

Disciplinary Trends in Boston Area Schools: Programming to
Improve Conflict Resolution Practices and Close the
Education Gap

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Abstract

Research shows disproportionate rates of suspensions and expulsions for youth of color and youth with special needs. Removing these students from schools at higher rates reinforces the education gap and puts them at a sustained disadvantage academically and socially. This thesis explores trends in discipline in Boston area schools and programs designed to address disciplinary issues. To provide further context to the available data, a sample of public school teachers were surveyed on their experiences with classroom conflict. My research found that according to the public data, Black and Hispanic students were disproportionately suspended when compared to their White counterparts across both general and special education programs. Teachers reported wanting to receive more training on conflict resolution methods.

My research suggests that alternative disciplinary programming based on models such as Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports and restorative justice may help to reduce the disproportionate use of suspensions and expulsions of minority students and facilitate more constructive responses to conflict.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The social culture around educators' role in disciplining students has changed over time in America, creating an antagonistic dynamic between teachers and their students. Recent research suggests that discipline structures in public schools in Boston and nationwide have become increasingly punitive, taking the form of suspensions and expulsions, which can be together termed as disciplinary exclusions (Wilka, 2011). These practices of exclusion may have detrimental effects on individual students and have longer term implications for students' academic and social outlooks (Rennie Center for Education Research and Policy, 2010) and even put them at risk for contact with the criminal justice system (Advancement Project, 2010). Further, students who struggle in the classroom fall farther behind when suspended or expelled (Rennie Center for Education Research and Policy, 2010). When these practices disproportionately affect students of color, an education gap is perpetuated over time that proliferates from the public school system into the rest of society as these students get older (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). Exclusions and in school arrests push minority students closer to the criminal justice system and incarceration, thus reinforcing the "school to prison pipeline" (Advancement Project, 2010). Collaborative and holistic approaches to education and discipline have the potential to mediate the education gap and help at risk students achieve their full potential in the classroom (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports [PBIS], 2014).

This thesis explores alternatives to disciplinary exclusions for handling classroom conflicts. Implementation of less punitive practices could decrease the

use of exclusions and promote the academic and social success of youth of color and youth with special needs. With this goal in mind, I examined Boston area schools' public data on suspension and expulsion rates and surveyed a sample of public school teachers to identify some of the specific activities being used to address disciplinary concerns. The public data showed that students with special needs are suspended at high rates, and Black and Hispanic students were disproportionately suspended. The teachers surveyed expressed a desire to receive more professional development around conflict resolution practices and clarity on disciplinary procedures between general and special education students. Additional options for handling conflict in schools can not only lessen the need for suspensions and expulsions, but also close the education gap that perpetually disadvantages the state's most vulnerable students.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Disciplinary Trends in U.S. Public Schools

Since the 1990's, public school administrations have been adopting zero tolerance policies in the wake of public school shootings, which were intended to address serious criminal offenses taking place on school grounds (Rennie Center, 2010). An example of a zero tolerance policy would be immediate expulsion upon bringing a firearm to school. Since then, zero tolerance policies have been manifested as harsher responses like disciplinary exclusions (suspensions and expulsions) that blanket the spectrum of disciplinary issues that take place in schools (Rennie Center, 2010). Some examples of situations that would require disciplinary action are fighting with other students, talking back to the teacher, making noises or performing actions that distract other students, running out of the classroom, yelling at students or staff, being physically aggressive with students or staff, damaging property, or bringing a dangerous object to school. Some additional responses by teachers and school administration are to call the student's parent or guardian, have the student picked up from school, ignore the student if no one is being physically harmed, send the student from the room to a "time out" space or to the principal's office, or call 911 if the student is posing a serious threat to his own safety or the safety of others. The situations perceived as disciplinary issues exist along a wide spectrum, and the responses to them may or may not match the severity of the issue.

Neither suspensions nor expulsions are proven to be productive responses to discipline issues and can in fact have detrimental effects on students

(Committee on School Health, 2003). Suspension and expulsion of students can actually lead to worsened academic performance and increased delinquency (Committee on School Health, 2003). Despite legislation passed in 2012 urging schools to use strong discretion when suspending students, research found that small infractions were still leading to suspensions in Boston schools (Taylor, Cregor, & Lane, 2014). Further, the report found that in Massachusetts public schools, 72% of suspensions in academic year 2012-2013 were for non-violent and non-drug related offenses such as tardiness, talking back, swearing and dress code violations (Taylor et al., 2014).

It must be noted that teachers may already be strained to manage and teach a class of twenty or more students, so when one student commands such urgent attention, few other options may exist but to remove that particular student. However, policies that were originally meant to keep students safe in more extreme situations have become routinized responses to less serious, non-threatening incidents for students in grades as young as elementary school (Rennie Center, 2010). Recent regulation by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) specifically addresses this issue, attempting to decrease the public school system's reliance on expulsions and suspensions for minor in-school offenses (Chapter 222 of Acts of 2012, An Act Relative to Student Access to Educational Services and Exclusion from School, 2012). Under Chapter 222, suspensions are only supposed to be used in the case of violent or drug related offenses. Taylor et al. (2014) noted that persistent high suspension rates are due in part to improper or neglected implementation of

Chapter 222. Classroom disruptions and other minor behavioral concerns are still being viewed more as threats to overall school safety. The following are suggestions for what district level administrators can do to better implement

Chapter 222 (Taylor et al., 2014):

- Identify which staff can help implement and tailor best practices to fit individual schools
- Train district and school administration on Chapter 222 monitoring
- Require annual reporting of school disciplinary data to Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
- Facilitate information sharing between schools

Further, stricter approaches to school safety have led to increased funding for law enforcement officers in schools to act as primary discipline policy implementers (Petteruti, 2011). In schools with school resource officers (SROs), the role of addressing disruptive behavior often falls to them instead of teachers or counselors, and this can result in arrests and generally law-driven responses (Petteruti, 2011). In-school arrests, especially of minority boys and girls, sustain the “school to prison pipeline,” which facilitates youth contact with the criminal justice system and incarceration at disproportionate rates (Lewis, Butler, Bonner, & Joubert, 2010). As resources allocated to law enforcement officers in schools have increased, funding and support for teachers and social programming have decreased (Greenberg et al., 2003). The key actors responsible for addressing school discipline have shifted in the past twenty years as a result of the strengthened link between school safety and discipline under zero tolerance policies.

Children's Social and Emotional Development

Throughout elementary school, children are developing their interpersonal, communication and conflict resolution skills. The conversation around discipline and consequences would be remiss if the social and emotional developmental trajectory of school-aged children was not considered. Throughout preschool, children are learning to regulate their emotions and social interactions, which fosters successful social functioning (Eisenberg, Fabes, Guthrie, & Reiser, 2000). In the transition from preschool to kindergarten, children begin to establish their own internal mechanisms of self-regulation that can be harder to change as the child gets older (Rothbart & Bates, 2006). Since children are learning to manage their emotions and participate in more advanced social interactions, research has made a case for integrating these concepts into mainstream education (Kris, 2015).

Punitive disciplinary responses are not sensitive to children's developmental abilities for problem solving and coping with negative emotions because removing students from school does not teach them how to properly handle similar conflict situations in the future. Explicitly teaching students how to handle conflict with others can promote social and academic success (Kris, 2015). Emotion regulation plays a significant role in developing high quality social behavior (Eisenberg et al., 2000) because emotion regulation allows children to tolerate moderate levels of frustration and other negative emotions without acting on them in an inappropriate way. According to this body of research, it would be

advantageous for schools to facilitate the development of these skills in order to help students develop socially as well as academically.

Social Emotional Learning Programs

Schonert-Reichl and Hymel (2007) discuss the growth of the social emotional learning (SEL) movement and its importance in education. SEL has been linked to academic improvement and performance, but only recently has it received more mainstream attention. SEL originated out of the University of Illinois at Chicago's Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL), which was founded in 1993 by Daniel Goleman and Eileen Rockefeller Growold. They have integrated SEL practices into preschool to high school education through explicit social skills instruction and integration into academic instruction. They describe five social and emotional learning competencies, which are: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision making (CASEL, 2015). These competencies are developed in students to produce the following four student outcomes: increased positive behaviors, decreased misbehaviors, academic success and reduced emotional distress (CASEL, 2015). Promoting these outcomes are designed to help students engage more in the classroom and prevent the need for suspensions and expulsions. SEL practices can be integrated into everyday classroom practices and student programming.

Morris and colleagues (2014) postulate that schools should promote SEL to help children identify their emotions and develop strategies for coping with and responding to them. A key part of the SEL process is to normalize strong

emotions by teaching children that they aren't good or bad and that they represent normal experiences (Kris, 2015). The SEL research supports the link between emotion regulation skills and children's ability to navigate social conflict.

The use of mindfulness as a tool for developing the five SEL competencies of CASEL has gained in popularity. Various curriculum packages are available for purchase by individual schools and teachers that teach mindfulness practices to students and promote SEL. Two very popular programs are MindUP and Inner Kids. The MindUP curriculum consists of 15 lessons for pre-K through middle school aged students. The goals of the program are to improve focus, concentration, and academic performance; reduce stress and anxiety; provide coping skills for peer-to-peer conflicts; emotion regulation; and to develop greater empathy toward others.

Schonert-Reichl and Lawlor (2010) evaluated the MindUP program's effectiveness for 4-5th graders in a public elementary school. To understand the impact of the program on social and emotional competence, they evaluated measures of executive function, such as problem solving, shifting attention between tasks and working memory. Teacher and student reports of prosocial behavior and well-being were also collected. All teachers noted significant improvement in classroom culture and student attentiveness. Finally, a test of executive function found that students showed an increase in regulatory abilities and faster reaction times. Student reports showed increased optimism about school (Schonert-Reichl & Lawlor, 2010).

The Inner Kids program is an 8-12 week program that can be used for students ranging from pre-kindergarten to 12th grade (Susan Kaiser Greenland, 2013). It uses what's called "The New ABC's: Attention, Balance and Compassion" to help students develop inner and outer awareness of themselves and others (Susan Kaiser Greenland, 2013). The program facilitates games around sensory awareness, awareness of one's own and others thoughts, emotions, experiences and world view, and understanding one's self in space in relation to others. Flook et al. (2010) found that in a randomized control study of sixty-four seven to nine year old children, executive function improved after completing the eight week course as evaluated by teacher and parent reports. Students identified as having executive function difficulties stood to gain more from the program than those without such challenges. The study authors suggest furthering research by using neurocognitive tests, behavioral observations and other more objective measures to evaluate the program's impact and effectiveness. This research provides initial support for more holistic teaching practices that target students' emotional experiences in school. Often times, students are reprimanded for behaviors that manifest out of inability to control impulses and regulate emotions when provoked. SEL's goal is to help students develop these skills, but SEL integration in schools can also increase teacher sensitivity to the developmental aspect of student behavior. Unfortunately, these curriculum packages are expensive and require training that might not be financially feasible, which denies many schools the opportunity to employ more holistic teaching practices.

The Role of Teachers in Students' Conflict Management

The transactions that take place between a child and their environment as they learn to regulate their emotions and behaviors will contribute to their subsequent social development (Eisenberg et al., 2000), which puts teachers in a critical position in school contexts. The responses a child receives from adults in conflict situations will be internalized and guide future behaviors. What this means for schools is that children who struggle emotionally and behaviorally can learn healthy or unhealthy coping strategies based on the responses and coaching they receive from adults. Of course behaviors deemed inappropriate should not be reinforced as acceptable, but punitive and harsh responses to a distressed child can hinder the development of healthy coping strategies. Thus, the teacher-child relationship is one worth exploring.

Teachers' feelings of efficacy have been found to affect the quality of their instructional capacities for students with learning and/or behavioral difficulties (Brownell & Pajares, 1999), and these feelings of efficacy may increase with the presence of programmatic supports for this population of students. Teachers who perceive higher levels of efficacy and success or who have received targeted training for struggling students are more likely to include these students in their rooms and persist in teaching them (Brownell & Pajares, 1999). Research has also shown that children identified as being aggressive as young as preschool age receive less attention for displaying prosocial behaviors from teachers compared to their non-aggressive counterparts (McComas, Johnson, & Symons, 2005). The relationship between kindergarten students and their teachers, especially in

conflict situations can have significant implications for future success and social emotional development (Spilt & Koomen, 2012).

This body of research advocates for earlier intervention of the relationships between children with externalizing behaviors and their teachers, as this relationship can mediate the negative consequences of problem behaviors. Spilt, Koomen, Thijs, and van der Leij (2012) performed one of the first studies on the effects of teacher-child relationships for behaviorally at-risk kindergarten students. Their research found that focusing on healthy relationships between teachers and at-risk students facilitated positive social-emotional development and acted as protective factors against externalized behaviors (Spilt et al., 2012). This body of research acknowledges the significance of children's relationships in social and emotional development. Sensitivity and reflection practices among teachers could be key for helping them approach conflict with children with behavioral problems (Spilt et al., 2012).

Discrimination in Public School Discipline

As exclusions (suspensions and expulsions) are being utilized in schools as a safety tool, discriminatory trends have developed over time that go beyond the differential treatment of children who consistently present problematic behaviors. Research shows that African American students are punished more in school and in harsher manners than their white counterparts (Gordon, Piana, & Keleher, 2000). African-American and Black students have been disproportionately affected by zero tolerance policies and disciplinary removals despite a lack of proof that these students exhibit more misbehavior than White

students (Rennie Center, 2010; Losen & Skiba, 2010). Further, the disproportionate rates of exclusionary discipline are more likely to be due to differential treatment based on bias (Losen & Skiba, 2010). White educators can experience what is called “racial threat” and perceive conflict with students of color as being more hostile and in response use more punitive measures (Welch & Payne, 2011). During the 2012-2013 school year, Black students accounted for 43% of all out of school suspensions in Massachusetts public schools while only comprising 8.7% of the total student population (Taylor et al., 2014).

These disproportionate findings stem from deeply rooted discriminatory paradigms. African American boys are more likely to be labeled as aggressive by teachers and peers (Noguera, 2003). Additionally, research respondents in general associate being black with lower intelligence and higher hostility, aggressiveness and violence (Blaine, 2007). In a study of racial bias using pictures of White boys, Black boys, non-human primates and measures of perceived aggression, Goff et al. (2014) found that White adults perceive Black boys as older in age and as more responsible for their actions than their White counterparts. They further noted that White police officers in particular unconsciously dehumanized Black boys, which they suggest carries significant implications for how children of color are perceived in the face of conflict (Goff et al., 2014). These findings are significant because if research has shown that children who are identified as aggressive are treated differently by teachers (McComas et al., 2005), then minority boys are at an even greater disadvantage because they are perceived as more aggressive simply based on their race and ethnicity.

Steele and colleagues' extensive work on stereotype threat shows that dealing with these stereotypes can adversely affect mental health and lead African American students to experience harmful levels of stress from trying not to reinforce widely held racial assumptions (Aronson & Steele, 2005). Research shows that White teachers hold stigmas about Black femininity that do not align with what White teachers consider "good" female students to look like (Jones, 2009). The potential effects of this stigma are lowered academic performance, delinquency, and the internalization of negative images of what it means to be Black, because Black identity has not historically been synonymous with academic success (Basow & Rubin, 1999). Ethnic minority youth tend to experience a lower sense of belonging than White students (Faircloth & Hamm, 2005), which in turn can lead to negative attitudes about school and lowered academic outcomes (Osterman, 2000). Minority students are also aware of and perceive instances of discrimination based on racial stereotypes (Way & Pahl, 2006). These students report discrimination in the form of receiving lower grades than they deserve, being disciplined harsher than is necessary, and experiencing verbal and psychological abuse (Graham, Taylor, & Ho, 2011). Discriminatory trends in classrooms can produce adverse psychological effects, which sustains a damaging cycle for minority youth in schools that keep them from achieving their highest academic and social potential.

If students of color are being removed from schools at higher rates, then they are at a higher risk of dropping out or underperforming as they get older, which perpetuates the education gap. These students are also at risk of being fed

into the school to prison pipeline with increased police presence in public schools (Petteruti, 2011). Punitive trends can carry youth into the criminal justice system, which implies not only inequality in public education but a systemic coordination of institutionalized racism that begins in schools. Research notes that African-American, Black and Latino children are also disproportionately affected by poverty, lower access to quality healthcare, and lack of early education intervention (Children's Defense Fund, 2009). These extenuating circumstances and consequential lack of key skills can make children more likely to act out and struggle in school (Children's Defense Fund, 2009). The children who are targeted more by zero tolerance policies could have complex needs extending beyond the classroom, and these needs might not be considered when a situation evokes disciplinary action. Research also shows that Black students are placed into special education programs at higher rates and that these placements are determined more by behavioral issues than cognitive abilities, which suggests perception bias on the part of counselors and teachers (Moore, Henfield & Owens, 2008).

In addition to students of color being disproportionately impacted by zero tolerance policies, students with disabilities (including mental health issues and trauma) are more likely to be affected by these policies (Petteruti, 2011). The New York Civil Liberties Union (2011) found that youth with disabilities were four times more likely to be suspended than students without disabilities. In Seattle public schools during academic year 2011-2012, Black and Latino students of both genders with special needs were suspended at disproportionately

higher rates (Losen, Hodson, Keith II, Morrison, & Belway, 2015). The term “disability” can describe any student with developmental disabilities, learning disabilities, cognitive delays and students with a documented social-emotional disturbance. All students who have been identified by the district as having a disability receive an Individual Education Plan (IEP) that is put together by an interdisciplinary team that includes the students’ parents/guardians and teachers. Having an IEP allows the student to receive special education services and accommodations under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 1990). It is important to explore why students with disabilities face higher rates of suspension so that student advocates and educators can then identify where systemic improvements can be made. Among these reasons are late or poorly constructed IEPs, insufficient special education and accommodation funding, undertrained teachers and staff, and reliance on law enforcement to enforce discipline (Browne, 2003). These weak points could be addressed in order to strengthen the capacity of public schools to ensure optimal educational outcomes for all students.

Both racial minority and special needs populations of students being disproportionately affected reveals a discriminatory process in school discipline that could be happening on a systemic level, subjectively in individual classrooms, or both. Dan Losen of the UCLA Center for Civil Rights Remedies emphasizes that there is a significant relationship between exclusion from school and perpetuation of the achievement gap for marginalized student populations, which he terms the “discipline gap” (2015). In the report by Taylor and colleagues

in The Lawyer's Committee for Civil Rights and Economic Justice (2014), a total of 208,605 missed school days were documented in Massachusetts during the 2012-2013 academic year due to suspensions, 57% of which were due to the minor misbehaviors such as talking back, yelling and not following directions. Multiple studies have shown that the majority of the students subjected to suspensions are students of color and students with special needs. If suspension can predict dropping out of school, reduced academic performance and feelings of disengagement from school (Fabelo et al., 2011), then Massachusetts public schools are systematically, regardless of intention, compromising minority students' academic and social outcomes.

Suspensions are a significant predictor of drop-out rates because removing students from school can decrease their level of engagement with their education, their teachers and their peers (Rennie Center, 2010; Fabelo et al., 2011). Further, students experiencing higher levels of academic achievement also report feeling safer (Petteruti, 2011). To ensure school-wide and individual student safety and success, schools can engage students rather than exclude them. Educators can view raising achievement as a tool for improving safety, rather than exclusions that threaten to further discourage lower achieving students (Petteruti, 2011).

Alternative Discipline Models

School administrations, principals and teachers across the country have been implementing alternative classroom strategies that minimize the need for punitive disciplinary measures. These alternative strategies are influenced by SEL theory that takes children's social and developmental milestones into

consideration when addressing conflict. Often times when students repeatedly present behavioral problems in the classroom, external factors could be affecting them in a profound way that manifest as social and emotional difficulties (Greenberg et al., 2003). A child who has experienced trauma, abuse, or chronic stress due to instability or poverty outside of school might struggle to regulate strong emotions and actions (Morris et al., 2014). Students who have social and emotional competency issues have a harder time learning or could exhibit disruptive behaviors (Greenberg et al., 2003). Children who are disruptive and receive disciplinary exclusions are subject to disengagement from school and even contact with the criminal justice system (Committee on School Health, 2003). The cause doesn't necessarily excuse the actions, but sensitivity to the causes of misbehavior could encourage alternative ways to prevent and address it, instead of continually employing punishments (Greenberg et al., 2003).

The Supportive School Discipline Initiative (The Initiative) represents a collaborative project between the U.S. Department of Education (DOE) and the Department of Justice created to promote inclusion and alternative disciplinary interventions in public schools nationwide. The Initiative used research, funding incentives, and an interagency collaborative body (made up of legislators, educators, child advocates and mental health professionals) to propose a practical set of recommendations for schools to use when handling disciplinary issues (U.S. DOE, 2013). The results of the Initiative's research were compiled in guidance documents to help states and school districts adopt new discipline procedures that are in accordance with three guiding principles: Climate and Prevention; Clear,

Appropriate and Consistent Expectations and Consequences; and Equity and Continuous Improvement (U.S. DOE, 2014).

The guidance documents produced by the Initiative outline ways that educators at state, district and school levels can improve school climate, switch to alternative methods of discipline and prevent discriminatory practices. The Initiative recommends targeting social-emotional development in schools at early ages, forming stronger partnerships with families, improving disciplinary documentation procedures and policies, and consulting with mental health professionals and other youth advocates around more constructive disciplinary methods (U.S. DOE, 2013). In addition to the guidelines, a Supportive School Discipline webinar series was developed in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to raise awareness and understanding of various issues as they pertain to discipline in schools. Some of the webinar topics are restorative justice, youth courts, and multi-tiered behavioral health frameworks (U.S. DOE, 2013). The Initiative's work has led to the development of Supportive School Discipline Communities of Practice (SSDCoP) that are made up of state leaders in education who focus on various sub topics around school discipline and how to better support students who struggle in school (U.S. DOE, 2013). Two notable alternative methods that are discussed by the Initiative and being integrated into schools across the country are restorative justice and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). Both of these methods acknowledge the developmental significance of less punitive practices and

promote social emotional learning (SEL) so students can navigate conflict in a healthy way.

Restorative Justice

One of the alternative methods discussed in the Initiative's guidelines and is receiving more attention in education discourse is restorative justice.

Restorative justice represents an alternative to exclusions and arrests as a response to misbehavior in schools. Dr. Carolyn Boyes-Watson of the Suffolk University Center for Restorative Justice (2014) states that restorative justice seeks to promote the safety and dignity of the parties involved in conflict and the community that surrounds them. Instead of resorting to punishments, dialogue and intentional processes facilitate constructive problem solving around what happened and relationship repairing to prevent further conflict. In the case of a disciplinary offense, restorative justice does not focus solely on the student and what a suitable punishment should be. Rather, the response is more relationship-centric and energy is devoted to repairing and strengthening bonds the offending student has with others (Karp & Breslin, 2001).

Restorative justice practices aim to find solutions to misbehavior and work with communities instead of the juvenile justice system (Karp & Breslin, 2001). Karp and Breslin (2001) discuss how the restorative justice approach to school discipline should be a synthesis of school and family social control practices. Their research draws on Braithwaite's (1989) family model of crime and control that states discipline in the home focuses more on the moral side of behavior and how the self and others are affected by it. School is a more formal setting than the

home, but approaches to disciplinary offense in schools should model more after home practices than criminal justice ones (Karp & Breslin, 2001).

Turning conflict situations into opportunities to create a dialogue and teach students about social problem solving can act as an alternative to disciplinary exclusions and help improve classroom management, school climate and even academic outcomes (Boyes-Watson, 2014). The following are some restorative justice practices schools can employ instead of suspensions and expulsions for minor behavioral infractions (Taylor et al., 2014): student behavioral contracts, conflict resolution (victim/offender dialogue and family school and class conferencing), restorative circles, community service, daily/weekly check ins between individual students and teachers, loss of a privilege, in school mentors, increased parent contact, and schedule adjustments.

Organizations and school administrations have begun to integrate restorative justice practices into schools as an alternative approach to conflict and discipline. Non-profits are effective partners for schools because they can increase the capacity to train school staff and help implement new programming. For examples, the Colorado School Mediation Project is a non-profit that partnered with 15 elementary and middle schools in the Denver metropolitan area to pilot a restorative justice program (Karp & Breslin, 2001). These schools were examined to explore the effectiveness of dialogue as a restorative justice tool (Karp & Breslin, 2001). In the case of one student committing some sort of offense towards another student, a series of conference style interventions were employed in which both parties shared their experience of the event and how they were

affected. In the conferences, families and other school staff participated, and the group came up with a contract or agreement that both parties agreed to in finding a long term solution (Karp & Breslin, 2001). Instead of merely punishing the student, conversations took place with the purpose of both parties learning from the experience and finding a constructive way to move forward. The students involved take an active role in helping develop a long term solution, which is more effective because the students are able to have more ownership and influence in the process.

Roca is another non-profit organization that implements an evidence based intervention program for high risk youths 17-24 to help them achieve social and economic independence and success using restorative justice practices (Roca, 2015). Roca uses a restorative justice tool called “Peacemaking circles” or restorative circles to facilitate safe, healthy and constructive dialogue among at risk students (Boyes-Watson, 2014). These restorative circles involve a group of students or a whole class coming together to discuss a particular conflict that took place, and those involved are able to discuss how they were affected and their perspective on the situation. This strategy can be helpful as a standard classroom routine, or as a routine process when conflict arises between students. Circles help build trust and respect between students, encourage healthy communication of emotions, allow students to practice storytelling and validate peers’ experiences (Boyes-Watson, 2014).

Oakland Unified School District

With coordination and buy-in, school district administrations can implement larger scale restorative justice programming. One district that strongly exhibits how restorative practices have been integrated on a larger scale as a disciplinary alternative is the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) in Oakland, California. Oakland is one of CA's largest districts serving 45,000 students and is a national model for expanding restorative justice in schools as a discipline alternative (OUSD, 2015). The district's student population is one third African American and 70% low income (OUSD, 2015). The Oakland restorative justice program was expanded after a 2012 federal civil rights agreement to close the discipline gap for African American students (OUSD, 2015). This was around the same time that Massachusetts legislation was passed to reduce use of disciplinary exclusions (Taylor et al., 2014).

OUSD uses a three tiered model of prevention, intervention and supported re-entry in its restorative justice (RJ) program (OUSD, 2015). These practices work to reduce the disproportionate rate of suspension and expulsion among students of color, create a positive school climate and improve academic outcomes (OUSD, 2015). Tier 1 of the school based RJ involves the entire student population and serves to build community through regular circles. Tier 2 uses restorative conversations in mediation between the parties involved as well as group and family conferences if necessary. Tier 3 provides full service support for students re-entering the school community after suspension, expulsion, truancy or

incarceration (OUSD, 2015). The center of these processes is dialogue and helping students better understand one another.

The progress so far of the RJ program was evaluated for the academic years 2011-2014 and compiled in a report prepared by OUSD for the Office of Civil Rights and The U.S. Department of Education titled “Restorative Justice in Oakland Schools Implementation and Impact” (2015). Three of the major implementation challenges the evaluation discovered were having enough time, buy in and limited training and staffing. The report discussed the positive impacts seen as they pertain to disciplinary issues: Some of the positive impacts seen were a 40% decrease in suspensions of African American students, the Black/White discipline gap decreased from 25 students to 19, and conflicts were successfully resolved in 76% of 500 restorative circles. Further, students reported an increased ability to manage emotions and handle conflict, and teachers reported that RJ helped increase positive relationships between students and staff.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

A second approach to handling disciplinary problems in schools is to utilize social emotional learning (SEL) as a protective factor against behavioral problems (Greenberg et al., 2003) by integrating SEL concepts into mainstream classroom practices. A SEL informed framework that can be customized for local and district-wide implementation is the evidence-based Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) model, which is intended to prevent the need for suspensions and expulsions. PBIS was conceived by the U.S. Department of

Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) as a way for schools and districts to take a "multi-tiered" approach to educating students with disabilities (U.S. Department of Education OSEP, 2010). The development of PBIS is a response to the increasing demand for preventative and school wide approaches to address behavioral issues in elementary schools for general education students as well (Sugai & Horner, 2002). The approach addresses students' social and emotional development with the same importance as academic achievement. However, more data is needed to see what existing school factors help to enable success of PBIS interventions in order to more effectively tailor the model from school to school (Horner et al., 2004).

This framework is not a static formula to alter student behavior but rather a way to operationalize interventions to improve school culture and student outcomes that requires collaboration between schools, families and communities (Sugai & Horner, 2002). The framework is made up of three tiers that focus on school wide, class wide and individualized behavioral interventions to address disciplinary issues. Tier 1 is for all students school-wide, and the objective of the tier is to prevent new disciplinary cases; Tier 2 is classroom-wide, and the objective is to address and reduce current disciplinary cases; and Tier 3 is for individual students, and the objective is to reduce the severity and complication of more serious current disciplinary cases (U.S. Department of Education OSEP, 2010).

School-wide PBIS is an approach to teaching behavioral and social expectations as though they were academic material, and these pre-determined

positive behaviors are consistently reinforced by staff (U.S. Department of Education OSEP, 2010). Some examples of teachable behavioral expectations are cooperating with peers, following directions, respecting school property, how to ask for help and how to communicate negative feelings in a healthy way. Each setting within the school (classrooms, hallways, lunchroom, playground) would have posters that outline student expectations (U.S. Department of Education OSEP, 2010). Students and their teachers could make the posters together based on conversations about these behaviors and why they are important, which makes the intervention collaborative from the beginning. The interventions are designed and tailored by individual schools to meet their unique needs. PBIS is a strengths-based approach, which means that focus is placed more on students' strengths and social successes so that they can identify more with what they do well in school rather than how they fail. PBIS allows schools to establish universal expectations and structures that emphasize student social growth and success (U.S. Department of Education OSEP, 2010).

Comparison of Zero Tolerance, Restorative Justice and PBIS

As of April of 2014, revisions were added to Chapter 222 (2014) that make reference to the possible use of restorative justice and PBIS as alternative disciplinary methods, but they do not delineate how to operationalize them. These two methods are growing in popularity as alternatives to zero tolerance for handling disciplinary issues in schools. Zero tolerance is criticized for being too punitive, on the whole ineffective and driven by stereotypes (Stewart, Baumer, Brunson & Simons, 2009). Restorative justice takes a more reparative and

constructive approach to conflict and problem solving while PBIS is a tool that can be used by teachers to prevent disciplinary issues from taking place to begin with. The combined use of the two has potential to decrease reliance on exclusions as a disciplinary response and mediate the detrimental effects of being removed from school. Table 1 outlines some of the similarities and differences between zero tolerance, restorative justice and PBIS activities.

Zero tolerance is an extreme response that is misused in schools by being applied to smaller disciplinary incidents and affecting students of color and students with special needs at higher rates (Committee on School Health, 2003). Punitive measures that push these students out of school do not help them problem solve and learn how to manage conflict in the future. Instead, zero tolerance pushes them farther from school engagement and academic achievement and closer to the criminal justice system (Advancement Project, 2010; Committee on School Health, 2003). Restorative justice and PBIS can work in concert to better handle disciplinary issues and promote academic and social success for all students. PBIS can help to improve school climate, keep students engaged and prevent smaller disciplinary incidents from taking place. Restorative justice on the other hand can take a more constructive and reparative approach after a disciplinary incident has taken place. Together, restorative justice and PBIS have the potential to keep students in school, help them develop age appropriate coping strategies for conflict and close the education gap for students of color and students with special needs.

Table 1: Comparison of discipline models

	Traditional or “Zero Tolerance”	Restorative Justice	PBIS activities
Practices used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suspensions • Expulsions • Arrests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conferences • Mediated conversations • Long term behavioral plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching expected behaviors • Positively reinforcing those behaviors • Setting achievement benchmarks
When	After a disciplinary incident occurs	As a disciplinary incident is escalating or after an incident	Daily as a preventative measure

Boston Initiatives

The Boston Public School district is currently addressing issues such as equity, achievement and discipline through a number of separate initiatives. The first initiative involves a partnership with a local non-profit that serves academically and socially struggling students using a PBIS modeled approach. Wediko Children’s Services provides schools in BPS with staff who implement PBIS activities and interventions such as facilitating weekly social skills groups targeting social and emotional growth (Wediko Children’s Services, 2013). These services are provided through contracts that BPS provides to the Wediko Children’s Services staff in the form of annual salaries. The staff and teachers decide on a school value or theme they want to teach to the students such as cooperation, and the skills group consists of an interactive, age appropriate game to teach the theme followed by a discussion. Over the course of the week, school

staff positively reinforce moments when the students are seen displaying the theme, such as helping a peer with a task. The children can be recognized for it on a chart that is placed in the classroom. This method helps staff celebrate the students' social strengths rather than point out weaknesses, while also redirecting unacceptable behaviors as they arise.

This organization uses the practice of assigning staff to work in schools alongside existing school staff to help students strengthen specific skills. These staff members are able to assist teachers in ways that might not be provided already by the district, and the services students receive under this program could increase student engagement and achievement. If students have the resources around them in the classroom to address social and academic issues, teachers might not have as much need to utilize disciplinary exclusions in certain situations.

The second initiative is the Inclusion Task Force (ITF), which was convened by the Boston School Committee in September of 2013 to evaluate, develop and expand inclusive practices in BPS (Office of Special Education and Student Services [OESS], 2014). The task force is completing its first year of a five year inclusion plan. One of the primary goals of this task force is to close the achievement and opportunity gap for Black and Latino students through inclusion (OESS, 2014). Inclusion can be described as allowing special education students to have the same learning opportunities as general education students by being placed in the same classroom. "Full inclusion" is defined as spending 80% or more of the school day in general education classrooms. Conversely,

“substantially separate” means spending 60% or more of the school day outside of general education classrooms (BPS, 2015).

The task force wants to increase inclusion options at every grade level in response to data showing that special education students have less access to general education opportunities and students of color are being enrolled in special education at higher rates (Moore et al., 2008). The task force aims to make implementation of inclusion pathways for special education students more feasible. Members are also working on creating learning communities where best practices around inclusion can be shared and opening more inclusive elementary school classrooms (OESS, 2014). The ITF will also produce a Special Education Supplemental Handbook and continue to facilitate professional development on how to utilize Universal Design for Learning (UDL), a set of principles and tools for how to effectively teach students with varying needs and learning styles (National Center on UDL, 2014). A strategic plan has been made on how to hire and train Inclusion Specialists who will facilitate inclusion and deliver UDL curriculum (OESS, 2014). Inclusion Specialists will be in classrooms to provide more individualized academic assistance to students, which could potentially mediate behavioral problems that are associated with academic insecurity. However, the ITF documents do not explicitly describe how to operationalize inclusion in the classroom as it specifically pertains to behavioral concerns and disciplinary responses.

If general education classrooms are being designed to be more sensitive to the academic needs of special education students, then disciplinary implications

must also be considered since research suggests that special education students are disciplined at especially high rates (Peterutti, 2011; Losen et al., 2015). With a substantial push to bring special education students into mainstream classrooms that might have more stringent behavioral expectations, the question remains, how these students will be disciplined. The ITF is devoting considerable efforts to transforming general education classrooms to be more accommodating to students with diverse learning needs, which creates an opportunity to also adopt less punitive disciplinary measures such as restorative justice and PBIS.

The third initiative is a program called “Promising Practices and Unfinished Business: Fostering Equity and Excellence for Black and Latino Males” (Tung et al., 2015). The mission of this initiative is to strategically address Black and Latino males’ lowered academic outcomes and lack of equitable access to more rigorous educational opportunities such as Advanced Placement courses and the International Baccalaureate program. The goals are delineated into two phases. Phase I focuses on expanding early education, a teacher diversity action plan, hiring autonomy for schools, expanding inclusive opportunities, expanding opportunities for dual language learners, and reducing suspensions through a student led code of conduct (BPS, 2015). The program wants to move forward and bring best practices discovered in Phase I to district scale.

Phase II outlines how to take a systemic and intentional approach to increasing the success of Black and Latino males while also being culturally sensitive and responsive (Tung et al., 2015). The authors propose recommendations based on a case study of four schools in BPS that have majority

Black and/or Latino student enrollment. The report identified key themes of strengths and challenges found across all four schools. The strengths identified are as follows: engaging families as leaders; individualizing instruction within classrooms to accommodate all students' learning abilities; creating authentic relationships between students, teachers and families, and facilitating creative professional collaborative learning communities for staff to share ideas (Tung et al., 2015). Conversely, the challenges identified are: staff being able to move from being "color blind" to explicit and responsive approaches to race and knowing and valuing students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds (Tung et al., 2015).

Based on these findings, authors developed detailed recommendations for BPS' next steps paired with explicit indicators of each. The recommendations focus on reforming school organization and curriculum and increasing family and community engagement. Some specific recommendations are as follows: recruit and retain culturally and linguistically diverse teachers and administration; operationalize culturally responsive practices; provide professional development on culturally responsive curriculum, instruction and assessment; model and form professional learning communities; and encourage strategies that increase Black and Latino male engagement, identity and voice. Again, this initiative focuses on academic outcomes of Black and Latino students, but the increase in cultural sensitivity and engagement of these students in their school communities has the potential to mediate conflict and disciplinary responses that arise out of cultural differences or biases.

Chapter 3: Methods

The data and literature available on school discipline nationwide and in Massachusetts reveal a problem of students of color and students with special needs being disciplined at higher rates, which reinforces academic and social inequalities in our education system. The two methods I employed in this thesis gave me a stronger understanding of the current policies and procedures Boston area schools endorse surrounding school discipline. First, I examined public disciplinary data in BPS to see the prevalence of suspensions and expulsions for students of color and students with special needs. Next, I surveyed a sample of local area public school teachers asking questions about how conflict is handled in their classrooms. My goal in utilizing these data driven approaches is to better understand what kinds of situations require a disciplinary response and what typical responses are. Knowing the current attitudes and practices around conflict can help me to propose feasible alternatives for Boston area schools that mediate the need for suspensions and expulsions. Further, the implementation of alternatives can prevent the disproportionate exclusion of minority students and instead promote their academic and social success.

Descriptive Analysis of BPS Disciplinary Data

I characterized the exclusion data in the Boston school district for the academic years 2011-2012, 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 from the sources in Table 2 below. Accessing this data allowed me to explore differences in the disciplinary climate across the district and racial lines. It must be noted that district wide data is available, but not all schools have provided exclusion numbers as it was not

mandatory for schools to report this information. I outlined the problem by comparing the exclusion rates of the racial/ethnic minority student populations to that of white students in the district. I then compared the exclusion rates of students with IDEA status (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) who have been given IEPs (Individual Education Plans) to their non-IDEA counterparts. Finally, I compared exclusion rates for the population of students with IDEA and/or LEP (Learning English Proficiency). In addition, I examined other indicators of academic and social well-being as they were available. Data is sparse at the school level within the Boston district, but it can be obtained for some schools.

Table 2: Data Sources

Source	Data Collected	Time Period	How Data was Collected	Resolution
Civil Rights Data Collection	Suspension and Expulsion numbers by race and LEP/IDEA status	2011-2012 school year	Districts submitted information in a survey	By school and district
Kids Count Data Center	Retention rates by grade and race and other well-being indicators	2012-2013 school year	Submitted by Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE)	By state, school district, and age
MA Dept. ESE Indicators Report	Suspensions, expulsions and number of students disciplined by race, gender, low income, LEP, disability status	2013-2014 school year	Schools and districts add and update their information on the site's database	By district

In addition to the research on demographic characteristics, I also explored funding sources for district administration, individual school programs and contracts with outside service providers using publically available BPS budget

information (BPS, 2015). I was interested in learning how much money is allocated to special education and programming that is not strictly academic curriculum. I also wanted to know the various sources of funding besides state government. This information could potentially shed light on how flexible district spending may or may not be, which can help determine the extent to which programs can be adopted or changed. For example, if an existing program would benefit from hiring more staff but financial resources are tight, then other options must be explored. Understanding the overall financial climate can contribute to my assessment of the adaptability and sustainability of new and existing programs.

Survey of Public School Teachers

Surveys were distributed to teachers of Boston area schools in grades one through three asking questions about routine discipline policies and procedures. I specifically targeted first through third grade teachers because literature suggests that elementary school students are increasingly being subjected to punitive exclusionary practices that put them at risk of more severe consequences when they are older (Wilka, 2011). Also, first through third grade teachers were identified as being more accessible than 4th and 5th grade teachers due to the state standardized testing that was taking place in the older grades during my data collection window. The survey consisted of multiple choice, ranking and open ended questions. The survey received IRB approval through an expedited review, and all participants provided informed consent. My target sample came from teachers from two schools across two districts, both of which have LAB

(Learning and Adaptive Behavior) classrooms. LAB classrooms are support classrooms for students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and have been identified as requiring academic, social and/or therapeutic accommodations.

Both schools were surveyed as follows: One school had all first, second and third grade teachers given a survey, and the other school had all first, second and third grade teachers in the LAB given a survey. I made contact first with the principals via email for permission to contact the teachers and special education coordinators. Upon receiving permission, I emailed teachers individually asking for their participation. At that time, I scheduled days to visit the schools. I delivered paper copies of the informed consent and survey to the schools, and was available to answer questions. All survey responses were kept completely anonymous, and individual teachers and schools are not identified in the results of this thesis.

Questions were designed to capture the nature of disciplinary issues that arose in classrooms and the typical procedures taken to address them. See Appendix A for a copy of the complete questionnaire. I also wanted to compare the LAB discipline structures to regular education classroom structures to see how schools and teachers respond to the two student populations. The following are the themes I hoped to gain information about from the survey responses:

- Current discipline procedures employed by teachers
- Nature of the disciplinary issues encountered in classrooms
- Contribution of LAB classrooms and IEPs to disciplinary responses
- Teacher's knowledge of and/or training in alternative discipline and conflict resolution

- Teachers' opinions of what can be improved in discipline process
- Open-mindedness of teachers to new solutions to conflict
- Involved of family in discipline issues

My survey sample was limited to teachers I had convenient access to, and it does not represent the larger population of Massachusetts teachers. The survey responses do not fully represent their school or district regarding their opinions, experiences and practices around school discipline. Also, due to the highly subjective nature of teacher-student interactions and the potential subjectivity of conflictual situations, definitive conclusions cannot be drawn that explain the disparities seen in scholarly research. The questions included in the survey were carefully designed to take into account the extreme sensitivity of the topic. Due to IRB requirements, questions could not directly or explicitly ask about the use and prevalence of punitive, harsh or discriminatory discipline practices. Instead, the questions were designed to circumvent that by illustrating what kinds of conflict arises in classrooms and what kinds of procedures are in place to address them.

Chapter 4: Results

Descriptive Analysis of BPS Disciplinary Data

The Boston Public School (BPS) District educates 73% of school aged children in Boston, which represents approximately 57,100 students across 128 schools as of March 30, 2015 (BPS, 2015). Of this number, 28,760 students are in pre-kindergarten through 5th grade (BPS, 2015). One in every two students speaks a language other than English at home, 19.5% of students are in special education, and 78% of BPS students are from low income households (BPS, 2015). Forty one percent of the student body is Hispanic, 36% is Black or African-American and 13% of White (BPS, 2015).

Within the special education department for academic year 2014-2015, 42% of special education students are fully included, meaning that they spend 80% or more of the school day with non-disabled peers (BPS, 2015). Further, 36% of special education students are in separate classrooms for 60% or more of the school day (BPS, 2015). Table 3 shows the inclusion levels of students with IEPs in BPS during academic year 2013-2014 as reported by the MA DESE Indicators Report (2014). The numbers from academic year 2014-2015 show that more special education students have been fully included into general education classrooms, though detailed information on how that was implemented is lacking.

External funds given to BPS are in the form of reimbursement and competitive grants. This external funding decreased by \$20,659,000 from FY2014 (BPS, 2015). Using external and government funding, BPS uses a weighted

school funding (WSF) system to allocate funds to schools based on per student dollar values. WSF can also be known as student based budgeting, and schools receive a foundational amount that covers fixed costs. Students with special needs are allocated more funding. The WSF formula is calculated by starting with the “base weight,” or the amount every student receives. Then, “need weights” are determined for different student groups that might have higher need, and this amount is added on to the base weight (Education Resource Strategies, 2012). However, more specific information was not made available that describes exactly how these funds are allocated or how flexible the spending is. The records also do not provide information about how much spending goes to academic programming versus social or extracurricular programming.

Table 3: Inclusion levels of students with IEPs in academic year 2013-2014

	Students ages 3-5 with IEP	Students age 6-21 with IEP
Enrolled	1,228	9,597
Full inclusion	31	2,626
Partial inclusion	686	2,505
Substantially separate rooms	511	3,665

Note: Adapted from BPS, 2015

State and district data provide various disciplinary indicators by race and disability status which allowed me to examine whether or not Boston area schools’ data reflected nationwide trends. Table 4 shows that Black students disproportionate receive detention and disciplinary exclusions; in 2013, Black

students made up 8% of the total population of children under 12 in Massachusetts and 29% percent of the juvenile detention population. Hispanic students were also detained disproportionately as seen in Table 4. Similarly, Black students represented 36% of the BPS student body in academic year 2013-2014, but they accounted for 56% of suspensions and 55% of expulsions, over half of all disciplinary exclusions. Table 5 displays the rates of disciplinary exclusions and referrals to local law enforcement by the three most represented racial/ethnic groups and disability status during academic year 2011-2012 (OCR, 2014; Kids Count Data Center, 2014).

Table 4: Public detention and exclusions by race

		Black	Hispanic	White
MA	Total children under 12	8%	17%	64%
	Juveniles under 12 in detention	29%	34%	33%
BPS	Total students	36%	41%	13%
	Suspensions	56%	32%	7%
	Expulsions	55%	26%	6%

Note: Adapted from Boston Public Schools (2015), Kids Count Data Center (2014), and the Office for Civil Rights Civil Rights Data Collection (2014)

Table 5: Percentages of expulsions and referrals by race and disability status¹

		Black	Hispanic	White
	Total students in BPS	36%	41%	13%
Students with disabilities in BPS	Expelled and did receive services (n=18)	44%	44%	0%
	Expelled and did not receive services (n=12)	67%	33%	0%
	Referred to local law enforcement (n=106)	60%	26%	9%
Students without disabilities in BPS	Expelled and did receive services (n=78)	59%	26%	5%
	Expelled and did not receive services (n=22)	46%	9%	18%
	Referred to local law enforcement (n=160)	56%	31%	5%

¹This table does not include percentages for the “Asian” or “Other” racial categories

Note: Adapted from the Office for Civil Rights Civil Rights Data Collection (2014)

Another statistic worth noting from Table 5 is that 67% of students with disabilities who were expelled and did not receive educational services upon expulsion were Black while Black students only accounted for 36% of the district student population. These findings support nationwide research showing that disciplinary responses are disproportionately affecting minority students.

In the state of Massachusetts, 19% of children have one or more emotional, behavioral or developmental condition, and 22% have special health

care needs (Kids Count Data Center, 2014). The number of students with disabilities referred to local law enforcement and expelled is close to or higher than students without disabilities as seen in Table 5. Further, Black students with disabilities make up a higher percentage of those expelled and referred to local law enforcement than they do of the total district population.

According to the Massachusetts Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education (MA DESE) Indicators Report, during academic year 2013-2014 across the state, three percent of public school students were disciplined, but six percent of all students with disabilities were disciplined. Further, five percent of both Black and Hispanic students were disciplined while one percent of White students were disciplined (MA DESE Indicators Report, 2014). The data source notes that many details about how particular disciplines are carried out are not disclosed by different schools and districts, but use of the term “disciplined” here includes in-school suspensions, out of school suspensions, permanent expulsions and removals to alternate settings. These disciplinary responses were for non-drug, non-violent, non-criminal related offenses.

Though qualitative data is lacking, examining these numbers provides a foundation upon which to better understand the current climate of discipline in BPS and Massachusetts as it pertains to race and students with disabilities. Having the quantitative numbers creates questions about how these students came to be suspended or expelled. Therefore, future attention can be directed towards classroom and school factors that led to the suspensions and expulsions.

Survey of Public School Teachers

Twenty-one surveys were distributed across both schools. Eight were returned completed; seven surveys from one school and one survey from the other school. One survey was from a special education program, and the remaining seven were from general education. After the surveys were delivered to the schools, follow up and collection of completed surveys was difficult due to scheduling conflicts. Teachers had no incentive to fill out the survey, and their existing time constraints contributed to the low collection number.

The survey questions were broken into four main categories: background and training, special needs considerations, disciplinary concerns, and restorative justice. The background and training questions gave me an understanding of how long teachers had been in the field of education as well as any special education training they may have received. These questions provide demographic context of my sample. The special needs considerations questions asked teachers to describe how students who have IEPs are treated when a disciplinary concern arises. These questions provided more insight into how special education students might receive differential disciplinary treatment. The disciplinary concerns section gave me an idea of the severity and frequency of different conflict situations and common responses to them. The final section was to gauge how familiar the teachers were with restorative justice as a disciplinary alternative. The following results are organized around the four question categories.

Background and Training

The teachers' class sizes ranged from nine to 21 students. Twenty five percent of teachers had a paraprofessional in their classrooms to assist them and work with students. The average number of years the respondents had been teachers was 10 years. The number of years teaching ranged from six months to 27 years. Twenty five percent of the teachers reportedly received special education training. Thirty six percent of teachers have at one point had staff from an outside organization assisting with disciplinary matters, and 50% of teachers reportedly received training on handling discipline and conflict resolution in Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) and Second Step.

Special Needs Considerations

When teachers were asked about the influence of IEPs in discipline, 66.67% reported that IEPs did not help in handling disciplinary issues, but 71.43% reported that IEPs do influence disciplinary responses. IEPs can take different forms and provide varying amounts of guidance for a particular student. For example, one teacher said that IEPs "are a tremendous support," and another said of IEPs, "You have a guide of support of what challenges the child is facing. Sometimes discipline guidelines are in the IEP." On the other hand, another teacher said that IEPs "are not specific enough and do not offer suggestions to assist with behavior issues."

Regarding the LAB classrooms' influence on students, 60% reported that the LAB does influence discipline for special education students, and 75%

reported that the LAB also influences discipline for general education students. One teacher described how being the LAB influences discipline for LAB students: “The children in these classes have behavior and discipline plans. The general education teachers have been directed not to interfere with their behaviors. So if I see a LAB student misbehaving, I’ve been told not to interfere. They might have a plan I don’t know about.” However, two different teachers’ follow up responses to that question suggested disapproval at how LAB students’ discipline differs from general education. For example, one teacher said that “rewards are given out too often,” while another similarly stated that, “The children get rewarded for behaviors like listening-These are expectations of ‘regular’ education kids who do not get rewarded.” Two responses communicated that general education students are “confused” when they see students with behavioral problems granted leniency or held to different expectations: “General education kids see them hit teachers, break school property and then see them using a computer game when they are calm. It confuses them.”

The varying qualitative responses suggest a gap in understanding of the function of LAB classrooms and the complexity of the issues LAB students might be dealing with. Similarly, general education students might not fully understand the function of the LAB classrooms. Overall it seems as though general education teachers would benefit from clearer communication of procedures and policies around discipline and behavioral accommodations for students with IEPs. This information could also be communicated to general education students to help

them understand the concept of special accommodations and develop sensitivity to students with special needs.

Disciplinary Concerns

Responses indicate a general consensus around the kinds of issues that are seen as more problematic than others: 100% of respondents reported that running from the room and physical aggression require administrative intervention, and 70% of respondents reported that destroying property and bullying require administrative intervention. Regarding parental involvement, respondents reported that for disciplinary issues ranking low in severity, 63% of parents are somewhat involved and 38% of parents are a little involved. The teachers were asked to rate various disciplinary concerns on severity and frequency with 1 being low in severity/frequency and 5 being high in severity/frequency. For disciplinary issues ranking high in severity, 50% of parents are somewhat involved and 38% are very involved. The numbers in Table 6 shows the percentage of respondents who rated the corresponding disciplinary issue a 4 or 5 when asked to rate the severity of each issue. Table 7 show the percentage of respondents who rated each disciplinary issue a 4 or 5 when asked to rate the frequency of each issue.

Table 6: Severity of disciplinary concerns

Disciplinary issue	Percentage of respondents per answer	Rating given
Running from the room	100%	5
Physical aggression	100%	
Bullying	86%	4
Destroying property	43%	
Swearing	43%	
Stealing	43%	

Table 7: Frequency of disciplinary concerns

Disciplinary issue	Percentage of respondents per answer	Rating given
Not following directions	38%	5
Distracting others	38%	
Talking back	14%	
Bullying	13%	
Stealing	20%	4
Swearing	17%	

As seen in Table 6, most respondents rated the same disciplinary issues as very high in severity. In Table 7, the results were a bit less concentrated around which disciplinary issues were more or less frequent, but “not following directions” and “distracting others” received the highest number of 5 ratings for being the most frequent occurrences. Still though, not all of the issues that were rated high in severity were rated high in frequency, such as “running from the room,” “physical aggression,” and “destroying property.” However, three disciplinary concerns were rated a 4 or 5 on severity and frequency; “bullying,” “swearing,” and “stealing.” The sample size was not large enough to examine how these responses may have varied across LAB and general education classrooms. When asked to rate the involvement of various people in handling disciplinary issues (1 being least involved, 5 being most involved), the principal, assistant principal, and parents/guardians received 38% of votes for a 5 rating, and the guidance counselor received 43% of votes for a 5 rating.

Restorative Justice

Only one respondent had heard of restorative justice. However, 63% of respondents were familiar with some sort of conflict resolution or problem solving method. Thirty eight percent of respondents reportedly had training in Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), a therapeutic approach designed to provide positive reinforcement of desirable behaviors to shape behavioral learning (Bierman ABA Autism Center, 2015). ABA is often used with children with special needs or with Autism. Twenty-five percent of respondents reportedly had training in Second Step, a program that teaches children social and emotional competencies in school contexts (Committee for Children, 2015). When asked what would make handling disciplinary issues easier (1 being least preferred, 5 being most preferred), “having more staff in the room” received 67% of votes for a 5 rating, and “trainings in conflict resolution” received 40% of votes for a 5 rating. Having “increased administrative support” received 17% of votes for a 4 rating. These results suggest that teachers want more resources to handle conflict in the classroom and more information about ways to problem solve with students, regardless of being in general or special education. One teacher stated that she wanted “constant parent/guardian contact and follow through at home,” when asked how high severity issues should be handled. Another teacher said that if anything could be changed around discipline, the school should provide, “additional strategies to support students and staff.”

Chapter 5: Discussion and Recommendations

Summary of Results

Research shows that exclusions can have detrimental effects on minority students; the disproportionately high discipline rates of these students strongly suggests that they are at a higher risk of struggling academically and having contact with the criminal justice system (Advancement Project, 2010). If this is the case, then schools are reinforcing a structure of discrimination that is preventing certain students from achieving social and academic success. My research methods allowed me to examine the current percentages of suspension and expulsion of Boston area students by race and disability status as well as gain more perspective from public school teachers about how they perceive discipline and conflict. Using the results and current literature, I will propose in this chapter recommendations for how schools can rely less on suspensions and expulsions to handle conflict and embrace more constructive methods.

The results of my descriptive analysis of BPS disciplinary data confirm the trends found in nationwide research. Within BPS, Black and Hispanic students are disproportionately suspended and expelled; they make up a higher percentage of those disciplined than they do of the student population. Students with special needs are also suspended and expelled at percentages that exceed their percentage of the total student population. The public disciplinary data does not disclose whether or not the students with disabilities being suspended and expelled are in LAB classrooms or general education classrooms. There is no way to definitively answer this question using the data that is publically available. Data are also

lacking on the average makeup of LAB classrooms regarding which students are placed there primarily for having behavioral difficulties versus just cognitive or developmental disabilities (though the two can be concurrent).

Somewhat contradictory to the results of my public data research, which showed that students with disabilities are suspended and expelled more often relative to their non-disabled classmates, the teacher surveys expressed frustration that LAB students are allowed leniency and less severe disciplinary consequences. My survey research uncovered differences in how IEPs can help students; some IEPs are strictly for academic accommodations, and other IEPs also provide detailed behavioral guidelines. The survey responses suggest that trainings and professional development sessions that are typically targeted to special education staff could be beneficial to general education staff. Wider conflict resolution training would be helpful for all teachers due to the number of students who struggle behaviorally but are not in a special education program to receive more individualized intervention.

Recommendations for Three Levels of Intervention

The following are my recommendations for Boston area schools and other large school district administrators working to close the discipline and education gap for students of color and students with special needs based on the literature and my research. These recommendations are meant to complement the work that Boston area schools are already doing around making schools more equitable for minority youth by providing ideas for how to reduce the use of suspensions and expulsions as a response to conflict. The recommendations are also meant to help

increase awareness of how differential discipline contributes to the education gap. The structure of my recommendations is as follows: Level 1 measures are preventative and foster more collaborative school climates; Level 2 measures mediate and de-escalate smaller infractions and facilitate constructive problem solving; and Level 3 measures provide alternative, restorative approaches to handling disciplinary concerns and larger conflicts.

Level 1: Preventative, Strengths Based Approaches

PBIS frameworks should be implemented in schools and classrooms to help teachers communicate expectations in a way that is strengths based and engages students while also promoting social emotional learning (SEL). Essentially, PBIS can be used as a tool to regularly teach social and emotional development skills which in turn can prevent conflict situations from taking place to begin with. These structures would be for the entire student body; both general and special education programs would both develop common values for the school and tangible examples that all students can follow. The survey results suggested misunderstandings between general education and the LAB regarding how discipline is and should be handled. Using PBIS school-wide would help unify school communities around common expectations and common language without any student population being singled out. Having a more unified and systematic way of teaching and strengthening students' social skills would help increase sensitivity to students who struggle socially and behaviorally.

The public disciplinary data showed that students with disabilities were especially vulnerable to suspensions and expulsions. PBIS would be a tool that

allows teachers to be more intentional about teaching and reinforcing expectations, which would be particularly beneficial for students who struggle with behavioral problems. Part of Level 1 intervention would also be regular convening of classroom circles that help students get to know each other better and form stronger bonds of trust with peers and teachers. The teacher surveys suggested that general education teachers did not know much about LAB students' IEPs or how their accommodations worked. With schools working towards increased inclusion, more general education teachers will be given new students who have IEPs. School wide PBIS and classroom circles will help general education teachers and students alike become more aware of the unique needs of certain students. With increased awareness comes increased sensitivity, which can buffer against conflict and harsher disciplinary responses from teachers.

In order to help students practice and understand social strengths, regular PBIS social skills groups should be incorporated into Level 1 supports. These groups would help teach social themes and expectations with age appropriate games and reinforce a strengths based mentality in teachers. In some Learning and Adaptive Behavior (LAB) classrooms in the Boston area, staff help students track daily and weekly progress with behavior charts, which is considered a Tier 1 PBIS intervention. See Appendix B for an example of a daily behavior chart that is used in a Boston area public elementary LAB classroom. The chart is filled out daily for each student and then reviewed and signed by a guardian before the student returns to school the next day. The surveys showed a consensus around

talking back, distracting others and not following directions being situations that were low in severity but high in frequency. PBIS structures and skills lessons could help to decrease the prevalence of these situations in the classroom.

Level 2: Mediating and Responsive Approaches

In addition to the Level 1 PBIS structures and circles, schools can have mediating spaces, age appropriate tools and trained behavioral specialists to help students deescalate when agitated and process intra and interpersonal issues that arise during the school day. In the teacher surveys, typically in the case of a disciplinary issue that the teacher couldn't handle, administration, the guidance counselor, or parents were involved. Smaller issues might not warrant intervention with these people, but other supports aren't always in place to deescalate these situations. These mediating spaces could be a "cool-down" desk somewhere in the classroom and processing rooms or spaces that are typically used in LAB wings. Figure 1 shows examples of the different tools students can use to deescalate when they have left the classroom. Students could process the conflict with a behavioral specialist in a non-punitive way in order to develop or implement an existing conflict resolution plan and return to class. Level 2 processes can potentially resolve issues that would typically be sent to an administrator, leading the student to receive a harsher punishment. Resolving conflicts close to the classroom would keep smaller issues from becoming larger ones that would otherwise lead to suspension. If an issue escalates and becomes more serious, then behavioral specialists and teachers can intervene and help modify or create a longer term plan and contact the student's family.

Figure 1: De-escalation tools



Photo courtesy: Breann Jeffries

If an issue arises between two students or among a small group of students, mediating circles can be used to help all parties involved better understand how their actions impacted others. Teachers and staff who facilitate these circles can help the students come up with a plan for how to repair the relationship and get along in the classroom moving forward. Teachers reported in the surveys that physical aggression and bullying were among the most severe disciplinary situations. Further, teachers also mentioned wanting to have more training around conflict resolution and have additional staff available to assist with behavioral concerns. Having more trainings on facilitating mediation and staff who are trained in these practices would help address these issues.

Level 3: Restorative Justice

This level of intervention acts very much against the popular paradigm around discipline, so buy in, education and feasibility would be essential to successful implementation. Most teachers surveyed had not heard of restorative justice, and expressed wanting to know about other methods for handling conflict. These recommendations are not meant to completely remove the suspension and expulsion policies in place, but they are meant to prevent more severe situations from taking place and to provide alternative options for handling conflict that do not remove students from school. The public data showed Black and Hispanic students were disproportionately suspended and expelled, so schools are in great need of alternatives. The data also showed that of the students who were expelled, half or more did not receive educational accommodations until receiving a new school placement. These students who have a right to education were denied continued opportunities to learn once being kicked out of school. Restorative justice (RJ) practices would address the disciplinary issue at hand without compromising the student's education. In fact, these practices could enhance students' educational experiences. RJ practices can be integrated into current initiatives underway to re-engage Black and Latino youth in schools and create more pathways to academic success.

OUSD has provided strategies that can help Boston area schools implement RJ practices to scale. RJ practices would include mediation meetings with a group of supportive adults (family members, teachers, school admin, counselors, and members of the community) as was done in the OUSD re-entry

circles (OUSD, 2015). Creating a network of support for students who struggle repeatedly would ensure that the student stays engaged in school, forms positive relationships with adults and forms stronger ties to the community. These products of a support network would be protective factors against repeated disciplinary offenses. Further, students who have committed some sort of behavioral offense like a fight or property destruction could perform service projects to give back to the school community and be productive with their time. This can involve helping to fix something in the school, interviewing staff and students to gain other people's perspectives on the issue (eg. "How does it make you feel when someone yells at you?"), or creating some sort of poster or visual for their class such as creating a list of ways that the class can be more supportive of one another.

The learning communities BPS is launching for its equity initiatives would help to address staff buy-in, which has been identified as a very important challenge in implementing new structures and procedures into fairly well established school systems (OUSD, 2015). Professional development trainings and conferences around the developmental significance of less punitive disciplinary practices for students of different ages would help promote teacher buy-in. The presence of mental health professionals and clinicians would be very important in advocating for more developmentally appropriate disciplinary measures. Such professionals would also be able to provide more insight on how trauma and mental illness can profoundly affect a child's development and behavior.

Since teachers in the surveys were not aware of restorative justice, school district administration would need to provide time, training and appropriate resources to make these practices feasible for teachers in order to properly implement all three levels of intervention. The Supportive School Discipline Initiative's webinar series could be a valuable resource in distributing pertinent information about alternative school discipline to a larger audience of educators (U.S. Department of Education, 2013). Teachers also expressed wanting more support staff in their classrooms to help with discipline, so additional behavioral specialists would also be essential to applying more therapeutic and developmentally appropriate concepts to the interventions. Community partnerships can act as capacity building agents who help train and model RJ practices.

For all three levels of intervention, professional development, conferences and learning communities can be used strategically to help train educators on the complexity of the problem, how to implement alternative disciplinary practices, and the importance of utilizing such alternatives. The communities of practice (CoP) created under the Supportive School Discipline Initiative should be broken down into state and district level communities of practice to help educators convene and share ideas with the support of the larger federal CoP. Districts should also reach out to the community to help build their capacity to implement new structures and keep students engaged in their education. Research on the subject of restorative justice has also encouraged schools to engage families more and utilize their perspective and input to tailor interventions for specific students.

Limitations of Research

The Civil Rights Data Collection will be implementing mandatory discipline reporting policies in the coming year, but for this thesis, limited data was available. District wide suspension and expulsion data was accessible, but individual schools tended not to report that information. Further, raw numbers of disciplinary exclusions was not sufficient in understanding classroom and school culture and the individual situations that precipitated the exclusions. The teacher surveys were able to provide more insight on how teachers handle discipline and what resources they would like to have in their classrooms to improve conflict resolution. However, IRB regulations prevented the surveys from including more direct and explicit questions about potential classroom discrimination and subjective attitudes about certain students. The process of distributing and collecting the surveys was also challenging, and I was unable to yield a high number of completed surveys. Therefore, my final sample of teachers was very small, so larger conclusions and implications could not be made.

Future Research on Discipline Alternatives

Further research should utilize more qualitative methods to better understand school and classroom culture as well as how teachers relate to different student populations on a daily basis. Understanding the interpersonal relationships in classrooms can move educators, activists and policy makers closer to understanding how conflict plays out and how it can be better resolved. The role of mental health professionals in schools must also be explored more. Students in special education programs and those with IEPs might have

counseling time during the day, but that excludes the students with undocumented therapeutic needs. The implementation issues with Chapter 222 suggest that more standardized and monitored documentation needs to be taking place around disciplinary offenses. These documentation improvements could also include more qualitative information about the problem situation so that future work with particular students can be more personalized and effective.

Longitudinal studies should be performed to measure and assess the longevity of new initiatives. Outcome measures could include academic performance, learning time, behavioral infractions, measures of social-emotional well-being and qualitative measures of school experience for students and teachers alike.

Researchers must continue to evaluate alternative disciplinary approaches and focus can be paid to particular age groups and the role that families and communities can play in helping students who struggle to succeed stay engaged with school. Research was lacking on the financial feasibility of implementing new initiatives as well as how the time is balanced. School days are devoted to maximizing teaching time, and push back against new programming tends to be because they compromise that teaching time. Future pilot programs should figure out how to balance effective time spent on social programming while still providing enough teaching time.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Discipline in Latin means “to teach,” but discipline practices over the past decade have not been systematically investing in opportunities to teach students in conflict resolution and problem solving (Taylor et al., 2014). Instead, students are punished, and valuable social lessons go untaught. Discrimination and perception issues in education have helped sustain a heavy reliance on law enforcement and punitive discipline (Advancement Project, 2010). As a consequence, there has been a lack of alternatives for handling in-school conflict and smaller behavioral infractions. My research results and the literature on the subject support the case for mediating programming to protect vulnerable student populations of color and with special needs from exclusion and ensure that they are successful in school.

Work is already being done in Massachusetts and other parts of the country to address the discipline and achievement gap for minority youth in our public schools. Fortunately, impressive work is also underway in Boston area schools to close the achievement gap for Black and Latino males through systemic, multi-tiered change around cultural sensitivity and creative ways to better engage that population in school. Empirical evidence and peer reviewed literature have provided a supportive foundation upon which to design and pilot innovative new programs to transform how public schools address discipline and conflict. Initiatives that target increased engagement of minority students in schools have begun to acknowledge the role suspension and exclusionary discipline policies play in hindering the academic success of certain students. My work supports the idea of combining PBIS classroom structures and restorative

justice as an alternative response to zero tolerance. Education discourse is moving towards repairing the damage zero tolerance has inflicted on youth of color and youth with special needs. Punitive disciplinary measures are being criticized for their discriminatory outcomes, and schools and districts nationwide are working to make instruction as well as discipline more culturally sensitive.

Programs supporting alternative discipline and social practices in classrooms need to be developmentally appropriate for different age groups. Additionally, cultural awareness must be integrated into interventions so as to consider immigrant, English language learning, minority and low socioeconomic status student populations. The professionals and educators who provide training and implementation would need to be especially sensitive to how critical cultural differences and perceptions can be in high stress conflict situations in schools. Currently, evidence based interventions have not rigorously considered these factors.

The federal and state governments have compiled various resources, trainings and toolkits for school districts, principals and teachers to encourage more inclusive schools. However, staff buy in, appropriate financial capacity, education and robust structures will be essential in changing the current system. The next step in this field will be to mobilize and implement highly organized programs to see positive impacts on a larger scale, significantly reduce the number discriminatory exclusions and close the education gap for marginalized students. I urge district administrations and principals to seek out these government resources and support alternative initiatives with the help of

community partners and education support organizations. Preventative measures and more sensitive responses to conflict that target stronger social development could reduce the need for extreme disciplinary responses and eventually close the education gap.

With a substantial push for increased inclusion for all students in Boston area schools, innovative classroom tools must be embraced to ensure that students being introduced into mainstream classrooms are able to succeed and have sufficient social support. General education classrooms are already made up of students with varying academic abilities, and they will be becoming more so with the increasing efforts to include students with disabilities. More emphasis is being placed on removing the divide between special and general education, and with new interventions, students in general education who require more specialized attention will be able to receive the support they need. All classrooms should be equipped with tools, supports and procedures that meet students where they are socially and emotionally for the sake of more productive problem solving.

My research can further assist school districts in developing creative initiatives that use collaborative processes to teach students to resolve conflict in a healthier manner. Behavioral infractions can be seen less as personal failings of children and instead as opportunities to teach them about their experiences with conflict and how to better handle them in the future. This thesis can hopefully serve as a resource for educators and advocates to use to take steps towards changes in the traditional discourse around in-school conflict and utilize alternative practices that keep students in school.

Appendix A: Teacher Survey

Background and Training

1. Are you a: Special education teacher Regular education teacher

2. What grade do you teach? _____ 3. How many students are in your class? _____

4. Do you have a teaching assistant or paraprofessional in your classroom?
 Yes No

5. How many years have you been a teacher? _____

6. Have you received special education teaching certification? Yes No

Please explain: _____

7. Not including student teachers, have you ever had members from an organization outside of your school or school district (such as a non-profit) working in your classroom with students to help with disciplinary matters?

Yes No

If so, what organization and what role did they play?

8. Did you receive any kind of training from an outside organization for discipline, conflict resolution and/or classroom management?

Yes No

If so, how have you used this training in your job?

Special Needs Considerations

9. Do you find Individual Education Plans (IEP) to be useful in handling disciplinary issues?

Yes No

Please explain: _____

10. Is your response to discipline different for students identified with special needs and included in an IEP? Yes No

Please explain: _____

11. In IEP meetings, do you feel your concerns are heard and considered by others?

Yes No

Please explain: _____

12. Does your school have a Learning Adaptive Behavior or special education classroom?

Yes No

13. If yes, do you feel that its presence influences disciplinary issues for LAB students?

Yes No

Please explain: _____

14. If yes, do you feel that its presence influences disciplinary issues for the *general population* of students? Yes No

Please explain: _____

Disciplinary concerns

15. Please rate these disciplinary situations on a scale of 1 (least serious) to 5 (most serious) in terms of severity and frequency of the problem. In the additional space provided, describe your typical first response to such behaviors, i.e. calling parents, involving administrators, talking with student, etc.

Problem	Severity (1-5)	Frequency (1-5)	Typical First Response
Running from the room			
Destroying property			
Not following directions			
Talking back to adults			
Yelling			
Being physically aggressive			
Distracting other students			
Bullying other students			
Swearing			
Stealing from others			
Other:			

16. Which of the responses listed above require administrative intervention or authorization?

17. Who, in addition to you, is involved in addressing disciplinary issues with your students? Please rate the following on a scale of 1 (least involved) to 5 (most involved):

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| ___ The principal | ___ Guidance/adjustment counselor |
| ___ Other teachers | ___ Students' parents/guardians |
| ___ Paraprofessional staff (classroom aid) | ___ The assistant principal |

18. How involved are parents/guardians in resolving **high rated** disciplinary situations you identified in question #15 above?

Not at all A little Somewhat Very

Please explain: _____

19. How involved are parents/guardians in resolving **low rated** disciplinary situations you identified in question #15 above?

Not at all A little Somewhat Very

Please explain: _____

Restorative Justice

20. Have you heard of restorative justice methods for handling disciplinary situations?

Yes No

If yes, what does restorative justice mean to you?

21. If you are **not** familiar with restorative justice by name, are you familiar with another method or program for resolving conflict among students or between students and school staff?

Yes No

If yes, please name and describe the method or program: _____

22. Have you received training in restorative justice or other conflict resolution methods?

Yes No

If yes, where and when?

Please answer the following questions if you **have** heard of restorative justice or another conflict resolution approach:

23. In the case of a **high rated** problem from question #15, please indicate which approach you would prefer to utilize: Responses given in question #15

Restorative justice approach

Please explain: _____

24. In the case of a **low rated** problem from question #15, please indicate which approach you would prefer to utilize: Responses given in question #15

Restorative justice approach

Please explain: _____

25. What types of support would make handling discipline issues easier for you as a teacher? Please rate them on a scale of one (least preferred) to 5 (most preferred):

___ More staff in the room ___ Another room where students and staff work together to resolve the issue

___ Trainings on conflict resolution

___ Administrative support ___ Improved IEPs

Other: _____

26. In your opinion, what are additional ways in which high rated discipline issues could be handled that you have not used before? (Please use the back of this page as needed)

27. What would you change, if anything, about how discipline issues are handled? (Please use the back of this page as needed)

Appendix B: Daily Behavior Chart

DAILY CHECKLIST

Student's Name: _____ Date: _____ M T W Th F

Target Behaviors	8:45-9:30	9:30-10:15	10:15-11:00	11:00-11:45	11:45-12:30	12:30-1:15	1:15-2:00	Total
Work hard and stay focused								
Communicate your needs								
Follow directions								
Work well together								
Support each other								
Be safe with body and language								
Respect others' personal space								
TIME OUT (Y or N)								
PERIOD TOTAL								

Points (0-2)

0= Required several redirections during class

1= Responded to redirection

2= Displayed expected behavior during class

Points Values

Excellent (38-54) =move up one day

Good (19-37) = stay the same

Needs Improvement (0-18)= drop one day

Parent signature:_____ Student signature:_____

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