage in the inappropriate behavior. The teacher will ask the student to recount what happened, why he behaved as he did, what the consequences are, and who else has been affected. Additionally, the teacher will attempt to guide the student in assuming responsibility for his actions, accepting the consequences, deciding how to repair any harm done, and how he can prevent such an occurrence in the future (Wachtel, 2012). Specifically, restorative questions include: "What happened?", "What were you thinking at the time?", "What have you thought about since the incident?", "Who do you think have been affected by

your actions?” and “How have they been affected?” (Wachtel, 2012). These questions likely foster the student’s self-awareness and future self-monitoring, while helping to guide the student through the perspective-taking process and empathize with others (CASEL, 2008).

Despite the promise of conferences for SEL skill building, few studies have ascertained if conferences, relative to suspension, reduces the probability of future student misconduct. One study suggests this is the case. It examined conferences as a component of Restorative Practices and their effects on future student suspension in the Denver Public Schools (Gregory et al., 2015). The findings indicate that students who received restorative interventions (conferences, restorative circles, or conflict mediation) during the first semester were significantly less likely to receive a referral to the office for misconduct during the second semester. Additionally, students who received restorative interventions were less likely to receive OSS. Though they were equally likely to receive restorative interventions relative to other groups, African American students however, were still referred to the office at a higher rate than their European American peers (Gregory et al., 2015). While it included a large sample of students ranging from Kindergarten through high school, the study was somewhat limited by its focus on a single school year. They did not follow conference participants over multiple school years (Gregory et al., 2015). Thus, additional research is needed to ascertain if conferences reduce the probability that students will receive future discipline referrals in subsequent school years.

Summary

Zero tolerance policies, in which students receive exclusionary disciplinary actions such as suspension and expulsion, have not proven to be effective at reducing

student misbehavior and classroom disruptions (APA Task Force on Zero Tolerance, 2008). Most scholars believe suspensions have a negative effect on students and may actually increase the rate of student misbehavior (APA Zero Tolerance Task Force, 2008; Raffaele-Mendez, 2003; Tobin, et al., 1996). One study showed it might be successful as punishment for younger students (Atkins et al., 2002). Atkins et al. (2002) conclude that for some elementary and middle school students, suspension may actually be a successful deterrent for future misconduct. For these students, it may have successfully served as a punishment, in the behaviorist sense, and reduced future negative behavior.

Additional research is needed at the high school level given the effects of suspension as punishment may operate differently for adolescents relative to younger children. At the high school level, adolescents, relative to children, have a better understanding of the connection between actions and consequences, and potentially have more to gain from avoiding class or remaining at home for a day. The present study aimed to address gaps in knowledge about the correlates of suspension by specifically examining students in high school. This can be a turbulent time for students, given the influence of puberty, a desire to be independent, and an increase in risk-taking behaviors (Eccles et al., 1993; Jessor & Jessor, 1977). Additionally, this study examined the likelihood of an increase or decrease in future suspensions based upon a single suspension.

Given racial disparities in discipline and lost instructional time from exclusionary discipline, schools are trying to better utilize alternative problem solving processes to effectively reduce future discipline referrals. While the use of problem-solving conferences is promising, research on conferences is somewhat thin. One study showed students who received restorative interventions (conferences, restorative circles, or

conflict mediation) during the first semester were significantly less likely to receive a referral to the office for misconduct during the second semester. Additionally, students who received restorative interventions were less likely to receive OSS (Gregory et al., 2015). However, they only examined a single school year and additional longitudinal research is needed to trace student trajectories after they receive a conference early in high school. In sum, the current study addressed gaps in knowledge about suspensions and conferences and was guided by the following research questions and related hypotheses. The literature also lacks research comparing OSS to ISS and the potentially unique effects each one may have on student trajectories.

Research Question 1:

Did students that received more conferences within a 9-month period have fewer overall discipline referrals than students who received a higher number of exclusionary consequences within a 9-month period of time?

Hypothesis 1: Students that received a higher number of conferences would have fewer overall discipline referrals when compared to peers with a higher number of exclusionary consequences within a 9-month period of time.

Research Question 2:

Did certain disciplinary actions at the 9th grade level reduce the chance of recurring referrals better than other consequences within a 9-month period of time?

Hypothesis 2a: Relative to in-school suspensions (ISS), student-centered disciplinary actions, such as parent and teacher conferences, would be more likely to reduce the likelihood of future office discipline referrals (ODRs) for 9th grade students, controlling

for severity and frequency of referrals and other covariates, during a 9-month period of time.

Hypothesis 2b: Relative to out-of-school suspensions (OSS), student-centered disciplinary actions, such as parent and teacher conferences, would be more likely to reduce the likelihood of future office discipline referrals (ODRs) for 9th grade students, controlling for severity and frequency of referrals and other covariates, during a 9-month period of time.

Hypothesis 2c: Relative to in-school suspensions (ISS), student-centered disciplinary actions, such as parent and teacher conferences, would be more likely to reduce the likelihood of future out-of-school suspensions (OSS) for 9th grade students, controlling for severity and frequency of referrals and other covariates, during a 9-month period of time.

Hypothesis 2d: Relative to out-of-school suspensions (OSS), student-centered disciplinary actions, such as parent and teacher conferences, would be more likely to reduce the likelihood of future out-of-school suspensions (OSS) for 9th grade students, controlling for severity and frequency of referrals and other covariates, during a 9-month period of time.

Methods

Participants

Schools. The current study followed 9th grade students across nine months of high school. Students attended one of two high schools located in a Northeastern state in the same school district. The two schools were similar in sociodemographic composition of the enrolled students. Between 2010 and 2012, the number of total enrolled students across both high schools ranged from 1,308-1,624 European American males, and 1,135-

1,475 European American females, 734-752 Hispanic males, and 678-772 Hispanic females, 283-301 African American males, and 233-275 African American females, 63-70 Asian males, and 69-84 Asian females. As such, European Americans made up approximately 54% of the student body, Hispanic students comprised approximately 31% of the student body, African Americans were approximately 11% of the student body, and the remaining 4% of the study body consisted of Asians, American Indian/Alaskan Natives, and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders.

Students with discipline records. The district-provided discipline dataset included data from four school years, including 37,155 referral cases and demographic variables of students who received discipline referrals. The records were comprised of referrals issued to mostly males (65%) across four school years (2009-2013). The following groups comprised the students who were issued discipline referrals: Hispanic (Mexican, Puerto Rican, Spanish Descent), American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian/Pacific Islander, African American, and European American. Across the four years of data, approximately 56% of referrals were issued to students who received no special lunch accommodations, 6% received reduced lunch, and 37% received free lunches. An estimated 27% of students received special education services at one time, whereas 73% of students received no additional services.

Referred 9th graders followed in the current study. Of the 308 9th grade participants in the current study, 64% of the sample was male, whereas 34% of the sample was female. Seventy-four (24%) of the participants were European American, 170 (55%) participants were Hispanic, and 62 (20%) participants were African American. Two participants identified themselves as multiracial and were included in the European American category for analyses, given that both students identified at least one racial

origin as European American. Ninety-nine (32%) participants were not eligible for free or reduced lunches, whereas 209 (68%) participants qualified for free or reduced lunches.

Each of the students in the sample received one or more referrals, with at least one consequence being one of the three major consequences studied: conference, ISS, or OSS.

Procedures

As part of a study in partnership with the International Institute for Restorative Practices, an organization devoted to teaching, researching, and disseminating restorative practices worldwide, and a Northeastern school district, we received de-identified discipline referral records from two high schools for four consecutive school years (2009-2013). Only two of the four years (2011-2013) were used to identify trends during the first two years of RP implementation, which included when they implemented restorative conferences. The data included district-assigned pseudo identification numbers to ensure that the researchers were unable to trace the records to identify individual students. Each student in the school discipline records who receive a major consequence, namely a conference, ISS, or OSS in the 9th grade, during the 2011-2012 school year, was followed for nine school months beginning at the exact date they receive one of these consequences. This enabled us to track each student for the same exact length of time. Thus, some students were followed into their 10th grade year if they received one of the consequences in the later months of their 9th grade year.

Measures

Student demographics. The district-provided dataset included student demographics, which were utilized in the analyses. Demographic variables included

student race, gender, and socioeconomic status. Each demographic variable was accounted for during analyses.

School discipline record. The district-supplied database indicated how many referrals were issued, for what reasons they were issued, along with “action codes,” which indicated the consequence issued for the discipline referral. The high schools’ numerous reasons for discipline referral were grouped into the following nine categories: Missing Class, Misconduct/Defiance, Fraud/Cheating, Vandalism/Theft, Assault/Endangerment, Peer Conflict, Possession of a Controlled Substance, Weapon Possession, and Other. All of these nine categories were used for analyses, with the exception of Weapon Possession, since none of the participants were referred for any infractions in the Weapon Possession category. The categorization was done in order to limit analyses and better recognize patterns among referrals and subsequent consequences. Similarly, the numerous consequences issued for discipline referrals were grouped into the following eight categories: Expulsion, Detention, OSS, ISS, Conference, Referral/Notification, Other, and None. Decisions to include a reason for referral or a consequence in a particular category were based on an assessment of similarities across reasons/consequences as was presented in the school district’s Student Code of Conduct. This categorization was done for conceptual and analytic clarity based on prior thematic grouping in the literature (Gregory & Weinstein, 2008; Skiba et al., 2011; see Appendix B for a breakdown of discipline categories).

Guidelines were developed to systematically clean the dataset and reduce errors. Out of 8,124 discipline records, 1,194 (14.70%) were repeat entries, in which a single student received two infractions for the same reason during the same school day. When this occurred, only one case was included in the analyses. Decision-rules for including

one of the entries were as follows: For students that received multiple consequences for a single infraction, such as a guidance referral and a student conference, the more severe of the two consequences was counted in the analyses, while the less severe consequence was excluded. In this case, conference would be included and guidance referral would be excluded. The receipt of a conference and a guidance referral are estimated to have been the most frequently paired consequences. In two instances, the two consequences received were both considered one of the three major disciplinary consequences. The same rule was followed in these cases; in one instance, the student received a conference and OSS. The second student to receive two of the three major consequences received ISS and OSS. For both of these cases, OSS was the only consequence used for the analyses, given it was the more punitive of the two consequences given. Of the 308 9th grade students followed, five were expelled during the nine-month period, and therefore excluded from the analyses.

Data Analytic Plan

First, descriptive statistics were examined for means, ranges, and standard deviations to determine the number of ISS, OSS, conferences, and total ODRs, per disciplined students. Pearson's correlations were run to investigate associations between student demographic variables, future referral rates, and infraction types. Independent samples T-tests and Chi-square analyses were run to compare discipline patterns across a range of student groups and identify possible disparities in future outcomes, such as future ODRs, OSS, and ISS. Additionally, Chi-square analyses were run to examine the potential relationships between student characteristics (e.g., student race) and first major consequences received.

Multiple linear regression analyses were performed to examine relationships

between the independent variables and the dependent variables. Nine separate regression analyses were conducted in order to investigate the relationship between the three independent variables, the first major consequence received (conference, OSS, or ISS) and each of the three dependent variables, including future ODRs, future OSS, and future ISS. Each model controlled for student variables in Block 1, including race, gender, and socioeconomic status, and infraction type and severity in Block 2. In order to create an index for infraction type and severity, the number of referrals that fell within each category *prior* to, and *including* the receipt of one of the three major consequences, were summed and categorized. It was important to include these covariates to pinpoint the link between consequence type and future ODRs, above and beyond the effects of sociodemographic variables and the type and severity of infraction. Block 3 in each model contained the independent variable being examined as a distinct predictor of the dependent variables.

Results

Descriptive Findings

The number of students that received a conference as their first major disciplinary consequence¹ varied greatly from the number of students that received OSS or ISS as a first disciplinary consequence. Of the 308 students included in the study, 226 students (73.4%) received a conference as their first disciplinary action, 45 students (14.6%) received OSS as their first disciplinary action, and 37 students (12.0%) received ISS as their first disciplinary action (see Figure 1).

¹ Students may have received minor consequences, such as detention, prior to a conference, ISS or OSS.

The descriptive statistics for future referrals², future referrals that resulted in OSS, future referrals that resulted in ISS, and future referrals that resulted in conferences are reported in Table 1. There was a mean of six future referrals per student ($Mean = 5.88$). However, there was a large range among the students ($Min = 0$; $Max = 27$). On average, students that received future referrals typically received 1 additional conference each ($Mean = 1.18$), whereas students that received future referrals, on average, received less than 1 additional OSS per student ($Mean = .56$) and less than 1 additional ISS per student ($Mean = .44$).

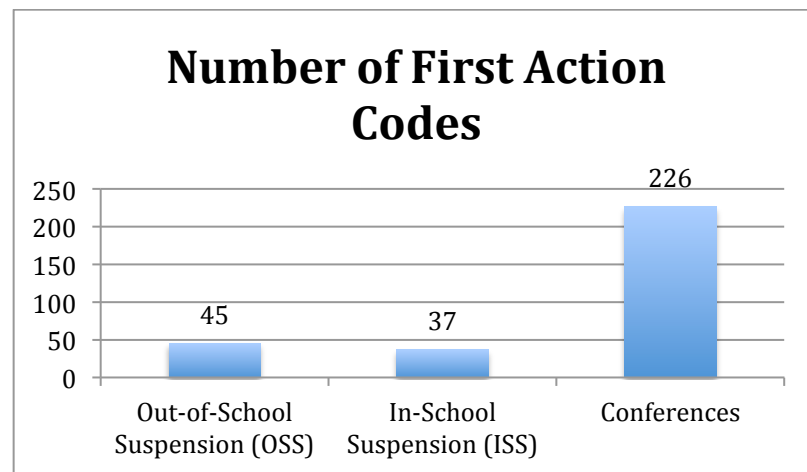


Figure 1. Number of students that received OSS, ISS, or conferences as a first consequence.

Table 1

Descriptive analysis of future referrals, future conferences, future OSS and future ISS

<i>Variables</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>
Future Referrals	5.88	5.84	0.00	27
Future Conferences	1.18	1.61	0.00	8.00
Future OSS	0.56	1.12	0.00	7.00
Future ISS	0.44	0.89	0.00	5.00

Note. M = mean; SD = standard deviation.

² The term “future referrals” refers to the total number of future office referrals received after the first referral resulting in a conference, OSS, or ISS.

Differences Between Groups

Independent samples T-tests and Chi-square tests were conducted in order to test for statistically significant differences between groups. Means and significance levels for each T-test conducted can be found in Tables 2, 3 and 4. Students of different races did not significantly differ in future discipline referrals. Similarly, future discipline referrals did not significantly vary based on gender. After their initial major discipline consequence, students that received free or reduced lunch, relative to their higher income peers, had a significantly higher number of discipline referrals ($p < .01$) and future OSS ($p < .08$).

Table 2

Results of T-tests and descriptive statistics for race and referral outcomes

Outcome	Group						<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	White			Non-White				
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>		
Future ODRs	4.97	5.44	76	6.17	5.94	232	-1.63	0.11
Future OSS	0.41	0.96	76	0.60	1.17	232	-1.46	0.15
Future ISS	0.43	0.87	76	0.44	0.90	232	-0.08	0.93

Note. Equal variances are not assumed

Table 3

Results of T-tests and descriptive statistics for gender and referral outcomes

Outcome	Group						<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	Male			Female				
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>		
Future ODRs	6.07	6.24	196	5.54	5.06	112	-0.82	0.41
Future OSS	0.59	1.21	196	0.50	0.97	112	-0.69	0.49
Future ISS	0.43	0.88	196	0.46	0.90	112	0.34	0.74

Note. Equal variances are not assumed

Table 4

Results of T-tests and descriptive statistics for free/reduced lunch status and referral outcomes

Outcome	Group						<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	F/R Lunch			No F/R Lunch				
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>		
Future ODRs	6.47	6.02	209	4.62	5.24	99	2.77	0.01**
Future OSS	0.63	1.21	209	0.40	0.91	99	1.80	0.07
Future ISS	0.42	0.84	209	0.49	0.98	99	-0.69	0.49

Note. Equal variances are not assumed** $p < .01$

Means and significance levels for each Chi-square test can be found in Tables 5, 6 and 7. Patterns in first ODRs differed significantly by race with regard to receiving OSS as the first major consequence, with European American students having a lower chance of receiving OSS as a first consequence than would be expected, when compared to African American and Hispanic peers ($p < .05$).³ Race did not account for a significant impact on whether or not the first consequence was a conference ($p = .50$, *n.s.*) or ISS ($p = .12$, *n.s.*). Patterns in first ODRs resulting in conferences significantly varied based on gender ($p < .05$), with males having a greater chance of receiving a conference first when compared to female peers, beyond what would be expected. Gender did not appear to account for any significant differences among students that received OSS first ($p = .38$, *n.s.*) or ISS first ($p = .10$, *n.s.*). Students that received free or reduced lunch did not significantly differ from students that did not for any first consequence, including conferences ($p = .71$, *n.s.*), OSS ($p = .23$, *n.s.*), and ISS ($p = .43$, *n.s.*).

Table 5

Results of Chi-square test and descriptive statistics for first consequence by race

First Consequence	Race				X^2	p
	White		Non-White			
	N	(%)	N	(%)		
Conference first	58	18.8	168	54.5	0.45	0.50
OSS first	5	1.6	40	13.0	5.22	0.02 [*]
ISS first	13	4.2	24	7.8	2.46	0.12

Note. Percentages are based on the total number of students in each group. The percentage therefore refers to the percentage of students in each group that received each consequence as the first.

* $p < .05$

³ African American and Hispanic students were similarly overrepresented in school-wide patterns of suspension and were therefore grouped together to test differences between European American and African American/Hispanic student groups.

Table 6

Results of Chi-square test and descriptive statistics for first consequence by gender

First Consequence	Gender				X^2	p
	Male		Female			
	N	(%)	N	(%)		
Conference first	151	49.0	75	24.4	3.70	0.05*
OSS first	26	8.4	19	6.2	0.78	0.38
ISS first	19	6.2	18	5.8	2.74	0.10

Note. Percentages are based on the total number of students in each group. The percentage therefore refers to the percentage of students in each group that received each consequence as the first.

* $p \leq .05$

Table 7

Results of Chi-square test and descriptive statistics for first consequence by free/reduced lunch status

First Consequen ce	Lunch Status				X^2	p
	Free/Reduced Lunch		No Free/Reduced Lunch			
	N	(%)	N	(%)		
Conference first	152	49.4	74	24.0	0.14	0.71
OSS first	34	11.0	11	3.6	1.43	0.23
ISS first	23	7.5	14	4.5	0.63	0.43

Note. Percentages are based on the total number of students in each group. The percentage therefore refers to the percentage of students in each group that received each consequence as the first.

Correlations

Pearson's correlations were computed to ascertain the nature of the association between the independent, dependent, and control variables. Results are shown in Tables 8, 9 and 10. Table 8 displays the correlations among the dependent variables, future referrals, future OSS and future ISS, and student demographic variables. As would be expected, future referrals were significantly correlated with future OSS ($r = .51, p < .01$) and future ISS ($r = .49, p < .01$). This means students who received more referrals overall tended to receive more OSS and ISS as well. Socioeconomic status as measured by free and reduced lunch was significantly correlated with future student referrals ($r = .59, p < .01$), but not with future OSS or future ISS, specifically. Therefore, socioeconomic status was linked to the total number of future referrals students received, but not to specific types of consequences, namely ISS or OSS. Race and gender were not significantly correlated with future referrals, future OSS or future ISS for students.

Table 8
Correlations among future ODRs, OSS, and ISS and student demographics

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Future Referrals	_____	.49**	.51**	-.04	.15**	.04	.05	-.09
2. Future ISS		_____	.07	.02	-.04	.01	-.01	-.01
3. Future OSS			_____	-.04	.09	.07	-.01	-.08
4. Gender				_____	-.01	.04	-.03	-.03
5. Socioeconomic Status					_____	.23**	-.05	-.22**
6. Hispanic						_____	-.56**	-.64**
7. African American							_____	-.29**
8. White								_____

** $p < .01$

Table 9

Correlations among future ODRs, OSS, and ISS and the number and reason for prior referrals

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Future Referrals	—	.49**	.51**	.11	-.00	-.05	.01	-.07	.04	.05	.13*
2. Future ISS		—	.07	-.03	-.07	-.04	.10	-.04	.01	.03	.05
3. Future OSS			—	.22**	.18**	-.04	-.02	-.01	-.03	.01	.03
4. Missing Class				—	.40**	-.04	-.04	-.01	-.08	-.02	.03
5. Misconduct/ Defiance					—	-.03	-.07	-.05	-.11	-.04	.08
6. Fraud/ Cheating						—	-.01	-.28**	-.02	-.01	-.02
7. Vandalism/ Theft							—	-.01	-.02	-.01	-.02
8. Assault/ Endangerment								—	-.03	-.01	-.03
9. Peer Conflict									—	-.02	-.05
10. Controlled Substance										—	.11
11. Other											—

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 10

Correlations among future ODRs, OSS, and ISS and the first consequence received

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Future Referrals	—	.49**	.51**	.06	-.09	.02
2. Future ISS		—	.07	-.04	.05	-.01
3. Future OSS			—	.10	-.02	-.06
4. OSS First				—	-.15**	-.69**
5. ISS First					—	-.61**
6. Conference First						—

** $p < .01$

Table 9 displays the correlations among the three dependent variables, future referrals, future OSS and future ISS and the number and reason for prior⁴ ODRs. Future referrals was significantly correlated with prior referrals in the “Other” category ($r = .13$, $p < .05$), which includes computer and Internet usage violations and dress code violations, among others. Future OSS was significantly correlated with prior referrals in the “Missing Class” category ($r = .22$, $p < .01$) and Misconduct/Defiance category ($r = .18$, $p < .01$). This suggests that students who commit infractions that fall into these three categories of ODRs had a higher risk for future ODRs and potentially more exclusionary consequences.

Table 10 shows the correlations between the three dependent variables, future referrals, future OSS and future ISS, and the first consequences received (e.g., a conference, OSS or ISS). Unexpectedly, no significant results were found. This means that there is no significant difference in the number of future referrals, future OSS, or future ISS as a result of the first major consequence received.

Linear regression

Table 11 shows a series of regression models (Models 1-3), which were used to predict future referrals based upon the first discipline action (conference, OSS or ISS), while controlling for student demographics and history of referrals. In each model, Block 1 consisted of student demographic variables, including race, gender, and socioeconomic status. Block 2 was comprised of the number of prior referrals grouped into 8 categories. These prior referral groupings serve as a severity control for each student’s unique history of referrals. Block 3 contained the independent variable, the first discipline action

⁴ The term “prior” refers to ODRs received by students prior to receiving an ODR that resulted in a conference, OSS, or ISS.

received. Each block accounted for the unique variance explained by unique student characteristics.

Results indicate that student socioeconomic status is the only demographic variable that significantly predicts the dependent variable, the number of future referrals ($\beta = .14, p < .05$). This means that students who were from a lower socioeconomic environment were more likely to receive a higher number of future ODRs when compared to their higher socioeconomic peers. Prior office discipline referrals that fell in the Missing Class category were predictors of the dependent variable ($\beta = -.14, p < .05$). Therefore, the number of Missing Class referrals was related to the number of ODRs a student received. Office discipline referrals that fell in the Other category approached significance as a predictor of the dependent variable, the number of future referrals ($\beta = .11, p < .07$). Unexpectedly, the first type of consequence a student received, was not a significant predictor of the future number of referrals.

Table 11

Regression analysis for student demographics, discipline history, and first consequences as predictors of future referrals

	Future Total Referrals		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
	Conference First β at each step	OSS First β at each step	ISS First β at each step
Block 1:			
Hispanic	.053	.053	.053
African American	.088	.088	.088
Gender	-.042	-.042	-.042
Socioeconomic Status	.141*	.141*	.141*
ΔR^2	.029	.029	.029
Block 2:			
Missing Class	.137*	.137*	.137*
Misconduct/Defiance	-.074	-.074	-.074
Vandalism/Theft	.003	.003	.003
Fraud/Cheating	-.048	-.048	-.048
Assault/Endangerment	-.042	-.042	-.042
Peer Conflict	.037	.037	.037
Possession of a Controlled Substance	.052	.052	.052
Other	.109 ⁺	.109 ⁺	.109 ⁺
ΔR^2	.038	.038	.038
Block 3:			
First Consequence Received	.048	.026	-.068
ΔR^2	.002	.000	.004

Table 12 shows a series of regression models (Models 4-6), which were used to predict future OSS based upon the first discipline action (conference, OSS or ISS), while controlling for student demographics and history of referrals. In each model, Block 1 consisted of student demographic variables, including race, gender, and socioeconomic status. Block 2 was comprised of the number of prior referrals grouped into 8 categories. Block 3 contained the independent variable, the first discipline action received. Each block accounted for the unique variance explained by variables entered in that block.

Results indicate that student demographic variables did not significantly predict the dependent variable, the number of future OSS. Prior office discipline referrals that

fell in the Missing Class category were predictors of the dependent variable, future OSS ($\beta = .19, p < .05$). Therefore, the number of Missing Class referrals was related to the number of OSS a student received. More missing class referrals predicted more OSS. Unexpectedly, the first type of consequence a student received was not a significant predictor of the future number of OSS a student received.

Table 13 shows a series of regression models (Models 7-9), which were used to predict future ISS based upon the first discipline action (conference, OSS or ISS), while controlling for student demographics and history of referrals. In each model, Block 1 consisted of student demographic variables, including race, gender, and socioeconomic status. Block 2 was comprised of the number of prior referrals grouped into 8 categories. Block 3 contained the independent variable, the first discipline action received. Each block accounted for the unique variance explained by variables entered in that block.

Results indicate that student demographic variables did not significantly predict the dependent variable, the number of future ISS. Prior office discipline referrals that fell in the Vandalism/Theft category approached significance as a predictor of future ISS ($\beta = .10, p < .09$). Unexpectedly, the first type of consequence a student received was not a significant predictor of the future number of ISS a student receives. In sum, these results did support the a priori hypotheses. The type of consequence students received first (conferences, OSS or ISS) did not predict the future number of referrals, OSS or ISS that students received following the original infraction.

Table 12

Regression analysis for student demographics, discipline history, and first consequences as predictors of future OSS

	Future Out-of-School Suspensions (OSS)		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
	Conference First	OSS First	ISS First
	β at each step	β at each step	β at each step
Block 1:			
Hispanic	.077	.077	.077
African American	.036	.036	.036
Gender	-.038	-.038	-.038
Socioeconomic Status	.076	.076	.076
ΔR^2	.014	.014	.014
Block 2:			
Missing Class	.185*	.185*	.185*
Misconduct/Defiance	.096	.096	.096
Vandalism/Theft	-.005	-.005	-.005
Fraud/Cheating	-.033	-.033	-.033
Assault/Endangerment	.015	.015	.015
Peer Conflict	-.007	-.007	-.007
Possession of a Controlled Substance	.029	.029	.029
Other	-.005	-.005	-.005
ΔR^2	.060	.060	.060
Block 3:			
First Consequence Received	.011	.029	-.031
ΔR^2	.000	.000	.001

* $p < .05$

Table 13

Regression analysis for student demographics, discipline history, and first consequences as predictors of future ISS

	Future In-School Suspensions (ISS)		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
	Conference First	OSS First	ISS First
	β at each step	β at each step	β at each step
Block 1:			
Hispanic	.024	.024	.024
African American	-.001	-.001	-.001
Gender	.018	.018	.018
Socioeconomic Status	-.047	-.047	-.047
ΔR^2	.003	.003	.003
Block 2:			
Missing Class	.004	.004	.004
Misconduct/Defiance	-.075	-.075	-.075
Vandalism/Theft	.102 ⁺	.102 ⁺	.102 ⁺
Fraud/Cheating	-.027	-.027	-.027
Assault/Endangerment	-.035	-.035	-.035
Peer Conflict	.004	.004	.004
Possession of a Controlled Substance	.016	.016	.016
Other	.061	.061	.061
ΔR^2	.022	.022	.022
Block 3:			
First Consequence Received	-.019	-.060	.062
ΔR^2	.000	.002	.004

Discussion

The current study examined whether the type of consequence issued for the first major discipline infraction was linked to later receipt of discipline referrals and exclusionary consequences. Specifically, in a sample of 9th graders followed over nine months, analyses examined whether receipt of a conference relative to ISS or OSS mattered for later accrual of referrals and consequences. It was hypothesized that students who received a higher number of conferences would receive fewer overall ODRs when compared to peers that received a higher number of exclusionary consequences. Further, it was hypothesized that the first major disciplinary consequences received by students

would change their future discipline trajectory, such that students who received a conference first would be less likely to receive additional ODRs, OSS and ISS, when compared to peers that received OSS or ISS as a first major consequence. Neither hypothesis was supported. Interestingly, students who received ODRs for infractions that were categorized as “Missing Class” or “Other” were more likely to receive additional ODRs. Also noteworthy, students who were eligible for free or reduced lunch were more likely to receive a higher number of ODRs compared to students that did not qualify. Additionally, males were more likely to receive conferences as a first major consequence compared to females, and African American and Hispanic students were more likely to receive OSS as a first major consequence compared to European American peers.

Does Type of Discipline Consequence Matter?

The current study investigated the relationship between certain disciplinary consequences and future student ODR trajectories. It was hypothesized that students who received conferences first, would ultimately receive fewer ODRs, whereas students who received OSS or ISS would be less likely to be deterred from future infractions. Ideally, conferences are more student-centered and focus more on problem solving and repairing any harm done. This should focus on skill building and therefore increase students’ ability to resist inappropriate behavior, thereby decreasing future ODRs. On the other hand, students that receive OSS are removed from the school setting, but allowed to remain at home for the day, without work to complete. This may act as a reward for some students that exhibit work-avoidant behaviors. In-school suspensions present a somewhat more complex situation. In theory, students in ISS are being removed from the classroom and their peers, but are still required to remain in school and therefore do not have access

to television, video games or cell phones that may otherwise be experienced as “rewarding.” In-school suspensions, therefore, may be more beneficial for students in the long-term, since the students are not being removed from the school setting. Yet, ISS is likely not as beneficial to students as a consequence through which students gain new SEL skills (hypothetically, conferences support skill development). Thus, ISS could theoretically be seen as more of a deterrent for students, given their lack of involvement in school socializing *or* desired activities at home. Yet, it could also be viewed as less of a deterrent since students are not required to remain in the classroom and may not be expected to complete work. However, accounting for prior referrals and the severity of rule infractions, and student sociodemographics, regression analyses showed that receipt of a conference versus ISS/OSS were not significantly related to future ODRs, future receipt of OSS or future receipt of ISS. Specifically, conferences were compared to receipt of ISS, to receipt of OSS, and receipt of either ISS or OSS. All sets of analyses replicated the same finding: the first consequence did not differentiate the subsequent pattern of discipline referrals.

The unsupported hypotheses may be due to each of these three consequences, conferences, OSS, and ISS, being equally ineffective at reducing future ODRs. Students in the study received an average of 6 additional ODRs (*Mean* = 5.88) within a 9-month period, indicating minimal effects as a deterrent (*Max* = 27). However, this is surprising, given the district-wide introduction of Restorative Practices, a school-wide intervention that has been shown to reduce future ODRs (Gregory et al., 2015) at the start of the 2011-2012 school year. Gregory and colleagues (2015) found that students who received restorative interventions in Denver during a single semester had lower odds of receiving

ODRs during the subsequent semester (Gregory et al., 2015). This presents a contradictory set of findings regarding the associations between the use of restorative interventions and future ODRs. While students were most likely to receive a conference as a first major consequence, indicating that the school district was truly attempting to integrate conferences into the discipline system, it is possible that the schools in Denver implemented *higher quality* conferences that truly engaged the students in key components, such as perspective taking, problem solving, and repairing harm.

Based on these findings, it may be necessary to intervene earlier in a student's academic career, such as during the elementary school years, to have a stronger effect on ODR outcomes. Alternatively, programs that involve parents and the home environment may have greater effects given that students spend approximately 79% of their time outside of school each week, during the 10-month school year. This would help provide stability and consistency for students across domains, thereby reinforcing positive behaviors and enabling students to generalize lessons learned. It is also important to consider that a single student-oriented consequence that does not systematically engage caregivers, supports, mentors, or other peers over longer periods of time may not be potent enough to create true change. Instead, a brief meeting to problem-solve (i.e., a conference) may lead to socially desirable responses in terms of demonstrations of remorse, apologies, or perspective-taking, but once the student returns to his fundamentally unchanged environment, peers, and teachers, it may be unlikely to have a lasting effect (Osher et al., 2010). In fact, research has shown that short-term interventions, even those based in restorative justice, do not typically have long-term effects (Jeong, McGarrell, & Hipple, 2012).

Risk Factors for Future Referrals

The current study identified some potential risk factors for students. These risk factors may lead to an increased risk of future ODRs, OSS and ISS. It is important for parents, administrators, and researchers to be aware of such factors in order to most effectively bolster students' protective factors and reduce their exposure to risk.

Infraction type. Regression analyses showed that students who had a history of ODRs related to missing class were more likely to receive a higher number of future ODRs. They were also more likely to receive OSS compared to peers without a history of missing class ODRs. Missing class included habitually truant, lateness to class, lateness to school, truancy confirmed, being found in unauthorized areas, and unexcused class absence. This suggests that infractions that fall into the "Missing Class" category may be especially predictive of a student's school trajectory. It may be the case that student absenteeism and truancy was acting as a proxy for student risk. The association between truancy and future troubling behavior has been well documented (Baker, Sigmon, & Nugent, 2001; Fabelo et al., 2011; Garry, 1996; Kearny, 2003; McCluskey, Bynum, & Patchin, 2004; Onifade, Nyandoro, Davidson, & Campbell, 2010; Teasley, 2004). Students that have a history of truancy are more likely to drop out of school (Attwood & Croll, 2006; Garry, 1996; McCluskey et al., 2004). This may be related to a lack of academic motivation and the effort that students would need to put forth in order to make up work that has been missed due to absenteeism (Garry, 1996). Additionally, students that miss school are more likely to become involved in delinquent and criminal activity (McCluskey et al., 2004; Onifade et al., 2010). When students are not in school or at home, they frequently gravitate towards other youth involved in similar negative

behaviors (Dishion et al., 1991). “Deviant peer affiliation” can easily foster an individual student’s pattern of negative behaviors (Garry, 1996). According to a report issued by the Los Angeles County Office of Education in 1995, chronic absenteeism is the strongest predictor of delinquent behavior (Garry, 1996; Shuster, 1995). Finally, truant students are also at a greater risk for antisocial behaviors, substance use and violence (Attwood & Croll, 2006; McCluskey et al., 2004; Robins, 1978).

Many factors contribute to student risk for truancy, including family context (e.g., parental supervision, poverty, family drug use), school context (e.g., difficulty of work, school climate, inconsistent discipline procedures), economic influences (e.g., poverty, single-parent homes, student employment), and student characteristics (e.g., lack of skills, lack of support, mental health difficulties; Baker et al., 2001; Onifade et al., 2010; Zhang et al., 2007). In order to effectively address the risk associated with absenteeism and truancy, it is important to intervene across a range of ecological levels (Baker et al., 2001; Garry, 1996). This means programs that intervene across the different domains, such as school, home, and peer groups, are more likely to truly affect change (Corville-Smith et al., 1998). Thus, disciplinary consequences, such as superficial conferences and suspensions that do not address underlying causes of the behavior may be unlikely to decrease numerous, multi-faceted risk factors and thus, more comprehensive interventions may be necessary. One intervention, Check & Connect, increases adult monitoring of student behavior through regular contact with the school, family, and targeted student. Check & Connect has been efficacious in reducing student absenteeism and truancy by using a consistent, comprehensive model that involves the student, school, and guardians (Sinclair, Christenson, Lehr, & Anderson, 2003; U.S. Department of

Education, 2015). A program such as Check & Connect might be important to reestablish school bonds and engage the student, especially for students whose truant behavior may be inadvertently reinforced when they are asked to leave school as a supposed punishment

The current study's regression models also showed that when frequency and severity of infractions, along with sociodemographic variables were controlled for, prior referrals within the "Other" category were predictive of future referrals. Other was quite heterogeneous including, for example, dress code violations, Internet usage violations, obscene and other sexual materials and performances, and habitual offender discipline infractions. The category of "Other" used in the current study would need to be unpacked given its heterogeneity to explicate the statistical findings. While this category includes a variety of discipline infractions, the majority relate to computers, network use, and Internet violations. While few studies have examined these types of infractions, it would be worthwhile exploring if technology violations are committed by students who tend to engage in more covert and instrumental acts of aggression. This might mean they tend to plan ahead in violating rules to advantage themselves while harming others. Research has documented that such antisocial personality traits are linked to serious externalizing behavior (Loeber 1990; Loeber & Schmalting, 1985; Robins, 1978). Currently, no research exists on the nature of this specific type of infraction. Future research should investigate a potential relationship between unauthorized computer and Internet usage and future misconduct.

Student socioeconomic status. Students eligible to receive free or reduced lunch, which indicates a low total household income, were significantly more likely to receive a

higher number of ODRs when compared to peers that did not qualify for free or reduced lunch. This finding held when accounting for the severity and frequency of infractions. This indicates that student socioeconomic status is significantly correlated with student behavior and discipline patterns in school, beyond the reason the student received an ODR. Some low-income students, relative to their higher income peers, have caregivers with higher stress levels, which can impact the quality of their caregiving (Conger et al., 1994), including inconsistent responses to behavior and an inability to provide optimal support to children (Conger et al., 1994; Conger et al., 1992; Mistry et al., 2002). Some low-income students might also be exposed to adults who exhibit externalizing behavior and subsequently learn from such modeling (Dishion et al., 1994; Loeber & Dishion, 1983). This may set more aggressive norms for students, which they bring into the school setting. Students may also be coping with violence in the neighborhood and take on an aggressive stance to ward off victimization (Anderson, 1999; Cassidy & Stevenson, 2005; Spencer et al., 2004). They might then bring this type of coping into the school, which results in greater conflict with others.

Students from low socioeconomic backgrounds are more likely to be truant or delinquent (Baker et al., 2001; Onifade et al., 2010). It may be that this behavior is more normative in some neighborhoods, which then clashes with school expectations. One study conducted found that adolescents from an inner-city with a high exposure to violence, had a lower baseline heart rate while witnessing violent acts, when compared to peers from areas with low exposure to violence (Cooley-Quille, Boyd, Frantz, & Walsh, 2001). Additionally, students from low socioeconomic backgrounds tend to have many life stressors and lack of stable social support, which may decrease a student's sense of

attachment and responsibility to others (Dodge, Pettit, & Bates, 1994). This, coupled with the literature base suggesting socioeconomic status is significantly linked to student achievement, truancy, delinquency, and drop out rates (Baker et al., 2001; Onifade et al., 2010; Sirin, 2005) suggests that the current findings are indicative of a larger pattern of risks associated with low-income concerns.

Student race and gender. In the current study, multiple regression analyses found that student race was a predictor of the first major consequence received, such that African American and Hispanic students were more likely to receive OSS as a first major consequence when compared to their European American peers. Unexpectedly, this appeared to be the only significant finding related to race. Race did not appear to predict any patterns in future disciplinary infractions or consequences. This is surprising given the extensive literature available recognizing race as a significant predictor for OSS (Finn & Servoss, 2013; Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010; Losen & Martinez, 2013; Robers et al., 2013; Skiba et al., 2011). However, the current study is more fine-tuned, given its examination of race as a predictor of multiple disciplinary consequences, including ISS and conferences. Due to the evidence supporting the idea that race *is* a significant predictor of ODRs though, it suggests something unique about the analyses performed, or the sample used in the current study.

Given that race predicted the receipt of OSS as a first major consequence, but not future consequences, it is possible that the analyses performed for this study masked effects of race on discipline by accounting for the severity and frequency of ODRs. If African American and Hispanic students are being differentially *selected* for ODRs, controlling for the severity and frequency of infractions artificially removes race

predictors from the analyses. Gregory and colleagues (2010) offer the idea of “differential selection,” with its origin in juvenile justice research (Piquero, 2008) as a framework for understanding racial disparities in ODRs. Specifically in schools, differential selection refers to the idea that despite similar rates and levels of infractions, minority students may be more likely to be differentially selected to receive disciplinary consequences (Gregory et al., 2010). The present study’s particular findings suggest differential selection may occur early in the school year due to the fact that race only predicted the receipt of OSS as a *first* major consequence, but ultimately did not predict future rates of ODRs, OSS or ISS. This indicates that the differential selection may occur as African American/Hispanic students enter into the discipline system, but after a student of any racial/ethnic group is issued a major consequences (conference, ISS, or OSS), then they are equally liked to be “selected” for rule infractions in the future. As a result, ODR receipts evened out across groups who are already in the discipline system. It is also important to note that since race was a predictor for OSS as a first major consequence for a sample of 9th grade students, differential selection may be occurring at the onset of students entering high school.

As stated above, African American and Hispanic students were more likely than European American students to receive OSS as a first major consequence (relative to a conference or ISS). This find held when accounting for type and severity of infraction, gender, and socioeconomic status. Thus, an African American or Hispanic student equivalent to his European American peer on infraction type, severity, socioeconomic status, and gender, was more likely to receive a harsher, exclusionary sanction despite their equivalency. This finding corroborates prior research (e.g., Finn & Servoss, 2013)

and suggests a procession of “differential sanction” (Gregory et al., 2010). This is especially concerning given the deleterious effects of OSS, which has been linked to truancy, grade retention, dropping out of school, and future involvement in the juvenile justice system (Balfanz, 2012; Fabelo et al., 2011; Losen & Martinez, 2013). Multiple reasons have been cited for the discipline gap’s existence and the tendency for African American students to receive harsher disciplinary consequences (Monroe, 2005; Skiba et al., 2000). One explanation revolves around teachers’ perceptions and expectations of students; while teachers may not consciously regard African American students negatively, it is possible that teachers hold implicit biases (Monroe, 2005; Pollock, 2009). Similarly, research has shown that people across racial groups associate Black faces with criminality (Blair, Judd, & Fallman, 2004; Eberhardt et al., 2004; Monroe, 2005), which can often lead to additional criminalization of African American youth (Gregory et al., 2014; Monroe, 2005). Therefore, future research is needed to further examine differential sanction tendencies and the unique effects it may have on student trajectories.

Also unexpected, gender only significantly predicted students receiving conferences as a first major consequence, with males receiving conferences as a first consequence more frequently than would be expected when compared to female peers. This is somewhat surprising due to the evidence supporting gender as a significant predictor of future ODRs and exclusionary practices. Specifically, past research has shown that males are up to four times more likely to receive ODRs and a variety of disciplinary consequences at a significantly higher rate than their female peers (Fabelo et al., 2011; Skiba et al., 2002; Taylor & Foster, 1986). However, recent research has shown a decrease in the gender discipline gap with the use of restorative conferences (Gregory et

al., 2015). Gregory and colleagues speculated that in this instance, males were consciously assigned conferences more frequently, given they may need more opportunities to practice SEL skills (Gregory et al., 2015). More research is necessary to determine if these practices can consistently decrease the gender gap.

Limitations

Limitations of the study include the data available to the researchers and lingering questions regarding data errors⁵. The data used for the current study was provided by the administration from the urban Northeastern district. While the dataset included important information regarding first major consequences, the date of the first major consequence, the number of future referrals and the types of future consequences received, some information was not available. Missing information included data on students that transferred out of the school district or dropped out of school altogether. For a hypothetical 9th grader who transferred to another district, the dataset indicated that they had no future ODRS, which may or may not have been the case in their new school. Cases like this impact the reliability of the data. The estimated future ODRs may be a low estimate for some students. However, there was likely a small sample of possible transfers or drop out. The study followed 9th grade students and it is unlikely that many students dropped out of school, since drop out typically occurs later in high school (Allensworth & Easton, 2001; Bowers & Spratt, 2012; Dalton, Glennie, & Ingles, 2009). Additionally, the data for the current study was comprised of discipline records from both district high schools, which would include students that may have transferred from one

⁵ Please refer to the Methods section for a complete review of selection procedures.

high school to the other. Given the low number of students likely to have transferred or dropped out during a nine-month period the overall results should not be affected.

During the data management process, it became noticeable that single infractions assigned to a pseudo student identification number were often entered multiple times. Sometimes the same infraction appeared to incur multiple consequences. Typically, however, infractions with multiple entries incurred consequences of similar significance. For example, students who received conferences would sometimes receive guidance referrals as well. In order to account for this, the more severe consequences were counted over the less severe consequences. Therefore, in the case of the student who received a conference and a guidance referral, only the entry that listed the conference as the disciplinary action was counted, since this is seen as a major discipline consequence compared to a guidance referral. Similarly, if a student received a suspension and a Child Study Team referral, the suspension was counted, given the more severe nature of the consequence. This process enabled a more parsimonious set of analyses given that the sample size did not allow for examination of every combination of consequences (e.g., conferences *and* a guidance referrals, child study team referral *and* suspension). Future research would benefit from larger dataset that could examine the effects of combinations of consequences.

Another major limitation is the lack of detail concerning what actually took place during ISS, OSS, or conferences. We know very little about current ISS practices, and it may vary across districts. For example, in some districts, ISS may be a secluded place to complete school work, whereas other districts may view it as a “time out” room, in which there may be no noise or activity permitted. Others still, may provide little supervision of

students and may allow activities unrelated to school. Similarly, there was no information as to what actually occurred for students while on out-of-school suspensions. When a student receives OSS, it is possible that he or she remains home unsupervised, playing video games and watching television. It is also possible, however, that the student is not permitted to use any electronics or engage in other desirable activities while suspended. Moreover, some students may be issued additional consequences at home, such as being “grounded,” or having a phone taken away. Since there are so many potential options for each student that receives ISS or OSS, each consequence needs to be further investigated to truly understand the process and subsequent student outcomes.

Additionally, given the recent introduction of RP into the school system, it is assumed that conferences utilized certain procedures of “restorative conferences”, in which a student responds to a guided set of questions encouraging the student to think through his actions, any harm he may have caused and how to repair the harm. However, since RP had only recently been introduced, it is unclear to what degree the exact intervention components were being utilized. This is important to consider in future research with RP, because intervention adoption, maintenance, and fidelity are critical to the success of interventions and cannot be assumed based upon the initial implementation procedures alone (Forman et al., 2013). Therefore, it is necessary to understand what truly occurred during student conferences and whether or not teachers and administrators were able to comfortably integrate RP core elements into the school. This is especially important given that students were most likely to receive conferences as a first major consequence, indicating a true desire by the school district to implement conferences. Information on fidelity would provide key insight into why a conference may or may not

have been as successful in deterring future misconduct in students as anticipated.

Tracking implementation fidelity in general, can help researchers understand how and why an intervention works, thereby enabling implementers to improve outcomes (Carroll et al., 2007). Thus, if the level of adherence to the RP intervention in the school district was known, the lack of association between conferences and future ODRs in the current study could be viewed more definitively as a result of poor RP implementation, or a lack of RP efficacy on future ODRs.

Future Directions

The current research contributed to knowledge on school discipline because it closely followed a 9th grade cohort for a full nine-month period to determine if certain discipline consequences are more effective at reducing future indiscretions. Specifically, this study aimed to compare the receipt of student-centered consequences, such as a student conference, with receipt of more exclusionary practices, such as OSS or ISS. While many studies have examined patterns among discipline records for students based on demographic variables such as race, gender, and socioeconomic status, and others investigate the efficacy of interventions that utilize conferences as a technique to decrease ODRs, few examine the relationship between specific consequences and future trajectories (Fabelo et al., 2011; Gregory et al., 2015; Skiba et al., 2002; Stinchcomb, Bazemore, & Reistenberg, 2006).

This study also examined any patterns associated with receiving a certain consequence as a first major consequence, namely conferences, OSS and ISS. Furthermore, OSS and ISS were separated, so that they were analyzed as distinct consequences, given the different nature of each punishment. Previous research does not

consider ISS systematically. As such, ISS is sometimes grouped with other exclusionary practices (e.g., Noltemeyer & Mcloughlin, 2010; Tobin et al., 1996) and at other times it is not used in the analyses (e.g., Balfanz et al., 2012; Skiba et al., 2013; Skiba, Michael, & Nardo, 2002). In some instances, it is unclear whether or not ISS has been combined with OSS to create one “suspension” category, or if ISS has been removed from the analyses (e.g., Atkins et al., 2002; Wallace, Goodkind, Wallace, & Bachman, 2008). While ISS may have similar effects to OSS, as may be assumed when reviewing research that does not distinguish between the separate consequences, it may also be more or less effective at reducing future misbehavior, since it requires students to remain in the school building. Given this limited knowledge about ISS as a discrete consequence, any additional information regarding its efficacy as a disciplinary consequence is extremely helpful. Since schools continue to rely on zero tolerance policies and use exclusionary discipline practices regularly (APA Zero Tolerance Task Force, 2008; Skiba et al., 2013) future research should consider the unique effects ISS may have on students’ future ODRs.

Future research must also focus on earlier interventions and preventative measures to deter students from misconduct and inappropriate behaviors leading to ODRs. Given this study showed no single major discipline consequence appeared to produce a more effective result for students, alternatives must be utilized if students are to be truly deterred in the future. This may include further research on interventions at the elementary school level to begin preventing this behavior early on, or interventions about student transition from middle school to high school, which can be a precarious time for young adolescents (Blyth, Simmons, & Carlton-Ford, 1983; Seidman, Allen, Aber,

Mitchell, & Feinman, 1994; Wigfield, Eccles, Mac Iver, Reuman, & Midgley, 1991).

Another possible route for decreasing misbehavior among students may be to introduce more comprehensive programs, which target not only the school environment, but students' home lives and communities as well.

Given some of the surprising results regarding race and gender predictors, more research is necessary to determine if differential selection consistently plays a role in student discipline. This may help clarify discrepant reports regarding race and gender as predictors of exclusionary discipline and future ODRs. If differential selection proves to be common in schools, interventions that specifically address implicit biases among teachers and administrators are necessary. Future research on conferences and Restorative Practices as an intervention should focus on implementation fidelity and maintenance, since adherence to the intervention guidelines is likely to greatly impact results for any promising intervention.

Further research may also be useful on the topic of ISS. Little is currently available in the research literature regarding ISS practices and its efficacy. As noted above, it is often grouped with OSS as "exclusionary" practices, excluded from analyses altogether, or not distinguished from OSS in the research. This does not account for the potentially important differences in punishment approaches, including keeping the student in the school building and out of the student's home where there may be other reinforcers, such as a television or video games.

Implications for Practice

These findings highlight the need for more preventative measures and earlier intervention for students. Given the three major discipline consequences, conferences,

OSS, and ISS, were equally associated with future ODRs, future OSS, and future ISS, and did not show clear evidence of deterring future misconduct, it is important that research and administrators look toward more preventative measures. These findings suggest that these consequences, at this particular stage, are not likely to reduce ODR recurrence. Particularly convincing, is the fact that the conferences in this study are assumed to have been conducted in accordance with Restorative Practices, which is geared toward improving school climate, creating supportive relationships among teachers and students, and decreasing misbehavior (Gregory, Clawson, Davis & Gerewitz, 2014; Gregory et al., 2015; Gonzales, 2015). However, the students in this study continued to receive ODRs, regardless of whether they received a conference or a more exclusionary consequence, such as OSS or ISS.

Since interventions are still likely to be needed at the secondary level, it may be necessary to introduce an intervention across domains. This would include components geared towards the students in school, the parents or guardians at home, and general community members. Enveloping the community and all major environments surrounding the student is more likely to create stability and consistency in messages across domains. This will increase the likelihood of students internalizing the message and generalizing expectations across environments.

For example, the 9th grade students in this study may have benefitted from a more comprehensive program, such as Multisystemic Therapy (MST), which is a home-based, comprehensive, individualized treatment for delinquent youth. MST attempts to directly affect the risk factors associated with antisocial behavior by targeting personal risk factors, such as cognitions and attention span, and familial risk factors, such as lack of

parental supervision, caregiver substance abuse, etc. Non-familial risk factors are also included, such as peer relationships. MST therapists also try to enhance communication between parents and school, creating a better relationship and increasing information between the systems (Henggeler, 1998). Research on MST indicates that MST is effective across genders, ethnicities, and for a range of ages (Ogden & Hagen, 2009; Butler et al., 2011; Henggeler et al, 1998). The largest study to follow-up with students suggests that MST's results are long lasting and reduce felony recidivism rates. In fact, results showed that those who had received MST an average of 22 years earlier had five times fewer misdemeanors (Sawyer & Borduin, 2011).

Yet, clinical data collected on 1,341 adolescents showed that deviant peer relationships significantly increased the possibility of treatment failure (Boxer, 2011). Additionally, MST relies on the adolescent's and his or her family's conscious efforts and adherence to the principles and individualized therapy program (Huey et al., 2000). Thus, adapting a program such as MST to be school-based, as well as in the home, may prove more successful. Not only would this attempt to truly engage all aspects of the youths' environment, but ideally it would also affect peers, thereby reducing the risk of antisocial peers' influence on the students. However, this would still rely on the adolescent's and his or her family's capacity of engagement and adherence to the principles and individualized therapy program to be truly effective (Huey et al., 2000).

Thus, other options for creating true change among the students may be accomplished through the adaptation of interventions currently in place. For instance, schools that currently utilize conferences as a form of discipline can implement higher quality conferences to engage the students and encourage future change. This would

require ensuring that the appropriate amount of time and effort can be devoted to the conference as well. Efforts should focus on encouraging the student to recognize the problem as they see it, explaining the problem as the teachers and administrators understand it, and collaboratively working towards a solution. Collaborative Problem Solving (CPS) outlines a specific plan that has proven effective when working with students with behavioral difficulties and reducing future misbehavior (Greene, Ablon, & Goring, 2002; Greene et al., 2004). Collaborative Problem Solving emphasizes the facilitation of adult-child problem solving, rather than relying on youth to comply with adult directives, and utilized three basic steps (known as “Plan B”) to engage in problem solving (see <http://cpsconnection.com/CPSmodel>). Step one requires empathizing with the child. Often, students feel justified in their actions, particularly students with significant behavioral difficulties, such as those diagnosed with Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD). Empathizing with the student then, enables the student to be heard and feel validated (Greene & Ablon, 2005). If staff understands the student’s perspective, it may help reduce misconduct and conflict in the future, since the teacher may have a better understanding of student triggers and responses. The second step involves identifying the problem. This is a two-step process, in which the student identifies his or her “problem” and the adult explains his or her “problem.” This leads to step three, at which point the adult invites the child to solve the problem collaboratively, by working together to repair the problem (Greene & Ablon, 2005). Additionally, CPS believes that “kids do well if they can” (Greene, 2008). Meaning, students that are misbehaving frequently do so because they lack or lag in the skills required to appropriately handle the situation. Therefore, in addition to collaboratively problem-solving in the moment, it is

important to address lagging skills in students (Greene, 2008). In this district in particular, more attention can also be paid to the RP implementation and the level to which guidelines for the responsive and restorative conference are being adhered.

The current results also highlight the importance of intervening with students that are habitually absent from class. Since this may be a risk factor for students, ultimately leading to truancy, antisocial behaviors, delinquency and dropping out of school, it is especially important that these students be paid special attention. Students involved in activities related to computer and Internet usage violations should also be carefully observed and supported to decrease the likelihood of future ODRs.

Conclusion

The present study followed 9th grade students across a nine-month period of time and provides insight into future discipline patterns among students based upon major consequences received. The results of this study do not provide evidence to support the use of three major discipline consequences studied, namely conferences, OSS, and ISS, as disciplinary procedures intended to deter future misconduct. The hypothesis that a student-centered approach, such as a conference, would be more likely to decrease future ODRs among students, when compared to students that received exclusionary practices, such as OSS or ISS, was not supported. No student groups appeared to have different trajectories based upon the type of consequence received.

The current study produced results that corroborated with past research, and results that did not corroborate with previous research. Specifically, the current study showed African American and Hispanic students as more likely to receive OSS compared to European American peers, supporting previous research on the increased likelihood of

African American students receiving harsher disciplinary consequences (Gregory et al., 2014; Monroe, 2005). This study also supported prior research suggesting that socioeconomic status significantly contributes to future ODRs (Gregory et al., 2010; Skiba, Peterson, & Williams, 1997). Similarly, gender appeared to play a significant role for students that received conferences as a first major consequence, with males receiving a higher number of conferences first than females (Gregory et al., 2015). Additionally, these results demonstrated an increased risk for students that received infractions for missing class, which supports previous research on the deleterious effects of absenteeism and truancy (Baker et al., 2001; Garry, 1996; McCluskey et al., 2004). Surprisingly though, certain findings contradicted previous findings. For instance, the frequently documented discipline gap (e.g., Gregory et al., 2010; Monroe, 2005; Skiba et al., 2002) was not corroborated beyond the initial consequence received, suggesting that the discipline gap evened out over the course of the nine-months. Further, the use of conferences, even those that proposed to follow RP guidelines, did not decrease the likelihood of future referrals, as found by Gregory and colleagues (2015).

Overall, this study suggested that the current major discipline consequences utilized in the schools are not noticeably correlated with reduced future student misconduct. Therefore, it is important that more preventative measures be introduced earlier in students' academic careers to deter students from committing future infractions. Future research should focus on alternative options for decreasing ODRs among high school students.

REFERENCES

- Allensworth, E., & Easton, J. Q. (2001). Calculating a cohort dropout rate for the Chicago Public Schools: A technical research report.
- American Academy of Pediatrics. (2013). Policy Statement, Out-of-school suspension and expulsion. *Pediatrics*, 131, pp. 1000-1007.
- American Psychological Association Task Force (2008). Are zero tolerance policies effective in schools? An evidentiary review and recommendations. *American Psychologist*, 63, 852- 863.
- Anderson, E. (1999). *Code of the Street* (pp. 107-141). New York: Norton.
- Atkins, M. S., McKay, M. M., Frazier, S. L., Jakobsons, L. J., Arvanitis, P., Cunningham, T., & Lambrecht, L. (2002). Suspensions and detentions in an urban, low-income school: Punishment or reward?. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*, 30(4), 361-371.
- Attwood, G., & Croll, P. (2006). Truancy in secondary school pupils: Prevalence, trajectories and pupil perspectives. *Research papers in education*, 21(4), 467-484.
- Baker, M. L., Sigmon, J. N., & Nugent, M. E. (2001, September). Truancy reduction: Keeping students in school. *Juvenile Justice Bulletin*.
- Balfanz, R., Byrnes, V., & Fox, J. (2013, January). Sent home and put off-track: The antecedents, disproportionalities, and consequences of being suspended in the ninth grade. In *Closing the School Discipline Gap: Research to Practice conference*, Washington, DC.
- Bethlehem Area School District Code of Conduct (2011). Bethlehem, PA: Bethlehem Area School District.

- Blair, I. V., Judd, C. M., & Fallman, J. L. (2004). The automaticity of race and Afrocentric facial features in social judgments. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 87(6), 763.
- Blyth, D. A., Simmons, R. G., & Carlton-Ford, S. (1983). The adjustment of early adolescents to school transitions. *The Journal of Early Adolescence*.
- Bowditch, C. (1993). Getting rid of troublemakers: High school disciplinary procedures and the production of dropouts. *Social Problems*, 40, 493-507.
- Bowers, A. J., & Sprott, R. (2012). Why tenth graders fail to finish high school: A dropout typology latent class analysis. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk (JESPAR)*, 17(3), 129-148.
- Boxer, P. (2011). Negative peer involvement in Multisystemic Therapy for the treatment of youth problem behavior: Exploring outcome and process variables in “real-world” practice. *Journal of Clinical Child & Adolescent Psychology*, 40(6), 848-854.
- Butler, S., Baruch, G., Hickey, N., & Fonagy, P. (2011). A randomized controlled trial of Multisystemic Therapy and a statutory therapeutic intervention for young offenders. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 50(12), 1220-1235.
- Carroll, C., Patterson, M., Wood, S., Booth, A., Rick, J., & Balain, S. (2007). A conceptual framework for implementation fidelity. *Implement Science*, 2, 40.
- Cassidy, E. F., & Stevenson Jr, H. C. (2005). They wear the mask: Hypervulnerability and hypermasculine aggression among African American males in an urban remedial disciplinary school. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma*,

11(4), 53-74.

Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). (2013).

Implementing systemic district and school social and emotional learning.

Chicago, IL: Author.

Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). (2003). *Safe and*

sound: An educational leader's guide to evidence-based social and emotional

learning programs. Chicago: Author.

Committee for Children (2011). *Second Step: Social-emotional skills for early learning.*

Retrieved from

http://www.cfchildren.org/Portals/0/SS_EL/EL_DOC/EL_Review_Research_SS.pdf.

Committee for Children (2001, 2005). *Steps to Respect program guide.* Retrieved from

http://www.cfchildren.org/Portals/0/STR/STR_DOC/Research_Review_STR.pdf.

Conger, R. D., Ge, X., Elder, G. H., Lorenz, F. O., & Simons, R. L. (1994). Economic stress, coercive family process, and developmental problems of adolescents. *Child Development, 65*(2), 541-561.

Conger, R. D., Conger, K. J., Elder, G. H., Lorenz, F. O., Simons, R. L., & Whitbeck, L. B. (1992). A family process model of economic hardship and adjustment of early adolescent boys. *Child Development, 63*(3), 526-541.

Cooley-Quill, M., Boyd, R. C., Frantz, E., & Walsh, J. (2001). Emotional and behavioral impact of exposure to community violence in inner-city adolescents. *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology, 30*, 199-206.

- Corville-Smith, J., Ryan, B. A., Adams, G. R., & Dalicandro, T. (1998). Distinguishing absentee students from regular attenders: The combined influence of personal, family, and school factors. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 27(5), 629-640.
- Costenbader, V., & Markson, S. (1998). School suspension: A study with secondary school students. *Journal of School Psychology*, 36, 59-82.
- Dalton, B., Glennie, E., & Ingels, S. J. (2009). Late high school dropouts: Characteristics, experiences, and changes across cohorts. Descriptive Analysis Report. NCES 2009-307. *National Center for Education Statistics*.
- Dishion, T., & Dodge, K. (2005). Peer contagion in interventions for children and adolescents: Moving towards an understanding of the ecology and dynamics of change. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*, 33, 395-400.
- Dishion, T. J., Duncan, T. E., Eddy, J. M., Fagot, B. I., & Fetrow, R. (1994). The world of parents and peers: Coercive exchanges and children's social adaptation. *Social Development*, 3(3), 255-268.
- Dishion, T. J., Patterson, G. R., Stoolmiller, M., & Skinner, M. L. (1991). Family, school, and behavioral antecedents to early adolescent involvement with antisocial peers. *Developmental Psychology*, 27(1), 172.
- Dodge, K. A., Pettit, G. S., & Bates, J. E. (1994). Socialization mediators of the relation between socioeconomic status and child conduct problems. *Child Development*, 65(2), 649-665.
- Domitrovich, C., Durlak, J., Goren, P., & Weissberg, R. (2013). *Effective social and emotional learning programs: Preschool and elementary school edition*. 2013 CASEL guide.

Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D., & Schellinger, K. B.

(2011). The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. *Child Development, 82*, 405-432.

Eberhardt, J. L., Goff, P. A., Purdie, V. J., & Davies, P. G. (2004). Seeing black: Race, crime, and visual processing. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 87*(6), 876.

Eccles, J. S., Midgley, C., Wigfield, A., Buchanan, C. M., Reuman, D., Flanagan, C., & Mac Iver, D. (1993). Development during adolescence: The impact of stage-environment fit on young adolescents' experiences in schools and in families. *American Psychologist, 48*(2), 90.

Ekstrom, R., Goertz, M., Pollack, J., & Rock, D. (1986). Who drops out of high school and why? Findings from a national study. *The Teachers College Record, 87*(3), 356-373.

Elias, M.J., Zins, J.E., Weissberg, R.P., Frey, K.S., Greenberg, M.T., Haynes, N.M., ... & Shriver, T.P. (1997). *Promoting Social and Emotional Learning: Guidelines for Educators*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Fabelo, T., Thompson M. D., Plotkin M., Carmichael D., Marchbanks, M. P. III, & Booth E.A. (2011). *Breaking schools' rules: A statewide study of how school discipline relates to students' success and juvenile justice involvement*. Council of State Governments. Justice Center Publications. Accessible at:
<http://justicecenter.csg.org/resources/juveniles>.

- Flay, B. R., Allred, C. G., & Ordway, N. (2001). Effects of the Positive Action program on achievement and discipline: Two matched-control comparisons. *Prevention Science*, 2(2), 71-89.
- Fenning, P., Golomb, S., Gordon, V., Kelly, M., Scheinfeld, R., Morello, T., & Banull, C. (2008). Written discipline policies used by administrators. *Journal of School Violence*, 123-146.
- Finn, J. D., & Servoss, T. J. (2013, January). Misbehavior, suspensions, and security measures in high school: Racial/ethnic and gender differences. In *Closing the school discipline gap: Research to practice conference, Washington, DC*.
- Forman, S. G., Shapiro, E. S., Coddling, R. S., Gonzales, J. E., Reddy, L. A., Rosenfield, S. A., ... & Stoiber, K. C. (2013). Implementation science and school psychology. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 28(2), 77.
- Garry, E. M. (1996). Truancy: First Step to a Lifetime of Problems.
- Gonzales, T. (2015). Socializing schools: Addressing racial disparities in discipline through Restorative Justice. In D. J. Losen (Ed.), *Closing the school discipline gap: Equitable remedies for excessive exclusion*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Gottfredson, G., Gottfredson, D., Payne, A., & Gottfredson, N. (2005). School climate predictors of school disorder: Results from a national study of delinquency prevention in schools. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 412-444.
- Greene, R. (2008). Kids Do Well If They Can. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 90(3), 160-167.
- Greene, R. W., & Ablon, J. S. (2005). *Treating explosive kids: The collaborative problem-solving approach*. Guilford Press.

- Greene, R. W., Ablon, J. S., Goring, J. C., Raezer-Blakely, L., Markey, J., Monuteaux, M. C., ... & Rabbitt, S. (2004). Effectiveness of collaborative problem solving in affectively dysregulated children with oppositional-defiant disorder: Initial findings. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 72*(6), 1157-1164.
- Greene, R. W., Ablon, J. S., & Goring, J. C. (2003). A transactional model of oppositional behavior: Underpinnings of the Collaborative Problem Solving approach. *Journal of Psychosomatic Research, 55*(1), 67-75.
- Gregory, A., Allen P., Mikami, A., Hafen, C., & Pianta, R. (2015). The promise of a teacher professional development program in reducing racial disparity in classroom exclusionary discipline. In D. J. Losen (Ed.), *Closing the school discipline gap: Equitable remedies for excessive exclusion*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Gregory, A. (2015). *Implementing restorative interventions and reducing future discipline sanctions in a large urban school district*. Manuscript submitted for publication.
- Gregory, A., Bell, J., & Pollock, M. (2014). How educators can eradicate disparities in school discipline: A briefing paper on school-based interventions. *Discipline Disparities Series: Interventions, March*.
- Greenberg, M. T., Kusche, C. A., Cook, E. T., & Quamma, J. P. (1995). Promoting emotional competence in school-aged children: The effects of the PATHS curriculum. *Development and Psychopathology, 7*(01), 117-136.
- Henggeler, S.W., Mihalic, S.F., Rone, L., Thomas, C., & Timmons-Mitchell, J. (1998). *Multisystemic Therapy: Blueprints for Violence Prevention, Book Six*. Blueprints

for Violence Prevention Series (D.S. Elliott, Series Editor). Boulder, CO: Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence, Institute of Behavioral Science, University of Colorado.

Huey, Jr., S. J., Henggeler, S. W., Brondino, M. J., & Pickrel, S. G. (2000). Mechanisms of change in Multisystemic Therapy: Reducing delinquent behavior through therapist adherence and improved family and peer functioning. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 68*(3), 451-467.

Jeong, S., McGarrell, E. F., & Hipple, N. K. (2012). Long-term impact of family group conferences on re-offending: The Indianapolis restorative justice experiment. *Journal of Experimental Criminology, 8*(4), 369-385.

Jessor, R., & Jessor, S. L. (1977). *Problem behavior and psychosocial development: A longitudinal study of youth*. New York: Academic Press.

Kearney, C. A. (2003). Bridging the gap among professionals who address youths with school absenteeism: Overview and suggestions for consensus. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, 34*, 57.

Kendziora, K., & Osher, D. (2009). *Starting to turn schools around: The academic outcomes of the Safe Schools, Successful Students initiative*. Washington, DC: American Institutes for Research.

Lannie, A., & McCurdy, B. (2007). Preventing disruptive behavior in the urban classroom: Effects of the good behavior game on student and teacher behavior. *Education and Treatment of Children, 30*, 85-98.

Lee, T., Cornell, D., Gregory, A., & Fan, X. (2011). High suspension schools and dropout rates for Black and White students. *Education and Treatment of Children, 34*(2),

167-192.

Loeber, R. (1990). Development and risk factors of juvenile antisocial behavior and delinquency. *Clinical Psychology Review, 10*, 1-41.

Loeber, R., & Dishion, T. (1983). Early predictors of male delinquency: A review. *Psychological Bulletin, 94*, 68.

Loeber, R., & Schmalting, K. B. (1985). Empirical evidence for overt and covert patterns of antisocial conduct problems: A metaanalysis. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology, 13*(2), 337-353.

Losen, D. J., & Martinez, T. E. (2013). Out of school and off track: The overuse of suspensions in American middle and high schools. *Civil Rights Project*.

Mayer, G. (1995). Preventing antisocial behavior in the schools. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, 28*, 467-478.

Mayer, G., & Butterworth, T. (1995). A preventive approach to school violence and vandalism: An experimental study. *The Personnel and Guidance Journal, 57*(9), 436-441.

McCluskey, C. P., Bynum, T. S., & Patchin, J. W. (2004). Reducing chronic absenteeism: An assessment of an early truancy initiative. *Crime & Delinquency, 50*, 214-234.

Mistry, R. S., Vandewater, E. A., Huston, A. C., & McLoyd, V. C. (2002). Economic well-being and children's social adjustment: The role of family process in an ethnically diverse low-income sample. *Child Development, 73*(3), 935-951.

Monroe, C. R. (2005). Why are "bad boys" always Black?: Causes of disproportionality in school discipline and recommendations for change. *The Clearing House: A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues and Ideas, 79*, 45-50.

- Noltemeyer, A., & Mcloughlin, C. S. (2010). Patterns of exclusionary discipline by school typology, ethnicity, and their interaction. *Penn GSE Perspectives on Urban Education*, 7, 27-40.
- Ogden, T., & Hagen, K. A. (2009). What works for whom? Gender differences in intake characteristics and treatment outcomes following Multisystemic Therapy. *Journal of Adolescence*, 32, 1425-1435.
- Onifade, E., Nyandoro, A. S., Davidson, W. S., & Campbell, C. (2010). Truancy and patterns of criminogenic risk in a young offender population. *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice*, 8, 3-18.
- Osher, D., Bear, G., Sprague, J., & Doyle, W. (2010). How can we improve school discipline? *Educational Researcher*, 39, 48-58.
- Osher, D., Sprague, J., Weissberg, R. P., Axelrod, J., Keenan, S., Kendziora, K., & Zins, J. E. (2008). A comprehensive approach to promoting social, emotional, and academic growth in contemporary schools. *Best Practices in School Psychology*, 4, 1263-1278.
- Payton, J., Weissberg, R. P., Durlak, J. A., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D., Schellinger, K. B., & Pachan, M. (2008). *The positive impact of social and emotional learning for kindergarten to eighth-grade students: Findings from three scientific reviews*. Chicago: Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning.
- Piquero, A. R. (2008). Disproportionate minority contact. *The Future of Children*, 18(2), 59-79.
- Pollock, M. (2009). *Colormute: Race talk dilemmas in an American school*. Princeton University Press.

- Raffaele Mendez, L. (2003) Predictors of suspension and negative school outcomes: A longitudinal investigation. In Wald & Losen (Eds.), *Deconstructing the School to Prison Pipeline* (p. 27). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Robers, S., Kemp, J., and Truman, J. (2013). *Indicators of school crime and safety: 2012* (NCES 2013-036/ NCJ 241446). National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education, and Bureau of Justice Statistics, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. Washington, DC.
- Robins, L. N. (1978). Sturdy childhood predictors of adult antisocial behaviour: Replications from longitudinal studies. *Psychological Medicine*, 8(4), 611-622.
- Sawyer, A. M., & Borduin, C. M. (2011). Effects of Multisystemic Therapy through midlife: A 21.9-year follow-up to a randomized clinical trial with serious and violent juvenile offenders. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 79(5), 643-652.
- Seidman, E., Allen, L., Aber, J. L., Mitchell, C., & Feinman, J. (1994). The impact of school transitions in early adolescence on the self-system and perceived social context of poor urban youth. *Child Development*, 65(2), 507-522.
- Shuster, B. (1995). LA school truancy exacts a growing social price. *Los Angeles Times*, 28.
- Sinclair, M. F., Christenson, S. L., Lehr, C. A., & Anderson, A. R. (2003). Facilitating student engagement: Lessons learned from Check & Connect longitudinal studies. *The California School Psychologist*, 8, 29-41.
- Sirin, S. R. (2005). Socioeconomic status and academic achievement: A meta-analytic review of research. *Review of Educational Research*, 75(3), 417-453.

Skiba, R. J., Chung, C. G., Trachok, M., Baker, T., Sheya, A., & Hughes, R. (2013).

Where should We Intervene?. *Closing the School Discipline Gap: Equitable Remedies for Excessive Exclusion*, 132.

Skiba, R. J., Horner, R. H., Chung, C. G., Karega Rausch, M., May, S. L., & Tobin, T.

(2011). Race is not neutral: A national investigation of African American and Latino disproportionality in school discipline. *School Psychology Review*, 40, 85.

Skiba, R. J., Michael, R. S., Nardo, A. C., & Peterson, R. L. (2002). The color of

discipline: Sources of racial and gender disproportionality in school punishment. *Urban Review*, 34, 317-342.

Skiba, R., Peterson, R., & Williams, T. (1997). Office referrals and suspension:

Disciplinary intervention in middle schools. *Education and Treatment of Children*, 20, 295-315.

Skinner, B. (1953). *Science and Human Behavior*. New York: Macmillan.

Skinner, B. (1974). *About Behaviorism*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Spencer, M. B., Fegley, S., Harpalani, V., & Seaton, G. (2004). Understanding

hypermasculinity in context: A theory-driven analysis of urban adolescent males' coping responses. *Research in Human Development*, 1(4), 229-257.

Stinchcomb, J. B., Bazemore, G., & Riestenberg, N. (2006). Beyond zero tolerance:

Restoring justice in secondary schools. *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice*, 4(2), 123-147.

Taylor, M. C., & Foster, G. A. (1986). Bad boys and school suspensions: Public policy

implications for black males. *Sociological Inquiry*, 56(4), 498-506.

- Teasley, M. L. (2004). Absenteeism and truancy: Risk, protection, and best practice implications for school social workers. *Children & Schools*, 26, 117-128.
- Tobin, T., Sugai, G., & Colvin, G. (1996). Patterns in middle school discipline records. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, 4(2), 82-94.
- U.S. Department of Education, *Guiding principles: A resource guide for improving school climate and discipline*, Washington, D.C., 2014.
- U.S. Department of Education, *Check & Connect*, Washington, D.C., 2015..
- Wachtel, T. (2012). *Defining restorative*. Retrieved from <http://iirpds.pointinspace.com/pdf/Defining-Restorative.pdf>.
- Wallace Jr, J. M., Goodkind, S., Wallace, C. M., & Bachman, J. G. (2008). Racial, ethnic, and gender differences in school discipline among US high school students: 1991-2005. *The Negro Educational Review*, 59(1-2), 47.
- Wasserman, G. A., Keenan, K., Tremblay, R. E., Coie, J. D., Herrenkohl, T. I., Loeber, R., & Petechuk, D. (2003). *Risk and protective factors of child delinquency*. Washington: US Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.
- Wehlage, G. G., & Rutter, R. A. (1986). Dropping out: How much do schools contribute to the problem? *Teachers College Record*, 87, 374-392.
- Wigfield, A., Eccles, J. S., Mac Iver, D., Reuman, D. A., & Midgley, C. (1991). Transitions during early adolescence: Changes in children's domain-specific self-perceptions and general self-esteem across the transition to junior high school. *Developmental Psychology*, 27(4), 552.

- Zhang, D., Katsiyannis, A., Barrett, D. E., & Willson, V. (2007). Truancy offenders in the juvenile justice system examinations of first and second referrals. *Remedial and Special Education, 28*, 244-256.
- Zins, J.E., Bloodworth, M.R., Weissberg, R.P., & Walberg, H.J. The scientific base linking Social and Emotional Learning to school success. In J.E. Zins, R.P. Weissberg, M.C. Wang, & H.J. Walberg (Eds.), *Building Academic Success on Social and Emotional Learning: What Does The Research Say?* (pp. 3-22). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Zinsser, K.M., Weissberg, R.P., Dusenbury, L. (2013). *Aligning preschool through high school social and emotional learning standards: A critical (and doable) next step*. Chicago: Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning.

APPENDIX A

Literature review on promising interventions for reducing exclusionary disciplinary practices and the racial discipline gap

Racial Discipline Gap

Racial minorities have a greater chance of receiving exclusionary consequences, such as suspension, when compared to European American peers (Skiba et al., 2011). African American students tend to receive higher numbers of office discipline referrals and exclusionary consequences at two- to three- times that of European American students (Finn & Servoss, 2013; Skiba et al., 2011; Skiba et al., 2002). This trend has been consistently documented over the past 30 years (e.g., Gregory et al., 2010; McCarthy & Hoge, 1987; McFadden, Marsh, Price, & Hwang, 1992; Raffaele Mendez & Knoff, 2003; Skiba et al., 2002; Wu, Pink, Crain, & Moles, 1982). This racial disparity remains when taking into account other factors, such as socioeconomic status and student-reported behavior (Bradshaw, Mitchell, & Leaf, 2010; Finn & Servoss, 2014), as well reason for referral and frequency (Fabelo et al., 2011). This is especially concerning given the adult subjectivity involved in labeling behaviors as “defiant” and “disruptive” (Balfanz, Byrnes, & Fox, 2013; Gregory, Cornell & Fan, 2011; Gregory & Weinstein, 2008). This disproportionality appears to have increased since the 1970’s when African Americans received approximately twice the number of suspensions as European American students, whereas current African American students may be almost three times more likely as European American students to receive suspensions (Losen & Martinez, 2013; Robers, Kemp, & Truman, 2013; Skiba et al., 2011; Wald & Losen, 2003). Latino students are at a greater risk for exclusionary discipline as well, receiving

approximately twice as many suspensions as European American students (Losen & Martinez, 2013; Robers et al., 2013). It should be noted, that this disparity between the suspension rates for European American students compared to Latino students varies across states and districts (Losen & Martinez, 2013).

Due to this increasing disparity in disciplinary actions across races, ongoing research is being conducted to find school interventions that can decrease this racial gap. Currently, there are a few interventions that show promise in this area. This section examines a few promising interventions: School-Wide Positive Behavioral Supports (SWPBS), Restorative Practices (RP), and My Teaching Partner–Secondary (MTP-S). Learning about the current interventions and their key components can help schools understand the value in these programs and begin to decrease the racial discipline gap.

School-Wide Positive Behavioral Supports (SWPBS)

The Rise in School-Wide Behavioral Supports

School-Wide Positive Behavioral Supports (SWPBS) is a whole-school approach to decreasing problem behavior and increasing pro-social activities. The intervention is a: “decision making framework that guides selection, integration, and implementation of the best evidence-based academic and behavioral practices for improving important academic and behavior outcomes for all students” (http://www.pbiscaltac.org/pbis_overview.html). Typically, schools implementing SWPBS develop a continuum of prevention and intervention strategies. These strategies are usually organized in three tiers: universal or primary (Tier 1), targeted or secondary (Tier 2), and intensive or tertiary (Tier 3; e.g., Sugai & Horner, 2002; Walker et al., 1996).

SWPBS has had positive results, such as improving perceived safety of the school, meeting or exceeding state testing standards, and reducing students receiving office disciplinary referrals and suspensions in middle and elementary schools across school districts. Additionally, some staff members involved in the program have reported improved organizational health and better staff relationships (e.g., Bradshaw, Koth, Bevans, Ialongo, & Leaf, 2008; Bradshaw et al., 2010; Bui, Quirk, & Almazon, 2010; Horner et al., 2009). Emerging research is beginning to show potential for SWPBIS in secondary schools as well (Bohanon et al., 2006; Bui et al., 2010; Muscott, Mann, & LeBrun, 2008).

Reducing Office Discipline Referrals (ODRs)

Recognizing the promise of SWPBS, the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services– Division of Behavioral Health, in collaboration with the New Hampshire Department of Education, called for statewide positive behavior support initiative proposals to address the overuse of exclusionary discipline practice, such as suspension. In response, the PBIS-NH initiative was developed as a three-year plan to implement, evaluate and sustain a multisystemic behavior support program statewide, integrating systems of support across school, home and community. Middle and high schools reported significant reductions in suspensions, both in- and out-of school, between the first and second years of implementation. Across all of the schools in NH ($N = 28$), there was an overall reduction in office referrals by 28% (Muscott et al., 2008). Additionally, Iowa instituted a similar initiative, implementing SWPBIS in 103 schools across the state, 72 of which were able to provide data for evaluation. Evaluation researchers found that almost all schools were able to implement the program with 80%

fidelity or higher, indicating that the schools were able to maintain the program satisfactorily. Finding from this case study show that 75% of schools that provided discipline data had, on average, a 42% decrease in office discipline referrals (Mass-Galloway, Panyan, Smith, & Wessendorf, 2008). These large-scale, statewide initiatives show the confidence Boards of Education and other organizations have in this intervention.

Larger states with a greater number of schools and a larger amount of diversity among students have implemented SWPBS statewide as well. As of September 2006, 467 of Maryland's public schools (approximately 33%) had been trained in PBIS, including a large number of schools from each education level. Office discipline data managed by an internet-based school-wide information system (SWIS) showed an average of 42% fewer ODRs per 100 students per day in Maryland, when compared to national averages, including 33% fewer ODRs at the elementary school level, 37% fewer ODRs at the high school level, and 72% fewer ODR's in K-12 schools; this indicated significantly fewer ODRs than the national average across school levels. However, only 182 schools were able to provide a full year of ODR records since many schools were still being trained on the new tracking system. In addition, although more data is needed to determine a sustained effect, preliminary data analysis also suggests a statistically significant decrease in suspensions among elementary and middle school students after one year (Barrett, Bradshaw, & Lewis-Palmer, 2008). Single-school case studies done at the high school and middle school levels have shown similar results (e.g., Bohanon et al., 2006; Lassen, Steele, & Sailor, 2006).

Similarly, as of 2009, over 1,000 public schools throughout Illinois were utilizing

SWPBS in their schools and classrooms. Of these schools, researchers evaluated the program and its implications in a sample of 428 schools spread across 125 school districts with data entered into the statewide database. It should be noted that not all schools had data for all years evaluated, with the majority only having data available for one or two years. Findings from this evaluation indicated a statistically significant decrease in the number of office referrals. This trend was more prevalent in schools with higher levels of implementation fidelity, indicating that better adherence to the program is related to a greater reduction in ODRs. Suspension rates did not substantially decrease across the entire sample, but did decrease significantly when limiting the analyses to schools that showed high fidelity. This remained true for out-of-school suspension as well (Simonsen, Eber, Black, Sugai, Lewandowski, Sims et al., 2012).

In addition to these large-scale studies, a randomized controlled trial has been conducted to determine the true effectiveness of SWPBS in schools. Results from the 37-school, five-year, randomized controlled effectiveness trial showed a significant decrease in the number of students referred for discipline problems, as well as the number of overall ODR events over the span of the five years (Bradshaw et al., 2010). However, even though average ODRs were also lower than national averages, there may have been a floor effect due to the low base rate of ODRs (Spaulding et al., 2008). This may also account for the small effect size found (Bradshaw et al., 2010). It is important to note though, that currently, the literature appears to be mainly limited to the elementary schools level.

Effects on Racial Discipline Gap

Given SWPBS's focus on increasing problem-solving skills, preventing problem

behaviors, and decreasing the number of overall discipline referrals in schools, it seems logical to see a decline in the disproportionality of discipline referrals across races in SWPBS schools as well. However, only a few research studies have been conducted to indicate whether or not this is the case. There are a limited number of studies available that specifically look at the effects of SWPBS on the racial discipline gap, rather than overall rates of discipline. A couple of studies have been promising, suggesting that SWPBS may be helpful in decreasing the gap (Bradshaw, Mitchell, O'Brennan & Leaf; Vincent, Sprague & Gau, 2013; Vincent, Swain-Bradway, Tobin & May, 2011). Others show that the racial discipline disparity continues to exist, regardless of the quality of SWPBS implementation (Fenning et al., 2013; Kaufman et al., 2010; Vincent, Tobin, Hawken & Frank, 2012).

In response to the inconsistency in results, researchers have begun examining additional factors that may impact the effectiveness of SWPBS on the racial discipline gap. Vincent and colleagues (2011) developed a list of culturally responsive educational practices that can help take cultural differences between European American and minority students into account when implementing SWPBS. This may allow for more sensitive and applicable practices in order to reduce the discrepancy between discipline practices for minority students. Suggestions include: enhancing staff members' knowledge of cultural differences, improving staff members' own cultural self-awareness, validating others' cultures, increasing the cultural relevance of classroom material, and emphasizing cultural equity. Given that SWPBS was created as a culturally neutral intervention (Sugai et al., 2010). Vincent et al. (2011) further provide strategies for integrating these culturally responsive behaviors with the elements of SWPBS. For

example, noting the importance of social skill demonstrations as a component of SWPBS, Vincent et al. (2011) recommends demonstrating culturally relevant, appropriate behaviors (Vincent et al., 2011; Vincent et al., 2013). This may involve including staff members of different cultures, and integrating problem-solving issues that may be more culturally specific, such as perceived fairness. Additionally, staff members involved in implementing SWPBS should be provided with more cultural learning opportunities to recognize personal cultural biases and better understand others' cultural practices and experiences. It is also important to disaggregate data collected on discipline outcomes from SWPBS by race. Many schools use SWIS (Schoolwide Information System) to document implementation outcomes, and while this system is capable of disaggregating according to race, gender and ethnicity, many schools do not utilize this feature (Vincent et al., 2011; Vincent et al., 2013). More research is needed to determine whether or not SWPBS has the potential to decrease the gap in its current form. If not, it may need modifications to successfully decrease the gap, or SWPBS may be fundamentally unable to adequately improve the racial discipline gap and alternative interventions are needed.

Restorative Practices (RP)

The Promise of Restorative Practices

The International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIRP) developed the Restorative Practices (RP) intervention, which stems from the Restorative Justice movement, in which alleged offenders come together with all those affected by the incident to try and repair any harm done (Coates, Umbreit, & Vos, 2003; Gal & Moyal, 2011; McGarrell & Hipple, 2007; Rodriguez, 2007; Wachtel & McCold, 2004). Restorative Practices differs from Restorative Justice, most notably in that it is a

prevention method, in addition to having components for intervention after a wrongdoing has occurred. The underlying theory behind RP is: “human beings are happier, more productive and more likely to make positive changes in their behavior when those in positions of authority do things *with* them, rather than *to* them or *for* them” (Wachtel & McCold, 2004). Wachtel, one of the founders of RP, cites the building and restoration of relationships as the critical component in RP (Wachtel, 2012). This is accomplished by utilizing the different relationship-building components of RP, aiming to create a more positive school climate. These 11 key elements are integrated into the whole school and individual classrooms to create maximum change. All teachers, administrators and staff members attend trainings to ensure that all personnel in the school use the language and components associated with RP’s program (see <http://www.safersanerschools.org> for a more comprehensive overview; Wachtel, 2012).

Recent studies have shown that although Restorative Practices is still relatively new, there is evidence to suggest that RP improves school climate, decreases the number of behavior problems in classrooms, and strengthens relationships (Corrigan, 2012). A pilot study conducted over the course of four years and across 18 schools in the United Kingdom focused on utilizing conferencing as a tool for repairing relationships. Even though there was no systematic implementation support offered for the schools, all primary schools showed a significant improvement in school climate and relationships, and a significant decrease in disciplinary incidents. While these findings remained true for two secondary schools, eight secondary schools did not show evidence of significant change (McCluskey et al., 2008; Corrigan, 2012).

Other studies conducted at the post-primary levels found positive results as well. One study piloted in seven post-primary schools across the Northwest Region of Ireland noted that not only did Restorative Practices significantly reduce the number of office referrals, detentions and suspensions, it was also looked upon favorably by most staff and students, including “wrongdoers” and those “wronged” (Garrigle, Meade & Morales, 2006).

Sumner, Silverman and Frampton also provided evidence of promise for RP in their study of Cole Middle School in California (2010). This study showed a significant decline in suspensions; in the three years prior to the implementation of RP in the school, there were an average of 50 suspensions documented for every 100 students, whereas two years post intervention, the number of suspensions decreased to only six suspension per 100 students, an 87% decline in suspensions. Additionally, the school reported zero expulsions after the RP implementation (Sumner et al., 2010). Similarly, Stinchcomb et al., (2006) found a 65% decrease in disciplinary referrals after RP implementation, falling from 1,143 referrals to only 405 referrals over the course of a school year. Moreover, attendance among students increased from 85% to 95% attendance (Corrigan, 2012; Stinchcomb et al., 2006).

Another study, which utilized data from schools implementing Restorative Practices in Philadelphia, Canada, England, and United Kingdom, demonstrated that RP decreased the number of discipline referrals for misconduct across behavior categories, including racist incidents, disobedience, and classroom disruptions. Additionally, RP appears to have reduced the number of detentions, suspension, and staff absenteeism (Lewis, 2009; Corrigan, 2012). This was the case for schools in Minnesota, Denver, and

Pennsylvania as well, where they found reductions in detentions as well as suspensions, suggesting true change, and not simply procedural modifications, after implementing restorative justice practices (Karp & Breslin, 2001).

Restorative Practices and Racial Discipline Gap

Although there is an increasing amount of research to suggest that Restorative Practices may be an effective intervention for decreasing the overall number of disciplinary infractions, as well as reducing the number of detentions, suspensions, and expulsions, there is almost no literature available regarding RP's effects on the racial discipline gap. However, one recent randomized controlled trial, conducted in two Pennsylvania high schools, showed that teachers higher in RP implementation had higher-quality relationships with their students, and gave Latino and African American students fewer exclusionary disciplinary referrals (Gregory et al., 2014).

The Denver Public Schools (DPS) began implementing Restorative Practices in a single middle school in 2003, in response to a rise in out-of-school suspensions. By 2009, DPS had expanded implementation significantly and reoriented the initiative from a responsive intervention to a preventative intervention. DPS currently utilizes restorative justice district-wide to promote positive change and improved climate in all schools. Over the course of 10 years, DPS concluded that districts must approach the intervention as one that needs to be adapted to the specific community and context. By doing this, DPS was able to slightly reduce the racial discipline gap every year for each racial group, as well as the overall rate of referral (Gonzales, 2015).

A critical factor in doing reducing office referrals, was hiring a full-time restorative justice coordinator in each school (Gonzales, 2015). This coordinator built

strong relationships with school resource officer, teachers and administrators and collaborative created short- and long-term strategies for the schools. Moreover, individual schools varied in their practices. For instance, one school infused restorative practices throughout the school, including restorative conferences, preventative classroom circles, and student-led circles. A different school decided to focus on student conflicts, using restorative techniques to have students mediate incidents. Another school still, chose to limit the use of restorative practices to specific offenses outlined in a discipline matrix. Additionally, DPS found that across the district, three key principles for restorative practices emerged: restorative dialogues, restorative conferences, and restorative circles (Gonzales, 2015). However, when using multilevel analyses, Anyon et al., (2014) did not find that restorative practices decreased the racial discipline gap. Instead, Anyon et al., (2014) concluded that in order to be successful at reducing the racial discipline gap, interventions need to target teacher selection patterns for office discipline referrals, and not just discipline selections after referrals have been made.

Additionally, a recent study looked more closely at the allocation of the intervention, to determine if it is being implemented to all student groups equitably. This study found that students in minority groups that tend to be overrepresented in exclusionary disciplinary practices had equal, if not better, access to the intervention. If this is the case, Restorative Practices may be effective at reducing the racial discipline gap, if only to a limited degree. It is also promising that restorative interventions were found to produce a protective effect on students; students who received the intervention were shown to receive fewer discipline referrals post-intervention as well (Gregory et al., 2015).

Thus, there is evidence to suggest that RP may have promise as an intervention geared toward decreasing the racial discipline gap, especially when adapted for individual communities. Furthermore, Restorative Practices focuses on increasing problem-solving skills among students, and strengthening the relationship between students and teachers, which has been linked to a decreases in discipline disparities among racial groups (Gregory et al., 2014; Gregory et al., 2011; Koon, 2013).

My Teaching Partner– Secondary (MTP-S)

My Teaching Partner– Secondary as a Change Agent

The My Teaching Partner (MTP) intervention was developed to help change teacher practices in the classrooms. Since students spend such a significant portion of time in individual classes, it is important that teachers play an active role in increasing student engagement, thereby resulting in greater academic achievement, and improved classroom climate (Gregory et al., 2014). This can all be achieved through developing more effective teacher-student interactions (Hamre et al., 2012). My Teaching Partner helps by providing teachers with individualized professional development and utilizing classroom video to observe, analyze, and provide constructive feedback on teacher practices (see <http://mtpsecondary.net>). This consultative model was modified for those teaching adolescents that can often be difficult to reach, creating My Teaching Partner–Secondary (MTP-S). Consultants for MTP-S analyze video by using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System– Secondary (CLASS-S), a measure used to assess the quality of interactions in the classroom (Hafen et al., 2012; Hamre, Goffin, & Kraft-Sayre, 2009).

The CLASS-S focuses on three domains, namely, *emotional support*, *classroom organization*, and *instructional support*. Within each of these domains are several dimensions. For example, dimensions such as positive classroom climate and regard for adolescent perspective fall into the emotional support domain, behavior management, productivity, and instructional learning format dimensions fall under the classroom organization domain, and quality of feedback falls into the instructional support domain. Trained observers score video clips of classrooms based upon these dimensions and provide feedback to teachers on areas at which the teachers excel, and areas in which they can improve (Hamre et al., 2009).

My Teaching Partner- Secondary in the Classroom

In order to ascertain the effects produced through the My Teaching Partner–Secondary program, Allen and colleagues (2011) conducted two separate randomized controlled trials. The first study demonstrated a significant change in the quality of student-teacher interactions, as an indirect result of the consultation. These effects did not appear to differ based on the subject matter taught by the teacher, nor did the results change if the teacher changed courses taught. These results, produced during the first year, during which the intervention occurred, remained true one year post-intervention as well. Interestingly, while end-of-school-year test scores did not show evidence of increased academic achievement among students during the intervention year, significant improvements in achievement were documented one year post-intervention. This may indicate that teachers required an additional year of continued, personal growth to enable the students to translate class teachings into academic gains (Allen, Pianta, Gregory, Mikami, & Lun, 2011; Hafen et al., 2012). More recent research does show a relationship

between each domain from MTP–S (i.e., emotional support, classroom organization, and instructional support) and academic achievement. Based upon classroom observations using the CLASS–S tool, standardized testing scores positively correlated with higher levels of implementation from each domain. However, results were stronger for classes with a higher teacher-student ratio (Allen, Gregory, Mikami, Lun, Hamre & Pianta, 2013).

Similarly to the first randomized controlled trial, the second study revealed that no classroom characteristics, subject characteristics, or teacher characteristics altered the findings. Results from this study showed a significant improvement in certain dimensions in the CLASS-S, such as student engagement, regard for adolescent perspective, and analysis and problem solving. This means that students were visibly more attentive in class. and the teachers showed more respect for student autonomy, and provided more leadership opportunities for students. Teachers and students were able to more likely to engage in higher-level thinking and problem-solving as well (Hafen et al., 2012).

Interestingly, allowing students to have autonomy in the classroom and demonstrating respect for student opinion has been shown to be a critical factor leading to increased engagement in the classroom, particularly at the high school level (Hafen, Allen, Mikami, Gregory, Hamre, & Pianta, 2012).

Researchers also discovered that certain dimensions from the CLASS-S served as mediators for increased student engagement in the classroom. Specifically, the teacher's use of a variety of instructional materials and modalities, as well as their concentration on analysis and problem solving in the classroom, impacted the level of student engagement

in the classroom. Again, these results did not appear to be effected by classroom, teacher, or student characteristics (Gregory, Allen, Mikami, Hafen, & Pianta, 2013).

My Teaching Partner– Secondary’s Effects on the Racial Discipline Gap

While the findings regarding My Teaching Partner– Secondary’s efficacy in reducing the racial discipline gap is in its early stages, the research available is encouraging. A randomized controlled trial found that teachers assigned to the intervention group relied less on exclusionary discipline practices in their classrooms when compared to teachers not receiving the same professional development. These findings remained true even when accounting for individual characteristics. This suggests that teachers receiving individualized coaching regarding teaching practices, providing emotional support for students, and encouraging student autonomy, are more skilled at maintaining order in the classroom. This allows the teachers to give students fewer exclusionary consequences (Gregory, Allen, Mikami, Hafen, & Pianta, 2015). More recently, Gregory et al. (2015) found teachers, who improved in the analysis and inquiry, and teacher sensitivity areas, provided more opportunities for students to be creative, analyze and evaluate material, and problem-solve. These categories were linked to lower rates of office discipline referrals for African American students when compared to classrooms in which the teachers were not involved in the use of MTP-S (Gregory et al, 2015). These promising results are likely due to MTP–S’s unique focus on student-teacher relationships, supporting student voice, and active problem solving, through the use of the CLASS-S (Gregory et al., 2015).

Additionally, research suggests that the overrepresentation of minority students receiving exclusionary discipline actions may be partially due to implicit bias (Carter,

Skiba, Arredondo & Pollock, 2014). Teachers often may anticipate worse behavior from minority students, and therefore “see” it more frequently. Teachers may also be more likely to give minority students consequences compared to European American peers. Since many disciplinary actions taken are subjective as well, consequences assigned to minority students referred for defiance or insubordination in particular, may be harsher (McIntosh, Girvan, Horner & Smolkowski, 2014; Skiba, Michael, Nardo & Peterson, 2002, Vincent et al., 2013). Therefore, it seems likely that an intervention that is more systematic and objective in viewing behaviors, and helps teachers focus on observable behaviors, may lead teachers to be more systematic in viewing and handling classroom disruption and insubordination.

REFERENCES

- Allen, J. P., Gregory, A., Mikami, A. Y., Lun, J. Hamre, B., & Pianta, R. C. (2013). Observations of effective teacher–student interactions in secondary school classrooms: Predicting student achievement with the Classroom Assessment Scoring System Secondary. *School Psychology Review, 42*, 76–98.
- Allen, J. P., Pianta, R. C., Gregory, A., Mikami, A.Y., & Lun, J. (2011). An interaction-based approach to enhancing secondary school instruction and student achievement. *Science, 333*, 1034–1037.
- Anyon, Y., Jenson, J. M., Altschul, I., Farrar, J., McQueen, J., Greer, E., ... & Simmons, J. (2014). The persistent effect of race and the promise of alternatives to suspension in school discipline outcomes. *Children and Youth Services Review, 44*, 379-386.
- Balfanz, J., Byrnes, V. & Fox, J. (2014). Sent home and put off track: The Antecedents, disproportionalities, and consequences of being suspended in the 9th grade. In D. J. Losen (Ed.), *Closing the School Discipline Gap: Equitable Remedies for Excessive Exclusion*. New York, NY: Teacher's College Press.
- Barrett, S. B., Bradshaw, C. P., & Lewis-Palmer, T. (2008). Maryland statewide PBIS initiative systems, evaluation, and next steps. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions, 10*(2), 105-114.
- Bohanon, H., Fenning, P., Carney, K. L., Minnis-Kim, M. J., Anderson-Harriss, S., Moroz, K. B., ... & Pigott, T. D. (2006). Schoolwide application of Positive Behavior Support in an urban high school a case study. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions, 8*(3), 131-145.

- Bradshaw, C. P., Mitchell, M. M., & Leaf, P. J. (2010). Examining the effects of schoolwide positive behavioral interventions and supports on student outcomes results from a randomized controlled effectiveness trial in elementary schools. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 12(3), 133-148.
- Bradshaw, C. P., Mitchell, M. M., O'Brennan, L. M., & Leaf, P. J. (2010). Multilevel explorations of factors contributing to the overrepresentation of black students in office discipline referrals. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 102(2), 508-520.
- Bradshaw, C. P., Koth, C. W., Bevans, K. B., Ialongo, N., & Leaf, P. J. (2008). The impact of School-Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) on the organizational health of elementary schools. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 23(4), 462.
- Bui, X., Quirk, C., & Almazan, S. *Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports*.
- Carter, P., Skiba, R., Arredondo, M., & Pollock, M. (2014). *Discipline Disparities Series: A*.
- Coates, R., Umbreit, M., & Vos, B. (2003). Restorative justice circles: An exploratory study. *Contemporary Justice Review*, 6(3), 265-278.
- Corrigan, M. (2012). Restorative practices in NZ: The evidence base. *Ministry of Education* <http://www.vln.school.nz/file/download/687787> Retrieved, 23(08), 2013.
- Fenning, P., Pigott, T., Engler, E., Bradshaw, K., Gamboney, E., Grunewald, S., & McGrath-Kato, M. (2013). A mixed methods approach examining disproportionality in school discipline. *Closing the school discipline gap: Research to practice, Washington, DC*.

- Finn, J. D. & Servoss, T. J. (2014). Security measures and discipline in American high schools. In D. J. Losen (Ed.), *Closing the School Discipline Gap: Equitable Remedies for Excessive Exclusion*. New York, NY: Teacher's College Press.
- Finn, J. D., & Servoss, T. J. (2013, January). Misbehavior, suspensions, and security measures in high school: Racial/ethnic and gender differences. In *Closing the school discipline gap: Research to practice conference, Washington, DC*.
- Gal, T., & Moyal, S. (2011). Juvenile victims in restorative justice findings from the reintegrative shaming experiments. *British Journal of Criminology*, 51(6), 1014-1034.
- Gonzales, T. (2015). Socializing schools: Addressing racial disparities in discipline through Restorative Justice. In D. J. Losen (Ed.), *Closing the school discipline gap: Equitable remedies for excessive exclusion*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Gregory, A. (2015). *Implementing restorative interventions and reducing future discipline sanctions in a large urban school district*. Manuscript submitted for publication.
- Gregory, A., Allen P., Mikami, A., Hafen, C., & Pianta, R. (2015). The promise of a teacher professional development program in reducing racial disparity in classroom exclusionary discipline. In D. J. Losen (Ed.), *Closing the school discipline gap: Equitable remedies for excessive exclusion*. New York: Teachers College Press.

- Gregory, A., Clawson, K., Davis, A., & Gerewitz, J. (2015). The promise of restorative practices to transform teacher-student relationships and achieve equity in school discipline. *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation*, 25, 1–29.
- Gregory, A., Cornell, D., & Fan, X. (2011). The relationship of school structure and support to suspension rates for black and white high school students. *American Educational Research Journal*, 48, 904–934.
- Gregory, A., Hafen, C., Ruzek, E., Mikami, A., Allen, J., & Pianta, R. (2014). *Closing the racial discipline gap in classrooms by changing teacher practice*. Manuscript submitted for publication.
- Gregory, A., Skiba, R. J., & Noguera, P. A. (2010). The achievement gap and the discipline gap: Two sides of the same coin? *Educational Researcher*, 39, 59–68.
- Gregory, A. & Weinstein, S. R. (2008). The discipline gap and African Americans: Defiance or cooperation in the high school classroom. *Journal of School Psychology*, 46, 455-475.
- Hafen, C. A., Allen, J. P., Mikami, A. Y., Gregory, A., Hamre, B., & Pianta, R. C. (2012). The pivotal role of adolescent autonomy in secondary school classrooms. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 41(3), 245-255.
- Hafen, C., Allen, J., Gregory, A., Mikami, A., Hamre, B., & Pianta, R. (2012). *Improving teaching quality in secondary schools through professional development: Evidence from two RCT's of the My Teaching Partner Program*. Paper presented at the 2012 APPAM Fall Research Conference, Baltimore, MD. Paper retrieved from <https://appam.confex.com/appam/2012/webprogram/Paper4012.html>.
- Hamre, B. K., Goffin, S., & Kraft-Sayre, M. (2009). *CLASS implementation guide*.

Horner, R. H., Sugai, G., Smolkowski, K., Eber, L., Nakasato, J., Todd, A. W., &

Esperanza, J. (2009). A randomized, wait-list controlled effectiveness trial assessing school-wide positive behavior support in elementary schools. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 11, 133-145.

Horner, R. H., Sugai, G., Todd, A. W., & Lewis-Palmer, T. (2005). School-wide positive behavior support. *Individualized supports for students with problem behaviors: Designing positive behavior plans*, 359-390.

Karp, D. R., & Breslin, B. (2001). Restorative justice in school communities. *Youth & Society*, 33(2), 249-272.

Kaufman, J. S., Jaser, S. S., Vaughan, E. L., Reynolds, J. S., Di Donato, J., Bernard, S. N., & Hernandez-Brereton, M. (2010). Patterns in office discipline referral data by grade, race/ethnicity, and gender. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 12, 44-54.

Lassen, S. R., Steele, M. M., & Sailor, W. (2006). The relationship of school-wide positive behavior support to academic achievement in an urban middle school. *Psychology in the Schools*, 43(6), 701-712.

Lewis, S. (2009). Improving school climate: Findings from schools implementing restorative practices. *International Institute for Restorative Practices*.

Losen, D. J., & Martinez, T. E. (2013). *Out of school and off track: The overuse of suspensions in American middle and high schools*. Los Angeles, CA: University of California, Los Angeles.

- Mass-Galloway, R. L., Panyan, M. V., Smith, C. R., & Wessendorf, S. (2008). Systems change with school-wide Positive Behavior Supports Iowa's work in progress. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 10(2), 129-135.
- McCarthy, J. D., & Hoge, D. R. (1987). The social construction of school punishment: Racial disadvantage out of universalistic process. *Social Forces*, 65(4), 1101-1120.
- McCluskey, G., Lloyd, G., Kane, J., Stead, J., Riddell, S., & Weedon, E. (2008). Can restorative practices in schools make a difference? *Educational Review*, 60, 405–417.
- McFadden, A. C., Marsh, G. E., Price, B. J., & Hwang, Y. (1992). A study of race and gender bias in the punishment of school children. *Education and Treatment of Children*, 140-146.
- McGarrell, E. F., & Hipple, N. K. (2007). Family group conferencing and re-offending among first-time juvenile offenders: The Indianapolis experiment. *Justice Quarterly*, 24(2), 221-246.
- McIntosh, K., Girvan, E. J., Horner, R. H., & Smolkowski, K. (2014). *A conceptual model for reducing racial and ethnic disproportionality in school discipline*. Manuscript submitted for publication.
- McGarrigle, M., Meade, K. and Santa-Maria Morales, A. Pilot implementation of Restorative Practices in Post-Primary Schools in the Northwest Region (2006). *Promotion Research Centre*, NUI Galway.

- Mendez, L. M. R., & Knoff, H. M. (2003). Who gets suspended from school and why: A demographic analysis of schools and disciplinary infractions in a large school district. *Education and Treatment of Children*, 30-51.
- Muscott, H. S., Mann, E. L., & LeBrun, M. R. (2008). Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports in New Hampshire Effects of large-scale implementation of Schoolwide Positive Behavior Support on student discipline and academic achievement. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 10(3), 190-205.
- Robers, S., Kemp, J., and Truman, J. (2013). *Indicators of school crime and safety: 2012* (NCES 2013-036/ NCJ 241446). National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education, and Bureau of Justice Statistics, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. Washington, DC.
- Rodriguez, N. (2007). Restorative justice at work: Examining the impact of restorative justice resolutions on juvenile recidivism. *Crime & Delinquency*, 53(3), 355-379.
- Simonsen, B., Eber, L., Black, A. C., Sugai, G., Lewandowski, H., Sims, B., & Myers, D. (2012). Illinois statewide positive behavioral interventions and supports evolution and impact on student outcomes across years. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 14(1), 5-16.
- Skiba, R. J., Horner, R. H., Chung, C. G., Karega Rausch, M., May, S. L., & Tobin, T. (2011). Race is not neutral: A national investigation of African American and Latino disproportionality in school discipline. *School Psychology Review*, 40(1), 85.
- Skiba, R. J., Michael, R. S., Nardo, A. C., & Peterson, R. L. (2002). The color of discipline: Sources of racial and gender disproportionality in school punishment.

Urban Review, 34, 317-342.

Spaulding, S., Horner, R., Irvin, L., May, S., Emeldi, M., Tobin, T., et al. (2008, March).

School-wide PBS research and evaluation efforts using large-scale data sources.

Paper presented at the fifth annual International Association for Positive Behavior Supports Convention, Rosemont, IL.

Stinchcomb, J. B., Bazemore, G., & Riestenberg, N. (2006). Beyond zero tolerance:

Restoring justice in secondary schools. *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice*, 4(2), 123-147.

Sugai, G., Horner, R. H., Algozzine, R., Barrett, S., Lewis, T., Anderson, C., &

Simonsen, B. (2010). School-wide positive behavior support: Implementers' blueprint and self-assessment. *Eugene, OR: University of Oregon.*

Sugai, G., & Horner, R. (2002). The evolution of discipline practices: School-wide positive behavior supports. *Child & Family Behavior Therapy*, 24(1-2), 23-50.

Sumner, M. D., Silverman, C. J., & Frampton, M. L. (2010). School-based restorative justice as an alternative to zero-tolerance policies: Lessons from West Oakland. *Thelton E. Henderson Center for Social Justice.*

The Chief Justice Earl Warren Institute on Law and Social Policy. (2003, April).

Exclusionary school discipline: An issue brief and review of the literature.
Berkeley, CA: Soto-Vigil Koon.

Vincent, C. G., Sprague, J. R., & Gau, J. M. (2013). Effectiveness of schoolwide Positive Behavior Interventions and supports in reducing racially Inequitable Disciplinary exclusion. *Closing the School Discipline Gap: Equitable Remedies for Excessive Exclusion*, 207.

- Vincent, C. G., Tobin, T. J., Hawken, L. S., & Frank, J. L. (2012). Discipline referrals and access to secondary level support in elementary and middle schools: Patterns across African-American, Hispanic-American, and White students. *Education and Treatment of Children, 35*(3), 431-458.
- Vincent, C. G., Swain-Bradway, J., Tobin, T. J., & May, S. (2011). Disciplinary referrals for culturally and linguistically diverse students with and without disabilities: Patterns resulting from school-wide positive behavior support. *Exceptionality, 19*(3), 175-190.
- Wald, J., & Losen, D. J. (2003). Defining and redirecting a school-to-prison pipeline. *New directions for youth development, 2003*(99), 9-15.
- Wachtel, T. (2012). *Defining restorative*. Retrieved from <http://iirpds.pointinspace.com/pdf/Defining-Restorative.pdf>.
- Wachtel, T., & McCold, P. (2004, October). From restorative justice to restorative practices: Expanding the paradigm. In *Fifth International Conference on Conferencing, Circles and Other Restorative Practices. Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada*. http://www.realjustice.org/library/bc04_wachtel.html.
- Walker, H. M., Horner, R. H., Sugai, G., Bullis, M., Sprague, J. R., Bricker, D., & Kaufman, M. J. (1996). Integrated approaches to preventing antisocial behavior patterns among school-age children and youth. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders, 4*, 194-209.
- Wu, S. C., Pink, W., Crain, R., & Moles, O. (1982). Student suspension: A critical reappraisal. *The Urban Review, 14*(4), 245-303.

APPENDIX B

The following are the incident code categories and the incident codes assigned to each broad category:

- **Missing Class:** Habitually Truant, Lateness to Class, Lateness to School, Truancy Confirmed (Not OSS/NR), Truancy Confirmed (OSS), Truancy, Confirmed, Unauthorized Areas, Unauthorized Areas (Not OSS), Unauthorized Areas (Not OSS/NR), Unauthorized Items, Unexcused Class Absence
- **Misconduct/Defiance:** Arrival Misconduct – Level II, Assembly Misconduct – Level II, Bus Misconduct – Level II, Cafeteria Misconduct, Cafeteria Misconduct (Not OSS/NR), Cafeteria Misconduct (OSS), Cafeteria Misconduct (throwing objects), Continued Classroom Misconduct – Level II, Defiance, Dismissal Misconduct, Disorderly Conduct, Disrespect, Disrespect (Not OSS), Disrespect (Not OSS/NR), Disrespect (OSS), Hall Misconduct, Insubordination, Insubordination (Not OSS), Insubordination (Not OSS/NR), Insubordination (OSS), Lavatory Misconduct, Loitering, Other – Disorderly Conduct, Profanity/Obscenity, Profanity Obscenity (Not OSS), Profanity/Obscenity (Not OSS/NR), Profanity/Obscenity (OSS), School Activity Misconduct, Study Period Misconduct
- **Fraud/Cheating:** Fraud/Cheating, Fraud/Cheating (Not OSS), Fraud/Cheating (Not OSS/NR), Fraud/Cheating (OSS)
- **Vandalism/Theft:** Damage/Destruction of School and/or Personal Property (Less than \$10.00 in value) – Vandalism, Damage/Destruction of School and/or Personal Property (More than \$10.00 in value) – Vandalism, Destruction of

School and/or Personal Property (\$10 or more in value), Destruction of School and/or Personal Property (less than \$10 value), Other – Burglary, Theft, Theft/Larceny (\$10 or more in value), Theft/Larceny (less than \$10 in value), Theft/Larceny (less than \$10.00 in value), Theft/Larceny (more than \$10.00 in value), Vandalism

- **Assault/Endangerment:** Activating False Fire Alarm, Activating False Fire Alarm (OSS), Aggravated Assault on Staff, Assault of a District Employee, Assault of a District Employee-Aggravated Assault on Staff, Assault of a District Employee-Simple Assault on Staff, Endangerment, Other-Aggravated Assault on Student, Other-Aggravated Indecent Assault, Other-Bomb Threats, Other-Indecent Assault, Other-Terroristic Threats (excludes bomb threats), Physical Assault, Physical Assault-Aggravated Assault on Student, Physical Assault-Simple Assault on Student, Possession of Explosive (bomb, missile, etc.), Reckless Endangering, Simple Assault on Staff, Simple Assault on Student
- **Peer Conflict:** All Other Forms of Harassment/Intimidation, Bullying, Fighting, Minor Altercation, Other-Fighting, Other-Minor Altercation, Other-Threatening School Official/Student, Racial/Ethnic Intimidation, Sexual Harassment, Threatening School Official/Student, Threats/Harassment/Bullying-All Other Forms of Harassment/Intimidation, Threats/Harassment/Bullying-Bullying, Threats/Harassment/Bullying-Racial/Ethnic Intimidation, Threats/Harassment/Bullying-Sexual Harassment, Threats/Harassment/Bullying
- **Possession of a Controlled Substance:** Drugs/Alcohol Violation, Possession, Use or Sale of Tobacco, Possession/Use of a Controlled Substance, Sale,

Possession, Use, or Under the Influence of Alcohol, Sale/Distribution of a Controlled Substance, Tobacco Violation

- **Weapon Possession:** Danger Objects/Weapons-Possession of BB/Pellet Gun, Dangerous Objects/Weapons-Possession of Cutting Instrument (razor, box cutter, etc.), Dangerous Objects/Weapons-Possession of Knife, Possession of Cutting Instrument (razor, box cutter, etc.), Possession of Knife
- **Other:** Computer, Network, and Internet Use Policy Violation, Computer, Network, and Internet Use Policy Violation (Not OSS/NR), Computer, Network, and Internet Use Policy Violation (OSS), Exceeding Five (5) Suspensions (Not OSS/NR), Exceeding Five (5) Suspensions (OSS), Exceeding Level III Consequences (Not OSS/NR), Habitual Offender of School Regulations-Exceeding Five (5) Suspensions, Habitual Offender of School Regulations-Exceeding Level, Non-Referral Incident, Other, Other (level 2), Other (level 3), Other (level 3)-(Not OSS), Other (Not OSS/NR), Other (OSS), Other-Obscene, Other Sexual Materials and Performances, ID Badge Violation, Dress Code Violation