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Middle School Discipline:
In Need of Solutions

by
Robin L. Moore-Robinson

A Master's Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement of the
Master of Arts Degree
of
The Graduate School
at
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May, 1999

Approved by _____
Professor

Date Approved May 1999

Acknowledgments

To my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, I thank Him for giving me the wisdom, knowledge and faith to successfully complete the missions of this world for the purpose of doing His will and assisting in meeting the needs of his precious children.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The Pleasantville Public School District, in Pleasantville New Jersey, has opened the doors of the district's first middle school in September, 1998. The Middle School of Pleasantville has enrolled all of Pleasantville's fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth grade students. The Pleasantville Public School District has not yet adopted the proposed discipline policy which was specifically constructed during the spring, summer and fall of 1998 by the discipline development committee of the Middle School. During that time, the intern has conducted an action research for the purpose of assisting in creating a discipline policy. The method in which data has been collected was through the interview process, and surveys.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to assist in the development of an effective discipline policy for The Middle School of Pleasantville and to also research ways of decreasing disruptive, inappropriate and violent behavior amongst middle school-aged students. Pleasantville Public School District needed to have a concise, effective discipline policy (see Appendix A). In the past, Pleasantville's middle school aged students followed the existing Pre-K to 8th grade discipline policy. Effective as it may have been on the elementary school level, a policy needed to be developed to address the security needs of middle school students in a middle school setting. The policy

called for firm consequences. This was very important to Pleasantville's Middle School teachers. Public school discipline problems are rapidly increasing with acts of violence that are taking administrators, educators and the general public by surprise. The public is crying for tougher solutions. Therefore, the intern developed a Discipline Mediation Team as a part of the Middle School's discipline policy (see Appendix B) to assist with these discipline problems.

For the first time in at least fourteen years, The Pleasantville Public School System has located seventh and eighth graders students together in one building. The district has also placed fifth and sixth graders within this building, therefore, this research project can also be used to prepare the Middle School faculty and staff to handle a wide range of discipline problems by utilizing the discipline model, (see Appendix C), that is designed specifically for the Middle School. The model can serve as a discipline guide for all teachers.

Definitions

For the purpose of this research project, the following terms will be defined as; 'effective middle school discipline' firm school rules for students who are in grades fifth through eighth; 'No Non-sense discipline policies' policies which does not give the students any leniency towards certain school offenses; 'referral' is a discipline action document that is completed by teachers and or administrators when students break school rules or display disruptive, disobedient, violent actions.

Limitations of the Study

This research project will be constructed for all of Pleasantville's 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grade students only. The project will be limited to the possible discipline actions of the Middle School of Pleasantville, the Middle School parents and community members. The actions of the Middle School administrators will most likely follow the district's, 'districtwide' discipline policy.

This will probably be the weakness of the research project. The Discipline Mediation Team's responsibilities will be limited to the discipline offenses which the Middle School Principal feel the team should handle.

Setting of the Study

The setting of this research will be the Middle School of Pleasantville in Pleasantville, New Jersey. Pleasantville New Jersey is a small urban community with suburban neighborhoods and rural surroundings. The town has its own city hall, police department, fire department, volunteer ambulance corp., library, shopping center and downtown business district. There are two banks; First Union and PNC bank which service the residents and five gas stations. The City of Pleasantville has over a dozen churches and the most prominent churches are the large Baptist churches which are under the leadership of African American Pastors. Pleasantville's city leaders and its Board of Education members rely on the support of these churches. Currently, the city leaders are of the democratic party and have been in office since 1994. The mayor is African American, 67% of the city council members are also African American, and 29% of the city council members are female.

According to the most recent government census report, Pleasantville's total population is 16,027, with the following racial breakdown; black - 8,864; white - 5,853; Hispanic - 1,604; Asian and other races - 1,310. The city has 3,645 single family homes, 2489 apartments or attached units, and 254 mobile homes or other units. The city tax rate is 3.151. The median family income in Pleasantville is \$34,380. According to the 1996 New Jersey Department of Labor's report, 7,903 Pleasantville residents are employed and 1,159 are unemployed. Pleasantville is a full service, Pre-K to 12 district. Pleasantville is categorized by the State Board of Education of New Jersey as a 'special needs or Abbott district.' Pleasantville's School District has a full Board of Education and is currently without a permanent superintendent.

The Pleasantville Public School District receives \$30,561,404 in total state aid. State aid is divided into various categories such as aid for Core Curriculum and Stand Curriculum is \$20,338,538 and State aid for Special Education aid is \$2,559,032.

The Pleasantville Public School District consist of four elementary schools one middle school and one high school. The breakdown is the following:

Leeds Avenue Elementary School - Pre-K to 4 (514 students)

North Main Street Elementary School - Pre-K to 4th grade (291 students)

South Main Street School - Pre-K to 4th grade (462 students)

Washington Avenue School - Pre-K to 4th grade (407 students)

Middle School of Pleasantville - 5th to 8th grade (1,015 students)

Pleasantville High School - 9th to 12th grade (979 students)

The district service a total of 3,668 students. The enrollment breakdown is the following:

African American Students - 2,655

Caucasian Students - 125

Hispanic Students - 821

Asian/Pacific - 61

American Indian / Alaska - 6

Each elementary school has a principal and assistant principal, (with the exception of NMSS, and WAS, they share one assistant principal). The high school and middle school each has one principal and two assistance principals.

The current curriculums being utilized by the Pleasantville Public School District are: 'Success For All' for grades Kindergarten to 4th grade, and Core Curriculum Content Standards for the middle school and high school.

Significance

This study has great importance because of the current problems which are facing public schools. Discipline problems and school violence are on a rise in public schools. The

Pleasantville community along with the Middle School faculty and staff needs to come together and develop preventive methods to handle any discipline problems. The Oxon Hill High School faculty and parents in Maryland came together and created a twenty-five member volunteer group call, "Parents on Patrol." This group of volunteers take time out of their schedule to patrol the halls of Oxon Hill High School to assist in ensuring security within the school.

Organization of the Study

This research paper will be presented in the following way; Chapter 2 will present researched information which will show statistically the percentage of certain discipline problems which public school are faced with, solutions to discipline problems, causes and interventions of discipline problems and information stating whether or not public schools are safe; Chapter 3 will present the data, how it was collected, the instrumentation used and the analysis of the data; Chapter 4 will present all the information that was gathered from the instruments, and explain what the data means and its significance to the district; Chapter 5 will present a conclusion of the entire research process, the overall conclusion to the findings, describe how the middle school was changed by the project and whether or not the need for further study is required, and what the intern has learned, in terms of leadership, as a result of this project.

Chapter 2

Review of the Literature

A Wide Spread Problem

Public schools in the United States of America are faced with a wide spread problem that has increasingly been one of the major focal points throughout the United States Education System. That problem is school discipline and violence. In Michael Casserly article, "Discipline and Demographics," he writes that a 1994 report entitled "First Things First," by the nonprofit Public Agenda Foundation in New York, and the annual America Teachers surveys compiled by Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, have listed school discipline as the number-one educational concern of both teachers and the general public. This is true. With the recent rash of random violence within the schools, educators as well as the general public cannot help but notice and be concerned. Students are bringing their vengeances to school with them in a deadly form and unfortunately, innocent lives of students and teachers are being taken due to thoughtless acts. For example, Jeffrey Rubin of Scholastic News reported that in October, 1997, student, Luke Woodham, 16, killed two students in Pearl, Mississippi; on December 1, 1997, three students died and five students were injured when a teenager opened fire at a school in Paducah, Kentucky; on March 24, 1998, four girls and a teacher were killed at a Jonesboro, Arkansas school - Andrew Golden, 11 and Mitchell Johnson, 14 did the shooting and on May 21, 1998, Kipland Kinkel, 15, shot twenty-three students at a Springfield, Oregon school, two students died.

A gun in the hands of a distraught student is noticeably a and deadly combination. Even though the use of guns are one of the factors contributing to public school discipline problems, there are many others. The Washington Education Association Resource Manual reported a recent study by the United States Department of Justice and the National Association of School Psychologists reported the following figures:

- Everyday 100,000 children take guns to school
- Each day 6,250 teachers are threaten and 260 teachers are assaulted.
- Some 14,000 young people are physically attacked on school property everyday
- 160,000 children miss school daily because of the fear of violence.

Public school districts in suburban, rural and urban settings have been faced with discipline problems which range from the less serious problems such as stealing, to the more serious problems such as physical altercations, sexual assault and use of a weapon. During 1996-1997 about 4,000 incidents of rape or sexual battery were reported; 11,000 incidents of physical attacks or fights in which a weapon was used and 7,000 robberies were reported that year. One and ten public schools experienced at least one of these crimes, which occur at a rate of 53 incidents per 100,000 students during 1996-97 (Violence and Discipline Problems in U.S. Public Schools: 1996-97). These problems are prevalent among middle school and high school students than elementary school-aged students. According to a survey conducted by the United States Department of Education, The National Center for Education Statistics and Fast Response Survey System, the frequency of crime in schools, overall showed that about 1,000 crimes per 100,000 students were reported in our nation's public schools. This included about 950 crimes per 100,000 that were not serious or violent crimes (theft, vandalism, fights or assaults without a weapon) and about 50 serious violent crimes per 100,000 students (rape, or sexual battery, robbery, fighting with a weapon and suicide). The ratio of serious crimes was lowest in elementary schools, with 13 violent crimes reported per 100,000 students compared with 93 per 100,000 students in middle school and 103 per 100,000 students in high schools. Higher percentages have shown that middle and high schools experience more serious violent crimes than elementary schools. It also appears that the larger the school population becomes, the more likely these serious discipline problems will occur within the school setting.

Medium-sized schools reported 38 serious violent crimes per 100,000 students, compared to 90 serious violent crimes per 100,000 students reported by large schools (Violence and Discipline Problems in U.S. Public Schools: 1996-97).

The Origin of Discipline Problems and Possible Interventions

Administrators and teachers are faced with the task of educating students who live in a society where violence is; depicted in television movies, dramas, and adventures; broadcasted on the local news; and acted out in the households of America's students. Sometimes these acts of violence are used against them in the form of mental and physical abuse or neglect. The Criminal Victimization in the United States Reports of the U.S. Justice Department for 1991, 1992, 1993 and 1994 indicate that rape, robbery and assault are about twice as likely to occur in the home than in school. In 1992, according to the Health and Human Services Department, approximately 2.9 million children were abuse or neglected. Family members accounted for 91 percent of the cases of abuse (Britton, Hyman, Shanock and Weiler). According to a response manual on Preventing and Coping with School Violence, the causes of violent behavior among students fall into several major areas. Three of the four areas centers around the home, they are; lack of positive role models or significant adults who care for the child over time, change or breakdown in traditional family structure, and poverty and its increase among young people. Maggie Lopez, Principal also states similar causes of violence in her article, "Re-Direct Violent Behavior." She gives three variables which contribute to discipline problems. The first is anger which becomes rage. This anger, she states, may come from home and brought to school. The second is the lack of academic success. Many students are frustrated by failure to learn and begin to believe they will never succeed in the classroom. Finally, the last variable is the family condition. Families are faced with fighting poverty, with all the emotional and social stress involved, they can rarely offer support for their children.

These acts of violence against these students, the absence of stability within the home, poverty in the home and the fear of failure are etched into the minds of these students and brought into the school environment when they come to school. Once in school, these students act out in negative, disruptive ways which eventually results in discipline problems for the teachers and administrators to handle. So how are educators expected to educate these students and maintain law and order within his or her classroom?

Dr. Linda Albert, author of the book; "Cooperative Discipline Model," points out several critical areas in which educators should be familiar with for maintaining controlled cooperative discipline within the classroom and at the same time helping troubled students maintain control and feel recognized and successful. The critical areas given are:

1. Styles of Classroom Management
2. Teacher Responses to Misbehavior
3. Teacher-Student Interaction
4. Understanding the Goals of Misbehavior

Dr. Albert points out three styles of classroom management. Hands-off, Hands-on and Hands-joined. Even though she suggests that educators use a management style that will be effective, she views the Hands-on style of classroom management as the better more effective style of classroom management. Her reasons are based on the fact that research and experience have shown that when students are respectfully treated as important decision-makers who have the right to make choices and participate in the design of their education, they behave more cooperatively and achieve more academically.

Dr. Albert expresses that teachers cannot control the students and force them to behave in certain ways, however, teachers can control themselves and their actions. Teachers should maintain a relaxed body language and calm, yet firm tone of voice.

Also, teachers should adopt a businesslike attitude when faced with poor behavior choices. Teacher-student interaction is considered a two way street when students choose to relate to teachers through misbehavior, we have to be able to recognize and know how to respond both immediately and in the long term.

Dr. Albert gives four goals of misbehavior. These goals are desirable goals of students who; are seeking attention; seeking power; seeking revenge or want to avoid failure. Students whose main goal is to gain more attention will act out in a disruptive manner in order to reach their goal. Students whose main goal is to seek power will take on this quest within the classroom in order to obtain power and be recognized. Students whose main goal is revenge, is a student who will lash out at anyone in his or her path in order to gain redemption for real or imagined hurt. Finally, students who try to avoid failure will act out so that he or she is not embarrassed or forced to face failure once more. Once educators are able to recognize the goals of misbehavior, Dr. Albert proposes several intervention strategies and examples for each goal of misbehavior. For the purpose of this paper, a maximum of one example for each strategy will be given.

Intervention strategies for Attention Seekers:

1. Minimize attention - example: refuse to respond
2. Clarify desired behavior - example: use "Target-Stop-Do"
3. Legitimize the behavior - example: create a lesson from the misbehavior
4. Do the unexpected - example: ask a direct question
5. Notice appropriate behavior - example: use proximity praise
6. Move the student - example: change the student's seat assignment

Intervention strategies for recognizing the three stages of a classroom volcano involving Power Seekers or Revenge Seekers:

1. The Rumbling Stage - example: acknowledge the student's power
2. The Eruption Stage - example: time out in another classroom or office
3. The Resolution Stage - example: select related consequences

Intervention strategies for Avoidance - of - Failure:

1. Modify instructional methods
2. Provide tutoring
3. Reframe positive self-talk
4. Reframe the "I Can't" refrain
5. Teach procedures for becoming "unstuck"

Dr. Albert's strategies and interventions appear to be good remedies for combating discipline problems within the classroom. But what if these problems worsen or the students do not respond appropriately, then what? Are the students referred to school administration? If so, what effective solutions can be taken by school administrators?

Finding Solutions That Work

One solution that can be taken to combat the rising discipline problems in public schools is the reviewing of school discipline policies or codes for the purpose of making them more effective and decreasing the violence within the schools. The First Response Survey System and the School Disciplinarian Survey on School Violence found that efforts to prevent or reduce violence were being implemented in 78% of public schools (Violence and Discipline Problem in U.S. Public Schools: 1996-97).

School districts have implemented solutions which range from districts enforcing stricter, "Zero Tolerance" policies to Saturday detentions and parent involvement. The American Federation of Teachers have formed a task force on school violence and safety to gather information on discipline policies.

Increasingly, union locals are taking tough bargaining positions, pressing districts to adopt stronger discipline codes (Bradley, A.). These districts which have already enforced these stricter codes are suspending and expelling students for inappropriate violence behavior. The School Actions and Reactions to Discipline Issues Report, reported that five to forty percent of all public schools reported the following reactions to violent crimes within their school:

Possession or use of a firearm - 31% used expulsion, 49% use out-of-school suspension and 20% transferred students to alternative schools or programs

Possession or use of a weapon other than a firearm - 23% used expulsion, 55% used out-of-school suspension and 22% transferred students to alternative schools or programs.

Physical attacks or fights - 15% used expulsion, 66% used out-of-school suspension 19% transferred students to alternative schools or programs. These reactions are a result of districts changing and or enforcing their discipline policies or codes. Seventy-nine percent of all public schools reported having a "Zero Tolerance Policy" for violence, weapons and firearms. Zero Tolerance a school or district policy that mandates predetermined consequences or punishments for specific offenses (Violence and Discipline Problems in U.S. Public Schools: 1996-97). The Milwaukee school district is among those public schools who have adopted a "get tough" expulsion policy which reflects a "Zero Tolerance Policy." Milwaukee district officials expelled students more than three times their 1996-97 expulsion rate. Their board of education members feel that it's really difficult for a child to concentrate on his or her school work when they are in constant fear of the person sitting next to them. District leaders are hoping that the number of expulsions will dwindle as word spreads that they are serious about kicking students out (Hendrie, Caroline). Students at Cincinnati's Schwab Middle School are most often suspended and expelled for unruly conduct (insubordination), disorderly conduct (disrupting class) fighting and profanity (Bradley, Ann).

Jeff Rubin reported in September 14th issue of Scholastic News that “in a Connecticut school last May, a 14- year-old boy was suspended for the school year for telling someone he wanted to blow up his school graduation. And a 15-year-old boy was arrested in New Jersey. He had drawn a picture of a man being targeted by a gun. These “Zero Tolerance Policies” may send a “no nonsense” message, but in the meantime, these school’s enrollment is declining and students are out of school due to suspensions. This may be acceptable in most districts but in “special needs districts” who must rely on a high enrollment in order to receive a certain amount of funding, they must find other means of discipline even if suspensions and expulsions are warranted and mandated by the state. For example: 18A:37-2 of the New Jersey Statue Annotated allows suspensions and or expulsions for offenses which are less violent than the possession of a weapon and physical assault. New Jersey’s 18A:37-2 states:

Any pupil who is guilty of continued and willfull disobedience or of open defiance of any teacher or person having authority over him, or of the habitual use of profanity or of obscene language or shall cut, deface or otherwise injure any school property, shall be liable to punishment and to suspension or expulsion from school.

If the Pleasantville Public School District, (a special needs district), of Pleasantville, New Jersey suspended or expelled middle school or high school students based on the offenses in 18A:37-2, there would probably be a considerable amount of students suspended or expelled from school. Therefore, districts like Pleasantville must construct other means of disciplining students for these offenses. For example: the Middle School of Pleasantville is planning on re-introducing Saturday detentions to the district, if approved by the district, students will be given Saturday detentions along with after school detentions; Howard County’s Middle School and High School of Washington, D.C. will also be iniating Saturday detentions for their unruly and disruptive students (Shaver, Katherine); a parent group, Citizens for Discipline in Schools, in Nashau, New

Hampshire was founded by Mr. & Mrs. Chris Sousa to help battle the increasing discipline problems within their children's schools (Portner, Jessica); and at the Oxon High School of Washington, D.C., parents have formed a 25 person group called, "Parents on Patrol," to patrol the halls of the high school to assist with maintaining order within the building and eliminating violence (Fraizer, Lisa). Solutions such as the ones which were stated and many others are being implemented within public schools so that public schools in the United States can be a safe place for students as well as teachers.

How Safe Are Public Schools?

When students are attending schools with a high rate of violence, often times the learning environment, overall discipline and personal safety are jeopardized. Educational environments are institutions where students come to be nurtured through education, trained through experiences and kept safe mentally as well as physically through policies developed to maintain safe, orderly learning environments. So how safe are public schools? Data from the National Education Goals Panel show that only 1% of public school teachers feel unsafe in their buildings during the day, as do 2% of urban teachers. Eight percent of teachers feel unsafe after school hours. A poll conducted two years ago for the Ford Foundation showed that 76% of teachers had no problem maintaining order in their classrooms. And a new report by the Federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention shows that while violent youth crime is rising rapidly, children are safer in school than they are anywhere else, including their homes (Casserly, Micheal). Hyman, Weiler, Sahnock and Britton believes that, "When all the data are examined, it is apparent that schools are one of the safest places for children and youth especially those in inner cities." However, public schools were once safer than what they are today, hence the need for more improved, effective discipline policies. Public school districts should continue to research solutions and find the most compatible solution for the purpose of combating discipline problems within their schools.

Chapter 3

The Design of the Study

The Research Design

The research design selected for this study was a qualitative, action research design. The purpose for using this type of research design was to; explore the discipline problems which are caused by middle school-aged students within the Pleasantville Public School District; obtain possible solutions to these discipline problems from assistant principals; obtain the concerns from educators regarding discipline problems within the school and classroom; solicit members for the Discipline Mediation Team; to obtain possible solutions from these educators; and to evaluate the effectiveness of the new discipline policy.

The types of research designs used were selected to; develop a plan of action; implemented the plan of action; improve the components of the developed plan; and observe and evaluate the effectiveness of the plan of action as the implementation unfolds.

The research design consisted of the following instrumentation; an one-on-one interview questionnaire designed for assistant principals which asked eleven questions (see Appendix D); a small group open-end survey which was taken among the Middle School's teachers, (see Appendix D); a teacher involvement survey, (see Appendix D), a parent involvement survey, (see Appendix D); and an one-on-one, open-ended, evaluative survey which was used and asked one question, (see Appendix D).

The Description of the Design and Instrumentation

The research design and instrumentation used consisted of five separate instruments. One eleven-question survey, one small-group survey, two school involvement surveys and an one-on-one survey.

The development of the interview questionnaire was designed to gather information based on past discipline problems and or violence amongst middle school-aged students. Assistant principals of two of Pleasantville's elementary schools were interviewed. The small-group, two-question survey was presented to the Middle School teachers during a teacher in-service for the purpose of obtaining knowledge of their concerns regarding discipline. The teacher and parent school involvement surveys were used to determine who would be interested in serving on the Discipline Mediation Team. The final instrumentation used was an one-on-one, open-ended, survey which requested one response from each person surveyed. Initially, a ten question, multiple choice and open-ended instrument was going to be issued to the Middle School staff but due to the lack of response from the teacher involvement survey and another nine item teacher survey which was issued concerning another internship project, it was realized that this type of instrumentation was best.

The Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample used for gathering information from the interviews was 50% of the total assistant principal population of Pleasantville's four elementary schools. The assistant principals in Pleasantville deal directly with discipline concerns, therefore, they were selected in stead of the principals. The type of sampling used for this process was simple random sampling. The sample used for gathering information from the small group survey resulted in a 20% return of the total teacher population. Teachers were in approximately six small groups. The responses from the questions were gather from each group. The sampling technique used for gathering information was cluster sampling.

The four item teacher survey was distributed to 77 teachers, which at the time was 100% of the faculty, and the nine item parent survey was distributed to 50 parents.

The techniques used for gathering this data was random sampling. The final sample used for gathering information from the one-on-one, open-ended survey was 46% of the total teacher population (as of January, 1999). The sampling technique used was simple random sampling.

Description of Data Collection

The questionnaire which was used as an interviewing instrument, was used in a person-to-person interview. The intern met with each assistant principal in their office and interviewed them for a time period which ranged from 30 minutes to 45 minutes. The small group teacher's survey was used during a teacher's in-service. Teachers were asked to assemble into small groups and honestly respond to two given questions. The principal called on teachers to share their responses. The intern assisted by collecting the data and writing the responses on the large display writing pad which was located in plain view of all groups. The teacher involvement survey was placed in the teacher's mailboxes. They were asked to complete the survey and return it to the main office of the Middle School. The parent involvement survey was distributed to parents; at the October and November Parent-Teacher-Student-Organization meetings; and during school hours when parents were in the building. The one-on-one open ended survey was used to asked teachers of grades fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth grades one evaluative question. These teachers were selected at random as they passed through the halls or stood at their classroom doors during the end of the day.

Data Analysis Plan

The data gathered from the small group questionnaire and one-on-one, open-ended survey, will be compared and the results will be presented to the administrators. The data will also be group to determine the number of similar responses and the urgency for change in order to satisfy these response if necessary.

Chapter 4

Presentation of the Research Findings

The information collected from the all instrumentations was useful, it gave direction and it also revealed alarming information regarding the implementation of the Middle School's new discipline policy.

During the interviews with the assistant principals, they expressed that the discipline offense, 'fighting', was the most frequent discipline problem amongst Pleasantville's middle school-aged students. They also express that students who were involved in fights, were dealt with according to the district's discipline policy which either called for; a 3 to 10 day out - of- school suspension, suspension with exclusion pending parent contact, administrative detentions, guidance intervention and or in-school-suspension. According to the assistant principal's responses, it appeared that some type of suspension, along with guidance intervention offered the most effective discipline consequences in terms of improving student discipline problems. This information was very useful in the development of the Middle School's discipline policy, for the purpose of effectively handling discipline problems, and in the development of the Discipline Mediation Team's guidelines and responsibilities.

The small group survey, which was given to the teachers during the September in-service, gave the Middle School administrators concrete data which came directly from the teachers. This data allowed the Middle School administrators to become aware of the predicted discipline problems that the teachers may encounter and it also gave administration a few suggestions for possible solutions to these predicted discipline problems (see Appendix D).

The four item teacher involvement survey, (which was given for the purpose of soliciting members for the discipline mediation team), yielded the worse return response. Out of seventy-seven surveys issued, there were only 17 teachers who responded to the survey. That's 2% of all persons surveyed (see Chart - 1). As a result of the limited responses, the intern concluded that teachers were either not interested in being involved in the Discipline Mediation Team, or did not have the time to become a part of the Discipline Mediation Team. The parent involvement survey yielded a better return response. The parent involvement survey was distributed to fifty-five parents. Thirty-seven percent of the parents surveyed, responded and return the surveys (see Chart - 2). The data from the parent involvement survey showed that the parents were interested in being involved, however, due to their work schedule, they are unable to attend the Discipline Mediation Team's resolution meetings.

The data from the final instrumentation used was the most useful and the most alarming of all data collected. This data was collected four months after the small group survey was issued to teachers requesting their discipline concerns and solutions. The new data from the final instrumentation evaluated the Middle School's discipline policy, and also the actions and consistency of Middle School administrators and teachers in terms of how they are enforcing the discipline policy within the school and classrooms. Thirty Middle School faculty and staff members responded a single open-ended survey question, "How should the Middle School of Pleasantville improve the way in which discipline is handled?" in very similar ways (see Table-1). For example; 3% of persons surveyed believed that the discipline consequences should be consistent amongst all students. These people expressed that students who have committed similar offenses have received very different consequences for their actions; 2% of persons surveyed called for some type of in-school-suspension. These individuals believe that their should be some type of guidance or academic intervention 'time-out' center for disruptive students.

Chart - 1

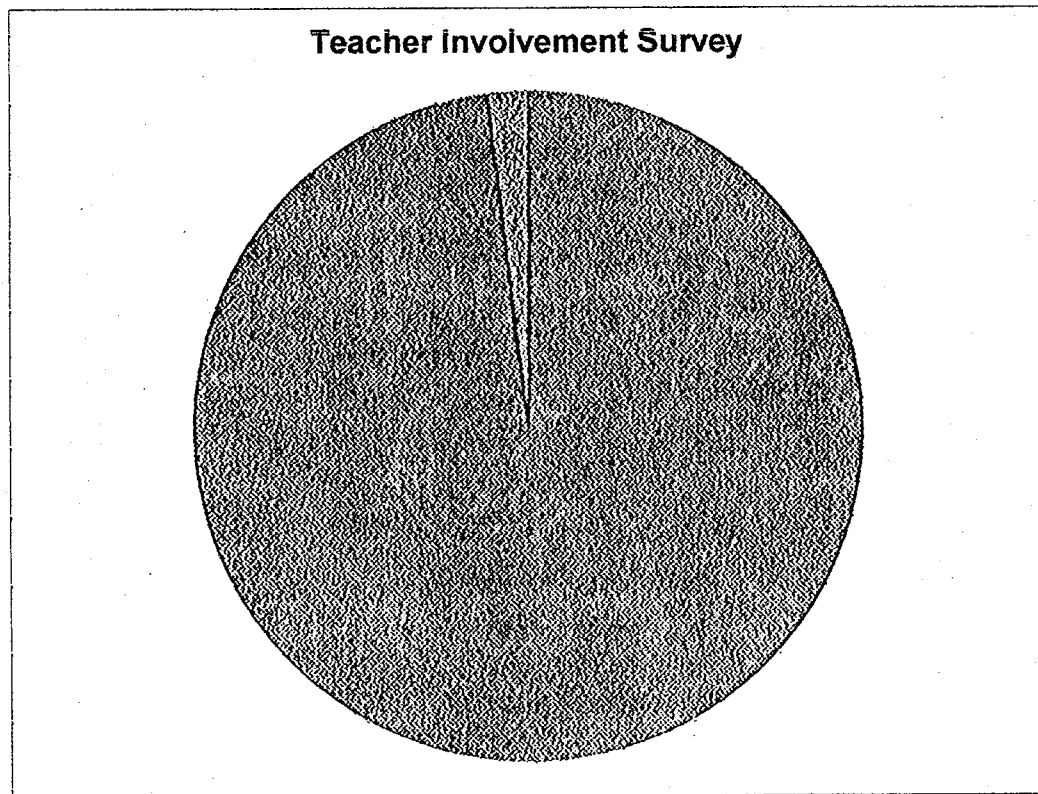
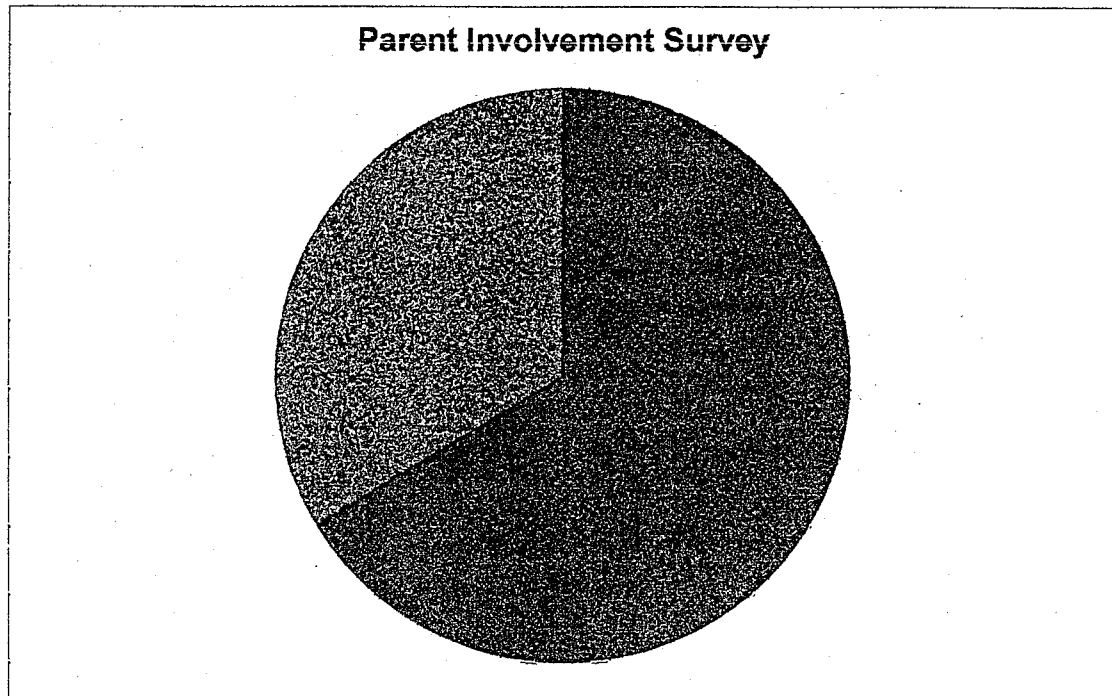


Chart - 1 shows that 98% of the total teachers survey at The Middle School of Pleasantville, 2% responded to the survey.

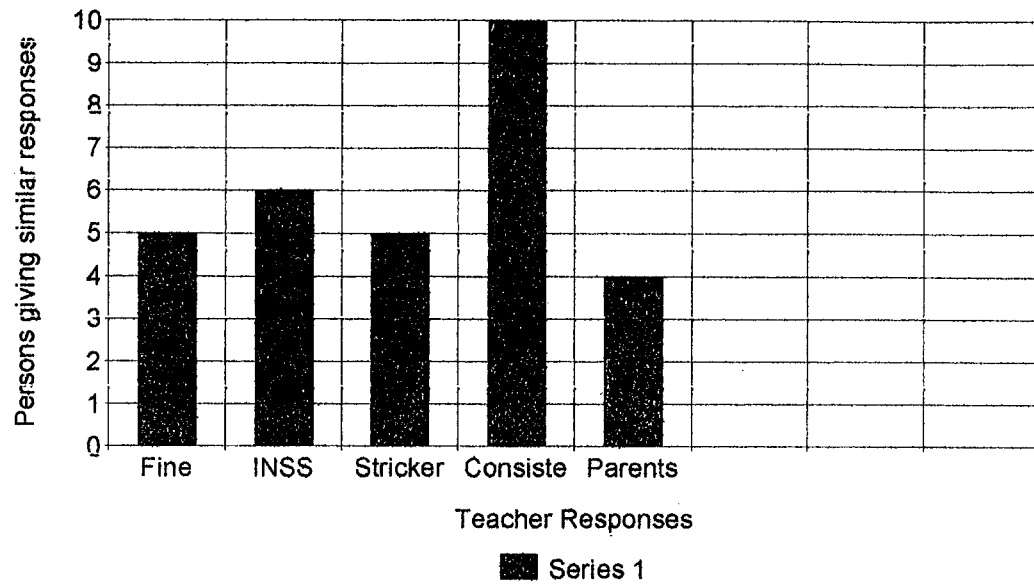
Chart - 2



This chart shows that thirty-seven percent of the surveys issued to fifty-five parents were returned.

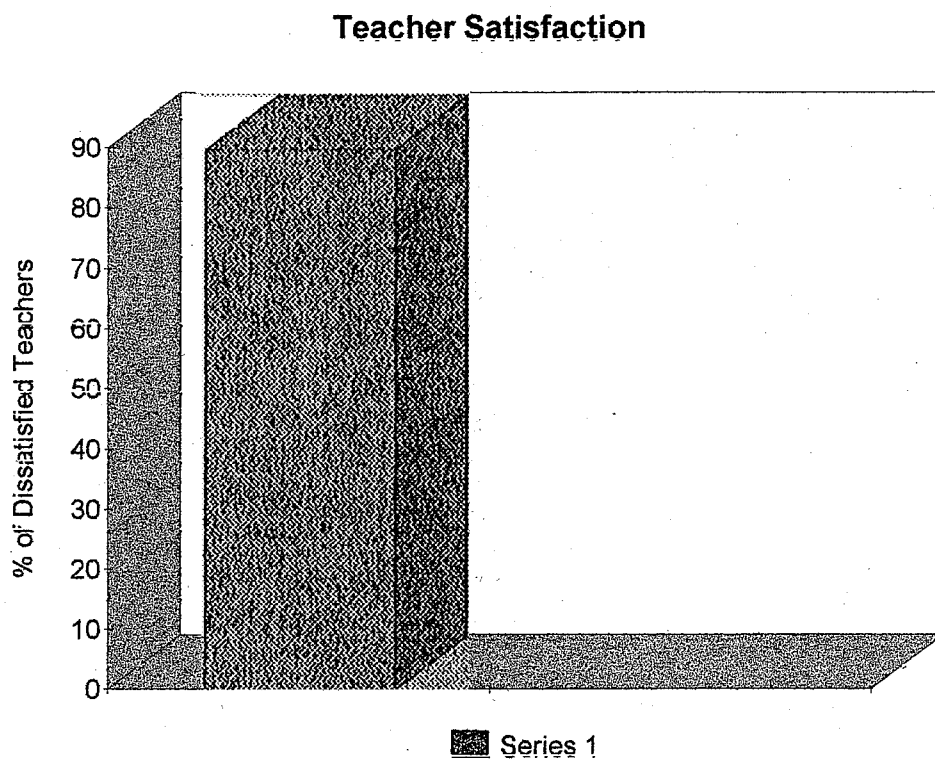
Table - 1

Evaluating The Discipline Policy



They also expressed that students who are removed from class should not be allowed to return to the regular classroom until some type of disciplinary action has been taken; 1% of persons surveyed called for parental contact and stronger consequences. These people strongly feel that parents should be made to take an active part in assisting the school in handling their student's discipline problems. They also feel that the consequences are too lenient and should be stricter; and finally another 1 % of all persons survey said that the discipline policy was fine. Overall, 90% of all persons surveyed were not satisfied with the discipline policy's consequences or the way in which discipline is handled by the Middle School administrators (see Table - 2).

Table - 2



Chapter 5

Conclusions, Implications and Further Study

The major conclusions and implications of this study revealed three major findings. The first finding revealed that the effectiveness of the implementation of the discipline policy was inconclusive because of the way the Middle School's administration and teachers applied consequences on a case to case basis. The second finding revealed the need to develop a discipline policy that uses stricter consequences for the violation of rules and regulations within the school building. The third and final finding revealed that the use of the discipline mediation team should continue because it has proven to be an effective vehicle for reducing unwanted behavior in the classroom.

According to the teacher's survey response to "How should the Middle School of Pleasantville improve the way in which discipline is handle?," it was revealed that teachers of the Middle School believed that the administration, as well as teachers, have not effectively implemented the Middle School's discipline policy. It was expressed that teachers were not uniformly adhering to the policy and as a result, it has created discipline problems for other teachers who adhered to the discipline policy. It was also expressed that administrators were not implementing the consequences of the discipline policy to the fullest extent. During the surveying process, teachers expressed that some administrators were being too lenient in distributing the consequences, and as a result, the same students have been referred to the administration for the same offenses. This results of this study also implied that some Middle School administrators have not been consistent in the administration of the consequences to students. The administrators have been accused of punishing students differently.

It was also expressed that some students are punished according to the discipline policy's consequences and others are not experiencing the consequences warranted by their actions.

A need for stricter consequences was also a response to the above stated survey question. In the beginning of the survey, the intern received valuable data from some of the assistant principals within the Pleasantville School District. The information generally stated that the consequences that most effect middle school-aged students are strict, 'no non-sense' consequences. When the discipline committee developed the Middle School's discipline policy some of these strict consequences were included, however, they were included as second, third & fourth offense consequences and as a result, teachers are calling for stricter consequences. Therefore, in evaluating the discipline policy for the 1999 - 2000 school year, the administrators and the school management team should consider changing the consequences so that they apply to the first or second offenses and not the third and fourth offenses. The discipline policy does consist of strict consequences and the intern does not see a need to make them stricter. The Middle School administration should consider the findings of this study and work towards either changing the teacher's perception or changing the way in which discipline is handled. Administrators should collectively agree to implement the discipline policy in a similar fashion. This will eliminate the accusations and dissatisfaction of the teachers. In-services or extended workshops should be planned for the staff during the summer break based solely on discipline, so that the teachers can also be consistent in adhering to the discipline policy.

The administration should also maintain teacher and parent involvement within the development and implementation of the discipline policy.

Therefore, as stated previously in this chapter, the discipline mediation team should continue to operate within the Middle School. The discipline mediation team has been successful in; handling discipline problems; assisting students in improving their behavior; and assisting teachers with their frustrations of having to constantly refer the same students to the administration. To date, the discipline mediation team has been in effect for two months. Since then, the team has handled 16 referral cases, created 6 student contracts, communicated with nine parents and the team's actions have resulted in the withdrawal of four referrals by the referring teacher. A parent and a teacher have even requested the services of the discipline mediation team. The discipline mediation team's success is measured by the progress of the referred student after meeting with the DMT, and the number of students who are re-referred to the administration after meeting with the team, thus far, that number stands at four. The discipline mediation team is successful because the teachers have an opportunity to communicate with the student, the student's parent and DMT members and express his or her concerns and or frustrations concerning the student's discipline problems. Teachers have thanked the committee and expressed their approval. Also, the student has the opportunity to tell his or her side of the story and see the 'whole picture' of what is and is not acceptable behavior within the school and within the classroom. The students are also offered counseling, a buddy partner for the DMT or from his or her class, a contract and a membership with "The Club" a family school-based service that is offered at Pleasantville High School for students in grades 7th through 12th. The discipline mediation team has been a positive addition to the new Middle School and the discipline policy. This is the first time a team of individuals, (other than school administrators) have made a decision concerning a discipline referral intended for the administration. The discipline mediation team has been the intern's pride and joy.

The intern has been allowed the opportunity to create, share, facilitate and implement a school-wide program. The leadership development gained from implementing the discipline mediation team has also allowed the intern to experience the demands, disappointments and expectations required of a leader. The intern now understands and appreciates the concepts of 'shared vision' and 'delegating authority.' This leadership experience has also taught the intern how to work along with people who agree and disagree with 'the cause.'

Unfortunately, the intern's hands-on involvement was often limited because of the misperceptions of some Middle School faculty members and outside influences. Even though the faculty and staff were aware of the intern's position within the school, the intern could not always be viewed as taking on the duties of an administrator. Often times certain aspects of this research project had to be completed and viewed as an administrative or school project, originating from the administration, instead of a project developed and implemented by the intern. Nonetheless, this research project and the development of the discipline mediation team has served the purposes of; developing a Middle School discipline policy, which in time will become effective; developing a team to assist in the discipline of the school; and evaluating the new discipline policy for the purpose of changing and improving.

Appendix A

Pleasantville Middle School's Discipline Policy

Page 30

"Filmed as Bound"

Middle School Discipline Offenses

Offense	1st Action	2nd Action	3rd Action	4th Action
Cutting Class	Parent Note Teacher/Student Conference Make up work Notify Guidance	Guidance Counseling Parent Conference Make up work Possible Admin. Referral Parent Conference w/ Team	Academic Reinforcement 1-2 days Discipline Mediation Team meeting with parent Guidance Referral	Conference with Principal Saturday Academic Reinforcement Guidance Behavior Contract with Administration
Disruptive Behavior	Parent Note Teacher/Student Conference Guidance Referral	Parent Conference Guidance Referral Teacher Detention	Parent Conference with Discipline Mediation Team Guidance Referral 2-Days Academic Reinforcement	Parent Conference with Administration Behavior Contract Guidance Referral Possible Suspension
Disrespectful Behavior	Parent Notification Teacher / Student Conference - Guidance Possible Suspension	Parent Conference Discipline Mediation Team Possible Administrative Referral - Possible Suspension (1-3 days)	Parent Conference Administrative Referral Behavior Contract Possible 3-day Suspension	Possible Child Study Team Referral - Administrative Referral Suspension 3 - 5 days
Forgery, False Phone Calls	Parent Notification Possible Academic Action Guidance Intervention	Parent Notification Possible Academic Action Guidance Intervention	Parent Notification Possible Academic Action Guidance Intervention	Parent Notification Possible Academic Action Guidance Intervention
Dress Code Violations	Parent Notification Make Arrangement to change clothes District's Policy	Parent Notification Make Arrangement to change clothes District's Policy	Parent Notification Make Arrangement to change clothes District's Policy	Parent Notification Make Arrangement to change clothes District's Policy
Gambling	District's Policy	District's Policy	District's Policy	District's Policy
Failure to Attend Administrative Detention	Administrative Discipline	Administrative Discipline	Administrative Discipline	Administrative Discipline

Smoking use of Tobacco	District Policy	District Policy	District Policy	District Policy	District Policy
Drugs and Alcohol	District Policy	District Policy	District Policy	District Policy	District Policy
Failure to Attend Teacher Academic Reinforcement	Parent Notification Opportunity to make up detention Team notification	Parent conference with teacher Guidance referral Discipline Mediation Team Two T.A.R.'s	Administrative Reference Guidance Conference Administrative Detention	Administrative Referral Suspension (Willful disobedience)	
Leaving School Grounds without permission	Parent Notification Referral to Truancy Officer Administrative Referral for 3 academic reinforcements or suspensions	Parent Conference Truancy Reference Guidance Reference Possible Suspension	Parent Conference Truancy Reference Guidance Reference Possible Suspension	Parent Conference Truancy Reference Guidance Reference Possible Suspension	
Unexcused Lateness to School	Verbal Warning	Parent Notification Team Detention	Guidance Referral Administrative Detention	Saturday Academic Reinforcement Discipline Mediation Team	
False Alarm/Bomb Scare	10 days suspension Police Notification Principal's Hearing Board of Education Hearing	10 days suspension Police Notification Principal's Hearing Expulsion Hearing	10 days suspension Police Notification Principal's Hearing Expulsion Hearing	10 days suspension Police Notification Principal's Hearing Expulsion Hearing	
Late to class	Verbal Warning	Parent Notification Team Detention	Guidance Referral Administrative Detention	Saturday Academic Reinforcement Discipline Mediation Team	

Fireworks	Automatic Suspensions District's Policy District Policy	Automatic Suspensions District's Policy District Policy	Automatic Suspensions District's Policy District Policy	Automatic Suspensions District's Policy District Policy
Weapons				
Electronic Devices (pagers)	Confiscate Item and send item to office. Written Warning to Parents	Police Notification Possible Suspension Parent Conference Administrative Referral	Parent Conference Possible Alternative School Placement Administrative Referral Police Notification Suspension	Parent Conference Possible Alternative School Placement Administrative Referral Police Notification Suspension
Disruptive Devices (boombox, walkman, gigapets, etc.)	Confiscate and make arrangements to return Parent Notification	Parent Conference Confiscate - return in June Administrative Referral	Parent Conference Confiscate - return in June Administrative Referral	Parent Conference Confiscate - return in June Administrative Referral
Sexual Harassment Physical & Verbal	Parent Conference with Guidance, Administrative & Affirmative Action Officer Referral	Parent Conference with Principal & Team Possible Suspension Appropriate Referral	Principal's Hearing Guidance Referral Possible Suspension	Principal's Hearing Guidance Referral Possible Suspension
Sexual Assault	Police Notification Parent Notification Suspension & Appropriate Referral	Police Notification Parent Notification Suspension & Appropriate Referral	Police Notification Parent Notification Suspension & Appropriate Referral	Police Notification Parent Notification Suspension & Appropriate Referral
Stealing (Minor)	Teacher notifies Parent Teacher Academic Reinforcement	Parent Conference with Teacher Two T.A.R. Guidance Referral	Guidance Referral	Guidance Referral Discipline Mediation Team
Stealing (Major)	Parent Conference Administrative Referral Possible Police Notification Guidance Referral	Parent Conference Guidance Referral	Referral to Child Study Team Parent Notification Suspension (1-5 days)	Principal's Hearing Possible Referral to an Alternative Program Police Notification

	Suspension (1-5 days)				Suspension
Damage to Property (Minor)	Restitution Parent Notification Teacher Detention	Restitution Parent Notification Teacher Detention Parent Teacher Conference	Restitution Parent Notification Teacher Detention Parent Teacher Conference	Restitution Parent Notification Teacher Detention Parent Teacher Conference	Community Service (with Parent Permission) 1 to 20 hours
Damage to Property (Major) Graffiti / Vandalism	Restitution Possible Police Involvement Parent Conference Possible Suspension	Restitution Possible Police Involvement Parent Conference Possible Suspension	Restitution Possible Police Involvement Parent Conference Possible Suspension	Restitution Possible Police Involvement Parent Conference Possible Suspension	Restitution Possible Police Involvement Parent Conference Possible Suspension
Trespassing	Police Notification Possible Charges Filed Principal's Hearing	Police Notification Possible Charges Filed Principal's Hearing	Police Notification Possible Charges Filed Principal's Hearing	Police Notification Possible Charges Filed Principal's Hearing	Police Notification Possible Charges Filed Principal's Hearing
Caught in an Unauthorized Area	Teacher Detention Parent Notification Possible Administrative Intervention	Teacher Detentions - Two	Teacher Detentions - Two	Administrative Detention	Saturday Academic Reinforcement
Excessive Use of Profanity	Student Teacher Conference	Possible Teacher Detention Parent Notification	Possible Teacher Detention Parent Notification	Guidance Referral Teacher Detentions - Two Parent Conference	Discipline Mediation Team Subject to Administrative Discretion
Gross Disrespect	Parent Conference Possible 1-3 days Suspension	Guidance Referral - Anger Management Suspension	Guidance Referral - Anger Management Suspension	Child Study Team Referral Suspension	Possible Alternative Placement Suspension
Sale of or distribution of Drugs or Substances	District's Policy	District's Policy	District's Policy	District's Policy	District's Policy

Fighting	Saturday Academic Reinforcement - 1 to 5 days Suspension Peer Mediation Guidance Referral	Discipline Mediation Team Parent Conference 3-5 Days Suspension Action Plan	3-5 days Suspension Anger Management Guidance Referral Parent Conference CST / Possible Alternative Program	3-5 days Suspension Anger Management Guidance Referral Parent Conference CST / Possible Alternative Program

Appendix B
Discipline Mediation Team Guidelines



IMPORTANT

*Discipline Project
For the
Middle School of
Pleasantville*

*Dr. Carpenter, Principal
Mr. Stern, Vice-Principal
Mr. Mora, Vice-Principal*

*Information Compiled by
Ms. R. Moore-Robinson, Intern*



Table of Contents

Discipline Mediation Team
written and constructed by R. Moore-Robinson

Discipline Mediation Team

Discipline Concerns & Solutions
Teacher In-service respondents
September 3, 1998

Proposed Discipline Model for The Middle School
Information compiled by R. Moore-Robinson

Middle School Discipline Policy
Constructed by the Middle School Discipline
Committee
Dr. Carpenter and Mr. Stern



Internship Project: Middle School Discipline
Intern: Robin Moore-Robinson

Discipline Mediation Team
Guidelines

The Discipline Mediation Team is a proposed discipline team which will consist of middle school educators, parents & community members, and students. The purpose of this committee is to attempt to resolve specified discipline matters before these matters are referred to the middle school administration for administrative actions. The Discipline Mediation Team will meet on a weekly basis to discuss conflict resolutions, improving the school's discipline actions, and strategies. However, there may be times when the committee must meet twice a week. There will be approximately Seventeen members on the team. The following is a break down of the team;

The intern
Eight middle school educators (2- 5th & 6th grade / 2 - 7th & 8th grade)
Two guidance counselors
Six parents / community members

The referred student, with the discipline problem, must attend the discipline meeting involving his or her case and must be accompanied by his or her parent or guardian. When a discipline case is referred to the Discipline Mediation Team, the team will meet in sub-teams to resolve the matter.

Fifth & Seventh Grade Review Team	Fifth & Seventh Grade Guidance Counselor Fifth & Seventh Grade Teachers Three parents / community members The intern (will alternate between the review teams)
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Sixth & Eighth Grade Review Team	Sixth & Eight Grade Guidance Counselor Sixth & Eight Grade Teachers Three parents / community members The intern (will alternate between the review teams)
-------------------------------------	---

An appointed person from the Discipline Mediation Team will contact the vice-principal's office, on a weekly basis, to determine if the committee's services are needed. The following discipline matters will be referred to the Discipline Mediation Team:

Student Conflicts (Physical Aggression) - *second offense*
Unexcused Lateness to school and or class - *forth offense*
Cutting Class - *third offense*

Excessive use of profanity - *forth offense*
Stealing (minor) - *forth offense*

The following are some remedies that can be offered by the Discipline Mediation Team in attempts to resolve discipline matters.

Personal Assessment & Goal Setting Progress Chart
Student Contracts
Referral to The School Based Services
Assignment of a Buddy Partner
Tutorial
Other suggested remedies.

The members of the Discipline Mediation Team will be selected once The Teacher and Parent/Community Surveys have been issued, collected and reviewed. The Discipline Mediation Team will be selected by the Pleasantville Middle School Principal, Dr. Doris Carpenter, the Vice-Principal, Mr. Stern and the intern, Ms. Robin Moore-Robinson.

**Middle School
of
Pleasantville**

Discipline Mediation Team

Discipline Mediation Teams

Sub-team #1 - Grades 5th & 7th

Sheila Williamson
Jean Hovey
Louise Garrison
Michelle Brock
Ethel Seymore

Donielle Graves (parent)
Stephanie White (parent)
Nicole Fraizer (parent)

Sub-team #2 - Grades 6th & 8th

Robin Moore-Robinson
Renee' Gensamer
Doris Kearney
Leni Benjamin
Jeanette Browne
Gerald Fowlkes

Rev. John Martin, Jr. (parent)
Morreen Johnson (parent)

Discipline Mediation Meetings

Meetings for the entire committee will be held at the beginning of each month for the purpose of sign ups for resolution meetings and brief reports from each discipline mediation sub-team.

Resolution Meetings

There must be at least 3 Discipline Mediation Team Members present at a resolution meeting. The child in question, his or her parent, and or any other parties involved may be present at the resolution meetings. Administrators can also attend these meetings.

Meeting Dates

Members of the Discipline Mediation Team are asked to sign up for at least 1 morning and 1 afternoon resolution meeting, (working parents can sign up for at least 2 afternoon meetings).

Meeting days;	Wednesdays -	8:00 a.m. to 8:20 p.m.
	1st Mondays -	2:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.
	2nd - 4th Mondays-	2:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Discipline Mediation Team of The Middle School

Middle School of Pleasantville
801 Mill Road
Pleasantville, NJ 08232

Dr. Carpenter, Principal
Mr. Ben Mora & Mr. Jeff Stern, Assistant Principals
Ms. Robin Moore-Robinson, DMT Coordinator

Date:

Dear Parent(s) or Guardian(s);

Your child _____ has been referred to the assistant principal for disciplinary action. On _____, at _____ the Discipline Mediation Team will be reviewing the discipline referral. The team requests that you and your child attend this meeting, along with the referring teacher or staff member, so that the discipline problem can be resolved.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Administrators, Educators, Parents & Students
Together we can combat the problems which
may arise and disrupt the process of
Education!



Discipline Mediation Team

Middle School of Pleasantville ~ 801 Mill Road ~ Pleasantville, NJ 08232
Phone (609) 383-6855 ~ Ext. 6200

Dear _____;

The Discipline Mediation Team of The Middle School of Pleasantville request your presence at the resolution meeting for _____ on _____ in The Assistance Principal's office, _____. The meeting will begin promptly at _____. Thank you.

Sincerely,

DMT Sub-Team _____

*Administrators, Educators, Parents & Students
Together we can combat the problems which may
arise and disrupt the process of Education!*

Discipline Mediation Teams' referred cases
Sub-Team_____ **Week of**_____

No More than four referrals per week

Name	Grade	Parent Contacted?	Teacher Contacted?	Offense	Date Referred

Middle School of Pleasantville
Discipline Mediation Team - Resolution Meeting

Sub-Team _____ Date _____

DMT members _____

Student referred _____

Student present? _____ Parent present _____ Teacher present _____

Resolution

_____ Student contract & Goal Setting progress chart

_____ Counselling by school counselor or CST

_____ Referral to "The Club" School-Based Services (must be 13 years or older
student must be given an application and parent must consent)

_____ Assignment of Buddy Partner

Comments

This document is confidential. A copy will go to the parent, assistant principal and place in the students file.

*Middle School of Pleasantville
Discipline Mediation Team
Sign-ups for Resolution Meetings*

Month _____

1st Wednesday 8:00 a.m.	2nd Wednesday 8:00 a.m.	3rd Wednesday 8:00 a.m.	4th Wednesday 8:00 a.m.	5th Wednesday 8:00 a.m.
1st Monday 2:00	2nd Monday 2:30pm	3rd Monday 2:30 p.m.	4th Monday 2:30 p.m.	

Discipline Mediation Summary Sheet

Date _____

Reviewed by Sub-team # _____

Referrals reviewed for grades _____

Number of referrals reviewed _____

Name(s)

Results

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

DMT Student Contract

I _____ hereby agree to;

_____ work towards changing my behavior in class so that I can become an outstanding student, academically and socially.

_____ follow the school rules and classroom rules so that I can become a self-disciplined student.

_____ pay attention in class, ignore others who are not paying attention, so that I will not disrupt class.

_____ practice being a model student by listening in class, participating, completing assignments and working cooperatively with others.

_____ communicate with my teacher or; ask to speak with a guidance counselor, a peer mediation advisor or a member of the Discipline Mediation Team if and when I feel as though I need to work out a problem or if I feel as though I really cannot control my behavior.

_____ ask permission, from my teacher, to speak with an assistant principal Lt. Kelly, or a security officer if someone is harassing me or if I feel the need to act out violently towards another person in school.

_____ make an appointment to see my teachers after school if I am having problems learning or need additional help.

_____ Other:

This student contract is binding. The DMT will follow-up to see if your conduct has improved and if you have been working towards the goal(s).

If you are referred to an assistant principal for any misconduct, you will not get a second chance and will have to face the punishment which is given by them.

Student's Signature _____ Date _____

(A copy will be mailed home and a copy will be attached to the referral and placed in student's

Appendix C
Middle School Discipline Model

Internship Project: Middle School Project
Intern : Robin Moore-Robinson
Theme: Administrators, Educators, & Parents/Community Working Together to
Ensure Success!

Designing a Middle School Discipline Model Suitable
For Pleasantville's Middle School
Ideas taken From: Cooperative Discipline Model
by Linda Albert, Ph.d

Cooperative Discipline is built on the premise that all students have the potential for moving toward more positive choices of behavior and for becoming responsible citizens of the school community.

"Everyone wins when Cooperative Discipline is implemented ~ Educators, Students & Parents!"

I. Styles of Classroom Management

The Cooperative Discipline Model points out three types of classroom management styles. Educators should use a classroom management style that will be effective and cooperative. The following are the three styles of classroom management;

The Hands-Off Style
The Hands-On Style
The Hands-Joined Style

The Hands-Off Style is a style that seems to have disappeared from the educational scene. The hands-off style of classroom management suggested a "free range" classroom without clear boundaries and effective teacher intervention.

The Hands-On Style is often used when students misbehave and the class seems to be getting out of control. This style seems to demand obedience from students when teaching is disrupted with chaos or other types of disruptions. The hands-on style influences students to make poor choices.

The Hands-Joined Style - research and experience have shown that when students are respectfully treated as important decision-makers who have the right to make choices and participate in the design of their education, they behave more cooperatively and achieve more academically. The hands-joined style of classroom management is site-based decision making at the classroom level.

"Teachers have Enormous power in influencing student's behavior."

"Teachers have Enormous power in influencing student's behavior."

II. Teacher Responses to Misbehavior

We, teachers, cannot control the students and force them to behave in certain ways. Teachers can control themselves and their actions. It's important to remain unimpressed and adopt a businesslike attitude when faced with poor behavior choices. Our relaxed body language and calm, yet firm, tone of voice convey to students that we are in charge of ourselves and of the situation.

III. The Key: Quality of Teacher-Student Interaction

Teacher-student interaction is a two-way street: The students relate to us, and we relate to them. When students choose to relate to us through misbehavior we have to be able to recognize the purpose or the goal, of the misbehavior and know how to respond both immediately and in the long term.

IV. The four Goals of Misbehavior

Attention
Power
Revenge
Avoidance-of-failure

Attention Some students choose misbehavior to get extra attention.

Power Some students misbehave in a quest for power.

Revenge Some students want to lash out to get even for real or imagined hurts.

Avoid-of-Failure Some students want to avoid repeated failure.

V. Interventions

Attention
Strategy 1: Minimize Attention
Refuse to respond
Give "The Eye"
Stand close by
Use name dropping

Strategy 2: Clarify Desired Behavior
Use "Target-Stop-Do"

Strategy 3: Legitimize the Behavior
Create a lesson from the misbehavior

Strategy 4: Do the Unexpected
Turn off the lights
Play a musical sound
Lower your voice
Change your voice
Use One-Liners

Strategy 5: Distract the Student
Ask a direct question
Ask a favor
Give choices

Strategy 6: Notice Appropriate Behavior
Use proximity praise
Use compliance praise
Make recordings

Strategy 7: Move the Student
Change the student's seat
Use a thinking chair

Power seeking or Revenge

The Three Stages of a Classroom Volcano

The Rumbling Stage: Make a graceful exit
Acknowledge student's power
Remove the audience
Use a fogging technique
Agree with the student
Change the subject
Dodge irrelevant issues
Deliver a closing statement
Call the student's bluff
Take a teacher time-out

The Eruption Stage: Use Time-Out
Time-Out in the classroom
Time-Out in another classroom
Time-Out in the office

The Resolution Stage - Select Consequences that are:

Related to the misbehavior
Reasonable - equal in proportion and intensity to the misbehavior.
Respectful - stated and carried out in a way that preserves a student's self-esteem and doesn't discourage belonging through positive behavior.
Reliably Enforced Consequences

Avoidance-of-Failure

The First Five Strategies

Strategy 1: Modify Instructional Methods
Strategy 2: Provide Tutoring
Strategy 3: Encourage Positive Self-Talk
Strategy 4: Reframe the "I Can't" Refrain
Strategy 5: Teach Procedures for Becoming "Unstuck"

Additional Strategies

Make mistakes okay
Build confidence
Focus on past success
Make learning tangible
Recognize achievement

Principles of Prevention

Attention

Catch them being good
Teach them to ask for attention

Power-seeking

- Allow voice and choice
- Grant legitimate power
- Delegate responsibility

Revenge

- Build caring relationships
- Teach appropriate expression of feelings

Avoidance of Failure

- Encourage an "I can" belief
- Foster friendships

**Middle School Discipline Internship Project
School-wide Monthly Themes
Dr. Doris Carpenter, Principal
Mr. Jeff Stern, Principal
Ms. R. Moore-Robinson, Intern**

**Focus: Educators, Students & Parents working together to develop
a relationship based on:**

Cooperation, Empowerment, & Openness

September's Theme: Discovering yourself and others through cooperative involvement!

October's Theme: Together We Can Build Relationships of Belongingness.

November's Theme: Encouragement, Motivation and Success for All!

December's Theme: Fostering a "Can Do" Attitude.

January's Theme: Positive Talk Builds Self-Esteem and Tears Down Fear.

February's Theme: A Commitment to responsibility is a recipe for success.

March's Theme: Challenges of Today Leads to Your Success for Tomorrow!

April's Theme: Enlightened, Energized and Exceeding Expectations!

May's Theme: Your Life is Like a Movie, You Direct It and Star in It! (Based upon your choices)

June's Theme: Conquering The Field of Negative Influences

Appendix D
Research Instruments

Internship Project: Middle School Discipline
Intern: Robin Moore-Robinson
Interview Questions

Interviewee:

Questions

1. How long have you been an assistant principal?
2. Which school were or are you an assistant principal?
3. Explain the population type of the school and its climate.
4. What type of discipline problems were most frequent amongst middle school-aged children?
5. How were these discipline problems dealt with?
6. What was the teacher's role in handling these discipline problems?
7. Which discipline consequence was the most effective? Why?
 - In-school suspension
 - Out-of-school suspension
 - Administrative Detention
 - Parent Conference
 - Guidance Intervention
 - Exclusion
8. As an assistant principal, how much of your time is spent handling discipline problems?
9. What type of responses have you received from parents once they have been notified that their child has been disciplined for whatever reason?
10. Do you find that classified students are most often disciplined that students who are not classified?
11. Do you think referring a child to the Child Study Team may be a positive solution or a 'scape goat' reaction?

Middle School Discipline: In Need of Solutions
Internship Project for the
Middle School of Pleasantville
Robin Moore-Robinson, Intern

Discipline Concerns and Solutions of
Pleasantville Middle School Educators

During a teacher in-service on September 3, 1998, Pleasantville Middle School Educators were ask to work in small groups and list their discipline concerns and possible solutions.

Discipline Concerns

1. Consistency in implementing the discipline code.
2. Classroom disruption
3. Respecting elders and inappropriate responses
4. Consistent managed behavior when students are in transition
5. School conflicts
6. Student safety to and from school.
7. Children causing disruptions
8. Violence because of the inability to get along with one another
9. Disrespectful and aggressive behavior toward each other, parents and those in authority.

Solutions

1. Commit to communicate and work closely with the students, the team members, parents and administration in supporting and enforcing the rules and regulations.
2. Implement the discipline policy in a loving, caring and consistent manner.
3. Hold open forums or rap sessions to help understand and possibly prevent conflicts.
4. Talk with students to find out what problems they are faced with walking to and from school, then take their concerns to administrators.
5. Hold discussions on 'respect for others' with the students
6. Have students involved in selecting the appropriate behavior when in the classroom.

7. Allow students to be a part of the planning stages of the classroom activities.
8. Lay out teacher's goals and expectations.
9. Engage student input to create a safe learning classroom environment plan.
10. Model calmness and appropriate behavior through conversation and plan day to day to prevent disruptions.
11. We can contact parents, the child and teachers to brainstorm positive options.
12. Set up teacher / staff mentoring programs.

Internship Project: Middle School Involvement
Intern: Robin Moore-Robinson
Dr. Doris Carpenter, Principal
Mr. Jeff Stern, Vice-Principal

Administrators, Educators & Parents / Community Working Together to Ensure Success!

Teacher Involvement Questionnaire

Please answer the following questions.

1. Would you like to become an active member of the Middle School's Parent-Teacher-Student Organization (PTSO)? Yes / No If no, please state why? _____

2. Were you ever involved in a Parent-Teacher-Organization? Yes / No

3. How can we, the Middle School Staff, develop and maintain good communications between our parents and community members? (Select as many choices as you wish)

Letters and Flyers

Telephone calls

School Hot Line

Newsletter in the Pride Magazine

Local advertisement in the Community Section of the Press

Church Announcements

Other _____

4. Would you be willing to serve any on the following committees? (Select your choices)

Discipline Mediation Team (Active part of the discipline committee)

Public Relations

Special Events

Please return your questionnaire to Ms. R. Moore-Robinson, A104 or to office suite on your floor. Your participation is greatly appreciated!

Middle School of Pleasantville
Dr. Doris Carpenter, Principal
Mr. Jeff Stern, Vice-Principal
Ms. R. Moore-Robinson, Intern

Internship Project;
Parent / Community Involvement Survey

Please answer the following questions

1. Have you signed up to become an active member of the Middle School's Parent-Teacher- Student Organization (PTSO)? Yes / No If no, please state why. _____

2. Were you ever involved in a Parent-Teacher-Organization? Yes / No.

3. Do you have; a child, children, grandchild, grandchildren, niece(s), nephew(s), foster child or children, stepchild or stepchildren, (circle one) enrolled in the Discovery Middle School of Pleasantville or in any of Pleasantville's public schools? Yes / No. If yes, please state the name of the school. _____

4. How can the Middle School Staff better communicate with parents and community members? (Circle as many Choices as you wish)

Letters and Flyers

Telephone calls

Newsletter in the Pride

Local advertisement in the Community Section of the Press

Church Announcements

5. Would you be willing to volunteer to be a member of one of the following special Parent/Community Teams? Yes / No (circle your choice)

Discipline Mediation Team

Public Relations Team / Parent's Against Negative Press

Special Events / Extra Curricular Team

PTSO Fundraiser Team

Athletic Support Team

6. What time & day would you be available to attend a special teams meeting?

(Special teams will be required to meet on a monthly basis, with the exception of the

Discipline Mediation Team. The meetings will be announced).

Day: Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday

Time: 8:00 a.m. 2:30 p.m. 3:00 p.m.

7. Please state any comments below.

Thank you for your time and participation!!! Please return surveys to the office.

Name _____

Discipline Survey
In person interview Survey

Persons interviewed _____

Number of persons interviewed _____

Questions

How should the Middle School of Pleasantville improve the way in which discipline is handle?

Responses

Biographical Data

Name	Robin L. Moore-Robinson
High School	Pleasantville High School Pleasantville, NJ
Undergraduate	Bachelors of Arts Business Administration Richard Stockton College of New Jersey Pomona, NJ
	Teaching Certification Glassboro State College Glassboro, NJ
Graduate	Master of Arts School Administration Rowan University Glassboro, NJ
Present Occupation	Special Education Educator Middle School of Pleasantville Pleasantville, NJ