The Impact Of Codes Of Conduct On Stakeholders

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April 30, 2015

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine how an urban school district's code of conduct aligned with actual school/class behaviors, and how stakeholders perceived the ability of this document to achieve its number one goal: safe and productive learning environments. Twenty participants including students, teachers, parents, and administrators were interviewed via focus groups and one on one interviews to gain their perceptions of the district wide code of conduct's ability to create a productive learning environment in one Baltimore City, Maryland K-8 school. Interview responses were compared to recent and prior district codes of conduct documents to determine the perceived effectiveness of the most recent code of conduct. Also, Baltimore City Code of Conduct documents were compared to three other school districts in the state to determine similarities and differences. Results from this school in Baltimore showed that participants did not perceive the code as effective in achieving its goal. Stakeholders showed compassion for students displaying behaviors that interrupted instruction: they wanted disruptions to cease, without returning to the negative effects of Zero Tolerance policies. Additionally, some associations between code of conduct strengths and weaknesses and state testing results, among the four districts, showed comparable relationships. When relevant, portions transcribed interviewee responses were included in the appendix section and as appropriate within the research.

Statement of the Problem

This year, as in years past, Baltimore City Public Schools (BCPSS) revised its code of conduct. However, the contexts around the enactment and implementation of this policy warrants deeper exploration of the impacts on stakeholders including parents, teachers, administrators, and most importantly, students. While the yearly suspension rates are significant, a more nuanced understanding of the causes and consequences of this policy bears merit. The purpose of this study was to determine how an urban school districts' code of conduct aligned with behaviors, and how stakeholders (students, teachers, parents, and administrators) perceive the ability of this document to achieve its number one goal: safe and productive learning environments.

From a socio-cultural and historical perspective, race and punishment against minority and low socioeconomic status (SES) students is disproportionately embodied in education as well as in other areas of life (Truman, Roberts, and Kemp, 2012). "In urban settings, discipline is often racially charged, and educators' report that fear of legal challenges prevent them from doing what they think is best for students" (Arum, 2011, p. 12). In other words, Arum (2011) is saying that with the added variables of racism and/or perceived racism as well as potential legal ramifications, disciplinary actions that may be best for children are sometimes waived to avoid the perceptions of poor legal or racial conduct. Fortunately, it is understood that education has the potential to counteract many of these disparaging and racially charged statistical outcomes (Broderick & Blewitt, 2009). The challenge then becomes to use education and discipline in ways that promote positive outcomes for students (Broderick, 2009) and not allow it to perpetuate discipline that is racially charged either in reality or perception (Arum, 2011). It is important to state that school violence and climate are not just an African American or urban school system problem (Truman, Roberts, and Kemp, 2012). Moreover, broad brushing the problem of school climate and violence with policies like "Zero Tolerance", do not provide the ability to address subtle nuances found in the complex make up of schools (Martinez, 2009).

Willoughby (2012) states that the beginnings of high suspensions rates occurred in the early 80s along with the idea of Zero Tolerance. Zero Tolerance, otherwise known as the Gun-Free Schools Act, is a public law passed in 2004 by former President Bill Clinton (Martinez, 2009). Historically, this idea originated in the 80s from the U.S. Customs Agency to deal with an ever growing drug problem (Martinez, 2009). Many people have a problem with the use of a "drug law" adopted into school policy (Martinez, 2009). Moreover, opponents state that many administrators misuse the law and apply it to students with behavioral problems, rather than students who bring weapons or guns to school (Martinez, 2009). Those who see the application of the law as misused may be missing the fact that administrators are looking for a way to solve problems that are negatively affecting the learning environment. Moreover, opponents of Zero Tolerance gloss over the fact that school violence reached epidemic status, as mentioned in a presidential state of the union address (Jones, 1998). Some administrators like the Zero Tolerance policy: they have seen benefits in their schools because of the policy (Keleher, 2000). Keleher (2000) later goes on to speak of in-school remediation techniques that can be used to modify students' behavior; rather than apply the law of Zero Tolerance. These last techniques somewhat contrast Keleher (2000), who also stated that zero-tolerance has flaws; however, it should be used in extreme cases (Keleher, 2000).

Keleher (2000), likewise, talked about the perceptions of teachers and the resulting application of Zero Tolerance in two situations where students are known to have brought weapons to school. Keleher (2000) makes a strong argument regarding the unfairness with which one of the students, who is African American is held to the letter of the law, rather than the spirit of the law. In terms of addressing behavior, we must continue to find a way to apply appropriately measured responses to infractions, with regard to the spirit of the law and not just the letter of the law. To further this point, APA (2008, p. 852) went on to say that,

There can be no doubt that schools have a duty to use all effective

means needed to maintain a safe and disciplined learning

environment. Beyond the simple responsibility to keep children

safe, teachers cannot teach and students cannot learn in a climate

marked by chaos and disruption. About this there is no

controversy. Disagreements have arisen, however, over the

methods used to achieve that aim.

It seems that challengers of Zero Tolerance, in a rush to abolish the practice do so without

evidence that it has some validity (APA, 2008). Rather, the lack of supporting evidence that it

works is held as reasoning to stop the practice (APA, 2008). Additionally, APA states that Zero

Tolerance should be used in serious cases: "2 Policy A.2.1 Reserve Zero Tolerance disciplinary

removals for only the most serious and severe of disruptive behaviors. Expulsions and long-term

suspensions should be reserved for offenses that place other students or staff in jeopardy of

physical or emotional harm" (APA 2008, p. 858).

Similarly, behavioral distractions too, while not violent, affect learning. The same effort

to avoid or drastically reduce suspensions for violent behavior has also nurtured an overall

attempt to reduce suspensions for nonviolent offenses. One of the assumptions here as that only

violent offenses have a negative effect on schooling. On the contrary, The American Federation

of Teachers (AFT) is discussing school climate as a factor that has been severely over looked

(AFT, 2003). Some of our schools, as some teachers say, are in a state of severe turmoil, with

mass chaos and confusion in and out of the classrooms (AFT, 2003). To make matters worse, the

campaign to reverse Zero Tolerance policies in schools (Martinez, 2009) has inadvertently

fostered another risky policy: tolerance of poor behavior. "Tolerance of poor behavior" for the

purposes of this discussion is defined as the willful ability to overlook or "under-consequence"

poor behavior, in the name of meeting curriculum, education, and federal and district mandates to curb suspensions. In effect, this becomes a question of whether the means justifies the end.

Tolerance of poor behavior is often mandated by states who then pressure school districts to comply. The end result is that principals are forced to choose which infractions should be dealt with and which should not be addressed. Ultimately students and teachers are left to deal with the aftermath of such decisions by finding ways to cope with students' disruptive behaviors: behaviors which may be better handled outside of the classroom (Stauffer & Mason 2013). Currently, some classrooms are breeding grounds for violent behavior stemming from in and outside of the school grounds (Burdick-Will, 2013). The current push for anti-bullying campaigns are immediate evidence of these behaviors (U.S Department of Health & Human Services 2014).

Discipline

Grades and tests scores are a component, but not an exclusive part, of the indicators of learning that takes place in schools. Concentrating on just these aspects (test scores) is detrimental to education (McMurrer, 2012). Awarding School Improvement Grants (SiGs) and ignoring improvements in school climate is detrimental to the progress of schools and forces administrators to place less value on climate (McMurrer, 2012). Contrary to how many schools operate, discipline is not simply a means to an end of better grades; rather, it is a form of needed education in and of itself (Arum, 2011).

Legal Ramifications and Discipline

From a legal perspective, it is understandable for schools to approach disciplinary actions cautiously.

Since Goss extended "rudimentary due process" to students in

even minor disciplinary matters, schools have been sued for in-

school suspensions, after-school suspensions, suspensions from

extracurricular activities such as athletic participation, and many

other everyday disciplinary sanctions designed to maintain school

environments conducive to learning (Arum, 2011, p. 13).

Court cases emerging from schools were about 5 annually prior to 1968—around 2005 those

numbers averaged 65 per year (Arum, 2011). Moreover, cases prior to 1974 were about self-

expression today these cases are more about weapons and violence, drugs, and special education

(Arum, 2011). For example, in 2007 a judge saw the potential for legal danger in schools,

forecasting an ever more entanglement of legal proceedings in education (Arum, 2011).

Understandably, this potential litigation prompts schools to cautiously approach writing and

implementing codes of conduct.

Background and Need

Many schools and school districts have developed codes of conduct to address specific

behaviors. Often these documents involve the input of parents, students and staff (Noonan,

Tunney et al, 1999). What is unclear in the research is how effective the implementation of

district created documents are in curbing behaviors that command consequences. How do these

policies impact the school climate for all stakeholders? Broderick & Blewitt (2009, p. 226-230)

classified behaviors as prosocial (desired behavior) and antisocial (undesired behavior). These

behaviors are present through all stages of development, from birth to adulthood. Both pathways

of behavior include external and internal factors (Broderick & Blewitt, 2009, p. 233). External

factors, not unlike schools with undesirable climates, can put "some children at greater risk for

developing antisocial patterns" (Broderick & Blewitt 2009, p. 233).

In an attempt to alter the course of antisocial behaviors, schools use what are known as

Character Education programs. According to Smith (2013):

Character education has been a part of schooling in the United

States since the early years of its public education system. Starting

with a religious emphasis on moral development, character

education eventually transformed into more secular approaches,

like the values clarification model, character word-of-the-month

approach, performance approach, and finally into social emotional

learning approaches. These approaches are reflective of the

changes occurring in the social, cultural, and economic spheres of

the country, which eventually blurred the lines between the moral

and performance (the socio-cultural and economic) aspects of

character development.

Character education programs and other similar attempts approach students as if they are all alike (Broderick & Blewitt, 2009). The research about the effectiveness of such programs is debatable (Broderick & Blewitt, 2009). In order to effectively teach and train students about appropriate expectations, schools should approach all of the needs of the child, inclusive of these needs are behavioral expectations (Broderick & Blewitt, 2009). Although the effectiveness of character education programs is unclear, what is clear by their creation and evolution, is that there is a cultural change in schools. Ways of addressing these cultural changes include the use of adequate codes of conduct.

In addition to a strong academic program, filled with rigor, students need demanding teachers: teachers who personify the traits of an authoritative parent (Broderick & Blewitt, 2009). However, this type of relationship cannot be fostered if administrators do not adequately support teachers. Rather, principals operate with the knowledge of potentially being placed on an unsafe or persistently dangerous school list, similar to schools in the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) school system (MSDE, 2013). Moreover, it contrasts the idea that warm

and friendly teacher-student relationships and classrooms are all that are needed to be successful (Broderick & Blewitt, 2009). Broderick & Blewitt (2009) found that a friendly teacher-student relationship was not enough to meet the students' academic needs.

As indicated in an article by the AFT, a number of schools today have climates that are in opposition of learning and safety (AFT, 2003). To substantiate the AFT article, Broderick & Blewitt (2009) stated environmental factors like, home environment, exposure to violence, and others as reasons that promote aggressive behavior in children.

Behaviors that warrant sever consequences may be detrimental to the ratings of a school (Gooden, Harrington et al, 2008). In short, schools labeled as unsafe may receive low ratings and administrators of these school face possible punitive consequences or risk losing funding from students who use the law to transfer to another school (Gooden, Harrington et al, 2008). As a result, "under-consequencing" is beneficial for administrators in an effort to avoid seemingly excessive consequences and the negative repercussions that may follow (Gooden, Harrington et al, 2008). Also, it is unclear about whether or not there is a gap in implementation. Specifically, are schools following the codes of conduct for specific behaviors or are certain policies being followed unequally across circumstances and contexts? Research about how students, teachers, parents, and administrators perceive their districts actual codes of conduct and its effectiveness is lacking.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this mixed methods action research study is to determine how an urban school district's code of conduct in the state of Maryland aligns with behaviors, and how stakeholders (students, teachers, parents, and administrators) perceive the ability of this document to achieve its number one goal: safe and productive learning environments.

Research Question(s)

What types of school climates are being fostered by school discipline policies? Specifically, what are the perceptions of parents, teachers, administrators, and students (both compliant and non-compliant) around the effects of the revised edition discipline policy on school climate?

Literature Review

Boyd (2012, p. 63) stated, "The teacher who can deliver consistently interesting and challenging instruction may have fewer student behavior issues than one whose lesson plans are boring or meaningless. Nevertheless, learning activities are not guaranteed to engage 100 percent of students, every minute of every class period, every day of the school year." Frequent noncompliance in young children can often develop into other more serious behavior problems, such as verbal or physical aggression, property destruction, and running away. Noncompliance also prevents teachers from engaging in essential instructional duties as they attempt to deal with noncompliance (Cipani, 1998). Boyd (2012, p. 66) went on to say, "Teachers cannot meet the school's academic priorities in a chaotic, dangerous, or unproductive environment."

A report from the AFT (2003) further builds upon this argument for safer schools and appropriate learning environments. School codes of conduct are effective management documents that should be used to address and set the standard for appropriate learning environment behaviors (Noonan, Tunney et al, 1999). In the report the AFT supports the system wide implementation of policies saying, "Enact districtwide discipline codes" (AFT, 2003, p. 3). However, the report stops short of saying that districts ignore or fail to implement the documents that they already have. Yet, the report continues saying "Most school districts have adopted some type of discipline policy. In many cases, the district policy spells out unacceptable behaviors and consequences for rule infractions. In other cases, the district wide policy only requires individual schools to establish a discipline code (AFT, 2003)."

At the heart of this study are questions asking if school code of conduct policies are able to create climates where learning takes precedence and behaviors contrary to learning are modified in ways that provide all students an optimum learning environment. This study is also about the impact of codes of conduct on all students including those who are not labeled as behavioral concerns and those who lack direct interaction with the policies due to their compliant behaviors. Particularly, research on the impact of discipline policies around "compliant" or "undisruptive" students is sporadic. How is their learning environment and climate impacted or not impacted by top down district policies? While this particular study does not scientifically determine this impact, it aims to qualitatively determine whether or not these students are impacted.

Codes of Conduct

To address undesired behaviors in schools, many districts have implemented a code of conduct. These documents should be explicit in their intent and outcomes of desired behavior and consequences (SAFE, 2003; Noonan, Tunney et al, 1999). The documents are best developed with input from the school and community, or more specifically the school staff and parents (Noonan, Tunney et al, 1999). Noonan, Tunney et al, (1999) go on to state how use of focus groups and qualitative research are good strategies for producing a code of conduct.

West, Leon-Guerrero, and Stevens (2007, p. 34) further acknowledge the benefits of "codes of acceptable behavior" by explaining that there must be acceptance by the school community, as a whole. They go on to express the importance of consistent implementation of the document from school staff (West, Leon-Guerrero, and Stevens, 2007). More importantly West, Leon-Guerrero, and Stevens (2007, p. 38) address the disconnection of a students' home life and implementation of a code of conduct by stating:

> Students from diverse backgrounds may be at a disadvantage when
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> they enter school, and every effort should be made to teach them

the expectations of the school culture. These expectations should

not be imposed on them by the dominant culture, but instead

should originate from careful, deliberative dialogue amongst all

constituents. The charge to be a reflective, culturally competent

educator is being taken to heart by teachers. However, this charge

has often been interpreted to allow the persistence of deviant

behavior that is incongruent with the school culture. In addition,

when this behavior persists, educators find themselves in a reactive

stance that may cause the behavior to escalate and result in a child

being labeled as having emotional disorders. A possible remedy is

to be proactive by establishing codes of conduct that clearly define

acceptable behaviors, explicitly teach the behaviors, and then

consistently model and adhere to the codes of conduct.

Behavior

Specifically in 2011 the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) developed a self-reporting system pertaining to school discipline, violence, and crime (VDOE, 2011).This self-reporting tool is used by VDOE as a tool to complete reports for the Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994 (VDOE, 2011). Incidentally the VDOE (2011, p. 2) stated "The most frequently reported incidents were defiance [15.83% (27,958)], classroom/campus disruption [11.52% (20,356)], obscene language/gestures [8.98% (15,856)], disrespect [7.62% (13,464)]," as some of the most pressing issues. In fact, at least in this school system, defiance (27,958 state totals), and classroom campus disruptions (20,356 state totals), outnumber bullying (6118 state totals) by about a ratio of 4:1. This 4:1 ratio is significant because there is a nationwide movement to stop bullying. Yet, at least in the VDOE data, defiance and classroom disruptions outnumber bullying. By no means is this comparison to minimize bullying, or its effects. Rather, if this data

from the VDOE is representative of other schools districts, then it signals that the latter concerns require equal attention to modify the behaviors.

Bullying as mentioned in the VDOE report, along with school violence and effective teachers are all buzz words talked about in media and other forms of public discourse (Dake, Price et al, 2004). The stopbullying.gov website defines bullying as "unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both, kids who are bullied, and those who bully others, may have serious, lasting problems." The definition is further explained by three distinct categories of bullying: Verbal, Social and Physical.

In contrasts to No Child Left Behind (NCLB), teacher effectiveness is not based solely on best knowledge and best practices; rather, it is a combination of these attributes, coupled with a desire to make students successful in a flawed system (Sosa, Gomez, 2012). Similarly, MacSuga-Gage, Simonsen, & Briere (2012) defined effective teaching well when the said "Effective teaching is both an art and a science. Successful teachers expertly weave together academic, behavioral, and social threads to achieve a unique classroom tapestry." Often, classroom teachers receive much of the blame and responsibility for modifying behaviors like bullying and school violence. However, the question arises regarding whether or not schools and school districts can adequately address problems, once teachers or other school staff make efforts to modify and then alert administrators of concerns. Restated, is school climate a product directly linked to school policy or is it an unstable entity, heavily steeped in outside factors and less so in routine school procedures?

At the core of any code of conduct is the need and desire to maintain acceptable school climates by guiding behavior. Bru (2009) found that including some disruptive students does not affect the learning outcomes of other students. However, what is not clear is how the negative behavior or attention to that behavior by the educator decreases the overall total of what is

taught. In other words, Bru (2009) may be stating that both disruptive and non-disruptive students are able to retain the information taught by the teacher; however, the study does not seem to account for the loss of information resulting from educators addressing classroom behavioral concerns.

To further this point, Cipani (1998) stated that noncompliant children are the main source of problems for teachers. They are the main sources because this type of behavior can become disruptive to the class (Cipani, 1998). Additionally, if these noncompliant behaviors are not adequately addressed they can become physical aggression, develop the potential to destroy property, or foster a desire to elope (Cipani, 1998; Broderick & Blewitt 2009, p. 233). Cipani (1998) continues the discussion of noncompliance with two reasons for the behavior: reinforcement either from the teacher or peers. While there are ways to counteract this behavior, it is important to note that the behavior will intensify as the child grows, if it is not adequately addressed (Cipani, 1998).

No study or discussion about a schools' code of conduct or behavior would be complete without acknowledging the real world discrepancies of African American students (boys specifically) receiving higher rates of suspension (Kaufman, Jaser, et al 2009). In Maryland, this problem is not just limited to BCPSS. In fact, black students experience higher rates of suspension in all 24 Maryland school districts, when compared to Whites and Hispanics for the same behaviors (O'Conner, Porowski, & Passa, 2009-12). However, it is not an issue that may be so easily connected to race and culture. Kaufman, Jaser, et al (2009) found that these disparities of African American students receiving disproportionate amounts of office referrals occurred in schools where African Americans are administrators and referring teachers. What is of heavy importance to address is that the research is not clear on the sources of these disparities: codes of conduct consequences are not cited as the problem. O'Conner, Porowski, & Passa (2009-12) stated: "Although the study findings indicate some large disproportionalities in discipline—

especially for black students and students in special education—the data cannot establish the source of these disparities."

School Climate

Truman, Roberts, and Kemp (2012) found that, in general, more schools record serious and violent crimes than are reported to the police. The percentage of crime occurring in schools, including serious and violent crimes, which schools are not reporting to police range anywhere from 15-20 percent (Truman, Roberts, and Kemp, 2012). Additionally, approximately 85% of public schools may acknowledge crime; however, only about 60% may notify police of the majority of these concerns (Truman, Roberts, and Kemp, 2012). Urban schools, outnumber the percentage of problems that occur in schools when compared to other locales (Truman, Roberts, and Kemp, 2012). For example, urban schools ranked highest in the following school discipline problems: verbal abuse towards teachers, other acts of disrespect towards teachers, classroom disorder, student sexual harassment, racial tensions, and bullying (Truman, Roberts, and Kemp, 2012). As a whole, both rural and urban schools under report the severity of these concerns to local authorities (Truman, Roberts, and Kemp, 2012). Although criminal concerns are not the foundational structure for this study, they have some relevance regarding this topic because of how and why they are or are not reported and how they impact the construction and implementation of codes of conduct.

Parental Perceptions

In terms of school climate, parent participation in schools depends largely on perception. For example, if parents perceive the school to be doing well, they are less likely to contact the teacher (Waasdorp, Bradshaw, and Duong, 2011). The inverse is also true: if parents view the schools as an unsafe (e.g. bullying) environment, they are more likely to contact the school (Waasdorp, Bradshaw, and Duong, 2011). Additionally, students are more likely to tell parents about a school incident, rather than a teacher (Waasdorp, Bradshaw, and Duong, 2011). This

phenomenon can further complicate the situation. It is important that schools are aware and appropriately address climate concerns, especially as they relate to safety. Although parents may want to help, they may not always know how to intervene with a global or communal perspective (Waasdorp, Bradshaw, and Duong, 2011).

Educators, especially in high needs schools, cannot simply rely on parents to help with behavior (Arum, 2011). If they do so, inadequate parental intervention may make a school problem worse and contribute to a negative school climate (Waasdorp, Bradshaw, & Duong, 2011). School climate was one of the top 6 reasons parents of a Utah school had their students try private education. This is very similar to parent's reasoning's around the country (Bukhari & Randall 2009). Incidentally, one parent of a school in Utah made note that money was no burden if it produced a better educational experience for their child (Bukhari & Randall 2009). This sentiment reinforces that parents' care deeply about their children's educational experience; however, they are not necessarily equipped to structure discipline outside of their socio-cultural context (Yang, Bear, et al, 2013). In other words, if parents in low SES circumstances were able to pay for a better educational environment, they would most likely do so. Therefore, careful policy creation and implementation is necessary to ensure a productive school climate for children in all SES groups.

Teacher Perceptions

Schools Climate and Codes of Conduct can essentially become interchangeable language for teachers. However, this is not the case, although one impacts the other. Specifically, Codes of Conduct refer to school climate, but only to the extent that it is enforced. Teachers have very poignant perceptions and experiences with school climate. For example teachers in a study from Stauffer and Mason (2013) said:

> "In addition to student achievement, students' behavior and
>
> attitude were concerns closely related to the instructional stressors

teachers listed. Although 67% of teachers expressed concerns in this category, one teacher's comment captured this connection well. This high-priority school teacher shared, sometimes I get impatient when my students misbehave and distract others or prevent me from teaching" (Stauffer & Mason 2013, p. 821).

"She said, the stressors associated with working with students are the problems with discipline and their lack of respect for themselves and others. The 'I don't care attitude' gets tiring and makes teaching more of a struggle" (Stauffer & Mason 2013, p. 821).

"School environment stated that students who are daily behavior problems who are not removed from the classroom and in turn affect the level of instruction of the other children" (Stauffer & Mason 2013, p. 821).

"She clearly linked students' home environment with students' behavior and attitude (Stauffer & Mason 2013, p. 822). A large part of my job is getting students to the point where they are ready to absorb the lesson/curriculum I am trying to teach. Negative and inappropriate behaviors abound and I am constantly having to assert my command and authority over my classes to keep the environment under control so learning can take place" (Stauffer & Mason 2013, p. 822).

Although teachers in a number of schools are stressed about student behavior and attitudes, it is also important to state how they perceived accountability for students. Teachers felt a sense of equity regarding accountability for both themselves and students. Restated,

accountability to student achievement, well-being, and safety was not second to their own; rather, it was equal to their own (Mathers & King, 2001). This is important because it shows that teachers are concerned about the wellbeing of students. Finally, teachers in some high priority schools cited unsupportive administrators as causes of stress (Mathers & King, 2001). This is equally significant because it supports research about the perceptions of teachers and climate as important factors of school climate (Mathers & King, 2001). Particularly, teachers felt that holding them legally responsible for classroom duties makes teachers second guess decisions that may be appropriate, when it comes to referring and disciplining students (Arum, 2011).

Administrative Perceptions and Practices

One main concern when addressing the use of codes of conduct is school climate. The extent to which schools have highly or poorly functioning environments determine the effectiveness of codes of conduct and other tools. One point of importance here is that many principals, who are the driving forces of all aspects of schools, perceive bullying as a small concern in their buildings (Dake Price et al, 2004). Dake Price et al (2004) stated that principals do see bullying as more of a concern in other schools. Compounding this unawareness is the fact that students are less likely to help another child being bullied if they do not have a relationship with that student (Bellmore & Hughes 2012). Additionally, students are less likely to tell a teacher about the concern, especially if the bullying occurs in front of a classmate who can identify the "whistle blowing" student (Bellmore & Hughes 2012). What is even more concerning regarding students reporting occurrences of bullying is that in examples where students said they would intervene or tell a teacher, the information is not clear as to whether students are referring to what they would do or should do (Bellmore & Hughes 2012). In all, although the principal is responsible for the entire school, initial recognition and response to these concerns is the responsibility of the educator. The classroom educator must determine whether the code of conduct will address the concerns and whether their principal will perceive

the concerns as a real issue versus classroom management (Dake Price et al., 2004). Similarly,

the administrator must determine if the exact behavior is explicitly written in the code of

conduct, or if there is wiggle room for the child to be excused for the infraction and return to

class to continue the disruptive behavior. While bullying behavior is only a portion of a code of

conduct, the process and perceptions held by administrators can be perceived as generally

accepted practices for code of conduct implementation.

Student Perceptions

Students in the United States have a lowered perception of school climate, when

compared to other countries (Yang, Bear, et al, 2013). Researchers and students alike see

classrooms and schools in China as having better overall school climates (Yang, Bear, et al,

2013). Fan, William, et al (2011) found that a students' perception of their school environment

affects their academic learning. Moreover, school violence runs the gamut of verbal assault to

physical aggression: all of it negatively impacts the students, their school experience, and grades

(Burdick-Will, 2013). Along those same lines, violent crimes committed in schools have a

negative impact on math and reading scores (Burdick-Will, 2013). Schools with poor school and

classroom climates often compensate for this by lowering classroom standards and expectations

(Burdick-Will, 2013). Even more, students whose parents or siblings had negative school

experiences gave those students a negative outlook about school as well (Fan, William, et al

2011). Burdick-Will (2013) said it best by saying "However, this work highlights the fact that

the criminal justice system and the education system are interrelated institutions and cannot be

understood in isolation." Similarly, Alexander (2012) came to the same conclusion as Burdick-

Will (2013) when discussing public education and its connection to correctional institutions.

Persistently Dangerous Schools

MSDE (2013, p. 1) in a letter to the members of the Maryland State Board of Education

dated July 23, 2013, regarding the labeling of Persistently Dangerous schools (PDS) stated the

following in their historical perspective:

> Title IX of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 requires
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> each state receiving funds under the Act to establish and
>
> implement a state wide policy that allows a student attending a
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> persistently dangerous school to attend a safe school within the
>
> local school system in which the students is enrolled. In 2003
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> MSBE adopted COMAR 13A.08.01.18 -.20 to meet this
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> requirement. While NCLB requires states to identify persistently
>
> dangerous schools, it allows states to establish the parameters for
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> this identification. These parameters vary from state to state. Other
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> states have established parameters such that no schools have
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> actually been identified as PDS. The Maryland State Board,
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> however, intended to implement the law with rigor so that this
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> issue could get the attention it deserves.

MSDE (2013) goes on to say that they have determined that a school is persistently dangerous if

2.5% of students from a given school are placed on suspension/expulsion for more than ten days.

The fact that MSDE has decided to set parameters for this labeling is commendable. On the other

hand, arguments either way can be made about this labeling. The Maryland State Department of

Education has used this mandate as an opportunity to identify PDS, as directed by the terms of

NCLB. However, some would hold the opinion that suspensions over ten days leaves plenty of

room for administrators to prevent persistently dangerous problems from ever really being

detected, at least by the federal level, by simply applying suspensions of ten days or less.

Additionally, it can be assumed that a strong subliminal message might be sent to school administrators whose schools do surpass this 2.5% threshold. For example in an identical letter in July 2010, MSDE (2010), five schools who met the criteria of PDS were removed from this list due to closures. Similarly in July 2012, only one school met this criteria: it too was closed (MSDE, 2012). While these school systems share common problems like other urban districts around the country, judging from the data of MSDE (2010) and MSDE (2012), an argument can be made that administrators will perceive PDS labeling as a negative consequence. Accordingly, this perception may alter how they handle codes of conduct and deal with behavior.

Methods

For this study quantitative and qualitative data was collected, with an emphasis on the qualitative perspective: Qual-quan mixed methods design. This was ideal because what was important in this body of work were the thoughts and perceptions of students, teachers, administrators, and parents of children who were not chronically disruptive. Inversely, some of the data gained from this group was loosely quantified by noting how frequently chronic disruptions were perceived to occur or how often students classroom instruction was interrupted by poor behavior. Data was collected via 6 focus groups consisting of 3-6 people and three one on one interviews (Administrator interviews). The interview process took about 3-4 weeks to plan and implement. At a later point, a decision was made to interview a former BCPSS headquarters employee to balance and widen the perspective of qualitative data from participants. The former headquarters employee was asked the same questions as school administrators, in an effort to maintain uniformity. At the end of all interview sessions, participants were given an opportunity to make any statements they thought were relevant to the topic—statements which may not have been elicited by the questions. In cases where those comments were directly or indirectly related to the research question, they were included in the study. All interviewees were given aliases in place of their actual names.

It should be noted that some districts' code of conduct documents in this study distinguished some consequences based on age and grade level. Generally, this separation could be found in 2nd grade and below. Although there are also some differences in consequences for at least one of the cohorts interviewed (3rd grade), these differences did not exists in all categories. To compensate for these differences and to align findings with other data (e.g. test scores and demographic information), all possible levels for all categories mentioned in this study were included. In cases where age and grade level may have played a factor, those attributes were acknowledged.

Student and Grade Criteria

During the interview portion of the study participants included students, teachers, parents and administrators. Students were selected based on a loose criteria of generally good behavior over the current school year. The decision to choose third, fifth, and seventh grade students was loosely based on personal teaching experience and thoughts about behaviors and maturity. Students picked for this study did not have to have a blemish free record. Pupils having been suspended during the interview school year or any prior school years were accepted to interview as long as they were generally perceived as students who were on task a majority of the time. Ideally, a request with this criteria was made to have a total of four students: two boys and two girls in each interview session. The request to have two boys and two girls was not strictly adhered to because of time and scheduling constraints. Also, to accommodate unforeseen circumstances, a decision was made to begin interviewing if three to six participants were present. Again, due to time and scheduling limitations, in some cases, a fourth grade student interviewed during the third grade session and an eighth grade student interviewed for a portion of the seventh grade session. These interviews took place at a school where the researcher had no contact or professional responsibilities with students, staff, or parents.

Similarly, four parents were chosen. Two parents became contact persons in the school and helped organize interviews with the remaining parents and students via input from teachers and staff as needed. At least one parent had a child and or family member who participated in the student interview sessions. All participants in the interviews were volunteers. Two eighth grade males made decisions to either not participate at all during the interview process or refuse to return about 30 minutes later to complete the remaining questions. It was later learned that the students made decisions to work together to earn community service learning time, during the same time that the interviews were scheduled. A decision was made to interview the eighth grade male, who began answering the first three questions, at a later time. His responses seemed to distract and make the other seventh graders uncomfortable or less likely to respond openly. This study included a total of 20 participants: nine students, four parents, four teachers, two school level administrators, and one former district office administrator.

Interview Structure and Subtleties

Interviews were guided by a set of 14 to 16 questions (See Table A1). These questions are generally the same; however, some questions were reworded or changed to better address a specific group. Also, some questions elicited answers that may have pertained to another question. Some participants gave longer or shorter answers at times. To accommodate time restraints and to reduce the likelihood that some participants would lose focus, some questions in a particular interview session were either skipped entirely or stated at a later time in the session. On average, each interview session took about 45 minutes. In the case of student interviews, some time prior to the interview sessions was allotted for a quick "ice breaking" conversation. You will find that some questions were omitted (mainly for time): mostly these were student questions. However, throughout the interviews all of the students were candid with their class behavior and with the behavior of other interviewees in that session. As a result, if a question had

the potential to make an interviewee uncomfortable, that question was omitted from that

particular session.

In each interview session more than one interviewee had an opinion that differed from

others in the same session. During those instances comfort levels were high enough that

interviewees would display both passive and active forms of agreement and disagreement. It

appeared that when a comment was made in which another interviewee disagreed, they were

quick and assertive, yet approachable with discussing or interjecting their difference in opinion.

Moreover, especially in the parent session, some interviewees spoke out to disagree and

remained quiet in agreement. As a result, in some cases, the responses are labeled passive

agreement, rather than yes. Similarly, some respondents, gave specific examples to punctuate

their yes answers. In such cases, the word "explanation" was used in place of a "yes" response.

Contrarily, respondents also gave explanations along with "no" answers; however, in a majority

of cases, "no" was specifically stated either before, during, or after the response. In a few

instances, it was difficult to determine passive agreement or disagreement. In these instances

most of the participants were involved in the discussion, with a few instances of interjections,

both agreeing and disagreeing. In these moments, rather than attempt to elicit a response or make

note of body language/disposition, a response of "no comment" was entered. Finally, in portions

of the interview where participants were not in attendance or stepped out of the room "n/a" or

"not available" were entered as a response.

Questions labeled with an M (e.g. QM8) are mixed numbered questions and represent

question numbers that did not correspond to question number eight in every session (See Table

A1). However, the questions were similar enough in intent and meaning to be grouped together

for comparison. For example, question QM8 is a compilation of staff question 8, administrative

question number 8, and student question number 9. All three of these questions, although worded

differently, elicited the same general response: "Are you friends or friendly with the students that misbehave?"

Introduction

This year Baltimore City revised its code of conduct; however, the contexts around the enactment and implementation of this policy lacks deeper exploration of the impacts on stakeholders including parents, teachers, administrators, and, most importantly, students. While suspension rates are significant, a more nuanced understanding of the origins and understandings of this policy bears merit. The purpose of this mixed method action research study was to determine how a school districts' policies impact school culture, and specifically how stakeholders (e.g. students, teachers, parents, and administrators) perceived the ability of this document to achieve its number one goal: safe and productive learning environments.

Research Question(s)

What types of school climates are being fostered by school discipline policies? Specifically, what are the perceptions of parents, teachers, administrators, and students (both compliant and non-compliant) around the effects of the revised discipline policy on school climate?

Setting

Interviews for parents, teachers, and students took place in a focus group format in a K-8 school in Baltimore, Maryland. Interviews for the administrative staff took place on a one to one basis. All interviews occurred in a closed/quiet room setting within the school. They took place after school or last period during the school week in a K-8 school in an urban school district in Maryland. The interview for the former district administrator took place in a neutral setting away from the school.

Participants

Participants included parents, students, staff, and administrators. Of these groups, the most diverse were the students. Three to four students were interviewed from the following grade levels: 3rd, 5th, and 7th. Parents were not necessarily those of the interviewed students; however, all of the parents had students enrolled in the school at the time. A large majority of the participants were African-American.

Instructional or Intervention Materials

No instructional or intervention materials were used. The 2014-2015 school year or latest editions of codes of conduct documents were downloaded from district websites to compare various behaviors and consequences between school districts.

Procedures

Data for this study was collected from two main sources: interviews/focus groups and regional school districts' code of conduct documents retrieved from corresponding websites.

Measurement Instrument

The interview data was collected via audio recordings during focus groups and one on one sessions. The recordings were transcribed. Quantitative data was measured by using the Consequence Ranking and Tolerance/Unacceptable Rating Scales.

Data Analysis

The qualitative analysis of the data consisted of identifying emerging themes around the research question, grounded within existing research. The sub group's perceptions and experiences were compared for a triangulated look at the impact on the perceptions of school culture by all stakeholders. The policies were evaluated and compared using document analysis techniques. Quantitative analysis included, tests scores in reading and math, mean household income, and district populations. Testing data for corresponding interview grade levels was averaged to show the number of students scoring basic or above for two prior school years in

reading and math for each school district. This averaged score was then compared to the school

districts' consequence rankings, derived in this study, by using the Consequence Ranking

System.

Findings

Behaviors Addressed

This study addressed the following behaviors found in the BCPSS (2014) code of

conduct: 101 Class cutting, 401 Physical Contact with School Personnel, 402 Attack on student,

403 Threat against school personnel (written or verbal), 404 Verbal or Physical Threat to

Student, 405 Fighting, 406 Robbery/Extortion, 407 Bullying, Including Cyberbullying and Gang-

Related Incidents, 408 Serious Bodily Injury, 601 Sexual assault or offense, 701 Disrespectful

behavior, 702 Defiance of Authority and/or Insubordination, 703 Harassment Based on Race,

Ethnicity, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Disability or Religion, Including Cyberharassment,

Against Members of the School Community, 704 Class disruption, 705 Inciting or Participating

in a Disturbance, 705 Hallway/Bus Misbehavior, 803 Theft, 804 Trespassing and 807 Refusal to

Obey School Policies (See Table A2). After interviews with participants were conducted, the

following categories were added because specific behaviors were mentioned that did not fall into

the original set of categories. Those categories were: 203/892 Drugs or controlled substances,

303/893 Other weapons (excludes fire arms), 502 False Fire Alarm activation, 806 Property

Damage, and Leaving school without permission. Of the school districts mentioned, BCPSS and

MCPS did not list specific categories to address leaving school (See Table A2).

Two Rating Systems

To compare all four school districts, two ratings systems were created. The first is called

the Tolerance/Unacceptable Rating Scale (See Table A3). This scale rates a district's tolerance

for specific behaviors listed in the code of conduct in two parts. The first part determines how

much effort the classroom teacher is expected to use, beyond instructional time, to modify the

student's behavior. Because the responsibility for student behavior is most likely to remain in the care of the classroom teacher, during levels 1-3, these levels are grouped together and make up the first scoring part of the Tolerance/Unacceptable rating scale. Secondly, in levels four and five, all of the districts' codes of conduct show consequences that are more likely to remove the majority of behavior modification responsibilities away from the classroom teacher. In these last two levels, students are more likely to be removed from the classroom setting. Overall, this two part rating system uses the same terms to rate behavioral level groupings: Tolerable, Less Tolerable, Unacceptable and Highly Unacceptable. The lowest possible rating to receive in either classification is Tolerable. The highest rating to receive in grouped levels one, two, and three is Unacceptable. The highest rating to receive in grouped levels four and five is Highly Unacceptable. As a result, when scoring from all levels are combined, the highest possible scoring would be Unacceptable/Highly Unacceptable. Conversely, the lowest scoring would be Tolerable/Tolerable.

The second rating system created is called the Consequence Ranking Scale (See Table A3). This system provides an overall numbering system for each behavior listed in the code of conduct. Similar to the Tolerance/Unacceptable Rating Scale system, levels one through three are grouped together and levels four and five are also grouped together. However, once totaled, their combined scores create an overall number ranking. For example, any behavior that receives a "No" listing or does not fall within the additional responsibilities of the classroom educator received 2 points. Conversely, a yes rating in levels four and five also received 2 points. The highest ranking score is 10 and the lowest possible score is zero. At times, using both systems will clarify information about a particular school system or category. For example, two schools with a ranking of six may use different strategies to approach a particular behavior (See Table A3). Receiving a lower ranking when compared to other school districts or, in the case of BCPSS, other school years, means that there may have been a weaker, more tolerable response to

a specific behavior. Conversely, receiving a higher ranking when compared to other school

districts may signify a stronger less tolerable response to a specific behavior.

District Criteria

        In order to discuss the 2014 edition of BCPSS's code of conduct, reference frames from

past school years and other school districts, having similar populations and other desired

attributes: higher test scores, and similar student populations were chosen (U.S. Census Bureau,

2014; MSDE Report Card, 2013-14; NCES, 2012-14). In two cases, Howard County Public

Schools (HCPSS) and Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), which are two of the

wealthiest school districts in the state of Maryland, were chosen to compare mean income, as a

determining factor. Similarly, Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS), was also included

because its mean household income level was comparable to HCPSS and MCPS: $87,430.

Additionally, HCPSS, AACPS, and to some extent MCPS, had school populations that were

thought to be relatively close enough to BCPSS to make some comparisons (U.S. Census

Bureau, 2014; NCES, 2012-14).

BCPSS Compared to Other Districts

        Compared to the other districts in this study, BCPSS scored first place in one category on

the Consequence ranking scale: 601 Sexual assault or offense (See Table 1). BCPSS scored last

place on the Consequence Ranking Scale in four categories. Those code of conduct categories

include: 404 Verbal or Physical Threat to Student, 405 Fighting, 407 Bullying, Including

Cyberbullying and Gang-Related Incidents, and 704 Class disruption. BCPSS tied for last place

on the scale in nine categories: 101 Class cutting, 203/892 Using or possessing drugs, 401

Physical Contact with School Personnel, 402 Attack on student, 502 False Fire alarm activation,

701 Disrespectful behavior, 702 Defiance of Authority and/or Insubordination, 703 Harassment

Based on Race, Ethnicity, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Disability or Religion, Including

Cyberharassment, Against Members of the School Community and 807 Refusal to Obey School

Policies (See Table 1).

HCPSS (2013), compared to other districts in this study ranked highest in 11 behavior

categories. Those categories include: 101 Class Cutting, 303/893 Other weapons (excludes fire

arms), 401 Physical Contact with School Personnel, 402 Attack on student, 403 Threat against

school personnel (written or verbal), 404 Verbal or Physical Threat to Student, 405 Fighting, 406

Robbery/Extortion, 502 False Fire Alarm activation, 702 Defiance of Authority and/or

Insubordination and 703 Harassment Based on Race, Ethnicity, Gender, Sexual Orientation,

Disability or Religion, Including Cyberharassment, Against Members of the School Community.

HCPSS did not rank last in any of the categories. HCPSS did tie for last place in category 601:

sexual assault or offense (See Table 1). HCPSS did not rank last place in any category.

AACPS (2014), compared to other districts in this study, ranked first place in three

categories and ranked last in one category. First place rankings for AACPS were 701

Disrespectful behavior, 705 Hallway/Bus Misbehavior, and 807 Refusal to Obey School Policies.

AACPS placed last in category 406: Robbery (See Table 1).

Compared to other districts in this study, MCPS (2014) did not rank first place in any

category. MCPS scored last place on the Consequence Ranking Scale in two categories, which

included 303/893 Other weapons (excludes fire arms) and 403 Threat against school personnel

(written or verbal). MCPS tied for last place in the seven following categories: 203, 892 Using or

possessing drugs, 402 Attack on student, 701 Disrespectful Behavior, 702 Defiance of Authority

and/or Insubordination, 803 Theft, 804 Trespassing and 807 Refusal to Obey School Policies

(See Table 1).

Table 1 BCPSS Placement Among Districts				
Behavior	BCPSS	AACPS	HCPSS	MCPS
101 Class Cutting	2,3,4	2,3,4	1	2,3,4
203, 892 Using or possessing drugs	3,4	1,2	1,2	3,4
303, 893 Other weapons that could cause bodily harm	2,3	2,3	1	4
401 Physical Contact with School Personnel	2,3,4	2,3,4	1	2,3,4
402 Attack on student	3,4	2	1	3,4
403 Threat Against School Personnel, Written or Verbal	2,3	2,3	1	4
404 Verbal or Physical Threat to Student	4	2	1	3
405 Fighting	4	2,3	1	2,3
406 Robbery	2,3	4	1	2,3
407 Bullying, Including Cyberbullying and Gang-Related Incidents	4	1,2,3	1,2,3	1,2,3
408 Serious Bodily Injury	1,2	N/A	1,2	3
502 False Fire alarm activation	2,3,4	2,3,4	1	2,3,4
601 Sexual Assault or Offense	1	3,4	3,4	2
701 Disrespectful Behavior	3,4	1	2	3,4
702 Defiance of Authority and/or Insubordination	3,4	2	1	3,4
703 Harassment Based on Race, Ethnicity, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Disability or Religion, Including Cyberharassment, Against Members of the School Community	2,3,4	2,3,4	1	2,3,4
704 Class disruption	4	1,2	1,2	3
705 Inciting or Participating in Disturbance	1,2	1,2	3	N/A
705 Bus Transportation Violations	2,3	1	2,3	N/A
705 Hallway Misbehavior	1	N/A	N/A	N/A
803 Theft	1,2	3,4	1,2	3,4
804 Trespassing	1,2	3,4	1,2	3,4
806 Property Damage	1,2,3,4	1,2,3,4	1,2,3,4	1,2,3,4
807 Refusal to Obey School Policies	3,4	1	2	3,4
Sources: AACPS (2014), BCPSS (2014), HCPSS (2013), MCPS (2014)				

BCPSS Now and Then

As part of the study to compare BCPSS (2014) to other school districts in Maryland with

similar populations, a decision was made to compare BCPSS amongst itself, using previous

years' codes of conduct information. BCPSS's codes of conduct from 4 consecutive school

years, 2010-2011, 2011-2012, 2012-2013, and 2013-2014, were used to compile the following

data against the latest edition of the BCPSS code of conduct: 2014-2015. Three stages of changes

to the code of conduct intervention levels were noted in this section: increase, decrease, and

equivalent. A decrease in consequence levels means that there were less intervention levels

available in year 2014-2015, than in previous years. Lastly, the status of equivalent means that

there was no differences across the five year period (See Table A4).

Over the 5 year period, ending in 2015, BCPSS decreased levels of consequences for the

following behaviors: 203/892 Drugs or controlled substances, 303/893 Other weapons (excludes

fire arms), 401 Physical Contact with School Personnel, 402 Attack on students, 406

Robbery/Extortion, 502 False Fire Alarm activation, 701 Disrespectful behavior, 702 Defiance of

Authority and/or Insubordination, 804 Trespassing, and 807 Refusal to obey school policies. In

the same year, BCPSS increased levels of consequences for 407 Bullying, Including

Cyberbullying and Gang-Related Incidents, 703 Harassment based on race, ethnicity, gender,

sexual orientation, disability or religion, including cyberharassment, against members of the

school community, and 705 Bus/transportation violations. Lastly during the 2014-2015 school

year 101 Class cutting, 403 Threat against school personnel (written or verbal), 404 Verbal or

Physical Threat to Student, 405 Fighting, 408 Serious Bodily Injury, 601 Sexual assault or

offense, 704 Class disruption, 705 Inciting or Participating in Disturbance, 705 Hallway

misbehavior, and 803 Theft had equivalent levels when compared to previous years.

BCPSS Category Changes

Behaviors listed here incurred changes in one of the three categories, but were not

specifically mentioned during interviews. 407 Bullying, Including Cyberbullying and Gang-

Related Incidents increased to include level five during the 2013-14 and 2014-15 school years.

This includes one additional level which was not available in all previous school years. 703

Harassment Based on Race, Ethnicity, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Disability or Religion,

Including Cyberharassment, Against Members of the School Community increased its behavioral

level rankings to include level five in the 2014-2015 school year. In all previous years, 703 used

levels one through four and excluded level five as a progressive option. Similar to 703, 705 Bus

Misbehavior increased to include level four as an option. In all previous years, 705 used

progressive steps for levels one through three only. 406 Robbery decreased to include levels two

through five, which is similar to school years 2010-2013. In school year 2013-14, 406 was

increased to begin at level three. The decrease to level two in the 2014-2015 school year is noted

to be used only for grades pre-kindergarten to grade one. 804 Trespassing decreased to begin

with level two as an option during the 2013-14, and 2014-15 school years. In all years prior, 804

began with the level three consequence progression. During the three school years beginning and

ending in 2010-2013, 807 Refusal to Obey School Policies included levels one, two, and three as

options for behavior management. In the remaining two school years 2013-2015, 807 was

decreased to only include levels one and two as options for behavior modification.

Behaviors Mentioned During Interviews

Behaviors specific to interview responses that can be found in BCPSS's code of conduct

are 101 Class cutting, 401 Physical Contact with School Personnel, 402 Attack on student, 403

Threat against school personnel (written or verbal), 404 Verbal or Physical Threat to Student,

405 1, 701 Disrespectful behavior, 702 Defiance of Authority and/or Insubordination, 704 Class

disruption, 705 Inciting or participating in disturbance, and 806 Property Damage. When

compared to other districts, BCPSS ranked last in responding to these behaviors: 402, 405, and

704. BCPSS tied for last place for other behaviors mentioned during interviews: 101, 401, 404,

502, 701, and 702 (See Table 1). None of the corresponding behaviors mentioned in the

interviews received a first place ranking (See Table 2). It is important to note that 705 (Hallway

misbehavior) was a behavior mentioned in the interviews. BCPSS did rank first in 705; however,

none of the other school systems, in this study, used Hallway misbehavior as a specific behavior

category.

Table 2

Behaviors Mentioned During Interviews

Cohort	Participant	Question	Behavior 1	Behavior 2	Behavior 3
Third	Sheena	1	Knife		
Parents	Bella	1	class disruption		
2teacher	Kelly	1	throwing flipping chairs		
Admin	Faith	1	shaking desks	walking out of class	class disruption
Third	Paige	3	yelling/screaming	kicked hole in wall	
Fifth	Larry	3	class disruption		
Admin	Vanessa	3	insubordination		
Third	Erica	4	running the hall		
Third	Donald	4	running the hall	class disruption	
Third	Jackson	5	throwing objects at people	starting fights(4th)	
Admin	Smith	5	class disruption		
Fifth	Barber	7	disrespecting adults		
Admin	Nelson	QM8	walk halls	leave school	curse at teachers
Third	Bailey	QM10	cursing at principal		
Third	Vadnor	QM10	disrespecting adults		
Fifth	Quiggins	QM10	cursing at adults		
Fifth	Madler	QM10	fighting	insubordinate	curse at teachers
2teacher	Mowen	QM10	flipping desks	spit/bite teacher (1st)	
2teacher	Tessler	QM10	pulling fire alarms	disrespecting adults	walking into other classes fighting
Fifth	Sheena	QM12	stabs/bothers people with scissors		
Fifth	Bella	QM12	threatened with scissors		
2teacher	Kelly	QM12	hitting teacher (2nd)		
7teacher	Faith	QM12	yelling/screaming	class disruption	
Admin	Paige	QM12	desk on teacher		
7teacher	Larry	QM13	smack in the back of head		
Admin	Vanessa	QM13			
Fifth	Erica	QM14	cursing at teacher	racial slurs	
Fifth	Donald	QM14	cursing at teacher		

Fifth	Jackson	QM14	walking out of class		
Seventh	Smith	QM14	pumping/playing music in class	smoking in/during class	
Seventh	Barber	QM14	smoking in school building(marijuana)		
7teacher	Nelson	QM14	cursing at teacher	threatening teacher	
7teacher	Bailey	QM14	walked out 3x		
Admin	Vadnor	QM14	disrespecting adults		
Admin	Quiggins	QM14	fighting		

Comparing BCPSS to itself, by using code of conduct documents over the last 5 years, shows that there is no change in consequences for the following behaviors mentioned during interviews: 101, 403, 404, 405, 408, 601, 704, 705 Hallway misbehavior and 806 (See Table A4). There were no categories mentioned in the interviews that increased in rankings over the five year period. Decreases in level consequences stated during interviews include 203, 303, 401, 402, 502, 701, and 702. 203/892 Drugs or controlled substances began as a level three consequence during the 2010-2011 school year and remained so until the 2013-2014 school year. 203 was then dropped to a beginning level of two and has remained so for the most recent school year. 303/893 Other weapons (excludes fire arms) initially began as a level four consequence. Throughout the 2013-2015 school years, it was lowered to begin as a level two corrective measure. From 2010 through 2013, 401 Physical Contact with School Personnel began at level three, unless the contact with an adult was accidental. If the contact was accidental, than the behavior modification began at level 1. In 2013-2014 to 2014-2015, the behavior began at level one for both unintentional and intentional contact (grade pre-k and 1: level 1; grades 2-12: level 2). For prior years, consequences began at level two and extended to level 5 for 402 Attack on student. During the 2013-14 school year, level one was added to the possible penalties. In the 2014-15 edition of the code of conduct, 402 became a level two and three consequence only: levels one, four, and five were removed as options. 502 False Fire Alarm activation, began as a

level three offense during the years 2010-2014. During the latest document, 502 was decreased

to begin at level one and includes all five progressive levels. 701 Disrespectful behavior, and 702

Defiance of authority and/or insubordination both began as level 1-3 consequences during the

years 2010-2013. In the school years 2013- 2015, level three as a progressive step was removed.

Interview Question Responses

The following questions elicited "yes" responses. When interviewees were asked Q1,

"Have you ever had a time/experience in school where the same student or students misbehaved

and it kept staff and students from hearing or understanding a teacher's lesson? What grade?

How long did it last? " All interviewees, except for one parent responded "yes". A response of

"passive agreement" was entered for that parent (See Table A5). Participants answered "same" to

Q4 "Are/were the same students interrupting or are there different students interrupting?" Again,

a parent responded with passive agreement (See Table A6). When asked question Q6: "If these

students were taken out of class when they misbehaved would students and staff be able to learn/

teach more? Would your staff be able to give more instruction? Why/How?" one parent

responded to this question with passive agreement. All other participants responded with a "yes"

answer (See Table A7). Question number QM9 "Do you see these students misbehaving with

other teachers or adults? Does the behavior occur in other areas of the school, excluding

classrooms i.e. homeroom, arts classes, and gymnasium? If so, where/when?" received a "yes"

response by all administrators, teachers, and three parents. A fourth parent was given "passive

agreement" as their response. A decision was made to remove this question during the students'

interviews. However, all of the students either mentioned or agreed with this as a "yes" answer at

other points in their interview sessions, mostly by giving examples of behaviors around the

school (See Table A8).

Responses to questions Q2, Q3, Q5, QM10, QM11, QM13, and QM14 show that most of the interviewees agreed (See Tables A9, A10, A11, A12, A13, A14, and A15). In total, although the majority answered similarly, there were more responses among these questions where opinions differed. For example in question Q2, "Do you ever get frustrated about students who are acting out during instruction?" there were four responses that received "passive agreement", 12 "yes", 2 "no", and one participant was not available at the time this question was asked. For question Q3, "Do/did these interruptions happen every day?" most participants, answered affirmatively, either by saying "yes" or by giving an explanation. One interviewee gave an answer of "sometimes". Similarly, question Q5, received the same type of response with a little more than half the participants agreeing with a "no" response or explanation. The remaining gave explanations that can be categorized as "sometimes". Question five asked, "Do you know or think that the students who are interrupting are learning? Why do you think they are misbehaving/acting out?" Question QM10 asked interviewees to rate how large or small a concern class interruptions were: On a scale of 1-10 (ten being large and one being small), "How big of a problem have children misbehaving in school been a problem in any class/grade, when you are listening to the teacher's instruction?" One parent gave a "no comment" response. Other participants rated the concern as follows: three rated the problem as a 10, one rated it as a 9, five rated it an 8, one participant rated it as a 6 or 7, four participants rated it a 6, one 5, and two others rated it as a 4.

Third and seventh grade students were not asked question QM11. All of the participants, except one "no comment", agreed that more work could be done if the students were not in the classroom. This question (QM11) was clarified to all the participants: to read "If they were not in the classroom when they misbehaved?" The implication and understanding during the interviews was that students were removed when they disrupted others and not necessarily as a punitive measure. Later in the study you will find that many of the participants also showed compassion

to students thought to be class disruptors (See appendix section question responses). Most of the

respondents of question QM13 shared mixed answers, yes and no, to this question: "Do you

think that children who are misbehaving want to learn?" When asked question QM14, "Do you

feel that there are clear cases when the students should be removed or disciplined for behaviors

that occur in school and are not removed? How does removing the student and not removing

them affect classroom learning?" nearly all interviewees agreed that students are not removed

from the class enough. This question elicited explanations, thoughts, and examples of certain

behaviors or school specific situations.

The following questions, Q7, Q7A, Q8, and QM9 were cohort specific questions and may

exclude particular interviewing groups. For example, question QM8 purposely excluded

members of the parent interview session. When asked to respond to QM8 "Are you friends or

friendly with the students that misbehave?" both administrative staff members responded that

they were not friends. Rather, their dispositions were determined by the needs and behavior of

the student they encountered. Likewise, the teaching staff responded in a similar manner: their

dispositions were determined by the needs and behavior of the student. The seventh grade

students gave various responses: some of them were friendly with misbehaving students and

some did not befriend misbehaving students. One seventh grader stated that they are friendly

with them outside the class, while the other admitted having conversations and befriending them

inside/during class (See Table A16). Question Q7 "What do you and your administrative team

think about students' acting out?" received the following responses from administrators and fifth

grade students: concern, negative perception, and not bothered (See Table A17). Q7A was

specifically addressed to staff members: "Do you think their behavior stems from planning or

lesson implementation? Are there other factors sparking this negative behavior." Two staff

members acknowledged that there are times when there planning can be a factor with some

behaviors. Two other staff members stated that there are other factors besides planning that

precipitate class behavioral concerns. At various points in the interviews, both administrators

made comments that addressed planning, as well as, outside factors that contribute to classroom

interrupting behaviors (See Table A18). Question Q8 "Have you ever told your parents about

your school day when this happens?" was addressed only to students. Four of the students

answered "Yes", two students replied "sometimes", and two other students gave either a "No"

answer or chose not to respond at all (See Table A19). Question QM9 "Do you see these students

misbehaving with other teachers or adults? Does the behavior occur in other areas of the school,

excluding classrooms e.g. homeroom, arts classes, and gymnasium? If so, where/when?" was

asked specifically of all the cohorts except students. All of the students indirectly answered yes

to this question via their responses to other interview questions. Additionally, all of the adults

answered yes to this question. QM9 elicited a lot of responses and members who generally

showed passive agreement gave specific examples. One parent did not respond and was given a

"no response" answer. All of the participants were asked question QM12: "What suggestions do

you have on how the district, state, or federal government can address this classroom concern?"

Answers for question QM12 included add more adults/staff, call parents and tell them to sit in

class with their children, send students home, have students complete assignments in in-school

suspension, change the code of conduct, firmer consequences rather than trying to avoid

suspensions, find a way to involve parents, address laws regarding special education, smaller

more manageable class sizes, reconsider age limitations in the code of conduct, and stress the

importance of education to parents are all part of a short list of responses (See Table A20).

Responses Related to the Code of Conduct

During the interview sessions behaviors specific to the BCPSS code of conduct were

mentioned in responses to questions 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, QM8, QM10, QM12, QM13, and QM14 (See

Table 2 and Table A4). Specific behaviors mentioned and their corresponding code of conduct

categories are walking out of class: 101 Class cutting; smoking marijuana in the building/during

class: 203/892 Drugs or controlled substances; knife: 303/893 other weapons (excludes fire arms); spit on, bite, and drop desk on teacher : 401 Physical Contact with School Personnel; smacked in the back of head, walking into other classes to fight: 402 Attack on student; threatening teacher: 403 Threat against school personnel (written or verbal); stabs, threatens people with scissors: 404 Verbal or Physical Threat to Student; fighting, starting fights: 405 Fighting; pulling fire alarms: 502 False Fire Alarm activation; profane language spoken to principal, teachers, and staff: 701 Disrespectful behavior; insubordinate: 702 Defiance of Authority and/or Insubordination; running the halls, walking the halls: 705 Hallway/Bus Misbehavior; chronic/persistent class disruptions (throwing/flipping chairs, shaking desks, yelling/screaming, playing loud music during class, throwing objects at people): 704 Class disruption; and (throwing/flipping chairs, shaking desks): 806 Property Damage.

Discussion Section

During the study, topics relevant to codes of conduct and their ability to produce a productive schooling climate included themes that were mainly generated by participant responses. The themes included codes of conduct, behavior, teacher planning, class disruptions, students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP), compassion for disruptive students, rigorous instruction, educating disruptive students, teachable moment versus disruptions, parenting/parental involvement, class size, and safety. Because all of these were either directly or indirectly stated in responses and because they all are a part of school climate, they were addressed in this discussion. Additionally, relevant information about the code of conduct's ability to promote an acceptable instructional climate that was not mentioned in the interviews were consequence rankings and Maryland State testing data.

Rankings

In order to discuss the 2014-15 edition of BCPSS's code of conduct, reference frames from past school years and other school districts, having similar populations and other desired attributes: higher test scores, were chosen. In two cases, HCPSS and MCPS, which are two of the wealthiest school districts in the state of Maryland, were chosen to compare mean household incomes, as a determining factor in code of conduct results. While BCPSS has the lowest mean household income of all the districts in this study, $41,385, and HCPSS has the highest median household income, $109,865, code of conduct rankings did not follow any income order. For example, using analysis from the Consequence Ranking Scale, the school districts ranking highest to lowest are: HCPSS, AACPS, MCPS, and BCPSS (See Table 1). However, in terms of median household income, school districts ranking from highest to lowest were: HCPSS, MCPS, AACPS, and BCPSS (See Table 3). In both cases, BCPSS placed last; therefore, an argument can be made that code of conduct documents are a stronger comparison than household income, in terms of school climate. Further explanation for this point will be discussed in the Maryland testing data section. Continuing placement order from highest to lowest, the following pattern represented school districts in this study with the highest to lowest number of students: MCPS, 146,459; BCPSS, 84,212; AACPS 76,303; and HCPSS, 51,555 (See Table 3). If you reverse this order, school districts from this study with the smallest number of students to the largest number of students, you will find the following order: HCPSS, AACPS, BCPSS, MCPS. Interestingly, using the Consequence Ranking Scale to compare with the previous standing, nearly the same ordering occurs, with the exception of MCPS and BCPSS: HCPSS, AACPS, MCPS, and BCPSS (See Table 3). This final ordering and its relevance to size will be addressed in the conclusion section.

Maryland Test Score Data

As stated in the previous section, the school systems' test scores of two consecutive years, 2013 and 2014, have averaged scores whose order is identical to the consequence rankings found in this study. To make this calculation, data from the Maryland Report Card websites (2013, 2014) were used, along with cohorts interviewed in this study: 3rd, 5th, and 7th grades. When each of these school year scores were averaged by combining interviewing grade levels, school districts scoring the lowest on the Consequence Ranking Scale also had the highest number of students scoring basic. School districts scoring highest on the Consequence Ranking Scale, on average, had higher numbers of students scoring proficient and advanced ratings on state testing (See Table 3).

Table 3

Maryland Testing, District Population, &
Mean Household Income Data
2014

% of Basic Students: Reading by Grade

District	3R	5R	7R	Basic Average	Ranking: Proficient/Advanced	
HCPSS	13.50%	5.00%	11.60%	10.03%	1st	89.97%
AACPS	14.20%	7.10%	18.00%	13.10%	2nd	86.90%
MCPS	20.10%	7.90%	14.10%	14.03%	3rd	85.97%
BCPSS	44.10%	26.10%	41.20%	37.13%	4th	62.87%

% of Basic Students: Math by Grade

District	3M	5M	7M	Basic Average	Ranking: Proficient/Advanced	
HCPSS	15.60%	17.30%	25.50%	19.47%	1st	80.53%
AACPS	13.90%	15.00%	36.30%	21.73%	2nd	78.27%
MCPS	27.00%	25.60%	25.10%	25.90%	3rd	74.10%
BCPSS	53.00%	57.50%	65.10%	58.53%	4th	41.47%

2013

% of Basic Students: Reading by Grade

District	3R	5R	7R	Basic Average	Ranking: Proficient/Advanced	
HCPSS	8.40%	5.00%	7.30%	6.90%	1st	93.10%
AACPS	11.20%	6.90%	11.10%	9.73%	2nd	90.27%
MCPS	14.60%	7.40%	9.00%	10.33%	3rd	89.67%
BCPSS	35.10%	26.40%	33.20%	31.57%	4th	68.43%

% of Basic Students: Math by Grade

District	3M	5M	7M	Basic Average	Ranking: Proficient/Advanced	
HCPSS	8.50%	9.10%	16.10%	11.23%	1st	88.77%
AACPS	9.10%	11.20%	20.80%	13.70%	2nd	86.30%
MCPS	21.90%	15.10%	20.30%	19.10%	3rd	80.90%
BCPSS	31.90%	35.00%	54.60%	40.50%	4th	59.50%

Consequence Rankings		District Student Population	Mean Household Income
HCPSS	1st	51,555	109,865
AACPS	2nd	76,303	87,430
MCPS	3rd	146,459	98,221
BCPSS	4th	84,212	66,486

Sources: MSDE (2013), MSDE (2014), National Center For Education Statistics, U.S. Census Bureau

Codes of Conduct Study Results

As mentioned earlier, BCPSS decreased levels of consequences in a number of areas: 203/892 Drugs or controlled substances, 303/893 Other weapons (excludes fire arms), 401 Physical Contact with School Personnel, 701 Disrespectful behavior, and 702 Defiance of Authority. Categories listed here are of particular interest because they were specifically mentioned by interviewees as concerns. These categories were referenced because students made mention of incidents of smoking controlled substances either in class or in hallways. Additionally, there is at least one reference of using a knife (303) or scissors or other object as a weapon. 702 was a behavior mentioned often by teachers and students. All of the cohorts made at least one reference to categories 401, 701, and 702.

For example, 203/892, prior to the 2013-2015 school years was a concern that was least likely to be handled by the classroom teacher. In school districts AACPS and HCPSS, 203/892 is still least likely to be handled by the classroom teacher. 303 ranked Unacceptable/Highly Unacceptable in the years prior to 2013-2014. During that school year the initial consequence began at Level 2, which is similar to the latest addition of AACPS. Currently, HCPSS agreed with BCPSS's previous editions and still maintains a ranking of Unacceptable/Highly Unacceptable (Level 4 initiation). Physical contact with school personnel (401), in years prior to 2013-2014, BCPSS began consequences at Level 3. There were some instances where it could be handled at a Level 1 based on age and intent. However, years 2013-2015 the consequence process began at Level 1: an additional teaching responsibility.

Conversely, in HCPSS, 401 is initiated at Level 4: it is not thought to be a teaching staff responsibility. This enormous gap in leveling is important because it sends a message to students of what is and is not acceptable. It also adds an extra burden on teachers, who should be more concerned with teaching their subject matter, rather than teaching lessons to students about

appropriate and inappropriate bodily contact. 701 for BCPSS, was lowered in the 2013-2015

school years to exclude Level 3, which was an option in previous years. In opposition, HCPSS

and AACPS include Levels 3, 4, and 5 (AACPS), as options to address 701 concerns. MCPS has

followed suit with the latest edition of BCPSS, and opted to maintain disrespectful behavior as

solely an instructional staff problem. Similarly, BCPSS has placed defiance/insubordination

(702) as solely a classroom concern. In the years prior to 2013-2015, BCPSS agreed with the

latest editions of AACPS, HCPSS, and MCPS. Some of these schools systems utilize Levels 4

and 5 to address repeated instances of defiance/insubordination (See table 1).

During the former BCPSS employee's interview, several references were made about

how unaddressed disrespect and defiant behaviors send the wrong messages to a class. However,

the former employee saw this as more of a classroom management concern, rather than a school

community issue (See Table A21). Leaving behaviors 701 and 702 solely at the teacher level is

problematic, because it does not require assistance from administrators, should the concern

escalate or become overwhelming for a teacher. Rather, it creates an opportunity for

administrators to perpetuate the notion that a teacher is not successful in their subject matter

because they need assistance to address behavior.

Although 407 Bullying, Including Cyberbullying and Gang-Related Incidents, 703

Harassment based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability or religion, including

cyberharassment, against members of the school community, and 705 Bus/transportation

violations were initially included in this study, only 703 was specifically mentioned in

interviews. While 407 was increased in 2013-14, it still initiates at Level 1. Conversely all of the

other school systems began consequences at Level 2 for the same category (407). 703 was

mentioned in the interviews when a 7th grade student talked about others making a racially

charged comments towards a teacher. With the exception of HCPSS, all of the school systems

utilized all five levels as a strategy to modify this behavior. None of the students mentioned 705

as a concern during these interview sessions.

Overall, teachers directly, and students and parents indirectly agreed that the 2014-2015

implementation and step procedures of the BCPSS code of conduct were not sufficient in its

effort to address class and school disrupting behaviors. Evidence of these findings are captured

in comments from parents: "I think the code of conduct stinks, I just disagree with certain things

because you have to do ten things just to make this one thing right. How is this one thing ever

going to be right?" Another parent responded to this statement saying:

> I'm glad Ms. Smith said that, because she is absolutely right. In my
>
> opinion it's too long to get from what's going to happen this time to
>
> what we are going to do the next time. You have to go to A
>
> through M before the next step. [When] step two happens, most of
>
> the time you are already into the next school year.

This point of the code of conduct being insufficient was further substantiated by a second year

teacher:

> There needs to be a consequence, rather than sending them home
>
> for the day. And there needs to be from the district that the
>
> principles don't feel that they're doing something wrong by
>
> suspending a child and giving them due consequence because then
>
> it's going to be tallied on their school and they're going to look
>
> bad. I just feel like somewhere down the line it became more
>
> political than practical and I feel like that affects the way that the
>
> principal and administration deals with consequences, because
>
> they're being hammered down from the district.

The perception that principals may feel as if they are doing something wrong is in step with earlier references of fearing that your school may be labeled "Persistently Dangerous" (MSDE, 2013). In support of the above statements, one administrator referred to some of the code of conduct as being limited when she said:

> Well, when we look at the limitations of the code of conduct, I'll
>
> give you an example that happened [purposely omitted]. Had a
>
> student who pushed a desk over on to the [purposely omitted]
>
> teacher. Teacher had to leave class, couldn't put [purposely
>
> omitted], sent her down to the [purposely omitted] …code of
>
> conduct, for a [purposely omitted] grader, because sometimes they
>
> have it broken up into elementary, middle or elementary
>
> secondary. First offense the maximum [purposely omitted] could
>
> receive is [purposely omitted] days.

Class Disruptions

Class disruptions were cited a number of times by nearly all of the participants as a concern. Parents felt that learning for an entire class should not be held captive simply because one or a few students want to be disruptive. Additionally, it was stated that frequently it is the same small number of children who are chronic interrupters—preventing other students from hearing class instruction. Some teachers gave specific examples of class disruptions; for example, running around and throwing and flipping chairs. These interruptions stopped the lesson: teachers had to wait until someone came to remove the students. There is no time limit or maximum set time for students to be removed. Anecdotally, it depends on the availability of personnel in the school. In some instances, help may not come at all.

Students, parents, and teachers speculated about why students may be behaving poorly. Reasons for class disruptions, which are not exhaustive, included running out of medicine, lacking attention from home, avoidance of work/tasks, attention seeking, and frustration with the assignment. The question becomes how do we meet the needs of the students in need of greater attention, without reducing the instruction that compliant/non-disruptive students deserve?

Often, progressive teaching techniques, like Learner Centered instruction are in favor of allowing students to remove themselves from the structured environment of assigned seating and the need to raise their hands for permission to move about the room at will (Schiro, 2008). In some cases this works; however, in the examples pertaining to running around the room, as well as behaviors cited in this study, unstructured or "Learner Centered" techniques may not be the best option. Often the caveat becomes which came first: some blame the lesson, and some blame student etiquette/training, prior to school. In any case, teachers have to juggle and balance how much autonomy students have in class, based on the perceived actions and prior school histories of all students. Furthermore, because principals are concerned about safety and lawsuits, they may make decisions that are counterintuitive to some progressive teaching techniques. Classroom teachers are then left to follow these rules, whether they benefit students or not. This process and decision making is often forgotten and the end result is that teachers' lesson plans must circumvent all of the earlier said; otherwise, they are held responsible for the school community problems.

Compassion for Disruptive Students

Although parents, students and staff members agreed that this disruptive behavior was a concern, they were also compassionate about how to address the problem. Stakeholders wanted the disruptions to stop, but they also wanted their counterparts to continue learning. Stakeholders had mixed feelings: they wanted orderly classes and they also wanted to help the students who

are misbehaving. They wanted a way to solve the problem without it being a learning penalty on the misbehaving student. Nearly all agreed that they should be removed when they were disruptive; however, they also felt a desire to minimize the impact on that student's learning. They seemed to yearn for a way for misbehaving students to be removed and continue learning. One student made this point clear when he said "Just send some people home until they just get right, and send them some work and stuff." A clarifying questioned was asked, "You don't think that's happening enough?" he responded "not really." The key point here is that the interviewee wanted the student removed with work. As understood, this does happen in some schools; however, the work may not always be completed as assigned. Another student reiterated the need for class disrupters to continue learning when she said "they should get work while they go to in-school suspension."

Behavior

When asked to rate behavioral and disruptive instructional concerns, most participants rated behavioral concerns as a six or better. Only two participants rated the concerns as either a four or five. The former BCPSS headquarters employee rated behavioral concerns as a 12. Aside from class disrupting behaviors, a few other behaviors were noteworthy. Those behaviors included: racial slurs, attack on a teacher, walking out of class without permission, kicking holes in the wall, fighting, running the halls, throwing objects at people, stabbing, threatening with knife and or scissors, playing loud music in class, and smoking controlled substances in school/class. None of the behaviors mentioned here are behaviors that are directly related to poor lesson planning. These behaviors may be more likely to occur, during certain periods of the lesson, but they are not a direct result. Throughout the sessions, administrators stated that the school staff was "at a frustration level" because some students were noncompliant with all strategies—inclusive of those strategies were lesson plans. Additionally, statements about students with IEPs were a concern in some of these cases. The behaviors listed above are not

autonomous responses to poor planning as declared by the engaging lesson response. Rather,

they are undesired responses that should be addressed by schools even if every teacher was well

planned and the behaviors only occurred outside the instructional environment. If schools are

going to take a holistic approach, than we should do so, regardless of grades and testing.

Teachers referenced behavioral concerns during the interviews with statements about

kicking and biting: "I've had kids spit on me kick me, bite me—um and I'm like why am I sitting

here looking at this child again." Concerning behavior, an administrator went on to say "I don't

feel like it's [this school] different from any other school that I've been in… I think some of the

behaviors may be a little stronger, but I don't think it's any different". When a 7th grade child

was asked "Are there clear cases when a student should be removed but is not?" she responded:

> Yes, I'm snitching, sometimes kids be down stairs and they be
>
> smoking and stuff and they should be removed out of school
>
> and they don't be. Sometimes people know who it is 'cause they
>
> got cameras down there and they don't ever do nothing. I think
>
> if they get pulled out it would help the class because some kids
>
> got asthma and they can't be around smoke.

It is apparent that students are just as aware of the behavioral concerns of their school as teachers

and administrators. Therefore it should be anticipated that there are a number of students who

will display specific behaviors because they know that minimal to no consequences will occur.

This forward thinking of students is no different than those of us who willfully choose to speed

or not speed in a given area of the highway, based on the likelihood of receiving a speeding

citation. At one point in the interview the former BCPSS employee stated that "students of today

have thinking that is comparable to fast twitch muscle fibers" because of the rate at which they

receive and process information through technology. With this knowledge, we as educators

should recognize that most students, even those from challenging backgrounds, have the mental

capacity to circumvent school rules and procedures, based on their perceptions of what we show

them is acceptable. An example of students understanding predetermined boundaries and

consequences is clear as a student made this comment during an interview session: "Parents

should and principals should sneak in on kids and expel them if it's the same person over and

over again. I don't think they learn when they do stuff over and over. I think they just do it just

because they can do it and I think they should get put outta school for that." We need to find the

balance between caring consequences and damaging consequences. Simply reducing damaging

consequences, like Zero Tolerance, does not produce the presence of caring consequences.

Individualized Education Program Students

School staff, on more than one occasion, mentioned students with IEPs as behavioral

concerns. The overarching theme was that these students no longer have the supports they once

had. One of the teachers, with at least seven years of classroom experience, said that she has a

student who was recently mainstreamed: "…and also talking about IEP inclusion and from about

two years ago, they put all of the kids into the regular education classroom." Prior to the 2014-

2015 school year, the student had been in special education since kindergarten. The student was

now in middle school. The teacher stated that the student randomly interrupted class by

screaming for no reason. Other examples of students with IEPs were mentioned by an

administrator saying:

> With about five different hall walkers who have IEPs, and even
>
> with constant connections with home, we just cannot seem to
>
> get that strategy that will keep them from leaving the classroom.
>
> We cannot seem to find the right consequence. As we know,
>
> suspension is one of the last options especially for students with

IEPs. We are at a frustration level with students where you see

repeated behavior and you have so many little strategies.

Again, this comment is from an administrator who is responsible for climate, safety, and

instruction. She has a clear understanding of the educators in her building who are either skilled

to do the job, or not. When she made this statement she was clear that as a school community

they have exhausted all of their options: classroom management, administrative assistance

through resources, and the code of conduct. Even with all of these resources, the entire staff is

frustrated with their current ability to give the students the appropriate school setting. This

statement is in contrast with the former BCPSS employee who stated there are thousands of

options of consequences that do not involve suspensions. While this statement by the former

employee may be true, it is apparent that the resources needed to implement those consequences

are nonexistent in this school. Also, while the staff members mentioned IEP students as

behavioral concerns, the former employee never mentioned special education students as a

concern at any point during the interview. The former BCPSS employees' remedy for the

majority of the concerns mentioned by stakeholders in this study were engaging, relevant and

meaningful lessons. Based on the needs stated here and the response from a policy maker outside

of the school, there are differences regarding the challenges and resources needed to be

successful.

Teacher Planning

Out of the fourteen questions that were asked by the former BCPSS employee,

approximately seven of the responses used teacher planning, preparation and engagement as part

or all of the solution. Teacher planning is a large part of the job and goes a long way at reducing

behavioral concerns; yet, there are cases where teaching strategies, planning, and relationship

fostering with students is not always successful. As one administrator stated, "Even though I

have teachers to try to form connections, the students that I'm making mention of, they're hard to make the connections with and to build a rapport with." However, the notion that lesson plans and student engagement are the main concerns is not as accurate as it may sound. What is missing in many of these discussions are the roles of tangible resources and the strategic thinking of school administration. Often in these conversations, generally positive, assumptions are made regarding administrators. In short, it is administrators who undergo some responsibility in placing teachers and students in positions to be successful. Moreover, when teachers refer students to administrators, some of those supervisors fail to see how their administrative decisions exacerbate class problems. For example, scheduling and materials can affect school climate and determine the extent to which reliance on codes of conduct are needed.

Anecdotally, instances of specifically being recruited, at least twice, by schools' whose principals desired to have thriving music programs come to mind. Unfortunately, in one of these schools there were no classroom instruments, and three poorly maintained pianos—of which, all of the pianos are un-tuned, have missing or sticking keys, and keys that do not work. Additionally, a schedule of which students from various age groups between kindergarten to eighth grade are seen daily for one quarter. Moreover, some of the classes were combined: classes that have two educators for the entire day are combined for music—often instructed by only one educator. As a combined class, these students, who were instructed by a total of four adults was now instructed by one. Regardless of the circumstances, teachers are expected to produce quality results from less than adequate materials, resources, and schedules. This example of poor scheduling and lack of resources is an example of situations that many educators, across all instructional disciplines, face daily. However, they too are forced to make decisions that are in the best interests of the school budget, rather than in the best interests of students' education. Having a strategic and well thought administrator is not always the case!

In another school, better resources were available, at least for the younger elementary students. However, scheduling prolonged the general music class experience. The classes were blocked in 90 minute periods. As is the case, this makes it easier for administrators to plan their school schedules for testing subjects such as math and English (ELA). However, unless the class was designed for an arts school or as an elective subject, 90 minute blocks for non-core subjects have the potential to create behavioral problems. Similarly, other colleagues have echoed comparable scheduling concerns, outside of visual and performing arts subject areas. In short, scheduling concerns and adequate resources are administrative and district level responsibilities which are often forgotten as lesson planning is cited as the primary source for misbehavior. While the former BCPSS employee was correct: "well-planned teachers with engaging lessons minimize the need for the use of codes of conduct." It can also be added that adequately resourced educators with appropriately dispersed scheduling also minimize classroom disruptions and the need for code of conduct implementation.

Educating Disruptive Students

How do we effectively educate disruptive students without negatively impacting the education of non-disruptive students? The answer to this questions is best answered by quoting an administrator from this study:

> You come into the profession because you like children you
> love teaching and you want to see them succeed. So when we
> think about it or when I think about it…I want to exhaust all the
> options that I can, to support the child in getting what he or she
> needs, for optimal success—but again for the rest of the students
> in the class too.

Successfully dealing with challenging behavior is not a numbers game. Success with high rates of suspension and the fallout that this type of behavior modification can produce is not solved simply by keeping students in the classroom or school hallways, as evident by BCPSS's need to create a behavioral category that other schools districts in this study do not use: 705 Hallway Misbehavior. Rather, successfully educating disruptive students will come from a core of support mechanisms: behavioral and mental health, and in conjunction with familial support and training. On the contrary, ramping up test measurement techniques and applying punitive consequences to educators has not produced quality outputs for students. As stated by the former BCPSS employee:

> What we've seen nationally was that a reliance on a testing culture, has in some ways been the antithesis of what we really wanted. What we wanted was more student engagement and [to be] better prepared to participate in the 21st century. But [the] standardized testing culture has led to many teachers and curricula being watered down—not being as interesting and as engaging as it could be. I think we need to completely rework how we practice schooling, because if we do that, we get more kids engaged and if we get more kids engaged, we get less misbehavior.

Conversely, as mentioned earlier, avoiding consequences for students is detrimental for their development (Broderick & Blewitt, 2009).

Rigorous Instruction

Rigorous instruction is a term often used in today's educational jargon to express a level of instructional engagement that is productive and challenging. When teachers have to plan lessons based on the possibility that certain students will take advantage of a discussion or time

allotted to work in groups, a number of lesson possibilities are removed because teachers have to

account for unreasonable behaviors. This point is substantiated when an administrator from this

school made these statements.

> Students would be able to cooperate, more cooperative
>
> learning…when you have a student in your class with a constant
>
> disruption, it makes it hard to say turn and talk, think pair share,
>
> get in small groups, because you don't ever know when the
>
> behavior is going to take [over] the lesson. The lesson would
>
> definitely be more engaging, the teachers would probably take
>
> more risks to serve more as facilitators, and less as where you
>
> are doing the majority of the talking. You can release your
>
> student[s] to be more independent when you don't have the
>
> threat of students who are misbehaving.

When the same administrator responded to question QM11, this statement about rigor was made:

"They could get more work done, I think that connects back to could they teach. They just can!

The time would be maximized, the level of engagement would be maximized, the level of rigor

that they could push the rest of the students would increase. So definitely!"

Class Size

Other outcomes that have an effect on class disruptions are class size. In this study one

teacher mentioned class size when responding to question QM12: "To me class size matters, I'm

not saying 15 kids, but 20-25, if more than that it's hard to manage." Regarding this educator's

point, she may be speaking from a position of overcrowded classrooms and therefore and

reduction in size to 20-25 would make a difference. However, thinking back to my own class

experiences and conversations with fellow colleagues, and ideal class size is about 15-18

students. This is a size that is small enough to manage, and yet large enough to keep interesting ideas and perspectives flowing.

Parenting/Parental Involvement

Parental involvement was a theme that reoccurred throughout all of the interview cohorts. The children talked of parenting in a mostly positive manner; for example, making comments of calling the parents of students when they misbehaved or sending them to their parents. One young lady gave a specific example of parental support when she spoke of requesting help from her dad with homework, after returning home from class detention: "He'll say why did you get in the house late and that's when I'll say some people were misbehaving so if you know how to do fractions from when you were little can you help me." Parents in this study saw total parent participation as sorely lacking. They stated that they were mainly the core group of parents that participated in school functions and attended most of the school's requests for meetings. Similarly, teachers and administrators agreed with the notion that parental support is lacking and is a cause for school wide disruptions in and out of the classroom.

Safety

Teacher safety did not directly appear to be an immediate concern at this school. None of the parents or staff mentioned egregious behaviors or incidents. When behaviors of hitting or spitting on teachers was mentioned, they were incidents committed by students in 3rd grade or lower. Although one reported incident about [purposely omitted] on a teacher was stated by many of the participants in this study, the concern was approached mainly as a flaw in the code of conduct and its inability to properly consequence the behavior because of age. One 4th grader indicated safety as a possible concern by saying, "[The] teacher must be scared of her or something like that because Ella [4th grade] will threaten the teacher so that may be why the teacher is not calling home."

Conclusion

This study sought to answer the questions: "What types of school climates are being fostered by school discipline policies? Specifically, what are the perceptions of parents, teachers, administrators, and students (both compliant and non-compliant) around the effects of the revised discipline policy on school climate?" By compiling data collected from interview responses, information listed on school district websites, testing data for those schools, and a measurement system to create a reference point, at least in this school, the 2014-15 edition of the BCPSS code of conduct does not foster a school climate that promotes a culture of learning. It seems that all of the participants in the school, either directly or indirectly, see the code of conduct as insufficient. As evidenced by a number of responses that stated proper consequences were not happening enough or that the step process; for instance Levels 1-5, as ordered by the 2014-2015 edition of BCPSS, created too much opportunity for students to continue the same poor behaviors. Other comments that supported rating the BCPSS 2014-15 edition of the code of conduct as insufficient referenced its capacity to divide some consequence levels based on student age and grade.

It is reasonable to have varied expectations for students at different development stages; however, the stakeholders in this school did not see age as a factor in at least one situation. All of the school systems in this study use some form of a five level approach. In contrast to the current BCPSS edition, some of the other school systems used the five steps to approach targeted behaviors differently. In a number of cases, when the levels were used to target the behaviors differently, this alleviated the long process used to correct behavior—a process that many participants cited as powerless to effectively correct behaviors impacting the learning environment. An example of approaching behavior differently can be found when comparing the current editions of HCPSS and BCPSS in the category of 303, 893 Other weapons that could

cause bodily harm. HCPSS begins the consequence process at level 4; conversely, BCPSS begins the consequence process at level 2 (See Appendix Table A4).

Although there were a number of points where the former BCPSS headquarters employee agreed with behavior and disruptions as a huge school problem, resolutions were mainly centered on teacher planning and preparation. In fact, none of the suggestions referenced Special Education, scheduling, parental involvement, or materials and resources. In direct references to children coming to school with "a host of issues" was made, but the core remedy was engaging lessons. Additionally, administrators were never mentioned as variables in this process. Administrators, like other stakeholders, at times make poor decisions. Removing the effect that all administrative decisions have on school climate and placing the need for teachers to adjust and substitute for those decisions misplaces some responsibility. Solely placing the bulk of school climate issues on planning, without citing proper resources, materials, adequate codes of conduct, and well thought administrative decisions reveals a breakdown in communication and understanding between school and non-school education professionals.

In addition, cursing at principals and teachers, kicking holes in the walls, making racial slurs and comments, throwing objects, and other incidents mentioned in this study are not a part of "low SES culture" and are not the result of unengaging lessons. Some degree of confidence about poor behaviors being excluded from low SES culture, is based on anecdotal contact with parents. In nearly all my parental contact encounters, undesirable student behaviors eventually stopped or decreased. Even parents themselves, who may display undesirable behaviors, did not intend or approve of their children behaving similarly. It appears that assumptions about behaviors of people in low SES status are based heavily on stereotypes. Using a parent as an example of behavior and hearing that parent's thoughts about their children's behavior are two separate circumstances. An argument can be made that parents are modeling poor behavior; however, an argument that they condone or approve of those negative behaviors from their

children is not accurate. The appearance of culture may stem from the difficulty of contacting

parents. However, the problem of establishing contact is sometimes more a result of low SES:

working long hours, frequent changes of contact information and other concerns, rather than the

perceived culture of low SES. Reducing the use of profanity and other behaviors of students to

culture is an assumption based on behaviors that are seen and not confronted, rather than

conversations with the family and extended families of these students.

Furthermore, these behaviors are perpetuated by a code of conduct that is more consensus

and politically charged, rather than focused on the long term development of the "whole child."

Assessment of the document being politically and consensus based resulted from comments

about making a document that applied to a large community and not necessarily what is best for

students in the smaller communal settings. Evidence supporting these findings stem from the

former employees' comments: "Here's the difference for district leaders. In Baltimore city you

are responsible for 200 schools—so you have to have a code of conduct that would be equally

sufficient at [purposely omitted] as it would be at [purposely omitted]." Names of the schools

were not included; however, they represented the diversity in both high and low SES

neighborhoods. Politically based was derived from the move away from Zero Tolerance policies,

and potential for Principals to have their schools placed on a "Persistently Dangerous" school

list.

Agreement with educators and parents in this study when they exemplified compassion

for students who disrupted the learning environment is reasonable. They do not want to see

children's educational opportunities penalized while the behaviors that they exhibit receive a

consequence. Essentially that is a resounding finding of this study. However, the pendulum of

educational penalty swings in both directions. Attempting to reverse Zero Tolerance simply by

keeping students inside the school walls, without addressing behaviors that led to the initial and

potential consequence of suspension, disrupts the education of students who are attempting to

comply and engage in the learning process. That is, the current code of conduct in BCPSS does

counteract the former policies of Zero Tolerance, but it does not foster a climate that creates an

uninterrupted learning environment for all students. The 2014-15 edition of BCPSS's code of

conduct appears to be more concerned with the letter of the law (reducing suspensions), rather

than the spirit of the law: educating students. The intent of abolishing Zero Tolerance was to

reduce dropout rates and to promote student engagement. By the accounts of stakeholders of this

school, reversing the effects of Zero Tolerance through changes in standards and expectations via

the code of conduct is not sufficient in that effort. Furthermore, singling out codes of conduct as

the source of the concern is a poor assessment of the situation: "Although the study findings

indicate some large disproportionalities in discipline—especially for black students and students

in special education—the data cannot establish the source of these disparities (O'Conner,

Porowski, & Passa (2009-12)."

Quantitatively it is clear that some connections occur between code of conduct

documents and testing data that deserve more investigation. These preliminary quantitative

assessments concern the rankings of BCPSSs' code of conduct compared to other school districts

codes, and those standings' similarities to district testing data. Schools whose codes of conduct

ranked higher in this study also had test scores that followed identical patterns (See Table 3).

If schools are taking on responsibilities that once were thought of as parenting, than it

stands to reason that discipline, for students with less parental support may look different in data

when compared to students with greater parental support. The conversation here is equity versus

equality. We often talk about this in other areas of education; for example, finance, budgeting,

and resources. Rethinking discipline in terms of equity rather than equality: providing guidance,

services, and consequences appropriately and when needed may be a reasonable outcome. After

all, success for students in grade school is based on how many students complete the process

satisfactorily—lowering any standards will not correct that trajectory. Advocates are correct

when they state that Zero Tolerance policies are bad for students. Unfortunately, adjusting

behavioral data by innovatively decreasing and increasing some standards is also detrimental for

students. Alexander (2012) made a reference to the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1986. Her point in

this conversation was that African Americans were receiving severe punishments for one form of

the drug (crack), while their white counterparts were receiving minimum sentences for the same

substance in a different form (cocaine). She goes on to state that one of few senators spoke out;

essentially saying—blaming this communities ills solely on crack, without looking at ill willed

funding and unsuccessful schools, among other concerns, diverts attention from the true

problem. Likewise, placing the majority of blame on teacher planning, without addressing the

repercussions of poor funding, little to know teaching resources, teaching equipment,

administrative decisions, and implementation of ineffective policies (i.e. some codes of conduct)

are comparable to ignoring the true issues effecting schools.

Clearly we see that Zero Tolerance policies of the 80s have no place in schools. We also

see, at least from data in one Maryland school, that attempting to reverse the negative effects of

Zero Tolerance simply by ratcheting up or down consequence levels for poor behavior, without

seriously addressing the root of the behavior, is comparable to politicians blaming the ills and

blight of an impoverished community solely on poor habits (Alexander, 2012).

Implications for Further Research

In addition to teacher planning comments, several strong points were made by the former

BCPSS headquarters employee. One such point was that compromise was necessary to create a

document that included a variety of neighborhoods. Specifically, the former employee stated that

creating a document that was acceptable in neighborhoods who saw diversity in all aspects,

including SES, is not easy: "Here's the difference for district leaders. In Baltimore city you are

responsible for 200 schools—so you have to have a code of conduct that would be equally

sufficient at [purposely omitted] as it would be at [purposely omitted]." Within this comment,

implications for further research include determining what impact student population and SES

status have on creating effective codes of conduct. Consideration for further study should include

determining factors that encompass creating codes of conduct documents: SES, community

population size, issues relevant to specific communities or subsections, and maximum population

sizes applicable for effective implementation. The school districts with smaller student

populations also ranked highest in their code of conduct and test score ratings. Therefore, a study

to determine communal consensus and maximum code of conduct populations, which may help

minimize the differences each community values as important when implementing corrective

actions for behavior is warranted.

During the interviews, the BCPSS former headquarters employee stated that there are

"literally thousands of consequences" that are effective outside of suspension. In contrast, school

administrators, teachers, parents, and students stated that students did not appear to receive

appropriate consequences or consequences that could positively impact undesired behaviors. As

a result, a study on what specific consequences are effective and how they can be utilized in a

school setting is warranted. Other questions for these consequence studies would include: Are

they based on parental involvement or lack of parental involvement? How long or how many

attempts to correct undesired behaviors should be utilized before escalation and referrals are

necessary? Currently there are no time frames assigned to BCPSS's Levels 1-5.

Another implication for research revolves around the ways in which in-school suspension

can be viable in correcting and minimizing class disruptions, while preventing learning deficits.

The former employee saw potential in in-school suspension as a theory but said that it lacked the

ability to bridge the gap for students who were disruptive and already behind. Can instructional

techniques like Direct Instruction be utilized during this time period to keep students on task and

in step with classroom engagement until they are able to return? A study to determine practical

ways of educating students who utilize in-school suspension as a behavior modification

technique is necessary.

A major source of concern talked about in this study occurred as the former employee

spoke about the logistics of creating a code of conduct document. In actuality, the document

becomes more of a political consensus because of the volume of people that it must satisfy. In

some ways communities with varying styles of child rearing must compromise, using the current

structure. Therefore, further study on two fronts is needed: should the level of parental

involvement be a factor in creating these documents, and should districts limit the amount of

students that one code of conduct document encompasses? Limiting the number of students or

communities guided by a document warrants further research. HCPSS and AACPS, school

districts whose code of conduct documents outranked BCPSS and MCPS, have smaller student

populations when compared to the other districts (See Table 3).

In terms of parental support, can the issue of creating codes of conduct to address

parental involvement, or the lack of parental involvement be remedied by having a two tracked

code of conduct system? This system would factor parental involvement and effectiveness, to

limit classroom disruptions. Will an Individual Behavioral Modification Code of Conduct

(IBMCC) for students whose behavior is not effectively modified by parental or familial

involvement help to alleviate the deficit that exist in the current code of conduct? Districts with

students that have less parental or familial support would be able to place chronically disruptive

students on an amended code of conduct to compensate for the lack of parental support, in an

effort to reduce class disruptions. Will a system like this be viable or would it create the potential

to alienate and discriminate against students? Further study is necessary.

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Appendix A

Table A1	
Grouped Interview Questions	
Q1	Have you ever had a time/experience in any school where the same student or students misbehaved and kept your child from hearing or understanding a teacher's lesson? What grade? How long did it last?
Q2	Do you ever get frustrated about students who are acting out when you are trying to hear your teacher's instructions?
Q3	Do these interruptions happen every day?
Q4	Are/were the same students interrupting or are there different students interrupting?
Q5	Do you know or think that the students who are interrupting are learning? Why do you think they are misbehaving/acting out?
Q6	If these students were taken out of class when they misbehaved would you be able to learn more? Would your teacher be able to give you more instruction? Why/How?
Q7	What do you think about students' acting out?
Q7A	Do you think their behavior stems from planning or lesson implementation? Are there other factors sparking this negative behavior.
Q8	Have you ever told your parents about your school day when this happens?
QM8	Are you kind or indifferent with the students that misbehave?
QM9	Do you see these students misbehaving with other teachers or adults? Does the behavior occur in other areas of the school, excluding classrooms (i.e. homeroom, arts classes, and gymnasium)? If so, where/when?
QM10	On a scale of 1-10 (ten being large and one being small), how big of a problem have children misbehaving in school been a problem in any class/grade? Of these extreme behaviors how often is it a concern. Monthly, yearly, every other year, rarely?
QM11	If these students were not in your class, when they misbehaved, could you get more work done or does it make a difference?
QM12	What suggestions do you have on how administrators and/or the district can change this classroom problem?
QM13	Do you think that children who are misbehaving want to learn?
QM14	Do you feel that there are clear cases when the students should be removed or disciplined for behaviors that occur in school and are not removed? How does removing the student and not removing them affect classroom learning?

Table A2	
	Study Behaviors
101	Class cutting
203/892	Drugs or controlled substances
303/893	Other weapons (excludes fire arms)
401	Physical Contact with School Personnel
402	Attack on student
403	Threat against school personnel (written or verbal)
404	Verbal or Physical Threat to Student
405	Fighting
406	Robbery/Extortion
407	Bullying, Including Cyberbullying and Gang-Related Incidents
408	Serious Bodily Injury
502	False Fire Alarm activation
601	Sexual assault or offense
701	Disrespectful behavior
702	Defiance of Authority and/or Insubordination
703	Harassment Based on Race, Ethnicity, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Disability or Religion, Including Cyberharassment, Against Members of the School Community
704	Class disruption
705	Inciting or Participating in a Disturbance
705	Hallway/Bus Misbehavior
803	Theft
804	Trespassing
807	Refusal to Obey School Policies

Table A3

Rating Systems

Tolerance/Unacceptable Scale

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Administration					
Support Staff					
Teacher					Yes

Highly
Unacceptable

Yes

Unacceptable

Yes   Unacceptable

Yes   Unacceptable

Yes   Less Tolerable

Yes

Tolerable

Consequence Ranking Scale

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Total Possible
	No	**No**	**No**	**Yes**	**Yes**	
Points	**2**	**2**	**2**	**2**	**2**	**10**

Two points are given for every "No" responsibility rating in levels one through three. Two points are given for every "Yes" responsibility rating in levels four and five. A total of ten possible points are available for each consequence of each district.

Examples

		Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Score		Rank
							Less	Highly	
BCPSS	203, 892 Drugs	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	Tolerable	Unacceptable	6
AACPS	203, 892 Drugs	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	Unacceptable	Unacceptable	6

BCPSS scored a rating of Less Tolerable/Highly Unacceptable because the first consequence begins on level 2 and continues through level 5
AACPS scored a rating of Unacceptable/ Unacceptable because their first consequence skips levels one and two and begins at level 3. However, the last consequence level is a 4 rather than 5.

Also, note that both school districts received a consequence ranking of six. However, how they distribute their consequences for this behavior differs.

Table A4

Detailed District Consequence Levels and Rankings

District	Behavior	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Initial Tolerance Range	Long Term Suspension Available as an Option	Consequence Ranking Among other Districts
BCPSS	101 Class Cutting	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
BCPSS 1314		YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
BCPSS 1213		YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
BCPSS 1112		YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
BCPSS 1011		YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
AACPS		YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
HCPSS		NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	Less Tolerable	Tolerable	2
MCPS		YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
BCPSS	203, 892 Drugs: Using or possessing	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6
BCPSS 1314		NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6
BCPSS 1213		NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	Unacceptable	Highly Unacceptable	8
BCPSS 1112		NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	Unacceptable	Highly Unacceptable	8
BCPSS 1011		NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	Unacceptable	Highly Unacceptable	8
AACPS		NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	Unacceptable	Highly Unacceptable	8
HCPSS		NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	Unacceptable	Highly Unacceptable	8
MCPS		NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6
BCPSS	303, 893 Other weapons that could cause bodily harm	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6
BCPSS 1314		NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6
BCPSS 1213		NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	Unacceptable	Highly Unacceptable	10
BCPSS 1112		NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	Unacceptable	Highly Unacceptable	10
BCPSS 1011		NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	Unacceptable	Highly Unacceptable	10
AACPS		NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6
HCPSS		NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	Unacceptable	Highly Unacceptable	10
MCPS		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	4
BCPSS	401 Physical Contact with School Personnel	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	4
BCPSS 1314		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	4
BCPSS 1213		YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6
BCPSS 1112		YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6
BCPSS 1011		YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6
AACPS		NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	Less Tolerable	Unacceptable	4
HCPSS		NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	Unacceptable	Highly Unacceptable	10

District	Offense						Judgment 1	Judgment 2	Score
MCPS		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	4
BCPSS		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	4
BCPSS 1314		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	4
BCPSS 1213		NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6
BCPSS 1112	402	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6
BCPSS 1011	Attack	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6
AACPS	on	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6
HCPSS	student	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	Unacceptable	Highly Unacceptable	10
MCPS		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	4
BCPSS		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	4
BCPSS 1314	403	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	4
BCPSS 1213	Threat	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	4
BCPSS 1112	Against	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	4
BCPSS 1011	School	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	4
AACPS	Personnel	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	Less Tolerable	Unacceptable	4
HCPSS	, Written	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	Unacceptable	Highly Unacceptable	10
MCPS	or Verbal	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	Tolerable	Unacceptable	2
BCPSS	404	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
BCPSS 1314	Verbal	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
BCPSS 1213	or	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
BCPSS 1112	Physical	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
BCPSS 1011	Threat	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
AACPS	to	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	Less Tolerable	Unacceptable	4
HCPSS	Student	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	Unacceptable	Highly Unacceptable	10
MCPS		YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	Tolerable	Unacceptable	2
BCPSS		YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
BCPSS 1314		YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
BCPSS 1213		YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
BCPSS 1112		YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
BCPSS 1011		YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
AACPS		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	4
HCPSS	405	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	Unacceptable	Highly Unacceptable	8
MCPS	Fighting	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	4
BCPSS	406	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6
BCPSS 1314	Robbery	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	Unacceptable	Highly Unacceptable	8

BCPSS 1213		NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6
BCPSS 1112		NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6
BCPSS 1011		NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6
AACPS	*Extortion	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	4
HCPSS	406 Robbery	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	Unacceptable	Highly Unacceptable	10
MCPS		NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6
BCPSS	407 Bullying, Including Cyberbullying and Gang-Related Incidents	YES	YES	YES	YES	Yes	Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	4
BCPSS 1314		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	4
BCPSS 1213		YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	Tolerable	Unacceptable	2
BCPSS 1112		YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	Tolerable	Unacceptable	2
BCPSS 1011		YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	Tolerable	Unacceptable	2
AACPS		NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6
HCPSS		NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6
MCPS		NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6
BCPSS	408 Serious Bodily Injury	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	Unacceptable	Highly Unacceptable	10
BCPSS 1314		NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	Unacceptable	Highly Unacceptable	10
BCPSS 1213		NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	Unacceptable	Highly Unacceptable	10
BCPSS 1112		NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	Unacceptable	Highly Unacceptable	10
BCPSS 1011		NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	Unacceptable	Highly Unacceptable	10
AACPS		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
HCPSS		NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	Unacceptable	Highly Unacceptable	10
MCPS		NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6
BCPSS	502 False Fire alarm activation	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	4
BCPSS 1314		NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	Unacceptable	Highly Unacceptable	8
BCPSS 1213		NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	Unacceptable	Highly Unacceptable	8
BCPSS 1112		NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	Unacceptable	Highly Unacceptable	8
BCPSS 1011		NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	Unacceptable	Highly Unacceptable	8
AACPS		NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	Less Tolerable	Unacceptable	4
HCPSS		NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	Unacceptable	Highly Unacceptable	10
MCPS		NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	Less Tolerable	Unacceptable	4
BCPSS	601 Sexual Assault or Offense	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	Unacceptable	Highly Unacceptable	10
BCPSS 1314		NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	Unacceptable	Highly Unacceptable	10
BCPSS 1213		NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	Unacceptable	Highly Unacceptable	10
BCPSS 1112		NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	Unacceptable	Highly Unacceptable	10
BCPSS 1011		NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	Unacceptable	Highly Unacceptable	10

AACPS		NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6
HCPSS		NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6
MCPS		NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	Unacceptable	Highly Unacceptable	8
BCPSS	701 Disrespectful Behavior	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
BCPSS 1314		YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
BCPSS 1213		YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
BCPSS 1112		YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
BCPSS 1011		YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
AACPS		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	4
HCPSS		YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	Tolerable	Unacceptable	2
MCPS		YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
BCPSS	702 Defiance of Authority and/or Insubordination	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
BCPSS 1314		YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
BCPSS 1213		YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
BCPSS 1112		YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
BCPSS 1011		YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
AACPS		YES	YES	YES	NO	YES (noncompliance)	Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	4
HCPSS		NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	Unacceptable	Unacceptable	6
MCPS		YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
BCPSS	703 Harassment Based on Race, Ethnicity, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Disability or Religion, Including Cyberharassment, Against Members of the School Community	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	4
BCPSS 1314		YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	Tolerable	Unacceptable	2
BCPSS 1213		YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	Tolerable	Unacceptable	2
BCPSS 1112		YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	Tolerable	Unacceptable	2
BCPSS 1011		YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	Tolerable	Unacceptable	2
AACPS		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	4
HCPSS		NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6
MCPS		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	4
BCPSS	704 Class disruption	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
BCPSS 1314		YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
BCPSS 1213		YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
BCPSS 1112		YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
BCPSS 1011		YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
AACPS		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	4
HCPSS		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	Unacceptable	Highly Unacceptable	4
MCPS		YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	Tolerable	Unacceptable	2
BCPSS		NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6

BCPSS 1314	705 Inciting or Participating in a Disturbance	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6
BCPSS 1213		NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6
BCPSS 1112		NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6
BCPSS 1011		NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6
AACPS		NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6
HCPSS		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	4
MCPS		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
BCPSS	705 Bus Transportation Violations	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	Tolerable	Unacceptable	2
BCPSS 1314		YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
BCPSS 1213		YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
BCPSS 1112		YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
BCPSS 1011		YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
AACPS		NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	Unacceptable	Highly Unacceptable	10
HCPSS		YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	Tolerable	Unacceptable	2
MCPS		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
BCPSS	705 Hallway Misbehavior	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
BCPSS 1314		YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
BCPSS 1213		YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
BCPSS 1112		YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
BCPSS 1011		YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
AACPS		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
HCPSS		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
MCPS		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
BCPSS	803 Theft	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6
BCPSS 1314		NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6
BCPSS 1213		NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6
BCPSS 1112		NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6
BCPSS 1011		NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6
AACPS		YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	Tolerable	Unacceptable	2
HCPSS		NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6
MCPS		YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	Tolerable	Unacceptable	2
BCPSS	804 Trespassing	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6
BCPSS 1314		NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6
BCPSS 1213		NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	Unacceptable	Highly Unacceptable	8
BCPSS 1112		NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	Unacceptable	Highly Unacceptable	8
BCPSS 1011		NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	Unacceptable	Highly Unacceptable	8

School	Category								
AACPS		NO	YES	YES	YES	No	Less Tolerable	Unacceptable	4
HCPSS		NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	Less Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	6
MCPS		NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	Less Tolerable	Unacceptable	4
BCPSS	806 Property Damage	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	4
BCPSS 1314		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	4
BCPSS 1213		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	4
BCPSS 1112		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	4
BCPSS 1011		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	4
AACPS		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	Tolerable	Unacceptable	4
HCPSS		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	4
MCPS		*YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	4
BCPSS	807 Refusal to Obey School Policies	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
BCPSS 1314		YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
BCPSS 1213		YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
BCPSS 1112		YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
BCPSS 1011		YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0
AACPS	Insubordination	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	Tolerable	Highly Unacceptable	4
HCPSS	807	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	Tolerable	Unacceptable	2
MCPS	Insubordination	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	Tolerable	Tolerable	0

Sources: AACPS (2014), BCPSS (2010- 11, 12, 13, & 14), HCPSS (2013), MCPS (2014)

Table A5			
		Question: Q1	
Cohort			**Responses**
Third	Sheena	Yes	
	Bella	Yes	Talked about a student who chased her with a knife and parents intervened by picking her up after school
	Kelly	Yes	Students fighting, ignoring directions, and throwing objects daily
Fifth	Faith	Yes	
	Paige	Yes	
	Larry	Yes	Sometimes
Seventh	Vanessa	Yes	
	Erica	Yes	
	Donald	Yes	"Yes, I do that myself all that on the paper"
Parents	Jackson	Yes	
	Smith	Yes	"It's ok that you have certain behavioral problems or you're not on the same level as everybody else, but that shouldn't stop certain kids from learning because you don't want to"
	Barber	Yes	"Same children, can't get the lesson cause they can't hear it"
	Nelson	Passive Agreement	
2ⁿᵈ Year	Bailey	Yes	"I have one student who can run crazy when he doesn't take his medicine and I'll have to pause the lesson and wait for help for his and other students' safety."
	Vadnor	Yes	"Several times a week. One particular student comes to school this way and will continue the behavior until I give him the attention he desires."
7ᵗʰ⁺ Years	Quiggins	Yes	"I have about six that misbehave. They are able to negatively impact the class at any time on a daily basis."
	Madler	Yes	"Kids constantly talking. It's very disruptive."
Admin	Mowen	Yes	"I had a student who was coded as emotionally disturbed and the teacher had to on a daily basis constantly redirect, from shaking desks to walking out." "Class was disrupted and either students could not hear or actually talking had to stop as a result of it."
	Tessler	Yes	"I witnessed that on probably every grade level."

Table A6		
Question: Q4		
Cohort		**Responses**
Third	Sheena	Same	
	Bella	Same	"It's mostly the same people about four or five in the same class."
	Kelly	Same	"I'm gonna tell the truth some days it can be the ten kids that always act up and then I could want to do it, I'm not gonna try to put it out there but sometimes Bella runs the hall too...we all want to do it because we just want to fit in and make friends...yes they are the same students interrupting every day."
Fifth	Faith	Same	
	Paige	Same	"Yes it's only like these three students every day."
	Larry	Same	"It's two people that interrupt most of the time."
Seventh	Vanessa	Same	
	Erica	Same	
	Donald	Same	
Parents	Jackson	Passive agreement	
	Smith	Same	
	Barber	Same	
	Nelson	Same	
2nd Year	Bailey	Same	
	Vadnor	Same	
7th + Years	Quiggins	Same	
	Madler	Same	
Admin	Mowen	Same	
	Tessler	Same	

Table A7			
			Question: Q6
Cohort			**Responses**
Third	S.	Yes	"Yes, because when half of them are gone or suspended, we'll be good we can listen to the teacher more and we get to do everything and have free time, like when they're there we don't get free time at all."
	B.	Yes	
	K.	Yes	"Yes, if they were taken out when they misbehaved we would be on track we would be able to get stuff done fast we would be able to go outside, draw on the board, play on the computer."
Fifth	F.	Yes	"Yes, and I don't have to get irritated. (Question: What irritates you?) They make my teacher yell and that gets on my nerves…but sometimes they make our class fun…I only got into one fight this year. Another student hit me with a ball. He said, "I do what I want" before hitting me."
	P.	Yes	Eagerly answered with Larry…."yes, because the three are not here today two were suspended and one didn't come, and we've been learning a whole bunch today, and we even got to do some free time today, which we never get to do."
	L.	Yes	
Seventh	V	Yes	"Yes, they're still not learning in the classroom, but they're not gonna learn even more out of the classroom, they just gonna fail, and then their mother and parents are going to come up to the school like, why my child failing and then they'll be ready to be beaten up everybody. (so even if they are interrupting class and slowing down learning, do you think they should be able to stay in class) I mean noooo, (but you think it should be fair to them to?) yeah, (they shouldn't stay in the room with you when they are interrupting, but they shouldn't miss out on their education either?) right, (That's fair I get that answer, that makes sense). (Would teacher be able to give more instruction if they were taken out of class) Yeah...yeah because our math teacher said we are two lessons behind where we are supposed to be at and that's because of people interrupting."
	E.	Yes	"Yes, because if they were taken out of the classroom, our teacher wouldn't have to stop and yell at them and correct them and then she would be able to finish the lesson."
	D.	n/a	
Parents	J.	Passive Agreement	
	S.	Yes	Agreed with Nelson
	B.	Yes	
	N.	Yes	"Yes if they were taken out into a smaller setting it would be better, because if the same kids are acting out every day, if you take those who are acting out an put them in a smaller group/setting it would be better, the teacher could teach the ones who are not misbehaving."
2nd Year	B.	Yes	"Yes when those kids are absent, I have a marvelous day, I get through everything I need to get through and without hesitation because I don't have to stop my day in order to address their behavior." "I don't want them to be taken out every time."
	V.	Yes	"I think so too, I think that the students who want to learn, they don't misbehave, they know how to sit they are comfortable with sitting for longer periods of time, they don't want you to be disappointed so if those students are taken out of the classroom right away, then I will have time to give a thorough instruction w/o constant stops."
7th + Years	Q.	Yes	"I know that I can teach more when they're out of the classroom, it's a fact."
	M.	Yes	"I think it makes a big difference, after two students were pulled out to the office, we/the whole class was able to go over everything."
Admin.	M.	Yes	"Oh absolutely, that one I don't even have to go deep into. Again I kind of hit on it about two questions back. If I didn't allow them to enter…the teachers or when they have a legitimate absents, the teachers and staff kind of feel like a breath of fresh air."
	T.	Yes	"Unfortunately yes. You can tell when I do cafeteria I can tell who's absent just by how the cafeteria is flowing that period…so it makes a difference when they are removed."

Table A8			
		Question: QM9	
Cohort			Responses
Third	Sheena	Not Asked	
	Bella	Not Asked	
	Kelly	Not Asked	
Fifth	Faith	Not Asked	
	Paige	Not Asked	
	Larry	Not Asked	
Seventh	Vanessa	Not Asked	
	Erica	Not Asked	
	Donald	N/A	
Parents	Jackson	Yes	"And it's not just the third grade class, it's the whole school…those certain kids that act out every day, it don't matter where they act out. They can act out on the roof if they could they would, it's the same kids no matter where they are."
	Smith	Yes	"You have the same children over and over throughout the whole school… [misbehaving with] teachers principals, whoever it may be at that time."
	Barber	Yes	"Yes, I don't care where they are (3rd grade)…in the middle of transitioning et cetera, they are just going to show off."
	Nelson	Passive Agreement	
2nd Year	Bailey		
	Vadnor		
7th + Years	Quiggins	Yes	"Their behaviors can start in one class and continue throughout the day, most times if they are having a problem in one class, it will continue throughout the day to other classes, no matter who the teacher is….it can be in the cafeteria, it may turn into a fight in the hallway, and then manifest itself in the next class."
	Madler	Yes	"I agree with Ms. Quiggins."
Admin	Mowen	Yes	"Definitely, the pocket of students that I'm talking about, usually it's across the board... You'll see misbehavior in the classrooms, related arts, P.E., you'll see it in the cafeteria, even in warmer weather on the playground. Unless, there is a very strong relationship between the student and that adult. These and it's a very few, even though I have teachers to try to form connections, the students that I'm making mention of, they're hard to make the connections with and to build a rapport with…"
	Tessler	Yes	"Well, they're consistent, the behaviors are always present. The magnitude of them differ between classroom hallway, cafeteria, of course where there's more structure and there's more engagement, the behaviors are there but they may not be as prominent as they would be in places where there is no structure, or is no engagement."

Table A9

Question: Q2

Cohort			Responses
Third	Sheena	Yes	"They make too much noise and jump on the desk while I'm trying to listen, I ask if I can move up front."
	Bella	Passive Agreement	"When we go on field trips, they wanna act nice, whenever they get to go places, when they're in resource, they just start acting crazy."
	Kelly	Yes	
Fifth	Faith	Yes	
	Paige	Yes	"Yes I get distracted."
	Larry	Passive Agreement	
Seventh	Vanessa	Yes	
	Erica	Passive Agreement	
	Donald	No	"Nope, when the students or the teacher be talking cause I don't pay them any mind."
Parents	Jackson	Passive Agreement	
	Smith	No	"I don't get frustrated because I remember when I was a child, I needed that little calm down or take a walk around the corner...as far as education wise with my child learning, that could be frustrating because its taking away from their important instruction time."
	Barber	Yes	"I feel as though I have more rights as a grandparent then I had when I was working for Baltimore City Public Schools doing substitute teaching. That's something I will never do again, not for BCPSS schools and that says a lot, because I love children."
	Nelson	Not Available	
2nd Year	Bailey	Yes	"Yes very frustrated! Yes it also depends on the child because some students they, want to get you frustrated and when it shows they act out more, and then I have some that don't want to disappoint me…and so some students I show my frustration and they get themselves in order and others I don't."
	Vadnor	Yes	
7th+ Years	Quiggins	Yes	"I do get frustrated often."
	Madler	Yes	"Very often!"
Admin	Mowen	Yes	"Yes, the actual building right now, we have 5th [and]6th grade, as well as 7th [and] 8th grade staff members, as well as admin and support staff at a frustration level right now. With about five different hall walkers who have IEPs, and even with constant connections with home, we just cannot seem to get that strategy that will keep them from leaving the classroom. We cannot seem to find the right consequence. As we know, suspension is one of the last options especially for students with IEPs. We are at a frustration level with students where you see repeated behavior and you have so many little strategies, you feel like you've exhausted the strategies, and you have some many little consequences."
	Tessler	Yes	

Table A10			
		Question: Q3	
Cohort			**Responses**
Third	Sheena	explanation	"We got in trouble last week because a little girl yelled and screamed and kicked a whole in the wall and they didn't know it was us so we had to go to in-school suspension."
	Bella	N/A	
	Kelly	Maybe	
Fifth	Faith	Yes	"Sometimes they get in trouble or in-school suspension. Some will come in the classroom like they are going to do their work, others will come into the class to distract others, I mean in my class it happens like every day."
	Paige	Yes	"Yes they happen every day, unless they are suspended."
	Larry	n/a	
Seventh	Vanessa	Yes	
	Erica	Yes	
	Donald	Sometimes	"hmm, sometimes it be because the people in the other classes be talking too much and that be the seventh graders. It's like our classroom got a little gap in the top of it...and there class will be in there playing too much."
Parents	Jackson	Yes	
	Smith	n/a	Interjects with Barber…"And sometimes more than once a day."
	Barber	Yes	"Yes they do, and you can come up here at any time of the day and find someone misbehaving."
	Nelson	Not available	
2ⁿᵈ Year	Bailey	Yes	"So yes it does happen every day, but the degree to which the behavior is disruptive varies."
	Vadnor	Nearly daily	"Some behaviors can be very extreme, so when you're dealing with behaviors like throwing crayons something's wont event affect you."
7ᵗʰ⁺ Years	Quiggins	Nearly daily	"They happen mostly every day, not always the entire period or sometimes never the entire period but almost every day."
	Madler	Nearly daily	"Yes, not every day, but most of the time."
Admin	Mowen	Yes	"Yes, we do have interruptions that happened at least three to five times a week, the majority of the week, I cannot say every day, but the majority of the week, we do have some sort of disruptions of that nature."
	Tessler	yes	"Again, some are daily, some it just depends on what happens when they came to school if something happens before school, it depends."

Table A11		
Question: Q5		

Cohort			Responses
Third	Sheena	No	"I guess because she was like crazy a little bit, she would throw stuff at people and start a fight, and because every time she do something she can get away with it, the teacher won't call her mother. Our teacher must be scared of her or something like that...because Ella [4th grade] will threaten the teacher so that may be why the teacher is not calling home."
	Bella	No	
	Kelly	Sometimes	
Fifth	Faith	Sometimes	"Miles Davis won't do anything bad unless Charlie is in the room. When Charlie is gone Miles will do his work. Charlie will do his work sometimes, but when he is distracted by the people in the hallway, he will leave the class and join them and do nothing. I think Miles and Charlie is smart but he makes the wrong decisions."
	Paige	Sometimes	"The boy Dizzy, he will learn until he comes from lunch and that's when he starts running the halls. And the boy Louis he just skips class…I kind of think that they are learning something...I think they are acting out because they got problems at home and if somebody messes with them, then they take all of their anger out on them."
	Larry	Sometimes	"They're probably acting out because something happened at home, they just bring it out at school."
Seventh	Vanessa	No	"Because if they keep interrupting the classroom, why or how are they learning? I think cause their parents didn't teach them in the correct mannerly way."
	Erica	Explanation	"They don't get attention at home so they wanna get it at school."
	Donald	N/A	
Parents	Jackson	No	"I don't think they're learning anything because how can you learn when you are disrupting the class…and I think they're acting out because they don't have attention at home….and when they come to school, they want attention and that's the only way they know how to get it, is to act out."
	Smith	No	
	Barber	???	
	Nelson	Sometimes	"I disagree with Ms. Jackson on some counts. They act out because they don't know things in the classroom and they aren't being helped the right way. I'm not going to agree with Ms. Jackson saying they don't get attention, because kids get attention. But when they don't know anything, then they act out…not for all children, but for some."
2nd Year	Bailey	Sometimes	"She just has her moments where she needs my attention, whether it be negative or positive. And even if I do try to praise her consistently to try to prevent that type of behavior, sometimes she just comes in and is just off. Like on a Monday or an extended weekend I can expect her to be off because she got her way all weekend, and it's not going to be a good day from the beginning."
	Vadnor	Sometimes	"I have one student who really really needs attention, he's an attention seeking child, so all of his misbehavior is geared to the fact that I am with someone else."
7th + Years	Quiggins	No	"No I don't think they're learning"
	Madler	No	"I do think the same thing, family problems, health issues, another one is academic issues, because some kids are so low that they really cannot follow. I have an example from today…he just randomly picks up other students stuff and throws it in the trash can…and then two kids are rumbling in the hall on the outside, I have to stop and call the office…so I don't think they're learning."
Admin	Mowen	No	"Well it depends on the child…it's an avoidance tactic…I get frustrated with the work, I don't want to be embarrassed, I don't want people to know that I don't know, so let me divert what's going on with me by creating a disruption. In other cases, attention seeking, either from peers or from the adult in charge. So the two major reasons that I believe are; avoidance and attention seeking."
	Tessler	No	"No they're not learning, again the reasons why they act out they are so many it could be frustration levels, some act out because they don't know, attention seeking behaviors, it's a number of reasons."

Table A12
Question: QM10

Cohort			Responses
Third	Sheena	10	"Because the effort in school has been really bad…they have been cursing out Ms. Mowen and Ms. Ella…because that's crazy she's the principal why would yall get smart with the principal."
	Bella	10	"I think ten because this school needs more people to help them out because it's too many kids and they are always being disrespectful, even to the adults."
	Kelly	10	"If ten is the biggest I'm gonna choose ten…they're always calling Officer Krumpke or Mr. T"
Fifth	Faith	9	"There's one girl in the 5th, she'll curse at the teachers and if somebody else does something, they get in trouble but if she does something" (Clarified: the punishment isn't fair?) Faith went on to explain that the teachers may be afraid of the girl's family.
	Paige	5	"Seven because they're disrespectful! They always fighting and talking back to the teachers and cursing at them and things…5 [when trying to listen to instruction.]"
	Larry	6	Answered three initially, then six when question was clarified about interruptions during instruction.
Seventh	Vanessa	4	"Yes she's right it is a ten it's not as bad as it used to be, but it's still a ten" (Clarified: about class interruptions when listening to instruction) "Four I say a four for my class cause its only one person."
	Erica	6	
	Donald	N/A	
Parents	Jackson	8	
	Smith	8	
	Barber	8	
	Nelson	No comment	
2nd Year	Bailey	7	"For me, I would rate the school at a seven on the misbehavior scale…and that's because, I'm not even talking 8th grade. I'm going to start in the 3rd grade. In this school, 3rd and up they just…Somebody flipped a desk on a teacher's [purposely omitted] - and then certain things like that. I feel like when I was in school you got expelled for certain things like that or a lot less than what you get suspended for here." "I've had kids spit on me kick me bite me, um and I'm like why am I sitting here looking at this child again."
	Vadnor	8	"I really don't know what to compare this school, I mean I remember when I was in school, and a lot of the behaviors would just not happen, pulling fire alarms a lot of things just shouldn't happen in school, but I want to say the disrespect that I've seen so many of the higher grades express is just out of control, so misbehavior…I think fighting is normal at their age but it's a lot of fights….going into another classroom and breaking it down [fighting/disrupting]…but you go into another room and you take things, and be totally destructive, I think that would make this school an eight. If I could compare my classroom to the school, I would give it a two."
7th + Years	Quiggins	6	
	Madler	6	"For me at this school I would say a six."
Admin	Mowen	4	
	Tessler	6 or 7	"Since I've been in the system? On a scale of one to ten I would say a six or seven maybe. I don't feel like it's [this school] different from any other school that I've been in. I think some of the behaviors may be a little stronger, but I don't think it's any different."

Table A13		
Question: QM11		

Cohort		Responses
Third	Sheena	Not Asked	
	Bella	Not Asked	
	Kelly	Not Asked	
Fifth	Faith	Yes	
	Paige	Yes	
	Larry	Yes	
Seventh	Vanessa	Not Asked	
	Erica	Not Asked	
	Donald	N/A	
Parents	Jackson	Yes	
	Smith	Yes	"If the behavioral kids were taken out then yes it would be a better chance for the other kids to learn, because the teacher won't have to take time away from her instruction to try to calm, settle, or solve whatever the issue may be at this time."
	Barber	Yes	"Yes then the class can get more done, because then it's more settled and the teacher is able to be heard."
	Nelson	No Comment	
2nd Year	Bailey	Yes	"If I didn't have them in the class it would be much smoother, a smoother ride and things like that, but I use those interruptions as teachable moments about what to do and not to do." (1st grade)
	Vadnor	Yes	"If they were not in my class, yes I could get work done but, I feel like they're sometimes the salt of the class, they bring the fun, they have the personalities sometimes…I think it would be a fast moving class, but it would be boring."
7th + Years	Quiggins	Yes	"It does make a difference if they weren't in there. A great example was set today before certain people came in this classroom, my students were settled, listening, and on task. As soon as those folks came back in things got out of order: and it was extremely hard to get my students back in order. Those students who managed to ignore, and I mean they're children too so it's very difficult to ignore…I would say definitely, it's a big difference when they're not there."
	Madler	Yes	"I agree with you Ms. Quiggins. For example, we noticed today that we had a different environment and we realized someone was absent."
Admin	Mowen	Yes	"They could get more work done, I think that connects back to could they teach. They just can! The time would be maximized, the level of engagement would be maximized, the level of rigor that they could push the rest of the students would increase. So definitely!
	Tessler	Yes	"They do get more work done when the kids are removed, so then the goal becomes or the objective becomes how do we get that student back into the classroom and working like everyone else?"

Table A14
Question: QM13

Cohort			Responses
Third	Sheena	Not Asked	
	Bella	Not Asked	
	Kelly	Not Asked	
Fifth	Faith	no	"No, I don't think they wanna learn."
	Paige	Yes/no	"Sometimes I think that they want to learn because they do, and sometimes I think that they don't want to learn because they would say I'm sorry I won't do it again and ask the teacher for help if they don't understand."
	Larry	Yes/no	"The first try to do his work, but the second one don't, after a while the first one will just start following the second."
Seventh	Vanessa	Not Asked	
	Erica	Not Asked	
	Donald	N/A	
Parents	Jackson	some	"I do believe that some of the kids who misbehave want to learn, but on the other hand they want to be with the "in crowd" you know and they don't want to be teased just because they want to learn. Maybe they're too smart or they know the work so that's why they act out, maybe they need some harder work."
	Smith	some	"I agree with Ms. Jackson. I would like to add that what they are being taught is not on their level. Maybe it's boring to them or for some of them maybe it's too hard."
	Barber	some	"I think some of them want to learn. Some are too advanced so they get bored, and some are not quite there and can't learn because of everything else that's going on in the classroom. They're not able to be brought up to speed to where the more advance classes are so they don't know anything else to do in my opinion except to act out in some kind of way."
	Nelson	no comment	
2nd Year	Bailey	sometimes	"Sometimes, If it's at they're level. Yes, I think that they want to learn, I don't think that they're acting because they don't want to learn."
	Vadnor	Yes	"I think that they all want to learn but they need that extra support."
7th + Years	Quiggins	Yes/No	"I have some that say they want to learn and I have had a child that tells me he just can't help it and he wants to do better, and then he'll say I'm sorry but then walk around the room again, smack people in the back of the head, throw things, walk out and then comeback in and then I'll stop and say you know you're being rude. He'll get right back up and start all over again."
	Madler	Yes/No	I think that in their hearts' they want to learn, they just sometimes cannot control their behavior."
Admin	Mowen	Yes	"I do, I think all children want to learn. Let's go back to why they're misbehaving. Your question about that…"
	Tessler	Yes	"I think they do want to learn, I think they want to learn, it's just that they don't know how to…But when you look around and you see everyone else is learning of course they want to, it's just like everyone else who has the latest sneakers or the newest hair style: they want it…"

Table A15			
		Question: QM14	
Cohort			**Responses**
Third	S.	Yes	"I think the kids who got behavior should really leave because we trying to learn. We caught Ms. [purposely omitted] in the bathroom crying because of students' behavior. I think that they should be taken out or go into a different class." It would help the class by being able to learn without getting frustrated. "…not moving them doesn't help at all, it really doesn't."
	B.	Yes	"If they're not taken out then we will have a bad day-if they're acting up all day." "Because if taken out when they're being bad we'll be able to do stuff better."
	K.	Explained	"Sometimes I be seeing Ms. [purposely omitted] cry when she comes to get students from lunch because they don't listen to her."
Fifth	F.	Yes	
	P.	Yes	"Yes, Ella she always cursing but she don't never get suspended unless she curses at the teacher real bad and go against all the teachers real bad and that's when they'll tell Ms. Tessler and that's when she'll get them suspended. I think that the teacher need to tell them all the time. If they call them all types of name why not call them to the office? I guess being teachers, they want them to be their friend or something like that—they want to like help them…but. She doesn't want to get on their [students] bad side. It effects the class because they always fussing and talking back to the teacher and being disrespectful."
	L.	Yes	"They should get disciplined, but not beat. They should learn lessons so they don't act up in class in stuff. Yes, weeks and days [suspension time period]. Two should have gotten taken out of class. Sometimes they walk out, but most of the times they should have gotten taken out. When they removed it will be a little quiet, but when the two come back they just start talking again."
Seventh	V.	Yes	"Yes, I'm just using my [purposely omitted] for example. When she be downstairs bullying people talking about I will slap you, like there should be consequences for that. But call their mother and parents don't do nothing either…Ms. Mowen, they keep saying that they [administration] are gonna put her out, but they never put her out, they let her back in. Yes, because it be like some kids in the seventh and eighth grade class and I'm thinking, so yall [administration] really not gonna do nothing about that...they just be in there playing and pumping music and throwing stuff around the room passing stuff and throwing stuff, saying stuff to the teacher."
	E.	Yes	"Yes, I'm snitching, sometimes kids be down stairs and they be smoking and stuff and they should be removed out of school and they don't be. Sometimes people know who it is 'cause they got cameras down there and they don't ever do nothing. I think if they get pulled out it would help the class because some kids got asthma and they can't be around smoke."
	D.	N/A	
Parents	J.	Yes	"They don't remove out of the school, and I think that's what they need to do." "When they get tired of seeing them, they will remove them from school."
	S.	Yes	"I have seen several kids get put out of the classroom and school this year, but what good is that if there situation is not helped." "So what you need to do is to find a resource to help not just the kids that want to learn, but a resource to help the kids that don't want to learn or have a behavior problem, or whatever it is that hinders those kids from learning." "If it is bad enough for them to be removed, than they are removed. I mean eventually you will get suspended, if that's the precaution that's being taken. But it's not like they do something and its automatically they get suspended. Like I said, it all follows in the code of conduct and it's really stupid to me because you have to go through a million things to make one thing right."
	B.	Yes	"I said it earlier when does it go to the next step, stop removing them and then send them back and they repeat the behavior. When does it go to the next step, you know when does it go beyond, a letter, phone call, a conference for your parent who may or may not come up, when does it go to the next thing with the student?"
	N.	Explained	"I feel like kids are being removed, they are being removed (over talking by other parents). Yes and then I say no cause once you get to a certain point, then they do remove you from school. But they do remove children who are being disruptive, sometimes they keep them out, sometimes they send them back."
2nd Year	B.	Yes	"I think they are clear instances when a student needs to be removed from class or school, what those are depend on the situation. Removing the student benefits the greater good because I get to move on with my lesson for the other kids. On the flip side removing the kids is not good for them because they are missing instruction."

	V.	Explained	"I think a lot of time some children want to be removed so that they can go to another teacher who they think is better or nicer."
7th + Years	Q.	Yes	"There have been instances where children have misbehaved and they have been removed and brought right back, and that sometimes sends the message- I don't care I'm coming back anyway. And it doesn't mean that the behavior was corrected. I am the kind of person that feels that there needs to be an alternative to outside the school suspension, but they do need to be removed from the classroom."
	M.	Yes	"Sometimes it's like with different kids if somebody talks to them for ten minutes and they come back it helps, but with others they have to be removed from the class for the whole period. Like what happened today in my class: a student walked out of class without permission three times. And the office told him to go back to the classroom. I said no if you come into my classroom, you will walk out again. They move kids to the office for a half-hour and when they return within one minute they are fighting." (Clarified: They leave out and enter to continue the same problem?) "Yes"
Admin	M.	Yes	"That are instances where students need to be removed and not removing them effects the culture. I'll stick with examples that are fresh on my mind from today…the students who turned the desk over and my staff member had to go to the [purposely omitted]. We did send [purposely omitted] home for three days, but I don't know if three days is severe enough to send the message that what you did was an attack on an adult. And the last part of the questions about them not being in the class…can teachers teacher and students learn. Absolutely! It's hard to remove for disrespect, you can remove, but there's a time limit of 55 minutes or else it's considered a suspension. A lot of verbal disruptions, I think, especially when they're repeated, could go checked, for lack of a better term, a little better."
	T.	Yes	"You mean suspension, yes, I think we should have some behaviors that should not be tolerated. You know we have to go through levels ABCD, before we can get to E, which is suspension. I feel like some things are unacceptable. You know blatant disrespect, cursing teachers and staff out that to me should be unacceptable. Fighting you know, when we were in school, you know these things you weren't allowed to stay in school if that happened- if you did those things. It's like everything is becoming more acceptable, and then there are something's that I agree that you shouldn't be put out of school for, like cutting class. There's a reason that you cut class, and then I'm going to put you out of school, that doesn't make sense to me. You know, a punishment would be making you go to class. But yes, I think there are some things that students should be removed from school for and regardless of the age. Because they have to learn— just because you're in third grade and you kick the teacher, it doesn't make it different from eighth grade and kicking the teacher. I'll give you an example. I kicked a teacher in Pre-School….and they put me out."

Table A16			
		Question: QM8	
Cohort			**Responses**
Third	Sheena	Not Asked	
	Bella	Not Asked	
	Kelly	Not Asked	
Fifth	Faith	Not Asked	
	Paige	Not Asked	
	Larry	Not Asked	
Seventh	Vanessa	Some	"Yes, friendly outside the class, I don't say nothing cause I don't wanna get myself in trouble."
	Erica	Some	"I'm not really friends with some of them but some of them yeah, sometimes I play with them in the class."
	Donald	N/A	
Parents	Jackson	Not Asked	
	Smith	Not Asked	
	Barber	Not Asked	
	Nelson	Not Asked	
2ⁿᵈ Year	Bailey	Based on needs	"I start off kind, it depends on the nature of the misbehavior. Nine times out of ten I'm going to start off kind. I'm going to have my poker face."
	Vadnor	Based on needs	"I believe I'm a little more lenient because I'm a mom and I can ignore some things. I am kind…"
7ᵗʰ⁺ Years	Quiggins	Based on needs	"I try to treat everyone fairly…it's just that they take a great deal of our attention, you know especially if I'm trying to redirect them and it really does take away from other students and even though we model behaviors as well."
	Madler	Based on needs	"I kindly remind them first please sit/be quiet. I mean I get frustrated if I have to say it ten times."
Admin	Mowen	Based on needs	"Well I'm not friends with any of my students…let's be clear with that. I am very cordial to all my students and staff. I am very warm to them to let them know that I care about them, I want them to succeed, but by the same token, I am going to hold them accountable for their behavior, because that's a part of caring too."
	Tessler	Based on needs	"Oh I'm not friends with any students (laughter and chuckling)…but I am friendly with those that misbehave, you try not to show favoritism…when I say we, I mean the administration, and we try to model for the teachers that…you can't show the difference from the one that acts out every day from the ones you wish you could take home and put on your mantle."

Table A17			
Question: Q7			
Cohort			**Responses**
Third	Sheena	Not Asked	
	Bella	Not Asked	
	Kelly	Not Asked	
Fifth	Faith	Negative Perception	"Sometimes when they [are] disrespectful I feel bad because we have an old teacher and they just disrespect her, it discussed me, you don't want nobody calling your parents or grandparents old."
	Paige	Negative Perception	"I think that when they are disrespectful, they don't have no self-respect, like what have their mother been teaching them all the time."
	Larry	Not Bothered	"It doesn't bother me I don't pay them any mind."
Seventh	Vanessa	Not Asked	
	Erica	Not Asked	
	Donald	Not Asked	
Parents	Jackson	Not Asked	
	Smith	Not Asked	
	Barber	Not Asked	
	Nelson	Not Asked	
2nd Year	Bailey	Not Asked	
	Vadnor	Not Asked	
7th + Years	Quiggins	Not Asked	
	Madler	Not Asked	
Admin	Mowen	Concerned	"You come into the profession because you like children you love teaching and you want to see them succeed. So when we think about it or when I think about it…I want to exhaust all the options that I can, to support the child in getting what he or she needs, for optimal success—but again for the rest of the students in the class too." "You try to exhaust all of your options, because in this profession if you are genuine, you don't want to give up on a child so for students who are misbehaving…usually when there is a misbehavior…my thoughts are around avoidance and around, attention so usually when there's misbehavior, and you drill down deeper, talking to parents contacts etc…. you find that there is a hindrance. So my thoughts for them are to try to exhaust all the strategies I can to bring resolution."
	Tessler	Concerned	"We think they are reasons why and just trying to find a solution to the problem for that specific child…to try to provide the supports that we have or that we can find to put in place…But just try to get to the root cause and try to help the student manage their behavior so that they can learn like everyone else."

Table A18			
		Question: Q7A	
Cohort			**Responses**
Third	Sheena	Not Asked	
	Bella	Not Asked	
	Kelly	Not Asked	
Fifth	Faith	Not Asked	
	Paige	Not Asked	
	Larry	Not Asked	
Seventh	Vanessa	Not Asked	
	Erica	Not Asked	
	Donald	Not Asked	
Parents	Jackson	Not Asked	
	Smith	Not Asked	
	Barber	Not Asked	
	Nelson	Not Asked	
2ⁿᵈ Year	Bailey	Not Asked	Agreed with Stokes "Same, so take the blame for certain misbehaviors, If I don't plan for something for 2 minutes, I know it is my fault…if I have other kids misbehaving especially at age 6 because they can't be idle for more than 30 seconds."
	Vadnor	Not Asked	"Sometimes I really can take the blame for some planning issues, if I have a moment of, we finished too early or woo I didn't plan for this time, it will get crazy because they need a schedule for this time that is implemented on a daily basis, if I have 4 minutes of down time, if they're idle for more than two minutes, than I can expect something to happen, than I take the blame for that because I haven't given them a task."
7ᵗʰ⁺ Years	Quiggins	Not Asked	"We plan meticulously, but it may not always be enough. I think that there are other factors. We do a lot in refining our lessons, breaking them down, tearing them down....(goes onto to talk about how meticulous they plan) but sometimes it's just not enough…when a child continues and gets wound up, it doesn't matter what you've planned or how you've planned it they don't seem to care."
	Madler	Not Asked	
Admin	Mowen	Not Asked	
	Tessler	Not Asked	

Table A19			
		Question: Q8	
Cohort			**Responses**
Third	Sheena	Yes	
	Bella	Yes	"Yes, sometimes she'll come up to the school to see what going wrong, and sometimes she just comes to check on me"
	Kelly	Yes	"When I go home my father he'll say how was your day, except in one of my classes I fought or I'll get detention...and he'll say why did you get in the house late and that's when I'll say yes some people were misbehaving so if you know how to do fractions from when you were little can you help me."
Fifth	Faith	Yes	
	Paige	No Answer	
	Larry	Sometimes	"Sometimes but not all the time, some days."
Seventh	Vanessa	Sometimes	"Yes sometimes because when I go home my father will ask me…How was my day?"
	Erica	No	
	Donald	N/A	
Parents	Jackson	Not Asked	
	Smith	Not Asked	
	Barber	Not Asked	
	Nelson	Not Asked	
2nd Year	Bailey	Not Asked	
	Vadnor	Not Asked	
7th + Years	Quiggins	Not Asked	
	Madler	Not Asked	
Admin	Mowen	Not Asked	
	Tessler	Not Asked	

	Table A20	
	Question: QM12	
Cohort		**Responses**
Third	S.	"They should bring more adults in there so they can act right, they need two people in there because it's like 40 kids in there she can't handle that her own self."
	B.	"I think if they have more people, than it would be better, like if they have two teachers in one classroom, than it would be better. It's a lot on one person, so if they have two teachers in one class, than it would be a lot better. If it's in the older classes, I think they need like three because they are [worse] than us."
	K.	"Teachers should make more calls…better teachers."
Fifth	F.	"I think like if I was in the school and we couldn't control the students I would call everybody's parents and tell them to stay in the class with their children so they can learn."
	P.	"Parents should and principals should sneak in on kids and expel them if it's the same person over and over again. I don't think they learn when they do stuff over and over. I think they just do it just because they can do it and I think they should get put outta school for that."
	L.	"Just send some people home until they just get right, and send them some work and stuff." (Clarified: You don't think that's happening enough?) "Not really!"
Seventh	V.	"I say in school suspension but they sit in there and they have their work, but they cannot talk and check them for their phone. Like cause when they say after school detention, kids run straight out the door, they don't do that. I went to another school before I came back here and I had to do in school suspension. I mean the people that were in there helped you with your work, but it really wasn't no talking."
	E.	"In school suspension."
	D.	
Parents	J.	No comment!
	S.	"I think the code of conduct stinks, I just disagree with certain things because you have to do ten things just to make this one thing right. How is this one thing ever going to be right?"
	B.	"I'm glad Ms. Smith said that, because she is absolutely right. In my opinion it's too long to get from what's going to happen this time to what we are going to do the next time. You have to go to A through M before the next step. [When] step two happens, most of the time you are already into the next school year."
	N.	No comment
2ⁿᵈ Year	B.	"Consequences, I understand the districts' push not to suspend as much and things like that because they don't want the kids outside the classroom as much and research has shown blah, blah, blah. I get that, but, what is the alternative when a student is hitting me? There needs to be a consequence, rather than sending them home for the day. And there needs to be from the district that the principles don't feel that they're doing something wrong by suspending a child and giving them due consequence because then it's going to be tallied on their school and they're going to look bad. I just feel like somewhere down the line it became more political than practical and I feel like that effects the way that the principal and administration deals with consequences, because they're being hammered down from the district. And sometimes I feel like they [the district] are not here for the day and the life of a teacher and they just say oh! You know, maybe it's not that bad or it doesn't deserve this consequence or something? When actually by the time I've called the office, this has happened, a million times."
	V.	"I agree (w/Ms. Bailey), I don't think I could have said it better myself. But I think that a lot of people have taken notice to the fact that parents don't help as much as they should. You can call a parent and tell them the behaviors and misbehaviors and they'll send the child to school, as if nothing happened. They'll say put the child on the phone and they say ok don't (inaudible) to the teacher anymore. Each school needs to have their own set of rules that works for their schools, and if suspension is an option: it's an option. Once the parent has that kid home for a week or several days, they're gonna say look."
7ᵗʰ⁺ Years	Q.	"Having been an administrator [principal], I kind of understand the dilemma that they're in and it's not as easy a fix as you might think it is. The true answer lies with the district and the laws governing special education because if there's a way that they can handle or house them differently, it would have a greater impact on those students that are starting to fall between the cracks. Because a lot of the attention is being drawn away from them because more attention is placed on what they are doing [wrong] rather than being placed on what they can do. It really lies with the district with those people that make the laws with the special education part because if there was a way to remove those kids without a lot of stipulation—more money put into the programs and what have you, hire your more bodies to manage them, than we would see great strides in the classroom. I really believe it, I really do!"
	M.	"To me class size matters, I'm not saying 15 kids, but 20-25, if more than that it's hard to manage, and also talking about IEP [Individualized Education Program] inclusion and from about two years ago, they put all of the kids into the regular education classroom. There's a young girl who yells and screams for no reason and I have a

		student who was in inclusion for her whole life [grades K-7] …until she was in 7th grade. And suddenly, she's in my room. And I cannot control her, she yells and screams for no reason, and that is a really big problem."
Admin	M.	"Well, when we look at the limitations of the code of conduct, I'll give you an example that happened [purposely omitted]. Had a student who pushed a desk over on to the [purposely omitted] teacher. Teacher had to leave class, couldn't put [purposely omitted], sent her down to the [purposely omitted] …code of conduct, for a [purposely omitted] grader, because sometimes they have it broken up into elementary, middle or elementary secondary. First offense the maximum [purposely omitted] could receive is 3 days out, and I just think honestly, if parents are inconvenienced with the suspension or expulsion, and if the students and parents knew that there were more severe consequences, that could be imposed, than parents would make a better effort in preparing the students to not misbehave. Also, parents have to have home consequences. That! I'm not seeing on a regular basis."
	T.	"I have so many, if I were talking frankly, and I was talking about the consistent behaviors, we have to look at the community, we have to look at the socio-economics, we have to look at all of that. For this school every student that has consistent behavior problems are [purposely omitted] students. I really can't even think of one student who is not [purposely omitted] that shows significant behavior problems. Everyone talks about parental involvement-parental involvement! I think we're at the age where, we are going to have to start attaching punitive measures to parents for students to increase achievement and performance- even attendance! You know I tease my [purposely omitted] all the time [purposely omitted]. We talk about even attaching your child's performance in school to federal funds that you [parents] receive, you know I don't know, something has to be done. Because the emphasis/focus is not education—that is not important. And we have to, somehow, find a way where it becomes important. Just as important as maybe receiving [purposely omitted]. Just as important as me receiving my [purposely omitted]. You know my child's education needs to be just as important as those things, so I don't know, maybe if they start looking at that."

Table A21		
	BCPSS Former Headquarters Employee	
Q1		"Yes, resounding yes, every grade I ever taught and every school that I've ever worked in….unfortunately student misbehavior is something that I think almost all public and private schools experience. So the question becomes how do you handle it? Whether they are middle school kids or high school kids."
Q2		"Yes, I think my frustration came from two things. Either you are acting out in my class or you're acting out in one of the classes that I'm responsible for. And now I've gotta go and figure out what or why the disruption is occurring and how can we prevent it from happening again. How can we get the class and the teacher back focused on instruction when the learning environment has been interrupted?"
Q3		"Well it depends in some situations they were isolated events. But in some situations I found there were teachers that created conditions that led to higher rates of student misbehavior. They weren't planned, they didn't have a good relationship with kids, they couldn't very quickly flow with the direction that a class was taking, and helping to identify teachable moments that would energize and help kids keep connected without shutting down the conversation, and so when those things happen, in some ways the teacher behavior led to or exacerbated student disengagement, which then led to the disruption."
Q4		"Again, it depends. I've seen both, in my personal experience as a teacher or as an administrator. I've seen the same individual being disruptive. I've seen different individuals being disruptive and there are different rationales for each within each category…but at the same time maybe they are not focused or concentrated because the teacher is not engaging them……maybe it's a matter of proximity sitting next to a friend that they spend more time trading jokes and playing…other times it might be because kids have a bad day."
Q5		"I think for every student, the reason for the outburst is different, but here's where I do start…I think great instruction and students being engaged in active participatory learning, limits students not being engaged, so hence when you get students not being engaged, you get more student disruptions. "Having a great instructional program is not a 100% resolution or panacea for student disruption, but it certainly goes a long way to eliminating student disruptions."
Q6		"I gotta tell you, that's the age old question. The question is, do you take the disruptive student out of class. I think you have to I think if for no other reason than to talk to them or reiterate the expectations, or to say you know what, you can't do this. You need to conduct yourself in a manner that is in line with the expectations and the norms we have for this class. And for this school. I think the answer is yes. I do think you take them out of class. Now for how long. I think the time they miss out of class is dependent upon the seriousness of the offense, whether it is repeated or the initial offense and the probable consequences. Those are the three factors that make up the calculous when they're thinking about what happened."
Q7		"I think that what principals and administrative teams think is that good instruction and great teachers minimize and prevent much, or you know most, student misbehavior. But many students also come to school with a host of issues and pathologies from home and the broader community that need to be address in order for them to be successful in the school environment. And so it's not enough to just to think that this kid is acting out because they're a bad student. Until you know what's going on with that kid, you have to reserve judgement."
Q7A		
Q8		
QM8		"Yes, I was friendly with everybody."
QM9		"There are some kids that only misbehave in certain classrooms. It is a direct result of the lack of great teaching and learning taking place in that classroom, maybe great relationship with the teacher and rapport, but also stability and preparedness, and all those things that go into making a great teacher. After the classroom, the second most problematic area in a school building is the hallway. Especially in high schools, where kids aren't supervised and so they're in the halls."
QM10		"12, huge I say it's a 12. It's a huge problem. Not talking about the genesis, what causes it? It is a huge problem that any instructional time is lost because of student misbehavior, for the student that misbehaves and for other students that are in that classroom that are not benefitting from that instruction because some kid is acting like a knuckle head. It's a huge problem." "Not all students are disruptive, as a matter of fact, most students are not disruptive, but when a student is disruptive, they're not only disrupting education for themselves, they are disrupting education for everyone else."

QM11		"Yes! Now for teachers it's clear that one disruptive students makes their ability to get through their lesson, to individualize to the extent that they can, to give personalized attention, it just makes it difficult. Again, the best antidote to student misbehavior is having a great lesson."
QM12		"The emphasis has to be on engaging curriculum, real life examples and making the connection that what's taking place in the classroom is something you're going to face as a contributing member of society." "The other thing that I would suggest is that the school day is not long enough to allow for the full breathe and depth of learning" Needs to be 7.5-8 hours and include P.E every day. I'd pay teachers between 80,000-100,000 and say you work 11 months a year. "What we've seen nationally was that a reliance on a testing culture, has in some ways been the antithesis of what we really wanted. What we wanted was more student engagement and [be] better prepared to participate in the 21st century. But [the] standardized testing culture has led to many teachers and curricula being watered down—not being as interesting and as engaging as it could be." "I think we need to completely rework how we practice schooling, because if we do that, we get more kids engaged and if we get more kids engaged, we get less misbehavior." "We can't underestimate the overreliance of suspension and expulsion and it impact on students. They don't care about me, they weren't fair to me, I don't like them, I'm never coming back, are just a few of the words that kids would say when they felt that the discipline policies in school mistreated them." [Question asked about in-school suspension] "I like in-school suspension as a concept or theory. It's difficult to get the type of...First, you gotta deescalate the student and get their perspective on the situation and get them to think about if there was something else they could have done about the problem to avoid in school. Secondly, there should be a strong work component. Many of the kids that are disengaged in school and disruptive are students that are performing low and already behind."
QM13		"Sometimes and sometimes not. I think if you can't see yourself in the lesson, if you can't see how the lesson is relating to your life presently or your life in the future, then no I'm not interested. For me it comes back to instruction. Great teacher, great lesson, great rapport, and showing the connection between what we're learning and what you're going to have to do in society."
QM14		"I am a firm believer that there are situations that student get themselves into where they absolutely must be removed from class. Those incidents that are a threat, violence, battery, things like that."