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AN INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AT CHEROKEE HIGH SCHOOL IN MARLTON, NEW JERSEY

by Jeffrey S. Wilson

A Masters Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment for the requirements of the Master of Arts Degree in The Graduate School of Rowan University

May, 1998

Approved by

Theodore Johnson Ed. D.

Date Approved Ogil 17, 199%

Abstract

Jeffrey S. Wilson

An Administrative Internship served at Cherokee High School in Marlton, New Jersey, 1997-1998.
University Mentor:
Dr. Theodore Johnson Practicum and Seminar in Administration and Supervision I and II.

The purpose of this study was to implement an in-school suspension program to change students' attitudes and provide alternatives to negative behavior. This was achieved by obtaining information from other schools about their ISS programs. It was then determined what would constitute an effective program at Cherokee. Meetings were held with every department to explain how the program would operate and the teachers' role for the success of the program. The various elements of ISS were explained. They included students being in the safe environment of the school, students not missing school work, not providing for a mini-vacation, and follow-up guidance support for students serving an ISS.

The intern gathered and analyzed the suspension statistics from this year and compared them to last year. It was shown that the overall number of suspensions had decreased. Continued monitoring and modification of the

program will continue. During the 1998-1999 school year, Cherokee's sister schools, Lenape and Shawnee, may adopt a similar program based on the success of this one.

At the conclusion of this study, the ISS program produced a lower number of suspensions than last year and provided a safe environment where students continued their studies.

Mini-Abstract

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The intern would like to give special thanks to:

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My brother, Bruce, for encouraging and helping me out in many ways over the years with this program.

Mr. Ken Denn, assistant principal at Cherokee High School, for serving as my mentor and patiently assisting me with my internship.

Mrs. Pat Sampson, for helping me with my office responsibilities.

Mr. Donald Stecher, principal at Cherokee High School, for giving me the opportunity to have this meaningful experience.

Dr. Theodore Johnson, my college mentor, for being a guiding and encouraging force throughout this internship.

My children, Jeff and Lauren, for putting up with mom and dad during the last six years.

My wife, Kathy, for being my partner in this internship and to be able to lean on for support.

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Chapter 1

Introduction: Focus of the study

Product Outcome Statement

Cherokee High School, which is located in Evesham Township, is the setting for this internship. The thesis problem chosen is Cherokee's policy dealing with suspension.

Up to now, Cherokee has relied solely on one type of suspension which removes the student from classes or the school environment and puts that student in a position of, perhaps, not being supervised. This situation may lead to that student getting into further trouble if his parents are not at home leaving said student in an unsupervised position. Along with this dilemma, another glaring problem is the lack of the educational process taking place. Students that are out of school are missing instruction, falling behind and may never fully recover from their absence. If a student is repeatedly suspended, a greater demand is being placed on the teachers in attempting to get him caught up.

Cherokee has, for several years, offered an alternative to suspension out of school. SWAP, which stands for Saturday Work Alternative Program, involves students who might otherwise be suspended out of school. These students, with parental approval, are given the opportunity to do various jobs around the school grounds and inside the property during Saturday mornings. These students, who were not suspended for major infractions, such as being

involved with drugs, are under the guidance of a paid staff member. The concept of SWAP is one of punishment and inconvenience. The use of these methods, however, is debatable. Some view this as an opportunity for the students to socialize. Also, some parents, for different reasons, do not sign for their son or daughter to participate in SWAP. This, again, leaves these high school aged students unsupervised.

This situation has led to the most recent "experiment" in dealing with students that are to be suspended. An in-school suspension program is being offered for the first time at Cherokee High School.

Current practice dictates that students who break the rules which are clearly laid out are "punished" by giving them from 1 to 10 days off from school. These students are missing valuable lessons and work within the classroom. A much lesser number have to give up a Saturday and work around the school but often the students do not seem to mind this. Therefore, this new approach of keeping students in the building, supervised, and giving them their normal classwork while still separating them from the mainstream of the school is being tried. This intern will help in implementing and monitoring the inschool suspension program.

Purpose of the study

The overall intent of this program is to keep students in a safe environment and not have them miss any work while, at the same time, removing them from the environment in which they caused the problem. This program also allows them the opportunity to discuss their behavior while being offered positive alternatives and suggestions.

More specifically, several questions will need to be answered. Perhaps the two most important questions will be; does this program reduce the number of students out of the school environment and is this program reducing the number of suspended students? Dove tailing another question with these two, one must ask, are the students breaking the rules less frequently because of the new policy?

From a humanitarian point of view, this intern hopes that another positive result comes out of this new policy. If a suspended student is sitting at home, watching television or sleeping, he is getting no positive communication from anyone, particularly if his parents are at work or do not care enough to take the time to counsel him. Children, event the roughest and toughest, desperately seek individuals that show compassion and concern and are supportive. If suspended students are in school, there is at least the possibility for this encouragement and counseling to take place. To put it simply, in-school suspension should not be viewed solely as punishment but an opportunity to give counsel and offer suggestions.

This intern will help implement and monitor this in-school suspension program for students in 9th through 12th grade in order to change student's attitudes, build self-esteem and give them alternatives to negative behavior.

Definitions

For the purpose of this study, the terms below will be used as follows:

In-school suspension- A form of discipline which removes the student from the regular school environment and places him in a self-contained classroom. Here the student will be monitored by a staff member and will be given

assignments from the regular teachers which are obtained the morning of the suspension. Counseling will be given by either a child study team member or a member of the Guidance department. Students are required to bring in their own lunch.

ISS- An abbreviation for in-school suspension.

Out of school suspension- The most common type of suspension that removes a student from the school environment completely. The student has no access to school work and is expected to make up any work missed. Typically, this student is unsupervised and could get into trouble at home or on the streets.

<u>SWAP</u>- Saturday Work Alternative Program. With parental approval, a suspended student, in selected situations, may opt to give up a Saturday morning to work around the school under the supervision of a paid staff member. This would take the place of either the ISS or the out of school suspension.

<u>Limitations of the study</u>

Cherokee High School is the pilot school within the district for the inschool suspension program. The desired goal is that it will have a positive impact on the number of suspended students and will create a better alternative to kids roaming the streets. If this occurs, perhaps Shawnee and Lenape High Schools will also adopt this program.

Marlton is a working, middle class community more closely on par with Lenape than Shawnee from a socio-economic point of view. Lenape draws it's students from Medford, Southampton and Mt. Laurel while Shawnee draws from Medford, Medford Lakes, Tabernacle, Shamong and Indian Mills. This fact may impact on whether or not results, either positive or negative, are the same as in Cherokee.

Moving beyond the district, results certainly should not be generalized with schools that are located in an urban setting as well as schools that are more rural.

A limitation of this study would also involve the number of students in the program. Cherokee is a group four school and, thus, will probably have more students in ISS than a smaller school. Smaller numbers in the ISS classroom may be advantageous to more one on one positive communication. This may result in fewer repeat offenders.

Perhaps the only way a conclusion could be drawn at the end of the first year of ISS would be if the number of suspendable students has dramatically increased or decreased from the previous year as a result of implementing ISS. If such a dramatic change in the number of suspendable students does occur, perhaps then a conclusion could be drawn that similar results might occur in other schools, particularly those that are very much the same as Cherokee.

Setting of the study (Community)

The setting of this study is Cherokee High School. Cherokee is one of three high schools in the Lenape Regional District. It is located in Evesham Township which is 308 years old. The first families to settle here were Quakers. They farmed in the northern part of the township where they used the marl or green soil to fertilize the land. Marlton, which is the center of Evesham Township, derived it's name from the green soil known as marl.

The village of Marlton was established in the 19th century, growing out of little villages on area plantations. The first general store opened in 1758. As the years passed, the village grew to include an inn, a post office, two churches, a one room schoolhouse, a doctor's office, a pharmacy, a blacksmith's shop and 30 new residences.

A gentleman by the name of Edward Byllinge played a key role in the history of Evesham Township. He purchased the northern half of New Jersey in 1674 from Sir George Carteret. Mr. Byllinge sold 1000 acres to the Society of Friends, Quakers, who had fled England to obtain religious freedom. Thomas Evans was one of them. Evans was aware that the Indians owned this land and therefore signed an agreement with King Himolin. King Himolin agreed to give up his tribe's land and they left in 1801 (Baals, 1988).

The Hewlings and Ballinger families are two of the first families on record to live in the township of Evesham. They came in 1684.

Today, Evesham Township is about 30 square miles in size with about 41,000 people living there. Although it seems that Evesham is a suburban community that is mostly developed, about 70% of the area is still agricultural or woodlands. While additional growth of Evesham Township is foreseen, federal laws along with the township's plan will make sure that the rural appearance remains intact even when the land is developed. Less than 83% of the area will be developed commercially in order to maintain the residential nature of Evesham Township.

The local government of Evesham Township is made up of 5 council members that are elected by the voters. One of these council members is selected as mayor. There is also a township manager. While members of council are responsible for management in the township, it is the local school

board that is responsible for the township's five elementary schools and two middle schools. St. Joan of Arc is a parochial school in the township.

Presently, there is a lot of new construction occurring in Evesham. There has been an increase of 25% in new jobs during the last decade. The number of homes during this time has nearly doubled. It has been projected that the growth cycle should continue into the 21st century. With this growth, there is currently a proposal by the Lenape Regional District to build a 4th high school in Shamong as well as a 9th and 10th grade building on the site of Cherokee High School. Voters will decide whether or not to approve a 67 million dollar bond referendum on December 9th, 1997 for these projects.

Evesham Township is made up of mostly white, middle class families that comprise both white and blue collar workers. While Evesham is mainly Caucasian, there has recently been an increase in the number of other ethnic groups moving in.

Education has been important to the members of the community and over 50% of the parents have completed some form of education beyond high school.

Setting of the study (Education)

Cherokee High School is the newest of the three high schools in the Lenape District, opening it's doors in 1975. The oldest sister school is Lenape which opened in 1955. Shawnee came next in 1967. Cherokee is unique from the other two schools because she serves only one community, Evesham Township.

Cherokee sits on a 71 acre tract of land at Tomlinson Mill and Willow Bend

Roads (Capella, 1995). With the building of Cherokee, the Lenape Regional District has become the largest of the 44 school districts in Burlington County.

With the continued growth in the district, it was clear by 1990 that additions would be needed. A referendum was passed for the building of 25 classrooms, 2 gymnasiums, additional locker room facilities, storage areas, two auxiliary cafeterias for Cherokee and Shawnee, a media center, a music wing and a weight room (Capella, 1995)

Additionally, space was obtained at Lenape High School when the District offices were moved to the new facility in Shamong in 1996. As of the fall of 1997, a major expansion is being proposed and a 67 million dollar referendum will be voted on which will provide for a 4th high school to be built in Shamong as well as a 9th and 10th grade school to be connected to Cherokee. Of the 67 million dollars, 21 million will be funded by the state.

With the projected enrollment for the district to be 6694 regular and 303 special education students by the year 2000, the need for additional space is obvious. The addition of this 4th high school would allow Lenape High School to be strictly for the Mt. Laurel area, Shawnee High School to be for the Medford area, Cherokee for the Evesham area and the new high school to be for the Shamong, Tabernacle, Indian Mills and Southampton areas.

Perhaps the most influential shaper of the Lenape school district was Mr. Kiki Konstantinos. Mr. Konstantinos served as the Superintendent of schools from 1963 to 1993. His list of honors and service is nearly endless. He was a member of the New Jersey Association of School Administrators Executive Committee, a member of the Board of Trustees for the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, chaired several Middle States

Evaluation Teams, served on the New Jersey Department of Higher Education and the New Jersey Department of Education Task Force on High School Standards for Graduation. His awards include the NJASA Distinguished Service Award, the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts 1990 School Administrator's Award and, in 1992, was named New Jersey Superintendent of the Year. Through his guidance, dedication and humanitarian approach, the development of the three high schools has been successful.

Our current Superintendent is Dr. Daniel Hicks who took over for Mr. Konstantinos in 1993. Formerly the Superintendent of Eastern Regional High School, Dr. Hicks has fine-tuned the district and will lead it into the 21st century using his creativity and vision of what a successful district should be.

Cherokee was under the leadership of William Foltz, the first principal, from 1975 to 1983. After his retirement, Donald Stecher took over and is the current principal. His mission is to uphold the high level of education that Cherokee provides as well as continuing his outstanding achievements in the areas of student welfare and service to the community. Some of Mr. Stecher's achievements include the institution of various advanced placement courses, as well as providing for the SERC program which utilizes satellite technology to teach students various languages and Micro/Macro Economics.

Mr. Stecher is assisted by four vice-principals as well as eight department supervisors. The departments include Social Studies, English/Foreign Language, Mathematics/Science, Physical Education, Media Services, Guidance, Business/Vocational Education and Special Education.

There are 148 certified and 44 non-certificated personnel at Cherokee. This includes 8 guidance and 2 media specialist individuals. Over one third of the

staff has furthered their education by taking graduate courses and receiving their masters degrees. Teacher's salaries range from \$31,021 for a first year teacher to \$60,534 for a 22 year teacher with a masters degree (Lenape Regional High School District, 1997)

The current enrollment of students is 1692. Approximately 89.5% of those students are white, 4.6% are black, 1.1% are Hispanic and 4.2% are Asian/Pacific Islander (Martin, 1997). Student attendance is very good with a daily rate of 94.1% (State Report Card, 1996). Over one third of the students at Cherokee participate in a sport and another 25% are involved in the performing arts.

Cherokee allows for 5 levels of instruction. These are honors, college prep, general, remedial and special education. The dropout rate is low and 53.5% of the class goes on to attend a 4 year college and 29.5% attend a 2 year college (Capella, 1995).

Plenty of support services exist at Cherokee. Title I, also known as Chapter I, serves the students who barely passed the Early Warning Test. While Cherokee no longer receives any Title I money, the program still exists and is funded by the district.

Cherokee also offers a Child Study Team and speech services. An ESL (English as a Second Language) teacher has also been employed by Cherokee since the 1980's. Guidance counselors as well as guidance groups exist to help students that are dysfunctional and have problems. The CORE Team is also available to help students with major problems that are not academic in nature. To help students who do have academic problems, there is the Pupil Assistance Committee. In addition to the Pupil Assistance Committee, a study skills center is open 3 periods a day where PAC students can obtain

tutoring and help with their study skills.

Cherokee provides opportunities for all of it's students and does its best to educate soundly and fairly. The district as a whole, has an outstanding reputation. I am proud to be a part of the Lenape District not only as an employed teacher, but also as a member of the community in which I have chosen to raise my own family.

Importance of the study

Perhaps the most important reason for conducting this study is to determine if there is a more effective way to deal with suspendable students other than to remove them from the school. It is critical that students remain in the educational environment as much as possible and suspending them out of school only serves as a "mini vacation" for many.

Another important reason for this study is to determine if there is a reduction in the number of students that repeat a suspension. The question raised is, will ISS act as a deterrent for inappropriate actions and behavior?

This study will also show if the learning process is continued and not interrupted by being removed from school. This factor is extremely important because a suspended student out of school often does not make up work which puts him at an even greater disadvantage. This could create a negative cycle of continued misbehavior.

Other than limiting the number of students that are suspended, the most critical aspect of this study on ISS is to determine if positive behavior changes have taken place through counseling and attempted modification of unacceptable behavior. Without this important element, ISS would simply be

another "purely punishment" tool. ISS can be extremely worthwhile if it provides students the opportunity to build self-respect as well as making them aware of the school's expectations of discipline and conduct. This rehabilitation aspect is crucial to a successful ISS program.

This study will also serve to point out any modifications or weaknesses in the structure of the program. Also, it could serve as a model for other school districts to follow.

Organization of the study

The rest of the paper will focus on the following areas: Chapter 2 will be a review of the literature on in-school suspension which points out how an effective ISS program is established as well as the goals to achieve. Chapter 3 will focus on whether the evidence and research that has been gathered points to the project being effective and successful. Chapter 4 will show the information that was found as well as the conclusions drawn from it. ISS is a relatively new approach but there does appear to be several consistent beliefs among the authors of the research. These will be discussed here. Chapter 5 will focus on what developments and conclusions can be drawn from the study as well as any implications derived from it. The question of whether ISS will remain at Cherokee or, perhaps, spread to her sister schools may be answered. What impact this program has had on my leadership development will be answered.

Chapter II

Review of the Literature

In-school suspension has been gaining greater acceptance as an alternative to out of school suspensions and expulsions. The most important goal of any discipline program should be to change unwanted student behavior. In-school suspension programs can accomplish this objective, but only if the program is appropriately designed and maintained to be an effective part of the school's total discipline philosophy. (Sheets, 1996). In addition, many programs have proven to be unsuccessful due to a lack of planning, insufficient monitoring and inadequate financial support.

Based on findings from several case studies, the following elements were shown to be imperative in order for in-school suspension programs to be effective. The first element involves researching various program options to avoid major program revisions in future years. Observing actual programs in practice is often useful. The second involves adequate financial support in order to budget for in-school suspension teachers. Including as many people as possible in the planning and implementation process is the third element. This will affect in a positive way the reception given to the program. Next, the program should be rehabilitative in nature. The primary goal should not be a punitive one. The purpose of discipline is to identify and treat the problem causing the misbehavior. Standardized and monitored record keeping

contributes to the effectiveness of the evaluation design, which is a critical element. Rules and procedures should be clearly defined and communicated in written form so as to not stray from the original intent of the program. Finally, there should be individualize student follow-up to assess progress following the suspension period. (Sullivan, 1989).

Unfortunately, the most commonly used model of ISS is punitive in nature. This is based on the assumption that the punishment of in-school suspension will eliminate the misbehavior. Strict rule enforcement, a jail-like atmosphere, and punitive activities characterize this plan. (Sheets, 1996). In fact, punishment should be only one of several components of ISS, certainly not the major focus on an entire program. Also included should be some type of academic continuance as well as behavior counseling and modification. A survey of 100 schools was conducted concerning ISS and 32% of the respondents viewed it as punitive in nature.(Costenbader & Markson, 1994) This view points out the need to correct the philosophy towards the program.

There are various questions to consider before implementing an in-school suspension program. The key operational component is the person assigned to monitor the program. No matter what model of ISS is used, be it punitive, rehabilitative, or a combination, the instructor will make or break it. A thoroughly thought out recruitment of a qualified person is essential. The person should have experience in counseling, social work, or special education. There is a need for strong classroom management skills. An interest in and desire to work with academically and behaviorally troubled students is a must. The ISS teacher should have instructional skills in general academic areas. Also, they must be competent in communicating findings to parents, teachers, and counselors. They should have the ability to keep

accurate records and enforce the rules of the classroom. (Sheets, 1996).

Another concern deals with the length of time spent in ISS. In most cases, an assignment of from one to three days will probably be sufficient to work with the student, to try to identify the problem, and to initiate a process for effectively dealing with the problem. No student should stay in the program for more than three days without a review of his/her progress during the first three days. Any recommendation that the student remain in the program beyond three days should be accompanied by documentation detailing the rationale for the recommendation, an explanation of the activities and services proposed for the student, and what is to be accomplished during the remaining days. (Mizell, 1978).

ISS classroom rules are imperative for a successful program. They must be clearly defined, be firm but fair and be consistently enforced. (Sheets, 1996). Some examples of classroom rules are to restrict any talking or socializing, demanding full concentration on getting all of the assigned work completed, and bringing all necessary materials such as pens and text books to the classroom.

Most ISS programs are operated as a separate entity of the regular school. Therefore, they do not necessarily need to abide by the normal bell schedule. The ISS teacher has great flexibility to handle breaks as he or she sees fit. Of course, students must be given a bathroom break. Most effective is the utilization of giving one or two opportunities whereby all of the ISS students go to the bathroom facility at one time. This serves three purposes. The first is that the students know not to bother asking to go any other time which may affect the smooth running of the program. The second is that the ISS teacher can escort them to the lavatory area. The third advantage is that the

teacher can choose the times, thus avoiding having the ISS students out of the room during the passing of regular classes.

Another break from the rigors of school work is lunch. In McDowell High School in Marion, North Carolina, students eat lunch in the cafeteria during normal serving times and are then given a 10 to 15 minute break to walk around the campus under the supervision of the director. (Johnston, 1987). Most often, ISS students bring a brown bag lunch to the classroom and eat it during a time determined by the teacher. Any student that does not bring a lunch may be offered, for example, peanut butter and crackers which the teacher would have on hand.

Perhaps the most integral aspect of a successful ISS program is the counseling that goes along with it. All ISS programs should incorporate activities to improve self-image, enhance communication skills and develop appropriate behavior responses. Behavior modification principles should be used. (Short & Noblit, 1985). The schools, as well as the community in general, must recognize the fact that suspension alone rarely helps resolve the problem that caused the behavior and that ISS affords the opportunity for counseling as well as family intervention.

Who should be doing the counseling is another concern. A school district may encounter resistance from the guidance department that is already overworked and feels that they do not have the time nor adequate numbers of staff to take on this additional responsibility. A question of continuity and confidentiality comes into play if a student has to confide in an unfamiliar counselor. If a counselor was hired solely for the ISS program, the continuity factor would be eliminated. However, there would still remain a question of confidentiality. Some students feel comfortable only with their own

counselor; someone they may have gained trust and respect for over a period of three or four years. Also, cost must be considered if a counselor is to be hired for just the ISS program. Cherry Hill School District, which hopes to have an ISS program running by November of 1997, predicts the cost will be \$198,000 of which part of that will go to counselor's salaries. (Brenowitz, 1997). Child Study Team members also could be utilized but, again, time constraints, workload, and confidentiality are factors.

One of the most overlooked aspects of ISS is student follow-up strategies. Monitoring through documented communication with parents, teachers, and students at pre-established intervals is one of the most important aspects of a rehabilitative ISS program. (Sullivan, 1989). Assessing what the ISS student has gained or feels about the experience is vital not only to that student, but also to the future of the program. Through the use of a mission statement, goals and objectives, as well as student and parent surveys, the program can improve to insure better results and efficiency. ISS, like most other aspects of education, should be continuously modified and updated to meet the needs of the students. It is important that, as often as possible, students that spend time in ISS feel that the program is more than just a punishment. By looking at the data that is collected, one can determine if attendance has increased, the recidivism rate is lower, the number of disciplinary referrals is reduced and, perhaps most importantly, academic achievement and attitude towards school has improved. If any combination of these factors show a positive result, the program is, at least, on the right track. If not, immediate modifications in the ISS program would be called for. Without proper follow-up and documentation, an ineffective situation may continue for too long a period of time.

There are several interesting sidelights to in-school suspension in comparison to out of school suspension. Most educators now recognize that out of school suspension is ineffective and may be counterproductive. (Costenbader & Markson, 1994). It has been suggested that out of school suspension is simply a knee jerk reaction to student misbehavior on the part of school personnel. (Wu, Pink, Crain, Moles, 1982). In fact, educators rarely hear complaints from students about the "vacation time" given to them, only the resulting consequences of being suspended too many times. A specified number of suspensions may result, in the case of seniors, in not being about to attend graduation or loss of the privilege of going on the senior class trip. Keeping a suspended student within the confines of the school environment eliminates some of the drawbacks but hangs onto the consequences resulting from any form of suspension.

Another area that ISS appears to deal with is the due process rights of students dealt with in the legal cases of Goss v. Lopez and Wood V. Strickland. Although the Supreme Court, particularly in recent years, has been sympathetic towards the educational system in general, in-school suspension would eliminate any concern over due process and removal of students from the school. Thus, any question of not providing for a thorough and efficient education would not exist.

In-school suspension is certainly not a panacea for all student misbehavior nor is anyone suggesting that it is. Rather, it should be viewed and approached as one element that should be incorporated into the overall disciplinary process of schools. It must have focus, with clear goals and objectives. Planning is a key element to a successful ISS situation. A properly trained and enthusiastic teacher in the classroom is vital as well as a

committed administration that realizes that the program will cost money. The entire school staff must truly believe in the concept and it must have support from the community in order to succeed.

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Chapter III The Design of the Study

General Description of the Research Design

The research design's description concerned risk management and, specifically, dealt with the implementation and evaluation of an in-school suspension program. The design included students in the 9th through 12th grades at Cherokee High School. The purpose was to change student's attitudes, build self-esteem, and offer them alternatives to negative behavior.

More specifically, the in-school suspension program, or ISS, was attempted at Cherokee High School as an alternative to suspending students out of school. It was housed in the high school within a room which was isolated from the rest of the classrooms. An ISS teacher was hired specifically for this new position. She has extensive background in schools in Northern New Jersey dealing with troubled students. The room itself was furnished with ten seats and desks which would be the maximum allowed in ISS at any one time. The room also had several functioning computers which were stripped down to have only word processing and spread sheet capability. An entire set of books from every teacher could be found in a large bookshelf. Even though students were required to bring books and writing instruments, they would not get out of doing any work if they forgot their materials.

The program was set up to provide for a minimum amount of time out of this room. Therefore, lunch was eaten in the room and lavatory breaks were given all at the same time. Students were assigned between 1 and 5 days in ISS depending upon their infraction and whether or not they were repeating in ISS. A student who was absent from school on a day they were to serve an ISS would still have to serve it prior to returning to school. In addition, if a student was asked to leave the ISS room due to behavior, that student would have to serve the ISS the next day.

Teachers were asked to provide work for any student they had in class that had to serve an ISS. A form was placed in their mailbox the afternoon before the suspension asking for work. The amount of work asked for was enough to keep the student occupied for an entire normal class period. Upon the completion of the suspension, the ISS teacher provided a summary of events as well as the work done and put it in the appropriate teacher's mailbox.

Follow-up questionnaires were given to students who served an ISS as well as to the parents of these students in an attempt to gather data as to the effectiveness of the program. Teachers were interviewed by the intern to help determine effectiveness as well.

Statistics of this year's suspensions were compared to last years. This information was shared with the ISS teacher, the intern's field mentor, and the assistant principal of the ISS program. After reviewing this information, the intern made recommendations to the administration about the ISS program.

Description of the Development and Design of the Research Instruments

The intern developed two specific instruments which were used, among other methods, as ways of collecting data on the in-school suspension program.

The first instrument was a student survey concerning their input on ISS.

This instrument was designed utilizing specific research information as to what other schools throughout the country were doing with regards to gathering feedback. This information was gathered through Rowan University's library, the files of one of Cherokee High School's assistant principals, and the internet. The intern asked for, and received, suggestions from the newly appointed ISS teacher as to what some of the questions should pertain to. Her suggestions generally coincided with the intern's. Both the intern and the ISS teacher believed that the questions should address the question of whether the program was having a remedial affect on behavior and, at the same time, hitting the mark with regards to continuing the student's education. Eight specific questions were used, of which five involved some form of opinion and reaction, not just a yes or no response.

The second instrument, a parent survey, was developed along the same lines as the student survey. The intern believed that it was vital to gain the insight and opinions of parents whose children served time in ISS. In designing this survey, the intern kept in mind that it should probably be somewhat brief in order to encourage participation in the completion of it. Questions pertaining to the value and worthiness of ISS were included along with an opportunity to include suggestions or comments.

Teacher input was also gathered through an interview process.

Description of the Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample used in this study consisted of those students that, for various reasons, spent time in the in-school suspension program. The reasons were for infractions that, in the past, would have resulted in either an out of school suspension or a SWAP. The infractions consisted of cutting class, study hall

or lunch, missing an assigned administrative detention, smoking, being verbally abusive to a teacher, destruction of school property and lateness to school after the 12th time. After 4 lateness, students are brought down to the office and warned, after 8 they are assigned an administrative detention. Major offenses such as fighting, drug or alcohol use, setting fires and so forth, would not warrant an ISS. These infractions would result in an out of school suspension with possible expulsion proceedings and/or criminal action.

The sample of students were both male and female and were in grades 9 through 12. They ranged from honor students to, mainly, level 3 and 4 which are remedial and special education students. They came from a middle class, blue and white collar suburban community. These students were mostly white. Some of these students were being disciplined for the first time at Cherokee while others had a more extensive discipline record.

The sample was not randomly given an ISS but, rather, their assigned assistant principal had to follow a discipline handbook that spelled out specifically if an ISS was an appropriate response to an infraction.

The overall intent of the in-school suspension program was to keep students in a safe environment and, at the same time, not have them miss any work. The ultimate objective was to reduce the number of students serving out of school suspensions and, perhaps, most importantly, reduce the number of students that were suspended at all.

Description of the Data Collection Approach

With these objectives in mind, the intern developed several research instruments to determine the effectiveness of the ISS program.

The first instrument was a student survey which was to be given to those students that spent time in ISS. Questions were designed by the intern and

submitted to the ISS teacher. Several suggestions were made as to the wording of these questions as well as what method would be used to get the surveys to the students. The method the intern chose to get the surveys distributed was to determine what homeroom the students were in via the guidance department and then put the surveys in their homeroom teacher's mailbox along with an explanation to the teacher as to the purpose of the survey. If the surveys were not returned, the intern gave the students a second opportunity to answer the questions. The incentive for the students to complete the survey was their opportunity to state their feeling concerning the program.

After addressing these issues, the intern proceeded with the final draft. The goal was to be brief with the number of questions and yet thorough in their nature. It was felt that if there were too many questions, the former ISS students may not answer them. The intern also wanted to have a variety of questions that ran from purely factual, such as asking the reasons the students served the ISS to opinion questions such as if they felt serving an ISS helped them stay out of trouble later on. This student survey was distributed in February.

The second instrument was a parent survey. The intern's intent in designing this instrument was to gather data from the home to help determine the effectiveness of the in-school suspension program as well as to indicate to the parents that their input was important in the successful implementation of the program.

Again, the intern had to deal with how he was going to distribute these surveys. It was determined that the best method would be to mail them directly home along with a self-addressed return envelope.

The first question on the survey asked the parents their opinion of the value and worthiness of ISS as compared to an out of school suspension. Room was given to respond. The intern also asked what was the best aspect of ISS as well as what needs to be improved upon. The intern also wanted to know if the parents believed their son or daughter gained anything from staying in school as opposed to being suspended out of school. This question was asked to find out if their responses matched up to the goals of ISS such as not missing any school work and instruction time. Space was also given for any additional suggestions or comments. The intern distributed this survey in February.

The intern interviewed teachers and, from their responses, obtained a general idea with regards to their feelings on the ISS program.

Description of the Data Analysis Plan

The data was analyzed by first attempting to collect and obtain as many of the surveys as possible. This involved searching out several students during the day and giving them a second survey.

After obtaining as many student and parent surveys as possible, the intern analyzed the data by reading each answer and comment and determining what the general, overall beliefs were as to the effectiveness and worthiness of the ISS program.

After comparing this information with statistics of suspensions from the previous year, the intern shared this information with the ISS teacher, the intern's mentor, and the assistant principal in charge of ISS. From this, and other sources of information such as teacher input, the intern made recommendations to the administration with regards to the ISS program.

Chapter IV

Presentation of the Research Findings

The intern's intent was to determine if an in-school suspension program was a more effective way to deal with suspendable students as opposed to out of school suspension or the Saturday Work Alternative Program. Specifically, the effectiveness was determined by four items. The first was to see if there was a reduction in the number of overall suspensions from last year to this year. The second was to determine if the learning process was less interrupted with ISS as opposed to the students being out of school. The next item was to see if any behavior modification occurred. The last item dealt with any benefits from being in a safe environment.

What Information Was Found?

Being that there was not an ISS program last year, no comparison can be made with regards to the number of students that served in an ISS this year. However, it could be determined if ISS had any impact on the overall suspension rate this year which could be compared to last years overall rate. The number of suspensions last year, which would also include all of those students that repeated an offense at least one time, which is the case, was 873. The number of overall suspensions this year, up to and including January 31st, 1998, was 353. Projected over the course of the full year, the number would be 706. This, of course, does not take into consideration the

possibility that there may be more suspensions towards the end of the year than the beginning, but it still would tend to indicate that ISS has had a positive effect on the number of students being suspended. To help corroborate this reduction statistic is the fact that every student responded with a "yes" answer to the survey question that asked them if ISS helped them stay out of trouble later on. Also, 66% of the students that served an ISS did not repeat in the program later in the school year.

The learning process is less interrupted by using the ISS approach as compared to out of school suspensions. Overall, the faculty saw no gap in classwork and homework due to the fact that the ISS students did their work in the ISS room. This was a definite plus in the minds of the faculty members. Students responded that they like the idea of getting work done, not getting behind, as well as not having the suspension count as a day out of school. Many suspended students, ordinarily, would not make up missed work and lose credit for it as well as fall behind in their studies, never truly catching up.

Looking at the recidivism statistics in ISS, it appears that some form of behavior modification has occurred. Every ISS student was given one on one counseling with their regular guidance counselor. A very dedicated guidance staff took on this extra counseling and performed it very professionally. The 66% of the students that did not repeat in ISS may have been affected by the counseling and, therefore, this aspect of ISS is very positive. A goal would be to reduce this rate even lower.

The built-in aspect of the in-school suspension program that is very positive is every student is safely inside the school building. The school officials as well as the parents or guardians of these students know exactly where they

are. Obviously, students who are suspended out of school are put in a potentially dangerous position of being unsupervised or, at the very least, are in a situation that could lead to them getting into trouble. These factors are eliminated with ISS. An additional plus to this aspect of being in a supervised classroom is that the students have the opportunity to do schoolwork and, in fact, are forced to do so. Not as many students sitting at home would be doing this work. Still, another benefit is the fact that students are counted as present for the day; they do not miss a day of school which would go on their record.

The safe environment alone makes ISS a better situation for students to be in. If this is compared to a SWAP situation, the argument would be that little, if any, educational productivity is occurring by having students pick up trash and the like. SWAP is simply a punishment tool.

What Does This Mean?

By all appearances, it seems as though ISS is having a very positive affect overall on the suspension process. The number of students that have been suspended this year is down from last year. From teacher input, as well as the intern's experience, it is clear that students come back from ISS without missing a beat in terms of the learning process.

Overall, the faculty feels less imposed upon by having to gather up work for a student in ISS, even though it may need to be hastily done, than having to gather it up when the student returns. In a sense, the feeling of "why should I be punished?" is diminished within the teacher if the work is gathered before hand and not after the fact.

The immediate support from the guidance counselors assists in dealing with two things. The first is attempting to determine why the negative behavior occurred, and the second is trying to prevent the situation from happening again. Once again, the support from the guidance counselors is an interracial part of the process of understanding and modifying inappropriate behavior.

Students being in the safe confines of the school decreases the risk of problems occurring as opposed to if the students were somewhere else. One can only speculate if any of those students in ISS would have found themselves in further trouble or, worse, injured somehow if they were not at school. The way that Cherokee's ISS is set up, students are benefiting in several ways over the traditional out of school approach.

Chapter V

Conclusions, Implications, and Further Study

There are several major conclusions and implications that can be drawn from this study. The first conclusion is that the in-school suspension program is having a positive effect in terms of lowering the overall number of suspensions. An implication connected to this is that students that serve an initial ISS do not want to come back for a second round. Prior to ISS, suspended students did not mind the mini-vacation of out of school suspension. However, the confinement of the ISS room serves as a detractor for repeat offenses.

A second conclusion is that students are keeping up with their school work far better in ISS than if they were suspended out of school. It is fair to say that many students sitting at home would not be opening up their books to do work. Although some faculty members find that gathering up work for an ISS student in a hurried fashion is an inconvenience, most understand that it is necessary for the success of the program.

Certainly the implication of keeping students in the safe environment of the school is very positive. This also keeps the students from losing a day out of school since they are counted as present while serving an ISS.

One must also conclude that providing guidance support to ISS students is a positive step towards keeping these students out of future trouble while attempting to determine what caused the behavior that got them in trouble in the first place.

The intern's leadership development has been affected by the new ISS program. The intern has learned that proper behavior management strategies such as those incorporated in ISS can have an overall, positive effect on

student behavior. The intern has become increasingly aware of the need to be precise in the planning and development of the program. Although the program was well thought out, minor adjustments, such as giving teachers more time to get work to the ISS teacher, may be necessary.

The intern evaluated data from other school districts to see how they ran their programs. Also, data on suspensions from last year to this year was reviewed and evaluated by the intern. A decrease in the number of suspensions this year has occurred.

The intern assisted in facilitating the program with the Assistant Principal and the ISS teacher. Together, we met with every department in the school, explaining the program and answering any questions they had. Also, the intern interviewed numerous teachers, gathering their feelings and concerns on this new program. The intern also encouraged the continued use of remedial and corrective strategies as an integral part of the overall ISS program.

Many individuals that are a part of the Cherokee High School family have come to realize the tremendous advantage and importance in having students remain in school when suspended as opposed to being out of school. Many have asked why we have not done this years ago. The organization has also changed in that it is now on the cutting edge of dealing with negative student behavior. The school realized that simply punishing students for negative behavior is not the answer and ISS addresses the gaps in this practice. The faculty's perception of dealing with students has changed somewhat from being skeptical or upset with discipline decisions to realizing that the administration is serious about dealing with troubled students.

The intern has strongly suggested that this program not only continue at

Cherokee High School but, also, be extended to her two sister schools, Lenape and Shawnee. Further study will continue with regards to the number of students suspended in June. At this time, an overall, yearly picture of comparison can be made between this year and last year.

Also, further study as to obtaining the most effective guidance and support for these suspended students should occur.

Finally, a study concerning suspended students' grades from this year to last year should occur to determine if there has been any significant increase in the number of passing grades of these students.

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Appendix A

Cherokee High School In-School Suspension Procedures and Surveys

CHEROKEE HIGH SCHOOL MARLTON, NEW JERSEY

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the In-School Suspension program of the Lenape Regional High School District shall be to assist the suspended student while completing the corrective action assignment by identifying and modifying unacceptable behavior and maintaining academic preparedness in a structured atmosphere of respect, acceptance and firmness, with expectations of self-discipline and scholarly work, reducing chances of recurrent misbehavior, in partnership with staff and administration.

GOALS

- 1. To reduce the number of students with repeat suspensions and the number of student suspension days served out of school;
- 2. To identify and treat the problems causing the misbehavior:
- 3. To effect positive behavior changes in the students;
- 4. To provide academic instruction thus maintaining proficiency in current class work;
- 5. To provide a safe and healthy educational environment.

OBJECTIVES

ISS students will be made aware of what their positive behavior expectations are, the value of positive behavior to the school environment and their responsibility to behave in an acceptable manner.

ISS students will maintain academic proficiency in their individualized program of instruction while completing their assigned corrective action.

ISS students will be treated fairly and with respect and dignity as part of their ISS experience.

In-School Suspension Cherokee High School Marlton, New Jersey Procedures

- 1. Students report to the office to return their signed parental ISS forms. They then report directly to F204 (ISS room). Nancy Norman will be the homeroom teacher. She will take attendance and report, to the office by the end of homeroom, if a student is absent.
- 2. If a student does not return their signed form to the office, a secretary will call into F204 to see if the student is present and has a form. The ISS teacher will deliver it to the office later in the day. If a student does not have a signed form, the AP will call home.
- 3. Students must be in ISS by the time the first period bell rings. If they are late to homeroom, they will be marked late. If they arrive after homeroom, they will not be permitted to complete ISS that day and they must attend the next day.
- 4. Students must come prepared with all their books and materials.
- 5. APs will try to complete their discipline by third period. A student given ISS will sign a contract with the AP and the AP will place this in Mrs. Smith's mailbox. A secretary will enter the student's name into the ISS log (as it is with Adm. Det.).
- 6. Nancy Norman will be in the ISS room third period. Carol Smith will check her mailbox for contracts and distribute ISS notices to teachers in order to obtain work for the next day. She will make adjustments to the ISS log as needed.
- 7. If a student receives ISS after third period, the AP must complete and distribute the sheets to the teachers. Six or 7 students is a good number for ISS daily. If 10 to 12 students are listed, the APs will have to readjust the discipline. No more than 8 per day would be ideal.
- 8. Teachers must check their mailboxes throughout the day for ISS notices (on pink paper).
 All work for students must be in Mrs. Smith's mailbox by 7:00 a.m. the next morning. Mrs. Smith will use homeroom time to track down teachers who have not submitted work.
- 9. Assignments should relate to what is being taught in class. It should cover the entire period, yet not be busy work. Reading assignments should contain some additional written component.
- Students must complete their work in ISS. Mrs. Smith will return the work to teachers' mailboxes. She will not grade the assignments but may make comments pertinent to the students' work. Work not completed will be sent home for homework.

- If a student is uncooperative and/or not fulfilling the obligations of the contract, Mrs. Smith will call an AP and have the student removed. Students may be sent home. Even if a student is given an OSS for his behavior, he/she must still make-up the ISS time before returning to class. If a student is just sent home, he/she must repeat the ISS day.
- 12. Behavior management will be part of the program.
- 13. An exit contract will be signed as the student leaves ISS.
- 14. Students will eat 6th period. Mr. Butler will cover the ISS room. Mrs. Smith will eat lunch and call the substitute caller to notify her if she is or is not available to "sub" the next day.
- The program will be continually monitored. There will be a mid-year and end-of-the year evaluation. Individual folders will be kept on students. Anecdotal records will be kept to see if the # of repeat offenders is lessened. Parent and teacher surveys will be distributed. Student comments will be solicited.
- 16. Please see student contract for additional rules in ISS.

In-School Suspension Morning Instructions

You have all read the contract agreement so you understand generally the procedures for this room.

School bells mean nothing. We are on our own time schedule. We will continue working until the end of the day. If you finish the assignments your teachers have sent in for you, there are other assignments that will be given. Lunch will be at 11:33 in this room.

Two bathroom breaks have been worked into the schedule. We will be using the bathrooms just past the stairway, going out one at a time. Please knock before using the key, as the door opens directly into the toilet area. There are other keys to this bathroom in circulation so knocking is necessary to insure privacy. There will be no other leaving the room.

In School Suspension does not go away. Your ISS penalty will only be removed when the time assigned has been served and when your assignments for all parts of the day have been completed. If for any reason your time is not completed, or you have not worked toward the completion of your assignments, your day will not count and the ISS time will be reassigned. If you complete the assignments from your teachers before the end of the day, you will be expected to complete an assignment that I will give you. In other words, you will be working until the end of the day.

There is no talking during the day, except at lunch, no sleeping, no gum chewing, no eating except during lunch period, no headphones, radios (CD players, walkman, etc.), no game playing. Put your hand up if you need help, need to sharpen your pencil, want permission to stretch if sitting becomes intolerable or have a question. I will attempt to help with any assignments you have been given.

Any questions?

CHEROKEE HIGH SCHOOL MARLTON, NEW JERSEY IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION CONTRACT

Student Name	Date	Time
Assigning Vice-Principal	Teacher (if any involved)	
Infraction		
Number of days assigned	commencing	
I understand that In-School Suspension (ISS) is a agreeing to take part in this program I also agree	an opportunity to receive credit without aca	demic penalty, and by
I will report to the In-School Suspension classronot come to F204 by the end of homeroom, I will the next day.	oom (F204) on the day(s) assigned before the all not be admitted to ISS, and I will complet	e homeroom bell. If I do e my In-School Suspension
I will come prepared with all text books, workbo	ooks and/or other materials necessary for ea	ch class.
I will work to complete all assignments forwards School Suspension faculty. All work performed faculty, and any incomplete assignments will be	I during the school day will be given to the i	ii-action anapension
I will complete assignments to the satisfaction or removal from In-School Suspension for the day	of the In-School Suspension faculty. Refusal and my ISS day will be repeated.	to comply will result in
I will not participate in extra-curricular activities	s during or after school on the day of an In-S	School Suspension.
I will bring a brown bag lunch and drink for the	lunch break.	
I will exercise self-discipline.		
I agree to adhere to the following In-School Su •Limited freedom of movement. Two bathroom breaks will be provided; assign		
Trips to lockers are not allowed. Lunch will be eaten in the In-School Suspen		
Sharpening pencils, if needed, is permitted. Standing and stretching at seat, if sitting becomes the students may talk only to the In-School Suspension.	comes intolerable, is permitted.	th when they may talk to
other In-School Suspension students.	······································	
Sleeping is not permitted.Doing nothing is not permitted.The subject matter of all reading material mus	st be directly related to the subject matter ass	signed by teachers.
Signature:	Date:	

CHEROKEE HIGH SCHOOL MARLTON, NEW JERSEY NOTICE OF IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

nas been assigned to	ISS for	days commencing
7AM. The comple day, with any incom	ted assignment appleted section	for your daily classwork in my mailbox no later than its will be returned to your mailbox at the end of each is to be done for homework. Be sure the assignment is e completing during this suspended time period and that period. Thanks for your cooperation. CAROL SMITH
Teacher:		
Period	Subject	
Assignment:		
<u> </u>		
Comments:		
		·
	· · ·	

CHEROKEE HIGH SCHOOL MARLTON, NEW JERSEY THREE DAY EVALUATION IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

Date
has complete
consecutive days in the In-School Suspension Program.
eview of Progress, including assignment completion, behavior modification supplement
·
Activities and services proposed for remainingdays in ISS
Desired accomplishments at completion of ISS stay
Signature(s)
OIRITATO (O)

To):		
	In-School S Report to	-	
		has completed	day(s)
of In-School Suspension as	nd has/has not com	npleted the assigned time.	
Classwork accomplished			
Assignment c	completed with no	problem	
		istance	
Homework			

Your questions, comments and suggestions are always welcome. Thanks.

Carol Smith

In-School Suspension Attendance

Student Name	Grade	Present	Absen

In-School Suspension Profile and Progress Daily Sheet

Name													
Grade					Dat	e		.,,		r			
Grade Sex M ()	F ()	Race	W()	В()	Н()	AI/AN ()	A ()
Prepared													_
Assignments_										·······························			
													
													
Attituda					,								
Attitude													
										•			
Accomplishme	nts		- 										
<u>.</u>													
Completed Da	у		,										
Sent Home		Tin	ne			_Reas	son_						
ISS Workshee	ts Com	pleted											
01			<u></u>										
Observations/I	Kecomi	nenda	uons										
	., ., .,,	· · · · · ·											
Signature								Dat	e_				

CHEROKEE HIGH SCHOOL MARLTON, NEW JERSEY EXIT QUESTIONNAIRE IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

Name	Date
Please respond to the following questions in sentence form.	
1. Your were sent to ISS because of a violation of rules. (Consider the violation and its
consequences. How do you feel about coming to ISS for	what you did?
2. Do you realize that if you get into trouble again, you are	
additional days?	
3. Did you talk to your parents about being in ISS? If so, being here?	
4. Were you punished at home for this offense? If so, how	w?
5. After you got into ISS, how did you feel about the way	y you were treated?
6. What did you like least about being in ISS?	
o. What did you like least about being in 188.	
7. What did you most like about ISS?	
<u> </u>	

8. What, if anything would you suggest to change about ISS?
9. If you were Principal at Cherokee, what action would you take against students who committed the same offense that you committed?
10. Tomorrow you will return to regular classes. What is your greatest concern regarding facing your teachers and friends after being in ISS?
11. Has anything good come from your ISS experience? If so, what?
11. Has anything good come from your 155 experience: if 50, what:
12. If you could have had the choice between ISS and at-home suspension, which would you have chosen and why?
13. What will you do differently in order to <u>not</u> be assigned to In-School Suspension again?
Signature

Cherokee In-School Suspension Student Survey

In an effort to determine the effectiveness of the In-School Suspension program, we are asking for your input. Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability.

1. For what reasons did you serve an ISS?	
a	
b	
c	
2. Do you feel that serving an ISS helped you stay out of trouble yes	e later on?
no	
3. Have you ever served an out of school suspension? For what	reason?
4. Did you prefer an ISS to a regular suspension?	
yes	
no	
Why or why not?	
5. Did you benefit from being able to do schoolwork in the ISS yes	room?
no	
If yes, how did it benefit you?	
	•

6.	Do you feel that your behavior has changed in a positive way since the time you served your ISS? yes or no If yes, how has it changed?
7.	Do you feel the ISS room was satisfactory? (lighting, ventilation, etc.) yes
	no If no, in what ways was it not satisfactory?
8.	What, if anything, needs to be changed about ISS?

Cherokee In-School Suspension Parent Survey

In an effort to determine the effectiveness of the In-School Suspension program, we are asking for your input. Please take a few minutes to answer the following questions and return in the enclosed envelope. Thank you.

while alternative to out of school suspension? yes no Please explain.
What do you believe is the best aspect of in-school suspension?
What do you feel needs to be improved concerning the program?
Do you believe that your son/daughter gained anything from the ISS experience that they would not have gained if he/she had been removed from school?
you have any suggestions or comments, please add them below.

Biographical Data

Name
Date of BirthMay 15, 1956
Place of Birth
High SchoolGloucester City High School
Undergraduate Degree and MajorB.A. in Secondary Education
Undergraduate Institution
Graduate Degree and Major
Graduate Institution
Present OccupationHigh School Teacher
Place of Employment
Position