A study of the evolution of three inschool suspension programs in Virginia

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A study of the evolution of three in-school suspension programs in Virginia

Sullivan, Judy Stowe, Ed.D.
The College of William and Mary, 1988
A STUDY OF THE EVOLUTION OF THREE IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION PROGRAMS IN VIRGINIA

A Dissertation
Presented to
The Faculty of the School of Education
The College of William and Mary in Virginia

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

by
Judy Stowe Sullivan
May 1988
A STUDY OF THE EVOLUTION OF THREE IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION PROGRAMS IN VIRGINIA

by

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Chairman of Doctoral Committee
Dedication

This study is dedicated to my husband and parents whose support throughout my educational pursuits has made this final step possible.
Acknowledgments

I am indebted to Dr. William Bullock for the assistance and guidance given by him throughout the dissertation process. To Dr. Armand J. Galfo and Dr. Robert Maidment, I express my appreciation for their input and direction.

The cooperation given by personnel in the three school divisions involved in the case studies is also most gratefully acknowledged. Without their contributions, this research could not have been completed.

Finally, I wish to express my thanks to my family who encouraged me throughout my studies and writing. Their support and understanding were invaluable.
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Chapter 1
Introduction

Discipline is not a new concern on the educational horizon. From the earliest autocratic school masters to current child rights advocates, educators have attempted to maintain order and control in the schools through training students to act in accordance with prescribed rules (Buyse, 1955). Although methods have changed, the challenge to provide the environment most conducive to student learning still remains.

Educational historians agree that school discipline has been a continually recurring problem. Ariès (1962) summarized disciplinary methods of the fourteenth through eighteenth centuries as a humiliating system of brutality where flogging was the most common means of correction. Quoting from discipline manuals of the late 1700's, Camp (1974) described other punishments imposed on those students who challenged the absolute, unlimited authority of the headmaster, including pupils being fastened in pillories, yokes, and shackles, and being suspended from the rafters in sacks or baskets.

Though slightly less severe, the generally accepted disciplinary theory in the 1800's was that "a painful experience is sometimes the only thing to impress the dull mind" (Perry, 1915, p. 192). Master teachers of the nineteenth century were known for their rigid, authoritarian style. The prevailing attitude of the day stressed conformity at the expense of individual freedom. Student rights were unheard of, and schools were run for the good of society and not the privilege of youth. Recorded punishments were harsh and demeaning (Harris, Fields, & Carter, 1983).
In the first half of the twentieth century, the philosophy and techniques of discipline began a process of slow change. According to Bagley (1923), the old-time penalties of painful, uncomfortable positions and ridicule were abandoned for more contemporary school penalties such as solitary treatment, an early form of the time-out room. Garinger (1936) confirmed this shift by noting that the old techniques of flogging, prolonged tiptoeing, and the wearing of the dunce cap were being replaced by Saturday school, home visits, and academic penalties.

This gradual evolution in disciplinary policy and practices escalated in the mid-1900's. Ingram (1986) attributed these new attitudes toward student discipline to the significant increase in federal court involvement in the affairs of public schools during this period. According to Ingram, the landmark decision in Brown v. Board of Education (1954) signaled the nation that the federal judiciary would not remain silent to abuses of the constitutional rights of students in public schools.

Other Supreme Court cases which followed in the next two decades, 1960-80, forced changes in public school discipline procedures. In a study of student rights and the disciplinary process in constitutional law, Goldman (1983) discussed two such cases. First, the decision in Tinker v. Des Moines (1969) upheld students' rights to freedom of speech and expression. Later, Goss v. Lopez (1975) assured the 14th Amendment right to due process in school suspensions.

Just as the focus on student rights was increasing in the 1900's, so too was the nation's concern about pupil behavior in the schools.
According to Gallup (1979, 1980, 1981), discipline was considered to be the number one problem in public schools. The crucial issue, however, according to Beaman (1979), was that administrators continued to rely on disciplinary methods that proved ineffective in solving disruptive behavior problems.

In light of the court decisions supporting students' rights, and in response to the public's concern about discipline in the schools, administrators began searching for alternatives to out-of-school suspension and corporal punishment. Their quest moved toward a more positive approach which focused on the prevention of disruptive behavior as well as more student self-control (Ovard, 1966).

The birth of the in-school suspension program in the 1970's was attributed to this urgent demand for a more positive solution to school discipline and student rights issues (O'Brien, 1976; Preston, 1974). In-school suspension or ISS was defined by Garrett (1981) as "any school sponsored program in which the suspended student remains in the school environment and under the supervision of school personnel" (p. 2097A).

Statement of the Problem

This study was conducted to determine the evolution of the disciplinary technique called in-school suspension. In a case study format, three ISS programs were examined with regard to why and how they were established, what changes have occurred, and their current status and effectiveness.
Purpose of the Study

There were three primary objectives in pursuing this study:

1. To provide a complete and documented history of the origin and development of three early in-school suspension programs.

2. To describe changes in program philosophy and methods of implementation of the in-school suspension plan in each school division with an emphasis on discovering elements or forces that may have caused the revisions.

3. To examine the effects of the in-school suspension program in each of the three school divisions from implementation to the present.

Justification for the Study

The objectives of this study represented the researcher's attempt to respond to specific needs in the educational arena. A historical perspective on the beginnings of each in-school suspension program, as outlined in the first objective above, should present data that yield a frame of reference for school systems desiring to initiate a similar program.

The purpose of investigating the changes which have occurred in each ISS program over the years was that other school systems might note the reasons for revisions and possibly avoid similar obstacles to the achievement of objectives. The examination of program changes should also provide a basis for comparison between original and evolved philosophies and goals to determine their degree of modification. Still other school divisions might find these observations helpful in developing realistic, practical
goals and statements of philosophy that have already proven they can withstand the test of time.

Reviewing the effects of the in-school suspension program, the third objective of this study, should identify implications for future action and direction. Specific areas targeted for review included total disciplinary infractions as well as the rate of repeat offenders both before and since the in-school suspension program's implementation. Accomplishments as well as limitations were described.

A review of the literature on in-school suspension supported the need for such research. Although many studies have been conducted comparing in-school and out-of-school suspension, Williams (1978) reported a lack of readily available information on how in-school suspension programs across the country evolved, and which programs have proven successful. Short (1984) concluded that the high use of ISS demanded a review of the types of programs that were being implemented.

Many researchers who have completed studies of in-school suspension have recommended that in-depth inquiry be undertaken to provide a qualitative analysis of the program, specifically through case study methods that involve interviews and a thorough review of records (McMurren, 1980; Sampson, 1986; Short & Noblit, 1985). This research approach is suggested as a needed extension to the survey method because the extensive differences in ISS programs and the paucity of reliable and valid discipline records make survey data incomplete and superficial.
McMurren (1980) suggested that the findings of any study on suspension would be most helpful to school administrators, school boards, and organizations concerned with effective alternatives to reducing student misbehavior and evaluating their districts' response to discipline problems.

Specifically, the information gathered by this case study method of research can aid school systems by (a) providing updated perspectives on ISS and its successes and failures, (b) helping to organize new in-school suspension programs or altering programs already in operation, (c) uncovering needs for educational reform, and (d) predicting future trends.

**Background**

In-school suspension has quickly become a common method of discipline in public schools across the United States. Apparently, it is more than just a passing trend in techniques of administration. In slightly more than a decade, ISS has gained widespread acceptance and has undergone rapid expansion.

To explore this innovation called in-school suspension, the following sections are included in the background information:

(a) Legal ramifications in the 1970's, (b) In-school versus out-of-school suspension, (c) Philosophical orientations: stated versus actual, (d) Theories in support of in-school suspension, and (e) Perspectives on disciplinary strategies in the 1980's.

**Legal Ramifications in the 1970's**

One factor which is often credited with precipitating the introduction of the in-school suspension program is the increased
civil rights liability faced by public school board members and administrators during the period 1970-80 (Goldman, 1983; Harris et al., 1983; Hazard, 1975; Implications, 1975; Ingram, 1986; Lufler, 1983; Mass, 1980; Tinney, 1978; Washburn, 1972). School officials who once believed themselves protected by claims of immunity and the defense of good faith, found themselves spending more time and money to defend their positions on disciplinary matters and other students' rights controversies (Vacca & Hudgins, 1982).

This trend of student plaintiffs successfully seeking judicial remedy for invasions of their constitutional rights is substantiated by a 1979 Yearbook of School Law report of a 1000% increase during the prior half-decade in court decisions based on the 1871 Civil Rights Act.

According to Washburn (1972), the significant increase of federal court involvement in public schools challenged the authority of school officials. Disciplinary decisions once made at the discretion of the administrator were now being replaced by explicit rules and regulations handed down by the courts.

The editors of Education U.S.A. (1971) defined three new principles which emerged during this era of legal activism: (a) Schools were no longer sacred cows as accountability filtered down to all school personnel; (b) the Bill of Rights and the 14th Amendment applied to juveniles as well as to adults; and (c) because education was a guaranteed right, and not just a privilege, a test of due process would have to be met before the right could be suspended.
The 1975 case *Goss v. Lopez* dates back to 1971 when, during Black History Week, some 75 Columbus, Ohio students were suspended following disturbances during speeches at a school assembly. None of the students was given a hearing, and many were never made aware of the reason why they were suspended. Dwight Lopez and eight other suspended students filed a class action suit in federal court against the Ohio statute allowing suspension of students for up to 10 days without either prior notice or a hearing.

The lower court held that the students had been denied the property right of an education without benefit of the minimal procedures required by the Due Process Clause of the 14th Amendment. The United States Supreme Court, in upholding the lower court's ruling, decreed that the following rules would be in effect for short-term suspensions of less than 10 days: (a) The student was to be informed of the charges; (b) the student was to be afforded an opportunity to tell his/her side of the story; and (c) the hearing was to precede the student's removal from school unless his/her continued presence constituted an immediate danger to persons or property, or a disruption to the educational process (Harris et al., 1983).

According to Meares and Kittle (1976), the case *Goss v. Lopez* left three alternatives to administrators: (a) Allow the disruptive student to remain in the classroom and impair the rights of other students to an education; (b) arrange a formal hearing,
until which time the disruptive student remained in class; or (c) utilize a form of in-school suspension which required no hearing. For a number of principals, ISS was the more convenient, less risky option chosen to replace out-of-school suspension as a common disciplinary tool (Stallworth, 1978).

Although many school administrators still believed out-of-school suspension was necessary to maintain the learning environment, most acknowledged that depriving a student of in-school instruction was a controversial solution which often treated only the symptoms of problems (Hadd, 1981). In-school suspension seemed to offer a solution that would meet the demands of teachers and parents for effective discipline, avoid due process concerns, and provide an opportunity to deal with the core of a student's problem.

In-school Versus Out-of-school Suspension

The concept of in-school suspension has continued to grow in popularity in the eighties. The trend toward a gradual shift from traditional measures of suspension and expulsion to experimentation with alternative programs such as ISS has been stimulated by surveys which repeatedly rank discipline as the number one problem in public schools. Congressional committee hearings, federally mandated research, and judicial decisions all have focused on student rights violations (Cooney, Adkinson, Wager, Chobot, & Ocel, 1981).

In a critical review of the research in educational equity cases, Rossell (1980) questioned the logic behind the suspension of over two million students each year. He cited a study by the
Project for Fair Administration of School Discipline at the University of Michigan School of Education (1975) which revealed that 75% of all students excluded from school were suspended for a violation of school rules, not dangerous or violent acts, and that only 3% posed a serious threat to either property or individuals. The greatest reason for suspension was a combination of truancy and tardiness, which made the punishment for missing school more missed school, and only served to compound the problem.

Many studies (Baskerville, 1983; Bogert, 1967; Children's Defense Fund, 1975; Harris et al., 1983; Johnson, 1983; McMurren, 1980; Meares & Kittle, 1976; Rossel, 1980; Wu, Pink, Crain, & Moles, 1980) pointed to exclusion from school (either external suspension or expulsion) as a failure of the school and not the students. In interviews conducted by members of the Children's Defense Fund of the Washington Research Project, Inc. (1975), no school officials indicated that they believed suspension actually helped children. Moseley (1977) criticized out-of-school suspension because no effort is made to help the students help themselves. To return, all the student has to do is just stay away awhile.

Cottle (1976) further observed that throughout the country, "millions of children suspended usually end up in situations far more serious than if they had been allowed to remain in school and work out their problems" (p. 4). For this reason, parents and community groups criticize school officials for abdicating their responsibilities to students when they remove students from school
without first using a range of techniques and services to identify and remedy the problems (Short, 1984).

In a comparative study of in-school and out-of-school suspension by Meares and Kittle (1976), the authors note that students in ISS are able to keep up with their assignments and receive supportive services. They do not roam the community, enjoy the reward of freedom, or become involved in delinquent acts. Nor do ISS students need their parents for classroom reinstatement, have formal documentation of exclusion on their records, or have feelings of alienation perpetuated. Finally, in-school suspension students do not lessen state aid money schools receive based on average daily attendance as their excluded counterparts do. Based on these contrasts, the researchers deem ISS both a legally and educationally sound alternative.

The effects of different methods of suspension were evaluated by Lynch (1984) in a comparative study of three groups of junior high school students in the Oak Grove School District of San Jose, California. The "Quality of School Life Scale" (Epstein, 1981; Epstein & McPartland, 1976; Mitchell, 1983) was administered to 30 students who had been placed in in-school suspension without schoolwork, and to 30 students who had been placed in in-school suspension with assigned schoolwork. The scale, designed by Epstein and McPartland of Johns Hopkins University, is a survey of students' satisfaction with school in general, their commitment to schoolwork, and their attitude toward teachers.
In addition to administering the "Quality of School Life Scale" to the students in the three groups, Lynch (1984) reviewed their school records to obtain the following information: grade level, gender, race, family configuration, absenteeism, grade point average, reading and math ability test scores, and recidivism rates. Lynch found that while there were no significant differences between the two in-school suspension groups on the factors compared, the externally suspended students had significantly higher absenteeism and recidivism rates, lower test scores, and more negative attitudes toward school in general than did the ISS students.

Lynch (1984) also surveyed the parents of the internally and externally suspended students to assess their attitudes toward the various suspension programs. The parents who responded to the study preferred in-school to out-of-school suspension. Though she cautioned that her findings were based on a small group of junior high subjects, Lynch concluded that in-school suspension produces more positive, effective results than out-of-school suspension.

Additional studies comparing in-school and out-of-school suspension have produced similar results. McMurren (1980), for example, reviewed the school records of 290 seventh and eighth grade students representing the total population of externally and internally suspended students from three public school systems in New York and New Jersey. The data collected from suspension tallies, attendance records, and report cards indicated that students suspended in-school would more likely improve in personal adjustment (based on their conduct grades) and be less likely to receive subsequent
suspensions than would students suspended out-of-school. In the areas of attendance and academic ratings, however, McMurren found no conclusive evidence that the internally suspended students showed more improvement than the externally suspended students.

Through the use of a case study format, Sampson (1986) reached conclusions similar to Lynch (1984) and McMurren (1980). Interviews, observations, and student records were analyzed to determine the effectiveness of an in-school suspension program over a three-year time span. Sampson found that although attendance did not improve, recidivism was significantly reduced, and the suspended students had increased chances of graduating.

Crews (1985) also supported the argument for in-school suspension as a more effective deterrent to school disciplinary problems than external suspension. After surveying all secondary school administrators in New Jersey for a description of their ISS programs and their perceptions of the programs' effectiveness, Crews selected several model programs for in-depth study. By analyzing records of referrals and suspensions as well as information gathered in student interviews, Crews determined that, at least in these exemplary programs, in-school suspension succeeded in protecting students' rights, increasing their feelings of self-worth, and decreasing referrals for pupil misbehavior.

Two additional studies, both conducted in Pennsylvania secondary schools, also reflected the widespread use of ISS as a viable disciplinary alternative to out-of-school suspension. While Angiolillo (1987) conducted surveys in a random stratified sample
of sixty-five public school districts, Haupt (1987) examined the perceptions of 345 secondary school principals. The results of both questionnaires suggested administrative satisfaction with the reductions made in external suspensions because of ISS, and with the potential of in-school suspension to meet the individual needs of disruptive students and reduce discipline problems.

In-school suspension is presented in the literature not only as a positive solution for managing disruptive students but also as a benefit to society. In a conference report on alternatives to out-of-school suspension, Williams noted that society loses when externally suspended students drop out of school, get involved in juvenile delinquency, or go on the unemployment rolls. Studies conducted by both Sampson (1986) and Thweatt (1981) supported the claim that ISS programs significantly lower the dropout and failure rate when implemented in schools previously using out-of-school suspension.

While there is seldom argument in the literature that in-school suspension is a preferable disciplinary option to out-of-school suspension, Anding (1985) found ISS merely delayed external suspension for problem students. Sampson (1986) also concluded that, though ISS had a significant impact on improving the behavior of the average student, the program had little impact on the chronically disruptive student. Overall, however, the research deems in-school suspension a moderate measure that is fair, rehabilitative, and logical (Martin, 1980).
Philosophical Orientations: Stated Versus Actual

In an American Association of School Administrators critical issues report on solutions to student discipline problems, Brodinsky (1980) questioned whether most ISS programs are rehabilitative in actual practice. Brodinsky divided all disciplinary measures into three categories: punitive, controlling, and developmental. Punitive measures such as corporal punishment, out-of-school suspension, and expulsion inflict a severe penalty in the hopes of deterring further misbehavior. Controlling measures resolve an immediate problem by removing the student from a negative situation until other steps can be taken. Developmental measures, also called educative, rehabilitative, or redirective, are more preventive in nature as they seek to encourage future self-discipline. According to Brodinsky, in-school suspension can be primarily punitive, controlling, or developmental, or a mix of all three disciplinary measures depending upon how the program is designed and administered in each school setting.

Several researchers (Garibaldi, 1979; Mendez & Sanders, 1981; Pare, 1983) separated developmental in-school suspension programs into two classifications: academic and therapeutic. The programs which have an academic orientation are based on the theory that discipline problems evolve from learning difficulties and the ensuing frustration the student feels. Emphasis in academic programs is placed on basic skills in reading and writing and study habits.

Therapeutic developmental strategies, on the other hand, are those which help a student to (a) enhance self-image, (b) improve
communication skills, (c) participate in decision making, (d) complete
classwork with a successful experience, and (e) learn more appropriate
ways of dealing with the school environment (Mendez & Sanders, 1981).
A variety of counseling techniques are used to achieve these results,
including individual, group, and peer counseling, reality therapy,
and referrals to outside agencies. In therapeutic ISS programs,
the rehabilitative process may also encompass parent training and
staff development activities aimed at making positive changes in
the student's environment (Garibaldi, 1979).

In order to determine if rehabilitative disciplinary techniques
were believed to be more effective than punitive, Wollan (1983)
surveyed Los Angeles County middle, intermediate, and junior high
school principals for their perceptions as to which disciplinary
measures had the highest potential for success. After analyzing
his data using percentages, central tendencies, and ANOVA, Wollan
concluded that though these principals continued to utilize both
in-school and out-of-school suspension, they supported rehabilitative
ISS programs as a superior method of discipline to out-of-school
suspension. Their philosophy, according to Wollan's research, was
that the purpose of discipline is to provide remedial treatment
that eventually improves or corrects the misbehavior, and not simply
to inflict a penalty that temporarily extinguishes the undesirable
behavior.

While most in-school suspension programs began with the goal
to turn from historically punitive disciplinary measures to more
developmental alternatives, many of these programs now find a
discrepancy between their original philosophy and current practices. In two investigations of ISS programs, Garrett (1981), Short (1984), and Short and Noblit (1985) found the theoretical orientation in actual operation was more punitive than therapeutic. While Garrett reviewed in-school suspension programs in 32 southern Illinois counties, and Short conducted her research on 10 ISS programs in North Carolina which had been considered by state education officials to be successful, both reached a similar conclusion: In-school suspension programs begun with high expectations for redirecting behavior often evolve into just an additional, more convenient form of punishment.

In Garrett's (1981) research, 46% of the public high school principals surveyed either had no reaction or disagreed that the ISS program had improved student behavior. The majority of the principals agreed, however, that the potential for rehabilitation was present if supportive services such as counseling and academic assistance were made available to suspended students.

A recent study by Hochman (1986) examined the rehabilitative potential of in-school suspension with and without counseling intervention strategies. Hochman used Analysis of Variance and Chi Square to test the experimental/control group design of internally suspended students in an urban high school. Students in ISS who received counseling intervention had: (a) greater reductions in recidivism, (b) more positive changes in grade point averages, (c) significantly higher attendance rates, and (d) significantly lower tardiness rates than did ISS students with no counseling intervention.
Williams (1978) also questioned the effectiveness of ISS when it is used as a consequence for all varieties of offenses. He expressed concern that the programs had become too highly regimented and might cause further alienation. Mizell (1978) agreed that in-school suspension programs where there is no flexibility that allows for meeting individual students' counseling and academic needs are unlikely to help either the student or the school.

In-school suspension, like out-of-school suspension, represents a serious loss of educational opportunities that is detrimental to the student's learning process. To be considered a positive alternative to out-of-school suspension, ISS must compensate for the missed class lectures, discussions, and learning aids by allowing pupils to complete and get credit for assignments, and receive individual assistance from competent, caring teachers and counselors (Seyfarth, 1980).

In an Education U.S.A. Special Report on current needs in school policies and programs, Neill (1976) summarized that to work effectively, a disciplinary program must assume that student misbehavior is a symptom of an underlying problem which must be identified and resolved. Treating misbehavior as the problem will not be productive. Only establishing the cause of the inappropriate responses to school rules will provide a true solution. In-school suspension, wrote Neill, should not be used as just another alternative to external suspension (a punitive measure) or as merely a removal device (a controlling measure), but as a developmental opportunity.
Educational Theories in Support of In-school Suspension

Following is a brief analysis of the most widely accepted theories that support the shift from out-of-school suspension and expulsion to in-school suspension. Included are concepts from the writings of Dewey (1922), Johnson (1961), Glasser (1965, 1969, 1977), Driekurs and Gray (1968), and Sherman (1973).

Dewey's behavioral adjustment approach. One philosopher to suggest a more positive alternative to punishment was John Dewey (1922). Dewey, known for his pragmatic orientation (Hardie, 1966), insisted that the past is beyond control, and that the only possible point of behavioral adjustment is from the present onward. He believed that there would be no reform in conduct until some conscious effort was made to alter the students' interactions with their environment, and to redirect their behavior.

According to Berger (1966), Dewey promoted a system of education that recognized the dignity and worth of all individuals, and that allowed all students to develop to their fullest potential. Berger interpreted Dewey's writing to support the belief that behavior cannot be changed for the better by inflicting on wrongdoers a degree of pain which is supposed to balance the moral ledger as retributivists contend. Neither can it be claimed that a threat of pain sometime in the future will influence present behavior. Dewey therefore concluded that the habit pattern must be altered and an alternative form of behavior be made more appealing for long-term behavioral adjustment. The basic principles of in-school suspend correspond to Dewey's tenets in that both support positive, practical efforts
to place offenders in an environment that treats them with dignity, while guiding them to an alternative form of behavior.

Johnson's problem-solving approach. In 1961, a problem-solving approach to discipline was advanced by psychologist D. M. Johnson. In support of the theory of inclusion versus exclusion, Johnson concluded that a child can discriminate between discipline that punishes a specific act and discipline that rejects him as an individual (i.e. exclusion from school).

Johnson further contended that punishment without any type of treatment, such as out-of-school suspension or expulsion, is usually a poor motivation for reform. The author stated that the punished pupils feel they are the victims of circumstances and develop a grudge against those who punished them. The resentful feeling often leads to further antisocial behavior.

Glasser's reality therapy approach. Glasser's (1965, 1969, 1977) educational philosophy rested on the belief that the most valid and workable suspension policy has to include certain principles: (a) avoiding punishment which removes the responsibility from the student for his actions, (b) utilizing counseling and behavioral restructuring or relearning techniques, (c) involving students in program planning, (d) referring only to present and future behavior, not past actions, (e) giving students alternatives and choices, (f) showing personal caring, and (g) reinforcing acceptable behavior.

In-school suspension correlates with Glasser's approach in that it places the responsibility for immediate acceptable behavior
on the student rather than expelling the student into an unsupervised setting. ISS also involves attempts to redirect the student's future behavior by providing individual attention, assistance, and reinforcement.

Driekurs' and Gray's logical consequences approach. Driekurs and Gray (1968), two educational theorists and psychologists, proposed a model in which discipline is a natural outcome of the child's behavior. It was their belief that discipline which makes sense to the recipient will have a constructive outcome.

According to the two theorists, traditional "primitive" disciplinary approaches (i.e. corporal punishment and external suspension) evoke defiance and destructiveness, are concerned with past problems which cannot be changed or nullified rather than present solutions, involve moral judgement, and emphasize the power of the administrator's personal authority.

Logical consequences, such as in-school suspension, on the other hand, avoid the power struggle, deal with immediate help for academic and behavioral problems, offer no moral judgement (the student is not labeled "bad" and rejected, but the ability to change is emphasized), and stress social order authority (explaining that all are bound equally by the rules of society and the inevitable consequences of destructive or injurious behavior). ISS is logical because it is theoretically structured to assist the student on an individual basis with whatever needs he has at the moment, whether they be for counseling, tutoring, or merely a cooling down period.
Sherman's behavior modification approach. Another psychological model that provides a basis for this study was developed by Sherman (1973), a behavior modification advocate. Sherman's model reflected the view that "the desirability of particular behaviors was more an attribute to the environment and the consequence of the behaviors than an attribute of the behaviors themselves" (p. 16). One implication is that educators should attempt to identify the factors responsible for maintaining the maladaptive behavior. Sherman's theoretical base for predicting the success of alternative suspension approaches follows:

Supportive counseling is provided with the object of such treatment being to attempt to retrain the student so that the problem situations no longer evoke the maladaptive response in him, but instead evoke more appropriate and effective behavior (p. 18).

In summary, the psychological and behavioral theories in recent educational literature point to the belief that separating problem students from the persons who can assist them in resolving their behavior problems is likely to increase rather than decrease the possibility of similar behavior in the future. They, therefore, support the need for an alternative to out-of-school suspension.

Perspectives on Disciplinary Strategies in the 1980's

While many educators, researchers, and theorists advocate the in-school suspension program as an alternative to out-of-school suspension, they also realize it is not the ultimate disciplinary
answer. They are still searching for ways to improve the structure and unify the concept, making ISS a more preventive and positive disciplinary technique (McNamara, 1986).

To meet educators' needs for information on in-school alternatives to suspension, the National Institute of Education contracted with a team of researchers who visited 22 school sites for observations and interviews, conducted telephone interviews with program directors and staff of more than 70 in-school suspension programs around the country, and analyzed completed questionnaires returned from an additional 128 schools. According to the published results of the study (Cooney et al., 1981), the basic problems confronted when implementing in-school suspension programs which need to be worked out in the eighties include: (a) recruiting and retaining effective program staff, (b) maintaining financial support, and (c) reducing inconsistencies in operation from district to district and even from school to school.

Mizell (1979), while agreeing there is no perfect in-school suspension program, noted that exemplary programs do have common factors which include: (a) principals totally committed to the idea of helping students and not just maintaining discipline; (b) a faculty which supports and believes in the program; (c) qualified personnel staffing the program, and (d) ISS as a part of an overall discipline plan to help the student develop self-discipline and identify and remedy the root problem, but not as the only technique utilized.

Similarly, when asked to evaluate the relative importance of various aspects of in-school suspension, ISS directors from seven
states rated adequate funding, strong administrative support, and caring, capable supervisors as critical to the success of any program. The majority of the suspension room coordinators surveyed also believed ISS programs should involve comprehensive counseling, opportunity to complete academic work without penalty, and regular program monitoring and evaluation (Bone, 1982).

At a National Institute of Education conference held in Washington, D.C. in 1975, spokespersons representing boards of education, superintendents, principals, teachers, parents, and students were asked to comment on the implications of in-school suspension for school practitioners in the eighties. The major focus outlined by the speakers for boards of education was a need for clarification of statutory responsibility and of rules for liability insurance at state and local levels. They also expressed the need for an update on board policies delineating student rights in light of Goss v. Lopez (1975).

The superintendents' representatives identified the need to review procedures for in-house suspension, to define what is a suspendable action, and to train administrators to understand their roles and responsibilities for administering this disciplinary technique. They also called for in-service for both principals and teachers on legal responsibility as well as required undergraduate courses on liability. Spokespersons for parents and students recommended that democratic values, due process, and the Constitution's legal framework be taught to students long before the twelfth grade government class.
Following an analysis of 54 federal court cases concerning suspension or expulsion of public school students and the historical evolution of the federal court's view of student rights, Tinney (1978) gave the following similar recommendations to school officials: (a) formulate comprehensive, clear, defensible regulations pertaining to student behavior; (b) communicate these policies thoroughly to staff, students, parents, and the community; (c) enforce the policies and regulations consistently and fairly; (d) maintain accurate and complete records of disciplinary infractions; (e) involve parents or guardians at an early stage of student disciplinary action; (f) avoid using suspension or expulsion as a first disciplinary action; (g) balance the severity of the infraction and the severity of the punishment; and (h) formulate procedures that guarantee the accused student fair notice and a hearing.

Williams (1979) further suggested that teachers be taught skills in management and designing discipline systems. Also, according to Williams, student conduct should be taught in schools like any other subject matter with instructional materials, objectives, lesson plans, and methods of evaluation.

At the conclusion of a conference on in-school alternatives to suspension, Garibaldi (1979) summarized the eighties' perspective by warning that, regardless of admirable intent, ISS programs must still be viewed with caution until it can be determined if they effectively address the underlying problems of the student, and have not strayed from their original rehabilitative goals. The
ultimate solution, according to Garibaldi, is neither convenient nor simplistic, but involves a complete restructuring of the current philosophy of discipline.

Definition of Terms

For purposes of the present study, the following definitions apply:

In-school Suspension

In-school suspension is defined as any school sponsored program in which the suspended student is excluded from classes and related activities, but remains in the school environment and under the supervision of school personnel (Garrett, 1981). The ISS program must occur during the regular school day, on the school grounds, with a minimum assignment of one full day, and as a result of the violation of a school infraction.

Out-of-school Suspension

Out-of-school suspension is the temporary denial of a student's attendance and/or participation in school for a prescribed period of time (Lynch, 1984).

Expulsion

Expulsion is the denial of a student's attendance and/or participation in school for a prescribed period of time. Expulsion generally involves long-term loss of school membership decreed by the school board for either the remainder of a semester, a school year, or, in some cases, permanently.
Scope and Limitations

This study focuses primarily on one aspect of the evolution of discipline in the United States—the in-school suspension program. The case studies have been restricted to three carefully selected school systems in Virginia.

Care should be exercised in extrapolating the conclusions of this study to other school districts that vary demographically, philosophically, or in other ways. Readers should be aware that the programs examined are not totally representative of the wide range of existing in-school suspension programs.

Finally, this study is descriptive and is not meant to be evaluative. Any attempt to analyze successes or failures of the various ISS programs is strictly for the purpose of explaining changes or defining future implications.

Methodology and Data Sources

This section outlines the methodology used in selecting the three in-school suspension programs and describes the procedures followed to conduct interviews for surveys, and document examination for data-gathering purposes.

Program Selection

The three in-school suspension programs selected for this investigation met the following standards: (a) The program was among the earliest to be established in the area so that the process of change could be observed over at least a five- to ten-year time span, (b) the school division kept reasonably accurate records so
the evolution of the ISS program from implementation to the present could be studied in detail; and (c) the in-school suspension program met certain criteria to qualify under the definition outlined in this study. It could not be a separate alternative school, a temporary time-out room, or a Saturday, after school, evening school, or part-time counseling or academic assistance program that fell under the general category of in-school alternatives to suspension.

While conducting a thorough review of literature on in-school suspension, three programs appeared in the research as early models in the state of Virginia (Beamam, 1979; Cooney et al., 1981; Harvey & Moosha, 1977; J. W. K. International Corporation, 1980b; Meekins, 1977; Winborne, 1980). A telephone survey of pupil personnel directors in Virginia public school systems (or the superintendents in smaller districts) confirmed that these programs were among the earliest to qualify under the definition of in-school suspension as presented in this study. Interviews with the Director of Pupil Personnel Services in two school divisions, and the Superintendent of the third district provided further background on the programs' origins and evolution, and the availability of primary sources for review.

The three school divisions selected for study varied widely in regard to certain demographic factors. While School Division A served a large, suburban area of upper to middle class families, School Division B served a large, urban area of upper to lower class families. School Division C served a much smaller rural area of middle to lower class families.
Data Collection

A case study method was used to analyze the development of in-school suspension in the three selected Virginia school districts. The research included three methods of data collection: (a) interviews with personal sources, (b) district-wide informational surveys, and (c) the systematic search for documents to undergo content analysis.

To get multiple perspectives on the origin, evolution, and effectiveness of the in-school suspension program, persons interviewed included program designers and implementors, superintendents, pupil personnel directors and others at the central office level, as well as principals, assistant principals, and in-school suspension teachers. Because the operational practices of the ISS programs varied widely from school to school, data reflecting the current status of the program within each district were gathered through the use of a survey instrument (Appendix A).

To support the interview and survey findings, documents examined included program proposals, relevant correspondence, requests to funding sources, evaluative reports, newspaper articles, student handbooks, work assignments for students, entrance/exit forms, and any additional materials on program rules or operations. The resulting data, after being subjected to external and internal criticism, were presented in a detailed narrative format comparing past and present practices of the three selected in-school suspension programs.

The selection of the interview format for primary data gathering was based on several factors: (a) the relatively small number of primary personal sources directly involved in the development and
Implementation of ISS (i.e. members of the planning committees, pilot project coordinators, school administrators, and in-school suspension teachers from the pilot schools) enabled the researcher to talk with each individually; (b) there was a need for in-depth discussions and open-ended questions which went beyond the gathering of clear factual information easily generalized into written choices to the probing of issues, attitudes, and conflicting viewpoints (Nachmias, 1979; Sampson, 1986); (c) the historical nature of the study necessitated a probing from source to source in order to locate those persons and documents which could provide first-hand information on the beginning and evolutionary stages of the ISS program; and (d) the interview was likely to yield more complete information when open-ended questions pertaining to negative aspects of the program needed to be asked (Jackson & Rothney, 1961).

A semi-structured interview format (Borg & Gall, 1979, pp. 312-13) was used to facilitate a comprehensive address and follow-up of the issues under investigation. Specifically, both structured and open-ended questions were asked to provide a desirable combination of objectivity and depth (Appendix B). Wording and sequencing of questions were determined in advance. This reduced interviewer bias and facilitated review of instrumentation, comparison of responses, and analysis of data. While providing consistency in each interview, the semi-structured format allowed freedom to probe for more complete data and clarification of initial responses (Patton, 1980).

The interview format was tested within a school system which met all criteria for the sample population except it could not claim to be one of the earliest programs. The pilot county's program
did qualify under the definition of in-school suspension outlined in this study and had kept sufficient records to be analyzed in detail.

The pilot interviews, which were taped, did indicate to the researcher needed revisions of interviewing techniques, as well as the phrasing and sequencing of questions for maximum clarity. Suggestions by those interviewed were taken into account in drafting the final interview form. The ability of the researcher to record data in writing during the pilot interviews went smoothly and was not noticeably distracting to the subjects; therefore, the decision not to tape future interviews was made. The initial pilot experiences predicted that a typical interview would last approximately one hour, which proved helpful in future scheduling.

During the pilot study, cross check items on the questionnaire were tested to determine if they successfully established the reliability of the data provided by the interviewees. Validity was successfully controlled for during the pilot study by comparing answers given by the interviewees with information obtained from other interviews as well as data extracted from the surveys and other written sources (Borg & Gall, 1979; Patton, 1980).

The second method of data collection, the informational survey, was similarly tested for validity during the pilot study. The information obtained from the individuals in the test group was verified against the interview data, the examination of written documents, and the responses given by others surveyed. Just as with the interview
questionnaire, revisions were made based on suggestions of the pilot study test group.

There were, however, two major differences in the function of the interview and survey instruments. The interview questionnaire was designed to supply a comprehensive historical review of the origin, development, evolution, change factors, and effectiveness of each in-school suspension program. It was a semi-structured instrument which allowed for follow-up questions to probe for details and clarifications. The purpose of the informational survey, conversely was to gather data only on the current status of the ISS program in each individual school. The written format of the survey also did not allow for immediate follow-up questions to clarify written responses. This was not considered necessary because of the objective nature of the questions.

After revising and retesting the questionnaire and survey instruments during the pilot study, interviews were scheduled and conducted with primary personal sources, surveys were distributed and collected, and documents were examined. All data gathered were critiqued for external and internal validity before being organized for presentation in the following chapters.

Organization of the Remainder of the Study

Because of the detailed nature of the case studies, a separate chapter will be devoted to the discussion of each of the three in-school suspension programs. Chapters 2, 3, and 4 will have three common divisions: (a) Origin and development, (b) original and
current design, and (c) effectiveness. In Chapter 5, the findings of this investigation are discussed and conclusions are drawn concerning these findings. Based on a summary and analysis of the findings, recommendations are offered both for administrative practice and for further research.
Chapter 2
Case Study Number One

School Division A serves a suburban area of upper to middle class families in southeastern Virginia. Between the years 1975 (the implementation date of in-school suspension) and 1987, the student population grew from approximately 55,000 to 60,000. In the same time span, the minority percentage rose from approximately 10% to 15%.

The following chapter focuses on three aspects of the in-school suspension program in School Division A. First, the origin and development of the program will be reviewed. The second section of the chapter will include a discussion of both the original and current design of the ISS plan. An analysis of the program's effectiveness will be presented in the third part of the case study.

Origin and Development of In-School Suspension Program

The concept of in-school suspension was introduced in School Division A by two of the system's assistant principals. These administrators, one at a senior high, and one at a nearby junior high, observed a marked increase in the number of referrals for truancy and class cutting. They also noted that the traditional administrative responses of out-of-school suspension, corporal punishment, and detention were failing to alleviate the problem.

Frustrated at repeatedly checking the same students out of school and back into school with problems unresolved, the assistant principals began searching for a solution that would avoid "legalized truancy," or out-of-school suspension. Their research into alternative
disciplinary measures uncovered an option called in-school suspension. Though still in the trial stages in a limited number of school divisions across the country, the program promised an effective disciplinary technique with rehabilitative potential.

Proposal for Pilot Program

The two administrators combined ideas they had gleaned from their research on in-school suspension programs in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Texas before talking with the Director of Program Development and Evaluation in School Division A about a pilot program. After receiving the support of both the program director and the assistant superintendent for a pilot program, the assistant principals spent six months formulating an in-school suspension proposal that featured counseling, student contracts, and values clarification exercises.

Permission was obtained from the superintendent of school and the school board to seek funding from the Division of Educational Research and Statistics at the State Department of Education to support the pilot in-school suspension program. This effort was coordinated by the local Director of Program Development. With partial funding ($8,000) granted by the state, and the remainder of the money promised locally, the selection of on-site locations was the next step in the implementation plan.

Site Selection

In the 1975-76 school year, the in-school suspension program was implemented at the work sites of the two assistant principals who had proposed the original ISS plan. These schools were selected
mainly for their convenience to the implementors. The junior and senior high schools were less than a mile apart and served students from the same neighborhoods.

At the time of the pilot program, the two secondary schools were representative of the school system in size, but were somewhat atypical in socio-economic status, racial balance, and average suspension rate. The areas served by the pilot schools were characterized by the assistant principals as being a cross section of lower to upper middle class families. While the total school division was approximately 10% minority, the pilot junior and senior highs reported 16% and 15% minority enrollment, respectively. The year before the in-school suspension program was implemented, the 2,000-student high school had a 12% higher suspension rate than the average of the other high schools. The 1,700-student junior high school had a 4.5% lower suspension rate in the pre-pilot year 1974-75 than did the other junior high schools. Those persons on the planning committee did believe, however, that the two pilot schools were sufficiently representative of the school division to serve as the selected sites for the implementation of the in-school suspension program. It became necessary, then, to develop cost estimates for the funding of the new program.

Estimated Expenditures and Funding

The cost of ISS equipment and materials during the 1975-76 school year was estimated at $500 per school. The major expense was the cost of additional personnel at $12,000 per year per school for a total cost of $25,000 for the pilot program's first year.
These expenses were partially funded by the State Department of Education during the two years of the pilot study.

Since its third year of operation, the in-school suspension program has been locally funded. The cost of the current in-school suspension program is dependent on the suspension room coordinator's salary at each school, the average now being $25,000, and the cost of instructional materials, ranging from an estimated $200 to $450.

Original and Current Design

During the interview, survey, and document analysis processes, an effort was made to describe the in-school suspension program in School Division A as it was initially as well as its current status. Following is a discussion of these program elements and revisions.

Philosophy and Goals

According to the two assistant principals who wrote the proposal, the main stimulus for designing the in-school suspension program was the need for an alternative to using out-of-school suspension as an initial or even sole punishment for misbehavior. They noted that many administrators were uncomfortable with the idea of defending a student's external suspension for a relatively minor rule violation if their decision were challenged in court. They believed that ISS provided an additional disciplinary option which did not jeopardize a student's right to an education.

Though the original pilot plan included efforts at behavior modification through counseling and values clarification exercises,
the basic philosophical orientation was punitive. For example, students were not allowed to talk while in ISS, socialize at lunch, or participate in extracurricular activities. They were required to work in specially prepared folders because it was not considered a rigorous enough punishment if students were allowed to do classwork. According to the two administrators who designed the program, in-school suspension had to be negative and strongly disliked by the students in order to work.

Although the in-school suspension program in School Division A is still largely punitive, the trend toward ISS as a controlling or temporary measure is emerging. While referrals were originally for a minimum of one day, students in some schools are now sent to ISS for as short a time as one period per day. The Director of Pupil Personnel Services explained, "In-school suspension is more short-term now than in the beginning. In some instances, it has deteriorated to a holding station."

This negative opinion was shared by one of the designers of the in-school suspension program who suggested that a student's stay in ISS must be planned in advance to be beneficial. He proposed that using in-school suspension as a temporary controlling measure (for periods of less than one full school day), addressed the immediate manifestation of the problem, but rarely addressed the cause. In schools where ISS is utilized as a type of detention center, coordinators have found that there is not enough time available
to plan individualized counseling, values clarification, or behavior modification techniques, all fundamental components of the initial in-school suspension program in School Division A.

Another fundamental component of School Division A's pilot in-school suspension program was the belief that work assignments made while in ISS should come only from prepared folders in order to make the program more undesirable for offenders. Conversely, one of the goals of the current program is to provide an opportunity for students to keep up with their classwork and homework assignments while in the supervised in-school suspension environment. Rather than preventing students from completing regular class assignments while in ISS, the revised philosophy is to require constant work on those assignments and others in such a restrictive environment that the students will not want to return.

In keeping with the punitive intent of the in-school program, many administrators and coordinators do not believe students should receive tutoring or help with study skills while in ISS. They feel it might cause students to misbehave with the sole intent of being placed in ISS. Some coordinators say they do not instruct or counsel the students simply because there are too many suspendees in the room to make it feasible.

The current in-school suspension program appears to have reached a compromise in its philosophy and goals. While not being totally punitive in nature, neither is its primary effort directed toward
the rehabilitation of students. The program has evolved into more of a controlling disciplinary technique, a means of removing problem students from the classroom while enabling them to continue with their classwork.

Objectives

There were seven objectives formulated in the initial proposal:

1. To reduce the number of suspensions per year.
2. To reduce the number of referrals to the Assistant Principal for Administration.
3. To determine what behaviors most generally lead to a student's being suspended.
4. To develop a demographic-psychological profile of the student who becomes suspended.
5. To determine the causes of student misbehavior.
6. To influence in-school programs with the information compiled from objectives 3-5, thus helping misbehaving students develop a more positive attitude toward themselves, toward attending classes, and toward learning.
7. To test the efficacy of in-school suspension as a replacement for traditional suspension as a positive disciplinary measure.

A new set of objectives was formulated for the in-school suspension program in School Division A after the program's twelfth year of operation. A committee composed of four central office staff members, four building administrators, and two ISS coordinators developed the new objectives as part of a recommended in-school
suspension plan distributed to all secondary schools.

Because the objectives in the 1975 proposal were written as part of a funding request from the Division of Educational Research and Statistics at the State Department of Education, emphasis was placed on quantitative goals such as reducing the number of suspensions and referrals. The revised objectives listed below focus on a qualitative change in student behavior:

1. To provide a disciplinary alternative for students with behavior problems.
2. To allow students to continue work on their regular class assignments while in a supervised environment.
3. To promote a thorough understanding of school rules and to assist students in examining the cause of their suspension.
4. To effect behavioral changes through increased counseling with students in the areas of their identified social, emotional, or environmental needs.
5. To enable the students to develop more positive attitudes toward themselves and learning in general.

All secondary principals and ISS coordinators as well as selected assistant principals were asked in interviews to state the objectives of the in-school suspension program at their individual schools. In general, the objectives mentioned by the administrators and coordinators were similar to those recommended by the committee. The major difference, however, was that the programs tended
to be punitive as well as educational in actual operation. For example, one desired result of ISS expressed by on-site administrators was to assist teachers in maintaining classroom discipline by isolating the disruptive students. Another objective mentioned was to deter student misconduct by placing the offenders in a hard work, no nonsense environment as punishment for their misbehavior.

If the objectives recommended by the in-school suspension committee are consistently incorporated into the individual school programs it will require a shift from a somewhat punitive program intent to a more rehabilitative effort. The use of ISS as a negative consequence for misbehavior will be secondary to the use of ISS as a problem-solving tool, emphasizing behavioral counseling and academic assistance.

Other Disciplinary Options

Originally, the in-school suspension program in School Division A was designed to replace completely out-of-school suspension. Other disciplinary options used by the district at that time included after-school detention, parent conferences, and referrals to outside agencies such as drug counselors. As a last resort, students were recommended to pupil personnel for a family counseling session and probation.

Gradually, however, out-of-school suspension and expulsion have been reinstated for major disciplinary problems deemed too extreme for in-school suspension. For example, a mandatory drug policy was added to the student disciplinary code in 1984. This
mandate required a five-day out-of-school suspension for possession of drugs, and expulsion for sale or distribution of drugs.

Even though out-of-school suspension and expulsion are disciplinary options in School Division A now, records show the total number of in-school suspensions has continued to increase over the years. School officials attribute this to the more positive, less legally risky nature of in-school suspension, and to the convenience with which they can refer students for minor disciplinary infractions.

Expansion

In the pilot year (1975-76) of the in-school suspension program in School Division A, one junior and one senior high were involved. With an extension of the pilot study granted by the State Department of Education, the program expanded to five schools the second year, adding one senior and two junior high schools. By the third year (1977-78), all fifteen schools grades seven through twelve had incorporated the ISS program. Each of the schools has continued to utilize the ISS concept over the past ten years.

The expansion of School Division A's program reached beyond the district's boundaries. Adaptations of the pilot in-school suspension program were instituted by other Virginia school systems. After the idea was presented at a North Carolina Principals' Conference and to a gathering of Virginia educators, over one hundred school systems across the country expressed an interest in the ISS program by requesting a copy of the format. A local delegate even urged the Virginia General Assembly to consider implementing the program statewide, but no action was taken.
Though the in-school suspension concept has been introduced in all School Division A junior and senior high schools, the specific format as outlined in the original proposal is no longer followed. Significant changes have been made due primarily to the freedom given administrators to adjust the program to fit their needs, facilities, and individual disciplinary considerations. While basic guidelines for the in-school suspension program come from the central office, most operational decisions are made at the school level.

**Staffing**

**Qualifications.** Both program originators agreed that the selection of qualified coordinators (title given suspension room teachers) was critical to the success of the new in-school suspension program. Accordingly, they chose two coordinators who were both experienced teachers with the desire and ability to work with academically and behaviorally troubled pupils, as well as strong disciplinarians able to command respect, with aggressive yet caring personalities. Two other characteristics believed essential to the successful candidates' profiles were: the ability to prepare individualized programs based on the students' strengths, weaknesses, and interests; and the ability to communicate findings to parents, teachers, and counselors.

**Selection.** One concern that was echoed in several interviews was the gradual lessening in subsequent years of emphasis on getting the "right person for the coordinator's position. Coordinators are now selected in the same manner as other resource teachers. They are screened by interviews in the Office of Personnel first,
with the principal making the final selection. In cases where the
position is filled with a teacher already at the school, the coordinator's
selection may be based on factors other than ability to command
respect and a strong desire to help students. Such factors might
include a request from a classroom teacher who desires a break from
regular instructional duties, a need to remove a low-skilled teacher
from the regular classroom, or a plan to lighten a teacher's academic
load because of other school responsibilities, such as coaching.

**Teacher rotation.** Another staffing concern identified during
the interviews was the use of regular classroom teachers to monitor
the suspension room. While most schools still employ one full-time
coordinator, some schools now opt for a combination of two or more
teachers to staff the in-school suspension room. In these programs,
there is generally less disciplinary continuity, little individual
assistance, and reduced coordinator insight into students' behavioral
problems.

**Training.** The first two ISS coordinators were briefed on the
objectives and guidelines of the program, but received no formal
training. The most extensive training session for ISS coordinators
over the years was conducted at the beginning of the second year
of the pilot study. For two weeks during the summer of 1976, the
two assistant principals who designed the program, as well as the
two original coordinators, conducted a two-week workshop. Their
primary goal was to share experiences and strategies from the first
year of ISS implementation with the suspension room coordinators and assistant principals from the three schools which were adding the in-school suspension program in the fall of 1976. The purpose of the workshop was twofold: to familiarize the coordinators and principals with ISS, and to ensure uniform operating and data collecting procedures for evaluation purposes.

Since 1976, all coordinators have attended an in-service workshop at the beginning of the school year to share suggestions and discuss new ideas for managing problem situations. As in the original ISS plan, the principals brief the new coordinators on the specifics of the program at their individual schools.

Record Keeping

Content. During the two pilot study years, a record keeping system was established in each school to record the number of referrals and suspensions, the inappropriate behavior, the established cause of the misbehavior, and a demographic-psychological profile of the child. The demographic-psychological data on the suspended student included: psychological tests, school achievement and IQ tests, teacher surveys, visiting teacher reports, and conferences with the students and their parents.

Currently, each school reports monthly to the central office the number of referrals and suspensions as well as a breakdown of the student behaviors which warranted the disciplinary action. These data are combined into a single page statistical overview which is distributed to the following persons for review: Assistant
Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent for Supportive Services, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, Director of Planning, Assessment, and Resource Development, Secondary Education Staff Assistant, Secondary School Principals, and the Director of Community Relations.

Method. The method and extensiveness of record keeping varies from school to school. While some assistant principals are responsible for disciplinary cards on the students they refer to ISS, other schools keep a disciplinary "log" in the office. Still other schools rely on the in-school suspension coordinators to maintain files on each suspendee that include the referral notice, the suspension letter, descriptive information about the student, and a record of completed work, as well as some essays written by the students. One high school ISS coordinator utilizes a special computer program to compile and statistically analyze data such as grade level, race, sex, and record of violations for all suspended students.

Referral

In the original in-school suspension program, students committing rule violations such as skipping class, truancy, smoking, disobedience, disrespect, or disruptiveness were referred to the assistant principal. Only the assistant principal assigned students to in-school suspension and set the minimum length of stay. This duty fell to the assistant principal because that person was usually the primary administrator of discipline, and a sense of fairness and continuity was maintained if one person handled all cases.
Once the in-school suspension coordinator received the referral, he contacted the student's teachers, usually through a written form requesting homework and classwork assignments as well as the teacher's evaluation of the student's academic and behavioral past performance. The coordinator also researched the student's scholastic record, disciplinary record, and record of parental contacts. A consultation with the counselor, school psychologist, or visiting teacher was held when deemed appropriate by the coordinator. The suspended students received a letter explaining in-school suspension procedures which was to be signed by their parents before they reported to ISS the following day.

Several changes have occurred in the referral process over the years, however. These changes generally reflect (a) the management preferences of individual principals, (b) a gradual move towards convenience of administration, or (c) the specific needs of the school and resources available to meet those needs.

**Preliminary steps to placement.** One change has been in the area of pre-placement preparation. In the pilot program the coordinator, resource teacher, and counselor met to discuss and design a special program for each referred student. This type of individualized planning prior to the student's arrival is rarely executed. The coordinators still have access to records, but usually seek information directly from teachers, counselors, or other resource persons only if a student has been a chronic offender, and past visits to ISS have seemingly had little effect.
The regular classroom teachers of a suspended pupil are informed of the student's placement in ISS and are requested to give behavioral feedback to coordinators through a teacher notification/work request form. School officials who do not use a similar form notify teachers of a student's suspension through a note or copy of the referral form in their mail boxes, or by the appearance of the student's name on the absentee bulletin under the in-school suspension listings.

**Length of placement.** Further changes in the referral process have affected the length of placement as well. While the minimum assignment in the original in-school suspension program was one full day, students are now referred to ISS for assignments as short as one class period in four schools. Also, while assistant principals generally do not order a suspension in excess of three days, the coordinator may increase the duration of the stay for students who fail either to complete their work or obey the rules.

There is currently an unwritten rule that in-school suspension is a one-day assignment for first-time offenders, two days for the second-time, and three days for third-time offenders. While most administrators agree there should be a limit on the maximum number of days a student may spend in ISS, they do not agree on what that limit should be. The majority of administrators feel the lack of specific guidelines is important to allow them the flexibility to determine the seriousness of the offense and, therefore, the amount of time the student will be assigned to ISS.
Maximum number of students. The maximum number of students assigned to ISS per day is another area where variations exist. Recommendations by principals, assistant principals, and coordinators ranged from an upper limit of 12 to 20 students. While some in-school suspension programs regularly reach their maximum student load, other programs rarely experience an overload of students. An average of five referrals per day was reported by coordinators as common.

When an administrator decides there are too many pupils assigned to in-school suspension on a given day, one of four options is selected: (a) ISS is moved to a larger space; (b) several suspended students are released early to make room for the newcomers; (c) some pupil placements are delayed a day or more; or (d) the suspendees are divided into two groups, with the coordinator keeping the "hardcore" offenders, and assigned teachers supervising the first-time offenders in another room.

Consideration of due process rights. When asked what consideration was given to due process rights for students during the referral process, most administrators seemed to be somewhat indifferent. They were not overly concerned about parents bringing a legal action against them as long as they informed the students of the offense with which they were charged, and gave the students an opportunity to speak in their own behalf.

Rules and Procedures

When the in-school suspension program was begun, the following rules and procedures were adhered to:
1. On the first day of their ISS assignment, student met with their guidance counselor.

2. The in-school suspension coordinator determined from recommendations of the student's counselor, teachers, and the assistant principal which section of the predesigned curriculum would be most beneficial to each student.

3. The students signed a contingency contract which specified the work which must be completed before their return to regular class. No course credit was received for work completed while in the ISS room.

4. All students referred for the first time were required to complete the Kuder General Interest Inventory and/or the Kuder Vocational Interest Inventory.

5. Constant working was required. Sleeping, sitting idly, talking to other students, eating, drinking, and chewing gum were not allowed. Any time missed for tardiness, visits to the clinic, etc. were made up the next day in ISS.

6. Students ate lunch when no other students occupied the cafeteria.

7. Students were allowed a five-minute morning and a five-minute afternoon break provided they used their time wisely and cooperated fully with the coordinator. Those students who did not follow established rules and procedures were allowed only emergency breaks with a teacher escort.

8. Students returned to regular class after completing at least the minimum assigned time and work.
9. The ISS coordinator provided a written report, describing the suspended student's work completed and overall behavior, as well as any specific observational comments and recommendations to the assistant principal and the student's parents, teachers, and counselor.

10. A conference was held between the assistant principal, ISS coordinator, student, and parents prior to the student's return to class.

For the next 10 years (1977-1986), there were no formal system-wide guidelines available for ISS coordinators and assistant principals. While the basic rules of constant working and severely limited peer interaction remained in place, there were many differences noted in the operational procedures of the original in-school suspension program and the ISS program of subsequent years.

Counseling sessions. In contrast to the operational procedures followed during the pilot years of the in-school suspension program, students no longer meet routinely with a counselor when placed in ISS. Instead, most counseling is conducted by the suspension room coordinator. Some coordinators attempt to talk individually with each suspendee at some point during the day, while others use specific written materials such as essays and values clarification exercises in an attempt to draw out the student's thoughts.

Curriculum variations. In most schools, the curriculum is no longer totally predesigned. Instead, students may be asked to complete any or all of the following: (a) written assignments examining the cause of their suspension, and their plans for future action;
(b) social values exercises; (c) basic English and math skill sheets; (d) various interest and aptitude tests; or (e) classwork and homework from their regular teachers. Students now receive credit for the classwork they complete while in ISS. They may or may not sign a contingency contract at the start of their suspension.

**Presentation of rules.** In-school suspension rules are presented to students in a variety of ways. Sometimes they are listed in the suspension letter that also serves as a notification to the student's parents of the action the school has taken as well as the reasons for this action. In some schools, students receive the rules at the beginning of each day in ISS, while other schools simply post them in the ISS room. Rules can also be explained during student orientation, in letters sent to students prior to the beginning of the school year, and/or included in the student handbook.

**Consequences of rule violations.** Despite some alterations in the process, the basic rules of conduct for those in ISS have remained unchanged. Students are still expected to be on time. They are required to work constantly, to be quiet, and to be respectful in addition to being prepared with books, pencils, and paper. The consequences of violating these rules vary. At the coordinator's discretion, rule infractions may result in extra hours or days in ISS, a referral back to the assistant principal with a recommendation for out-of-school suspension, or a referral to Pupil Personnel Services.

**Lunch and restroom breaks.** Lunch for the suspended students is either brought to the suspension room, eaten in an isolated portion of the cafeteria, or scheduled at a time when no other students
occupy the cafeteria. One coordinator said he extended the students' 20-minute lunchtime an extra 20 minutes if they voluntarily read articles and books on drugs and alcohol that he kept at the front of the room. Restroom breaks are either taken as a group and monitored by the coordinator, or individually allowed as needed and unescorted.

Preliminary steps to readmittance. In some schools, suspended students must not only have completed their assigned time and work in ISS, but also have their homework approved by the coordinator before they are allowed to return to class. Most coordinators do retain some or all of a student's non-classwork assignments, either in a special ISS file, a counseling file, a disciplinary file in the office, or in the student's cumulative folder. The coordinator may or may not complete a behavioral and work related report on each suspendee.

Exit procedures also vary from program to program. A few schools still require a parent conference before the student's readmittance into class. Some assistant principals meet with parents of first-time offenders only because they feel it is a waste of time to discuss repeatedly the same problems with the same parents. Others see only the parents of chronic offenders. Still other assistant principals conduct telephone conferences or merely request rather than require a call or visit. One administrator related the following dilemma, "When parents will not respond to calls or letters to come in for a conference, we are often forced to readmit the student to class."

Work Assignments

In the original in-school suspension plan, each student signed
a contingency contract which outlined the specific assignments that were to be completed prior to the student's return to regular classes (Appendix B). The work assigned in the contract was taken from one of three folders, and was designed to provide constructive activities in what one of the founding assistant principals called "survival skills."

The first folder, for students suspended the first time, included the Kuder General Interest Inventory or the Kuder Vocational Interest Inventory, plus over 20 different exercises in writing, values clarification, occupational exploration (from the SRA Exploration Kit), reading comprehension, basic English skills, and basic math skills. The second folder, for students who had been suspended a second time, contained 12 exercises on social skills, values clarification, ecology information and consumer activities, as well as basic skills in reading, writing, English, and math. A third folder, prepared for the relatively few students who were suspended a third time, was a collection of similar yet more in-depth and time-consuming activities.

If students were suspended a fourth time, their ISS work assignments were tailored to their needs by the coordinator. Students who violated school rules resulting in an additional suspension were referred to Pupil Personnel Services for alternative disciplinary action.

Each student in the original ISS program was not expected to complete all the work in a folder, but was assigned activities based on recommendations from the assistant principal, the student's counselor and teachers, and the in-school suspension coordinator.
The student received no regular class credit for the work completed in the suspension room, and the coordinator decided when the terms of the contract had been fulfilled. Any regular class assignments or homework assignments sent by teachers to the coordinator were given to the student at the end of the day (Appendix B). Students received credit only for the work done at home, which the coordinator usually put in the teacher's box each day to be checked.

**Folders or packets.** Now in School Division A, the work assignments made in ISS vary from program to program. Most schools which still use the work folders have added various exercises in study skills, vocabulary work, values clarification, behavior examination, and career exploration. While some of the activities are prepared by teachers or department heads according to ability levels, most are gathered by the coordinator from textbooks, workbooks, and materials exchanged at in-service workshops.

Many suspension rooms are also supplied with newspapers, magazines, encyclopedias, and other library materials to aid in the completion of academic assignments. The coordinator is responsible for assigning work according to ability level (often assessed by looking at a student's class schedule), evaluating the work, and having the student make corrections. The coordinator also decides if a contingency work contract will be signed by entering students.

**Regular class assignments.** Some schools have dropped the work packets altogether and rely solely on teacher assignments. The majority of in-school suspension programs, however, use a combination of required ISS assignments and classwork submitted by teachers. Often, the homework assignments are not given to the students until
the end of the school day in an attempt to prevent them from hurrying through their other work.

**Individualized tutoring.** The coordinator in each suspension room determines if students will be individually tutored. Most coordinators felt that there were too many students working on too many different subject areas and levels for effective academic instruction to take place. At least one school had a classroom teacher stationed outside the suspension room each hour to answer students' questions.

**Coordinator preferences.** When looking to the future for ISS, some coordinators expressed a desire for a system-wide curriculum guide and predesigned work packets. Other coordinators preferred to continue making their own choices as to the work assigned to students in ISS.

**Counseling**

During the pilot years of School Division A's in-school suspension program, students met with their counselor on the first day of their suspension. School psychologists, special education teachers, reading teachers, probation officers, social service workers, and drug counselors were utilized when a specific need was identified. The suspended students were also required to write essays designed to help them examine and clarify their values, feelings, and beliefs.

**Involvement of coordinators.** The amount of counseling now received by students in ISS depends on the number of students in the suspension room on a given day. Much of the counseling is done by the coordinators. Some in-school suspension coordinators state,
however, that due to constant supervision duties, record keeping, assignment checking, nonsuitable atmosphere, and lack of privacy, they do not even attempt to counsel the suspended students.

**Involvement of guidance personnel.** Guidance personnel are involved in the counseling process only if they choose to be, or if their assistance is specifically requested by a coordinator, teacher, or administrator. With the exception of one school, counselors are not required to work with the students in ISS.

**Follow-up**

In the initial stages of School Division A's in-school suspension program, much of the follow-up was handled by the suspension room coordinator, who would talk with the students and their teachers at least several times in the two weeks following the suspension. At the pilot high school in the early years of the program, a group of students with records of chronic misbehavior were labeled by the coordinator as "The Dirty Dozen." These students were required to check in daily with the coordinator or he would visit their teachers.

In the current in-school suspension program, follow-up is not routinely conducted. Although the majority of ISS coordinators have a planning period and a duty-free lunch, most believe there are just too many students assigned to ISS to follow-up in an organized manner.

**Effectiveness**

The central objective of the in-school suspension program in School Division A was to establish an alternative to out-of-school
suspension. The program's founders also wished to determine if the in-school suspension approach would be more effective than the traditional out-of-school suspension system in changing student behavior and thus reducing the number of suspensions.

Based on a mixture of principles from time out, detention, and systematic exclusion, ISS was to be a positive response to the discipline problem. The program was designed to give school personnel an opportunity to work in the school environment with students who had instructional, emotional, social, or home problems. The students were to be placed in a structured, isolated atmosphere where they could receive individualized attention to help modify their behavior and build their self-concept.

Hypotheses

In order to accomplish the goals they had set forth, the founders of the in-school suspension program in School Division A proposed the following hypotheses:

1. The total number of out-of-school suspensions for the control year 1974-75 would be greater than the total number of in-school suspensions (which replaced out-of-school suspensions) for the experimental year 1975-76 in the two schools tested.

2. There would be a decreased number of disciplinary referrals to the assistant principal.

3. Student misbehavior resulting in suspension would fall under a limited number of types and causes, which could be categorized.
4. A demographic/psychological profile showing commonalities among the suspended students would emerge.

5. In-school suspension, when used as a replacement for out-of-school suspension, would result in improved student attitudes toward self-discipline, school in general, and the learning process.

First Year Evaluation

Both the junior and the senior high schools involved in the first year of the pilot study experienced a marked reduction in the total number of suspensions as compared with the prior year. The total number of students suspended was reduced approximately 42% at the junior high school and 29% at the senior high school. Repeat suspensions were also reduced at the two experimental sites. At the senior high school, the number of students suspended only once during the 1975-76 school year decreased 19% from the rate of first-time suspensions in 1974-75. Second-time suspensions fell 28%, third-time suspensions 36%, and fourth-time (or more) suspensions 78%.

At the junior high school, the decreases were even greater. First-time suspensions fell 27%, second-time suspensions 28%, third-time suspensions 59%, and fourth-time (or more) suspensions 94%.

As the total number of out-of-school suspensions for the control year was greater than the total number of in-school suspensions for the experimental years in both schools, Hypothesis 1 was supported. Hypothesis 2 stated that there would be a decreased number of disciplinary referrals directed to the assistant principal during the
first year of the ISS program than during the year preceding ISS implementation. No data were collected to support or reject this hypothesis.

Hypothesis 3 was supported by data collected during the experimental year. Types of offenses for which suspension was assigned were generalized into four categories for both schools. At the junior high, disruptive behavior accounted for 47% of the total offenses, skipping class 24%, truancy 10%, smoking 9%, and miscellaneous violations 9%. At the senior high school, disruptive behavior was the disciplinary violation in 44% of the cases, skipping class accounted for 27%, truancy 18%, smoking 8%, and miscellaneous violations 3%.

The demographic/psychological profile showing common traits among suspended students, a list of identified causes of misbehavior, and an evaluation of attitude changes were not included in the first year evaluation, although the assembly of these items was among the stated objectives. Therefore, Hypotheses 4 and 5 were neither supported nor rejected.

Second Year Evaluation

In an effort to explore other dimensions of the in-school suspension program in School Division A, as well as to verify first year results, a new evaluation design was planned. The design included: (a) the validation of first year results (e.g. testing for a significant reduction in the percentage of student suspensions); (b) the evaluation of the effects of the program upon student attitude and achievement; (c) an assessment of program impact upon attitude,
achievement, social adjustment, and career plans through the use of a longitudinal student profile; and (d) the establishment of a set of criteria with which potential suspension room coordinators could be screened.

Validation of first year results. Confirmation of first year results was achieved through three separate analyses. First, an estimate of normal fluctuation in the percentage of students suspended system-wide for the period 1974-75 through 1975-76 was obtained for comparison employing the original single group time-series design. While the pilot high school had achieved a decrease in the suspension rate of 31%, all other high schools in School Division A had experienced a combined decrease of 8%. The pilot junior high had achieved a decrease in suspension rate of 42% as compared with an 18% decrease among all other junior high schools.

The second step in the confirmation of first year results was an expansion of the original time-series design to include two additional years (1973-74 and 1976-77). A 19% decrease in the suspension rate at the pilot high school and a 9% decrease at the pilot junior high school were reflected when comparing the two years preceding the study (1973-75) and the two years following the implementation of the in-school suspension program (1975-77).

The third analysis, a multi-group time-series design, was to be used to examine the pattern of suspension rates between experimental schools (those schools incorporating the ISS program), and the rest of the system for the school years 1973-74 through 1976-77. No figures could be located for this analysis.
In an attempt to explore the relationship between the dropout rate and in-school suspension, the above three processes were to be repeated substituting dropout rate in the place of suspension rate. Only one analysis was completed. A comparison of the dropout rates at the two original pilot schools and the dropout rate of all other secondary schools in School Division A indicated a slight decrease in the dropout rate at the pilot junior high school. Those observations were ruled by the Director of Program Development and Evaluation to be of little value to the evaluation of the in-school suspension program.

**Evaluation of program effects on student attitude and achievement.**

In order to assess the relative impact of the in-school suspension program on student attitude and achievement during the 1976-77 school year, two control schools (one senior high and one junior high using only out-of-school suspension) were matched to two experimental schools (one senior high and one junior high incorporating the in-school suspension program). The schools were to be matched with respect to student socio-economic background, teacher experience, average yearly suspension rate, and overall academic program.

Teachers in both the experimental and control schools were asked to rate attitude toward school and academic performance as improved or unchanged two weeks after the student's return from suspension. Upon completion of the spring term in 1977, 2 x 2 contingency tables were developed and a chi-square test performed in order to determine whether there was a relationship between type of suspension and perceived student attitude changes.
At the two experimental pilot schools, teachers rated 35% of the suspendees as having improved attitudes and 65% of the suspendees as demonstrating unchanged attitudes in the two weeks following their suspension. At the two control schools, teachers' responses on the attitude surveys indicated that 17% of the students showed improvement in the two weeks following their out-of-school suspension, while 83% of the students' attitudes toward school and academic performance remained unchanged.

Utilizing the same experimental and control schools as described above, a second plan was devised to explore program effects on student attitude and achievement. All students suspended during the 1975-76 school year took a locally prepared survey which gauged their attitude toward school and learning at the time of their suspension. At the end of April, 25 randomly selected students at each of the experimental and control schools who had been suspended at least twice were given the post-test. An independent t-test was performed on the results of post-test minus pre-test scores.

At the pilot high school as well as at the control high school, there was a slight drop from the average pre-test score to the average post-test score on the attitude survey. The average scores at the control junior high decreased significantly from pre-test to post-test. All these scores indicated a negative change in attitude toward school and learning from the beginning to the end of the school year. Only the students at the experimental junior high recorded an increase from the average pre-test score to the average post-test
score. This increase, though slight, was interpreted to represent more positive attitudes among those suspended students at the experimental junior high only.

For the purpose of the second year evaluation, student achievement was defined by cumulative grade point average based on all subject areas for the periods September through January and February through June 1976-77. Upon completion of the school year, an independent t-test was performed using second semester minus first semester grade point average for randomly selected repeat suspendees at the experimental and control schools.

The findings indicated that grade point averages for all subject groups (those suspended internally and externally) declined. The decrease at the experimental and control high schools, as well as the drop at the control junior high, were not significant at the .05 level. A significantly greater decline (-0.710) occurred at the experimental junior high. Administrators explained that it was not unusual for students' attitudes toward school as well as their grade point averages to worsen from the beginning to the end of the school year.

**Development of longitudinal student profiles.** A third phase of the second year evaluation design was to be the development of longitudinal student profiles containing such data as standardized achievement and ability test scores, extracurricular activities, career plans, teacher and counselor comments, academic records, and, in some cases, individual interview notes. All
students at the experimental junior and senior high schools who were suspended at least twice during the 1975-76 school year were identified, and a random sample of five boys and five girls were drawn from each school. The profile was to cover the students in the sample for the remainder of their years in public school. It was hoped that the longitudinal profiles would identify a pattern of social, emotional, and academic development that might provide additional evidence as to the impact of the in-school suspension program. These longitudinal profiles were never completed as formal evaluation procedures were discontinued after the first two years of ISS.

**Establishment of coordinator screening criteria.** The fourth phase of the second year evaluation was to be the development of criteria for selecting suspension room coordinators. A profile was to be developed on the six suspension room coordinators using school records and informal interviews to determine their academic background, work experience, ancillary duties, and attitudes toward the coordinator's role.

Next, criteria for evaluating the successful operation of the suspension room was to be established during the 1976-77 school year. Interviews with assistant principals, teachers, and counselors, as well as a review of recidivism statistics, were to be considered. The final step in the process was to interview and examine the profiles of the coordinators of "successful" programs in order to identify basic competencies and to establish the criteria for selecting future suspension room coordinators.
The only data located in regard to the development of criteria for selecting suspension room coordinators was an "In-school Suspension Record Attitude Profile." When comparing the pre-test and post-test profile scores for the five ISS coordinators employed during the 1976-77 school year, the less experienced coordinators tended to have greater changes in attitude. The posttest results also indicated that the suspension room coordinators recognized the need for more rigid control in the suspension room, the use of a variety of management techniques, and training in counseling or psychological assessment skills.

Twelfth Year Evaluation

After the first two years of the in-school suspension program in School Division A, formal evaluation procedures were discontinued. With the pilot study completed and the ISS program firmly entrenched in the district's discipline plan, only monthly suspension totals were submitted to the central office.

Because the supervision of each in-school suspension program rested with the building administrator, ISS had evolved into an individualized, diversified concept systemwide. Lack of consistency in the administration and maintenance of the program prompted the formation of a committee in August, 1986 to make a full analysis of the current in-school suspension program and to make recommendation for the future of the program based on the results of the analysis.

The evaluation committee members included two principals, two assistant principals, and two ISS coordinators from various junior
and senior high schools in School Division A, as well as four central office personnel from the areas of administration, curriculum development, and resource development. Their task was fivefold: (a) to develop a series of questions to be used in the interviews and written questionnaires; (b) to survey all secondary building principals, selected assistant principals, and all ISS coordinators either by questionnaire or direct interview; (c) to survey a random sample of secondary school teachers (stratified by grade level and subject area) to determine their perceptions about the ISS program in their building; (d) to examine the materials and procedures currently being used in various programs; and (e) to compile the results of the data gathering process into administrative guidelines for a recommended in-school suspension program.

A composite of the responses made by the various groups reflected three major areas of common concern and 14 specific recommendations. The three areas of need targeted by a number of the administrators, coordinators, and teachers responding to the in-school suspension assessment included alternatives to ISS for the chronic offenders, systemwide administrative guidelines and curriculum guides, as well as criteria for evaluating program and coordinator effectiveness.

The following recommendations were made following an analysis of interview and survey responses:

* provide adequate facilities for in-school suspension
* provide time in the coordinator's schedule for record keeping and follow-up
* provide opportunities for information exchange between guidance counselors and ISS coordinators
* provide a set of basic textbooks to be kept in the ISS room
* provide more instructional and curriculum direction
* provide additional in-service programs for coordinators
* provide instruction and materials for working with English as a second language and special education students
* provide follow-up plans for repeat offenders
* provide an orientation for coordinators and administrators
* avoid partial-day assignments if possible
* avoid the use of ISS for lunch detention
* avoid the use of ISS as an initial penalty for failure to dress out in physical education classes
* avoid the assignment of copying work or composition work as a punishment
* limit the number of days per school year that can be assigned to an individual student

Attitudes and Opinions

While reviewing statistical data was the basic mode for assessing the effectiveness of the in-school suspension program in School Division A, examining the perceptions of all those directly connected to the program was also an important step in analyzing the ISS operation. As pointed out by the two assistant principals who initiated the program, effectiveness is difficult to gauge solely on statistics since many administrators began to increase the number of suspensions when the in-school suspension concept made the process more positive.
Views of administrators. Personal observations on the strengths of the in-school suspension program in School Division A were gathered through interviews with superintendents, program coordinators, pupil personnel directors, principals, and assistant principals, as well as through the examination of relevant correspondence, reports, and newspaper articles. The most frequently lauded aspect of the ISS program was that it removed the element of reward associated with out-of-school suspension. Educators also praised the program because it forced the suspended students to examine the cause of their misbehavior, and to perform in a controlled situation in order to return to class. The lack of peer contact and the focus on academic work made ISS especially effective for truants and class skippers.

One administrator referred to the in-school suspension as a "bridge instead of a break" in the educational process. Others interviewed called ISS an adaptable, relatively inexpensive, constructive alternative to out-of-school suspension. They praised ISS as an exercise in applied values and completed work, a negative consequence that results in students keeping themselves in line, and a useful step in a progressive discipline program.

Consistent support of the school system for full-time coordinators was cited as another strength of the in-school suspensions program, as was the positive public relations aspect. Some administrators in School Division A felt the image of educators held by the public became more positive and less antagonistic as the ISS program enabled them to meet their responsibility of helping students deal with and not avoid problems.
While most sources agreed that in-school suspension was a step in the right direction, many acknowledged that there was a limit to what could be accomplished in a one to three day assignment. When asked what improvements they felt could be made in the current in-school suspension program, persons interviewed mentioned the following needs: (a) standardized operations through systemwide coordinator guidelines; (b) a common curriculum guide; (c) more in-service preparation for coordinators; (d) additional alternatives for chronic offenders; (e) stronger direction, monitoring, and evaluation through central office; (f) increased efforts in counseling and follow-up; (g) greater parental involvement, and (h) greater emphasis on securing the best person for the coordinator's position.

Although most administrators agreed that in-school suspension was not the ultimate disciplinary answer, overall they responded favorably to the program. Only a few principals and assistant principals expressed a preference to have suspended students "out of sight, out of mind." Their specific suggestions for the improvement of the program included: (a) improved communication with other schools' faculty and staff concerning various ISS management techniques that have proven effective for them, (b) additional curriculum materials for the ISS coordinators, (c) the elimination of part-time suspensions, and (d) extended use of the school psychologist to work with troubled students in ISS.

**Views of coordinators.** The suspension room coordinators also had several proposals for the improvement of the ISS program. They included: (a) limit the number of students placed per day, (b)
allow coordinators to reduce the length of the suspension for good behavior, (c) allow suspended students to participate in work details, (d) appoint a district supervisor for the in-school suspension program, and (e) provide assistance with special education and ESL (English as a second language) students. An instructional specialist to develop materials was recommended.

Views of teachers. A random sample of 452 junior and senior high teachers in School Division A were also surveyed in the spring of 1987 to determine their perceptions about the in-school suspension program in their building. The sample was stratified to include teachers from all grade levels and subject areas. Of the 56% (254 teachers) who responded to the survey, most felt that ISS was somewhat effective in reducing disruptive student behavior, but that the program needed to put more emphasis on activities to help students change their behavior, improve their attitude toward school, and raise their self-concept.

In the early years of the in-school suspension program, teachers felt directly involved in the discipline process for two primary reasons. First of all, the coordinators and assistant principals presented a teacher orientation to discuss general program plans and purposes as well as specific procedures for suspending students and recording data. Secondly, the teachers were called on to make observations concerning students' attitudes during the two-week follow-up process.

The feedback administrators now receive indicates that teachers feel ISSN is an effective deterrent to truancy and class skipping.
It provides them with a brief vacation from a disruptive student, but results in little improvement in the behavior of chronic offenders. Most teachers, however, feel in-school suspension is a step in the right direction even though it entails the extra work of writing assignments for the suspended student, a task not required for students suspended out of school.

Views of parents. The response of parents, law enforcement officials, and local citizens to the in-school suspension program was reported by administrators and central office personnel to be almost totally favorable. The parents of the suspended students have given ISS almost unanimous approval. Most prefer in-school to out-of-school suspension because they believe the former offers help with the behavioral and academic problems their children face, making the suspension period a learning experience rather than wasted "vacation" time. As one administrator phrased it, "The only complaints were from the complainers." For example, one parent was not supportive of the extended in-school suspension her son received because his contracted work had not been completed.

Views of law enforcement officials and community members. Both law enforcement officials and community members were pleased with the decrease in daytime vandalism and break-ins they noted when out-of-school suspensions were replaced by in-school suspensions. The police reported an 85%-90% reduction in daytime teenage crime once the ISS program was incorporated throughout School Division A in grades seven through twelve.
Views of students. The attitudes of suspended students towards the in-school suspension program have been less positive than those expressed by the public sector. Strict rules, social isolation, and constant work make the suspension room an undesirable consequence for rule violators. In essays written while assigned to ISS, students expressed such observations as: they hated it; they were bored looking at the same faces; their hands cramped from writing; they were sleepy; and they would rather be home. Most students recommended to their friends that in-school suspension was a punishment to be avoided.

Regardless of the students' reaction to the program, most educators in School Division A feel in-school suspension is a reasonable and justifiable consequence for misbehavior, and that it will continue to be utilized. One member of the central office staff predicted that eventually it may no longer be legal to assign out-of-school suspension as a punishment, making ISS an indispensable alternative.

Overview of attitudes and opinions. Overall, those interviewed in School Division A feel the in-school suspension program is a success. They attribute its effectiveness today to the extensive research, planning, piloting, and evaluation incorporated in the early years of the program. The key to the future success of the ISS program, they believe, is a coordinated effort by all involved, including superintendents, program coordinators, principals, counselors, teachers, and parents, to support the in-school suspension program and constantly strive to make it as rehabilitative as possible.
One coordinator who has worked with the program since it began believes in-school suspension in School Division A has retained the same principles over the years, but that these principles have been interpreted differently by the administrators and coordinators. He sees a new movement in the process to unify the program and bring back the original focus.
Chapter 3
Case Study Number Two

School Division B serves an urban area of upper to lower middle class families in southeastern Virginia. Between 1974 (the implementation date of in-school suspension) and 1987, the student population decreased from approximately 40,000 to 35,000. In the same time span, the minority percentage fell from approximately 70% to 50%.

The following chapter focuses on three aspects of the in-school suspension program in School Division B. First, the origin and development of the program will be reviewed. The second section of the chapter will include a discussion of both the original and current design of the ISS plan. An analysis of the program's effectiveness will be presented in the third part of the case study.

Origin and Development of In-School Suspension Program

The concept of in-school suspension was introduced in School Division B through the efforts of a junior high assistant principal who read about the disciplinary strategy in an educational magazine. The assistant principal, along with the principal at the same junior high school, approached the Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Personnel Services for permission to develop a similar program in their district. The Assistant Superintendent appointed the Director of Pupil Personnel Services to chair a committee charged with developing a pilot ISS program.
Proposal for Pilot Program

During the 1973-74 school year, a committee of 11 educators met to draft a proposal for an in-school suspension plan which was officially labeled the Program for Alternatives to Suspensions and Expulsions. The committee was composed of principals from an elementary, junior high, and senior high school; a representative from the local education association, and seven central office administrators, including the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction; the Directors of Secondary Instruction, Special Education, Guidance, Pupil Personnel Services, and Adjustive Services; as well as the Assistant Director of Pupil Personnel Services.

The committee decided to pattern their in-school suspension program after North Miami Beach High School's "Alternatives to Suspension and Expulsion," a disciplinary plan one of the committee members had heard about at an educators' meeting. Following a question-and-answer telephone conversation with the principal of the Florida high school, the committee members developed a proposal which was later presented to and approved by the Superintendent and School Board of School Division B.

Site Selection

In August 1974, the Director of Pupil Personnel Services contacted the principal and assistant principal who had originally proposed the in-school suspension idea. The two junior high administrators agreed to implement the ISS program in the school where they were both employed.
On October 1, 1974, the in-school suspension pilot program was instituted in the aforementioned junior high school. The site selection for the pilot study was based more on the interest and willingness of the two administrators who proposed the idea than on the representativeness or particular need of their school. The 1,200 student junior high served a middle income population of approximately 55% minority. Its out-of-school suspension rate was not inordinately high in comparison with other secondary schools in Division B.

**Estimated Expenditures and Funding**

Since its inception in 1974, the ISS program in School Division B has been locally funded, without any state or federal financial assistance. Until approximately 5 years ago, no formal position was budgeted for an in-school suspension teacher. Each site administrator either made a special request for the additional money needed to hire ISS personnel or shifted schedules to free one or a combination of staff members for the ISS duty. This lack of consistent pecuniary resources led to many differences in staffing arrangements from school to school and from year to year.

The current yearly expenditures for the in-school suspension program include the teacher's salary, which is based on the district's base pay scale, and the expense of a minimal amount of duplicated materials. As with any budget item, the funding for the in-school suspension program must be reapproved yearly by the School Board.
Approval is based on where ISS is ranked in the prioritized budget needs as presented to the School Board by the Superintendent. Most administrators feel, however, that in-school suspension is so firmly entrenched as a disciplinary option in School Division B that a decision not to fund the program is highly unlikely.

**Original and Current Design**

Following the critical examination of data from both the interview, survey, and document analysis processes, an effort was made to describe the in-school suspension program in School Division B as it was initially as well as its current status. Following is a discussion of these program elements and revisions.

**Philosophy and Goals**

According to one of the planning committee members, the original purpose of the ISS program was to provide a place within the school building to house students violating rules and interfering with instruction whose sole intent was to provoke an out-of-school suspension. The planning committee saw in-school suspension as a positive method of punishment which offered academic instruction in a restricted social environment.

In the current ISS program, there is a discrepancy between the written philosophy of the program and the goals affirmed by the principals. A majority of administrators indicated that the purpose of in-school suspension at their school was to rehabilitate and redirect the behavior of offenders. However, they expressed
that their primary goal was to provide a punitive environment so that the students would avoid in the future those behaviors that warranted their initial referral.

There is also a discrepancy between the written philosophy that focuses on therapeutic alternatives to out-of-school suspension, and the use of ISS as a temporary controlling measure. The original proposal adopted in 1974 directed that the minimum length of stay in ISS be three days to allow time for testing, academic instruction, and individualized counseling. At least three schools now assign students to in-school suspension for as brief a duration as one class period per day. This short-term disciplinary option serves only temporarily to remove the student from the problem situation. There is not enough time for the counseling and academic assistance that constitutes a therapeutic, redirective focus.

In summary, the current in-school suspension program appears to present a blend of three different philosophical orientations: developmental, punitive, and controlling. While there is intent to rehabilitate student behavior through counseling and academic assistance, administrators desire the isolated social environment in ISS to be punitive enough to deter future misbehavior. Out of convenience and a lack of other alternatives, in-school suspension is also used as a temporary controlling measure or holding zone for disruptive students. The dominant philosophical orientation in actual practice in each school is determined more by the building
administrators who staff and monitor their individual ISS programs than by the proposal developed over 13 years ago.

Objectives

There were four objectives formulated in the initial proposal:

1. To reduce the need for externally suspending or expelling students who do not conform to the established rules of conduct, meet attendance requirements, or participate effectively in classroom learning activities.

2. To modify the behavior of such students.

3. To provide personal, academic, and vocational guidance and counseling.

4. To enable the student to earn credit in current courses while in the special program.

The central objective of the current in-school suspension program continues to be providing an alternative disciplinary consequence to out-of-school suspension. The objectives of modifying student behavior and enabling students to earn class credit while in ISS also remain at the core of the program. The major difference in the objectives formulated in the initial proposal and those aims expressed by current administrators is the decreased emphasis on personal, academic, and vocational guidance and counseling. While some form of counseling was reported in all ISS programs, less than half of the programs consistently offered counseling to all students. Vocational guidance was not a part of any in-school suspension plan.
Other Disciplinary Options

The in-school suspension program in School Division B was not designed to replace out-of-school suspension, but to reduce the number of students suspended out-of-school for relatively minor rule violations. At the time of ISS implementation, disciplinary options available to administrators included after-school detention, parent conferences, cafeteria duty, behavior contracts, conduct notices, out-of-school suspension, and, as a last resort, expulsion.

The alternatives used for correcting behavior have changed little over the years. Principals still select from those same disciplinary methods according to their individual preferences, and which techniques have proven most successful at their school.

Expansion

The in-school suspension program in School Division B was piloted in the 1974-75 school year in a single junior high school. In subsequent years, ISS was retained in the junior high as well as implemented in all other secondary schools as principals could work out suitable staffing arrangements. Though all 13 secondary schools have continued to utilize an in-school suspension program of some type, operational details have varied widely during the years since ISS implementation. The differences between the programs are a reflection of the specific needs of each school as well as the resources available at each site.

Staffing

The proposal drafted for the pilot in-school suspension program in School Division B included staffing requests for a full-time
certified teacher, an aide, and a guidance counselor. The only two positions approved, however, were those of teacher and part-time guidance counselor.

According to the proposal, the in-school suspension teacher was to be selected based on ability to relate to pupils, maintain order, and to administer and interpret diagnostic tests. The person hired for this position was to be certified in at least one academic area, have a guidance oriented background, and be able to assist students in all subject areas.

Five major responsibilities of the ISS teacher were outlined. They included:

1. Secure assignments from the suspended students' teachers.
2. Administer diagnostic tests.
3. Provide classroom teachers with the results and interpretation of diagnostic tests completed by the students while in ISS.
4. Assure that the pupils work continuously on the assignments received from their classroom teachers.
5. Assist students as needed in the completion of their classwork assignments.

Current responsibilities. All in-school suspension teachers surveyed indicated that they currently secured assignments for the students, monitored their work, and offered assistance when needed. None of the ISS teachers, however, indicated that they administered
diagnostic tests on a regular basis, or provided classroom teachers with interpreted results of any tests.

Qualifications. All administrators interviewed felt the selection of qualified ISS teachers was crucial to the success of the program. They agreed that a counseling or social work background would be helpful, but placed more emphasis on choosing experienced teachers who were firm disciplinarians and had a desire to work with problem students. All concurred that continuity was lost in those situations where a principal was forced to rotate a different teacher into ISS each class period.

Selection. In most secondary schools, the suspension room is staffed by a full-time certified teacher who is relieved one class period per day by another teacher, an aide, a counselor, or an administrator. Principals often select their ISS teacher from staff available at the school. In at least two programs, ISS is now covered by a combination of two or more teachers who rotate in and out during the day.

Training. No in-service workshops or formal training programs have ever been regularly conducted to familiarize the in-school suspension staff in School Division B of their responsibilities. Instead, new ISS teachers are briefed on the objectives and guidelines of the program by an administrator at their individual schools.

Guidance personnel. The second ISS staff member included in the original proposal was a guidance counselor to be chosen from
those counselors already at the school. The primary responsibilities specified for the guidance counselor were to:

1. Request and coordinate services of resource personnel as needed.
2. Conduct group counseling sessions.
3. Share diagnostic data and observations on suspended student with the administration and classroom teachers.
4. Provide follow-up counseling after students left ISS.

The role of guidance personnel in the ISS program gradually decreased over the years. Of the four tasks designated in the 1974 proposal for the guidance counselor, none is routinely performed in the current in-school suspension program. Responsibility for securing the services of resource specialists, sharing diagnostic data with teachers and administrators, and providing follow-up on the suspended students has shifted primarily to the ISS teacher if undertaken at all. Because of the instability of a constantly changing student composition in ISS, group counseling was found to be both ineffective and difficult to implement. Therefore, the group guidance sessions were replaced by individual counseling during the fourth quarter of the pilot year.

Record Keeping

Since the inception of the in-school suspension program, each school has reported the number of in-school as well as the number of out-of-school suspensions to the Department of Pupil Personnel
Services through the forwarding of a copy of each suspension notice. These data are compiled and included in an annual two-page school discipline and attendance statistical overview which is distributed to selected central office administrators for review.

The responsibility for and extensiveness of record keeping varies from school to school. While maintaining disciplinary statistics is a duty of the principal or assistant principal at some sites, other administrators delegate the task of data recording to the in-school suspension teacher.

A tally of the total number of in-school suspensions is kept at all secondary schools in School Division B. Most schools also maintain a count of the number of repeat offenders and a list of the disciplinary violations which warranted each suspension. Less than half of the secondary schools compile demographic data such as grade level, race, and sex of the suspended students, or prepare a written description of each student's academic and behavioral progress while in ISS.

Referral

The original in-school suspension proposal outlined six eligibility requirements which were to be met before a pupil could be referred to the program. The first three included violations for which in-school suspension was the suggested penalty:

1. Excessive, unexcused absences from class.
2. Non-participation in classroom learning activities.
3. Persistent minor disruptive classroom behavior.

The last three screening requirements in the original proposal were conditions to be met before a student could be sent to in-school suspension:
4. Student agreement to participate in ISS (in lieu of out-of-school suspension and/or referral to Juvenile Court).
5. Parental permission for student to participate in ISS.
6. Teacher notification of student's suspension.

**Offenses currently punishable by ISS.** Several changes have occurred in referral requirements over the years. Students are now sent to in-school suspension for an expanded number of violations which include smoking, disruptive, disobedient, or disrespectful behavior, truancy, leaving school grounds and/or class without permission, skipping class, refusing to stay after school, refusing to bring absence excuse notes, and tardiness. At a few schools, the offenses of lying, cheating, stealing, damaging property, and coming to class unprepared (without assignments and/or supplies) were also offenses punishable by in-school suspension. Generally, fighting, profanity, and involvement with drugs still warranted out-of-school suspension or expulsion.

**Length of placement.** In addition to the increased variety of suspendable offenses, another change in the referral process has been the length of placement. The original in-school suspension proposal designated three days as a minimum placement and five days
as the maximum penalty. The specific length of placement was determined by the Assistant Principal for Administration.

Students are now referred to ISS for as short a time as one class period in three schools. In-school suspension in these sites is often used as either a "cooling off station," a temporary holding zone until further action can be taken, or a type of daytime detention hall for minor offenses. Assistant principals at four schools reported a full school day as their minimum assignment, while only one administrator indicated he still observed this original three-day minimum referral.

Maximum length of referral to ISS also varied among schools. Ranging from a rarely used upper limit of 10 days at two schools, to a maximum penalty of only one day at one senior high, the most common response of administrators regarding the maximum length of ISS referral was three days. Students at some schools also received extra days in ISS as a penalty for failure to follow rules or complete assignments.

Maximum number of students. The maximum number of students assigned to ISS per day was another area where variations existed. The most frequently mentioned overload point for in-school suspension was 15 students, with one administrator indicating he allowed up to 20 students in ISS on a given day. When asked the average number of students in ISS each day, administrators estimated anywhere from 6 to 12.
Though overcrowding was not regarded as a common problem in ISS, 12 of 13 administrators indicated that the maximum student load had been reached occasionally. In these situations, several alternatives were used by the administrators. The majority delayed some suspensions a day or more. Other lesser used options included releasing suspended students early, suspending students out-of-school in place of in-school suspension, or simply bringing in more desks, chairs, or carrels.

When asked about the changes made in reasons for referral, length of placement, and number of students allowed in ISS, most persons interviewed felt the options which evolved over the past 14 years were necessary steps to meet the changing disciplinary needs at their schools. All agreed, however, that the individualized counseling, resource assistance, and diagnostic testing were less accessible to the students as a result of these changes in the referral process.

Rules and Procedures

The original in-school suspension program drafted in the spring of 1974 contained no specific list of rules and procedures. The details of daily operation were decided by the ISS teacher and/or the site administrators. The only guidelines available were three suggested program activities which included:

1. One hour of group counseling each day;
2. Time required for diagnostic testing;
3. Remaining time devoted to supervised study.
Current guidelines. When asked if formal systemwide guidelines were currently available for their ISS program, half of the administrators responded affirmatively. Conversely, six administrators indicated there were no systemwide guidelines. However, two of these six administrators expressed a desire for uniform guidelines to be formulated at the central office level. The remaining four principals said that they preferred the flexibility of individualizing their own school's ISS program, and did not desire central office direction.

The Assistant Director of Pupil Personnel Services clarified that there was no formal list of systemwide rules and procedures for ISS. He explained that administrators at individual schools may have at some time formulated their own written guidelines, which subsequent administrators assumed were consistent throughout the school division.

Presentation of rules. In-school suspension rules and procedures vary greatly from program to program in School Division B. For example, students may be informed of the ISS rules in a variety of ways. They may be reviewed orally by the in-school suspension teacher at the beginning of each day, or merely posted in the suspension room. Rules may also be listed in the suspension letter that is sent to the parents as a notification of disciplinary action. In some schools, in-school suspension regulations are included in the student handbook, explained at orientation, or presented to
students through an introductory letter at the beginning of the school year. Administrators maintained that although they may use one or a combination of these methods, all students spending time in ISS were aware of the rules in force.

**Consequences of rule violations.** Students violating the rules of ISS face two possible consequences, depending on the nature of the disturbance and the discretion of the suspension room teacher. They may either receive extra hours or days in ISS, or be suspended out of school.

**Daily activities.** Students seldom receive group counseling or diagnostic testing while in ISS. They are expected to work on assignments submitted by their regular classroom teachers, interrupted only by restroom breaks, lunch, and occasional individualized counseling. If regular class assignments have not been received, the suspended students generally work in specially prepared booklets or folders.

**Lunch and restroom breaks.** In the majority of schools, a lunch period is scheduled for the ISS pupils either before, between, or after regular lunch shifts to restrict peer interaction. Talking among the suspended students may or may not be allowed during the lunch break. In two schools, suspended students eat simultaneously with nonsuspended students, but sit in an isolated section of the cafeteria. In one school, lunch is brought to the suspension room. In another school, ISS students are required to clean the cafeteria before eating their lunch.
Restroom breaks are generally taken as a group and monitored by the ISS teacher. In only three schools were these breaks taken individually with students carrying a hall pass instead of having an escort.

**Preliminary steps to readmittance.** Exit procedures also differ from program to program. All students must complete their minimum assigned time before returning to their regular classes. However, in half of the schools, classwork and homework must also be completed and approved or checked by the ISS teacher. In three schools, parents are required to attend a conference before their son or daughter is readmitted to class. In three other schools, a conference or telephone call is requested but not required of the suspended student's parents.

Once the students are released from in-school suspension, they are to submit completed assignments to their classroom teachers. The ISS teachers at two schools also provide the regular classroom teachers with a written report describing the suspended pupils' behavioral and academic progress during the suspension period. Verbal feedback from the ISS teacher to the regular classroom teachers is the informal method of communication reported at three sites. The remaining in-school suspension programs in School Division B have no established informational link between the regular classroom teachers and the in-school suspension teacher. Students are simply admitted to class with a form signed by the assistant principal.
Work Assignments

Work assignments in ISS have changed little over the years the program has been in operation. The majority of students' time still is devoted to the completion of classroom assignments. Predesigned work booklets are sometimes used before assignments arrive, or if the students complete classroom assignments before their time in ISS is concluded.

The work packets, folders, or booklets used as supplemental materials include various types of exercises in values clarification, reading comprehension, basic English and math skills, social skills, writing, and applied life skills such as budget making. Those in-school suspension teachers who utilize the work packets indicated that they, or school department heads, developed the curriculum to meet the varying ability levels of the students referred to ISS.

Procedures for obtaining work assignments. Different methods are used to obtain work assignments from the suspended students' regular teachers. At some schools, a student aide is sent to the appropriate classrooms with a prepared form requesting classwork and homework assignments for the stated duration of the pupil's suspension. Teachers may also be notified of a student's suspension and the need to prepare a list of assignments through a note or copy of the referral form in their school mailboxes.

A related problem mentioned by interviewees in School Division B was the delay in receiving work assignments for some students.
In short-term suspensions, students may be released from in-school suspension before their assignments arrive. This situation eliminates the possibility of tutorial assistance with regular class assignments while in ISS. For this reason, the majority of in-school suspension teachers keep predesigned work materials available to supplement regular class assignments.

**Individualized tutoring.** Because both group counseling and diagnostic testing have been eliminated from most in-school suspension formats, additional time is available for the suspended student to complete classroom assignments and to receive tutorial assistance from the ISS teacher. The majority of ISS teachers indicated that they regularly assisted the students with their work, as time and the number of pupils allowed.

To enable the ISS teacher to offer more focused instruction and specialized attention, regular classroom teachers in four schools are expected to provide a brief assessment of each pupil's recent behavior and academic progress. At other schools, the ISS teacher takes the initiative to either view students' records or request a conference with their regular classroom teachers if such background information is desired.

**Counseling**

The most significant change in the counseling aspect of the in-school suspension program in School Division B has been the discontinuation of one hour of mandated daily group counseling. The
principal at the pilot junior high school felt the guidance aspect of the original program had not been very effective because of the instability of the group composition. The counselors who replaced the ISS teacher in the pilot program for one class period per day reported that the students had to be "coerced, cajoled, or humored into participating in group sessions." They believed a lack of common student goals negated the appropriateness of the group guidance method. Because of these nonproductive results, the daily group counseling sessions outlined in the original ISS plan were replaced with individualized counseling during the last quarter of the pilot year.

Involvement of guidance personnel. In approximately half of the current in-school suspension programs in School Division B, the major counseling responsibility still rests with the guidance department. Guidance counselors usually meet with individual students at the request of the regular classroom teachers, the ISS teacher, or the students themselves. Their involvement is not mandatory. Group counseling is still practiced in two ISS programs.

Involvement of ISS teacher. In the other half of the in-school suspension programs, individual counseling is conducted by the ISS teacher with students as time and teacher duties (i.e. supervision, record keeping, and assignment checking) permit. One ISS teacher viewed the in-school suspension program in his school as a hospital where his job was to diagnose and treat the students to the best
of his ability. Though some form of counseling was reported in all ISS programs, less than half of the programs provided counseling for all students.

**Follow-up**

According to the original in-school suspension proposal, the major responsibility for follow-up rested with the guidance counselors. Their role was threefold:

1. To request any pupil personnel services appropriate to the specific needs of the suspended students.
2. To provide the administration and classroom teachers with information that could facilitate the success of the pupil in school.
3. To conduct follow-up counseling for the pupil after in-school suspension.

The first year report on the pilot ISS program contained no details concerning the implementation of the follow-up plan. Once the in-school suspension program was incorporated in all the secondary schools, follow-up procedures were defined by the administrators and staff at the individual schools.

When asked what follow-up is currently being done on suspended students once they leave ISS, two administrators indicated that their guidance counselors routinely talk with students and teachers in the weeks following an in-school suspension. At three schools, guidance counselors also do post-ISS tracking of student progress,
but on a much more sporadic basis. Three administrators said follow-up at their school was conducted routinely by the ISS teacher, while another trio of administrators stated that follow-up was also handled by the ISS teacher, but on a less frequent and less formal basis. Two administrators reported no follow-up on the students returning to regular classes after a stay in ISS.

**Effectiveness**

The central objectives of the in-school suspension program in School Division B were:

1. To reduce the need for suspending and/or expelling students from school.
2. To modify the behavior of these students through personal, academic, and vocational counseling and guidance.

The program's founders wished to accomplish these two objectives in a setting that would allow the suspended student to continue to earn class credit while participating in the punitive yet therapeutic program.

**Hypotheses**

In keeping with the objectives they had set forth, the founders of the in-school suspension program in School Division B proposed the following hypotheses:

1. There would be an increase in average daily attendance at schools incorporating the ISS program.
2. There would be a decrease in disruptive behavior at schools incorporating the ISS program.
First Year Evaluation

Comparison of first year and previous year suspension totals.

During the school year preceding the implementation of the in-school suspension program (1973-74), the pilot junior high recorded 524 suspensions. During the 1974-75 school year, 807 students were suspended, with 364 or 45% of those pupils placed in ISS, and the other 443 students assigned to out-of-school suspension.

Even though the total number of suspensions increased when comparing the 1973-74 school year with the year of ISS implementation, the principal at the pilot junior high school felt both objectives outlined for the program had been accomplished. He reasoned that 364 pupils were afforded an opportunity to remain in school, to continue to receive credit, and to progress in each of their subject areas. Also, the average daily attendance had been increased because without the in-school suspension program those 364 students would have been sent home to serve their suspension time.

Furthermore, to judge the effectiveness of the ISS program based on the total number of suspensions was not an accurate assessment, according to the principal of the pilot junior high school. He explained that while the major disciplinary violations warranting out-of-school suspension did not decline, the more minor infractions for which in-school suspension was used as a penalty did decrease during the trial year.

Comparison of monthly suspension totals. From a high of 65 placements the first month of ISS, the number of students assigned
to the program dropped to 39 the second month. The number of in-school suspension referrals remained in the high thirties and low forties until the last full month of school, a month the principal indicated traditionally experiences a higher number of disciplinary violations.

Faculty survey. Faculty members at the pilot junior high school were surveyed as to their opinion of the in-school suspension program. Of the 76 persons on staff, 33 responded favorably, 3 expressed negative sentiments, 3 new teachers felt too unfamiliar with the program to comment, and 37 teachers chose not to share their opinions.

Parent survey. An attempted survey of parental attitudes toward ISS during its first year brought a low response. Letters were sent to 100 parents or guardians of students randomly selected from a list of first year suspendees. The letters re-explained to the parents or guardians what the program was and asked them to briefly comment on it. Only 10 of the families returned the letters, but those 10 were very positive about the program.

Recommendations based on first year evaluation. Based on their assessment of first year results, the administration at the pilot school desired to continue the program in the upcoming school year. They also recommended to central office personnel that similar programs be introduced in each of the other 12 secondary schools.

Current Evaluation

After the 1974-75 pilot year of in-school suspension in School Division B, the program was incorporated into the disciplinary plan
at each secondary school as principals could work out suitable staffing arrangements. Individual site administrators were responsible for the operation of, as well as the evaluation of, their in-school suspension program. Yearly reviews of both the program and the ISS teacher were to be the duty of the principal or an administrative team consisting of the principal and one or more assistant principals.

**Evaluation of program.** When asked what type of evaluation of the ISS program was currently conducted at their school, administrators responded with the following answers: two said "None," three mentioned statistical data analysis of number of students assigned and number of repeaters, two referred to suspension room observation and conferencing with the ISS teacher, and one weighed the feedback received from regular classroom teachers.

**Evaluation of ISS teacher.** Two administrators in School Division B indicated that their ISS teacher was not evaluated on a regular basis. All other principals stated that the in-school suspension teacher was evaluated in the same manner as all other teachers: through classroom observation. The focus of the observations varied from administrator to administrator. While some evaluators emphasized management skills, others noted rapport with students, variety of materials used, well-planned, appropriate learning activities, and/or implementation of the program according to stated guidelines.

**Suspension statistics 1973-87.** As mentioned previously, there is currently no systemwide evaluation of the in-school suspension
program. The total number of in-school and out-of-school suspensions for the district is obtained through a copy of each disciplinary notice which is forwarded to the Department of Pupil Personnel Services. The following suspension statistics have been compiled from the school year preceding implementation of ISS (1973-74) to the end of the 1986-87 school year:

Table 1
Suspension Statistics 1973-74 - 1986-87

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Out-of-School Suspensions</th>
<th>In-School Suspensions</th>
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<tr>
<td>1973-74</td>
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<tr>
<td>1974-75</td>
<td>11,716</td>
<td>704</td>
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Interpretation of statistics. Though the total number of pupils in School Division B has declined by approximately 5,000 since the implementation of the in-school suspension program during
the 1974-75 school year, the number of both in-school and out-of-school suspensions has continued to increase. According to these figures, the school system does not appear to be moving toward the two original goals set for the ISS program: to increase average daily attendance and to decrease disruptive behavior. Those interviewed all agreed, however, that the effectiveness of the ISS program is difficult to gauge solely on statistics. They attribute the rise in suspensions to the more convenient and more positive nature of in-school suspension. They do not concede that disciplinary problems are necessarily more abundant.

Even though the ISS program may not be accomplishing the objectives originally proposed, the majority of educators consider in-school suspension a permanent program and even a success. They maintain that ISS fills a need by providing administrators with a supervised alternative to out-of-school suspension in which students can continue work on their class assignments. Without a restructuring of goals and strategies and a considerable increase in money for additional personnel and other resources, the in-school suspension program in School Division B is not expected to make major strides in reducing the number of student suspensions.

Attitudes and Opinions

While comparing suspension totals was one means for assessing the effectiveness of the in-school suspension program in School Division B, examining the perceptions of all those directly connected
to the program was also an important step in analyzing the ISS operation. Personal observations of central office staff, site administrators, and in-school suspension teachers were gathered through interviews and open-ended survey questions, as well as through the examination of relevant correspondence and reports.

The most frequently lauded aspect of the ISS program was that it provided a supervised, controlled alternative to out-of-school suspension. Educators also praised the counseling component in some schools which made ISS a positive program and helped students improve their attitude and behavior.

The strict discipline and no-nonsense approach which forced students to complete academic assignments in an isolated environment was especially effective in reducing truancy. Most persons interviewed felt the ability of the ISS teacher to relate to, communicate with, and manage the suspended students was a key to the success of the program.

**Views of administrators.** Overall, administrators were satisfied with the in-school suspension program. The weaknesses cited seemed to deal more with facilities and available resources than with basic principles of operation. Administrators mentioned such problems as insufficient space in ISS, lack of equipment and/or supplies, delay in receiving classroom assignments, interruption of regular classes to obtain work assignments, unavailability of resource materials and personnel, and, in crowded ISS rooms, understaffing.
When asked what suggestions or recommendations they would make for the improvement of the in-school suspension program, administrators' responses included: (a) training workshops for ISS teachers, (b) more remedial assistance for suspended students with learning difficulties, (c) increased involvement from members of the guidance department, (d) intensive work on behavior modification through individual and group counseling sessions, and (e) provisions for additional program space.

When asked their opinion concerning the evaluation of the in-school suspension program and teachers, most administrators seemed to be fairly satisfied with their current methods, however varied. They believed the effectiveness of the ISS program should be based on the accomplishment of preestablished goals and objectives, and the examination of statistical data, specifically the number of suspension and repeat offenders.

The majority of administrators also agreed that the ISS teacher should be evaluated in the same manner as other teachers: through classroom observation by either the principal or an administrative team composed of the principal and one or more assistant principals. Only one administrator believed recidivism rates for suspended students should be a basis for judging the in-school suspension teacher's effectiveness.

Views of teachers. At one school, feedback from regular classroom teachers was used to evaluate the in-school suspension program.
One teacher summarized the common sentiment in saying, "There is value in a program whereby a discipline problem can be solved while the student keeps up with his work." Teachers indicated that they liked having the option of removing disruptive students from the classroom without sentencing those pupils to out-of-school suspension.

Many of the responding teachers noted improved conduct and attitude when the suspended students returned to regular classes. They were quick to add, however, that while some changes were long lasting, other changes were short-term, and old behavior patterns soon reappeared.

**Views of parents and local citizens.** The response of parents and local citizens to the in-school suspension program was reported by administrators and central office personnel to be almost totally favorable. Parents felt the program was a satisfactory alternative to out-of-school suspension. Community members were reportedly pleased with the daytime decrease in unsupervised teenagers loitering in their neighborhoods.

**Views of students.** The attitudes of suspended students toward the in-school suspension program was described as "mixed" by various principals and assistant principals. A few pupils have requested to be sent to ISS so they can receive assistance on the completion of class assignments. The majority, however, consider ISS a punitive environment and thus, a negative consequence to be avoided. Many would opt for out-of-school suspension over in-school suspension if given the choice.
Overview of attitudes and opinions. Regardless of the students' reaction to the program, most administrators, teachers, and parents in School Division B feel in-school suspension is a reasonable and justifiable consequence for misbehavior. Though many of those interviewed wish time and money were available to make the program more rehabilitative, they believe ISS will be maintained as it is currently established. Other educators see in-school suspension progressing in a positive direction, and evolving as needed to meet the changing demands of a large, urban school district.
Chapter 4

Case Study Number Three

School Division C serves a rural area of middle to lower class families in central Virginia. Since the in-school suspension program was implemented in 1981, the student population has consistently averaged 9,500. In the same time span, the minority percentage has remained at approximately 20%.

The following chapter focuses on three aspects of the in-school suspension program in School Division C. First, the origin and development of the program will be reviewed. The second section of the chapter will include a discussion of both the original and current design of the ISS plan. An analysis of the program's effectiveness will be presented in the third part of the case study.

Origin and Development of In-School Suspension Program

The in-school suspension program in School Division C began as an alternative to the traditionally punitive approach of out-of-school suspension. An average of 1,200 students were being suspended from the four secondary schools each year. Surveys conducted within the school division indicated that the suspended students frequently were experiencing academic and behavioral problems. Their suspensions only compounded their learning difficulties.

Analysis of school division records also indicated that the drop-out rate had increased from 4.5% in the 1977-78 school year to 5% during the 1978-79 term. Out-of-school suspensions were believed by the central office staff to adversely affect the problem
student's ability to remain in school, thus contributing to the rise in the drop-out rate.

Personnel in School Division C realized a need for alternatives to the traditionally punitive approaches being used in response to discipline problems. In conformity with a State Standards of Quality Mandate (General Assembly of Virginia, 1980) requiring all school divisions to implement a plan to help pupils attain self-discipline and responsible citizenship, the superintendent sought to establish a program which would address the specific academic and behavioral needs of individual students in the most appropriate manner possible. The results of a survey conducted in the secondary schools indicated that an instruction-oriented in-school suspension program was highly supported as the preferred option to meet the needs of the student population in School Division C.

The following figures represent percentages of survey respondents who were in favor of implementing an in-school suspension program:

Table 2
Survey Respondents Pro Implementation of ISS

<table>
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<th>Respondents</th>
<th>School #1</th>
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</table>

Proposal for a Pilot Program

The next step toward implementing the in-school suspension idea was the drafting of a proposal for a pilot study. A planning committee
composed of central office staff members desired a program with
an individualized diagnostic/prescriptive focus that would keep
students in school and allow them to continue with their regular
classwork. The resulting proposal borrowed concepts from a federal
grant proposal written four years earlier by the superintendent
in School Division C while he served as assistant superintendent
in a neighboring county.

The proposal was then presented to the State Department of
Education and subsequently approved for a five-year grant. With
first year matching funds awarded by the State, the selection of
an on-site location was the next step in the implementation process.

Site Selection

The in-school suspension plan, or "Citizenship Program" as
it was formally titled, was first implemented during the 1981-82
school year in a junior high setting. The 1,070-student junior
high was selected for two prevailing reasons. First, it was close
enough in proximity to the neighboring senior high school that suspended
students from the senior high could also participate in the program.
Second, the planning committee members believed the administration
and faculty at this particular junior high school to be very receptive
to the introduction of new programs.

While the pilot junior high school enrolled fewer minority
students and served families with a slightly higher average socio­
economic status than did the other junior high school in School
Division C, the suspension rate was approximately the same at both
schools. In summary, the pilot junior high school was selected as the site for implementation of the in-school suspension program due to its location, the willingness of its faculty and staff members to test educational innovations, and its general representativeness in suspension rates.

**Estimated Expenditures and Funding**

Since its beginning in 1981, the yearly expenditures for the in-school suspension program in School Division C have included the salaries of the in-school suspension teachers and the instructional tutors, which are based on the district's pay scale, as well as the cost of materials. According to the Director of Special Services, $200 per school is budgeted each year for testing materials which are ordered and distributed by the central office staff. An additional $200-$250 is allocated yearly to the principal of each secondary school. This money is designated for the purchase of any supplementary materials which might be requested by the ISS teacher (also referred to as the diagnostic teacher).

Not all ISS teachers were aware of the funds allocated for their in-school suspension program, however. One diagnostic teacher did not realize that money was budgeted annually for the program, but believed that funds were available only if specifically requested by the principal.

During the first year of ISS operation at the pilot school, matching funds were provided by the State Department of Education.
The state funds diminished from 50% of the cost of the program the first two years to 25% of the expenditures at the pilot school during the program's third and fourth years. By the fifth year of ISS operation, the program was entirely supported by local monies.

Original and Current Design

Following the critical examination of data from the interview, survey, and document analysis processes, an effort was made to describe the in-school suspension program in School Division C as it was initially, as well as its current status. Following is a discussion of these program elements and revisions.

Philosophy and Goals

According to the proposal for the pilot study program, in-school suspension was expected to improve inappropriate behavior by diagnosing its cause and prescribing an individualized academic and behavioral plan for changing the undesirable behavior. The program was developed with the intent of keeping those students exhibiting inappropriate behavior in school, while requiring them to continue work on their regular class assignments.

Though the original pilot plan included the punitive aspect of student isolation from peers, the basic philosophical orientation was developmental. This rehabilitative focus has been maintained during the years since ISS implementation in 1981. For example, a diagnostic teacher still writes an academic and behavioral plan for all students who have completed their stay in the program. This remedial plan, based on information gleaned from tutoring,
counseling, and testing provides a basis for follow-up observations made by the instructional tutors to assess student progress.

There is apparently no discrepancy between the stated philosophy of the in-school suspension program in School Division C and the goals affirmed by the ISS staff. When asked the purpose of the in-school program at their school, all four ISS teachers responded that it was to identify the academic and/or behavioral problems of disruptive students and redirect their behavior. Only one teacher added that the purpose of ISS was also to punish students who violate rules by placing them in an isolated environment.

According to the responses of central office staff members as well as the in-school suspension teachers, the ISS program in School Division C has not strayed from its original rehabilitative philosophy. The redirective potential is thought to be even greater now than in the past due to the program's recent outreach into areas such as substance abuse and mental health counseling. Those interviewed were quick to point out, however, that the focus of the program is defined primarily by the principal who can sway the philosophical orientation in either a punitive or rehabilitative direction.

Objectives

There were six objectives formulated in the initial proposal:

1. To reduce the number of out-of-school suspensions.
2. To lower the school division's drop-out rate.
3. To assist the suspended student in making measurable academic progress.
4. To assist the suspended student in making positive gains in the areas of self-image, self-concept, and self-confidence.

5. To positively influence the perceptions of parents and teachers regarding the methods used within the school division to respond to discipline problems.

6. To test the effectiveness of the in-school suspension program over a period of five consecutive years in order to determine cumulative results.

These same objectives have remained in effect over the years ISS has been in existence in School Division C. Annual program evaluation has always been based on an analysis of data pertaining to the above objectives.

Other Disciplinary Options

The in-school suspension program in School Division C was not designed to replace out-of-school suspension, but to add a developmental alternative to the traditional punitive approaches used by administrators to solve disciplinary problems. Other disciplinary measures used prior to and since the implementation of ISS include before- and after-school detention, parent conferences, out-of-school suspension, and, on rare occasions, expulsion.

Some disciplinary decisions involve a combination of measures. For example, long-term suspensions (10 or more days) are served part in-school and part out-of-school. This relatively severe penalty does not allow credit for class work completed in ISS, and can be assigned only by the School Board.
Expansion

The in-school suspension program in School Division C was piloted during the 1981-82 school year. Though ISS was housed in and utilized primarily by a junior high school, students from a nearby senior high school were occasionally placed in the program.

During the 1983-84 school year, the in-school suspension program expanded to include the school district's other junior high. Once again, the diagnostic teacher and aide at the junior high school worked on a limited basis with students from the neighboring senior high school. By the beginning of the 1984-85 school year, all four secondary schools had implemented a separate ISS program.

The four secondary schools in School Division C were selected because the greatest number of suspensions and drop-outs occur at the secondary school level. The administrators at all four schools continued to utilize in-school suspension as a disciplinary option after the five-year pilot study concluded.

Staffing

The proposal drafted for the in-school suspension program in School Division C included the following positions: two diagnostic teachers to be shared by each pair of junior and senior high schools and four instructional tutors, one at each secondary school. However, the program began in 1981 with one diagnostic teacher and one instructional tutor. In 1983, an additional diagnostic teacher and an additional instructional tutor were hired. By the beginning
of the 1984-85 school year, each of the four secondary schools employed a teacher and a tutor.

Although the two in-school suspension positions were officially titled "Diagnostic Teacher" and "Instructional Tutor" in the original proposal, they are more commonly referred to now as "ISS teacher" and "aide." The principal, assistant principals, guidance counselors, and classroom teachers are also expected to be a working part of the ISS staff.

Qualifications. Four characteristics were repeatedly mentioned by the ISS teachers as qualifications for their position: (a) experience in teaching, (b) skill in maintaining discipline, (c) an interest in and desire to work with academically and behaviorally troubled students, and (d) preferably, a background in special education, counseling, or social work. Although only a bachelor's degree is required, one of the four ISS teachers holds a master's degree in special education, and another has a doctorate in a related field.

The position of instructional tutor does not, however, require teacher certification. When selecting an ISS aide, the following skills were considered necessary: (a) providing individualized academic instruction to students, (b) monitoring students' work, (c) preparing a written report describing a student's progress while in ISS, (d) gathering appropriate instructional materials, and (e) performing general record-keeping tasks.

Selection. The diagnostic teacher selected to coordinate the in-school suspension program at the pilot junior high school was
chosen primarily because of her previous experience with ISS operation. Specifically, she had worked as an aide in the pilot in-school suspension program that had served as a model for the program being implemented in School Division C.

All in-school suspension staff are now selected by personnel in the central office with individual school principals having the final approval. It has been the policy in School Division C to hire diagnostic teachers from outside the school system rather than move them from another position within the school system. The primary factor in the selection of the ISS teacher has been expertise and experience in working with students having academic or behavioral difficulties.

Training. Because the first in-school suspension teacher had worked with an ISS program very similar in design to the program being introduced in School Division C, no formal training sessions were conducted during the first few years of the program. As the other three secondary schools began their programs, the newly hired diagnostic teachers were briefed on the objectives and guidelines established by the administrator at their individual schools.

The only instance in which a formal training session was conducted for ISS teachers was at the beginning of the 1986-87 school year when three new diagnostic teachers were hired. That year, the in-school suspension teacher who directed the program at the pilot school led in-service workshops to familiarize the recently selected staff members with their responsibilities.
Responsibilities. No significant changes have occurred in the job description for the diagnostic teacher or the instructional tutor since the ISS program began in 1981. The following responsibilities were outlined in the pilot study proposal and still serve as the expectations for persons currently employed in those two positions.

It is the responsibility of the diagnostic teacher to prepare and assist in the implementation of an individualized academic and behavioral prescriptive plan for each student assigned to the in-school suspension program. Specifically, the duties of the diagnostic teacher are:

1. To coordinate the diagnostic assessment of students assigned to the ISS program (to include educational and personality assessments, a review of disciplinary records, and systematic student observation).
2. To provide alternative instruction during a specified period of time for referred students.
3. To prepare academic and behavioral prescriptive plans for the regular classroom teacher.
4. To assist regular classroom teachers in the implementation of the prescriptive plans.
5. To assign duties to the instructional tutor.

The job description for the instructional tutor includes five areas of responsibility:
1. To provide individualized and personalized tutoring to students as directed by the diagnostic teacher.

2. To monitor the academic and behavioral progress of students assigned to ISS.

3. To prepare a written report of each student's progress while in ISS.

4. To collect and prepare instructional materials that offer individualized academic and behavioral assistance to the suspended students.

5. To perform general record keeping tasks.

Record Keeping

An in-school suspension record keeping system was established during the early years of the ISS program which included the following data:

1. Total number of in-school suspensions.

2. Number of repeat offenders in ISS.

3. Reason for suspension.

4. Demographic data such as grade level, race, and sex of suspended students.

5. Description of each student's academic and behavioral progress while in ISS.

6. SRA Achievement Series pre- and post-test scores.

7. Personality assessment pre- and post-test scores.

8. Academic and behavioral follow-up plans and their success rate.

10. Record of parental contacts.
11. Number of and outcome of any outside referrals.
12. Sociological report containing any pertinent data on past academic achievement, testing results, and family situations.
13. Educational appraisal submitted by the referring classroom teacher.
14. Samples of student work completed while in ISS.

Student records are maintained while the student attends the school at which the suspension occurred, then are destroyed. For example, suspension information amassed while a student attends junior high school does not accompany the records forwarded to the high school. Likewise, suspension data do not remain in a student's permanent file following graduation from high school.

When asked what changes have occurred in the record keeping process, the in-school suspension teacher who has been with the program since it was implemented, noted the following variations:

1. The first year of the program, forms were developed for the referring teacher's educational appraisal, the guidance counselor's sociological report, and the principal's disciplinary report. In subsequent years, ISS teachers developed their own forms, thus eliminating county-wide consistency.

2. The Estes Attitude Scale was used as a personality assessment during the first two years of the program. At the beginning of the 1983-84 school year, the Estes Attitude Scale was replaced by the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventories because of the latter's more comprehensive sub-scales (including school subject areas as well as home, social, and general attitude measurement sections).
3. The SRA Achievement Series has always been the means of academic pre- and post-testing for the in-school suspension program in School Division C. However, over the years ISS personnel have experimented with other tests, and are still considering a replacement for the SRA Achievement Test.

4. In the early years of the ISS program, a summative report was written at the end of the school year for each student suspended at least once during the September through June period. This report, shared only with the student's parents and guidance counselor, contained background information concerning the suspension, diagnostic assessment results, observations made by the ISS teacher and aide, a description of the prescriptive plan, and an account of the student's academic and behavioral progress following the suspension. Because diagnostic teachers now meet with parents and guidance counselors only if they perceive a special need, these individualized reports are no longer completed. Instead, a year-end narrative report evaluating the entire ISS program is submitted along with the annual disciplinary report to personnel in the central office.

The annual disciplinary report submitted to the Director of Special Services includes four categories of information: (a) the number of disciplinary referrals, (b) the number of repeat offenders, (c) the number of out-of-school suspensions, and (d) the number of drop-outs. These statistics are compiled and analyzed each consecutive year to determine long-term effects of the individualized prescriptive plans on the academic and behavioral progress of the suspended students.
Although an annual disciplinary report and narrative evaluation are the primary informational links between the in-school suspension staff and central office personnel, monthly feedback is gathered from a copy of each suspension notice which is forwarded to the Director of Special Services. The Director of Special Services reviews monthly the number of and reason for suspensions at each secondary school, and keeps the Superintendent updated on trends as they emerge.

**Referral**

The original in-school suspension proposal stated that pupils would be assigned to the in-school suspension program by school principals in the case of "substantiated, observable, and maladjusted behavior" that normally would require an out-of-school suspension. Specifically, students were referred to ISS for the following offenses: truancy, disruptive behavior, tardiness, and smoking.

Students are now sent to in-school suspension for an expanded number of violations which include truancy, disruptive behavior, tardiness, and smoking, as well as disobedience, disrespect, skipping class, fighting, lying to a person in authority, cheating, stealing, and, depending on the seriousness of the offense, damaging property. There are no formal guidelines that designate certain consequences for specific acts of misbehavior. Instead, each principal makes a judgement based on the past disciplinary record of the individual student. For example, a first-time offender may be sent to in-school suspension for fighting, whereas a habitual fighter may be suspended out-of-school.
Occasionally, a student may request a referral to the in-school suspension program. Generally, this request involves the desire of a previously suspended student to receive additional tutoring from the ISS teacher or aide. If space is available, students are allowed to come to the suspension room during their study hall, homeroom period, lunch break, or morning activity period. Only upon the approval of the regular classroom teacher is a nonsuspended student permitted to spend class time in the suspension room.

**Preliminary steps to placement.** Once a student is assigned to in-school suspension due to a violation of one or more school rules, the principal notifies the student's guidance counselor and classroom teachers as well as the in-school suspension teacher. Parents are contacted by telephone at the time of the suspension, if possible. Also, separate copies of the suspension letter are sent home with the student and mailed to the parents' home address. The final preliminary step to placement involves the forwarding of the suspended student's disciplinary records to the diagnostic teacher.

**Length of placement.** While there are variations at the secondary schools concerning the maximum and minimum length of stay in ISS, all four schools have stayed within the one-to-five-day placement guidelines established in the original proposal. At two schools, the minimum amount of time students may spend in ISS is one day. At a third school, the minimum is two days, and at a fourth school, the briefest placement is three days. Any referral of less than one day is rare and is not reported in the monthly suspension totals.
Three of the four diagnostic teachers stated that five days was generally the maximum placement in ISS. They noted, however, that with a special school board review the length of stay could be extended to 10 days.

**Maximum number of students.** The original proposal offered no guidelines on the maximum number of students to be allowed to participate in the ISS program at any given time. When asked the maximum number of students that may be assigned to their program in one day, three diagnostic teachers responded that six was the upper limit, while one indicated that five students was the maximum load. The average number of students assigned to in-school suspension each day was estimated by the ISS teachers to be three to five.

Generally, the maximum student load in ISS is governed more by space considerations than the ability of the teacher and aide to work with a larger number of students. One principal commented that he would like to expand the space in the suspension room so that up to 15 students could simultaneously serve time in ISS. Since present facilities do not permit such a large group of suspended students, several options are used when the maximum student load is reached: (a) suspensions may be delayed a day or more; (b) suspended students may be released early; (c) students are assigned to out-of-school suspension instead; or (d) additional desks, chairs, or carrels may be brought in, but only if the overflow is created by students making up absences from a previous referral.
When the in-school suspension program was begun, the following rules and procedures were established:

1. The referring classroom teacher, with the assistance of the guidance counselor, will submit an educational appraisal to the diagnostic teacher by 3:30 p.m. on the first day of a student's placement in the program.

2. The guidance counselor will submit a sociological report to the diagnostic teacher by 12:00 noon on the student's first day in the program.

3. The school principal will submit the suspended student's disciplinary records to the diagnostic teacher by 8:30 a.m. on the first day of placement. He will also notify all teachers of the suspended student of the need for current educational objectives.

4. All regular classroom teachers of the suspended student will complete a teacher assignment sheet listing current educational objectives (work assignments) by 9:00 a.m. on the student's first day in the program.

5. Academic and personality assessment tests will be administered during the students' first day in the program. Students will begin work on regular classroom assignments after the initial testing phase.

6. Based on the data from the educational appraisal, sociological report, disciplinary records, current educational...
objectives, and assessment tests, the diagnostic teacher will organize a schedule of intensive individualized instruction that will assist the ISS aide in implementing the student's educational objectives.

7. During the period the student is in ISS, the diagnostic teacher will develop a personalized academic and behavioral prescriptive plan. The plan will be based on the analysis of (a) the referring teacher's educational appraisal, (b) a sociological report gleaned from information in the student's cumulative file, (c) school disciplinary records, (d) achievement test scores, (e) a personality assessment, (f) current class assignments, (g) suspension room observations, and (h) a written progress report from the instructional tutor.

8. The diagnostic teacher will explain and present a copy of the individualized academic and behavior prescriptive plan to the suspended student's regular classroom teachers and guidance counselor.

9. The diagnostic teacher, guidance counselor, and parents of the suspended student will meet to discuss the findings of the academic and behavioral evaluations and to explain the prescriptive plan.

Some changes have occurred in the general operating procedures for ISS in the years since the program began. First, the referring teacher's educational appraisal of the suspended student has been
replaced in most cases by a simplified teacher assignment sheet given to all of the student's regular classroom teachers. This form is generally placed in the teachers' school mailboxes on the day of the suspension.

When asked what steps are taken if teachers fail to promptly return the sheet listing current educational objectives, one in-school suspension teacher listed the following alternatives: (a) concentrate efforts on general remedial work, (b) give assistance on long-term projects that the diagnostic teacher knows are assigned to all students in certain subject areas, (c) review students' class schedules to determine appropriate learning tasks, or (d) ask the students to show where their class is currently working in the text, and to share any concepts with which they may be struggling.

A second change in operational procedures noted by several ISS teachers was that the sociological report has become a much less formal account of the student's educational, behavioral, and family history. Often a sociological report is not completed by the guidance counselor, and does not involve the use of a prepared form. The diagnostic teacher may simply review the suspended students' cumulative records for signs of academic difficulties, behavioral problems, or special home situations.

Another change in procedures involves the use of staffing meetings on a more limited basis. Although the in-school suspension teachers still prepare a prescriptive plan for each student referred to the program, they do not always find it necessary to meet with
the teachers and guidance counselor to explain the plan. The "staffing sessions," as they are sometimes called, are held only when the diagnostic teacher, guidance counselor, or one of the student's regular classroom teachers feel that a student's follow-up requires special consideration. These conferences are scheduled on an individual basis at the convenience of the classroom teachers.

Parent conferences following in-school suspensions have never been a requirement for student readmittance to class since the program began in School Division C. However, the procedures established in the pilot study proposal indicate that a meeting between the diagnostic teacher, guidance counselor, and parents will be conducted following each suspension. A final change in procedures is that ISS teachers now meet with parents based on perceived need. If their request for a conference is ignored or refused by the parent, the next step is a referral to Social Work Services.

No other specific guidelines were written for the operation of the ISS program. Therefore, the following sections outline the procedures as they have evolved at each secondary school.

Presentation of rules. Students are informed of the in-school suspension rules in a variety of ways. At one school, rules are reviewed at the beginning of each day in the suspension room. Students are also given a copy of the rules to be signed, indicating their understanding of and acceptance of the regulations. ISS rules are posted in the suspension room in two schools.
Additionally, in-school suspension rules may be listed in the suspension letter that is sent to the parents, explained at orientation, included in disciplinary handouts presented to all students, listed in the student handbook, or reviewed by the principal at the time of referral. Although the in-school suspension teachers may use any one or a combination of these informational methods, they affirmed that all students assigned to ISS are aware of the rules in force.

**Consequences of rule violations.** The consequences of violating the rules in ISS vary. Students may: (a) receive extra hours or days in ISS, (b) be suspended out-of-school but still required to serve in-school suspension time upon their return, (c) have a parent contacted to take them home, or (d) be placed in a time-out room within the ISS facility.

**Lunch and restroom breaks.** In two of the four in-school suspension programs in School Division C, lunch is brought into the suspension room. In the remaining two programs, lunch is scheduled when no other students occupy the cafeteria.

In one junior and one senior high school, private restroom facilities are available within the in-school suspension setting. Student restroom breaks at the other two schools are taken as a group and monitored by the ISS teacher or aide.

**Preliminary steps to readmittance.** Exit procedures for ISS also differ from program to program. At two schools, students must only complete their minimum assigned time before returning to regular
classes. In the other two programs, all assigned classwork and homework must be completed and checked or approved by the ISS teacher or aide. In addition, parents are often requested to come to school for a conference.

All four diagnostic teachers provide a written report that accompanies first-time offenders to their regular classes. The prescriptive plan written by the ISS teacher is officially titled the "In-School Suspension Report." The single page form contains information in the following five areas: (a) achievement test scores and self-esteem inventory results, (b) suspension room observations, (c) post-suspension objectives, (d) recommended intervention strategies to accomplish the objectives, and (e) follow-up evaluation procedures. A copy of this confidential academic and behavioral plan is then forwarded to the suspending principal, the student's guidance counselor, and each of the student's regular classroom teachers.

For repeat offenders, a follow-up report is written which includes expanded information concerning the student's diagnosed problem area. In two schools, regular classroom teachers regularly receive verbal feedback from the in-school suspension teacher in addition to the written prescriptive plan or the follow-up report.

Work Assignments

A student's time in the ISS program is divided among four program phases: (a) assessment, (b) remediation, (c) continuation of current
educational objectives, and (d) counseling. Each of these phases will be discussed separately in the following paragraphs.

Assessment. According to the proposal for the pilot studies program, academic achievement was to be measured by the SOL Achievement Series, and self-concept was to be assessed from the pre- and post-test results of the Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire. The use of either test was never reported in conjunction with the ISS program in School Division C.

The SRA Achievement Series was substituted for the SOL Achievement Series because the latter was already being administrated on a county-wide basis for all students. Although ISS personnel have experimented with other achievement tests, and are still considering the use of a different evaluation tool, the SRA Achievement Series continues to be the means of academic assessment.

The Estes Attitude Scale was chosen over the Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire because it focused on the student's attitudes toward specific school subject areas. After two years, the Estes Attitude Scale was replaced by the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventories because of the latter's more comprehensive sub-scales (Home, Social, School, and General).

The only instances in which assessment procedures for suspended students might vary is in the case of the educably mentally retarded (EMR), the learning disabled (LD), or the emotionally disturbed (ED). Achievement tests are waived for EMR students. LD and ED
students may be tested based on the recommendation of the special education teacher.

**Remediation.** In all four in-school suspension programs, the basic form of remediation is the tutoring provided by the instructional aide. The assistance provided is based on individual student needs assessed by both formal testing procedures and the monitoring of student progress on regular class assignments.

The diagnostic teachers in both junior high schools have also designed supplemental materials to be used by students placed in ISS. While the packets designed by one diagnostic teacher focus mainly on writing exercises, the work assigned by the other junior high ISS teacher includes exercises in basic math and English skills, consumer activities, "survival" skills such as budget making, job applications, and writing business letters, and the use of newspapers, magazines, encyclopedias, and other library materials. The in-school suspension teachers also use copies of English and math textbooks from past years for additional practice exercises.

**Continuation of current educational objectives.** Classwork and homework assignments are generally submitted to the in-school suspension teacher by 9:00 a.m. on the student's first day in the program. When students are not involved in testing, remedial work, or counseling, they are expected to work toward the completion of the educational objectives prescribed by their regular classroom teachers.
Students serving part of a long-term suspension in ISS cannot receive class credit for any work completed during the suspension period. In these instances, remedial work and intervention strategies such as counseling comprise a major portion of the student's time.

Counseling. The major counseling responsibility in all four in-school suspension programs in School Division C rests with the ISS teacher. Three of the four in-school suspension teachers indicated that they counseled with all referred students, while the fourth ISS teacher reported counseling with some, but not all, students.

The counseling techniques used by the in-school suspension teachers may include one or more of the following: (a) private discussions between the teacher and student concerning problem areas in the student's life, (b) group counseling sessions, (c) activities focusing on values clarification, (d) writing exercises that examine the cause of misbehavior, alternative behavior choices, and plans for future actions, and (e) the formulation of career goals and the development of a plan for achieving those goals.

Some of the in-school suspension facilities offer more privacy for counseling than others. One junior and one senior high each have a separate room that may be used for counseling while the other junior and senior high have but one multi-purpose room available.

The role of the school guidance counselor, school psychologist, county social worker, visiting teacher, mental health counselor, and substance abuse counselor in the in-school suspension program
is usually that of a consultant. When the diagnostic teachers believe additional forms of counseling may be needed by a particular student, they confer with these resource persons and often refer the student to the appropriate source for special assistance. One in-school suspension teacher commented that, because of limited time and inappropriate facilities, she does "a lot of referring and only a little counseling".

According to the original in-school suspension proposal, the guidance counselor had four responsibilities: (a) to assist the referring classroom teacher with the writing of an educational appraisal regarding the suspended student's academic and behavioral past performance, (b) to prepare a sociological report based on information from the student's cumulative file, (c) to meet with the diagnostic teacher and the student's parents to discuss any findings from the assessment process and to explain the prescriptive plan, and (d) to meet with teachers individually and in regular staff training sessions to discuss topics such as utilizing test results and specialized instructional and behavior modification techniques.

According to the in-school suspension staff, guidance counselors currently perform all four of the above tasks, but by request only, in most cases. Many referring teachers no longer complete educational appraisals. Often, diagnostic teachers review cumulative records for pertinent information. Parent conferences are not conducted with every suspended student. Finally, individual teacher conferences
and staff training sessions are scheduled only when a special need is recognized.

Follow-Up

In the original in-school suspension proposal, the individualized academic and behavioral prescriptive plan prepared by the diagnostic teacher served as the basis for all follow-up procedures. A written copy of the plan was to be presented and explained to the suspended student's regular classroom teachers. The diagnostic teacher was also to meet with the student's guidance counselor and parents to interpret the findings of the evaluation and to discuss the individualized plan. Actual follow-up was to include: (a) monitoring of the student for a specified period of time to ascertain both academic and behavioral improvement, and (b) a written record of the observations to be maintained in a separate student file.

In the current in-school suspension program, it is still the responsibility of the diagnostic teacher to examine behavior and attendance records, and to judge each student's progress based on the criteria established in the prescriptive plan. In two schools, the ISS teacher routinely talks with students and their teachers the week following the student's return to regular classes. At the other two schools, contact between the diagnostic teacher, the suspended students, and their teachers is conducted on an occasional basis. Only one ISS teacher reported regular assistance of guidance personnel in the follow-up process.
If a student returns to in-school suspension because of subsequent rule violations, that student's past suspension records aid in prescribing a plan of action to follow-up the previous prescriptive plan. One diagnostic teacher commented that, whether students are suspended on a single occasion or multiple occasions, she periodically monitors the progress of all suspended students for as long as they attend that school.

Two other forms of follow-up occur infrequently in the school suspension program in School Division C. Occasionally, regular classroom teachers may approach the diagnostic teacher with information or concerns about a student's progress. Also, a small number of students have requested permission to return to the ISS room for follow-up tutoring or counseling.

Effectiveness

The central objective of the in-school suspension program in School Division C was to develop a positive alternative to the county's traditionally punitive approaches to solving discipline problems. Therefore, a program was designed with the following three primary goals:

1. To allow students exhibiting inappropriate behavior to remain in school.

2. To provide the opportunity for those students exhibiting inappropriate behavior to continue work on regular class assignments.
3. To decrease inappropriate behavior by diagnosing its cause and prescribing an individualized academic and behavioral plan for each student suspended in-school.

Hypotheses

The proposal submitted to the State Department of Education in 1981 outlined a five-year study designed to evaluate the effectiveness of an in-school suspension program in School Division C. The independent variable in the study was participation in the ISS program. The dependent variables included: (a) the number of students referred as repeat offenders, (b) the number of students who drop out of school, (c) the number of disciplinary referrals, (d) the number of out-of-school suspensions, (e) the academic progress attained by suspended students, (f) a change in the self-image of participating students, and (g) the long-term effects of the prescribed treatment.

In keeping with the objectives set forth in the proposal, the following hypotheses were formulated:

1. At the conclusion of the project period of July 1, 1981 to June 30, 1982, out-of-school suspensions will decrease by 50% from the 1979-80 school year in grades 8-12.

2. At the conclusion of the project period of July 1, 1981 to June 30, 1982, the drop-out rate will decrease by 10% from the 1980-81 school year.

3. At the conclusion of the project period of July 1, 1981 to June 30, 1982, students who are assigned to the In-school
Suspension Program will gain an average of one month of composite achievement (reading, math, and language arts) for each month of instruction.

4. At the conclusion of the project period of July 1, 1981 to June 30, 1982, students assigned to the In-school Suspension Program will demonstrate a positive gain in the area of self-image, self-concept, and self-confidence.

5. At the conclusion of the 1981-82 school year, a greater number of parents and teachers will perceive the school to be handling discipline appropriately.

6. Data collected yearly for objectives 1-5 will substantiate the permanency of positive gains.

First Year Evaluation

During the school year preceding the implementation of the in-school suspension program (1980-81), the pilot junior high school recorded 235 suspensions. During the 1981-82 school year, 327 suspensions were recorded (an increase of 39% from the previous year), with 157 or 48% of those students placed in ISS, and the remaining 170 students assigned to out-of-school suspension. Although the number of out-of-school suspensions declined 28%, this did not meet the first year goal of a 50% decrease as stated in the program objectives.

The drop-out rate at the pilot junior high school did decline from 22 students in the 1980-81 school year to 14 students during the year of ISS implementation, meeting the first year goal of a
10% decrease. No records were maintained, however, on the academic achievement of suspended students during the first year of the program.

A slight positive gain was noted in student self-concept based on an analysis of individual profiles derived from the results of the Estes Attitude Scale. All students were pretested during their first assignment to ISS. If the students returned to ISS after April 30, the attitude scale was administered a second time. All students who did not return to in-school suspension by the end of May were post-tested in a group before the conclusion of the school year to determine if there was a measurable change in attitude following the in-school suspension and prescribed follow-up procedures.

Parent and teacher perceptions of the in-school suspension program were judged to be positive based on questionnaires distributed at the end of the school year. The parent survey contained questions related to the parents' knowledge about the in-school suspension program and their perceptions of its effectiveness. Teachers with suspended students returning to their classrooms were surveyed regarding the utility of the prescriptive plans, any observable effects of the ISS program, and whether the students subsequently displayed the same behavioral problems that necessitated their first suspension.

**Fifth Year Evaluation**

During its first five years, the in-school suspension program in School Division C was partially funded under the provisions of
a state grant. Data collected yearly on the program's major objectives were aggregated and reviewed at the end of five consecutive years to evaluate the effectiveness of ISS. A discussion of these results will focus on those statistics directly relevant to the original program objectives.

When pertinent records for the first five years of in-school suspension operation in School Division C were reviewed, no distinct patterns emerged. Out-of-school and in-school suspension totals, the drop-out rate, and composite achievement scores at each school rose and fell during the five year period with no consistent trends established. Evaluation of statistical data was also difficult because the programs varied in length of operation due to a staggered expansion process.

One common point of comparison, however, was the first year results at each school. Because the objectives in the pilot study proposal focused on desired results during the pilot year only, the following paragraphs contrast the suspension, drop-out, and achievement totals during the first year of ISS operation at each of the four secondary schools.

Number of out-of-school suspensions. The number of out-of-school suspensions did not meet the goal of a 50% decrease during the first year of ISS implementation at any of the four secondary schools. At the two junior high schools, the number of out-of-school suspensions declined 28% and 11% during their respective first years of ISS operation. First year results at both senior high schools show
the number of out-of-school suspensions increased 40% and 15% respectively from suspension totals the previous year.

Three explanations were offered by various persons interviewed for the failure of all four programs to reduce suspensions by 50% or more. First, a cumulative disciplinary system was established in which penalties became harsher with each referral, regardless of the rule violation which precipitated the disciplinary action. For example, a third-time offender might be suspended out-of-school for smoking on school property, whereas smoking as a first-time offense would not be considered serious enough for out-of-school suspension. This new disciplinary system resulted in an increased number of out-of-school suspensions.

A rise in out-of-school suspensions at one school was also attributed to the loss of an assistant principal during the school year who was not replaced until the following school year. Certain teachers at that school were assigned to solve disciplinary problems during their planning periods. As a result of the teachers' lack of time to seek alternative solutions and general inexperience in making such decisions, out-of-school suspensions increased.

A third reason offered to explain the number of out-of-school suspensions was the inordinate number of changes in personnel and, consequently, changes in disciplinary policies during the program's first five years. The Director of Special Services indicated that unless fluctuations among personnel involved with the in-school suspension program can be avoided, data are not being gathered in
a controlled situation. Thus, the data should not serve as the sole mode for judging program effectiveness. Although statistical trends are furnished to the principals for review, the success of the program in School Division C is based more on the program's efficacy as a positive intervention strategy for a significant number of students.

Drop-out rate. The drop-out rate did decline more than 10% (37.5%, 36%, and 63% respectively) at three of the four secondary schools during the first year ISS was implemented at each location. The fourth school recorded a 4% increase in the number of students dropping out of school during the first year of ISS operation.

Achievement rate. According to the pilot study proposal, students assigned to ISS would gain an average of one month of composite achievement in the combined areas of reading, math, and language arts, for each month of instruction as measured by the SOL Achievement Series. As was noted earlier, the SRA Achievement Series was substituted in place of the SOL Achievement Series because the former test was already being administered on a county-wide basis for all students.

All students referred to ISS were pre-tested during their first suspension period, provided the suspension occurred before April 1. If students returned to ISS after April 30th, the short form of the achievement test was administered a second time. All students who did not return to in-school suspension by the end of May were post-tested in a group before the conclusion of the school year.
To derive a statistical achievement rate, the average composite gain between pre-test and post-test scores for all tested students was divided by the average time (in months) between the pre-test and the post-test. During the years for which data were available, the average composite achievement rate was 3.5 months gain for every month of instruction between pre- and post-test dates.

**Personality assessments.** A pre- and post-testing design identical to the achievement testing design was implemented in each school to assess the self-image of ISS participants. Results from both the Estes Attitude Scale the first two years of the program, and from the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventories the next three years were reported in general narrative form rather than as specific numerical scores.

The fifth year in-school suspension evaluation report contained one comment regarding personality assignments: "A slight positive affect was noted in student self-concept." The Director of Special Services explained in more detail that the average post-test scores were slightly higher than the average pre-test scores, each of the five years, but the difference was not statistically significant.

**Prescriptive plan success rate.** The prescriptive plan or In-school Suspension Report includes a synopsis of the suspended students' areas of academic and behavioral strengths and weaknesses. The diagnostic teacher also furnishes written comments on test results and observational data, offers suggestions for general intervention strategies, and recommends further services if warranted.
Included in the in-school suspension report are measurable objectives with a specific time frame for their achievement, usually a month or more.

The fifth year evaluation report contained one comment regarding the success rate of the prescriptive plans: "Approximately three-fourths of the prescriptive plans were determined to be effective." This determination was reportedly based on two separate methods of evaluation. First, each ISS teacher reviewed all prescriptive plans at the conclusion of the school year to make a determination of what percentage of objectives was met. An example of an objective written in a prescriptive plan follows: "There will be no incidences of class cutting in the six weeks following ISS." As a part of the follow-up process, the diagnostic teacher reviewed disciplinary records or asked the classroom teachers to determine which objectives were accomplished.

A second method used to determine the success rate of the prescriptive plans was surveying teachers who received returning ISS students into their classrooms. These teachers, who each received a copy of the prescriptive plan, were asked their perceptions regarding the effectiveness of the intervention strategies proposed by the in-school suspension teacher.

Parent and teacher perceptions. In the fifth year evaluation report, parent and teacher perceptions of the in-school suspension program were reported to be positive. According to the Director of Special Services, all parents of students suspended in-school
were surveyed at the end of each of the five pilot study years. An 85%-90% response rate was reportedly received from those surveys. The questions focused on parents' knowledge of the program and their perceptions of its effectiveness.

At the pilot junior high school, parents of suspended students were surveyed at the end of the program's first two years. Due to a response rate of less than 10%, the surveys were later replaced by three less formal methods of gathering parental feedback. First, specific comments were often noted following a parent conference. Second, parental requests for in-school suspension rather than out-of-school suspensions were recorded as a form of positive feedback. Third, parents were often asked to complete a response sheet regarding how the school staff could help their child. Many parents mentioned the services provided in ISS as a positive course of action.

Teacher perceptions regarding in-school suspensions were measured through end-of-the-year surveys as well. Teachers with suspended students returning to their classrooms were questioned concerning the utility of the perscriptive plans, any observable effects of the ISS program, and whether the suspended students subsequently displayed the same behavioral problems that necessitated their first suspension.

At the pilot junior high school, teacher perceptions were measured in a less formal manner. At the conclusion of each school year for the first two years of the in-school suspension program, teachers were asked several open-ended questions pertaining to their impressions.
and observations of the newly implemented program. The opinions were consistently favorable.

Current Evaluation

When asked what type of evaluation of the in-school suspension program was currently conducted at their school, ISS teachers reported a variety of evaluation methods. One diagnostic teacher explained that the effectiveness of in-school suspension was judged by how well original program grant goals were being met. Another said evaluation of the program was conducted through classroom observation. A third diagnostic teacher indicated that the evaluation was twofold: through a review of individual records on suspended students (i.e. SRA pre- and post-test scores, self-esteem inventory results, and recidivism rates), as well as through observations conducted by a supervisor. An assistant principal at the fourth school, answering in the absence of the ISS teacher, responded that a prescribed format is used for a summative evaluation.

On a district-wide basis, evaluation of the in-school suspension program is accomplished primarily through a yearly report sent to the Director of Special Services. This narrative report, prepared by the ISS teacher, contains an analysis of data collected on each of the five objectives in the original grant proposal. The five categories include: number of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, the drop-out rate, academic progress made by the suspended students, a measurement of self-image, and parent/teacher perceptions of the program.
This information is compiled and presented to the Superintendent and each secondary school principal in the form of tables and charts representing figures from three years prior to the implementation of ISS to the present. The Director of Special Services emphasized that the purpose of in-school suspension review is not to compare programs or judge quality from statistical data, but to allow the principals to note trends and to make adjustments in their individual programs as they deem necessary to retain the developmental nature of this disciplinary strategy.

Attitudes and Opinions

While reviewing statistical data was one means for assessing the effectiveness of the in-school suspension program in School Division C, examining the perceptions of persons directly connected to the program was also an important step in analyzing the ISS operation. Most central office staff, site administrators, and in-school suspension teachers concurred that program effectiveness was difficult to gauge solely on statistics. The following attitudes and opinions were gathered through personal interviews, open-ended survey questions, and the examination of relevant correspondence and reports.

Views of administrators. Personal observations of administrators include responses shared by the Superintendent, the Director of Special Services, principals, and assistant principals in School Division C. The feature of the program most frequently lauded by those interviewed or surveyed was that ISS provides an alternative
to out-of-school suspension which allows students to remain in a supervised, controlled environment while receiving assistance on regular class assignments and behavioral counseling.

Administrators also praised the diagnostic/prescriptive aspect of the in-school suspension program. They explained that the focus is on determining the cause of the misbehavior, and subsequently developing a personalized remedial plan for each student. The emphasis is on correction rather than punishment.

Two keys to the success of the in-school suspension program, according to the administrators questioned, were maintaining a strict, no-nonsense environment in the suspension room, and counseling one-on-one with the students. Overall, they felt ISS had been successful in reducing out-of-school suspensions and improving the behavior and attitude of many who had participated in the program.

Although the administrators did not hesitate to voice their support for the in-school suspension program, they also realized the program could be improved in some areas. One weakness mentioned involved the program's ineffectiveness for some repeat offenders. Several administrators indicated that ISS did not seem to be an adequate deterrent for a relatively small number of students. They suggested that a harsher punishment was required to change the behavior of those few students for whom a stay in ISS failed to make a sufficient impression.

Another weakness of the current in-school suspension program cited by various administrators was the lack of a more specialized
counseling component. While the major student counseling responsibility rests with the ISS teacher, the school system's guidance counselors, psychologists, social workers, visiting teachers, and mental health and substance abuse counselors generally serve as consultants. Some administrators would like to see the counseling aspect of ISS include those resource persons, especially the school guidance counselors, on a more regular basis.

When asked their opinion concerning the evaluation of the in-school suspension program and teachers, most administrators seemed to be satisfied with their current methods, however varied. They believed the effectiveness of the ISS program should be based on the accomplishment of preestablished goals and objectives, the yearly examination of statistical data, and feedback from teachers, parents, and students. They agreed that ISS teachers should be evaluated in the same manner as other teachers (through classroom observation), as well as on their ability to implement the in-school suspension program according to stated guidelines.

Concerning the future of ISS in School Division C, all those questioned indicated that they felt the program would continue to be a part of each secondary school. They hoped for adequate funding and facilities to maintain the program at a high level of quality. One administrator also expressed a desire to expand the physical space and monetary resources allotted to ISS so that more students might be served in the future.
Views of in-school suspension teachers. The opinions of the diagnostic teachers were similar to those views advocated by the administrators. All agreed that the primary goal of the program was to provide an in-school alternative to out-of-school suspension that would result in improved behavior and attitudes for suspended students.

When asked what management strategies have proven effective in decreasing the number of repeat offenders in ISS, all diagnostic teachers mentioned individual counseling with the students. Three other strategies mentioned were: (a) enforcing strict behavior codes, (b) ensuring that work assignments are completed satisfactorily, and (c) assisting students in areas of academic difficulty.

The strength of the program, according to the in-school suspension teachers, depended on their ability to assess the cause of the student's problems, to plan appropriate academic and behavioral strategies for the regular classroom teacher to implement, to follow-up on progress once the student leaves the program, and to involve parents and community service groups in the remediation process. One diagnostic teacher responded that the success of the in-school suspension program rested on the listening ability of the ISS teacher.

When considering ways in which the ISS program might be improved, the diagnostic teachers acknowledged that, in general, the changes they desired involved circumstances over which they had limited control. For example, teachers mentioned weaknesses such as "politics and power plays," inconsistency among administrators when punishing
different students for similar violations, occasional delays in placing students in ISS due to space limitations, and inadequate furnishings (i.e. carrels and audio-visual equipment) in the suspension room.

All in-school suspension teachers agreed that the evaluation of the ISS program and the ISS teacher should be based less on classroom observation and more heavily on: (a) the implementation of the program according to stated guidelines, (b) feedback from suspended students and their classroom teachers, and (c) how well program goals and objectives are being met. One ISS teacher also added that diagnostic teachers should be rated only on those factors over which they have direct influence.

Looking to the future of in-school suspension in School Division C, the diagnostic teachers predict few changes in the years to come. Though they desire more consistent ISS policies among the four secondary schools and clearly defined referral guidelines within each school, the in-school suspension teachers strongly believe that ISS is a valuable alternative to out-of-school suspension as a securely established disciplinary technique.

Views of regular classroom teachers. In the first five years of the in-school suspension program, faculty surveys were conducted which indicated that teachers were in favor of the in-school suspension program because it (a) removed disruptive students from the classroom, and (b) often produced a positive change in student attitude and behavior.
Over the years, teacher response to the ISS program has been primarily positive. As one administrator elaborated, "Most teachers are very accepting of the program, and are willing to take the extra time required to write up assignments. We try to make it a minimum of pain and inconvenience for them."

Views of parents and local citizens. The response of parents and local citizens to the in-school suspension program was reported by administrators and diagnostic teachers to be almost totally favorable. One principal summarized the views of parents when he commented, "In-school suspension has provided good p.r. Parents are not nearly so apprehensive about a suspension when they realize their child will be supervised in a supportive setting."

Parent surveys conducted the first five years of the program indicated that parents of suspended students view ISS as a good alternative to out-of-school suspension, and as a positive program which helps their child improve in behavior and attitude.

Although a relatively small amount of feedback has been received from local citizens, the consensus of opinion has been that ISS is a disciplinary step in the right direction. Specifically, community members are pleased with the decreased number of unsupervised teenagers roaming the neighborhoods each day.

Views of students. The attitudes of suspended students toward the in-school suspension program have been more varied than those expressed by others directly involved in the program. Because of the strict rules, social isolation, and constant work associated
with ISS, diagnostic teachers and administrators report that many students would opt for out-of-school suspension over in-school suspension if given the choice. The majority of students, however, appear to be more accepting of their placement in ISS. Some view an in-school suspension as an opportunity to complete regular class assignments during the school day. A few students even request a referral to ISS in order to receive intensive academic and behavioral assistance.

Overview of attitudes and opinions. Overall, most administrators, teachers, and parents in School Division C believe in-school suspension has been effective in both maintaining discipline and meeting the educational needs of the suspended student. Those interviewed feel the individualized attention given each student and the personalized academic and behavioral plan formulated by the diagnostic teacher are the two points which set the ISS program in their school district apart from many other programs in the state and nation. Not only have they been able to maintain problem students in a learning environment, but they also pride themselves on their attempts to design appropriate treatment strategies to follow-up on maladaptive behaviors even after the student leaves the in-school suspension program.

When asked what changes they had witnessed in the seven years since the program’s implementation, several persons mentioned that operational procedures had been simplified in various ways. However, a majority of those interviewed discussed revisions in philosophical
tenets. According to the Director of Special Services, in-school suspension was begun solely to remediate academic achievement and to modify maladaptive behavior. The program has since delved more deeply into a holistic approach that includes intervention strategies which treat problems that are not always school-related.

One in-school suspension teacher referred to the new focus as "parent and community networking". She explained that over the years ISS has been in operation, contacts have been developed with the district parents' group, a local Al-Anon organization, the mental health department, social services, drug abuse counselors, and local law enforcement and juvenile court personnel. Most administrators, teachers, and parents in School Division C agree that no other disciplinary alternative offers such a wide range of positive intervention strategies to combat the broad scope of problems facing students in their school system.
Chapter 5

Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations

This study was conducted to determine the evolution of three in-school suspension programs in Virginia. The programs were examined in a case study format with regard to why and how they were established, what changes they have undergone, and their current status and effectiveness.

In Chapter 5, the findings of this investigation are discussed and conclusions are drawn concerning those findings. Based on a summary and analysis of the findings, recommendations are offered both for administrative practice and for future research.

Summary of Findings

This section includes a summary and analysis of data acquired from the three case studies as well as a discussion of apparent relationships among the in-school suspension programs. The major findings of this research are organized and described in two subdivisions: (a) origin and development of in-school suspension programs, and (b) program design.

Origin and Development of In-School Suspension Programs

Consistent with the purpose of this study, a historical perspective on the origin and development of three in-school suspension programs was presented. The resulting data yield a frame of reference for school administrators desiring to initiate similar programs.

The in-school suspension programs examined in the case studies each followed similar steps during the developmental process. However, the three school divisions varied considerably in the method and
extensiveness with which these steps were accomplished. Following is a summary of how the programs paralleled and differed from each other during the planning and implementation stages. The results of major variations in procedure are also noted.

**Delineation of problem area(s).** All three in-school suspension programs were begun as a positive alternative to the traditionally punitive approaches being used in response to disciplinary problems. Administrators in each school division found out-of-school suspension was failing to alleviate the increasing number of disciplinary referrals, and, furthermore, was not meeting the students' needs for academic and/or behavioral assistance. The in-school suspension program in School Division C was also established in conformity with a State Standards of Quality Mandate (General Assembly of Virginia, 1980) requiring all school divisions to implement a plan to help pupils attain self-discipline and responsible citizenship.

**Research of options.** Two assistant principals in School Division A researched the option of in-school suspension through a review of the literature. An assistant principal in School Division B read about the innovative strategy in an educational magazine. The Assistant Director of Pupil Personnel Services in School Division B also conducted a telephone interview with the principal of a Florida high school, whose ISS program had received national attention. Only in School Division C were existing programs observed, as well as options reviewed in the literature, interviews conducted with persons experienced in the implementation and administration of
in-school suspension, and input requested from faculty, staff, and parents. Of the three programs, the ISS program in School Division C also followed most consistently the plan outlined in the original proposal.

Draft of proposal. The two assistant principals who introduced the concept of in-school suspension in School Division A were solely responsible for the formulation of the pilot proposal for their district. A committee of 11 educators (three principals, a representative from the local education association, and seven central office administrators) was charged with developing an in-school suspension plan in School Division B. In School Division C, the committee that drafted the original ISS proposal was composed entirely of central office staff members.

Formulation of philosophy. Each of the three in-school suspension programs began with a developmental or rehabilitative philosophy. The central concept of the ISS program in School Division A was described in the pilot proposal: "... to leave the deviant child within an educational environment where his problems are manifest and where treatments can address causes rather than symptoms." The basic principles guiding the in-school suspension program in School Division B were derived from the statement of purposes listed in the 1974 proposal, which featured the modification of behavior of problem students through personal, academic, and vocational counseling and guidance. The philosophical doctrine for the ISS program in School Division C focused on the improvement of behavior
by diagnosing its cause and prescribing an individualized plan for changing the undesirable behavior.

**Identification of objectives.** The planning committees in School Divisions A and C both identified measurable program objectives which were in accord with their philosophy and goals and which included a reasonable time frame for their accomplishment. The objectives for the ISS program in School Division B were not clearly defined in measurable terms, nor was any time span designated for their achievement. Consequently, the latter program experienced a significant lack of direction, and the majority of its program purposes were never fully realized.

**Selection of strategies.** While all three in-school suspension proposals outlined specific strategies (such as counseling and follow-up) for accomplishing program objectives, the strategies were never effectually initiated in School Division B, and were consistently incorporated in School Division A only during the two pilot study years. School Division C has continued to utilize the strategies designated in its pilot studies proposal from implementation to the present. This investigation indicates that when the effectiveness of proposed strategies was not subject to direct evaluation, as in School Divisions A and B, those strategies were often only occasionally utilized or discontinued altogether.

**Development of evaluation design.** The evaluation design developed for the in-school suspension programs in both School Divisions A and C contained an extensive plan for the measurement
of program objectives. However, only the evaluation scheme for
the latter school system detailed specific steps for the recording
and collection of data, regular program monitoring, and periodic
cumulative assessment and revision. In School Division B, the
evaluation design was not directly linked to the measurement of
program objectives, and included no directives for data collection,
program monitoring, or cumulative assessment. It was observed that
the record keeping system in both School Divisions A and B evolved
into a simplified yearly statistical report. Although the ISS
programs examined in all three case studies underwent many changes
from implementation to the present, the two programs which failed
to include a plan for regular program monitoring and cumulative
assessment strayed from their original philosophy, objectives, and
strategies toward a less rehabilitative focus. Conversely, revisions
made in the in-school suspension program in School Division C enhanced
its redirective potential.

Estimation of expenditures. The planning committee in School
Division A presented an estimate of expenditures required for
personnel and materials in the original ISS proposal. The proposals
for both School Divisions B and C contained only a list of desired
staff positions (including full-time guidance counselors, aides,
and instructional tutors) which were not realized in the first year
of the program due to inadequate funds.

Securing of financial support. The in-school suspension programs
in School Divisions A and C were both partially funded by the State
Department of Education during their initial years. Until approximately five years ago, no formal position was budgeted for an in-school suspension teacher in School Division B. Each site administrator either made a special request for the additional money required to hire ISS personnel or shifted teachers' schedules to free one or a combination of staff members for the ISS duty. This lack of consistent pecuniary resources in School Division B led to many differences in staffing arrangements from school to school and from year to year.

**Determination of pilot site(s).** Site selections in School Divisions A and B were based primarily on the interest and willingness of the administrators who proposed the concept of in-school suspension to house the program in their building. In School Division C, the pilot junior high school was selected as the site for implementation of ISS because of its location near the high school so facilities could be shared initially, the perceived willingness of its faculty and staff members to test educational innovations, and its general representativeness in suspension rates.

**Selection and training of staff.** The in-school suspension teachers chosen to initiate the program in each school division were carefully screened based on preestablished qualifications. In School Division A, the first two ISS coordinators were briefed on the objectives and guidelines of the program, but received no formal training. In the beginning of the second year of the pilot study, a two-week workshop was conducted for the suspension room
coordinators and assistant principals from the three schools which were adding the in-school suspension program. Since the third year of ISS in School Division A, all coordinators have attended an in-service workshop at the beginning of each school year to share suggestions and discuss strategies. No provisions have ever been made for formal training of ISS staff in School Division B. As in School Division C, suspension room teachers are informed of their responsibilities and general operating procedures by site administrators. A single in-service workshop was conducted in School Division C at the beginning of the 1986-87 school year when three new in-school suspension teachers were hired. This lack of formal, systemwide training in all three school divisions has resulted in a lack of uniform operating and data collecting procedures.

Involvement of faculty and administration. During the two pilot years of the in-school suspension program in School Division A, a faculty orientation was conducted at the beginning of each term, teacher feedback was requested regarding changes in pupils' behavior in the two-week interval following each student's suspension, and regular student follow-up was conducted by the ISS coordinator. The ISS implementation process in School Division B contained no provisions for faculty orientation and involvement. A follow-up plan allowing guidance counselors to communicate with students and provide feedback to teachers was included in the original proposal. However, the process was never consistently executed. In School Division C, staff training sessions were scheduled bi-monthly during
the first year of the in-school suspension program. Written follow-up plans were also prepared for the teachers of each suspended student. In the two schools where faculty and administration were included in the in-school suspension planning and implementation process, their support of the program was more evident and their attitudes toward ISS were more positive.

Original and Current Design

The objective of this research was to describe the changes in program philosophy and methods of implementation of the in-school suspension plan in each of the three selected school divisions. The purpose of investigating these changes was to note the reasons for revisions and to assess which specific strategies appeared to be effective over an extended period of time.

All of the in-school suspension programs examined in the case studies underwent a number of changes from implementation until the present. However, the reasons for the modifications varied within each school division. Following is a summary of the major alterations made in each ISS program and the stimuli that influenced those changes.

Philosophy and goals. Although the original pilot plan in School Division A included efforts in behavior modification through counseling, student contracts, and values clarification exercises, the basic philosophical orientation in actual practice was punitive. Students were required to work in specially prepared folders because
it was not considered a rigorous enough punishment if students were allowed to do classwork.

The current in-school suspension program appears to have reached a compromise in its philosophy and goals. While now allowing students to complete regular class assignments, the counseling and follow-up services have been greatly limited and remedial assistance is not usually provided. Because students may now be referred to ISS for as short a time as one period per day, the program also serves as a temporary holding station for rule violators. In summary, the in-school suspension program in School Division A is neither totally punitive in nature nor primarily rehabilitative. Instead, the program has evolved into a controlling disciplinary technique, a means of removing problem students from the classroom while enabling them to continue with their classwork.

While beginning with a rehabilitative philosophy, the in-school suspension program in School Division B has also emerged as a temporary controlling technique. The original proposal adopted in 1974 directed that the minimum length of stay in ISS be three days to allow time for testing, academic instruction, and individualized counseling. At least three schools now assign students for as brief a duration as one class period per day. The use of in-school suspension as a short-term disciplinary option does not allow time for the behavior modification through personal, academic, and vocational guidance and counseling which was described in the 1974 proposal.
In both School Divisions A and B, the current in-school suspension program appears to present a blend of three different philosophical orientations. While there is intent to rehabilitate student behavior through limited counseling and academic assistance, administrators desire the environment in ISS to be punitive enough to deter future misbehavior. Out of convenience and a lack of alternatives to handle a growing number of rule violators, in-school suspension is also used as a controlling measure for disruptive students. The dominant philosophical orientation in actual practice in each school division is determined more by the building administrators who staff and monitor their individual ISS programs, than by the philosophy presented in the original proposals.

Only in School Division C was there no apparent discrepancy between original philosophy and current practices. Since the program's inception in 1981, an effort has been made to improve inappropriate behavior by diagnosing its cause and prescribing an individualized academic and behavioral plan for changing the undesirable behavior. This remedial plan, based on information gleaned from tutoring, counseling, and testing, provides a basis for the follow-up observations conducted to assess student progress.

Objectives. Lack of consistency in the operation of the in-school suspension program prompted administrators in School Division A to form a reevaluation committee during the program's twelfth year of operation. One of the outcomes of the assessment process was
a description of a recommended program which featured objectives more qualitative in nature than the objectives from the 1975 proposal. Emphasis was placed on assisting students in examining the cause of their suspension and developing more positive attitudes toward school rather than on reducing the number of suspensions and referrals.

The in-school suspension program in School Division B began with four purposes. The central objective of the current ISS program continues to be providing an alternative disciplinary consequence that reduces the need for out-of-school suspension. Two other objectives of modifying student behavior and enabling students to earn class credit while in ISS remain at the core of the program. The major difference in the objectives formulated in the initial proposal and those aims expressed by current administrators is the decreased emphasis on personal, academic, and vocational guidance and counseling. While some form of counseling was reported in all ISS programs, less than half of the programs consistently offered counseling to all students. Vocational guidance was never a part of any in-school suspension plan. Two reasons seem to underlie the lack of regular developmental counseling. First, the involvement of guidance counselors is not mandatory. Second, individualized counseling is conducted by the ISS teachers with students as time and teacher duties permit. Most suspension room teachers feel there are too many referrals each day for them to effectively counsel with each student.
The same objectives have remained in effect over the years ISS has been in existence in School Division C. Annual program evaluation has always been based on an analysis of data pertaining to the objectives as presented in the original pilot study proposal.

**Disciplinary options.** The in-school suspension program was not designed to replace out-of-school suspension in School Divisions B and C, but to reduce the number of students suspended out-of-school for relatively minor disciplinary rule violations. In School Division A, however, out-of-school suspension was replaced initially by in-school suspension, only to be reinstated in subsequent years for major disciplinary problems deemed too extreme for in-school suspension, for chronic offenders, and for students who refused to comply with ISS rules and procedures.

Even though out-of-school suspension and expulsion are currently disciplinary options in all three school divisions, the number of in-school suspensions continues to increase. School officials attribute this to the more positive, less legally risky nature of in-school suspension, and to the convenience with which they can refer students for minor disciplinary infractions.

**Expansion.** Many changes occurred in the in-school suspension programs in School Divisions A, B, and C as ISS was incorporated in all secondary schools. However, the primary reason for the modifications was different in each district. Significant changes were made in School Division A as the program expanded and freedom was given to administrators to adjust the program to fit their needs,
facilities, and individual disciplinary considerations. Operational
details in School Division B varied widely as the program was
introduced at each new site due to a lack of consistent pecuniary
resources. Until approximately five years ago, no formal monies
were budgeted for the in-school suspension program in School Division
B. Each site administrator either made a special request for the
additional money needed for a teacher and materials, or used personnel
and materials already at the school. As the ISS program expanded
in School Division C, a diagnostic teacher and aide were initially
shared by each pair of junior and senior high schools to minimize
costs and to test the program's efficacy.

Staffing. One concern that was echoed in several interviews
in School Division A was the gradual lessening in subsequent years
of emphasis on securing the most qualified person for the coordinator's
position. In cases where the position was filled with a teacher
already at the school, the coordinator's selection was often based
on factors other than their experience, interest, and ability to
work with academically and behaviorally troubled students. The
in-school suspension teacher in School Division B is also frequently
selected from staff available at the school, while, in School Division
C, the policy has been to hire diagnostic teachers from outside
the school system.

Another staffing concern identified during the interviews in
School Divisions A and B was the use of a combination of two or
more regular classroom teachers to staff the suspension room. Two
results of this staffing option in School Division B have been that
diagnostic tests are no longer administered to suspended students
on a regular basis, and classroom teachers are no longer provided
with interpreted results of any tests. The ISS teachers explain
that there is not adequate time in their schedules for these additional
duties. In School Division A, there is generally less disciplinary
continuity, little individual assistance, and reduced coordinator
insight into students' behavioral problems when there is no full-time
coordinator.

The in-school suspension teachers in all three school divisions
are briefed on ISS objectives and guidelines by an administrator
at their individual schools. Formal training programs were only
conducted at the beginning of the second year of the pilot study
in School Division A (when three new schools added the program),
and at the beginning of the 1986-87 school year in School Division
C (when three new diagnostic teachers were hired). No formal training
programs have ever been regularly conducted in School Division B
to familiarize the suspension staff with their responsibilities.
Only in School Division A are in-service workshops currently organized
at the beginning of each school year for ISS teachers.

Record keeping. After the first two years of the in-school
suspension program in School Division A, formal evaluation procedures
were discontinued. With the pilot study completed and the ISS program
firmly entrenched in the district's discipline plan, only monthly
suspension totals and the student behavior which warranted the referral
were submitted to the appropriate central office staff members.

A tally of the total number of in-school suspensions is maintained at all secondary schools in School Division B. Any additional records, including individual student files, are kept at the discretion of the administration or the ISS teacher. Since the program's inception, the only information that has been consistently forwarded to the Department of Pupil Personnel Services is a copy of each suspension notice.

The record keeping system in School Division C has likewise remained basically unchanged over the years since the in-school suspension program began. However, two major differences exist between the record keeping systems in School Divisions B and C: extensiveness and relationship to program objectives. As many as 14 separate categories of information are gathered on each suspended student in the latter district, all directly related to the measurement of stated objectives.

**Referral.** One change noted in School Division A concerned the simplification of the individualized planning process which precedes each student's placement in ISS. In the pilot program, the coordinator, resource teacher, and counselor met to discuss and design a special program for each referred student. The coordinator also researched the student's scholastic record, disciplinary record, and record of parental contacts as well as consulted with the guidance counselor, school psychologist, or
visiting teacher when deemed appropriate. This extensive research and planning prior to the student's arrival is rarely executed in the current program, primarily because of the large number of students placed daily in ISS.

Students are now sent to in-school suspension for an expanded number of violations in all three school divisions. No formal guidelines now exist (as they did in the original proposals of School Divisions B and C) that designate certain consequences for specific acts of misbehavior. Instead, each administrator makes judgements usually based on the past disciplinary record of the individual student.

An additional program modification in School Divisions A and B involved the length of placement. While the minimum assignment designated in the original in-school suspension program in School Division A was one full day, and three days in School Division B, students in both programs are now referred to ISS for as short a time as one class period. Also, the original proposal in School Division B designated five days as the maximum penalty. Maximum length of referral now ranges from an upper limit of ten days at two schools to only one day at one senior high. These revisions in operational procedures generally reflect (a) the management preferences of the individual principals, (b) a gradual move towards convenience of administration, and (c) specific needs of the school and resources available to meet those needs.
Rules and procedures. No systemwide written guidelines for the detailed operation of the in-school suspension program are available in any of the three school divisions reviewed in the case studies. Although some administrators have formulated guidelines for their individual ISS programs regarding the presentation of rules, consequences of rule violations, procedures for lunch and restroom breaks, and requirements for readmittance to regular classes, these rules are not consistent among schools within each district.

The major change in each school division has been a decrease in communication between in-school suspension teachers, regular classroom teachers, guidance counselors, administrators, and parents. In School Division A, a conference was held between the assistant principal, ISS coordinator, student, and parents prior to the student's return to class. Also, the ISS coordinator provided a written report describing the suspended student's work completed and overall behavior, as well as any specific observational comments and recommendations to the assistant principal and the student's parents, teachers, and counselor. These two preliminary steps to readmittance are no longer a part of every in-school suspension program.

In only 3 of the 13 secondary schools in School Division B are parents still required to attend a conference before their son or daughter is readmitted to class. The ISS teachers at just two schools continue to provide regular classroom teachers with a written report describing the suspended pupil's behavioral and academic progress during the suspension period.
Four alterations were noted in the general operating procedures of the in-school suspension program in School Division C since the program began. First, the referring teacher's educational appraisal of the suspended student has been replaced in most cases by a simplified teacher assignment sheet. Second, the sociological report has become a much less formal account of the student's educational, behavioral, and family history. Often, the report is completed by the ISS teacher rather than the guidance counselor, and does not follow any predetermined format. A third change in procedures involves the use of staffing sessions on a more limited basis. These conferences between the diagnostic teacher, guidance counselor, and student's regular classroom teachers are now scheduled only when a student's follow-up requires special consideration. Finally, a meeting between the diagnostic teacher, guidance counselor, and parents of the suspended student is not conducted before the readmittance of each student to regular classes. Instead, ISS teachers now meet with parents based on perceived need.

When asked why various avenues of communication between in-school suspension teachers, regular classroom teachers, guidance counselors, administrators, and parents have been limited or discontinued, two common responses were offered. First, both ISS and regular classroom teachers as well as guidance counselors reported a lack of available time to complete detailed reports on each suspended student. Second, required conferences were found to be difficult to schedule and often unproductive.
Work assignments. In the early years of the in-school suspension program in School Division A, all work assigned to students was from prepared folders because it was not considered a rigorous enough punishment if students were allowed to do classwork. Over the years, this punitive philosophy shifted somewhat. While some ISS programs still use only work folders, others rely solely on assignments from regular classroom teachers. The majority of programs, however, now use a combination of required ISS assignments and classwork submitted by teachers.

The original in-school suspension proposal in School Division B included three suggested program activities: (a) one hour of daily group counseling, (b) diagnostic testing, and (c) supervised study. Because diagnostic testing was never a routinely established practice and group counseling was found to be ineffective and was discontinued in most ISS programs, additional time is now available for the suspended student to complete classroom assignments and to receive tutorial assistance from the ISS teacher.

The only significant change in work assignments in School Division C was a switch in personality assessment instruments. The Estes Attitude Scale was replaced by the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventories at the beginning of the third year of ISS operation because of the latter's more comprehensive sub-scales.

Counseling. During the pilot study years in School Division A, students met with their guidance counselors on the first day of their suspension. Guidance personnel are now involved in the
counseling process only if they choose to be, or if their assistance is specifically requested by a coordinator, teacher, or administrator. With the exception of one school, guidance counselors are not required to work with students in ISS. Consequently, much of the counseling responsibility has shifted to the coordinator. Some coordinators indicate that the amount of counseling received by students in ISS depends on the number of students in the suspension room on a given day. Other coordinators state that due to constant supervision duties, record keeping, assignment checking, nonsuitable atmosphere, and lack of privacy, they do not even attempt to work with the students in ISS.

One significant change in the counseling aspect of the in-school suspension program in School Division B has been the discontinuation of one hour of mandated daily group counseling. Because of the instability of the group composition and the lack of common student goals, the daily group counseling sessions outlined in the original ISS plan were replaced with individual counseling in all but two programs. The gradually decreasing role of the guidance personnel over the years has shifted the responsibility for student counseling primarily to the in-school suspension teachers, if undertaken at all. None of the four tasks designated in the 1974 proposal are routinely performed by guidance counselors in the current in-school suspension program. Those tasks included conducting group guidance sessions as well as securing the services of resource specialists, sharing diagnostic data with teachers and administrators, and
providing follow-up on suspended students.

The major responsibility for student counseling in School Division C has always rested with the in-school suspension teacher. Three of the four ISS teachers indicated that they counseled with all referred students, while the fourth diagnostic teacher reported counseling with some, but not all, ISS pupils. One diagnostic teacher also reported that because of limited time and inappropriate facilities, she frequently utilizes the services of resource persons within the school system and community to offer specialized assistance.

According to the original in-school suspension proposal, the role of the guidance counselor in School Division C was (a) to assist the referring classroom teacher with the writing of an educational appraisal, (b) to prepare a sociological report based on information from the student's cumulative file, (c) to meet with the diagnostic teacher and the student's parents prior to the pupil's return to class, and (d) to meet with teachers individually and in staff training sessions to discuss relevant testing and discipline-related topics. Guidance counselors in School Division C currently perform all four of the above tasks, but by request only in most instances.

*Follow-up.* No formal guidelines were ever developed for the follow-up process in School Division A. In the pilot study years, the ISS coordinator would talk with the students and their teachers several times in the two weeks following the suspension. Although the majority of ISS coordinators currently have a planning period and duty-free lunch, most believe there are just too many students
assigned to ISS to follow-up in an organized manner. Therefore, follow-up procedures are not routinely conducted.

In contrast, the major responsibility for follow-up in School Division B originally rested with the guidance counselors. However, once the in-school suspension program was incorporated in all secondary schools, follow-up procedures were defined by the administrators and staff at the individual schools. Currently, guidance counselors at two schools routinely talk with students and teachers in the weeks following an in-school suspension, while at three schools, the post-ISS tracking of students is conducted on a much more sporadic basis. ISS teachers routinely provide the follow-up at three schools; less frequently at another three sites. The administrators at two schools report no follow-up on students returning to regular classes after a stay in ISS.

The individualized academic and behavioral prescriptive plan prepared by the diagnostic teacher has always served as the basis for follow-up in School Division C. Over the years since ISS implementation, students have been monitored for a specified period of time, and a written record of these observations has consistently been maintained in the student's file. The only change in procedure is the reduced contact between the ISS teacher and the student's regular classroom teachers, guidance counselors, and parents. Meetings are now held only when a pupil's follow-up requires special attention.

Evaluation. During the first year of the in-school suspension program in School Division A, both pilot schools experienced a marked
reduction in the total number of suspensions as well as in the recidivism rate when compared with the prior year statistics at each school. Second year data again demonstrated a decreased number of suspensions in each school as well as improved attitudes in 35% of the students suspended in-school (compared to improved attitudes in 17% of students suspended out-of-school at the control sites).

For the next 10 years, formal evaluation procedures were discontinued. Lack of consistency in the administration and maintenance of the program prompted the formation of a committee in August, 1986 to make a full analysis of the in-school suspension program and to make recommendations for the future of the program based on the results of the analysis. The three main areas of concern included alternatives to ISS for the chronic offenders, systemwide administrative and curriculum guidelines, and criteria for evaluating program and coordinator effectiveness.

Personal opinions regarding changes which could be made to improve the current in-school suspension program in School Division A were gathered through interviews with superintendents, pupil personnel directors, principals, assistant principals, and program coordinators. Their responses included the following perceived needs:

- standardized operations based on systemwide guidelines
- additional in-service preparation for coordinators
- stronger direction from central office regarding record keeping and program monitoring and evaluation
* increased efforts in counseling and follow-up
* greater parental involvement
* intensified emphasis on securing qualified persons for the coordinator's position
* more extensive use of resource persons
* decreased number of students in ISS on a daily basis
* elimination of part-time suspensions (less than one full day).

Overall, those interviewed felt the in-school suspension program was a success. They attributed its effectiveness to the extensive research, planning, piloting, and evaluation incorporated in the early years of the program. The key to the program's future success was believed to be a coordinated effort by all involved to unify the program and to make it as rehabilitative as possible.

At the conclusion of the first year of the in-school suspension program in School Division B, the total number of suspensions (in-school and out-of-school) had increased 54% from the preceding year (out-of-school suspensions only). However, the principal at the pilot junior high school felt both objectives outlined for the program had been accomplished. He reasoned that all 364 pupils suspended in-school had been afforded an opportunity to continue to progress and receive credit in each of their subject areas. Also, the average daily attendance had been increased because without the in-school suspension program those 364 students would have been sent home to serve their suspension time.
After the 1974-75 pilot year of in-school suspension in School Division B, individual site administrators were responsible for the operation of, as well as the evaluation of, their individual in-school suspension programs. Twelve years later, no more than three schools had the same evaluation plan, and at two schools there was no established plan for assessing the effectiveness of the in-school suspension program or the ISS teacher.

Although the total number of pupils has declined by approximately 5,000 since the implementation of the ISS program, the number of in-school suspensions has continued to increase. Without a restructuring of goals and strategies and a considerable increase in money for additional personnel and other resources, educators in School Division B do not expect the program to make major strides in reducing the number of student suspensions. However, they still view ISS as a positive alternative to out-of-school suspension.

Personal observations of central office staff, site administrators, and in-school suspension teachers were gathered through interviews and open-ended survey questions. When asked what suggestions or recommendations they would make for the improvement of the program, their responses included:

* training workshops for ISS teachers
* increased involvement from members of the guidance department
* intensive work on behavior modification through individual and group counseling sessions
* provisions for additional program space and equipment.
Though many of those interviewed wished time and money were available to make their in-school suspension program more rehabilitative, they foresee ISS being maintained as it is currently established. Other educators see in-school suspension progressing in a positive direction and evolving as needed to meet the changing demands of a large, urban school district.

During its first five years, the in-school suspension program in School Division C was monitored as a state grant program. Data collected yearly on the major objectives were aggregated and reviewed at the end of the fifth consecutive year to formally evaluate the effectiveness of the program.

When records for the first five years of ISS operation were reviewed, no distinct patterns emerged. Out-of-school and in-school suspension totals, the drop-out rate, and composite achievement scores at each school rose and fell during the five-year period with no consistent trends established. An inordinate number of changes in personnel and disciplinary policies was offered as an explanation for the statistical fluctuations.

The fifth year evaluation report also contained brief statements regarding the measurement of student self-concepts, the effectiveness of the prescriptive plans, and parent/teacher perceptions of the program. A slight positive gain was noted in the self-concept of students who had been placed in ISS. These results were based on pre- and post-test scores from the Estes Attitude Scale (the first two years of the program) and the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventories.
(from the beginning of the 1983-84 school year to the present).

Through follow-up observations of suspended students and through teacher surveys, approximately three-fourths of the academic and behavioral prescriptive plans were determined to be effective. These prescriptive plans, developed for each student referred to ISS, included suggestions for intervention strategies as well as measurable objectives with a specific time frame for their achievement.

Parent and teacher perceptions of the in-school suspension program were measured by surveys conducted at the end of each of the five pilot study years. The responses from both groups were consistently favorable.

According to central office staff members, the evaluation of the in-school suspension program in School Division C is accomplished primarily through an analysis of data collected on each of the five objectives in the original grant proposal. However, the success of the program is based more in its efficacy as a positive intervention strategy for a significant number of students. The Director of Special Services emphasized that the purpose of the yearly in-school suspension review is not to compare programs or judge quality from statistical data, but to allow principals to note trends and make adjustments in their individual programs as they deem necessary to retain the developmental nature of this disciplinary strategy.

Personal opinions of central office staff, site administrators, and in-school suspension teachers were gathered through interviews
and open-ended survey questions. When asked what weaknesses they observed in the current in-school suspension program, their responses included:

* ineffectiveness for repeat offenders
* lack of a more specialized counseling component that includes resource persons, especially school guidance personnel, on a more regular basis
* inconsistency among administrators when disciplining different students for similar violations
* occasional delays in placing students due to space limitations.

Overall, most administrators, teachers, and parents in School Division C believed in-school suspension has been effective in both maintaining discipline and meeting the educational needs of the suspended student. They felt two major points distinguishing their ISS program from many others in the state and nation were the individualized attention given each student and the personalized academic and behavioral plan formulated for each suspendee. Those interviewed attributed the effectiveness of their in-school suspension program to the emphasis placed on a holistic approach to remediation rather than a punitive response to misbehavior.

Conclusions

On the basis of the findings of this study, the following conclusions were drawn:
1. Thorough research is a vital prerequisite to planning and implementing an in-school suspension program. By evaluating available program options and assessing their potential effectiveness in meeting the particular disciplinary needs of their school division, administrators avoid major program revisions in subsequent years. A review of literature provides ideas on possible strategies. However, observations of actual programs and interviews with persons experienced in developing and maintaining successful programs offer additional insight into the operational details of various strategies and the feasibility of implementing those strategies.

2. A wide spectrum of persons included in the planning and implementation process positively affects the reception given the in-school suspension program. When input is requested from faculty, staff, and parents as to their desire for an ISS program and their suggestions for its design, the teachers and administrators remain actively involved in the program's daily operation. When faculty and administration are oriented to in-school suspension through beginning-of-the-year workshops, they tend to develop a stronger commitment to the program's philosophy, objectives, and strategies as well as a deeper understanding of the operational details.
3. Securing adequate financial support is a crucial factor in the planning and implementation of an in-school suspension program. In correlation with the research of Cooney et al. (1981), inadequate financial support appears to be a major deterrent to an effective ISS program. When no formal positions are budgeted for in-school suspension teachers, site administrators are often forced to use a combination of staff members for ISS duty. The lack of consistent pecuniary resources also leads to insufficient funds for materials, equipment, and training needs. Consequently, planned strategies are never fully initiated.

4. This study suggests that in-school suspension cannot serve as a genuinely positive disciplinary alternative if the focus of the program is not rehabilitative. In keeping with the findings of other researchers, especially Neill (1976) and Wollan (1983), the purpose of discipline is to provide remedial treatment that identifies the underlying problem and eventually improves or corrects the misbehavior, and not simply to inflict a penalty that temporarily extinguishes the undesirable behavior. The findings in this study likewise reinforce the theories of Dewey (1922), Driekurs and Gray (1968), Glasser (1965, 1969, 1977), Johnson (1961), and Sherman (1973) that punishment without meeting students' needs for tutoring and other behavioral restructuring techniques is a poor motivation for reform.
Specifically, if the root cause of the inappropriate response to school rules is not being addressed, in-school suspension is just another alternative to external suspension or merely a temporary solution to recurring student problems.

5. The results of this investigation indicate that clearly defined, measurable objectives are a key element to a successful in-school suspension program. These objectives should correlate with the stated philosophical orientation of the program. Specific strategies should be selected that will facilitate the accomplishment of the program objectives. Finally, the evaluation design should be based on the attainment of these preestablished objectives. In those programs where philosophy, objectives, strategies, and evaluation design are not in harmony, there is a significant lack of direction and the majority of objectives are not realized.

6. ISS loses its effectiveness when used as a consequence for all varieties of offenses. When established as a part of an overall disciplinary plan, ISS is not employed as a first response to minor behavior problems. This practice abdicates teacher responsibility for discipline in the classroom, dramatically increases the number of suspensions, and severely limits the ability of the ISS staff to provide individualized attention, academic assistance, counseling, and follow-up. Other disciplinary options should also
be available for chronic offenders for whom in-school suspension has not proven beneficial in repeated past attempts and for those students who refuse to comply with ISS rules and procedures. These conclusions tend to confirm the reports of Mizell (1979) and Williams (1978) that question the effectiveness of in-school suspension when it is the only disciplinary technique utilized.

7. Full-time, qualified, trained staff are critical to the success of any in-school suspension program. When a combination of teachers share the responsibility for the operation of the ISS program, there is less disciplinary continuity, little individualized assistance, and reduced teacher insight into students' behavioral problems. ISS personnel should also be selected based on their desire and ability to work with academically and behaviorally troubled pupils, and then thoroughly instructed as to the program's philosophy, objectives, strategies, operational procedures, and evaluation techniques. A lack of formal, systemwide training among in-school suspension personnel often results in a lack of uniform operating and data gathering procedures. These conclusions appear to substantiate the conclusions reached by Bone (1982), Cooney et al. (1981), and Mizell (1979) that recruiting and retaining capable, caring teachers who are committed to the program's
philosophy, objectives, and strategies is a common factor in exemplary in-school suspension programs.

8. The existence of standardized, frequently monitored record keeping systems significantly contributes to the effectiveness of the evaluation design and to the accuracy and thoroughness with which data are gathered.

9. When in-school suspension rules and procedures are clearly defined, thoroughly communicated in written form to staff and students, and consistently enforced, the programs are less likely to stray from their original philosophy, objectives, and strategies. In school divisions where uniform operating guidelines are not observed systemwide, administrators and teachers tend to adopt gradually the least time consuming, most convenient methods of procedure rather than the most effective.

10. The opportunity for students to complete regular class assignments for credit without academic penalty, and to receive appropriate remedial instruction is an essential component of a developmental in-school suspension program. This conclusion supports the arguments of Bone (1982), Mizell (1978), and Seyfarth (1980) that to be considered a positive alternative to out-of-school suspension, ISS must compensate for the loss of regular classroom time with tutorial assistance which focuses on current class assignments.
11. The rehabilitative potential of in-school suspension is significantly enhanced when extensive, individualized counseling is conducted with suspended students by persons trained in appropriate guidance techniques and knowledgeable of the student's academic and behavioral history. The findings in this study also lend evidence in support of Hochman's (1986) research regarding the multiple benefits of counseling intervention strategies in ISS programs.

12. Individualized student follow-up strategies monitored through documented communication with parents, teachers, and students at preestablished intervals is one of the most important, yet most often overlooked, aspects of a rehabilitative in-school suspension program. Without planned follow-up, there is no means to assess student progress following the suspension period.

13. The findings of this study corroborate the report of Bone (1982) that regular program monitoring and comprehensive evaluation techniques are critically important components of an in-school suspension program. When there are no written directives for the recording and collection of data relating to the stated program objectives, no plans for regular program monitoring, and no provisions for cumulative assessment and revision, the evaluation design is often reduced to a simplified yearly statistical report.
Programs which fail to include a plan for regular program monitoring and cumulative assessment tend to stray from their original philosophy, objectives, and strategies toward a less rehabilitative focus. Conversely, when programs are periodically reviewed and revised, their redirective potential is enhanced and there is no discrepancy between philosophy and practice. The results of this investigation reinforce the findings of Garrett (1981) and Short (1984) that when evaluation data are not gathered in such a manner that trends can be noted and program adjustments made, in-school suspension evolves into merely an additional punitive disciplinary measure.

**Recommendations for Administrative Practice**

**Planning and Implementation of an In-School Suspension Program**

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, there appear to be 12 critical steps involved in the implementation of an in-school suspension program. They include:

1. Delineate the reasons in-school suspension is a desired disciplinary option (i.e. define the problem areas for which ISS might provide a solution).

2. Examine options available through: (a) review of the literature, (b) observations in other school districts, and (c) interviews with persons experienced in the implementation and administration of the program.

3. Request input from faculty, staff, and parents as to their desire for such a program and suggestions for its design.
4. Formulate a philosophical foundation that is in harmony with the school division's existing doctrinal base and disciplinary plan.

5. Identify measurable program objectives which are in accord with the established philosophy and goals, and designate a reasonable time span for their accomplishment.

6. Select appropriate strategies to accomplish those objectives. These strategies should include the coordination of existing resources within the school division and community.

7. Develop an evaluation design that includes a plan for the recording and collection of data, regular program monitoring, and periodic occasions for cumulative assessment and revision.

8. Estimate expenditures required for personnel, materials, equipment, and training needs.

9. Secure adequate financial support to fund the proposed program.

10. Choose a pilot site where: (a) faculty will be receptive and supportive of the new program (b) the administration is committed to the idea of helping students and not just maintaining discipline, and (c) facilities appropriate for in-school suspension are available.

11. Select and train qualified staff.

12. Orient and involve the faculty and administration through in-service workshops on the program's philosophy, objectives, and strategies, and through provision for established
communication channels and regular feedback.

It is also suggested that a special committee be formed to coordinate the entire planning and implementation process. This committee should preferably include representatives from the central office who are in charge of instruction, special education, guidance, and pupil personnel services, as well as principals, assistant principals, counselors, teachers, and parents. The wider the spectrum of persons involved in the accomplishment of the above 12 steps, the more likely the program will be well-received in the schools.

Program Design

The following recommendations are based on either those strategies which proved successful from the beginning of each of the three in-school suspension programs, or those strategies which evolved as improvements were made on the original design.

**Philosophy and goals.**

1. Incorporate a developmental or rehabilitative focus that assumes misbehavior is a symptom of an underlying problem that must be identified and resolved.

2. Address the root cause of inappropriate responses to school rules through counseling, academic assistance, and follow-up procedures.

3. Provide a copy of the in-school suspension philosophy and goals to members of the faculty and administration at each school.
Objectives.

1. Identify the areas in which in-school suspension can reasonably be expected to render improvements (i.e. attendance, number of suspensions, recidivism rate, number of disciplinary referrals, academic achievement, attitudes toward school, etc.).

2. Formulate measurable objectives based on realistic goals established for the program.

3. Set a definite time frame for the accomplishment of the objectives.

Other disciplinary options.

1. Establish in-school suspension as a part of an overall disciplinary plan, and not a consequence for all offenses, regardless of severity.

2. Avoid the use of ISS as a first response to minor behavior problems that might abdicate teacher responsibility for discipline in the classroom.

3. Plan alternative disciplinary options for chronic offenders and for students who refuse to comply with in-school suspension rules and procedures.

Expansion

1. Secure adequate financial support before implementing ISS in each new site so that original standards of quality can be maintained.
2. Orient and involve the faculty and administration at each new site through in-service workshops on the program's philosophy, objectives, and strategies.

Staffing.

1. Seek a full-time staff member to coordinate the in-school suspension program rather than staffing the suspension room with part-time or rotating personnel.

2. Recruit qualified personnel with: (a) experience in a related field such as counseling, social work, or special education; (b) strong disciplinary and classroom management skills; (c) an interest in and desire to work with academically and behaviorally troubled students; (d) the ability to relate to pupils in an empathetic, respectful, and consistent manner; (e) knowledge regarding test administration and interpretation; (f) instructional skills in general academic areas; (g) competence in communicating findings to parents, teachers, and counselors; (h) a willingness to seek out a variety of appropriate resources and act as a referral agent when warranted; and (i) proficiency in providing a positive atmosphere which is conducive to learning.

3. Provide centralized training for new ISS staff to ensure consistent policies throughout the school division.
4. Conduct regular in-service workshops for ISS staff to provide an opportunity for the sharing of concerns, sample materials, and successful management strategies.

5. Plan adequate time within the in-school suspension teacher's schedule for record keeping, referral contacts, consultations, and student follow-up along with other duties.

Record keeping.
1. Provide standard forms and assessment procedures which are consistent at each school.

2. Establish and monitor record keeping procedures which gather information directly related to the objectives to be evaluated.

3. Maintain individual student files with all pertinent assessments, observations, and assignments completed during the pupil's time in ISS.

Referral.
1. Maintain consistency and fairness. Establish general guidelines to eliminate arbitrary disciplinary decisions.

2. If possible, allow all referrals to be decided by the same administrator.

3. Establish and utilize an efficient system to notify teachers, counselors, and parents of a student's referral to ISS.

4. Avoid the use of in-school suspension as a temporary controlling measure. Make no referrals for less than one full school day.
5. Limit the number of days per year that may be assigned to an individual student by restricting both the maximum number of days (five is generally recommended) and the number of times a student may be referred to ISS during one academic term.

6. Decide the maximum number of students that the ISS facility can suitably accommodate and that the in-school suspension teacher can effectively supervise. Plan specific alternatives to employ whenever the maximum student load is reached.

Rules and procedures.

1. Establish systemwide guidelines to eliminate major operational inconsistencies among schools in a district.

2. Develop a regular, planned system of communication between the in-school suspension teacher, regular classroom teachers, guidance counselors, and parents.

3. Maintain an atmosphere of constant work and limited peer interaction.

4. Ascertain that students are informed of and understand the rules which are in effect during their in-school suspension as well as the consequences of rule violations.

5. Supervise lunch and restroom breaks, maintaining isolation from non-suspended peers.

6. Explain to each student the requirements for readmittance to regular classes (i.e. completed work, approved assignments, or served minimum suspension time).
Work assignments.

1. Allow students to complete regular class assignments for credit without academic penalty.
2. Emphasize to the faculty the need to supply current class assignments promptly.
3. Offer instructional tutoring and remedial assistance to meet the individual needs of each student.
4. Utilize academic assessment tests, teacher appraisal information, and data from the student's cumulative file to ensure work assignments are suited to the pupil's ability level.
5. Determine appropriate work assignments for students with learning problems.
6. Avoid assigning busy work which has no practical educational application.

Counseling.

1. Involve the school guidance counselors on a regular basis. The in-school suspension teacher may have too little time, training and privacy to effectively carry the sole responsibility for counseling.
2. When warranted, utilize the services of resource persons within the school system, such as the school psychologist, social worker, and visiting teacher; as well as community referral agencies, such as local parents' groups, mental health organizations, substance abuse counselors, social services, local law enforcement and juvenile court personnel, etc.
3. Prior to counseling with students, review their cumulative folder for family background information, academic history, and disciplinary records.

4. Focus counseling efforts on identifying the reasons for the student's inappropriate behavior and planning appropriate follow-up actions.

5. Avoid the use of writing and values clarification exercises to replace individualized counseling. While the former techniques are valuable supplementary counseling tools, they offer no opportunity for verbal exchange or immediate feedback.

**Follow-up.**

1. Design appropriate follow-up strategies for each student.

2. Monitor students for a specified period of time at regular, preestablished intervals.

3. Maintain a written record of follow-up procedures and results.

4. Establish a systematic plan for communicating with parents and teachers to explain and implement follow-up strategies as well as to receive feedback.

**Evaluation.**

1. Base evaluation design on preestablished program goals and objectives.

2. Include both quantitative and qualitative methods of evaluation (i.e. statistical data provided through each school's record keeping system as well as the perceptions
of administrators, in-school suspension teachers, regular classroom teachers, guidance counselors, parents, and students).

3. Provide consistent, regular monitoring of the in-school suspension program at each school where the program is established.

4. Compile evaluation data for presentation to appropriate personnel. Chart data from a year or more prior to ISS implementation to the present so that trends may be noted and adjustments made.

5. Form a committee to analyze data, reassess goals and objectives, make revisions, and offer recommendations at the end of each pilot year, and at five to ten year intervals thereafter.

Future Research Questions

The results of this research highlight the need for further study of in-school suspension as a disciplinary method. School practitioners concerned with effective alternatives to reducing student misbehavior and evaluating their district's response to discipline problems would benefit from answers to the following questions:

1. Would a descriptive study similar to this study reveal like findings concerning the origin, design, and effectiveness of in-school suspension programs in different regions of the country?
2. Does the size of the school division influence how well stated philosophy and goals are maintained? Does the size of the school division affect the type of program (punitive, controlling, or developmental) which is most likely to be in existence several years after implementation?

3. Does the type of school division in which an in-school suspension program is found (i.e. a rural, suburban, or urban setting) influence the effectiveness of ISS? If so, which setting is most conducive to the operation of a successful in-school suspension program?

4. Does the socio-economic status of the majority of families in a school division influence the effectiveness of the in-school suspension program? If so, are ISS programs more successful when used with children from upper, middle, or lower class families?

5. How does the in-school suspension program compare with an alternative school program (a separate school which draws truant and/or disruptive students district-wide for specialized academic instruction and counseling) in regard to philosophy, goals, objectives, methods, and outcomes?

6. How can the in-school suspension program effectively serve the chronically disruptive student who is referred to ISS three or more times during one school year?
7. If a developmental in-school suspension program were implemented which incorporated all or a majority of the suggestions outlined in the Recommendations of this study, what would be the long-term impact of the program on discipline in that school division?
Appendix A

In-School Suspension Survey

Directions: Circle the letter of the answer which best describes the in-school suspension (ISS) program at your school. You may circle more than one answer when applicable. If none of the given choices are appropriate, please write in your response on the line following the word "Other."

Demographic Data

1. What grade levels are housed at your school?
   a. Seven through nine
   b. Ten through twelve
   c. Other

2. What is your current position?
   a. Principal
   b. Assistant Principal
   c. ISS teacher
   d. Other

Philosophy and Goals

3. What is the purpose of in-school suspension (ISS) at your school?
   a. To remove problem students from the classroom until they can rethink their behavior
   b. To punish students who violate rules by placing them in an isolated environment
   c. To rehabilitate and redirect the behavior of offenders
   d. Other

4. What are the goals of your ISS program?
   a. To provide a punitive environment so that the students will not want to return, and will avoid future misbehavior
   b. To change a student's behavior through counseling
   c. To remove the problem student from the classroom
   d. Other

Disciplinary Options

5. What disciplinary measures are used at your school other than ISS?
   a. After-school detention
   b. Parent conferences
   c. Corporal punishment
   d. Out-of-school suspension
   e. Expulsion
   f. Other
Facilities

6. What would make your ISS facilities more suitable?
   a. Adequate just as they are
   b. Need larger rooms
   c. Need carrels for students (enclosed desks)
   d. Need more books, newspapers, and/or magazines
   e. Need more audio-visual equipment
   f. Need more isolated location
   g. Need closer restroom facilities
   h. Need better heating or air-conditioning systems
   i. Other

Staffing

7. Who staffs your ISS room?
   a. Full-time certified teacher
   b. Two or more teachers who rotate in and out
   c. Other

8. What training do ISS teachers receive?
   a. Formal training workshops
   b. Briefing by principal or assistant principal
   c. Inservice education
   d. None
   e. Other

9. How are ISS teachers selected?
   a. By central office with principal's approval
   b. From staff already at the school
   c. Other

10. What qualifications does your ISS teacher have?
    a. Experienced teacher
    b. Counseling or social work background
    c. Firm disciplinarian
    d. Desire to work with troubled kids
    e. Weak teacher who cannot be placed elsewhere
    f. Desire for lighter teaching load
    g. Other

Record Keeping

11. What records are kept in ISS?
    a. Total number of in-school suspensions
    b. Recidivism rates (number of repeat offenders)
    c. Reason for suspension
    d. Demographic data such as grade level, race, and sex of suspended students
    e. Checklist or written description of each student's behavior while in ISS
    f. Other
Referral

12. For what offenses is a student sent to ISS?
a. Disruptive, disobedient, or disrespectful behavior
b. Skipping class
c. Tardiness
d. Truancy
e. Fighting
f. Drug-related violations
g. Lying to a person in authority
h. Cheating
i. Stealing
j. Smoking
k. Not coming to class prepared with assignments and/or supplies
l. Damaging property
m. Other

13. What information about the suspended student is given to the ISS teacher?
a. None
b. Teacher write-up on student's recent attitude and behavior
c. ISS teacher has access to all student records
d. Other

14. What options do you use if ISS is overcrowded?
a. Never a problem
b. Bring in more desks, chairs, or carrels
c. Move ISS to a larger room
d. Delay some suspensions a day or more
e. Release some suspended students early
f. Divide suspended students into two groups and assign an additional teacher to monitor
g. Other

Operational Rules and Procedures

15. Do you have formal systemwide guidelines available for the operation of the ISS program?
a. Yes
b. No, but would like to
c. No, and do not desire systemwide guidelines
d. Other

16. How are students informed of the rules in ISS?
a. Listed in the suspension letter that goes to the parents
b. Reviewed at the beginning of each day in ISS
c. Posted in the suspension room
d. Explained at orientation or in letters given to the student body at the beginning of the school year
e. Included in the student handbook
f. Other
17. What are the consequences when a student refuses to follow the rules in ISS?
   a. Extra hours or days assigned in ISS
   b. Suspended out-of-school
   c. Other

18. What rules and procedures are followed at lunchtime?
   a. Lunch is brought into the suspension room
   b. Suspennees sit in an isolated area of the cafeteria
   c. No talking is allowed
   d. Lunch is scheduled when no other students occupy the cafeteria
   e. Other

19. What are the rules and procedures for restroom breaks?
   a. Taken as a group and monitored by the ISS teacher
   b. Taken individually as needed and unescorted
   c. Taken individually at a designated time and unescorted
   d. Other

20. What requirements must be met before a suspended student may return to class?
   a. Must complete minimum assigned time
   b. Must complete all assigned classwork and homework
   c. Completed work must be checked and/or approved by the ISS teacher
   d. Parents must come in for a conference
   e. Parents are requested, but not required to call or come in for a conference
   f. Other

21. What information is provided for the teachers of suspended students when the students are released from ISS?
   a. None
   b. A written report from the ISS teacher
   c. Verbal feedback from the ISS teacher
   d. Other

Work Assignments

22. What do students do while in ISS?
   a. Classwork assigned by regular classroom teachers
   b. Homework assigned by regular classroom teachers
   c. Predesigned work packets, booklets, or folders
   d. Interest tests
   e. Ability tests
   f. Read newspapers, magazines, encyclopedias, or other library materials
   g. Other
23. Is the work assigned to each student matched to his/her ability level?
   a. Always
   b. Usually
   c. Rarely
   d. Other

24. Are students tutored (regularly assisted with their work) while in ISS?
   a. Usually
   b. Occasionally
   c. Never
   d. Other

25. If you use work folders, booklets, or packets, what type of exercises do they contain?
   a. Not applicable
   b. Values clarification
   c. Reading comprehension
   d. Basic English skills
   e. Basic math skills
   f. Consumer activities
   g. "Survival" skills such as budget making, job applications, and writing business letters
   h. Social skills
   i. Writing exercises
   j. Other

26. If you use work folders, packets, or booklets, who prepares them?
   a. Not applicable
   b. ISS teacher
   c. Department heads or other teachers
   d. Someone in central office
   e. Other

Counseling

27. How is counseling incorporated into your ISS program?
   a. Not at all
   b. Conducted by ISS teacher with some students
   c. Conducted by ISS teacher with all students
   d. Conducted by guidance counselors with some students
   e. Conducted by guidance counselors with all students
   f. Conducted in group sessions
   g. Conducted by the school psychologist with some students
   h. Other
Follow-up

28. What follow-up is done on suspended students once they leave ISS?
   a. None
   b. ISS teacher occasionally talks with students and teachers in the following weeks
   c. ISS teacher routinely talks with students and teachers in the following weeks
   d. Guidance counselors occasionally talk with students and teachers in the following weeks
   e. Guidance counselors routinely talk with students and teachers in the following weeks
   f. Other

Effectiveness

29. Which of these statements do you believe accurately describe(s) your ISS program?
   a. ISS provides an alternative to out-of-school suspension, and keeps students in a supervised, controlled environment
   b. ISS often results in improved behavior and attitudes for the suspended students
   c. ISS rarely results in improved behavior and attitudes for the suspended students
   d. ISS is a waste of time and money
   e. Other

30. What management strategies have proven effective in decreasing the number of repeat offenders in ISS?
   a. Creating a strict, no-nonsense environment
   b. Counseling one-on-one with the students
   c. Making students complete all work satisfactorily before allowing their return to class
   d. Other

31. In your opinion, how should the ISS program be evaluated?
   a. Based on established goals and objectives
   b. Based on the number of repeat offenders
   c. Based on feedback from students
   d. Based on feedback from teachers
   e. Other

32. In your opinion, how should the ISS teacher be evaluated?
   a. Same as any other teacher
   b. Based on classroom management skills
   c. Based on rapport with students
   d. Based on classroom observations
   e. Based on daily lesson plans and variety of materials used
   f. Based on the number of repeat offenders
   g. Based on the implementation of the program according to stated guidelines
   h. Other
33. How do you think faculty members view the ISS program?
   a. Like it because it gets the student out of the room
   b. Believe it makes a positive change in student attitude and behavior
   c. Believe it makes little change in student attitude and behavior
   d. Would like to eliminate the program
   e. Other

34. How do you think students view the ISS program?
   a. A negative consequence to be avoided
   b. A place to go for academic and behavioral assistance
   c. An opportunity to catch up on schoolwork during the school day
   d. No big deal to be sent there
   e. Would prefer out-of-school suspension
   f. Other

35. How do you think parents view the ISS program?
   a. A good alternative to out-of-school suspension
   b. A positive program which helps their child improve in behavior and attitude
   c. A negative consequence which does little to help their child
   d. A plan which should be replaced by some other disciplinary plan
   e. Other

36. How do you think local citizens view the ISS program?
   a. A disciplinary step in the right direction that keeps kids off the streets
   b. A waste of taxpayer money
   c. A new innovation that will soon run its course and disappear
   d. Other

Directions: Please write in your response to the following questions in the space provided.

37. What is the maximum number of students who may be assigned to ISS on any one day? ________________

38. What would you estimate is the average number of students in ISS each day? ________________

39. What is the minimum number of days or hours for which a student may be assigned to ISS? ________________

40. What is the maximum length of time for which a student may be assigned to ISS? ________________

41. What type of evaluation of the ISS program is conducted at your school? ________________
42. What type of evaluation of the ISS teacher is conducted at your school?

43. What is a major strength of your ISS program?

44. What is a major weakness of your ISS program?

45. What recommendations or suggestions would you make for the improvement of the ISS program in your school district?

46. What do you think will be the future of the ISS program in your school district?
Appendix B

Interview Questions

Demographic Data

1. What was the student population of your school division at the time in-school suspension was implemented? What is the current student population in your school division?

2. What was the minority ratio of your school division at the time the in-school suspension program was implemented? What is the current minority ratio in your school division?

3. What was the average family income in your school division at the time in-school suspension was implemented? (Upper = greater than $30,000 per year; Middle = $15,000 - $30,000; Lower = less than $15,000) What is the current average family income in your school division?

4. Would you classify your school division as primarily urban, suburban, or rural?

Origin and Development

1. When did you first hear of ISS?

2. Who initially proposed the idea of in-school suspension in your school division?

3. What were the principal factors that contributed to the establishment of the program?

Proposal for Pilot Program

1. Who served on the planning committee?

2. Was your in-school suspension program patterned after another program or theoretical model? If yes, please elaborate.

3. What approval process was followed?

Site Selection

1. When was the ISS program begun in your school division?

2. How was (were) the pilot school(s) selected?

3. How representative was (were) the pilot school(s) when compared to the total district in socio-economic status, minority percentage, and suspension rate?
Estimated Expenditures

1. What was the cost to operate ISS the first year? In subsequent years?

2. How was the program funded initially? How is the program currently funded?

3. In your opinion, has funding been adequate in past years? If no, please elaborate.

Original and Current Design

When responding to each of the following questions, please answer as to: (a) how the program was originally designed, (b) the status of the program today, and (c) possible reasons for any changes.

Philosophy and Goals

1. Why was your program begun? What goals did you believe ISS might accomplish?

2. What goals does your current program strive to achieve?

3. Was a written mission statement or program philosophy formulated? If so, is it available for review?

4. How would you describe the current philosophy of the ISS program at your school?

5. How closely do you feel the stated philosophy and purpose of your ISS program match the day-to-day operational procedures?

Objectives

1. Were written objectives formulated? If so, do you have a copy of them?

2. Have these objectives been revised over the years ISS has been in operation? If so, what are the current objectives of your program?

Other Disciplinary Options

1. How did the concept of in-school suspension combine with your overall disciplinary plan? Did it totally replace out-of-school suspension?

2. What disciplinary measures are used in your school(s) other than in-school suspension?
Expansion

1. Describe the in-school suspension program's process of expansion from the year of implementation in the pilot school to the time all schools had incorporated the plan.

Staffing

1. Who staffs or monitors your ISS program?

2. What qualifications are required for the ISS teacher? Which qualifications are desired?

3. How are in-school suspension teachers selected?

4. What training is given to newly hired ISS teachers?

5. Are regular inservice workshops conducted for ISS teachers? If so, how often and what topics are included?

6. What are the primary responsibilities of the ISS teacher?

Record Keeping

1. What records are kept in ISS?

2. Who is responsible for keeping ISS records?

3. What records are submitted to the principal? To central office personnel? How frequently?

Referral

1. For what offenses is a student sent to ISS?

2. Who may assign a student to ISS?

3. Do students ever request a referral to the in-school suspension program? If so, how frequently does this occur and for what reasons?


5. What information about the suspended student is made available to the ISS teacher?

6. What is the maximum and minimum length of placement in ISS?
7. How is the length of suspension determined?

8. What is the average length of stay in ISS?

9. Does the ISS teacher have the option of adding time to the ISS assignment?

10. What is the maximum number of students who may be assigned to ISS on any one day?

11. What would you estimate is the average number of students in ISS each day?

12. What options do you use if ISS is overcrowded?

Rules and Procedures

1. Do you have formal systemwide guidelines available for the operation of the ISS program?

2. What rules or restrictions are enforced in ISS?

3. How are students informed of the rules in ISS?

4. What are the consequences when a student refuses to follow the rules in ISS?

5. What rules and procedures are followed at lunchtime and for restroom breaks?

6. What requirements must be met before a suspended student may return to class?

7. What information is provided for the teachers of suspended students when the students are released from ISS?

Work Assignments

1. What do students do while in ISS? Describe the daily schedule or sequence of activities from entrance to exit.

2. What diagnostic and testing procedures are utilized, if any?

3. Is the work assigned to each student matched to his/her ability level?

4. Are students given credit for classwork completed in ISS or work done outside of school during the suspension period?
5. Do you use any type of prepared folders, packets, or work booklets? If so, what type of exercises do they contain? Who gathers and/or prepares the ISS work materials?

6. Are students given remedial instruction or tutoring?

7. How does the program differ for repeaters?

Counseling

1. Does your program have a counseling component? If so, who bears the major responsibility for counseling suspended students?

2. Are all students counseled? How frequently do students in ISS receive counseling?

3. What counseling techniques are utilized?

4. What school and community resources are utilized in the counseling process?

Follow-Up

1. Are follow-up efforts conducted for suspended students once they leave ISS? If so, at what intervals and for what duration?

2. Who is responsible for the follow-up procedures?

3. Are written records kept regarding the results of follow-up conferences and observations?

Effectiveness

1. How is your ISS program evaluated? How often? By whom?

2. In your opinion, how should the ISS program be evaluated?

3. How is the ISS teacher evaluated? How often? By whom?

4. In your opinion, how should the ISS teacher be evaluated?

5. What written evaluation data are furnished to principals or central office staff members? May I see copies for each year of ISS operation?

6. Do you have data regarding the number of in-school suspensions, out-of-school suspensions, and repeat offenders before the in-school suspension program began and since its implementation? If so, may I view them?
7. Which management strategies in ISS have proven most effective in reducing the number of disciplinary violations?

8. Do you consider the ISS program a success? Upon what do you base your opinion?

9. What do you consider to be the main strengths of your program? The main weaknesses?

10. Do you believe your ISS program is accomplishing the purpose for which it was begun?

11. What recommendations or suggestions would you make for the improvement of the ISS program in your school division?

12. What do you see in the future for the in-school suspension program in your school division?

13. What do you perceive to be the general attitudes and opinions of the following persons regarding the ISS program: (a) central office personnel? (b) principals and assistant principals? (c) ISS teachers? (d) regular classroom teachers? (e) parents? (f) community members? (g) students?
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Abstract

A STUDY OF THE EVOLUTION OF THREE IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION PROGRAMS IN VIRGINIA

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The College of William and Mary in Virginia, May 1988
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The purpose of this study was to research the evolution of three in-school suspension programs in Virginia. In a case study format, the programs were examined with regard to why and how they were established, what changes they have undergone, and their current status and effectiveness.

The three in-school suspension programs selected for this investigation met the following standards: (a) the program was among the earliest to be established in the area, (b) the school district kept reasonably accurate records, and (c) the in-school suspension program met certain criteria to qualify under the definition outlined in this study.

The research included three methods of data collection: interviews with personal sources, district-wide informational surveys, and the systematic search for documents to undergo content.

It was concluded that the following elements are essential for an in-school suspension program to achieve maximum effectiveness: (1) thorough research into available options; (2) a wide spectrum of persons included in the planning and implementation process; (3) adequate financial support; (4) a rehabilitative focus; (5) clearly defined, measurable objectives; (6) use of a variety of disciplinary options in addition to ISS; (7) full-time, qualified, trained staff; (8) standardized, frequently monitored record keeping systems; (9) systemwide rules and procedures which are consistently enforced; (10) opportunity for students to complete regular class assignments and receive remedial assistance; (11) a comprehensive counseling component; (12) a plan for systematic student follow-up; and (13) an evaluation design which is in harmony with the program's philosophy, objectives, and strategies.

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, 12 critical steps involved in the implementation of an in-school suspension program were outlined. Also, 51 specific recommendations for program design were presented.

Further study is needed to evaluate the influence that geographical location, size of school division, type of district (urban, suburban, or rural) and socio-economic status of the majority of families served by the system have on the origin, design, effectiveness, and evolution of in-school suspension programs. In addition, future research might be undertaken to explore the impact of programs which incorporate a majority of the recommendations offered in this study, as well as to investigate program options for chronically disruptive students who are referred repeatedly to in-school suspension.