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OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN
INDIANA HIGH SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to determine whether schools that impose more days of out-of-school suspension as a discipline consequence in Indiana high schools have a relationship with the academic results of the school. The study was conducted by administering a survey to all Indiana public high school principals. Eighty-nine principals responded to the Principal Survey on High School Discipline. The Principal Survey on High School Discipline asked respondents the number of days a student would be suspended out of school for first time offenses to 18 common discipline infractions. The sum of out-of-school suspension days (called the suspension composite score) for each high school was then compared to each high school's scores for the 2013 sophomore cohort on Indiana's End of Course Assessments following the completion of English 10 and Algebra I coursework. Also analyzed in the study were whether there was a difference in the suspension composite score and the school's size; whether there was a difference in the suspension composite score and the school's location; whether principal demographics of age, years of experience, or years in education affected the suspension composite score; if out of school suspension makes students less likely to misbehave; and if zero-tolerance policies made an impactful contribution in maintaining order at their schools. Data were analyzed through one-way ANOVA and linear regression testing and the null hypotheses were tested at the .05 probability level or better. The data analysis did not display significant findings for any of the research questions. Some of the findings when analyzing the demographic data were urban schools were more likely to suspend but less likely to expel a

student for issues such as drug possession or transmission and alcohol possession or transmission. Rural schools were the exact opposite. They were less likely to suspend but more likely to expel a student for those infractions. Small schools versus large schools followed the same pattern, but the data were not as pronounced. The principals were split as to whether zero tolerance policies make an impactful contribution in maintaining order at their schools. When zero tolerance policies were broken down by school size, small schools disagreed that it helped maintain order, but medium- and large-sized high schools had nearly 60% agreeing to 40% disagreeing.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

During the 2009-2010 school year, public schools in the United States issued over 3,700,000 suspensions and over 72,000 expulsions for the more than 42,000,000 students (National Center for Education Statistics, as cited in Skiba et al., 2013). This means that nearly 9%, or roughly one out of 11 students across all grade levels, were suspended in some fashion during a school year from a public school. If one examines the impact of race on rate of suspensions, the ratio of African American students suspended during this time is one in six (Skiba & Sprague, 2008). Losen and Martinez (2013) also noted that minority students are far more likely to be suspended and once students get to public high schools, the ratio raises to nearly one in nine students being suspended during a school year. These increasing rates of suspension in conjunction with the research findings indicate there is no academic gain to schools that suspend at higher rates than other schools. In fact, higher suspension rates can lead to a level of distrust between students and the adults in a school (Losen & Martinez, 2013). This removal from school causes students to “start to feel alienated from their home school” (Harball, 2012, para. 3) and leads to higher dropout rates.

But, misbehaving students must be stopped from harming the education of their fellow students. Some teachers have made statements similar to “Get that student out of my classroom in any way you can. He is stopping the other students from learning and I can’t teach.” This

type of statement forces school administrators to believe that the best way to help teachers excel in the classroom is to remove those problem students as quickly as possible. It has been debated, however, whether this strategy works in the best interests of the school or students. For school administrators, there is a desire to keep students in school to improve graduation rates, which is an important performance metric used to evaluate their school (Lofstrom & Tayler, 2009). Therefore, school administrators have to balance the wants of overwhelmed teachers with the desire for all students to be present at school and have the ability to learn daily.

Statement of the Problem

Administrators at public high schools are faced with student discipline issues that change nearly every day. Some minor student discipline infractions that are common in schools include passing notes, talking during instruction, or tardiness to class. More serious student offenses include cheating on tests, fighting, smoking, and possessing drugs or alcohol. For those minor offenses, a high school principal can deliver students a warning, assign demerits or detentions, or call parents. For the more serious discipline infractions, a principal could give an in-school suspension, assign an out-of-school suspension, or expel the student and this would act as a deterrent to both the offending student and other students in the school. The discipline consequence that is most common in this culture is the out-of-school suspension (Iselin, 2010). School administrators make critical decisions each day that affect their students.

Another factor that varies across school systems is the way out-of-school suspensions are applied. The research suggests a lack of consistency among schools (Bloomberg, 2004). An example is when a student is found smoking. According to McNeeley, Nonnemaker, and Blum (2002), in 40% of the 80 high schools studied on the consistency of school discipline, the punishment for a student's first offense for smoking is an out-of-school suspension. In other

schools, the consequence is a detention or an in-school-suspension. Out-of-school suspensions are not only administered unevenly among schools for common offenses, but among other student factors like race. For example, in Decatur, Illinois, seven African-American students were suspended and expelled for getting into a fist fight at a football game. These expulsions were chosen by the school board despite that earlier in the school year two White students brought weapons to school and were only expelled one year and not two. This is an example of some of the inconsistencies that exist in administering out-of-school suspensions (Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2002).

Donaldson (2001) discussed that there can be differences in similar organizations based on their environment, size, and strategy. These differences are due to the organizational structure and how it relates to the desires of the stakeholders in the school community. These goals and proper fit within the community differ from school to school. So, “within a school setting, understanding the context of the environment, the size of the classrooms or school, and the strategies being employed by principals to focus on certain functions within the building to maximize performance all impact decisions” (Hatton, 2013, p. 19). Even though schools possess differences based on their location and size, their mission of educating all students is the same.

There are alternatives to out-of-school suspension that are currently being used in schools. In-school-suspension is a form of suspension where the student goes to school or another school corporation assigned building and works on assignments that are given to the student by his or her teachers. Another discipline alternative is a *temporary teacher dismissal* where a teacher or administrator assigns the student to a different setting in a school. The student misses only the period of school where the misbehavior occurs and not the entire school day (Robinette, 2008). Detentions held before, after, and even during school hours during

student free time such as lunch periods are other alternatives to suspension that can be used in today's classroom (Kirk, 2008).

In-school and out-of-school suspensions are embedded in the American educational culture (Nogera, 2003). One goal of these disciplinary measures is to show the rest of the student body that certain behaviors are not tolerated in a school setting (Barrientos, 2010). Suspensions are also positive in that they remove a troubled student from the school setting (Iselin, 2012). However, there is little research to support the idea that removing students from school helps to create a better learning environment or improves school climate (Skiba, 2001).

Significance of the Study

Core standards exist to create consistent learning across schools, but the same cannot be said of school discipline. Zero tolerance laws have been passed and it is up to each school system to decide how to deal with the range of student violations that may occur. This means educational leaders spend substantial time each day enforcing those rules. According to Catherine Danyluk, Assistant Director of Student Services for the Indiana Department of Education, all discipline decisions outside of zero tolerance laws are decided at the local level (C. Danyluk, personal communication, January 15, 2014). School administrators must make choices about the safety of the students in the school, the academic needs of all students—not just the students being suspended—and the ability of teachers to work in their classrooms. The current study will provide school leaders with the knowledge of the range of discipline consequences that are currently being used. In addition, variables will be considered that examine the relationship between the severity of the student discipline and the school's academic performance. From this study, a better understanding of the norms that exist will be provided to educators.

This study will attempt to understand how public high schools in the state of Indiana discipline students and if providing exclusionary discipline practices aides its academic mission. A questionnaire will ask public high school principals what are their norms for first time offenses of suspendable infractions for a specific student behavior. For example, if two students engage in a fight at school, what is the school or school district’s customary consequence? Does the student receive an out-of-school suspension? How many days? Second, principals will be asked if these consequences are deterrents to student behavior and whether they believe it serves as a deterrent for further student misbehavior. Or, as Ferguson (2012) asked, “Does it [student suspension] actually ameliorate behavioral and academic problems?” (para. 1).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine whether schools that impose more days of out-of-school suspension as a discipline consequence in Indiana high schools have a relationship with the academic results of the school. It would also allow school or district officials to evaluate if their consequences to student infractions were in line with other schools and school districts in the state by looking at the descriptive statistics provided by school administrators. An analysis was used to determine if demographic factors such as the size or location of the school have a relationship in disciplinary decisions as well as the gender, age, and experience of the school administrator.

Research Questions

1. Is there a significance difference in the suspension composite score based on a school’s location?
2. Is there a significance difference in the suspension composite score based on a school’s size?

3. Do the demographics of the building principal serve as a predictor of the suspension composite score?
4. Does the suspension composite score serve as a predictor of the passing rate on the English 10 ECA?
5. Does the suspension composite score serve as a predictor of the passing rate on the Algebra I ECA?
6. Do Indiana public high school principals believe that out-of-school suspension makes students less likely to misbehave in the future?
7. Do Indiana public high school principals believe that zero tolerance policies make an impactful contribution in maintaining order at their schools?

Limitations

A limitation that may have affected the outcome of the study was the number of days that a student missed school when they were expelled in the state of Indiana. According to Indiana Code 20-33-8-3 (2010), an “expulsion” means a disciplinary or other action whereby a student is separated from school attendance for a period exceeding 10 school days or is separated from school attendance for the balance of the current semester or current year. Because it is a common occurrence for a student to return to school the semester following his or her expulsion and most school semesters contain 90 days, 45 days was chosen as the number of days a student was suspended from school when expelled. Another limitation to this study is that the survey measured what schools would do if faced with a specific discipline situation. It did not measure whether they had to actually administer such discipline in the recent past.

Delimitations

There were several delimitations to the study. One was that the study was only going to be sent to principals of public high schools in the state of Indiana. Assistant principals were not part of the sample population. Another was that the survey consisted of only 18 discipline infractions with specific examples of the student misconduct. There were many more types of student discipline occurrences that could result in assigning a student an out-of-school suspension. These were only a few that most school administrators have encountered. A final delimitation was that the academic data were limited to those from the 2012-13 school year.

Definition of Terms

Assault is the threat of bodily harm coupled with an apparent, present ability to cause the harm.

Bullying is an overt, unwanted, repeated acts or gestures, including verbal or written communications or images transmitted in any manner (including digitally or electronically), physical acts committed, aggression, or any other behaviors, that are committed by a student or group of students against another student with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, intimidate, or harm the targeted student and create for the targeted student an objectively hostile school environment (Indiana Code 20-33-8).

Chronic attendance violations is defined as missing 10% or more school days, for any reason including excused or unexcused absences (Spradlin, Cierniak, Shi, Chen & Han, 2012).

Expulsion is a disciplinary or other action whereby a student is separated from school attendance for a period exceeding 10 school days or is separated from school attendance for the balance of the current semester or current year.

False alarm is knowingly sending or delivering a false message of possible explosive materials being on or near campus, a pending explosion, or of a fire, including pulling a fire alarm.

Injury to others is engaging in actions that either knowingly or unknowingly causes harm to another student/adult.

In-school suspension (ISS) is the removal of a student or students from their regular classrooms and requiring them to remain in school (Evans, 2011).

Large school is a high school that has 1,001 or more students.

Medium school is a high school that has between 501 and 1,000 students.

Misdemeanor theft/larceny is taking away another person's property, with the intent to deprive him or her permanently of the object.

Misrepresentation (cheating) is any attempt to gain academic credit or recognition to which one is not entitled or to assist others to do so.

Out of school suspension is the removal of a student or students from the school for a short period of time, generally 10 school days or less (Evans, 2011).

Possession is to secretly bring any contraband items such as tobacco, alcohol, drug or drug paraphernalia, firearm or any type weapon, pornography, etc. or any item containing any of these materials to the school campus for the purpose of personal use, harm to another, or to pass or sell to another student, teacher, or administrator.

Profanity/obscenity is vulgar or foul language or behavior.

Rural school is a high school that is more than 25 miles from an urbanized area.

Small school is a high school that has 500 students or fewer.

Suburban school is a high school outside a principal city and within 25 miles of an urbanized area with population of at least 50,000 people.

Suspension composite score is the sum of the number of days a student is suspended from a school for the 18 discipline infractions listed in the Principal Survey on High School Discipline. The sum for a school can range from 0 to 810.

Truancy from school refers to any student that misses a day of school instruction without a reason accepted by the school.

Urban school is a high school that resides inside the boundaries of a city of more than 50,000 people.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of the study was to determine whether schools that impose more days of out-of-school suspension as a discipline consequence in Indiana high schools have a relationship with the academic results of the school. According to Solutions Not Suspensions (2012), “Out of school suspensions run directly counter to those goals” (of educational equality and excellence) (p. 1). In fact, Losen and Martinez (2013) found that once a student is suspended out of school just one time, the dropout rate for that student rises from 16% to 32%. One of the main concerns for school personnel is to address and eliminate the habitual behavior concerns and open up valuable resources that are being used to address school discipline to improve student learning (Felesena, 2013). To appreciate how school discipline is today, one must look at the history of school discipline, classroom discipline approaches, zero tolerance policies, who and why students are suspended out of school, student views of school suspension, alternatives to suspension, school suspensions and student academic achievement, school location and size on academic achievement, and principals’ impact on student discipline.

The first area of review is the history of school discipline. School discipline was created by young school teachers who were keeping order in their classrooms using trial and error methods. Corporal punishment was a staple for teachers as a means to handle discipline issues (Butchart & Landau, 1998). The literature then discussed more proactive classroom approaches

to school discipline where teachers teach and model appropriate student behavior or school wide discipline approaches that are consistent among all classrooms in the school.

Another area of review was zero tolerance. Zero tolerance policies are “not straight forward” (Iselin, 2000, p. 2) for school administrators. They take flexibility away from educators and force the school to possibly make decisions that leaders are not wanting to make. Zero tolerance policies also “do not improve overall school safety and are associated with lower academic performance, higher rates of dropout, failures to graduate on time, increased academic disengagement, and subsequent disciplinary exclusions” (Iselin, 2010, p. 2).

The literature review then leads to which students are suspended and what school rules were broken. Many schools suspend for infractions that do not affect school safety like tardiness or absences and statistically suspensions are skewed toward students with disabilities and minorities (Skiba & Sprague, 2008). How students view suspensions are discussed as well as alternatives to suspensions such as in-school-suspensions, detentions, extended school days, etc. are examined in the next section of the literature review.

The final areas of review debate how student suspension from school influences academic achievement and what issues, both from home and the school, cause a student to misbehave. The prevailing answer is that missing school is negative but to what level and how much does it cost the student. How a school’s location and size affect the out-of-school suspension rate were studied. Finally, how a principal impacts student academic achievement will end the literature review.

History of School Discipline

According to Butchart and Landau (1998), it is difficult to secure an accurate writing on school discipline because there “is not much of a written history” (p. 21). Butchart and Landau

stated that the history of school discipline is difficult to identify because there are various opinions of how it came to be. Classroom and school management strategies that worked in one community were not going to necessarily work in another. Most history of school discipline includes corporal punishment that was used in the United States well past the middle 1900s. School masters were the heads of schools and ruled with fear. Students “recited memorized works or presented their lessons, and other students were expected to sit quietly and listen or work on their assignments” (Butchart & Landau, 1998, p. 22). Fear of physical violence ruled except for a few “righteous” (Butchart & Landau, 1998, p. 21) people who began denouncing corporal punishment in the 1820s and 1830s.

The first reform away from corporal punishment was called bureaucratic discipline. This began in Joseph Lancaster’s monitorial schools. Students did not meet with a teacher but had group relationships with monitors, who were older students (Matzat, n.d.). Lancaster used rewards, prizes, and promotions as incentives to students rather than using fear to run the school. Some of the prizes consisted of a badge on the neck. Another incentive was the promotion to monitor (Butchart & Landau, 1998). This method died out because the working class believed that their religion was not being stressed and that the monitors could not teach as well as the growing population of adult teachers (“The Lancasterian Monitorial System of Education,” 2001).

The next type of discipline style that developed during the middle 1800s was called the New England pedagogy. This put the teacher as an object of affection and feminized teaching. It rejected corporal punishments except in “extreme cases” (Butchart & Landau, 1998, p. 26). The goal was to have the students become intrinsically motivated in their studies and not need extrinsic motivation. The movement toward individual teacher classrooms developed in this

period because it helped teachers maintain order. This movement ended because the use of corporal punishment in “extreme cases” (Butchard & Landau, 1998, p. 26) was used mostly on the children of working class citizens and caused an uproar among parents.

Rousmaniere (1994) stated that since early school employees were women, they were often torn between being nurturing and understanding of their students’ feelings and the harsh realities of the times. That leads one to today where the goal for teachers is to “nurture and help children learn right from wrong with love and understanding” (Rousmaniere, 1994, p. 52).

These methods of school discipline history provide teachers a vision of where schools were with regard to school discipline. Just as Butchart and Landau (1998) stated that corporal punishment was not evenly administered in the New England pedagogy in the 1800s, later in this review one learns that out-of-school suspensions are not evenly distributed in today’s educational system. Variation of suspension rates can occur among schools in the same district much less across the country (Farneth & Sundius, 2008).

Classroom Models of Discipline to Avoid School Suspension

According to Allen (1996), there were no effective classroom management models prior to 1969. Teachers asserted their authority to maintain order in the classroom. Students that did not fear their teacher’s threats of corporal punishment were difficult to keep in line. After 1969, several models came into existence that could fit with a teacher’s personality. They differed—from the teacher utilizing low control approaches over their students to high levels of control over their students. Then these models of positive behavior support interventions (PBIS) on student behavior created policies for individual classrooms and schools that used the following models or methods (Chin, Dowdy, Jimerson, & Rime, 2012).

The first of these models is the Kounin model—named after Jacob Kounin, a professor of psychology at Wayne State University in Ohio (Burden, 1995). He stated that an educator needs to have “withitness” (Burden, 1995, p. 47). “A teacher who is ‘with-it’ knows what is going on in the classroom at all times” (Burden, 1995, p. 47). The teacher should have a variety of methods incorporated in each lesson that will allow students not to be bored during class. Also, if the instructor takes the time to correct the behavior of one student, it tends to change the behavior of others because children will listen to the directions given by the teacher (Allen, 1996).

A second classroom method that has been used in this time is the Neo-Skinnerian model. This model is named after the psychologist B. F. Skinner (Allen, 1996). The neo-Skinnerian model extended Skinner’s *behavior modification* technique to the school setting by establishing a system of rewards to students immediately after a desired act. This reward could be candy, stickers, books, tokens, or free time. Besides being used at the classroom level, it could also be used at the school level. Whatever motivates students could be used by the teacher or school administrator as a reward (Burden, 1995).

A third classroom model is the Ginott model. In this model, teachers should model appropriate behaviors for their students (Burden, 1995). Educators should praise or correct a student’s specific behaviors and not the student’s integrity (Allen, 1996). This method focused on “how adults can build the self-concepts of children, especially emphasizing that adults should avoid attacks on the child’s character and instead focus on the situation or actions” (Burden, 1995, p. 39).

Another model of classroom management is the Glasser model. Glasser believed that students could control their actions, and they should be able to make choices about what is good

behavior (Allen, 1996). Glasser believed that “teachers and students need to jointly establish classroom rules and the teacher is to enforce the rules consistently without accepting excuses (Burden, 1995, p. 47).

The Dreikur model stated that the teacher’s role is to help a student exhibit self-control over his or her behaviors. Dreikur stated that educators should recognize the reason for the misbehavior, keep control of one’s reactions to the misbehavior, and then encourage the students to do better (Burden, 1995). Teachers should praise the efforts of the students and not the end result of their work because it is the student’s effort that is needed for them to ultimately be successful and build character (Allen, 1996).

The husband and wife team of Marlene and Lee Canter viewed teachers instructing in the classroom. They came up with the idea that

teachers have the right and responsibility to (a) establish rules and directions that clearly define the limits of acceptable and unacceptable student behavior, (b) teach these rules and directions, and (c) ask for assistance from parents and administrators when support is needed in handling student behavior. (Burden, 1995, p. 53)

Allen (1996) stated that when teachers fail, it is typically due to poor classroom control.

Fred Jones created another model for student discipline. Jones believed that as much as 50% of class time was lost due to students being off task with as much as 80% of that time being attributed to students talking without permission (Allen, 1996). Jones also believed that a teacher should arrange desks so they could move around the room easily. Teachers should also not spend a long period of time with one student. Instead, a teacher should “praise, prompt, and leave” (Burden, 1995, p. 50) when interacting with students performing independent work in the classroom.

Judicious discipline is a method of classroom discipline that is commonly used. It is comprised of students and educators working together to write classroom or school rules and the consequences for breaking them. The basis of judicious discipline is that each student has basic human rights that must coexist with the rights of the rest of the student body. Teachers must establish expectations up front for students to follow the rules that are based upon these ideas: no property loss or damage, no threats to the health or safety of others, all students have a legitimate purpose, and there cannot be any disruptions to the educational process (Gathercoal & Nimmo, 2001).

A progressive discipline policy (PDP) is another discipline method that is being used. It entails a five level, 13-step sequence that is designed to stop all discipline issues. Students begin the school year with 13 chances to adapt to the school setting. Level 0 offenses are handled at the classroom level. Levels 1 through 5 involve detention as the consequence for inappropriate behavior. Levels 6 through 8 contain Saturday school. Level 9 is in-school suspension. Levels 10 through 12 consist of 3-day, 5-day, and 10-day suspensions. If Level 12 is needed for a student, it is followed with an expulsion (Felesena, 2013).

Whatever system is in place, educators agree that school rules are needed. According to Walker (2006), school rules are incorporated into three types: primary, secondary, and tertiary. Primary rules are for the benefit of 80% of the students. Examples of these rules are behavior in the halls, tardiness, absences, etc. Next are the school's secondary rules. These are for 15% of the students and include incidents like truanancies, low grades, etc. The next type is a school's tertiary set of rules. These are for only 5% of the student body and are for those more severe discipline issues like drug or alcohol use, weapons on school campus, violent threats, and other severe infractions.

The fact that most rules work for 80% of the student body led to the introduction of PBIS, a systems approach for establishing a set of proactive, positive discipline procedures for all students and staff in a school building. School-wide PBIS is a “noncurricular universal prevention strategy that aims to alter the school environment by creating improved systems (e.g., discipline, reinforcement, data management) and procedures (e.g., office referral, reinforcement, training) that promote positive change in staff and student behaviors” (Bradshaw, Koth, Bevans, Ialongo, & Leaf, 2008, p. 462). Schools create teams that determine what and how interventions will fit into the school culture. The team chooses three to five behavioral supports that will be used in the school. The team helps create consequences to these behavioral supports that are known throughout the school building. These discipline consequences are administered in the classroom and not by an office based administrator. PBIS has shown to reduce discipline referrals and improve the climate of a school. Only the most severe discipline infractions involve a referral to the school office and involve an administrator (Netzel & Eber, 2003).

Zero Tolerance

Zero tolerance policies provide the basis for many of today’s discipline guidelines in education. Zero tolerance was created by the U.S. Navy in 1983 to handle drug abuse accusations among 40 members of a submarine (Skiba & Peterson, 1999). Later in 1986, a U.S. district attorney, to penalize drug dealers in southern California, established zero-tolerance policies for offenders (Skiba & Peterson, 1999). Ten years later, these same non-flexible policies were being used in schools as discipline measures for serious offenses like weapon possession, drug possession and use, tobacco, and serious school disruption (Skiba & Peterson, 1999). Once zero tolerance policies are enacted in the educational setting, school leaders are to enforce them without regard to the context of the situation. This forces school leaders to act

without regarding the seriousness of the behaviors or the intent of the individuals involved (Gage, Sugai, Lunde, & DeLoreto, 2013).

By 1993, when school corporations across the country began to implement these rigid standards, the federal government had silently abolished its zero tolerance policies for sentencing criminals. But, in 1994 President Clinton signed the Gun Free Schools Act. This established, by federal law, the necessity for schools to expel for one calendar year any student found to have a firearm on school property (Skiba & Peterson, 1999).

Zero tolerance policies have been argued to be bad for schools rather than making discipline decisions easier for educators and acting as a deterrent for students (Bloomberg, 2004). According to Iselin (2010), zero-tolerance policies do not allow administrators to be flexible with students on each discipline issue, are often implemented indiscriminately, and used too often for minor discipline offenses. They have not been shown to improve school safety (Iselin, as cited in Skiba & Sprague, 2008). In fact, according to Iselin (2010), they are associated with lower academic performance, higher rates of dropout and graduation delays for students, increased indifference in academic achievement, and increased discipline occurrences.

Bloomberg (2004) also stated that zero tolerance leads to an increase in out of school suspension rates. It does not reduce or eliminate student misconduct by acting as a preventative measure. Instead, zero tolerance policies provide for suspension or expulsion without discussion of other penalties or consequences. Because of this, suspension rates increase and students are out of the classroom more often. Gage et al. (2013) stated, “Zero tolerance policy approach may not address the problem, but instead be associated with other negative outcomes, especially for the population of students in need of the most help” (p. 134).

What Behaviors Result in Suspension and Expulsion

The behaviors that result in a student being excluded from the educational setting differ depending upon the school (Skiba & Sprague, 2008). Most educators agree that all children need to come to school and feel safe, but the behaviors that cause a suspension or expulsion should be more consistent. James Logan High School in Union City, California, listed fighting, assault and battery, drugs and look-alike substances, alcohol, robbery/extortion, damage to school property (graffiti), theft/stealing, habitual profanity, vulgarity, obscene actions, unlawful drug paraphernalia, knowingly receiving stolen property, imitation firearm, sexual assault/battery, hazing/intimidating, and threats as those behaviors that can lead to a suspension between one and five school days. All of these behaviors can automatically lead to a student expulsion if an administrator believes they are serious enough in nature (James Logan High School Infractions, n.d.).

Mount Vernon High School in Alexandria, Virginia, added false alarms, bomb threats, use of tobacco products, and verbal abuse to the list mentioned above (Mount Vernon High School Student Handbook, n.d.). This school also posted that weapon possession, arson, and assault on a staff member are infractions for which an administrator will automatically seek an expulsion.

What Causes Students to Incur Discipline Issues

It is also important to understand why students misbehave. Killion (1998) stated that a lack of parental involvement was the primary reason for student misbehavior in schools when he surveyed Indiana assistant principals. The second finding in his study was student immaturity and an inability to process the outcomes to student behavior.

Students also need to feel that they are cared for by the school's teachers and staff. For whatever reason, students have stopped believing they are important and teachers have stopped reinforcing good behavior (Toby, 1998). A second reason brought up is that students do not have a desire to be in school. Students have always felt this way and have wanted to escape the confines of the school building. The problem today is that society requires that students attend school longer than in the past. "Keeping more students in school who do not want to be there interferes with learning as well as the school order" (Toby, 1998, p. 71).

A student's individual connection to school plays a role in a student's behavior as well as the school's climate. According to Stewart (2003), student attendance rates, commitment to school, and involvement in school activities work on the individual level affecting a student's behavior. On a broader level, he stated that the school's climate has either a positive or negative influence on the student's behavior. To reach children in a positive manner, schools must respond to student needs on both of these levels.

Who Gets Suspended and Why

Students can stay out of trouble in school and with the law if the following four pieces apply to their school life. They are: a connection with positive peer influences, involvement in school activities, commitment to conform to social norms, and a "belief in the value or legitimacy of convention" (Hirschi, as cited in Scaggs, 2009, p. 1). Skaggs (2009) stated "the current school climate in America is ubiquitously characterized by disciplinary policies which remove students, who have violated rules, from the school" (p. 2). Schools should attempt to provide "more effective, less exclusionary methods for maintaining safe, productive school climates" (Skiba & Sprague, 2008, p. 40) because "schools that continue to use suspension

practices as punitive measures are in effect claiming that further educative interventions for their students will prove ineffective” (Williams, 2013, p. 34).

Losen and Martinez (2013) stated that during the 2009-2010 school year, one in nine high school students were suspended out-of-school nationally. One out of five of these students had a disability. Most of these out-of-school suspensions were for less serious infractions like being disruptive or loud, tardy to class, or dress code violations rather than for serious violations like drugs, weapons, or alcohol. Male students were more likely to be suspended than female students (Iselin, 2010). Iselin (2010) also stated that students who are frequently suspended are likely to have less parental supervision at home. Higher rates of suspension lead to a larger chance of the student being involved with the juvenile and adult justice systems (Skiba et al., 2013). Data from the Office for Civil Rights (2012) for suspensions and expulsions in the United States for the 2009-2010 school year are listed in Table 1.

Table 1

Breakdown of 2009-2010 Suspensions and Expulsions from the U.S. Department of Education

Race	Out of School Suspension Rates	Expulsion Rates	Total Number of Students
White	38.2%	32.9%	51.2%
Black	35.3%	41.5%	18%
Hispanic	23.8%	23.9%	23.7%
Other	2.7%	1.7%	7.2%
Total Students	3,727,285.0	72,135.0	42,237,135.0

Source. Office for Civil Rights (2012).

Skiba and Sprague's (2008) research also predicted that African American emotionally disabled (ED) or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) students are the most suspended subgroup in schools with 36% of those students receiving an out of school suspension. This subgroup grew from 24.3% of the population in the 1972-1973 school year to 36% in the 2009-2010 academic year (as cited in Losen & Martinez, 2013). Other predictors of suspensions among students with disabilities are those who make multiple school changes, are an older age than the majority of students in their grade, and whose parents possess a low satisfaction level with their child's school (Iselin, 2010).

Martinez (2013) stated that family dynamics and other home issues play a role in whether children are more likely to get suspended. Children whose parents nurture learning in a positive and encouraging way have a better chance of succeeding in school. "The involvement or non-involvement of a parent can also be critical to a child's success" (Ferrell, 2009, p. 22). A family's financial stability can predict a student's discipline record because those students are more likely to be disciplined at school. Finally, children who witness violence or abuse between parents/guardians or between a parent and child are more likely to get in trouble in school. In fact, out-of-school suspension pushes students out of school who need its structure the most because of difficult home lives and then going to unsupervised homes (Blakesley, 2013).

Children of divorced parents also struggle with discipline, especially at younger ages, because they feel guilt and feelings of loss (Blakesley, 2013). "In single-parent households, the parent may experience a higher level of stress than their counterparts due to the financial obligations of being the primary breadwinner in the household" (Ferrell, 2009, p. 26). This strain of meeting financial obligations is not as great on individual parents if two people share the burden. Another reason that children of divorced parents are more likely to be suspended

from school is that they move more often than children in two-parent families. This relocation takes not only children from their support system of friends and trusted adults, but it also takes the single parent from his or her network of friends and causes a raised level of anxiety in children (Ferrell, 2009).

According to Skiba et al. (2013), school suspensions should be scaled to the severity of student behavior. But, these serious behaviors like drugs, alcohol, or weapons account for less than 5% of the behavioral incidents in our schools. The national dropout rate increases from 16% to 32% for any student who has been suspended from school at least one time (Losen & Martinez, 2013). Higher rates of suspension are related to high rates of future antisocial behaviors and involvement in the justice system. Also, schools with high suspension rates have higher law violations and more students from lower socio-economic backgrounds. They also spend more money per student. Losen and Martinez (2013) continued to state that schools with high suspension rates do not differ from schools with low suspensions rates on the number of students, gender of students, teacher experience, and student/teacher ratio. Schools with low suspension rates have higher ratings of school cleanliness and climate. Skiba et al. (2013) conducted another study that says that schools with less warmth/support have higher suspension rates. Students need to be cared for as people and not “just considered as test scores or poverty index rates” (D. S. Peterson, 2013, p. 75).

Student Views of Out-of-School Suspension

Brown (2007) stated that students view suspensions that are assigned too liberally. He also stated that out-of-school suspensions are given without enough evidence to support them. Brunette (2010) reported that student suspensions did not help deter future inappropriate behavior but rather increased the likelihood of future suspensions. Caru, Drupper, and Theriot

performed a study that found that both suspended and non-suspended students perceive suspensions as a vacation or holiday from school and not as a discipline consequence (as cited in Bloomberg, 2004).

Frequently disciplined students do not always see the value in following school rules. The results of a study by Marsh, Rosser, and Harre stated, Differentiating between official rules and unofficial rules, the students in their study stated that non-academic students often perceived official school rules to be irrelevant, instead adopting their own rules of behavior within the confines of the school environment. The mismatch between what the students saw as just and fair, therefore, differed drastically from that of the teachers, often creating a distrust of the teachers and a culture of defiance. (as cited in Evans, 2011, p. 71)

The result of this study indicated a distrust among teachers and often disciplined students that harms the educational mission of the school.

Bowen (2010) noted that students indicate that rules may not be enforced evenly throughout schools. The students believe that special education students do not receive the same consequences as regular education students and therefore do not have to follow the same directives. Bowen's study also indicated that students believe that adults in schools do not model appropriate behavior. Blakesley (2013) stated when teachers model acceptable behaviors then this will lead to better student behaviors. Most students believe that time-outs and detentions are not always deterrents because some students enjoy being in a quiet place. Bowen goes on to state that schools do not want to demand good behavior because they do not want to hurt a child's self-esteem. This also causes the student-teacher relationship to be strained because students believe that they are not held accountable for their actions. Teachers are sometimes

viewed as inconsistent in their discipline procedures and this causes students to not understand what to expect when they enter the classroom (Munn, Cullen, & Lloyd, 2000). Barrientos (2010) stated that students need to feel a sense of belonging to the school and that good educators do not become combatants with students. Teachers' tolerance and attitudes also affect classroom discipline and climate (Skiba et al., 2013)

Students who have been suspended have a myriad of feelings. They range from rejection, anger, feeling unfairly treated, worried about parents reactions, upset, scared and shocked. Students understand that violence should be a suspendable and even expellable offense. Where they differ with adults is that they do not believe that other offenses, like pouring mousse on the bathroom floor should cause a separation from school (Munn et al., 2000). They desire consequences for inappropriate behaviors that are logical, fair, and relate to the student's actions (Center for Mental Health in Schools, 2010).

Alternatives to Suspension

There are several views by educators that provide alternatives to suspension. The most obvious one is in-school suspension (ISS) but there are several types of ISS. Turpin and Dawn produced a study in a rural high school where the school used a camera to monitor the students because of trouble finding competent employees to staff an ISS classroom (as cited in Bloomberg, 2004). Other, larger school districts, use a central location where students who are given ISS report on a specific day. This eliminates the feeling of the student being on vacation (Iselin, 2010). Leapley found that schools that used an in-school suspension program reduced the number of violent acts by students (as cited in Bloomberg, 2004).

Other forms of alternatives to suspensions are discussed in Robinett's (2012) investigation. The first alternative is for students to perform community service instead of being

suspended in-school or out-of-school. Another is to not take students out of class when a student misbehaves at school but rather to make them attend more school. Options are Saturday school or after-school detentions. There are several forms of Saturday school models. One alternative taken from the New Albany Plain Local School District website has students report from 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM on Saturday mornings for a study hall. Students are responsible for bringing their own work for the sessions. Another school in Connecticut, Scofield Magnet School in Stamford, staffs their Saturday school with parent teacher organization volunteers (Kettle, 2011).

Robinette (2012) discussed that another option is to temporarily remove a student from class, not for an entire school day like a suspension, but only for the time period that the student is misbehaving. The student would then be allowed to attend other classes that day. He also said establishing a behavior support plan or contract could be created to help a student modify behavior. Another method of help for a struggling student would be for him to attend a study team before or after school if the reason that the student was acting out was poor performance in the classroom. Sending students for a psychological assessment is another way to help educators understand ways to help a student. It is important to realize that there is not a one size fits all approach to student discipline and educators need to adapt to meet student needs. To discover which alternatives are best for a particular school or corporation, Iselin (2010) stated that schools should perform an assessment audit of student and school needs.

Grandmont (2003) suggested using judicious discipline's democratic approach as a valuable tactic to lower suspension levels. In it, students are involved in developing rules and consequences that fit into each student's individual rights. Everyone's behavior should not interfere with an individual's right to freedom but should also not interfere with other student's rights to learn. Another method that works in schools is to create parental involvement

opportunities for volunteering or even allowing them to follow their child in the classroom (Bowen, 2013). The creation of alternative schools has helped separate problem students as well as creating more lunch periods so that fewer students are free at a time (Bowen, 2013). The final method that Bowen (2013) emphasized for orderly schools is to “emphasize school as a learning place” (para. 18).

Iselin (2010) explained that schools should practice prevention and reinforce positive student behaviors. These positive behavioral interventions and supports to students reduce discipline referrals. Conflict resolution that focuses on alternatives to suspension and sensitivity training will allow students to understand others of different races and cultures. These are effective methods of discipline prevention. School employees should work to create social bonds with students. These bonds allow students a greater desire to conform to school rules and policies (Kirk, 2008).

Peterson (2005) shared other alternatives mentioned are creating coordinated behavior plans for students. This is used for special education students, but can be utilized to aid regular education students too. Performing community service or in-kind restitution for damage caused by improper student behavior is another alternative to suspension. A final method that she advocates is providing students with a short course or self-study module to be assigned if a student violates part of the student code. Giving students more school instead of less can be an alternative that teaches students awareness of how their actions impact others.

According to Shah and McNeil (2013), a program to limit the negative aspects of when a student must be suspended was created in Baltimore, Maryland, by Jonathon Brice. Brice, along with other school district members, created a system where if a student gets suspended during the school day, they would be sent to their building called Success Academy (Shah & McNeil,

2013). If a student was fighting, dealing drugs, or bringing a weapon to school, they were still suspended from the learning environment. However, if the offense was not endangering other students, instead of sending students home with little or no schoolwork, they were sent to Brice and his colleagues to work and continue learning in their environment. Brice stated that this way, the students receive a “full day of learning” (Shah & McNeil, 2013, p. 28) and these were not incentives for students who misbehave to go home.

Another study performed by Flannagain (2007) found that in Texas students in classrooms and schools that incorporated “democratic, caring classroom management strategies” (p. 47) had statistically significant gains in academic performance. Democratic classrooms are seen as those with “a positive process, affirmed the students’ individuality, set mutual realistic classroom limits and guidelines, and build cooperation without using coercion (Flannagain, 2007, p. 47). This method also gave the students the ability to set goals that were both individualized and realistic.

According to Solutions Not Suspensions (2012), some state legislatures have put laws in place to limit out-of-school suspensions. Examples are in Connecticut where suspensions must be in-school suspensions unless the student poses a safety threat or disrupts the educational process. California has a law that states that administrators cannot suspend until they have tried other disciplinary practices first. If those fail, then administrators can utilize out of school suspension. Delaware has amended zero tolerance provisions and provided its school personnel leeway in making discipline decisions.

When Should Suspensions Be Used?

According to Margo Pensavalle, professor at the University of Southern California, “Students should be suspended if they pose a threat to themselves or others in school” (as cited

in Barrientos, 2010, para. 9). Suspension should be used as a last resort unless for drug violations, fights, weapons possession, etc. Suspensions are also needed in the high school level to send a message that there are consequences to actions (Barrientos, 2010). Skiba et al. (2013) reported that these serious offenses accounted for only 5% of all student suspensions nationally during the 2009-2010 school year. The other 95% were for lesser offenses like disrupting class, tardiness, and dress code violations among others (Losen & Martinez, 2013). In fact, an Indiana study that surveyed assistant principals found that student tardiness was the “number one discipline problem” (Killion, 1998, p. 47).

Suspension is effective in some cases. According to Iselin (2010), it is positive in removing a problematic student from school. It provides temporary relief to school staff who are frustrated with the student’s misconduct. It also allows the student’s parents to become aware of the child’s behavior at school.

How Student Suspension Affects Academic Achievement Through Testing

High schools can be difficult places to be for some students. Thornsberry (2010) stated, “High schools are generally larger than middle schools. Students have a longer distance to travel between classrooms. Along with moving from different areas of the building, the freshmen have to move among upperclassmen” (p. 24). These factors can have a negative effect on the behavior of students. Out-of-school suspension adds to the student’s development of academic and social disengagement from school (Farneth & Sundius, 2008). According to Warren (2007), students who are frightened for their safety and unable to concentrate will not be able to perform well in school. Teachers and school administrators must provide a school environment that nurtures students and raises student achievement. If students are removed from school for disciplinary

reasons, they are not always provided with alternative education opportunities and this needs to be addressed by policy makers (Bennett, Famularo, Norton, & Washington, 2010).

School suspension causes students a myriad of feelings that often confuse and alienate them (Skiba & Peterson, 1999). Students who received an out-of-school suspension in middle school were half as likely to graduate on time as students who did not receive a suspension. Students who were suspended also report anger with and alienation from the school community that they have trouble handling and working through social problems (Warren, 2007). Further, it was found that a negative correlation was found between those students that receive school discipline and their achievement in schools (Zenter, as cited in Warren, 2007). A Massachusetts study reported that students who were suspended in Grade 9 went in one of two directions. Either they stopped receiving discipline and graduated, or they left school by voluntary or involuntary means by dropping out or being expelled (Bennett et al., 2010).

A study in Miami-Dade County Schools broke down reading progress by the number of days a student was suspended from school during their ninth grade school year (Arcia, 2006). Only 42% of those students were still enrolled in the school district during their senior year. A total of 25% dropped out, 15% moved to adult education, 15% moved out of the school district, and 3% of those students finished their high school coursework early (Arcia, 2006). The study also revealed that students who were suspended at least one day had smaller gains in reading than those of their peers. Even though suspensions alone were not the only problem that these students had, it did show that to keep up with peers, students must be in the classroom to learn (Arcia, 2006).

Rausch and Skiba (2004) used Indiana's ISTEP scores to determine if schools with high suspension rates performed better on academic tests. The data overwhelmingly showed that

schools with the largest suspension rates had lower passing rates than those with lower suspension rates. High and low poverty were not factors either, “the negative relationship between a school’s use of suspension and its average ISTEP scores continues to hold when poverty, race, and a number of other demographic variables are controlled” (Rausch & Skiba, 2004, p. 6). According to Rausch and Skiba’s study, the more students a school suspends, the worse they will score on Indiana’s standardized tests. Roby (2004) conducted a similar study in Ohio that focused on attendance, not just student suspension, and found “the correlation of student attendance and student achievement is moderate to strong, with the most significant relationship occurring at the ninth grade level” (p. 10). These two studies displayed the relationship between students being in school and their ability to perform well on standardized tests.

School Location and Out-of-School Suspension

As conferred earlier, much of the literature discusses race as a factor of higher out-of-school suspension rates rather than a school’s location of urban, suburban, or rural. Research indicates that teachers in urban schools spend more time on discipline than their suburban and rural counterparts (Noltemeyer & Mcloughlin, 2010). In addition, African-American male students are suspended at higher rates than other races by gender and these high schools with larger African-American populations tend to reside in urban areas (Skiba et al., 2002). Urban schools also utilize out-of-school suspensions, and expulsions as well, more than their suburban and rural counterparts (Skiba & Sprague, 2008).

Rural schools use suspension far less than their suburban and urban counterparts (Noltemeyer & Mcloughlin, 2010). But Noltemeyer and Mcloughlin (2010) found that White students were expelled more often than African-American students in rural schools. Schools

located in rural districts reported spending more time on discipline issues that indicate a lack of civility, like rumors, verbal intimidation, and pushing/shoving, rather than violent issues such as drugs, weapons carrying, and gang involvement (Skiba & Peterson, 2000). Students in rural schools feel a stronger connection with their school if it has at least 80% of students belonging to the same race. The school could be 80% Caucasian, Latino, African-American, etc. This stronger connection leads to fewer discipline issues (McNeely et al., 2002).

Suburban schools have been found to be between urban and rural schools when it comes to utilizing out-of-school suspension as a discipline tool. Noltemeyer and Mcloughlin (2010) stated that while urban schools reported spending more time on discipline, 67%, suburban schools spent 47% of their school time and rural schools spent 42%.

Suburban and urban areas were more likely to use out-of-school suspension than were schools in small cities or rural farming areas. In addition, schools in suburban areas were more likely to use in-school-suspension as a disciplinary response, perhaps due to greater available resources. (Noltemeyer & Mcloughlin, 2010, p. 28)

Rausch and Skiba (2004) reported that suburban schools have the highest rate of disproportionality among the discipline rates of African-American students in relation to the rest of their student bodies.

School Size and Out-of-School Suspension

The size of a school has not been shown to have a positive or negative impact on the number of out-of-school suspensions or expulsions that a school assigns to students. In fact, school size, as measured by the number of students enrolled, and the gender breakdown of the student body was not significantly related to suspension rate” (Christle, Nelson, & Jolivette, 2004, p. 4). Higher student-teacher ratios, however, did relate to more out-of-school suspensions

than those schools with low student-teacher ratios regardless of the size of the school (Lee & Smith, 1995). The benefits of larger schools is that they can potentially use their physical plants more effectively, cut costs by buying materials in bulk, and employ teachers and resources more efficiently over a broader base of students. Another argument for larger schools is that they offer a larger curriculum than smaller schools (Cornell & Klein, 2010). Smaller schools are argued to offer students more social supports than larger schools and generate closer student-teacher relationships. They have found these social supports to have positive effects on school attendance and participation in extra-curricular activities (Cornell & Klein, 2010). McNeely et al. (2002) related these feelings of belonging to rural schools and the make-up of the communities that surround them, but they did not, however, see a relationship to the number of students enrolled in the rural school and these feelings.

Principals' Impact on Student Achievement

According to Hull (2012), principals have a greater impact on student achievement as their experience increases. A principal's influence is second only to a teacher's influence in the impact on a child's learning. In fact, a highly effective principal can increase students' scores in his or her school up to 10 percentile points on standardized tests in just one year (Hull, 2012). This increase can be greater in a high poverty or high minority school where the principal and staff show a greater example of stability to students than they may receive in their home (Hull, 2012).

Research shows that teacher perception on the competency of the principal increases the academic achievement of the school (Miller, 1976). Effective principals provide teachers with the help they need to be effective, both emotionally and with other needs like professional development, supplies, and computer needs (Hull, 2012). They cultivate a climate of high

student achievement that is shared with a school's stakeholders. They have a situational awareness of issues in a school and understand how to involve teachers in strong decisions that can cause upheaval in the school (Goodwin, 2013). Effective principals also provide teachers with immediate, meaningful feedback when it comes to observing teachers (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004).

Low principal turnover has a positive effect on student achievement. According to Beteille, Kalogrides, and Loeb (2012), "Turnover rates for principals range from 15 percent to 30 percent each year, with especially high rates of turnover in schools serving more low-income, minority, and low-achieving students" (p. 906). In the low-income, high-minority schools, this principal turnover does not allow new initiatives to take hold and forces schools that are already in turmoil to not maintain stability (Hull, 2012).

Summary

"Discipline begins in the home" is a very famous quote. Today, student discipline, and more importantly student achievement, are also the responsibility of the school given the mission of increased student accountability. This literature review was separated into thirteen sections for dialog. The sections were the history of school discipline, classroom models of discipline to avoid school suspension, zero tolerance, behaviors that result in suspension and expulsion, demographics of suspended students, student views of out-of-school suspension, alternatives to out-of-school suspension, when out-of-school suspension should be used, how student suspension affects academic achievement through testing, the causes of student discipline issues, school location and out-of-school suspension, school size and out-of-school suspension and a principals' impact on student achievement. Each of these sections discussed the issues related to out-of-school suspension. As No Child Left Behind legislation has forced states to publish

academic data, school and district personnel must respond to school discipline in a different manner. Administrators cannot simply remove troubled students from the school environment and forget about their academic progress. They must now provide interventions to keep troubled kids in school and implement programs that provide students incentives to stay in the school setting; all this while forwarding the academic mission of the school.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses research methodology including the questions for the study, the null hypotheses, the population examined, the data collection process, the instrument used, the instrument's validity and reliability, the study's variables, and an analysis of the data. The purpose of the study was to determine whether schools that impose more days of out-of-school suspension as a discipline consequence in Indiana high schools have a relationship with the academic results of the school. It will also allow school or district officials to evaluate if their consequences to student infractions are in line with other schools and school districts in the state by looking at the descriptive statistics provided by school administrators. Data were gathered to determine if there were significant differences in a suspension composite score for each school whose principal participates in the survey. This data was then used to determine if the years of experience that a principal had in his or her current position served as a predictor of the school's suspension composite score.

The design of the study contained the following components. Every public high school in the state of Indiana was chosen for this study. The principals of these high schools were asked to complete a survey asking about the school's demographics, discipline data, and specific discipline offenses that include a fictional situation to help ensure consistency. All situations were answered as if it was a student's first offense and the student had no prior offenses. Data

from the survey were calculated and each school was given a suspension composite score based upon the sum of the number of days a student was suspended for each discipline infraction. A school's size and location were used to determine if those factors made a difference in the suspension composite score. It was also used to determine if there was a relationship between a high schools principal's years of experience and the suspension composite score.

The results of the survey were related to the school's scores on the state of Indiana's End of Course Assessment (ECA) in the academic areas of Algebra I and English 10. The Algebra I exam was given to Indiana students after they completed the course. A student in Indiana can take the Algebra I course during middle school or high school. The English 10 exam is given for the first time late in the spring term of a student's Grade 10 year. After a student has completed an Algebra I or English 10 course, the student may take its corresponding ECA exam at the end of the fall and spring semester until a passing score is achieved. If a student enrolls in either course during a summer school session, the student may re-take the exam for the class in which they are enrolled during a summer testing window as well. For this study, the ECA data for English 10 and Algebra I were reported by the high school principal as the percentage of students who passed each of these tests by the end of their Grade 10 year.

Research Questions

1. Is there a significance difference in the suspension composite score based on a school's location?
2. Is there a significance difference in the suspension composite score based on a school's size?
3. Do the demographics of the building principal serve as a predictor of the suspension composite score?

4. Does the suspension composite score serve as a predictor of the passing rate on the English 10 ECA?
5. Does the suspension composite score serve as a predictor of the passing rate on the Algebra I ECA?
6. Do Indiana public high school principals believe that out-of-school suspension makes students less likely to misbehave in the future?
7. Do Indiana public high school principals believe that zero tolerance policies make an impactful contribution in maintaining order at their schools?

Null Hypotheses and Research Question Analyses

H₀1. There is no significant difference in the suspension composite score based on a school's location.

H₀2. There is no significant difference in the suspension composite score based on a school's size.

H₀3. The years of experience for a building principal in their current position does not serve as a predictor of the suspension composite score.

H₀4. The suspension composite score does not serve as a predictor of the passing rate on the English 10 ECA.

H₀5. The suspension composite score does not serve as a predictor of the passing rate on the Algebra I ECA.

Questions 6 and 7 will be addressed through descriptive statistics analysis of the school and building principal.

Population

There are approximately 463 public high schools in the state of Indiana. All secondary school principals were asked to participate in a survey for this study. Null hypotheses were formulated and tested for each research question.

Data Collection Process

All principals of public high schools in the state of Indiana were asked to complete a survey. A list of principal's e-mail addresses and their ground mail addresses for all 463 public high schools in the state were obtained from the Indiana Association of School Principals (IASP) President, Dr. Todd Bess. The surveys were e-mailed to the principals with a short letter of introduction (Appendix A) about the study and a link to the Qualtrics online survey software. The letter explained that participation in the study was voluntary. No identifying information including the principals' names, e-mail addresses, or computer IP addresses were collected; however, absolute anonymity was not be guaranteed through the use of the Internet. The respondents were advised that there were no known risks or costs for participating in the research study. The information provided for the study helped offer a greater understanding of how a school's discipline philosophy is based upon the building leader and how it relates to student achievement. It also determined if school discipline was impacted by location or size. The information learned in this study will provide general statistics of how students are disciplined for certain infractions and how student out-of-school suspension affects academic achievement. Any principal could ask for the results of the study after its completion and receive a summary of the findings.

Instrumentation

A 27-question survey (Appendix B) was developed after a review of the literature about

student suspension and establishing content validity. The first seven questions of the survey provided the name of the high school, whether or not the school was a charter school, and demographic data on the principal completing the instrument. By providing the name of the high school, ECA data, enrollment, and whether the school was urban, suburban, or rural were found on the Indiana Department of Education website.

The second section of the survey dealt with how specific discipline infractions are handled in the respondent's school. The survey stated in the directions,

It is understood that school discipline is very fluid and situational. There could be many different answers to the survey questions below. Please answer the survey with the understanding that the discipline infraction is for a student who is a first time offender without prior discipline offenses.

The student transgressions of chronic attendance violations, cheating, profanity/obscenity directed toward an adult, tobacco use/possession, electronic cigarettes, false alarms, pornographic material, fighting, weapons, drug possession/distribution, alcohol possession/distribution, drug paraphernalia possession, possession of a lighter/matches, truancy, bullying, and possession of a pocket knife were chosen for the study. These student code infractions were chosen from personal experience, a review of the literature, and student handbooks from schools from across the United States. Each of the student discipline infractions were followed with a specific situation to help with the consistency of the responses. The choices for discipline consequences were numbered from 0 to 10 with Exp [expulsion] in the final column standing for expulsion. Zero represented consequences where a student was not assigned an out-of-school suspension. These could be warnings, demerits, in-school suspension, or detention. One stood for a one-day out-of-school suspension, two represented a two-day out-

of-school suspension, and three denoted a three-day out-of-school suspension, etc., through the maximum allowed by the state of Indiana, which is a 10-day out-of-school suspension. Exp signified infractions for which the school principal asked for an expulsion and counted as 45 days of out-of-school suspension in calculating the suspension composite score.

The final section of the survey asked for data that could provide further explanation of the school's approaches to student out-of-school suspension. It then asked if the administrator believed that student suspension made students less likely to misbehave in the future asking if the respondent strongly disagrees, disagrees, somewhat disagrees, somewhat agrees, agrees, or strongly agrees. The final question probed whether zero-tolerance policies made a significant contribution to maintaining order in a school. It too had the principal state whether he or she strongly disagrees, disagrees, somewhat disagrees, somewhat agrees, agrees, or strongly agrees.

Survey Validity

Survey reliability is the ability of the survey to measure what the author intends. Creswell (1994) recommended both face validity and content validity to ensure that a survey is well-founded. Face validity asks if the respondents of the survey understood the questions and their meaning. The face validity of the survey was tested via a sampling of middle school administrators, central office personnel, teachers who possess their administrative licenses and desire a job in high school administration, and statistical experts. They were given the survey and asked to provide feedback on the instrument's clarity and organization. Once those changes were made, the survey was given to a K-12 doctoral cohort in educational leadership at Indiana State University. Cohort feedback was incorporated into the survey to help further confirm its face validity.

Content validity is the ability of the questions to contain all the possible answers that respondents could answer (Creswell, 1994). The discipline consequences in the survey were developed from research from the literature review, personal experience in dealing with student discipline, student handbooks found on-line, and conversations with the piloted cohort mentioned above. After discussing the survey, several questions were deleted, amended, and clarified.

Survey Reliability

Survey reliability is used to describe the consistency of measure of a survey under repeated, identical conditions (Creswell, 1994). The survey was analyzed for reliability using a Cronbach's alpha test (18 items; $\alpha = .745$). Cronbach's alpha determines the internal consistency or average correlation of items in a survey instrument to gauge its reliability (Tavakol, 2011). In other words, Cronbach's alpha determined if the survey was answered consistently and without high levels of variance among responses.

Study Variables

The independent and dependent variables varied among each null hypothesis. For H_{01} , the independent variable was the location of the school and the suspension composite score was the dependent variable. The levels of the independent variable were urban, which are those schools residing inside the boundaries of a city of more than 50,000 people, suburban, those schools outside a principal city and inside an urbanized area with population of at least 50,000, and rural, schools which are more than 25 miles from an urbanized area. For H_{02} , the independent variable was the size of the school and the dependent variable was again the suspension composite score. The independent variable of a school's size was split into three levels of small, those schools with less than 500 students, medium, schools whose enrollments

were between 501 and 1,000 students, and large, schools with more than 1,001 students. For H₀₃, the criterion variable was the suspension composite score and the predictor variable was number of years of experience a principal has in his or her current position. For H₀₄, the criterion variable was the school's score on the English 10 ECA exam and the predictor variable was the suspension composite score. For H₀₅, the school's Algebra I ECA score was the criterion variable and the predictor variable was again the suspension composite score.

Data Analysis

A survey was developed for this study on the suspension lengths of Indiana public high school students for various infractions. The information from this survey was analyzed with ECA data for English 10 and Algebra I from the Indiana Department of Education website as the percentage of students passing these tests by the end of their Grade 10 year. The survey was conducted after IRB approval based on data from the 2013-2014 school year.

Each school was then given a suspension composite score based on the sum of the days of suspension for the 18-discipline situations asked in the survey to measure how potentially punitive a school could be. This composite score measured what a school would do if faced with certain student discipline infractions. It did not measure how often the consequence was actually used by the school. It was used to further analyze Research Questions 1 through 5. In Research Questions 1 and 2, a one-way ANOVA was utilized because one dependent variable was being examined among three levels of the independent variable. In Research Question 1, the levels of the independent variable were urban, suburban, and rural. In Research Question 2, the levels of the independent variable were the high school's size of small, medium, or large. Research Question 3 attempted to predict if a high school principal's years of experience in their current position as a building principal served as a predictor of the suspension composite score.

Research Questions 4 and 5 were tested using linear regression because the research attempted to predict if the suspension composite score could be used to determine a high school's performance on Indiana's English 10 and Algebra I ECA exams. Research Questions 6 and 7 was explored by descriptive analysis. The discipline consequences for 18-student discipline situations were asked of the building principal in a survey and this data were reported.

Summary

In this chapter, the outline of the study consisting of the hypotheses, the data sources including the population, and the plan of an instrument to be used were discussed. Chapter 4 describes the data collected from the survey and provides a descriptive analysis of the suspension rates, relationships between student composite score and ECAs, and an analysis of the findings. Chapter 5 discusses the impact those results have on education and hypothesizes on any future changes school administrators can make regarding student suspension.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS

The purpose of the study was to determine whether schools that impose more days of out-of-school suspension as a discipline consequence in Indiana public high schools have a relationship with the academic results of the school. Skiba and Sprague (2008) stated that the behaviors that resulted in a student being suspended from the educational setting differed depending upon the school. Because of this, an analysis was prepared to determine if Indiana public high schools that provide students with more days of out-of-school suspension for 18 common discipline infractions earned higher scores on Indiana's ECAs following Algebra I and English 10. Demographic data of the principals responding were also analyzed to determine whether there was a pattern in the data. The principals' gender, age, years of experience in education, and years of experience in their current positions were analyzed along with their highest level of education completed. The descriptive data of the high school's where the respondents worked was also analyzed by its enrollment, small was less than 500, medium was 501-1,000, and large was 1,001 or greater, as well as their location of rural, suburban, and urban. The number of days a student was suspended for discipline infractions was reported as a suspension composite score. This was the school's sum of the number of days a student was suspended from a school for the 18 discipline infractions listed in the Principals Survey on High School Discipline that ranged from 0 to 810.

Statistical analysis of the data included a one-way ANOVA for Research Questions 1 and 2. A linear regression was used for Research Questions 3, 4, and 5. Research Questions 6 and 7 were answered by frequencies from the respondents.

This chapter presents a description of the data and the results of the study. It is separated into sections describing descriptive data for the entire sample for the principal and the school that he or she represented and a breakdown of the discipline infractions, and a summary of the suspension composite score. Next is a discussion of the data for both the principals and schools in the sections of respondents designated by location as rural, suburban, urban, and by size of the school described as small, medium, and large. That is followed by an explanation of the inferential test results and a summary of the study's findings.

Descriptive Data for Whole Sample

All principals of public high schools in the state of Indiana were invited to participate in the study. Of a total of 463 principals invited, 89 chose to participate by submitting surveys. The data contained 89 records ($N = 89$) which was 19.2% of the public school principals in the state of Indiana.

Principal Demographics for Whole Sample

Of the population of Indiana public high school principals who participated in the study, 73 (82%) were men and 16 (18%) were women. Their ages ranged from 27 to 67 years old with $M = 47.87$ and $SD = 9.02$. Six (6.7%) had worked six to 10 years in the field of education, nine (10.1%) had been in the field 11 to 15 years, 19 (21.3%) had been in the field 16 to 20 years, 20 (22.5%) had 21 to 25 years in education, and 35 (39.3%) had been employed in education for 26 or more years. As for time in current position of building principal in his or her current school, 51 (57.3%) had been in that position for zero to five years, 19 (21.3%) for 6 to 10 years, 14

(15.7%) for 11 to 15 years, two (2.2%) had 16 to 20 years in a position, and three (3.4%) had been in the current position for 21 to 25 years. Of the highest level of education achieved by the building principals responding to the survey, 48 (53.9%) held master's degrees, 34 (38.2%) held education specialist's degrees, and seven (7.9%) held doctoral degrees. The Suspension Composite Scores for the schools ranged from 27 to 436 with $M = 287.27$ and $SD = 91.66$.

School Demographics for Whole Sample

The enrollments of the schools ranged from 152 to 3,304 students. One (1.1%) of the Indiana public high schools that responded was a charter school and 88 (98.9%) were not. Of these, 48 (53.9%) had an enrollment of 500 or fewer students, 19 (21.3%) comprised 501 to 1,000 students, and 22 (24.7%) had student populations of 1,001 students or greater. The total number of school's whose principals responded were broken down into 36 (40.4%) from rural areas, 37 (41.6%) from suburban areas, and 16 (18.0%) from urban areas in Indiana. The Algebra I ECA data for the high schools ranged from 19.6 to 94.7, $M = 64.61$ and $SD = 17.30$. The high schools English 10 ECA scores ranged from 45.3 to 96.4, $M = 76.49$ and $SD = 10.16$.

Discipline Infractions for Whole Sample

The top two responses for the discipline infractions for the whole sample are highlighted in Table 2. Data are listed in Table 2 in the order each violation was addressed in the survey.

Table 2

Whole Sample Suspension Data Summary

Violation	Top Response	Second Most Popular Response
Chronic attendance violations	64.0% Zero Days	12.4% 3 Days
Misrepres/Cheating	86.5% Zero Days	9.0% 1 Day
Profanity/Obscenity	30.3% 3 Days	22.5% Zero Days
Tobacco product	39.3% 3 Days	23.6% Zero Days
Electronic cigarette	36.0% 3 Days	25.8% Zero Days
False Alarms	33.7% Expulsion	30.3% 5 Days
Pornographic material	33.7% 3 Days	24.7% 5 Days
Fighting	43.8% 3 Days	37.1% 5 Days
Weapons	88.8% Expulsion	3.4% 0 Days 3.4% 10 Days
Narcotics/Drugs	80.9% Expulsion	6.7% 10 Days
Alcohol possession	70.8% Expulsion	11.2% 5 Days
Drug paraphernalia	59.6% Expulsion	18.0% 5 Days
Alcohol transmission	79.8% Expulsion	9.0% 5 Days
Drug transmission	87.6% Expulsion	3.4% 5 Days 3.4% 10 Days
Possession of lighter	34.8% 3 Days	19.1% Zero Days
Truancy	74.2% Zero Days	19.1% 1 Day
Bullying	41.6% 3 Days	29.2% Zero Days
Possession of pocket knife	33.7% Zero Days	23.6% Expulsion

Rural High School Demographics

Rural Principal Demographics

Rural public school principals in Indiana also participated in the study. Thirty (83.3%) were men and six (16.7%) were women. Their ages ranged from 30 to 67 years old with $M = 48.64$ and $SD = 8.58$. As for years of experience in the field of education, one (2.8%) had worked in the field for six to 10 years, three (8.3%) had been in the field 11 to 15 years, six (16.7%) had been in the field 16 to 20 years, 12 (33.3%) had 20 to 25 years in education, and 14 (38.9%) had been in education for 26 years or more.

Eighteen (50.0%) of the rural school principals had been in their current position of building principal for zero to five years, eight (22.2%) had been in their current position for six to 10 years, eight (22.2%) for 11 to 15 years, and two (5.6%) for between 20 and 25 years. None of the principals in this category had been in their current position for 26 years or longer. As for the highest level of education completed by the principals, 20 (55.6%) had earned master's degrees, 12 (33.3%) earned specialists degrees, and four (11.1%) had earned doctoral degrees. The suspension composite scores for rural public high schools ranged from 44 to 406 with $M = 295.83$ and $SD = 84.24$.

Rural School Demographics

Rural high schools in this study had enrollments that ranged from 152 to 1,143. Of these, 28 (77.8%) were categorized as small with 500 or fewer students. Six (16.7%) were considered medium-sized high schools because they had enrollments between 501 and 1,000 students. Two high schools (5.6%) had students populations considered large. They had enrollments of 1,001 students or more. The Algebra I ECA data for the rural high schools ranged from 19.6 to 92.6,

$M = 62.56$ and $SD = 17.76$ and their English 10 ECA scores ranged from 59.5 to 96.3, $M = 75.60$ and $SD = 8.92$.

The data for the suspension composite score components for the 36 rural public high schools in Indiana are listed in the Table 3. There was very little difference between the whole sample and the rural sample for most of the discipline infractions. Some differences that were found were that 50% of rural high schools gave a three-day out-of-school suspension for electronic cigarettes compared to 36% of the whole sample who assigned a three-day out-of-school suspension. Consequences for pornographic material also differed from the whole sample with 12.4% of all high schools giving a one-day suspension, but 19.4% of the rural high schools assigning one day of out-of-school suspension. Another noticeable difference was with possession of pocket knives, 33.7% of the whole sample did not assign an out-of-school suspension, and 41.7% of the rural schools gave zero days. However, 23.6% of the whole sample, but 27.8% rural sample would expel for possessing a pocket knife.

Table 3

Suspension Composite Score Data for Rural Public High Schools in Indiana by Percentage

Violation	Days of out-of-school suspension								
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6-9	10	Exp.
Chronic attendance violations	63.9%	13.9%	0	11.1%	2.8%	0	0	0	8.3%
Misrepres/ Cheating	88.9%	8.3%	2.8%	0	0	0	0	0	0
Profanity/ Obscenity	19.4%	25.0%	8.3%	27.8%	0	19.4%	0	0	0
Tobacco product	19.4%	19.4%	2.8%	55.6%	0	2.8%	0	0	0
Electronic cigarette	27.8%	16.7%	2.8%	50.0%	0	2.8%	0	0	0
False Alarms	5.6%	0	2.8%	25.0%	0	30.6%	0	5.6%	30.6%
Pornographic material	19.4%	19.4%	5.6%	33.3%	0	19.4%	0	0	2.8%
Fighting	8.3%	11.1%	0	41.7%	0	36.1%	0	2.8%	0
Weapons	2.8%	0	0	0	0	0	0	8.3%	88.9%
Narcotics/ Drugs	0	0	0	0	0	5.6%	0	8.3%	86.1%
Alcohol possession	0	0	0	2.8%	0	5.6%	0	8.3%	83.3%
Drug paraphernalia	5.6%	0	0	2.8%	2.8%	16.7%	0	11.1%	61.1%
Alcohol transmission	0	0	0	2.8%	0	5.6%	0	5.6%	86.1%
Drug transmission	0	0	0	0	2.8%	5.6%	0	5.6%	86.1%

Table 3 (continued)

Violation	Days of out-of-school suspension								
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6-9	10	Exp.
Possession of lighter	22.2%	11.1%	5.6%	38.9%	0	16.7%	0	2.8%	2.8%
Truancy	75.0%	13.9%	2.8%	8.3%	0	0	0	0	0
Bullying	33.3%	8.3%	2.8%	44.4%	0	8.3%	0	0	2.8%
Possession of pocket knife	41.7%	8.3%	0	13.9%	0	5.6%	0	2.8%	27.8%

Suburban High School Demographics

Suburban Principal Demographics

The data from suburban high schools were also broken down by suburban Indiana public high schools. Twenty-nine (78.4%) were men and eight (21.6%) were women. Their ages ranged from 31 to 65 years old with $M = 47.32$ and $SD = 9.70$. As for their experience levels, three (8.1%) had worked in field of education for six to 10 years, five (13.5%) had been in the field of education 11 to 15 years, 10 (27.0%) had been in the field of education 15 to 20 years, four (10.8%) had 20 to 25 years in education, and 15 (40.5%) had 26 or more years of experience in the educational field.

Suburban principals had been in their current jobs for varying amounts of time. Twenty-four (64.9%) had been in their position for zero to five years, seven (18.9%) for six to 10 years, four (10.8%) for 11 to 15 years, and one (2.7%) had been in the current position for each interval of between 16 and 20 years and 20 to 25 years respectively. Their highest education levels obtained was as follows: 21 (56.8%) had earned master's degrees, 13 (35.1%) achieved

specialist's degrees, and three (8.1%) held doctoral degrees. The suspension composite scores for the suburban public high schools ranged from 27 to 436 with $M = 289.68$ and $SD = 98.87$.

Suburban School Demographics

Suburban public high school enrollments varied from 181 to 3,304 students. Of these, 16 (43.2%) were small-sized high schools, 11 (29.7%) were medium-sized high schools, and 10 (27.9%) were large-sized high schools. The Algebra I ECA data for the suburban participants ranged from 39.0 to 94.7, $M = 68.85$ and $SD = 15.17$, and English 10 ECA scores ranged from 60.0 to 96.4, $M = 79.56$ and $SD = 8.58$. The data for the suspension composite score components for the 37 suburban public high schools in Indiana are listed in Table 4.

Table 4

Suspension Composite Score Data for Suburban Public High Schools in Indiana by Percentage

Violation	Days of out-of-school suspension								
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6-9	10	Exp.
Chronic attendance violations	62.2%	13.5%	0	10.8%	0	5.4%	0	0	8.1%
Misrepres/ Cheating	83.8%	10.8%	0	5.4%	0	0	0	0	0
Profanity/ Obscenity	24.3%	13.5%	10.8%	27.0%	2.7%	18.9%	0	0	2.7%
Tobacco product	21.6%	18.9%	18.9%	24.3%	0	16.2%	0	0	0
Electronic cigarette	21.6%	18.9%	16.2%	24.3%	2.7%	16.2%	0	0	0
False Alarms	0	0	2.7%	18.9%	5.4%	16.2%	0	13.5%	43.2%
Pornographic material	18.9%	5.4%	5.4%	37.8%	0	24.3%	0	0	8.1%
Fighting	2.7%	2.7%	8.1%	48.6%	0	29.7%	0	5.4%	2.7%
Weapons	5.4%	0	0	2.7%	0	5.4%	2.7%	0	83.8%
Narcotics/ Drugs	2.7%	2.7%	0	0	0	8.1%	2.7%	2.7%	81.1%
Alcohol possession	2.7%	0	2.7%	2.7%	2.7%	13.5%	2.7%	8.1%	64.9%
Drug paraphernalia	2.7%	0	2.7%	2.7%	0	18.9%	2.7%	8.1%	62.2%
Alcohol transmission	2.7%	0	2.7%	2.7%	2.7%	8.1%	0	5.4%	75.7%

Table 4 (continued)

Violation	Days of out-of-school suspension								
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6-9	10	Exp.
Drug transmission	0	0	0	2.7%	2.7%	2.7%	0	2.7%	89.2%
Possession of lighter	18.9%	18.9%	5.4%	27.0%	5.4%	16.2%	0	5.4%	2.7%
Truancy	70.3%	24.3%	0	5.4%	0	0	0	0	0
Bullying	24.3%	16.2%	2.7%	45.9%	0	8.1%	0	2.7%	0
Possession of pocket knife	24.3%	5.4%	5.4%	21.6%	0	13.5%	0	8.1%	21.6%

Urban High School Demographics

Urban Principal Demographics

The principals who led urban high schools ranged in age from 27 to 59 years old with $M = 47.38$ and $SD = 8.82$; 14 (87.5%) men and two (12.5%) women among them. The educational experience that the principals had in education ranged from two (12.5%) who had six to 10 years of experience in the field of education, one (6.3%) had been in the field 11 to 15 years, three (18.8%) had 16 to 20 years of experience, four (25.0%) had 21 to 25 years in education, and six (37.5%) had been employed in education for 26 or more years.

The experience the urban principals possessed when leading their buildings consisted of nine (56.3%) who had zero to five years of experience, four (25.0%) had accrued six to 10 years of building leadership, two (12.5%) had 11 to 15 years of time as building principal, and one (6.3%) had been in the current position for between 16 and 20 years. Their highest level of

education achieved was reported as seven (43.8%) who held master's degrees, and nine (56.3%) who held specialist's degrees. The suspension composite scores for the urban public high schools ranged from 75 to 400 with $M = 262.44$ and $SD = 91.75$ compared to 44 to 406 with $M = 295.83$ and $SD = 84.24$ for rural schools, and 27 to 436 with $M = 289.68$ and $SD = 98.87$ for suburban high schools.

Urban School Demographics

The enrollments for the urban public high schools ranged from 206 to 3,101 students. Of these, four (25.0%) were considered small-sized high schools, two (12.5%) medium-sized high schools, and 10 (62.5%) were large-sized high schools. The Algebra I ECA data for the urban high schools ranged from 23.8 to 92.0, $M = 59.39$ and $SD = 19.62$, and their English 10 ECA scores ranged from 45.3 to 91.2, $M = 71.36$ and $SD = 13.79$. By comparison, rural schools reported their Algebra I ECA data ranged from 19.6 to 92.6, $M = 62.56$ and $SD = 17.75$ and their English 10 ECA scores ranged from 59.5 to 96.3, $M = 75.60$ and $SD = 8.92$. Suburban participants ranged from 39.0 to 94.7, $M = 68.85$ and $SD = 15.17$, and their English 10 ECA scores ranged from 60.0 to 94.7, $M = 79.56$ and $SD = 8.58$. The data for the suspension composite score components for the 16 urban public high schools in Indiana is listed in Table 5.

Table 5

Suspension Composite Score Data for Urban Public High Schools in Indiana by Percentage

Violation	Days of out-of-school suspension								
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6-9	10	Exp.
Chronic attendance violations	68.8%	0	0	18.8%	6.3%	0	0	0	6.3%
Misrepres/ Cheating	87.5%	6.3%	0	6.3%	0	0	0	0	0
Profanity/ Obscenity	25.0%	18.8%	6.3%	43.8%	0	6.3%	0	0	0
Tobacco product	37.5%	12.5%	6.3%	37.5%	0	6.3%	0	0	0
Electronic cigarette	31.3%	18.8%	12.5%	31.3%	6.3%	0	0	0	0
False Alarms	6.3%	0	0	12.5%	0	62.5%	0	0	18.8%
Pornographic material	12.5%	12.5%	12.5%	25.0%	0	37.5%	0	0	0
Fighting	6.3%	0	0	37.5%	0	56.3%	0	0	0
Weapons	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100.0%
Narcotics/ Drugs	0	0	6.3%	6.3%	0	0	6.3%	12.5%	68.8%
Alcohol possession	0	0	6.3%	6.3%	0	18.8%	0	12.5%	56.3%
Drug paraphernalia	0	6.3%	6.3%	12.5%	0	18.8%	0	6.3%	50.0%
Alcohol transmission	0	0	6.3%	0	0	18.8%	0	0	75.0%

Table 5 (continued)

Violation	Days of out-of-school suspension								
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6-9	10	Exp.
Drug transmission	0	0	6.3%	0	0	0	6.3%	0	87.5%
Possession of lighter	12.5%	6.3%	12.5%	43.8%	0	18.8%	0	6.3%	0
Truancy	81.3%	18.8%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bullying	31.3%	6.3%	6.3%	25.0%	0	31.3%	0	0	0
Possession of pocket knife	37.5%	6.3%	0	12.5%	6.3%	18.8%	0	0	18.8%

A comparison of rural, suburban, and urban data is listed in Table 6.

Table 6

Rural, Suburban, and Urban Principal Summary Table

Variable	Rural	Suburban	Urban
Criteria	More than 25 miles from urban area of at least 50,000 people	Within 25 miles of urban area of at least 50,000 people	Inside city of at least 50,000 people
Number of respondents	36	37	16
Male principals	83.3%	78.4%	87.5%
Female principals	16.7%	21.6%	12.5%
Average age of principal	48.64 years	47.32 years	47.38 years
Years in education			
6 to 10	2.8%	8.1%	12.5%
11 to 15	8.3%	13.5%	6.3%
16 to 20	16.7%	27.0%	18.8%
21 to 25	33.3%	10.8%	25.0%
26 or more	38.9%	40.5%	37.5%
Years in current position			
1 to 5	50.0%	64.9%	56.3%
6 to 10	22.2%	18.9%	25.0%
11 to 15	22.2%	10.8%	12.5%
16 to 20	5.6%	2.7%	6.3%
21 to 25	0.0%	2.7%	0.0%
Highest level of ed.			
Master's degree	55.6%	56.8%	43.8%
Specialists degree	33.3%	35.1%	56.3%
Doctoral degree	11.1%	8.1%	0.0%
School size			
Small	77.8%	43.2%	25.0%
Medium	16.7%	29.7%	12.5%
Large	5.6%	27.0%	62.5%

Table 6 (continued)

Variable	Rural	Suburban	Urban
Algebra I ECA	$M = 62.56$ $SD = 17.76$	$M = 68.85$ $SD = 15.17$	$M = 59.39$ $SD = 19.62$
English 10 ECA	$M = 75.60$ $SD = 8.92$	$M = 79.56$ $SD = 8.58$	$M = 71.36$ $SD = 13.79$
Suspension Composite Score	$M = 295.83$ $SD = 84.24$	$M = 289.68$ $SD = 98.87$	$M = 262.44$ $SD = 91.75$

Small School Demographics

Small School Principal Demographics

All schools in the study were also broken down into small-, medium-, and large-sized high schools. Forty-eight principals (48% of the total responses) responded representing schools in the small school segment of the study. Of the small Indiana public high schools that contained 500 or fewer students, 39 (81.3%) principals were men and nine (18.8%) were women with their ages ranging from 27 to 65 years of age ($M = 47.54$, $SD = 9.68$). Of the small school principals surveyed, four (8.3%) had been employed in education between six and 10 years, six (12.5%) had been employed in education 11 to 15 years, 10 (20.8%) had 15 to 20 years of educational experience, eight (16.7%) had been in education for 21 to 25 years, and 20 (41.7%) had been in education for 26 years or more.

As for years of experience in their current position of building principal, 26 (54.2%) have been employed for zero to five years, 12 (25.0%) for six to 10 years, seven (14.5%) for 11 to 15 years, one (2.1%) had been in his or her current position between 16 and 20 years, and two

(4.2%) had been in their current positions for 21 to 25 years. The education level of the small school principals was also very similar to the breakdown of the total population studied.

Twenty-seven (56.3%) held a master's degrees, 16 (33.3%) held education specialist's degrees, and five (10.4%) held doctoral degrees.

Small School Demographics

The Indiana public high schools that were 500 students or smaller contained 28 (58.3%) of the responses from rural areas, 16 (33.3%) from suburban areas, and four (8.3%) from urban areas. The high schools' enrollments ranged from 152 to 490 students ($M = 345.27$, $SD = 88.05$). The small schools' scores on the Algebra I ECA exams ranged from 19.60% of students passing in the 2013 sophomore cohort to 94.7% of the students passing with $M = 63.72$ and $SD = 18.70$. English 10 data for small schools ranged from 48.3% passing to 96.4% passing with $M = 75.35$ and $SD = 10.44$. The Suspension Composite Scores for small public high schools ranged from 44 to 436 with $M = 298.90$ and $SD = 88.51$. The data for the suspension composite score components for the 48 small public high schools in Indiana is listed in the Table 7.

Table 7

Suspension Composite Score Data for Small Public High Schools in Indiana by Percentage

Violation	Days of out-of-school suspension								Exp.
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6-9	10	
Chronic attendance violations	70.8%	8.3%	0	10.4%	2.1%	2.1%	0	0	6.3%
Misrepres/ Cheating	89.6%	4.2%	2.1%	4.2%	0	0	0	0	0
Profanity /Obscenity	25.0%	27.1%	8.3%	25.0%	0	12.5%	0	0	2.1%
Tobacco product	20.8%	18.8%	2.1%	47.9%	0	10.4%	0	0	0
Electronic cigarette	27.1%	16.7%	2.1%	45.8%	0	8.3%	0	0	0
False Alarms	4.2%	0	4.2%	20.8%	4.2%	29.2%	0	8.3%	29.2%
Pornographic material	20.8%	18.8%	4.2%	35.4%	0	18.8%	0	0	2.1%
Fighting	6.3%	10.4%	4.2%	45.8%	0	29.2%	0	0	4.2%
Weapons	4.2%	0	0	0	0	0	2.1%	4.2%	89.6%
Narcotics/ Drugs	0	0	2.1%	0	0	6.3%	2.1%	4.2%	85.4%
Alcohol possession	0	0	2.1%	2.1%	0	10.4%	2.1%	2.1%	81.3%
Drug paraphernalia	2.1%	0	2.1%	2.1%	0	16.7%	2.1%	6.3%	68.8%
Alcohol transmission	0	0	2.1%	2.1%	0	8.3%	0	0	85.4%
Drug transmission	0	0	0	0	2.1%	4.2%	0	2.1%	91.7%

Table 7 (continued)

Violation	Days of out-of-school suspension								Exp.
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6-9	10	
Possession of lighter	18.8%	16.7%	2.1%	31.3%	2.1%	18.8%	0	6.3%	4.2%
Truancy	70.8%	18.8%	2.1%	8.3%	0	0	0	0	0
Bullying	29.2%	10.4%	2.1%	41.7%	0	12.5%	0	2.1%	2.1%
Possession of pocket knife	33.3%	4.2%	4.2%	18.8%	0	10.4%	0	2.1%	27.1%

Medium School Demographics

Medium School Principal Demographics

Nineteen principals (21.3% of the total responses) represented medium-sized high schools. Eighteen (94.7%) of the medium-sized high school principals were men and one (5.3%) was a woman. Their ages ranged from 36 to 67 years of age ($M = 48.53$, $SD = 8.98$). The years of experience that the principals had in education ranged from one (5.3%) who had been employed in education between six and 10 years, two (10.5%) had been in education 11 to 15 years, three (15.8%) had 16 to 20 years of educational experience, seven (36.8%) had been employed in education between 21 to 25 years, and six (31.6%) that had been in education for 26 years or more.

As for their experience reported in their current position of building principals, eight (42.1%) had been in that position for zero to five years, four (21.1%) for six to 10 years, five (26.3%) for 11 to 15 years, one (5.3%) had been in his or her current position between 16 and 20 years, and one (5.3%) had been in his or her current position for 21 to 25 years. When asked

about the highest level of education achieved, 12 (63.2%) stated master's degrees, six (31.6%) said specialist's degrees, and one (5.3%) stated doctoral degree.

The major difference in the education level of the medium-sized school principals and the total population that responded was that 9.3% more earned master's degrees as their highest education level attained than the total sample. Twelve (63.2%) held master's degrees, six (31.6%) had earned education specialist's degrees, and one (5.3%) held a doctoral degree. When the total population of all public high school principals surveyed were asked about their highest level of education obtained, 48 (53.9%) held master's degrees, 34 (38.2%) held education specialist's degrees, and seven (7.9%) held doctoral degrees.

Medium School Demographics

The medium-sized Indiana public high schools contained six (31.6%) responses from rural areas, 11 (57.9%) from suburban areas, and two (10.5%) from urban areas. The high schools' enrollments ranged from 501 to 935 students ($M = 720.16$, $SD = 140.85$). The Algebra I ECA exams scores for the 2013 sophomore cohort ranged from 40.00% to 92.5% of the students passing with $M = 68.55$ and $SD = 15.22$. English 10 data for this group ranged from 66.2% passing to 88.90% passing with $M = 78.87$ and $SD = 6.64$. The suspension composite scores for medium public high schools ranged from 115 to 394 with $M = 296.26$ and $SD = 72.05$. The data for the suspension composite score components for the 19 medium-sized public high schools, those with enrollment between 501 and 1,000 students, in Indiana are listed in Table 8.

Table 8

Suspension Composite Score Data for Medium Public High Schools in Indiana by Percentage

Violation	Days of out-of-school suspension								
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6-9	10	Exp.
Chronic attendance violations	52.6%	15.8%	0	21.1%	0	0	0	0	10.5%
Misrepres/ Cheating	84.2%	10.5%	0	5.3%	0	0	0	0	0
Profanity/ Obscenity	21.1%	10.5%	5.3%	31.6%	5.3%	26.3%	0	0	0
Tobacco product	26.3%	5.3%	15.8%	36.8%	0	15.8%	0	0	0
Electronic cigarette	26.3%	5.3%	10.5%	36.8%	5.3%	15.8%	0	0	0
False Alarms	0	0	0	21.1%	0	26.3%	0	10.5%	42.1%
Pornographic material	15.8%	0	5.3%	36.8%	0	31.6%	0	0	10.5%
Fighting	0	0	0	52.6%	0	42.1%	0	5.3%	0
Weapons	0	0	0	0	0	5.3%	0	0	94.7%
Narcotics/ Drugs	0	0	0	0	0	5.3%	0	5.3%	89.5%
Alcohol possession	0	0	0	5.3%	0	5.3%	0	15.8%	73.7%
Drug paraphernalia	5.3%	0	0	5.3%	5.3%	21.1%	0	10.5%	52.6%
Drug transmission	0	0	0	0	5.3%	5.3%	0	5.3%	84.2%
Possession of lighter	15.8%	15.8%	10.5%	47.4%	0	10.5%	0	0	0

Table 8 (continued)

Violation	Days of out-of-school suspension								Exp.
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6-9	10	
Truancy	63.2%	36.8%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bullying	15.8%	15.8%	0	52.6%	0	15.8%	0	0	0
Possession of pocket knife	31.6%	15.8%	0	26.3%	0	5.3%	0	5.3%	15.8%

Large School Demographics

Large School Principal Demographics

Large schools were Indiana public high schools that contained 1,001 or more students and 22 principals (24.7% of the total responses) represented schools in this segment of the study. Sixteen (72.7%) of the large school respondents were men and six (27.3%) were women. Their ages ranged from 32 to 63 years of age ($M = 48.00$, $SD = 7.85$). When asked how long the principal had been employed in education, one (4.5%) responded between six and 10 years, one (4.5%) 11 to 15 years, six (27.3%) said 16 to 20 years, five (22.7%) had been in education for 21 to 25 years, and nine (40.9%) responded with 26 years or more of educational experience.

As for time in current position of building principal, 17 (77.3%) had been in that position for zero to five years, three (13.6%) for six to 10 years, and two (9.1%) for 11 to 15 years. Principals responding to the survey in the large-sized school category had the least amount of experience in their current jobs when compared to small and medium high schools. The highest level of education achieved for the large school principals was as follows: nine (40.9%) had earned master's degrees, 12 (54.5%) had earned specialist's degrees, and 1 (4.5%) had obtained doctoral degrees.

The major difference in the education level of the large school principals and the total population that responded was that 16.3% more earned education specialist's degrees than the total sample of respondents. Nine (40.9%) held a master's degrees, 12 (54.5%) held education specialist's degrees, and one (4.5%) held a doctoral degree. For the total population of all public high school principals surveyed, 48 (53.9%) held master's degrees, 34 (38.2%) held education specialist's degrees, and seven (7.9%) held doctoral degrees.

Large School Demographics

The responses for large-sized high schools contained two (9.1%) rural schools, 10 (45.5%) from suburban schools, and 10 (45.5%) from urban schools. The high schools' enrollments ranged from 1,108 to 3,304 students ($M = 1721.32$, $SD = 645.27$). The large schools' scores on the Algebra I ECA exams ranged from 39.0% to 92.0% of the students passing with $M = 63.15$ and $SD = 15.99$ and English 10 data ranged from 45.3% passing to 91.20% passing with $M = 76.91$ and $SD = 11.94$. By comparison, small schools' Algebra I ECA scores ranged from 29.60% to 94.7% with $M = 63.72$ and $SD = 18.70$ and their English 10 scores ranged from 48.3% to 96.4% with $M = 75.35$ and $SD = 10.44$. Medium schools had Algebra I scores that ranged from 40.6% to 92.5% and English 10 scores ranging from 66.2% to 88.9% with $M = 78.87$ and $SD = 6.64$.

The suspension composite scores for large public high schools ranged from 27 to 400 with $M = 254.14$ and $SD = 108.12$ compared to a range of 44 to 436 with $M = 298.90$ and $SD = 88.51$ for small schools and 115 to 394 with $M = 296.26$ and $SD = 72.05$ for medium-sized high schools. The data for the suspension composite score components for the 22 large public high schools in Indiana is listed in Table 9.

Table 9

Suspension Composite Score Data for Large Public High Schools in Indiana by Percentage

Violation	Days of out-of-school suspension								Exp.
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6-9	10	
Chronic attendance violations	59.1%	13.6%	0	9.1%	4.5%	4.5%	0	0	9.1%
Misrepres/ Cheating	81.8%	18.2%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Profanity/ Obscenity	18.2%	9.1%	13.6%	40.9%	0	18.2%	0	0	0
Tobacco product	27.3%	27.3%	22.7%	22.7%	0	0	0	0	0
Electronic cigarette	22.7%	31.8%	27.3%	13.6%	4.5%	0	0	0	0
False Alarms	4.5%	0	0	18.2%	0	36.4%	0	4.5%	36.4%
Pornographic material	13.6%	9.1%	13.6%	27.3%	0	31.8%	0	0	4.5%
Fighting	4.5%	4.5%	4.5%	31.8%	0	50.0%	0	0	4.5%
Weapons	4.5%	0	0	4.5%	0	4.5%	0	4.5%	81.8%
Narcotics/ Drugs	4.5%	0	4.5%	4.5%	0	4.5%	0	13.6%	63.6%
Alcohol possession	4.5%	0	4.5%	4.5%	4.5%	18.2%	0	18.2%	45.5%
Drug paraphernalia	4.5%	4.5%	4.5%	9.1%	0	18.2%	0	13.6%	45.5%
Alcohol transmission	4.5%	0	4.5%	0	4.5%	13.6%	0	9.1%	63.6%
Drug transmission	0	0	4.5%	4.5%	0	0	4.5%	4.5%	81.8%

Table 9 (continued)

Violation	Days of out-of-school suspension								Exp.
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6-9	10	
Possession of lighter	22.7%	4.5%	13.6%	31.8%	4.5%	18.2%	0	4.5%	0
Truancy	90.9%	4.5%	0	4.5%	0	0	0	0	0
Bullying	40.9%	9.1%	9.1%	31.8%	0	9.1%	0	0	0
Possession of pocket knife	36.4%	4.5%	0	4.5%	4.5%	18.2%	0	9.1%	22.7%

A breakdown of the data for small, medium, and large schools is listed below in Table 10.

Table 10

Small-, Medium-, and Large-Sized School Principal Summary Table

Variable	Small	Medium	Large
Criteria	500 students or fewer	501 to 1,000 students	1,001 or more students
Number of respondents	48	19	22
Male Principals	81.3%	94.7%	72.7%
Female Principals	18.8%	5.3%	27.3%
Average age of Principal	47.54 years	48.53 years	48.00 years
Years in Education			
6 to 10	8.3%	5.3%	4.5%
11 to 15	12.5%	10.5%	4.5%
16 to 20	20.8%	15.8%	27.3%
21 to 25	16.7%	36.8%	22.7%
26 or more	41.7%	31.6%	40.9%

Table 10 (continued)

Variable	Small	Medium	Large
Years in Current Position			
0 to 5	54.2%	42.1%	77.3%
6 to 10	25.0%	21.1%	13.6%
11 to 15	14.6%	26.3%	9.1%
16 to 20	2.1%	5.3%	0.0%
21 to 25	4.2%	5.3%	0.0%
Highest level of ed.			
Master's degree	56.3%	63.2%	40.9%
Specialists degree	33.3%	31.6%	54.5%
Doctoral degree	10.4%	5.3%	4.5%
School location			
Rural	58.3%	31.6%	9.1%
Suburban	33.3%	57.9%	45.5%
Urban	8.3%	10.5%	45.5%
Algebra I ECA	$M = 63.72$ $SD = 18.70$	$M = 68.55$ $SD = 15.22$	$M = 63.15$ $SD = 15.99$
English 10 ECA	$M = 75.35$ $SD = 10.44$	$M = 78.87$ $SD = 6.64$	$M = 76.91$ $SD = 11.94$
Suspension composite score	$M = 298.90$ $SD = 88.51$	$M = 296.26$ $SD = 72.05$	$M = 254.14$ $SD = 108.12$

Inferential Test Results

For Research Questions 1 and 2, a one-way ANOVA test was used to determine if there were significant differences in the suspension composite scores based on a school's location and size. The one-way ANOVA test was utilized because one dependent variable, the student suspension score, was being examined among three levels of the independent variable. In Research Question 1, the levels of the independent variable were urban, suburban, and rural. In

Research Question 2, the levels of the independent variable were the high school's size of small, medium, or large.

Research Question 1

The null hypothesis for Research Question 1 was, "There was no significant difference in the suspension composite score based on a school's location." SPSS software was used to test for significance difference and the assumptions for the one-way ANOVA and to ensure that the results were valid.

An examination of the box plots were used to determine if there were any outliers in the dependent variable. There were no data points more than 1.5 standard deviations away from the edge of the box. So, there were no outliers in the dependent variable of the suspension composite score. A Shapiro-Wilk test was then utilized to determine that the suspension composite scores of each school were normally distributed in all three groups of rural, suburban, and urban. This assumption was met because the significance value was greater than .05. The assumption of homogeneity of variance was also tested to ensure that the variances for the suspension composite scores were equal for rural, suburban, and urban schools. A Levene's test of equality of variances was run on the data. This assumption was met because it had a significance level of greater than .05. In this case, it was .248.

Among the different locations in the study of rural ($M = 295.83$, $SD = 84.24$), suburban ($M = 289.68$, $SD = 98.87$), and urban ($M = 262.44$, $SD = 91.75$), there was no significant difference on the suspension composite score. This was due to a non-significant one-way ANOVA, $F(2, 86) = .753$, $p = .474$.

Research Question 2

The null hypothesis for Research Question 2 was, “There was no significant difference in the suspension composite score based on a school’s size.” SPSS software was used to test for significance difference and the assumptions for the one-way ANOVA and to ensure that the results were valid.

An examination of the box plots were used to determine if there were any outliers in the dependent variable. There were no data points more than 1.5 standard deviations away from the edge of the box. So, there were no outliers in the dependent variable of the suspension composite score. A Shapiro-Wilk test was then used to determine that the suspension composite scores of each school were normally distributed in all three groups of small, 500 students or fewer, medium, 501-1,000 students, and large, 1,001 students or larger Indiana public high schools. This assumption was met because the significance value was greater than .05. The assumption of homogeneity of variance was also tested to ensure that the variances for the suspension composite scores were equal for small, medium, and large schools. A Levene’s test of equality of variances was run on the data. This assumption was met because it had a significance level of greater than .05. In this case, it was .224.

Among the different locations in the study of small ($M = 298.90$, $SD = 88.51$), medium ($M = 296.26$, $SD = 72.05$), and large ($M = 254.14$, $SD = 108.12$), there was no significant difference on the suspension composite score. This was due to a non-significant one-way ANOVA, $F(2, 86) = 1.957$, $p = .148$.

Research Question 3

The null hypothesis for Research Question 3 was, “The years of experience as a building principal does not serve as a predictor of the suspension composite score.” A linear regression

using SPSS was used to determine if an Indiana public high school principal's years of experience could serve as a predictor of the suspension composite score.

The independence of residuals was met because the Durbin-Watson score was approximately 2.0. The assumption of linearity looked to see that the years of experience as a building principal shared a linear relationship with the suspension composite score. This assumption was met because there was a linear relationship when the data were plotted on a graph. The assumption of heteroscedasticity looked to ensure that the residuals were equal for the predicted values of the suspension composite score. This assumption was met because the plots of the graph did not show evidence of the residual spread increasing or decreasing as the predicted variable of the suspension composite score increases. The data were also examined for outliers that fell outside the typical pattern of points. This assumption was met because no standardized residual fell 1.5 standard deviations from the mean. Finally, a normality of the residuals was tested to ensure that the residuals within the model were normally distributed. This assumption was met because the residuals aligned with the diagonal line on the normal p - p plot of regression standardized residual.

The correlation coefficient speaks to the strength of the relationship between the suspension composite score and the number of years principals had been in their current positions. This was a small relationship ($R = .126$). The coefficient of determination speaks to the amount of explained variance in the suspension composite score based on the number of years principals has been in their current positions. With $R^2 = .016$, this meant that 1.6% of the variance in the suspension composite score was explained by the years in their current positions. The adjusted $R^2 = .004$ and the shrinkage is the amount of variance due to the adjustment for

sample size. Here it was .012. The standard error of the estimate was the average residual distance each data point was from the line of best fit, it was 91.45.

The years principals had been in their current positions did not serve as a significant predictor of their suspension composite score. The results of the linear regression test was non-significant, $F(1, 87) = 1.40, p = .241$.

Research Question 4

The null hypothesis for Research Question 4 was, “The suspension composite score does not serve as a predictor of the passing rate on the English 10 ECA.” A linear regression using SPSS was used to determine if a school’s suspension composite score could serve as a predictor of its results on the English 10 ECA exam for its sophomore cohort.

The independence of residuals was met because the Durbin-Watson score was approximately 2.0. The assumption of linearity looked to see that the suspension composite score shared a linear relationship with English 10 ECA scores. This assumption was met because there was a linear relationship when the data were plotted on a graph. The assumption of heteroscedasticity looked to ensure that the residuals were equal for the predicted values of the English 10 ECA. This assumption was met because the plots of the graph did not show evidence of the residual spread increasing or decreasing as the predicted variable of the ECA English 10 increased. The data were also examined for outliers that fell outside the typical pattern of points. This assumption was met because no standardized residual fell 1.5 standard deviations from the mean. Finally, a normality of the residuals was tested to ensure that the residuals within the model were normally distributed. This assumption was met because the residuals aligned with the diagonal line on the normal p - p plot of regression standardized residual.

The correlation coefficient speaks to the strength of the relationship between the English 10 ECA and the suspension composite score. This was a small relationship ($R = .141$). The coefficient of determination speaks to the amount of explained variance in the suspensions composite score based on the number of years principals had been in their current position. With $R^2 = .020$, this meant that 2.0% of the variance in the English 10 ECA was explained by the student suspension score. The adjusted $R^2 = .008$ and the shrinkage was the amount of variance due to the adjustment for sample size. Here it was .012. The standard error of the estimate was the average residual distance each data point were from the line of best fit, it was 10.12.

The suspension composite score did not serve as a significant predictor of the English 10 ECA. The results of the linear regression test was non-significant, $F(1, 87) = 1.75, p = .189$.

Research Question 5

The null hypothesis for Research Question 5 was, “The suspension composite score does not serve as a predictor of the passing rate on the Algebra I ECA.” A linear regression using SPSS was used to determine if a school’s suspension composite score could serve as a predictor of its results on the Algebra I ECA exam for its sophomore cohort.

The independence of residuals was met because the Durbin-Watson score was approximately 2.0. The assumption of linearity looked to see that the suspension composite score shared a linear relationship with Algebra I ECA scores. This assumption was met because there was a linear relationship when the data were plotted on a graph. The assumption of heteroscedasticity looked to ensure that the residuals were equal for the predicted values of the Algebra I ECA. This assumption was met because the plots of the graph did not show evidence of the residual spread increasing or decreasing as the predicted variable of the ECA Algebra I increases. The data were also examined for outliers that fell outside the typical pattern of points.

This assumption was met because no standardized residual fell 1.5 standard deviations from the mean. Finally, a normality of the residuals was tested to ensure that the residuals within the model were normally distributed. This assumption was met because the residuals aligned with the diagonal line on the normal p - p plot of regression standardized residual.

The correlation coefficient speaks to the strength of the relationship between the Algebra I ECA and the suspension composite score. This was a small relationship ($R = .027$). The coefficient of determination speaks to the amount of explained variance in the suspension composite score based on the number of years principals had been in their current positions. With $R^2 = .001$, this meant that 0.1% of the variance in the Algebra I ECA was explained by the student suspension score. The adjusted $R^2 < .001$ and the shrinkage was the amount of variance due to the adjustment for sample size. Here it was .012. The standard error of the estimate was the average residual distance each data point was from the line of best fit, it was 17.40.

The suspension composite score did not serve as a significant predictor of the Algebra I. The results of the linear regression test was non-significant, $F(1, 87) = .065, p = .800$.

Descriptive Results for Research Questions 6 and 7

Research Question 6

Research Question 6 stated, “Do Indiana public high school principals believe that out-of-school suspension makes students less likely to misbehave in the future?” Of all the principals responding to the survey, six (6.7%) strongly disagree, nine (10.1%) disagree, nine (10.1%) somewhat disagree, 44 (49.4%) somewhat agree, 21 (23.6%) agree, and none responded that they strongly agree. The rest of the data are shared in Table 11.

Table 11

Suspension Makes Students Less Likely to Misbehave in the Future

Demographic	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Rural	4 (11.1%)	1 (2.8%)	4 (11.1%)	18 (50.0%)	9 (25.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Suburban	0 (0.0%)	7 (18.9%)	3 (8.1%)	18 (48.6%)	9 (24.3%)	0 (0.0%)
Urban	2 (12.5%)	1 (6.3%)	2 (12.5%)	8 (50.0%)	3 (18.8%)	0 (0.0%)
Small	5 (10.4%)	5 (10.4%)	6 (12.5%)	23 (47.9%)	9 (18.8%)	0 (0.0%)
Medium	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	13 (68.4%)	6 (31.6%)	0 (0.0%)
Large	1 (4.5%)	4 (18.2%)	3 (13.6%)	8 (36.4%)	6 (27.3%)	0 (0.0%)

The findings for this research question was fairly consistent among most of the areas. One of the discrepancies was in the suburban area where 18 (48.6%) of the principals surveyed said that they disagreed that out-of-school suspension made students less likely to misbehave in the future. The next highest percentage among the six groupings was in the large school category with 13.6%. The medium-sized school category where schools had an enrollment of between 501 and 1,000 students is another area for discussion. Of the 19 total respondents, all either somewhat agreed (13, 68.4%) or agreed (6, 31.6%).

Research Question 7

Research Question 7 stated, “Do Indiana public high school principals believe that zero tolerance policies make an impactful contribution in maintaining order at their schools?” Of all the principals responding to the survey, 22 (24.7%) strongly disagreed, nine (10.1%) disagreed,

13 (14.6%) somewhat disagreed, 23 (25.8%) somewhat agreed, 18 (20.2%) agreed, and four (4.5%) responded that they strongly agreed. The rest of the data are shared in Table 12.

Table 12

Zero Tolerance Policies Make an Impactful Contribution in Maintaining Order at my School

Demographic	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Rural	11 (30.6%)	2 (5.6%)	4 (11.1%)	13 (36.1%)	5 (13.9%)	1 (2.8%)
Suburban	6 (16.2%)	6 (16.2%)	7 (18.9%)	7 (18.9%)	9 (24.3%)	2 (5.4%)
Urban	5 (31.3%)	1 (6.3%)	2 (12.5%)	3 (18.8%)	4 (25.0%)	1 (6.3%)
Small	15 (31.3%)	4 (8.3%)	8 (16.7%)	9 (18.8%)	9 (18.8%)	3 (6.3%)
Medium	2 (10.5%)	4 (21.1%)	2 (10.5%)	8 (42.1%)	3 (15.8%)	0 (0.0%)
Large	5 (22.7%)	1 (4.5%)	3 (13.6%)	6 (27.3%)	6 (27.3%)	1 (4.5%)

The only consistency among the respondents about this question was that the answers do not show a pattern and are spread from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Summary of Findings

Summary of Descriptive Data

There were 89 principals that responded to the study representing Indiana public high schools that were separated into rural, suburban, and rural locations as well as small, medium, and large sizes. There were 36 rural, 37 suburban, 16 urban, 48 small, 19 medium, and 22 large high schools that participated. Principals were asked their gender, age, years of experience in education, years in their current positions, and highest level of education obtained. The

principals were then asked to respond to how students would be disciplined in their school for 18 common student discipline infractions.

Summary of Null Hypotheses Testing

Five null hypotheses were tested in this study. The first two were tested using a one-way ANOVA through SPSS to test that there was no difference in a school's suspension composite score based on a school's location or size. Both of the null hypotheses were retained. There was no relationship in the suspension composite score based on a school's location or size.

The next three null hypotheses were tested using linear regression. They asked if the years of experience as a building principal served as a predictor of the suspension composite score, if the suspension composite score served as a predictor of the passing rate on the English 10 ECA and the Algebra I ECA. All three of these null hypotheses were also retained. A principal's years of experience as a building principal does not serve as a predictor of the suspension composite score. Also, the suspension composite score does not serve as a predictor of the passing rate on either the English 10 ECA exam or the Algebra I ECA exam.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF INTERPRETATIONS, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This chapter is organized into five major sections. Following the introduction, an interpretation of the data with a summary of the descriptive data, a summary of the hypotheses testing occurs. The second section summarizes the research and discusses any conclusions that came from the data. The third section discusses future research opportunities that this study can have for readers. It follows with a conclusion and an explanation of any differences that were noticed.

The purpose of the study was to determine whether schools that impose more days of out-of-school suspension as a discipline consequence in Indiana public high schools have a relationship with the academic results of the school. As public high schools in Indiana face accountability measures that include graduation rates, pressures are in place to keep students in school and on track to receive a diploma. Research on school discipline suggests a lack of consistency among schools (Bloomberg, 2004) and that is seen in some of the data reflected in this study. Zero-tolerance laws have been passed but they have not been proven to help provide safer schools (Iselin as cited in Skiba & Sprague, 2008). In fact, Iselin (2010) stated that zero-tolerance laws are associated with lower academic performance, higher rates of dropout, and delays graduation for students. It also does not decrease discipline occurrences in schools, but

increases it. So schools must provide “more effective, less exclusionary methods for maintaining safe, productive school climates” (Skiba & Sprague, 2008, p. 40).

In general, the research design contained a population of 463 public high schools in the state of Indiana. Of the 463 principals contacted to participate in the study, 89 responded. Statistical analysis of the data included descriptive statistics regarding the mean and standard deviation and the frequency of selected responses. A one-way ANOVA and linear regression were used to test the null hypotheses. In addition to the survey responses, demographic information about both the individuals responding and the high school’s they represented were obtained and reported in the data.

Summary of the Population

Demographic information of the population of Indiana public school principals participating in the study was collected. There were 463 principals sent surveys and 89 responded. One (1.1%) of the 89 respondents represented a charter school. Seventy-three (82.0%) were men and 16 (18.0%) were women and their ages ranged from 27 to 67 years old ($M = 47.87$, $SD = 9.022$). As for their highest level of education achieved, 48 (53.9%) obtained master’s degrees, 34 (38.2%) held education specialist’s degrees, and seven (7.9%) had earned doctoral degrees. Six (6.7%) had worked six to 10 years in the field of education, nine (10.1%) had been in the field 11 to 15 years, 19 (21.3%) had been in the field 16 to 20 years, 20 (22.5%) had 21 to 25 years in education, and 35 (39.3%) have been employed in education for 26 or more years. As for time in current position of building principals, 51 (57.3%) had been in that position for zero to five years, 19 (21.3%) for six to 10 years, 14 (15.7%) for 11 to 15 years, two (2.2%) had 16 to 20 years in a position, and three (3.4%) had been in their current positions for between 21 and 25 years.

As for the schools they represented, 36 (40.4%) were from rural high schools, 37 (41.6%) were from suburban high schools, and 16 (18.0%) were from high schools in urban areas. The size of the schools represented ranged from 152 students to 3,304 students ($M = 765$, $SD = 657.82$) with 48 (53.9%) of the schools classified as small with 500 students or fewer. Nineteen (21.3%) of the schools represented were classified as medium-sized high schools with enrollments of 501-1,000 students. Those high schools with enrollments of 1,001 or more were classified as large, and 22 (24.7%) fit into this category. The suspension composite scores reported by the schools ranged from 27 to 436 ($M = 287.27$, $SD = 91.66$). The number of students in their 2013 sophomore cohort that passed the Algebra I ECA exam ranged from 19.60 to 94.70 ($M = 64.61$, $SD = 17.30$) and ranged from 45.30 to 96.40 ($M = 76.49$, $SD = 10.16$) for the English 10 ECA.

Summary of the Descriptive Data

Surveys were e-mailed to all 463 Indiana public high school principals. The principals were asked to respond to three sections of a 27-question survey. The first section of the survey asked the name of the high school the principal represented, whether the high school was a charter school, and demographic data about the principal. The second section of the survey asked about how many days of out-of-school suspension the school the principal's high school would assign for various first time student offenses. The choices ranged from zero days to 10 days of out-of-school suspension and expulsion. The third section of the survey asked the principal if out-of-school suspension's acted as a deterrent to student misbehavior and whether zero-tolerance policies made a significant contribution in maintaining order in their school.

The top two responses for each discipline infraction were stated. For chronic attendance violations, 57 (64%) of the 89 respondents making up the whole sample stated that the student

would receive zero days of out-of-school suspension, and 11 (12.4%) responded that the student would receive three days of out-of-school suspension. For the question of misrepresentation/cheating on a test or major assignment, 77 (86.5%) would give zero days of out-of-school suspension, and 8 (9.0%) would give one day. Students engaging in profanity/obscenity directed to an adult, 27 (30.3%) would assign three days of out-of-school suspension, and 20 (22.5%) would give zero days.

As for tobacco products, 35 (39.3%) would hand out three days of out-of-school suspension, and 21 (23.6%) would assign zero days of out-of-school suspension. If a student had an electronic cigarette, 32 (36%) would assign three days of out-of-school suspension and 23 (25.8%) would assign zero days. If a student falsely pulled a fire alarm, then 30 (33.7%) of the principals stated that the student would be expelled, and 27 (30.3%) would assign five days of out-of-school suspension. If pornographic material was shown at school, 30 (33.7%) of the principals stated that students would receive three days of out-of-school suspension, and 22 (24.7%) stated that they would assign five days of out-of-school suspension. If students engaged in a fight, the most common response was a three-day out-of-school suspension by 39 (43.8%) of the principals, and the second highest response by 33 (37.1%) principals was a five-day out-of-school suspension.

If a student brought a weapon to school, 79 (88.8%) of the respondents stated that they would expel the student. The next highest response was shared by zero days of OSS, and 10 days of out-of-school suspension by three (3.4%) of the principals. If a student had narcotics or drugs at school, 72 (80.9%) of the principals would expel, and six (6.7%) of the respondents would assign a ten-day out-of-school suspension. Alcohol possession's top response was expulsion with 63 (70.8%) of the respondents assigning expulsion, and 10 (11.2%) assigning a

five days of out-of-school suspension. Possession of drug paraphernalia had 53 (59.6%) principals requesting expulsion, and 16 (18.0%) assigning five days of out-of-school suspension. Alcohol transmission was similar as well with 71 (79.8%) stating that they would expel, and eight (9.0%) said they would give five days of out-of-school suspension. Drug transmission had 78 (87.6%) of the principals requesting expulsion, and three (3.4%) each assigning five days of out-of-school suspension and 10 days of out-of-school suspension.

Possession of a lighter had 31 (34.8%) who stated that three days of out-of-school suspension would need to be served, and the second choice had 17 (19.1%) who responded that they would not give any days of out-of-school suspension. Sixty-six (74.2%) of the respondents would not give any days of out-of-school suspension for truancy from school, and 17 (19.1%) would suspend for only one day. Bullying had a wide range of responses with 37 (41.6%) who said that a three-day out-of-school suspension would be assigned, and 26 (29.2%) stated that they would not assign an out-of-school suspension. Possession of a pocket knife had one of the widest range of responses with 30 (33.7%) of the principals saying that they would not suspend a student out of school; however, the second most popular response was expulsion with 21 (23.6%) of the respondents who said that they would ask for the student to be removed from the traditional school setting.

When comparing the suspension of rural, suburban, and urban high schools, the descriptive data was very interesting to compare. For chronic attendance violations, zero and one-day out-of-school suspensions are nearly similar for rural and suburban high schools with rural being 63.9% and 13.9% and suburban are 62.2% and 13.5% respectively. The major difference when compared to urban is for a three-day out-of-school suspension. Rural is at 11.1%, suburban is 10.8%, but urban is 18.8%. For misrepresentation/cheating, no rural schools

assigned more than two days of out-of-school suspension but 5.4% of suburban and 6.3% of urban high schools assigned three days of out-of-school suspension. As for the violation of profanity directed toward an adult, rural and suburban schools would give a five-day out-of-school suspension at close to the same percentage of 19.4% and 18.9%. On the contrary, only 6.3% of the urban schools would assign five days of out-of-school suspension for that offense.

When comparing the responses for possession of tobacco products, 55.6% of all rural schools would give three days of out-of-school suspension but only 24.3% of suburban and 37.5% of urban schools would give the same punishment. Possession of electronic cigarettes had a very similar breakdown. Rural schools would assign a three-day out-of-school suspension in 50% of the cases whereas only 24.3% of suburban and 31.3% of urban schools would. Falsely pulling a fire alarm would get a student expelled in 43.2% of the suburban schools responding but 30.6% of the rural and only 18.8% of the urban schools would expel. Possession of pornographic material would earn a student a one-day out-of-school suspension only 5.4% of the time in a suburban school as compared to 19.4% in a rural and 12.5% in a urban school. But, none of the urban schools would expel for the offense whereas 8.1% of suburban schools and 2.8% of rural schools would expel for that infraction.

Fighting had several different responses, but all three levels had three and five days as the first and second choice. Rural and suburban schools had three days as the top choice, 41.7% and 48.6% respectively, followed by five days as the second most popular response at 36.1% and 29.7% respectively. Urban schools had a five-day out-of-school suspension as the top choice with 56.3% of the schools assigning this consequence and 37.5% of them assigning a three-day out-of-school suspension. Bringing a weapon to school would get a student expelled 100% of the time in an urban school, but only 88.9% of the time in a rural school and 83.9% of the time in

a suburban school. In fact, there is a 2.7% chance in a rural school and 5.4% chance in a suburban school that a student would not be assigned any days of out-of-school suspension.

If a student is found with narcotics/drugs in his or her possession at school then 86.1% of the time in a rural school and 81.1% of the time a suburban school would expel. Urban schools, on the contrary, would only expel 68.8% of the time. A student would also have a nearly identical chance of being expelled in a rural school for possession of drug paraphernalia as in a suburban school 61.1% of the time as compared to 62.2%. Urban school would only expel in 50.0% of the schools responding. Alcohol transmission is less likely to get a student expelled in an urban or suburban school, 75.0% and 75.7% respectively, as compared to 86.1% in rural schools. Drug transmission had a nearly identical expulsion rate, but in 6.3% of the urban high schools, a student would only receive two days of out-of-school suspension. Urban schools were more punitive for possession of a lighter with 43.8% of the schools assigning three days and 18.8% assigning 5 days of out-of-school suspension as compared to 38.9% and 16.7% in a rural school and 27.0% and 16.2% in suburban school. But, a student could get no suspension in a rural school 22.2% of the time and 18.9% in a suburban school as compared to only 12.5% of the time in an urban school.

Students with truancy issues were given zero or one-day suspensions most of the time, but in rural schools a student would suffer a three-day out-of-school suspension 8.3% of the time and 5.4% of the time in a suburban school. Bullying was fairly consistent among all three levels of the schools except for at the five-day out-of-school suspension level. Urban schools would suspend 31.3% of their students for five days as compared to only 8.3% of rural and 8.1% of suburban schools. Possession of a pocket knife had responses that varied from zero days of out-of-school suspension to expulsion. Rural schools would not suspend 41.7% of the time, but

would expel 27.8% of the time. Suburban schools had 24.3% of the responses that stated zero days of out-of-school suspension and 21.6% of the responses that they would expel. Urban schools were much the same with 37.5% assigning zero days but 18.8% moving to expel a student.

Another breakdown of the data was among small, medium, and large high schools. A student would not be suspended 70.8% of the time for chronic attendance violations as compared to 52.6% for medium and 59.1% for large schools. The consequence for misrepresentation/cheating is zero or one-day of out-of-school suspension in most cases however, some small-sized high schools (4.2%) and some medium-sized schools (5.3%) assign three days of out-of-school suspension as a punishment. The most popular response in medium- and large-sized schools for profanity / obscenity directed toward an adult is either a three-day, 31.6% or 40.9%, or five-day, 26.3% or 18.2%, out-of-school suspension. However, a student in a small-sized high school has a 25.0% chance zero days out-of-school and 27.1% chance at a one-day out-of-school suspension.

The possession or use of tobacco products earns most students between zero and three days of out-of-school suspension in all sized schools. But, 10.4% of students in a small-sized high school and 15.8% of the students in a medium-sized high school could be given a five-day out-of-school suspension. Electronic cigarettes have very similar consequences with most of them being between zero and three days of out-of-school suspension. Some small-sized high schools (8.3%) assign five days and medium-sized high schools assign four days (5.3%) of the time and five days (15.8%) of the time. The largest out-of-school suspension reported among large-sized high schools for electronic cigarettes was 4.5% reporting four days of out-of-school suspension.

If a student falsely pulls a fire alarm, the student is expelled in 42.1% of the medium-sized high schools compared to 36.4% of the large-sized high schools, and 29.2% of the small-sized high schools. Medium-sized high schools will also expel 10.5% of the students for pornographic material when only 4.5% of the large-sized high schools, and 2.1% of the small-sized schools would. Fighting is generally a three- or five-day out-of-school suspension among all three levels, but in small-sized high schools students could not be suspended 6.3% of the time or given a one-day out-of-school suspension 10.4% of the time. If a student brings a weapon to school, 94.7% of the medium-sized high schools would expel the student, and 89.6% of the small-sized high schools and only 81.8% of the large-sized high schools would expel.

When a student is found in possession of narcotics/drugs, the student will be expelled 89.5% of the time in a medium-sized high school, 85.4% of the time in a small-sized high school, but only 63.6% of the time in a large-sized high school. Alcohol possession was much the same. Students were expelled at a clip of 81.3% in a small-sized high school, 73.7% in a medium-sized high school, but only 45.5% of the time in a large-sized high school. If a student possesses drug paraphernalia, again, small-sized high schools are more likely to expel, 68.8%, compared to medium-sized high schools (52.6%) and large-sized high schools (45.5%). Alcohol transmission and drug transmission follow the same patterns with a student being less likely to be expelled the in a larger-sized high school than a smaller-sized high school. Three days of out-of-school suspension is the most popular consequence among all three levels for possessing a lighter, but 18.8% of small-sized high schools and 18.2% of large-sized high schools would assign a five-day out-of-school suspension for the offense as compared to 10.5% of the medium-sized high schools.

Students who are truant from school are more likely to have zero or one-day of out-of-school suspension assigned rather than any other consequence. Bullying will only get a student suspended more than five days in a small-sized high school (2.1% for 10 days and 2.1% for expulsion). Most schools assign three days of out-of-school suspension (41.7% for small-sized high schools, 52.6% for medium-sized high schools, and 31.8% for large-sized high schools). The results for carrying a pocket knife ranged from zero days of out-of-school suspension to expulsion. No days of out-of-school suspension would be assigned by 33.3% of the small schools while 27.1% of that group would expel. Large high schools had similar results because 36.4% of them would assign zero days of out-of-school suspension and 22.7% would expel. Medium-sized high schools do not suspend in 31.6% of the occasions but assign three days of out-of-school suspension in 26.3% of the occurrences.

Summary of Null Hypotheses Testing

The first hypothesis stated, “There is no difference in the suspension composite score based on a school’s location.” The Indiana public high schools were separated by location and listed as rural—those more than 25 miles from an urbanized area, suburban—a school outside a principal city and within 25 miles of an urbanized area that has a population of at least 50,000 people, and urban—a school that resides inside the boundaries of a city of more than 50,000 people. This null hypothesis was tested using a one-way ANOVA using SPSS to determine if there was a significant difference in the suspension composite score based on a school’s location. There was no significant difference in the suspension composite score based on a school’s location, $F(2, 86) = .753, p = .474$. This meant that the differences in the suspension composite score among the Indiana public high schools surveyed could not be confirmed to be because of their location.

The second null hypothesis stated, “There is no difference in the suspension composite score based on a school’s size.” The high schools were separated by size and listed as small—500 students or fewer, medium—those with 501 and 1,000 students, and large—those with 1,001 or more students. This null hypothesis was tested using a one-way ANOVA using SPSS to determine if there was a significant difference in the suspension composite score based on a school’s size. There was no significant difference in the suspension composite score based on a school’s size, $F(2, 86) = 1.957, p = .148$.

The third null hypothesis stated, “The years of experience for a building principal in their current position does not serve as a predictor of the suspension composite score.” A linear regression using SPSS was chosen to test this null hypothesis, and the results were non-significant, $F(1, 87) = 1.40, p = .241$.

The fourth null hypothesis stated, “The suspension composite score does not serve as a predictor of the passing rate on the English 10 ECA.” A linear regression using SPSS was used to determine if a school’s suspension composite score could serve as a predictor of its results on the English 10 ECA exam for a high school’s sophomore cohort. The results of the linear regression tests were non-significant, $F(1, 87) = 1.75, p = .189$.

The fifth null hypothesis stated, “The suspension composite score does not serve as a predictor of the passing rate on the Algebra I ECA.” A linear regression using SPSS was used to determine if a school’s suspension composite score could serve as a predictor of its results on the Algebra I ECA exam for its sophomore cohort. It was found that it could not be confirmed as a predictor with the test being non-significant, $F(1, 87) = .065, p = .800$.

Summary of Descriptive Results for Research Questions 6 and 7

Research Question 6 stated, “Do Indiana public high school principals believe that out-of-school suspension makes students less likely to misbehave in the future?” Of all the principals responding to the survey, six (6.7%) strongly disagree, nine (10.1%) disagree, nine (10.1%) somewhat disagree, 44 (49.4%) somewhat agree, 21 (23.6%) agree, and none responded that they strongly agree.

Research Question 7 stated, “Do Indiana public high school principals believe that zero tolerance policies make an impactful contribution in maintaining order at their school schools?” Of the principals responding to the survey, 22 (24.7%) strongly disagree, eight (10.1%) disagree, 13 (14.6%) somewhat disagree, 23 (25.8%) somewhat agree, 18 (20.2%) agree, and four (4.5%) responded that they strongly agree.

Summary of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative study was to determine whether schools that impose more days of out-of-school suspension as a discipline consequence in Indiana public high schools have a relationship with the academic results of the school. The research questions that drove the study were:

1. Is there a significance difference in the suspension composite score based on a school’s location?
2. Is there a significance difference in the suspension composite score based on a school’s size?
3. Do the demographics of the building principal serve as a predictor of the suspension composite score?

4. Does the suspension composite score serve as a predictor of the passing rate on the English 10 ECA?
5. Does the suspension composite score serve as a predictor of the passing rate on the Algebra I ECA?
6. Do Indiana public high school principals believe that out-of-school suspension makes students less likely to misbehave in the future?
7. Do Indiana public high school principals believe that zero tolerance policies make an impactful contribution in maintaining order at their schools?

As reported in the review of the literature, a major concern for school teachers and administrators was to address and eliminate negative student behavior and open up valuable resources that are being used to address school discipline to improve student learning (Felesena, 2013). School discipline began as young teachers needed to keep order in classrooms and they often imposed corporal punishment as a consequence for student misbehavior (Butchart & Landau, 1998). Effective classroom management styles became popular after 1969. PBIS models were created to aid teachers and schools in creating effective classroom learning environments (Chin et al., 2012).

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, zero tolerance policies came into place in the educational setting copying those imposed to drug dealers in U.S. district courts (Skiba & Peterson, 1999). Once these zero tolerance policies were established, school administrators could no longer look at the context of a situation and had to act in accordance with the policy (Gage et al., 2013). This, coupled with the fact that the behaviors that resulted in a student being suspended or expelled differed depending upon the school, caused an inconsistent application of out-of-school suspension for students (Skiba & Sprague, 2008).

There was also data that showed that male students were more likely to be suspended than female students (Iselin, 2010). Special education students were more likely to suffer out-of-school suspension as a discipline consequence than regular education students (Iselin, 2008). According to Skiba and Sprague (2008), 36% of all ED or ADHD African American students had received out-of-school suspensions. Other predictors of suspensions among students with disabilities are those who make multiple school changes, are an older age than the majority of students in their grade, and are those whose parents possess a low satisfaction level with their child's school (Iselin, 2010).

Rausch and Skiba (2004) used Indiana's ISTEP scores and found that schools with high suspension rates had lower passing rates than those with lower suspension rates even when poverty, race, and other variables were controlled. Rural schools use suspensions less than their suburban counter parts or urban counterparts (Noltemeyer & McLoughlin, 2010). Rural schools report spending more time on discipline issues like rumors, verbal intimidation, and pushing and shoving as compared with more violent issues like drugs, weapons, and gang involvement (Skiba & Peterson, 2000). The literature review reported that the size of a school had not been shown to have a positive or negative impact on the number of out-of-school suspensions that a school assigns (Christle et al., 2004). Principals, according to Hull (2012), were reported to have a greater impact on student achievement as their experience increased, and their influence on student learning is second only to the teacher.

This study continued the research of gathering data on out-of-school suspensions and the academic results of the school. The research looked at how schools assigned out-of-school suspensions for 18-discipline infractions by finding the sum of the days a student is suspended out-of-school and giving each school a suspension composite score. It then looked to determine

if there was a relationship between the suspension composite score and the high school's scores on the Algebra I and English 10 ECA. The study looked at whether there was a relationship between the experience of the principal and the suspension composite score. It also looked to see if there was a relationship between the school's suspension composite score and the school's location and size. Demographic information was also analyzed.

It was found that there was no significant difference in the suspension composite score based on a school's location. Even though Noltemeyer and McLoughlin (2010) stated that research indicated how teachers in urban schools spent more time on discipline than their suburban and rural counterparts, the findings of this study did not support those facts. However, in the demographic data, it did find that urban schools did not expel as often for first-time offenses like drugs. For narcotics/drug possession, only 68.8% of urban high schools would expel, and 80.9% of the entire population would. For possession of tobacco products, three out of eight (37.5%) of the urban schools would not assign any OSS as compared to 23.6% of the entire sample. So, although there was no significant difference in the suspension composite score based on a school's location, there was a slight pattern in the demographic data displaying that urban schools were less likely to expel for serious offenses than their rural and suburban counterparts.

The study then found that there was no significant difference in the suspension composite score based on a school's size. Christle et al. (2004) found that school size had no positive or negative impact on the number of out-of-school suspensions and expulsions a school assigns to students. This study supported that claim, but when looking at the demographic data, it did find some interesting patterns. Small schools are more likely to expel for narcotic/drug possession (85.4%), alcohol possession (81.3%), drug paraphernalia possession (68.8%), alcohol

transmission (85.4%), and drug transmission (91.7%) than the whole sample (80.9%, 70.8%, 59.6%, 79.8%, and 87.6% respectively). Large school patterns were opposite those of the small schools. It was evident that large schools in general are not as likely to expel for narcotic/drug possession (63.6%), alcohol possession (45.5%), drug paraphernalia possession (45.5%), alcohol transmission (63.6%), and drug transmission (81.8%) than the whole sample (80.9%, 70.8%, 59.6%, 79.8%, and 87.6% respectively). So, small schools were more likely to expel for alcohol and drug issues than their large school counterparts. This was counter to a study by Cornell and Klein (2010) who found that smaller schools offered students more social supports than larger schools. One would be led to believe that those students who had strong social supports with the school would not be in a position where drugs or alcohol leads to suspension.

The study then examined if the years of experience principals had in their current positions served as predictors of the suspension composite score. It too was found to have non-significant results. Beteille et al. (2012) found that the longer a principal was in his or her position, the better the school performed academically. The goal of this question was to determine if this included fewer out-of-school suspensions for students when the principal's experience grew as a part of the increased academic performance.

The next two research questions addressed if the suspension composite score served as a predictor of the passing rate on the Algebra I ECA and the English 10 ECA. It was found that it was non-significant in both cases. Farneth and Sundius (2008) claimed that out-of-school suspension added to a student's development of academic and social disengagement from school. The results of this study did not support these claims.

A demographic analysis was done for Research Questions 6 and 7. Research Question 6 asked whether Indiana public high school principals believed that out-of-school suspension made

students less likely to misbehave in the future. None of the principals responded that they strongly agreed with that statement. The rest of the responses showed that while most, 73.0%, either somewhat agree (49.4%) or agree (23.6%) that out-of-school suspension made students less likely to misbehave in the future, none of them thought that it was the top ingredient in forcing students to obey school and societal rules.

Research Question 7 asked if zero-tolerance policies made an impactful contribution in maintaining order at their schools. The responses were nearly split between the disagree (49.4%) and agree (50.6%) answers. If it were not for 24.7% of the responses in the strongly disagree category the responses would fit into a bell curve. The literature stated that zero-tolerance policies might make a decision easier for a building leader without taking into account the context of the situation, but it could open up other problems, especially for students who need the most support from the school (Gage et al., 2013).

Implications

The state of education is continually changing. The politics currently in the state of Indiana have tied money to students graduating. Graduation rates and attendance rates are now important metrics that measure how high schools are graded and compared to one another. Another issue is principal training. Principals are taught to be flexible and attempt to keep students on track educationally. Currently, if a student is expelled in Indiana, the expulsion can be held in abeyance and the student is able to continue earning high school credits in an online or alternative program toward graduation. Only in the last decade has this been possible. Before that, it was difficult for students to graduate on time if they were expelled from school because there was no way for students to make up for the lost time.

Research Questions 1 and 2

Research Questions 1 and 2 had non-significant differences when asked if there was a difference in a school's suspension composite score based on a school's location or size. Christle et al. (2004) found that school size was not found to relate to a school's suspension rate. Noltemeyer and Mcloughlin (2010) found that urban schools faced more discipline issues per student than suburban or rural schools. This study did not find a relationship between the suspension composite score and both a school's size or location. One implication is that the suspension composite score measured what a school would do if faced with a specific student discipline infraction, but it does not measure if a school actually faced that discipline situation. For example, a school could not have a student falsely pull a fire alarm for several years. This study measured what schools would do if faced with that situation, but it did not measure whether they had to actually administer such discipline. Because of this, differences may not be found in any of the research questions.

Another implication that may attempt to explain this finding is that safety issues have forced building administrators to have similar views. Since the Columbine shootings, schools have taken tough stands on safety issues in schools, and they have also collaborated more often with other building administrators from across the state. Indiana has implemented the School Safety Specialist Academy where best practices in school safety and accident prevention are shared. Seminars like these may cause administrators to have similar views regardless of their location or size since representatives of all schools are included in the same seminars.

Another reason for more consistency among responses may be the new Indiana bullying law and training that the state provides. The state now requires all schools and school districts to report bullying data that is visible for anyone to see on the Indiana Department of Education

website. Because of this, many schools collaborate about how to treat relational, physical, and electronic bullying offenses.

The fear of lawsuits could play a role in principals across the state assigning similar punishments for various infractions. Principals do not want an angry parent to obtain a lawyer and ask why a student in another school or in a neighboring district only received one day of out-of-school suspension but their child received three days for the same offense. The fear of these questions could have indirectly forced collaboration among building leaders to assign more common punishments among schools.

Descriptive data did support that rural schools expel more often for infractions involving drugs and alcohol than urban schools. This finding was not as prevalent, but still existed, between small and large schools. The literature stated that urban schools spent more time on discipline than their rural and suburban counterparts (Noltemeyer & McLoughlin, 2010), contrary to the descriptive data. School size, however, has not been shown to have a positive or negative impact on the number of out-of-school suspensions and expulsions that a school assigns or affects the high school's academic results (Christle et al., 2004).

Research Question 3

Research Question 3 asked if the demographics of the building principal served as a predictor of the suspension composite score. According to Hull (2012), principals have a greater impact on student achievement as their experience increased. The hope with this question was that the suspension composite score would lessen as the experience of the principal increased because the experienced principal gains strong situational awareness of issues in a school and better understands the effects tough decisions have on others (Goodwin, 2013).

A factor that could have an effect on this study is the new evaluation model. Because of the new Indiana state law that every teacher will be evaluated by school administrators each school year, it could be argued that teachers are handling discipline in their classroom in a more efficient manner. Another byproduct of this is that administrators could be more visible inside a school since they are in classrooms more often and there are more adults interacting with the student body, and thereby students are behaving better. Another positive of the new evaluation system is that since principals are in more classrooms, this hopefully leads to better instruction and fewer classroom problems.

Research Questions 4 and 5

These research questions asked if the suspension composite score served as a predictor of the passing rate on the English 10 ECA and the Algebra I ECA respectively. It was found to be non-significant. In a Florida study, students who were suspended just one day had smaller gains in reading than their peers (Arcia, 2006). Because of this and Rausch and Skiba's (2004) study of Indiana's ISTEP scores that determined that schools with larger suspension rates had lower passing rates than those with higher suspension rates, the literature review supported that the more punitive a school was, the lower their standardized test scores were.

Many of the implications for Research Questions 1 and 2 can also be valid here. The suspension composite score measured what schools would do if faced with specific discipline consequences, not that students had violated these rules and the consequences were imposed on students. Indiana administrators collaborate and share best practice information on a regular basis through the Indiana School Safety Specialist Academy where administrators meet at least once per year for a two-day training seminar on best practices on safety issues. The Indiana Association of School Principals (IASP) sends out weekly newsletters to its members and shares

what is happening across the state in regard to legislation and current situations facing administrators in Indiana. This, along with other collaborating activities in which principals participate, causes many administrators in Indiana to have similar views when it comes to student discipline and how to react to new situations.

There are several free on-line public high schools in Indiana in which students are able to enroll instead of traditional high schools and the students can “attend” school without leaving their homes. According to OnlineSchools.com, there are more than 257 on-line high schools in which schools can enroll. Students who have discipline issues in high school could leave the traditional setting and attend the virtual school and work at his or her own pace without needing to interact with other students.

Research Question 6

Research Question 6 asked if Indiana public high school principals believed that out-of-school suspension made students less likely to misbehave in the future. Of all the principals responding to the survey, six (6.7%) strongly disagree, nine (10.1%) disagree, nine (10.1%) somewhat disagree, 44 (49.4%) somewhat agree, 21 (23.6%) agree, and none responded that they strongly agree. Even though 73.0% of the respondents somewhat agree (49.4%) or agree (23.6%), the response that was missing from this question was that there were no responses strongly agreeing with this statement. The purpose of out-of-school suspension is to “ameliorate behavioral and academic problems” (Ferguson, 2012, para. 1). If not one principal surveyed believed strongly that this is the case, then why is out-of-school suspension so engrained in our educational culture in America?

The responses to this research question could also be tied to student views of out-of-school suspension. Brown (2007) said that students view that out-of-school suspensions are

assigned too liberally. Suspended and non-suspended students sometime perceive out-of-school suspensions as a vacation or holiday from school and not as a discipline consequence (Caru, Drupper, & Theriot, as cited in Bloomberg, 2004). It has also been found that out-of-school suspension did not deter future inappropriate behaviors, but rather increased the likelihood of students receiving future out-of-school suspension occurrences (Brunette, 2010).

Research Question 7

Research Question 7 asked if Indiana public high school principals believed that zero-tolerance policies made an impactful contribution in maintaining order at their schools. Of the principals responding to the survey, 22 (24.7%) strongly disagree, nine (10.1%) disagree, 13 (14.6%) somewhat disagree, 23 (25.8%) somewhat agree, 18 (20.2%) agree, and four (4.5%) responded that they strongly agree. The responses were nearly split between the disagree (49.4%) and agree (50.6%) answers. One would think that zero tolerance policies would make administrators jobs easier because if a student breaks a certain rule, then the consequence is set without debate. It has, however, not allowed administrators to be flexible with students and the policies are too often is applied for minor offenses (Iselin, 2010).

The split in the data for the responses could be because some administrators appreciated not having to look at the context of a situation and make a decision based on intent and other circumstances. Other administrators constantly try to side with the student and find ways to keep the student in school and not suspend or expel because by keeping the student in school, the student has a better chance of obtaining academic success. Administrators' responses displayed support from both sides of this issue.

It is interesting to note how Research Questions 6 and 7 differ. Research Question 6 asked if out-of-school suspension made students less likely to misbehave in the future. Seventy-

three percent of the respondents either somewhat agreed or agreed with that statement. The descriptive data for Research Question 7, do Indiana public school principals believe that zero-tolerance policies made an impactful contribution in maintaining order at their schools, was split with nearly 50% of the respondents agreeing and disagreeing. The data shows that principals agree by nearly a 3-to-1 ratio that out-of-school suspension made students less likely to misbehave in the future but they were split when asked if they wanted pre-determined consequences for those suspensions.

Research Recommendations

When conducting this study, there were several things that I thought could have been done to further study this topic:

1. The first was to incorporate middle and junior high schools into the study population. Their ISTEP scores and the English 10 and Algebra I ECA scores could have all been changed to z-scores for comparison of the academic data. This would have greatly increased the sample size and possibly provided enough power to find significant differences in the variables studied.
2. A second option for further research is to do a qualitative study with interviews of school administrators with both high and low rates of out-of-school suspension and see how they are similar as well as different. This would allow for a more in-depth view of how principals handle discipline in their schools and provide context to the suspension lengths given rather than viewing them as raw data.
3. The study of principal tenure in a school and its relationship to suspension data and academic results seem to be a topic that the literature supports. According to Beteille

- et al. (2012), high principal turnover, especially in high-poverty schools, does not allow new initiatives to take hold and forces schools to not maintain stability.
4. A fourth option for further research would be to study special education students by comparing the number of out-of-school suspensions that the population receives compared to the regular education population after controlling for demographic variables like race and poverty.
 5. A fifth recommendation for further research would be to study alternatives to out-of-school suspension like detentions and in-school-suspensions and attempt to measure its effect on academic achievement.
 6. Another recommendation for further research would be to see what zero-tolerance policies, if any, minimize student discipline infractions. For example, if a school is drug free, alcohol free, or even bully free, does having a set consequence for specific student misbehavior, regardless of the situation, minimize the number of student discipline infractions in a school.
 7. A seventh option for further research would be to study alternative programs and their track record of success for students.
 8. One might study Indiana Department of Education high school suspension data and determine if there is a relationship between Indiana ECA scores and a school's suspension rate.
 9. A final option for further study could be to determine if there is a relationship between students who break the law and their academic progress in rural, suburban, and urban locals. This could be due to the number of supports in a community outside of the school.

Conclusion

The purpose of this quantitative study was to determine whether schools that impose more days of out-of-school suspension as a discipline consequence in Indiana public high schools had a relationship with the academic results of the school. Public high school principals in Indiana have many items on their plate. They have to maintain safe schools for students to attend each day, they are the educational leaders of the school, and they are in charge of record keeping for the school. All of these are difficult tasks to oversee and maintain, and school discipline is included in keeping a safe school and being an educational leader. Even though none of the findings of this study were statistically significant, they were still able to provide discussion and learning experiences for both the writer and readers.

One of these learning experiences was based on the location of the high schools in rural settings, suburban settings, and urban settings. The stereotype is that rural teachers and administrators get to know their students more than suburban and urban administrators do. In fact, McNeely et al. (2002) found that rural students had a stronger relationship to their school than their urban and suburban counterparts. It was thought that because of this relationship, students would not be suspended as often. In fact, it was found that schools in rural districts reported spending more time on discipline issues that were tied to politeness and following societal rules like not calling others names or not pushing other students in the halls (Skiba & Peterson, 2000).

This study does not agree with these statements because rural schools were more likely to expel a student for several more offenses than their suburban and urban counterparts. For example, if a student brought a pocket knife to school, the student would be expelled 27.8% of the time compared to 21.6% in a suburban high school and 18.8% of the time in an urban setting.

Urban and suburban high schools were also less likely to expel for drug and alcohol offenses than their rural peers if they were faced with that discipline infraction. Noltemeyer and Mccloughlin (2010) found that urban high schools spent 67% of their time on discipline. Another reason that urban high schools may have more severe consequences than their rural counterparts is that they could have more community supports in place to aid students than those in rural situations. Larger-sized schools and districts can offer a larger curriculum and more assistance programs to students (Cornell & Klein, 2010).

Research Question 6 that asked whether the threat of out-of-school suspension made students less likely to misbehave in the future. For rural high schools, 75.0% either somewhat agree or agree with this statement. By comparison, only 72.9% of suburban high school administrators and 68.8% of urban high school administrators somewhat agree or agree with this statement.

Unlike location, this study found that small-sized high schools were found to expel students more often for some discipline offenses than medium-sized or large-sized high schools. Part of this difference could be attributed to the fact that 77% of schools that were in the small-sized high school category were also rural high schools. But, the literature review stated that school size did not display much of a difference in suspension rates. This study varied from this pattern. For example, a small-size high school would expel 91.7% of the time for drug transmission. Medium-sized (84.2%) and large-sized (81.8%) high schools had smaller percentages. A similar example is for alcohol possession. When comparing the three levels of schools, large-sized high schools would only expel a student 63.6% of the time compared to 85.4% of the small-sized high school and 84.2% of the medium-sized high schools. Thus, the

data for these discipline infractions for small-, medium-, and large-sized high schools was similar to the differences noted for rural, suburban, and urban schools.

There were also differences in the suspension composite score for schools by location. The inferential testing did not find significance for this area, mostly because of the large size of the standard deviations for each group. Rural schools had $SD = 84.24$, suburban schools had $SD = 98.87$, and urban schools had $SD = 91.75$. But, when looking at the mean suspension composite score for rural schools, it was 295.83, whereas suburban schools had a mean of 289.68 and urban schools had a mean of 262.44. This result where the mean for the rural schools was higher than the mean for the other two categories, related with the results shared earlier that rural schools were more likely to expel students for more behaviors than their suburban and urban counterparts.

Again, analyzing the difference by suspension composite score was not as beneficial when looking at it by a school's size. Small-sized high schools had the largest mean of 298.80, but medium-sized high schools were very close behind with a mean of 296.26. Large-sized high schools were far lower with a mean of 254.14. Again, the large-sized high schools' standard deviations kept the means in this category from being significant ($SD = 88.51$ for small high schools, $SD = 72.05$ for medium-sized high schools, and $SD = 108.12$ for large-sized high schools), but it does contradict the literature review stating that there is not much of a difference among school size and suspension rates.

Another interesting statistic to note was the average age of a principal in the study. For the entire sample, it was 47.87 years of age. A noteworthy part of looking at the data was how close all six different breakdowns of the data were with regard to the average age of a principal. Rural principal's age was 48.64 years, suburban was 47.32 years, urban was 47.38 years, small-

size high school principal was 47.54 years, medium-sized high school principal was 48.53 years, and large-sized high school principal was 48.00 years.

Other principal demographic data that matched the literature review was that 57.3% of all principals in the study had been in their current position for five years or less. This matched the data that Hull (2012) stated that the average tenure for a high school principal was three to four years. The data supports with every category displaying above 50% except in medium-sized high school where only 42.1% principals had been in their current position for zero to five years (Table 13). Hull (2012) also stated that it took a building principal at least five years to move a faculty and that an effective principal is second only to the teacher in influencing student learning. So, a challenge to school districts in Indiana is to attempt to keep principals in their positions longer so they can move along their building initiatives and provide better schools to their communities.

Table 13

Percentage of Principals in their Current Position Zero to Five Years

Rural	Suburban	Urban	Small	Medium	Large
50.0%	64.9%	56.3%	54.2%	42.1%	77.3%

Another surprising component of the study came when discussing zero tolerance. The literature review stated that zero-tolerance policies do not allow administrators to interpret the context of a discipline situation with a student and instead force a school administrator to impose a pre-set punishment for a student action (Iselin, 2010). By school location, the data in Table 14 shows that the principals were split in their view of zero tolerance policies and their impact in maintaining order in their school. But, when looking at the data below by school size, small-

sized high schools slightly disagreed with the impact of zero tolerance policies but when looking at medium- and large-sized high schools, the split was almost 60% agreeing and 40% disagreeing. This may be due to the fact that administrators in high schools with enrollments larger than 500 students handle many discipline issues each day. By having zero tolerance policies in place, decision making can be decided for these principals because they know if a student acts out in a certain manner, then there is a certain pre-established consequence. On the other hand, administrators in smaller-sized high schools may have more time to assess each situation specifically thinking about the needs of the students involved and may not find a pre-determined consequence as easy to handle as a principal in a larger school.

Table 14

Zero Tolerance Policies Make an Impactful Contribution in Maintaining Order at my School

Demographic	Strongly Disagree/ Disagree/ Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Agree/ Somewhat Agree/ Agree
Rural	47.2%	52.8%
Suburban	51.4%	48.6%
Urban	50.0%	50.0%
Small	56.3%	43.7%
Medium	42.1%	57.9%
Large	40.9%	59.1%

What Can Schools Do Differently?

How can schools be more effective in disciplining students? The thought from the literature that continues to resonate is when students misbehave and the actions do not endanger

the safety of others, give students more school, not less (Robinette, 2012). After studying all the data about where, when, and how students are removed from the school setting, the best alternative seems to be to make students stay in school longer. A student who does not follow school rules to the point of needing to be removed needs additional guidance that the school can provide. So, if a student is caught smoking in a restroom, what good does it do to remove a student for three days (the top choice for tobacco for the whole sample) from school? The student is not hurting the school. The student is not harming other students. The only thing the student is doing is hurting is himself or herself. In fact, out-of-school suspension pushes out of the school building those who need this structure the most. Instead, some students may go to unsupervised homes that many times do not provide much needed guidance (Blakesley, 2013).

The recommendation from this study is for high schools to run an extended school day. It could run from 7:00 AM to 5:00 PM or something similar. Students would have to come to school early and then stay late. Consequences could vary for students who do not comply with the rules. This concept can be compared to students who receive their second out-of-school suspension during a school year. In Indiana, if the student is less than 18-years old, the student loses his or her driving privileges for 120 days. This restriction is a motivator for students to stay out of trouble. The extended school day could be a similar motivator for students, providing a deterrent rather than a holiday for students being kept home from school.

Closing

School discipline is very fluid and situational most of the time. Hopefully, this study provides insight into how public high school principals use discipline in Indiana and what educators can do differently to make it better. No Child Left Behind laws have made schools across the country publish graduations rates, testing results, attendance data, and discipline

results for public viewing. School administrators can no longer remove students with discipline issues from the school and not worry about their academic achievement. Schools must now provide interventions to keep troubled students on a path to academic success. This chapter discussed an interpretation of the data with a summary of the descriptive data, a summary of the hypotheses testing, a summary of the research, a discussion of conclusions that came from the data, future research opportunities, and a conclusion with an explanation of differences that were noticed.

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APPENDIX A: LETTER OF INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE



July 9, 2014

OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN
INDIANA HIGH SCHOOLS

Principals in public high school across Indiana are being invited to participate in a research study about student suspensions in the state of Indiana. This study is being conducted by Joe Voelker, as part of a doctoral dissertation with Dr. Todd Whitaker serving as the faculty sponsor from the Department of Educational Leadership at Indiana State University.

There are no known risks if you decide to participate in this research study. There are no costs to you for participating in the study. The information you provide will help determine the effects of out-of-school suspension on academic achievement in Indiana high schools. The questionnaire will take about five minutes to complete. The information collected may not benefit you directly, but the information learned in this study should provide more general benefits.

This survey is anonymous. Do not write your name on the survey. Although anonymity cannot be guaranteed over the internet, no names of the participants of this study will be collected nor will there be any collection of IP addresses. No one will be able to identify you or your answers, and no one will know whether or not you participated in the study. Individuals from the Institutional Review Board may inspect these records. Should the data be published, no individual information will be disclosed.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. By completing the survey, you are voluntarily agreeing to participate. You are free to decline to answer any particular question you do not wish to answer for any reason.

If you have any questions about the study, please contact Joe Voelker at 6575 Old Vincennes Rd., Floyds Knobs, IN 47119 (812) 542-3004 or jvoelker@nafcs.k12.in.us. You may also contact Dr. Todd Whitaker at Indiana State University, UH 317B, Terre Haute, IN 47809

(812) 237-2904 or Todd.Whitaker@indstate.edu.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject or if you feel you've been placed at risk, you may contact the Indiana State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) by mail at Indiana State University, Office of Sponsored Programs, Terre Haute, IN, 47809, by phone at (812) 237-8217, or by e-mail at irb@indstate.edu.

Your participation is greatly appreciated!

Sincerely,

Joe Voelker
Assistant Principal of Student Development
Floyd Central High School
6575 Old Vincennes Rd.
Floyds Knobs, IN 47119
812-542-3004

APPENDIX B: PRINCIPAL SURVEY ON HIGH SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

Please answer the following questions.

1. What is the name of your high school?

2. Is your school a charter school?

_____ Yes _____ No

3. What is your gender?

_____ Male _____ Female

4. What is your age?

5. How many years, including this year, have you been employed in education?

_____ 0 to 5 years

_____ 6 to 10 years

_____ 11 to 15 years

_____ 16 to 20 years

_____ 21 to 25 years

_____ 26 or more years

6. How many years, including this one, have you been in your current position?

_____ 0 to 5 years

_____ 6 to 10 years

_____ 11 to 15 years

_____ 16 to 20 years

_____ 21 to 25 years

_____ 26 or more years

7. What is the highest level of school you have completed?

- _____ Bachelor degree
 _____ Master's degree
 _____ Specialist degree
 _____ Doctorate degree

Please enter the number of days your school would suspend a student out of school for the following infractions. In parenthesis is the scenario of what occurred that will help ensure consistency among the responses. Zero means that the discipline would not require a student to miss school serving a detention, an in-school suspension, receiving demerits, etc. A 1 means a one-day suspension, 2 means a two-day suspension, etc., all the way to a 10-day suspension. The final choice is if your school would ask for an expulsion for the infraction. Please answer the survey with the understanding that the discipline infraction is for a student who is a first-time offender without prior discipline offenses. You may choose only one item.

8. Chronic attendance violations (a student misses 10% or more of school days without a note from a doctor).

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Expulsion

9. Misrepresentation / Cheating on a test or major assignment (a student has his phone between his legs and is caught looking up answers during a test).

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Expulsion

10. Profanity / Obscenity directed to an adult in the school (the student calls a teacher a profane name).

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Expulsion

11. Tobacco products (a student is found smoking cigarettes in a stall in the restroom while out of class on a hall pass).

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Expulsion

12. Electronic cigarettes (a student is found smoking an electronic cigarette during lunch in a secluded hallway).

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Expulsion

13. False alarms (a student pulls a fire alarm during the school day as a senior prank).

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Expulsion

14. Pornographic material (a student is found showing obscene pictures to another student).

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Expulsion

15. Fighting (a student gets in a fight with another student in the hallway before school; this student was punched first, but then retaliates with five strong blows before a teacher intervenes).

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Expulsion

16. Weapons (a student has a gun in the trunk of his car).

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Expulsion

17. Narcotics / drugs (a student is found with a gram of marijuana in a baggie).

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Expulsion

18. Alcohol possession (a student puts vodka in a water bottle and is found drinking it at school).

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Expulsion

19. Possession of drug paraphernalia (a student is found with a bong, pipe, and roach clip).

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Expulsion

20. Alcohol transmission (a student gives beer to three other students on the bus on the way home from school).

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Expulsion

21. Drug transmission (a student gives prescription pills to another student in the hallway in exchange for \$10).

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Expulsion

22. Possession (use) of a lighter or matches (a student is showing off by striking matches on the back of the school bus).

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Expulsion

23. Truancy from school (a student skips school to spend the day with a friend).

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Expulsion

24. Bullying (a student posts a picture of another student on social media).

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Expulsion

25. Possession of a pocket knife (a student has a pocket knife in the pocket of his jeans).

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Expulsion

Please fill in the best answer.

26. Suspension makes students less likely to misbehave in the future.

_____ Strongly Disagree

_____ Disagree

_____ Somewhat Disagree

_____ Somewhat Agree

_____ Agree

_____ Strongly Agree

27. Zero tolerance policies make an impactful contribution in maintaining order at my school
(zero tolerance is defined as the practice of imposing an automatic and severe punishment
for any violation of a certain rule).

_____ Strongly Disagree

_____ Disagree

_____ Somewhat Disagree

_____ Somewhat Agree

_____ Agree

_____ Strongly Agree

Thank you very much for taking part in the survey. If you would like to receive the results from this study, please contact Joe Voelker at jvoelker@nafcs.k12.in.us.