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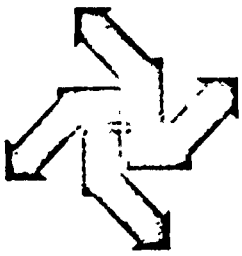
ABSTRACT

Observations and interviews were used to evaluate the East Providence Career Education Project for 1973-1974. Data available on processes and products suggest that the program is substantially meeting its goals in spite of low attendance figures and student performance on various tests. A lower socioeconomic class of students with its resultant lower motivation and reading ability, the fact of double sessions in the school, and the future-oriented nature of career education goals may account for the limited showing of the program. Recommendations are for a continuation of the program. (MU)



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# East Providence Career Education

# Project Evaluation

# 1973 - 74

This report was prepared by the Curriculum Research and Development Center of the University of Rhode Island under a contract with the East Providence School Department and is principally the work of Drs. William Kelly, Richard Purnell, and Robert MacMillan.





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## PROCESS EVALUATION

A total of three visits was made to each of the schools in the Career Education Program. Each of the involved classrooms was visited and all of the teachers were interviewed during each visit. In addition, the administrators and guidance personnel were interviewed. The facilities were considered equivalent to the regular program's facilities. All personnel evidenced interest in the Career Program and showed a high degree of enthusiasm.

### Elementary Process Objective

Each classroom to some degree showed evidence of the individualization of instruction. In the primary grades the emphasis, of course, is upon reading and arithmetic in the subject areas. The range of abilities of the children widened as the year progressed and the amount of individualization increased. In the intermediate grades, the pupils were working on individualized assignments in all subjects . This was especially true in reading, social studies and science. Although there were instances of large group instruction, most of the instruction observed was individually oriented. This was aided by the contracts developed by the teachers and by the variety of materials available.

Every classroom had "skill-building centers". These were oriented to the Career Education Program both in the materials available and the work done by the pupils. Again, the sophistication of the centers increased from the lower to the upper grades. The primary grade activities were more oriented to the acquisition of specific skills in basic subjects. The intermediate grade activities were aimed at the development and improvement of the skills. Much of the material in the centers was career oriented.

Field trips in conjunction with the career education was one of the most evident aspects. Small groups able to visit various sites to study various careers seemed to be very helpful to the understanding of the pupils.

## Junior High Schools

The program in the Junior High Schools reflected a sincere effort on the part of all personnel to attain the stated goals. This was true of the academic teachers, shop teachers and guidance personnel.

Students had various opportunities to explore occupational clusters. This was possible through books, pamphlets, and A.V. materials which were available in all classrooms. Contracts were evident in all rooms and were the basis of most of the work in all grades. The students and teachers seemed to work very well together in developing the general

contracts in the homerooms and the specific work in the subject matter classes. The task cards developed by the teachers were well done and used extensively by the students. The use of the contracts and the task cards allowed the students to learn of various occupations and the

teachers to check on the progress of the pupils in the basic disciplines.

The work of the students in the shop areas was most interesting.

Both boys and girls appeared to be enjoying their learning experience in areas such as woodworking, cooking and sewing.

The work of the group leaders and guidance persons became more apparent as the year progressed. Class periods were set aside for guidance work and appeared to be helpful. The guidance counselors in both schools gave considerable help both to teachers and pupils. In addition to individual and group work, they arranged for various field trips for both large and small groups.

All classrooms involved in the career program on both the elementary and secondary levels reflected an environment conducive to learning about careers. Commercial pamphlets, books, exhibits, bulletin boards, displays of student's work, all drew the attention of the pupils to careers.

## Senior High School

The program in the High School also reflected an attainment of the process goals. The students worked on individual projects. Contracts were always evident and were well written. The open classroom was well utilized by both students and teachers. The students easily moved from area to area and in a most serious fashion, the open space was well equipped and, in general, is an environment conducive to learning. One of the most impressive activities was the career awareness day in which members of the business community came to the school and conferred with

the pupils. The visitors, teachers and pupils are all to be commended for the manner in which the program was carried out.

There is little doubt that the placement component was a success. The project placement director prepared the way for students to make on-site out of school visits to various places. This allowed the students to see people working in the careers that the students were exploring. This planning was well coordinated with the guidance counselors in both the Junior and Senior High Schools. The work of these counselors was apparent in the plans for field trips of large and small groups as well as the visitation of community resource people to the schools. Field trips were made to over 260 sites at 758 different times by 2,698 students. This is evidence of the development of a system for efficient placement of the students to business and industrial sites.

## ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY PRODUCT EVALUATION

This part of the East Providence Career Education Project Evaluation reports information about the products of the program, based on standardized test scores and attendance and disciplinary records. The following variables were used to perform this evaluation for the elementary and secondary grades, respectively:

### Elementary Grades (K - 6)

Attendance for 1972-73

Attendance for 1973-74
(scores = N of days absent)

Knowledge of Careers Test

Max. score = 128 for K-3
Max. score = 240 for 4-6

### Secondary Grades (7 - 12)

Attendance for 1972-73

Attendance for 1973-74
(scores = N of days absent)

Disciplinary actions/student 1972-73

Disciplinary actions/student 1973-74

Career Maturity Inventory (Max. score)

Part 2: Knowing About Jobs (20)

Part 3: Choosing A Job (20)

Part 4: Looking Ahead (20)

Part 5: Problem Solving (20)

Career Attitude Scale (50)

Elementary Product Evaluation

Table 1 contains the number of elementary school boys and girls in the career education project by grade for one and two years respectively. There was a total of 468 elementary students in the program in 1973-74; 269 were males and 199 females; 316 were in for their first year, while 152 were participating for a second year in the program.

Table 1. Number of Students in Elementary Program by Grade, Sex, and Number of Years in Program

| Grade | Total N | First Year | | Second Year | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Males | Females | Males | Females |
| K | 51 | 34 | 17 | - | - |
| 1 | 63 | 23 | 17 | 11 | 12 |
| 2 | 63 | 22 | 18 | 13 | 10 |
| 3 | 66 | 27 | 15 | 12 | 12 |
| 4 | 71 | 24 | 18 | 21 | 8 |
| 5 | 67 | 20 | 20 | 13 | 14 |
| 6 | 87 | 35 | 26 | 14 | 12 |
| Totals | 468 | 185 | 131 (316) | 84 | 68 (152) |

Table 2 presents the median scores and ranges for elementary students by grade and number of years in the program on attendance for two school years and performance on the Knowledge of Careers Test. Norm data were not available on the Knowledge of Careers Test. However, the objective set in the project proposal was to have students answer 75 percent of the items correctly on this test. The test has maximum scores of 128 and 240 for grades K-3 and 4-6, respectively. This objective would require scores

of 96 and 160, respectively, for grades K-3 and 4-6.

Table 2. Elementary Students' Medians and Ranges* for Attendance in '72-'73 and '73-'74 and Knowledge of Careers Test Scores by Grades (K-6) and Years in Program

| | First Year Students | | | Second Year Students | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Grade | Attendance 72-73** | Attendance 73-74 | Knowledge of Careers | Attendance 72-73** | Attendance 73- 74 | Knowledge of Careers |
| K | - | 15.8 (1-91) | 93.50 (41-106) | - | - | - |
| 1 | 15.5 (5-60) | 11.2 (2-46) | 91.50 (66-104) | 14.5 (3-61) | 15.4 (5- 40) | 88.25 (75-106) |
| 2 | 10.8 (0-57) | 8.5 (0-36) | 92.25 (68-105) | 8.5 (0-60) | 6.3 (1-61) | 81.75 (61- 96) |
| 3 | 7.5 (1-24) | 9.3 (1-36) | 82.17 (67-106) | 9.3 (0-86) | 11.5 (2-53) | 90.00 (66-109) |
| 4 | 4.8 (0-32) | 6.5 (0-45) | 145.50 (93-183) | 5.4 (0-48) | 5.0 (0-44) | 130.38 (105-174) |
| 5 | 7.5 (1-48) | 6.5 (0-57) | 133.00 (110-164) | 7.5 (0-37) | 4.0 (0-50) | 141.50 (115-160) |
| 6 | 4.3 (0-26) | 7.3 (0-66) | 148.75 (114-190) | 5.8 (0-45) | 8.0 (0- 56) | 147.75 (116-179) |

*Ranges reported as minimum and maximum scores in parentheses below medians.

**Attendance figures for 72-73 based on fewer Ns for each grade reported in Table 1.

Table 2 shows that the median scores for each grade were slightly below the 75 percent achievement marks set by the program. This means that in all grades better than 50 percent of each grade fell below the targetted 75 percent mark on the Knowledge of Careers Test. Item analyses of these test results could be used to detect whether areas of weakness existed in the program in terms of these tests and what they were.

Table 2 also presents the median attendance scores of number of days absent during 1972-73 and 1973-74 school years for each grade. For first year students 1973-74 attendance improved in grades 1, 2, and 5 as indicated by lower median absenteeism scores in that year. On the other hand, grades 3, 4, and 6 showed higher median absenteeism scores among first year students. For students in the program for a second year grades 2, 4, and 5 showed improved attendance, while grades 1, 3, and 6 showed declines in attendance in the second year.

The proposal for the project anticipated improvements in attendance among students in the program. The data in Table 2 do not demonstrate clear-cut support for the expected effects of the program on attendance. Interpretations based on median attendance scores alone reveal very little in the way of an explanation of the results.

A more detailed presentation of the distribution of attendance scores appears in Tables 3 and 4 for the second year and first year students, respectively. These tables show the percentages of students absent for intervals of days for each year by grade. Here grade 6 second year students and grades 3 and 6 first year students appear to be the ones in which the program did not have a salutory effect on attendance, as indicated by the increases of students in the very high absenteeism categories. This may be an artifact of becoming a sixth grader, but the fact that second year students declined more in attendance than first year students would seem to argue against this explanation.

Table 3. Attendance of Elementary Students in Program for Two Years Comparing '72-'73 with '73-'74 by Grade (Figures = % students in category)

| Grade | | N Days Absent 0-4 | 5-9 | 10-14 | 15-19 | 20+ | N | Median |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 72-73 | 4.5 | 27.3 | 18.2 | 13.6 | 36.4 | 22 | 14.5 |
| | 73-74 | 0.0 | 30.4 | 13.0 | 26.1 | 30.4 | 23 | 15.4 |
| 2 | 72-73 | 26.1 | 30.4 | 17.4 | 8.7 | 17.4 | 23 | 8.5 |
| | 73-74 | 34.8 | 26.1 | 8.7 | 8.7 | 21.7 | 23 | 6.3 |
| 3 | 72-73 | 25.0 | 29.1 | 4.2 | 16.7 | 25.0 | 24 | 9.3 |
| | 73-74 | 20.8 | 20.8 | 25.0 | 8.3 | 25.0 | 24 | 11.5 |
| 4 | 72-73 | 48.3 | 17.2 | 10.3 | 6.9 | 17.2 | 29 | 5.4 |
| | 73-74 | 48.3 | 17.2 | 10.3 | 3.4 | 20.7 | 29 | 5.0 |
| 5 | 72-73 | 34.6 | 30.8 | 7.7 | 7.7 | 19.2 | 26 | 7.5 |
| | 73-74 | 55.6 | 14.8 | 14.8 | 11.1 | 3.7 | 27 | 4.0 |
| 6 | 72-73 | 42.3 | 38.5 | 3.8 | 7.7 | 7.7 | 26 | 5.8 |
| | 73-74 | 23.1 | 30.8 | 3.8 | 19.2 | 23.1 | 26 | 8.0 |

Table 4. Attendance of Elementary Students in Program for One Year Comparing '72-'73 with '73-'74 by Grade (Figures = % students in category)

| Grade | | N Days Absent 0-4 | 5-9 | 10-14 | 15-19 | 20+ | N* | Median |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 72-73 | 0.0 | 23.5 | 23.5 | 11.8 | 41.2 | 17 | 15.5 |
| | 73-74 | 17.6 | 35.3 | 17.6 | 17.6 | 11.8 | 17 | 9.1 |
| 2 | 72-73 | 27.3 | 13.6 | 27.3 | 9.1 | 22.7 | 22 | 10.8 |
| | 73-74 | 27.3 | 31.8 | 13.6 | 13.6 | 13.6 | 22 | 8.1 |
| 3 | 72-73 | 32.0 | 32.0 | 12.0 | 16.0 | 8.0 | 25 | 7.5 |
| | 73-74 | 32.0 | 20.0 | 8.0 | 20.0 | 20.0 | 25 | 9.0 |
| 4 | 72-73 | 46.2 | 23.1 | 11.5 | 0.0 | 19.2 | 26 | 4.8 |
| | 73-74 | 42.3 | 19.2 | 15.4 | 11.5 | 11.5 | 26 | 5.5 |
| 5 | 72-73 | 21.4 | 39.3 | 10.7 | 0.0 | 28.6 | 28 | 7.5 |
| | 73-74 | 46.4 | 28.6 | 7.1 | 10.7 | 7.1 | 28 | 5.1 |
| 6 | 72-73 | 52.9 | 17.6 | 5.9 | 17.6 | 5.9 | 17 | 4.3 |
| | 73-74 | 41.2 | 29.4 | 5.9 | 11.8 | 11.8 | 17 | 6.0 |

*Based on cases for which absenteeism available for both years.

Secondary Product Evaluation

Table 5 shows the number of secondary school males and females in the career education project by grade for one and two years, respectively.

Table 5: Number of Students in Secondary Program by Grade, Sex, and Number of Years in Program

| Grade | Total N | First Year | | Second Year | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Males | Females | Males | Females |
| 7 | 110 | 46 | 44 | 10 | 10 |
| 8 | 104 | 17 | 9 | 38 | 40 |
| 9 | 114 | 23 | 29 | 35 | 27 |
| 10 | 70 | 9 | 15 | 23 | 23 |
| 11 | 46 | 0 | 2 | 17 | 17 |
| 12 | 66 | 2 | 12 | 25 | 25 |
| Totals | 510* | 97 | 111 (208) | 148 | 154 (302) |

*Five cases deleted because of miscoding.

There was actually a total of 515 students (510 are shown because of miscoding on sex as tallied by the computer) in the secondary program in 1973-74; 245 were males and 265 females; 208 were in for their first year, while 302 were involved in their second year of the program.

Table 6 contains information about the attendance and Career Maturity Inventory (CMI) scores of secondary students who were in the career education project for their first year. Median scores on four parts of the CMI competence test and the CMI attitude scale are included in this table by grade (7-12), except that there were too few (N = 2) 11th graders for whom to report scores.

Table 6. Secondary Students' Medians and Ranges or Norms* for Attendance in '72-'73 and '73-'74 and CMI Test Scores by Grade for Those in Program for First Year

| Grade | Attendance 72-73 | Attendance 73-74 | CMI Tests: Problem Solving | Choosing a Job | Knowledge of Job | Planning | Attitude |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | 0.0 (0-39) | 8.5 (0-68) | 12.44 (96%) | 10.46 (48%) | 10.31 (46%) | 6.78 (41%) | 31.33 (56%) |
| 8 | 6.3 (0-78) | 15.0 (1-53) | 12.50 (89%) | 10.60 (46%) | 8.33 (26%) | 7.60 (47%) | 33.50 (52%) |
| 9 | 10.5 (0-38) | 12.5 (1-52) | 13.50 (94%) | 10.21 (47%) | 9.70 (35%) | 7.50 (53%) | 33.75 (45%) |
| 10 | 11.5 (0-34) | 14.5 (1-60) | 13.75 (89%) | 7.88 (32%) | 9.75 (29%) | 6.88 (37%) | 32.33 (32%) |
| 11 | N = 2 | Too low to be included | | | | | |
| 12 | 26.5 (0-46) | 34.8 (18-66) | 10.75 (54%) | 9.75 (23%) | 5.75 (15%) | 6.25 (20%) | 35.75 (39%) |

*Figures in parentheses are minimum and maximum days absent for attendance and publisher's norms for CMI scores (in percentiles).

Table 7 shows the same information for students in the program for two years, with sufficient 11th graders to report on.

Table 7. Secondary Students' Medians and Ranges or Norms* for Attendance in '72-'73 and '73-'74 and CMI Test Scores by Grade for Those in Program for Second Year

| Grade | Attendance 72-73 | Attendance 73-74 | CMI Tests: Problem Solving | Choosing a Job | Knowledge of Job | Planning | Attitude |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | 5.8 (0-27) | 9.0 (0-38) | 12.50 (97%) | 10.00 (45%) | 10.00 (44%) | 6.83 (40%) | 28.50 (39%) |
| 8 | 7.0 (0-28) | 8.6 (0-56) | 13.75 (93%) | 10.55 (46%) | 10.55 (37%) | 7.50 (47%) | 33.25 (50%) |
| 9 | 7.0 (0-35) | 6.2 (0-53) | 14.50 (97%) | 10.75 (48%) | 11.93 (45%) | 9.14 (60%) | 33.67 (43%) |
| 10 | 8.5 (0-41) | 15.5 (1-60) | 15.13 (93%) | 11.00 (43%) | 9.75 (29%) | 6.88 (38%) | 34.00 (42%) |
| 11 | 16.5 (0-51) | 21.8 (0-77) | 13.70 (86%) | 9.83 (26%) | 10.63 (21%) | 9.58 (41%) | 32.50 (26%) |
| 12 | 18.8 (3-52) | 21.0 (4-58) | 14.13 (85%) | 7.50 (20%) | 8.00 (13%) | 7.67 (26%) | 33.17 (21%) |

*Figures in parentheses are minimum and maximum days absent for attendance and publisher's norms for CMI scores.

Once again, the project had proposed having its participants answer 75 percent of the items correctly on these tests. This would have required them to achieve scores of at least 15 on the four CMI competence tests and 37.5 on the attitude scale. In most instances, performance at this level may be viewed as unrealistically high, as it would have required many of the students to score well above the median (in some instances all grades

above the 90%) of the norms reported by the publishers for their grades. Thus, we will analyze the results in the context of the publisher's norms.

As for the attainments of the program as measured by the CMI, there was clearly excellent achievement in one category: Problem Solving. Almost all grades for both groups of students (Tables 6 and 7) achieved medians around or above the 90th percentile. The one exception being the twelfth graders in their first year of the program.

For the other CMI measures - Choosing a Job, Knowledge of Job, Planning, and Career Attitude - the junior high school grades attained medians below, slightly below, or at the 50th percentile norming level. The senior high school grades, however, performed considerably below the 50th percentiles of the norms, as indicated by their medians. In other words, there has been appreciably more success among the junior high students than among the senior high school students in this program as indicated by the Career Maturity Inventory scales and norms. In a larger sense, the junior high students are just barely performing at slightly below the norm averages for these tests. Item analyses of these performances would seem to be warranted in order to try to identify areas in which the program preparation for these parts of the tests may be improved.

Tables 6 and 7 also show that attendance for almost all grades declined from 1972-73 to 1973-74 for both groups of secondary students in the program. In only one case did the attendance improve, and this for grade 9 of the second year students, where the median dropped from 7.0 to 6.2 days absent. This was a very slight decrease, whereas the increase in absenteeism in most other instances was quite dramatic: witness the jump from 0 to 8.5 for the seventh graders and 26.5 to 34.8 for the twelfth graders in the program for their first year! It seems clear

that the program is coinciding with appreciable increases in absenteeism among its participants, and although one cannot demonstrate the program being a cause, the objective of improving attendance is certainly not being realized or approached by the program.

Tables 8 and 9 present more detailed distributions of the attendance variable using five-day intervals to categorize students' scores by grade.

Table 8. Attendance of Secondary Students in Program for Two Years Comparing '72-'73 with '73-'74 by Grade (Figures = % students in category)

| | | N Days Absent | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Grade | | 0-4 | 5-9 | 10-14 | 15-19 | 20+ | N | Median |
| 7 | 72-73 | 15.0 | 40.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 35.0 | 20 | 5.8 |
| | 73-74 | 30.0 | 15.0 | 20.0 | 10.0 | 25.0 | 20 | 9.0 |
| 8 | 72-73 | 29.5 | 32.1 | 15.4 | 9.0 | 14.1 | 78 | 7.0 |
| | 73-74 | 17.9 | 35.9 | 11.5 | 12.8 | 21.8 | 78 | 8.6 |
| 9 | 72-73 | 29.0 | 21.0 | 19.4 | 9.7 | 21.0 | 62 | 7.0 |
| | 73-74 | 32.3 | 19.4 | 6.5 | 12.9 | 29.0 | 62 | 6.2 |
| 10 | 72-73 | 19.6 | 26.1 | 21.7 | 8.7 | 23.9 | 46 | 8.5 |
| | 73-74 | 13.0 | 26.1 | 6.5 | 15.2 | 39.1 | 46 | 15.5 |
| 11 | 72-73 | 6.8 | 11.4 | 22.7 | 20.5 | 38.6 | 44 | 16.5 |
| | 73-74 | 11.4 | 6.8 | 2.3 | 20.5 | 59.1 | 44 | 21.8 |
| 12 | 72-73 | 3.8 | 15.4 | 19.2 | 15.4 | 46.2 | 52 | 18.8 |
| | 73-74 | 1.9 | 11.5 | 9.6 | 19.2 | 57.7 | 52 | 21.0 |

Table 9. Attendance of Secondary Students in Program for One Year Comparing '72-'73 with '73-'74 By Grade (Figures = % students in category)

| Grade | | N Days Absent 0-4 | 5-9 | 10-14 | 15-19 | 20+ | N | Median |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | 72-73 | 98.9 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.1 | 90 | 0.0 |
| | 73-74 | 25.6 | 24.4 | 15.6 | 13.3 | 21.1 | 90 | 8.5 |
| 8 | 72-73 | 9.2 | 30.8 | 3.8 | 3.8 | 42.3 | 26 | 6.3 |
| | 73-74 | 15.4 | 15.4 | 15.4 | 19.2 | 34.6 | 26 | 15.0 |
| 9 | 72-73 | 15.4 | 25.0 | 21.2 | 15.4 | 23.1 | 52 | 10.5 |
| | 73-74 | 5.8 | 21.2 | 26.9 | 5.8 | 40.4 | 52 | 12.5 |
| 10 | 72-73 | 12.5 | 12.5 | 33.3 | 12.5 | 29.4 | 24 | 11.5 |
| | 73-74 | 8.3 | 20.8 | 20.8 | 8.3 | 41.7 | 24 | 14.5 |
| 11 | 72-73 | N of cases too few to report | | | | | 2 | - |
| | 73-74 | | | | | | 2 | - |
| 12 | 72-73 | 7.1 | 0.0 | 14.3 | 7.1 | 71.4 | 14 | 26.5 |
| | 73-74 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 7.1 | 92.9 | 14 | 34.8 |

The patterns provided by these tables substantiate the picture given by the attendance medians in Tables 6 and 7. There is an increase of students in 73-74 toward higher absenteeism categories with a concomitant decrease of students in the lower absenteeism categories.

A final objective of the program anticipated decreases in the incidence of disciplinary actions taken against secondary level students in the program. Table 10 presents the mean number of disciplinary actions taken against first year and second year program secondary students for 1972-73 and 1973-74.

Table 10. Mean Number of Disciplinary Cases for Secondary Students in the Program One and Two Years by Grade

| | One Year | | | Two Years | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Grade | 72-73 | 73-74 | N | 72-73 | 73-74 | N |
| 7 | 0.0 | 1.4 | 90 | 0.2 | 0.6 | 20 |
| 8 | 1.4 | 4.3 | 26 | 0.2 | 1.8 | 78 |
| 9 | 1.2 | 4.4 | 52 | 0.7 | 1.4 | 62 |
| 10 | 0.2 | 1.2 | 24 | 0.9 | 0.9 | 46 |
| 11 | 4.0 | 4.5 | 2 | 1.2 | 3.3 | 44 |
| 12 | 0.0 | 2.5 | 14 | 1.0 | 1.8 | 52 |

In almost every case, the trend from 72-73 to 73-74 indicates an increase in number of disciplinary actions taken against students in the program. While it is possible, as with the attendance variable, that this phenomenon is an artifact of advancing in grades in school ($r$ between discipline for consecutive years in the secondary sample is .33 and significantly greater than $r = 0$, $p = .001$), it is also clear that the objective of

decreasing disciplinary actions among students was not achieved. Clues as to what may be happening here may be revealed upon closer inspection of the disciplinary action data and should be sought for future practices of the program.