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# BULLETIN OERI

*U.S. Department of Education • Office of Educational Research and Improvement*  
*Center for Statistics*

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## DISCIPLINE IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Discipline is still a problem in American junior and senior high schools although principals report a decline in recent years in disruptive classroom behavior. Principals in 96 percent of secondary schools reported having suspended students for disciplinary reasons, and the rate of this occurrence was 10 per 100 students.<sup>1</sup> In 69 percent of secondary schools, one or more students had been assigned to in-school alternatives to suspension; the rate of occurrence was also 10 per 100 students. Student violations of the law were reported to the police by school authorities in 72 percent of the schools, and 35 percent reported having caught one or more students selling illegal drugs at school.<sup>2</sup>

Two-thirds of junior and senior high school principals reported that disruptive classroom behavior had decreased over the past 5 years. Only 12 percent saw an increase in such behavior, while 22 percent reported that they had observed no change.

These findings were obtained in a survey of secondary school principals, which was conducted by the Center for Statistics (CS) through its Fast Response Survey System (FRSS). The survey, which was conducted in 1985, was designed to obtain information on discipline policies and practices in public secondary schools.

Among the data elements collected were:

- o Administrators' reports on disruptive classroom behavior as compared with 5 years ago;
- o Number of occurrences of selected student infractions of the law, such as thefts and drug selling;
- o Number of occurrences of selected disciplinary actions, such as suspensions and expulsions;
- o Administrators' ratings of the degree to which certain factors limited their ability to maintain order;



- o Extent to which schools had various programs and activities available for the improvement of discipline; and
- o Administrators' assessments of the effectiveness of such programs.

It bears mention that the respondents for this survey were principals (or other administrators most familiar with their schools' discipline policies and practices), and their responses reflect the information available to them. Many disciplinary incidents, such as thefts or cases of classroom disruption that are handled completely by teachers, probably do not come to their attention. This may partially explain why principals' reports sometimes differ from those obtained in surveys of teachers or students.

### **Student Infractions of the Law**

Principals reported on the occurrence of several types of student infractions of the law during the 1983-84 school year. At least one occurrence of each of the following infractions was reported by the indicated percent of schools:

- o Student caught selling illegal drugs at school (35 percent of all schools; 63 percent of large schools);
- o Theft of personal item over \$10.00 in value reported by student to the school (82 percent of all schools; 93 percent of large schools); and
- o Instance of law violation reported to police by school authorities (72 percent of all schools; 88 percent of large schools).

Urban schools and large schools were more likely to have student infractions than rural schools and small schools (table 1).<sup>3</sup> Reports of drug selling by students showed the largest differences among schools. For example, 63 percent of the large schools (1,000 or more students) reported at least one instance of drug selling on campus, compared with only 10 percent of the small schools (less than 400 students). Proportionately more senior high than junior high schools<sup>4</sup> experienced drug selling on campus, but the difference was smaller than those by size and metropolitan status.

The average rate at which students were caught selling illegal drugs was 2 per 1,000 students.<sup>5</sup> This rate was the same in junior and senior high schools, and did not differ among small, medium-sized, and large schools. However, proportionately more students were caught selling drugs in urban schools (5 per 1,000 students) than in rural schools (1 per 1,000). Thefts and law violations occurred more frequently, averaging about 1 infraction per 100 students. Slightly more thefts were reported in senior high (1.4 per 100 students) than in junior high schools (0.8 per 100) and in small schools (1.7 per 100 students) than in large schools (1.1 per 100). Urban schools reported more law violations to police than did rural schools (1.5 compared with 0.7 per 100 students).

Based on the number of occurrences of these violations reported by the schools surveyed, the total number of occurrences nationwide during the 1983-84 school year were: 37,000 instances in which students were caught selling illegal drugs at school; 184,000 reported thefts of items over \$10 in value; and 144,000 reports to police of law violations by students.<sup>6</sup>

### **Disciplinary Actions**

Almost all secondary schools (96 percent) used suspension as a disciplinary measure in the 1983-84 school year (table 2). In addition, 69 percent used in-school alternatives to suspension. The average rate of suspensions and use of in-school alternatives during 1983-84 was 10 per 100 students for each of these disciplinary actions.<sup>7</sup>

Expulsions occurred in 37 percent of the secondary schools, and student transfers to special schools for disruptive students in 33 percent. The rates of occurrence for each of these disciplinary actions were relatively low--3 per 1,000 students.

Both the percent of schools using these disciplinary actions and the rates of occurrence varied by school characteristics (table 2). Proportionately more large than small schools employed each disciplinary measure. Also, the rates of occurrence for suspensions and for use of in-school alternatives to suspension were higher in large schools.

Urban schools were more likely than rural schools to use suspensions, expulsions, and school transfers as disciplinary actions. However, more suburban than urban or rural schools used in-school alternatives to suspension. The occurrence rates of all disciplinary actions except expulsions were higher in urban than in rural schools. Expulsion rates among the different types of schools did not differ significantly.

Junior high schools used in-school alternatives to suspension and transfers to special schools to a greater extent than senior high schools, while senior highs used expulsion more frequently. However, the rates of occurrence of all disciplinary actions were similar in both junior and senior high schools.

Differences in the use of in-school alternatives to suspension and transfers to special schools may be related to their availability. As seen in table 6, only 42 percent of all schools had access to alternative schools, and 77 percent had in-school alternatives to suspension. Moreover, their availability in different types of schools varied somewhat (table 7). For example, proportionately more urban, large, and junior high schools had access to alternative schools as compared with rural, small, and senior high schools.

### **Trends in Classroom Disruption**

For all types of schools, the percent of administrators reporting decreases in disruptive classroom behavior was much greater than the percent reporting increases. Across schools, between 58 and 73 percent of the principals indicated that classroom disruption had decreased, as compared with 5 years ago, while 8 to 20 percent said it had increased (table 3).<sup>8</sup> Reported decreases varied by grade level, metropolitan status, and to some extent, school size.

Proportionately more senior high than junior high school principals reported decreases in disruptive behavior. Such decreases were also more common in suburban schools than in urban schools, and in medium or large schools than in small schools.

### **Factors Limiting Ability to Maintain Order**

Principals were asked whether each of the following factors limited their ability to maintain order or to discipline students:

- o Lack of or inadequate number of security personnel;
- o Teacher's fear of being sued for disciplining students;
- o School principal's or administrator's fear of being sued for disciplining students;
- o Lack of or inadequate teacher training in discipline procedures and school law; and
- o Lack of or inadequate alternative placements or programs for disruptive students.

Only the lack of alternative placements was seen as a serious limitation<sup>9</sup> to schools' ability to maintain order: 36 percent of the principals indicated that this limited them greatly (table 4). Only 4 to 12 percent of the schools perceived each of the other factors as greatly limiting their ability to maintain order.

Principals in all types of schools rated the factors similarly. Only lack of alternative placements and lack of security personnel showed appreciable differences among schools (table 5). Junior high schools and large schools considered lack of alternative placements a serious limitation more frequently than senior high schools and small schools.

Principals in urban schools and large schools were more inclined to perceive a lack of security personnel as a limiting factor, compared with rural schools and small schools. However, even among these principals, fewer than 20 percent described the lack of security personnel as a serious limitation.

### **School Programs to Promote Discipline**

The existence and effectiveness of various discipline-related programs in schools were also explored (table 6). Almost all schools had discipline codes (97 percent) and counseling programs (95 percent). Fewer (64 to 77 percent) of the schools provided teacher training in classroom management, parent or student involvement in decisions, and in-school alternatives to suspension. Academic assistance programs and alternative schools for disruptive students were available in about 40 percent of the schools. Few schools (20 percent) offered programs designed to involve the parents of disruptive students.

Access to alternative schools for disruptive students varied widely by school size, metropolitan status, and to a lesser extent, grade level (table 7). For example, 68 percent of the urban schools had access to alternative schools, compared with 50 percent of suburban schools and 27 percent of rural schools. Differences by school size were similar: 62 percent of large schools compared with 24 percent of small schools. Alternative schools also were available to junior high schools (49 percent) somewhat more frequently than to senior high schools (38 percent).

The availability of other discipline-related programs showed fewer differences. Proportionately more urban than rural schools involved students in decisionmaking and provided academic assistance programs for disruptive students. Academic assistance programs were also more prevalent in large schools than small ones. Suburban schools and junior highs had in-school alternatives to suspension more frequently than urban schools and senior highs.

Discipline codes, alternative schools, and in-school alternatives to suspension were considered the most effective discipline-related programs. They received "very effective" ratings from 42 to 57 percent of the schools with a given program (table 6). Counseling programs were thought to be very effective by 30 percent of the principals, while the remaining programs were considered very effective by only 18 to 23 percent. Many principals thought their programs were somewhat effective, while only a few (1 to 13 percent) thought they were ineffective. Some principals, possibly those who had initiated programs in the last 5 years, indicated that it was too soon to evaluate program effectiveness.

Effectiveness ratings did not vary greatly by school size, grade level, or metropolitan status (table 8). Large schools and suburban schools rated alternative schools and academic assistance programs as very effective more frequently than small schools and either urban or rural schools. In addition, more large than small schools considered their discipline codes very effective.

## Survey Background

This survey was requested by the National Institute of Education in response to a request from the National Council on Education Research. The survey was performed under contract with Westat, Inc., using the Fast Response Survey System (FRSS). Westat's Project Director was Elizabeth Farris, and the Survey Manager was Margaret Cahalan. Douglas Wright was the CS Project Officer for this survey. FRSS was established by CS to collect quickly, and with minimum burden on respondents, small quantities of data needed for education planning and policy.

In February 1985, questionnaires were mailed to a stratified national probability sample of 900 public junior and senior high schools, representing the universe of approximately 30,000 junior, senior, combined, and other schools.<sup>10</sup> The sample was allocated proportionately to the number of schools in each of four strata: junior high, senior high, combined, and other public (including ungraded, vocational education, special education, and alternative schools). The schools were selected systematically with probabilities proportionate to the square root of their enrollment. The survey form was completed by the school administrator (often the principal) most familiar with the discipline policies of the school. The response rate for the survey was

93 percent. Responses were adjusted for nonresponse and weighted to national totals. All statements of comparison made in the text are significant at the 90 percent confidence level or better. Standard errors for selected items are presented in table 9 as a general guide to the precision of the numbers. Additional findings from this survey are available in a second CS bulletin entitled "School Discipline Policies and Practices," which covers due process suspension procedures, corporal punishment, lawsuits, and inservice training on student discipline policy.

#### **For More Information**

For information about this survey or the Fast Response Survey System, contact Helen Ashwick, Office for Educational Research and Improvement, Center for Statistics, 555 New Jersey Avenue NW., Washington, D.C. 20208, telephone (202) 357-6761.



## Notes

- <sup>1</sup>The average number of occurrences of suspensions and in-school alternatives to suspension are based on all schools including those that reported no occurrences. Rates of occurrences, here and elsewhere in this bulletin, should not be confused with percent of students; if a single student was suspended five times, the principal was instructed to report five occurrences.
- <sup>2</sup>This survey was conducted in early 1985. Data on student infractions and disciplinary actions were reported for the last full school year, i.e., 1983-84.
- <sup>3</sup>The data were analyzed by the following school characteristics: grade level, school size, metropolitan status, district size, and percent of students receiving free or reduced-price lunches (obtained in the survey as an approximate measure of socioeconomic status). Only data on grade level, school size, and metropolitan status are discussed in the text; all data, however, are presented in the tables.
- <sup>4</sup>Schools with combined junior and senior high grades were classified as senior high schools.
- <sup>5</sup>The average number of occurrences of each infraction is based on all schools including those that reported no occurrences. Since the average number of occurrences of drug selling is so small, this average is reported per 1,000 students. The average rates of other infractions are reported per 100 students.
- <sup>6</sup>For reference, there are approximately 19 million students in public junior and senior high schools.
- <sup>7</sup>The average number of occurrences of each disciplinary action is based on all schools including those that reported no occurrences. Since the average number of occurrences of expulsions and transfers to special schools are so small, these averages are reported per 1,000 students. The average rates of other disciplinary actions are reported per 100 students.
- <sup>8</sup>School administrators compared current disruptive behavior with that 5 years ago on a 5-point scale: "much less now," "somewhat less now," "about the same," "somewhat more now," "much more now." The "less" and "more" categories have been combined to indicate decreases and increases of disruption. In addition, there was a "don't know" category, which was used by only 2 percent of schools. Percents have been adjusted for "don't know" responses. The base for school reports, i.e., the amount of disruption these schools were experiencing 5 years ago, is unknown.
- <sup>9</sup>The 6-point scale ranged from "not at all" (0) to "very much" (5). Ratings of "4" and "5" have been combined as an index of "greatly limited" or "serious limitation."
- <sup>10</sup>Of the total sample, 60 schools were determined to be out of scope because they were actually elementary schools, had closed, or served only students with special needs (such as handicapped students). The weighted total of schools from the sample was thus 26,365, somewhat lower than the original number.

Table 1.--Incidence of selected student infractions in public secondary schools in 1983-84, by school characteristics: 50 States and D.C., 1985

School characteristic	Student caught selling illegal drugs at school		Theft of personal item over \$10 value reported by student to the school		Instance of law violation reported to police by school authorities	
	Percent of schools with occurrences	Occurrences per 100 students <sup>1</sup>	Percent of schools with occurrences	Occurrences per 100 students <sup>1</sup>	Percent of schools with occurrences	Occurrences per 100 students <sup>1</sup>
Total.....	35	.2	82	1.2	72	.8
Grade level <sup>2</sup>						
Junior high.....	31	.2	80	.8	70	.7
Senior high.....	39	.2	84	1.4	75	.8
School size						
Less than 400.....	10	.2	71	1.7	62	1.0
400 - 999.....	38	.2	85	.9	71	.7
1,000 or more.....	63	.2	93	1.1	88	.9
Metropolitan status						
Rural.....	21	.1	79	1.4	64	.7
Suburban.....	46	.2	84	1.0	76	.8
Urban.....	51	.5	89	1.3	88	1.5
District size						
Less than 1,000.....	11	.1	72	2.0	61	.9
1,000 - 24,999.....	40	.2	84	1.0	73	.7
25,000 or more.....	48	.4	87	1.1	85	1.2
Percent of students receiving free or reduced-price lunches <sup>3</sup>						
10 percent or less...	39	.2	86	1.1	77	.7
11 - 39 percent.....	35	.2	81	1.2	71	.7
40 percent or more...	31	.3	80	1.3	70	1.1

<sup>1</sup>Based on all schools including those that reported no occurrences.

<sup>2</sup>Some schools have both elementary and secondary grades. These schools are not listed separately because their number is small; they are included in the total and in analyses with other school characteristics.

<sup>3</sup>Obtained from the survey as an approximate measure of socioeconomic status.

Table 2.--Incidence of selected disciplinary actions in public secondary schools in 1983-84, by school characteristics: 50 States and D.C., 1985

School characteristic	Suspension for disciplinary reasons		Assignment to in-school alternative to suspension		Expulsion		Transfer to special school for disruptive students	
	Percent of schools with occurrences	Occurrences per 100 students <sup>1</sup>	Percent of schools with occurrences	Occurrences per 100 students <sup>1</sup>	Percent of schools with occurrences	Occurrences per 100 students <sup>1</sup>	Percent of schools with occurrences	Occurrences per 100 students <sup>1</sup>
Total.....	96	10.0	69	9.9	37	.3	33	.3
Grade level <sup>2</sup>								
Junior high.....	97	10.2	75	10.1	31	.2	39	.3
Senior high.....	95	9.9	66	9.9	42	.3	30	.4
School size								
Less than 400.....	89	7.1	63	6.0	29	.4	14	.2
400 - 999.....	98	10.1	71	10.9	35	.2	38	.3
1,000 or more.....	99	13.7	75	13.1	51	.2	50	.6
Metropolitan status								
Rural.....	92	6.6	66	7.1	35	.2	19	.1
Suburban.....	98	10.9	75	12.1	35	.2	43	.4
Urban.....	100	18.8	65	12.9	45	.6	52	.9
District size								
Less than 1,000.....	88	4.7	57	4.9	27	.3	12	.1
1,000 - 24,999.....	97	10.4	74	11.2	37	.2	34	.2
25,000 or more.....	99	15.3	66	11.3	50	.5	56	.9
Percent of students receiving free or reduced-price lunches <sup>3</sup>								
10 percent or less...	97	7.2	78	9.3	33	.2	37	.2
11 - 39 percent.....	95	9.8	69	9.8	35	.2	31	.4
40 percent or more...	96	13.1	61	10.6	44	.4	33	.4

<sup>1</sup>Based on all schools including those that reported no occurrences.

<sup>2</sup>Some schools have both elementary and secondary grades. These schools are not listed separately because their number is small; they are included in the total and in analyses with other school characteristics.

<sup>3</sup>Obtained from the survey as an approximate measure of socioeconomic status.

Table 3.--Perceived amount of current disruptive classroom behavior in public secondary schools compared with 5 years ago, by school characteristics: 50 States and D.C., 1985

School characteristic	Amount of disruption		
	Less	Same	More
(Percent of schools <sup>1</sup> )			
Total.....	66	22	12
Grade level <sup>2</sup>			
Junior high.....	59	28	13
Senior high.....	73	18	10
School size			
Less than 400.....	60	27	13
400 - 999.....	69	20	11
1,000 or more.....	68	19	13
Metropolitan status			
Rural.....	65	24	12
Suburban.....	71	20	9
Urban.....	58	22	20
District size			
Less than 1,000.....	66	22	11
1,000 - 24,999.....	66	23	11
25,000 or more.....	66	17	16
Percent of students receiving free or reduced-price lunches <sup>3</sup>			
10 percent or less.....	73	19	8
11 - 39 percent.....	64	23	13
40 percent or more.....	62	23	15

<sup>1</sup>School administrators compared current disruptive classroom behavior with that 5 years ago on a 5-point scale ranging from "much less now" to "much more now." In addition, there was a "don't know" category, which was used by only 2 percent of the schools. Percents have been adjusted for "don't know" responses. Percents are based on 26,365 public secondary schools. Percents may not add to 100 because of rounding.

<sup>2</sup>Some schools have both elementary and secondary grades. These schools are not listed separately because their number is small; they are included in the total and in analyses with other school characteristics.

<sup>3</sup>Obtained from the survey as an approximate measure of socioeconomic status.

Table 4.--Factors limiting public secondary schools' ability to maintain order:  
50 States and D.C., 1985

Factor	Extent to which factor limits ability to maintain order*					
	Not at all	Very little	Little	Somewhat	Much	Very much
	(Percent)					
Lack of security personnel.....	57	20	6	9	4	3
Teacher fear of being sued.....	30	43	13	9	4	2
Administrator fear of being sued.....	49	35	8	4	2	2
Lack of teacher training in classroom management.....	14	31	20	23	8	4
Lack of alternative placements available...	18	17	12	17	16	20

\*School administrators responded on a 6-point scale, with 0 = "not at all," 1 = "very little," and 5 = "very much." The mid-points of the scale were not defined on the questionnaire.

NOTE.--Percents may not add to 100 because of rounding.



Table 5.--Factors perceived as greatly limiting the ability of public secondary schools to maintain order, by school characteristics: 50 States and D.C., 1985

School characteristic	Lack of security personnel	Teacher fear of being sued	Administrator fear of being sued	Lack of teacher training	Lack of alternative placements
(Percent <sup>1</sup> )					
Total.....	7	6	4	12	36
Grade level <sup>2</sup>					
Junior high.....	6	6	6	9	43
Senior high.....	7	5	3	13	32
School size					
Less than 400.....	3	5	6	10	27
400 - 999.....	6	6	4	12	42
1,000 or more.....	16	5	2	14	39
Metropolitan status					
Rural.....	4	7	5	11	32
Suburban.....	8	3	3	13	39
Urban.....	17	8	4	10	40
District size					
Less than 1,000.....	2	5	6	9	21
1,000 - 24,999.....	7	5	3	13	40
25,000 or more.....	15	9	6	10	41
Percent of students receiving free or reduced-price lunches <sup>3</sup>					
10 percent or less...	5	3	3	10	30
11 - 39 percent.....	7	5	4	11	36
40 percent or more...	10	9	5	15	42

<sup>1</sup>Based on schools that indicated the factor limited them "much" or "very much," i.e., ratings of 4 or 5.

<sup>2</sup>Some schools have both elementary and secondary grades. These schools are not listed separately because their number is small; they are included in the total and in analyses with other school characteristics.

<sup>3</sup>Obtained from the survey as an approximate measure of socioeconomic status.

Table 6.--Availability of discipline-related programs in public secondary schools and ratings of their effectiveness: 50 States and D.C., 1985

School program	Have program	Changed or initiated in last five years*	Program evaluation*			
			Very effective	Somewhat effective	Ineffective	Too soon to tell
(Percent)						
Discipline code.....	97	57	57	39	1	3
Counseling program....	95	33	30	63	5	3
Parents involved in decisions.....	71	42	20	59	13	8
Teacher training in classroom manage- ment.....	66	58	23	65	4	9
Students involved in decisions.....	64	39	18	65	11	6
In-school alternatives to suspension.....	77	59	42	48	4	5
Alternative schools...	42	47	46	41	4	9
Academic assistance...	37	49	21	65	7	7
Programs with parents of disruptive youth.	20	50	19	54	12	15

\*Based on schools that have the given program. Percents for program evaluation may not add to 100 because of rounding.

Table 7.--Availability of discipline-related programs in public secondary schools, by school characteristics: 50 States and D.C., 1985

School characteristic	Discipline code	Counseling program	Parents involved in decisions	Teacher training in classroom management	Students involved in decisions	In-school alternatives to suspension	Alternative schools	Academic assistance programs	Programs with parents
(Percent)									
Total.....	97	95	71	66	64	77	42	37	20
Grade level <sup>1</sup>									
Junior high.....	97	93	71	70	67	82	49	37	18
Senior high.....	97	96	71	63	62	76	38	38	22
School size									
Less than 400.....	95	92	69	66	64	79	24	30	18
400 - 999.....	97	95	71	66	66	77	44	38	19
1,000 or more.....	99	98	75	67	58	75	62	44	25
Metropolitan status									
Rural.....	94	92	70	66	62	76	27	30	18
Suburban.....	99	96	71	65	62	81	50	43	22
Urban.....	99	97	75	72	72	70	68	42	21
District size									
Less than 1,000.....	93	93	71	65	59	76	15	28	15
1,000 - 24,999.....	98	95	71	65	64	79	44	38	21
25,000 or more.....	98	95	72	72	69	73	68	46	23
Percent of students receiving free or reduced-price lunches <sup>2</sup>									
10 percent or less...	99	97	70	56	60	83	48	42	23
11 - 39 percent.....	96	94	69	67	63	79	40	38	19
40 percent or more...	96	93	76	73	67	69	38	29	19

<sup>1</sup>Some schools have both elementary and secondary grades. These schools are not listed separately because their number is small; they are included in the total and in analyses with other school characteristics.

<sup>2</sup>Obtained from the survey as an approximate measure of socioeconomic status.

Table 8.--Public secondary schools' ratings of discipline-related programs as very effective, by school characteristics: 50 States and D.C., 1985

School characteristic	Discipline code	Counseling program	Parents involved in decisions	Teacher training in classroom management	Students involved in decisions	In-school alternatives to suspension	Alternative schools	Academic assistance programs	Programs with parents
(Percent <sup>1</sup> )									
Total.....	57	30	20	23	18	42	46	21	19
Grade level <sup>2</sup>									
Junior high.....	57	33	18	27	17	39	47	25	18
Senior high.....	57	28	21	21	17	44	45	18	20
School size									
Less than 400.....	47	29	21	20	20	40	29	8	25
400 - 999.....	60	31	19	24	15	41	49	27	18
1,000 or more.....	66	28	21	23	21	48	51	23	13
Metropolitan status									
Rural.....	53	28	20	24	20	44	38	14	22
Suburban.....	63	32	19	21	14	41	54	29	19
Urban.....	56	30	23	24	22	40	40	15	10
District size									
Less than 1,000.....	46	31	25	23	26	40	20	2	35
1,000 - 24,999.....	60	29	16	22	14	43	46	24	16
25,000 or more.....	60	32	27	26	22	42	53	26	17
Percent of students receiving free or reduced-price lunches <sup>3</sup>									
10 percent or less...	62	35	20	25	16	41	49	21	14
11 - 39 percent.....	58	29	22	21	17	43	40	24	28
40 percent or more...	52	25	17	23	21	43	39	15	9

<sup>1</sup>Based on schools that have the given program.<sup>2</sup>Some schools have both elementary and secondary grades. These schools are not listed separately because their number is small; they are included in the total and in analyses with other school characteristics.<sup>3</sup>Obtained from the survey as an approximate measure of socioeconomic status.

Table 9.--Standard errors of selected items

Item	Estimate	Standard error
Percent of secondary schools indicating that compared with 5 years ago, disruptive classroom behavior is:		
Less now, all schools .....	65.9	1.6
Less now, junior high schools .....	59.1	2.5
Less now, senior high schools .....	72.7	2.2
More now, all schools .....	12.0	1.3
Percent of secondary schools reporting one or more occurrences of the following student infractions in the 1983-84 school year:		
Student caught selling illegal drugs at school, all schools .....	34.9	1.9
Student caught selling illegal drugs at school, junior high schools ..	30.5	2.9
Student caught selling illegal drugs at school, senior high schools ..	39.4	2.3
Theft of personal items over \$10.00 in value, all schools .....	82.3	1.7
Theft of personal items over \$10.00 in value, small schools .....	71.3	4.3
Theft of personal items over \$10.00 in value, large schools .....	93.2	1.6
Percent of secondary schools reporting one or more occurrences of the following disciplinary actions in the 1983-84 school year:		
Suspension for disciplinary reasons, all schools .....	95.7	0.8
Suspension for disciplinary reasons, small schools .....	89.3	2.7
Suspension for disciplinary reasons, large schools .....	99.3	0.5
Expulsion, all schools .....	36.8	1.8
Expulsion, urban schools .....	44.9	4.9
Expulsion, rural schools .....	35.4	2.6
Average number of occurrences per 100 students of the following disciplinary actions in the 1983-84 school year:		
Suspensions for disciplinary reasons, all schools .....	10.0	0.5
Suspensions for disciplinary reasons, small schools .....	7.1	1.1
Suspensions for disciplinary reasons, large schools .....	13.7	1.0
Expulsions, all schools .....	0.3	0.04
Expulsions, urban schools .....	0.6	0.2
Expulsions, rural schools .....	0.2	0.03
Percent of secondary schools indicating that the following factors greatly limited their ability to maintain order:		
Lack of alternative placements, all schools .....	36.2	1.6
Lack of teacher training in discipline procedures and school law, all schools .....	11.5	1.2
Lack of or inadequate number of security personnel, all schools .....	7.3	0.9
Lack of or inadequate number of security personnel, urban schools ....	17.3	3.8
Lack of or inadequate number of security personnel, rural schools ....	3.9	1.0
Percent of secondary schools indicating the availability of the following discipline-related programs:		
Counseling program, all schools .....	94.7	0.9
In-school alternatives to suspension, all schools .....	77.3	1.8
In-school alternatives to suspension, junior high schools .....	82.2	2.5
Alternative schools for disruptive youth, all schools .....	41.5	1.4
Alternative schools for disruptive youth, urban schools .....	68.2	4.3

NOTE.--Statistics used in this report are subject to sampling variability. The estimated standard error of a statistic (a measure of the variation due to sampling) can be used to examine the precision obtained in a particular sample. If all possible samples were surveyed under similar conditions, intervals of 1.645 standard errors below to 1.645 standard errors above a particular statistic would include the average result of these samples in approximately 90 percent of the cases. For example, for the first item in the table (percent of secondary schools indicating that disruptive classroom behavior is less now compared with 5 years ago), a 90 percent confidence interval is from 63.3 to 68.5 ( $65.9 \pm 1.645 \text{ times } 1.6$ ). If this procedure were followed for every possible sample, about 90 percent of the intervals would include the average from all possible samples.



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION WASHINGTON, D.C. 20202 NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS  FAST RESPONSE SURVEY SYSTEM  SURVEY OF SCHOOL DISCIPLINE POLICIES AND PRACTICES	FORM APPROVED OMB NO.: 1850-0561 EXPIRATION DATE: 5/85
This report is authorized by law (20 U.S.C. 1221e-1). While you are not required to respond, your cooperation is needed to make the results of this survey comprehensive, accurate, and timely.	

<p style="text-align: center;">Affix label here</p>
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IF ANY OF THE INFORMATION PRINTED ON THE LABEL ABOVE IS INCORRECT, PLEASE ENTER NECESSARY CORRECTIONS BELOW.

SCHOOL NAME		
ADDRESS		
CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE

RETURN COMPLETED FORM TO: WESTAT, Inc. 1650 Research Boulevard Rockville, Maryland 20850
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NAME OF PERSON COMPLETING THIS FORM	TELEPHONE NUMBER
TITLE	

SCOPE: IF YOUR SCHOOL COMBINES ELEMENTARY, JUNIOR HIGH AND SENIOR HIGH GRADES, ANSWER ONLY FOR JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH GRADES.

- I. Column A (Status): Does your school require or practice any of the actions listed below before a short term suspension (under ten days) is given? Enter one code in Column A for each action.

- 1 = Required by school policy;  
2 = Not required, but usually done;  
3 = Not required nor done.

ANSWER COLUMNS B AND C FOR EACH ITEM WHETHER OR NOT YOUR SCHOOL REQUIRES/PRACTICES THE PROCEDURE.

Column B (Burden): Do you believe that implementing the procedure is (or would be):

- 1 = A small operational burden;  
2 = A moderate operational burden;  
3 = A large operational burden?

Column C (Evaluation): Considering the operational burden, student rights, and the impact on student attitudes toward student discipline, do you believe the procedure should be:

- 1 = Required by school policy;  
2 = Not required, but usually done;  
3 = Not required nor usually done?

School Procedure	A. Status	B. Burden	C. Evaluation
1. The student to be suspended is presented, orally or in writing, with the reasons for the suspension	_____	_____	_____
2. If students deny misconduct, they are given the opportunity to tell their version of the event and are given an explanation of the evidence against them	_____	_____	_____
3. If the student denies misconduct, the student's parents are invited to a formal or informal hearing	_____	_____	_____
4. If the facts are disputed, the student or a third party is allowed to question others involved in or witnessing the event	_____	_____	_____
5. A formal or informal appeal process is made available	_____	_____	_____

- II. A. As a principal/administrator, do you believe that corporal punishment should be permitted under certain circumstances? Yes |\_\_\_|; No |\_\_\_|. Are paddling or other forms of corporal punishment permitted at your school? Yes |\_\_\_|; No |\_\_\_|.

- B. Except in situations calling for expulsion or suspension, does your school have more lenient rules for disciplining handicapped than non-handicapped students? Yes |\_\_\_|; No |\_\_\_|; N.A. |\_\_\_| (No handicapped students in school).

- III. Does your school or district require inservice training on student discipline policy and/or law for:

- A. Principals/administrators? Yes |\_\_\_|; No |\_\_\_|. If yes, enter number of hours required on topic last year \_\_\_\_\_.

- B. Teachers? Yes |\_\_\_|; No |\_\_\_|. If yes, enter number of hours required last year \_\_\_\_\_. (If part of a multi-topic session, include only those hours devoted to student discipline and/or law.)

- IV. On a scale of 0 to 5 (0 = not at all, 1 = very little, 5 = very much), indicate how much the following limit your ability to maintain order and to discipline students in your school.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| A. Lack of or inadequate number of security personnel _____                          | D. Lack of or inadequate teacher training in discipline procedures and school law _____ |
| B. Teacher fear of being sued for disciplining students _____                        | E. Lack of or inadequate alternative placements/programs for disruptive students _____  |
| C. School principal/administrator fear of being sued for disciplining students _____ | F. Other (SPECIFY) _____  |

- V. A. About how many lawsuits regarding student discipline have been filed against teachers or principals/administrators in your school over the past 5 years? \_\_\_\_\_. Are you aware of any such lawsuits in your school district over the last 12 months? Yes |\_\_\_|; No |\_\_\_|.
- B. Within your State in the last 5 years, are you aware of any State or local court decisions in favor of students against teachers, principals, or central office administrators in circumstances of denied due process? Yes |\_\_\_|; No |\_\_\_|. If yes, do you believe these decisions were: Warranted to protect student rights |\_\_\_|; Unwarranted, went too far in protecting student rights |\_\_\_|?

VI. What was the approximate number of times each of the following occurred at your school during the 1983-84 school year? (If one student was suspended 5 times, count as 5 occurrences. If none, enter "0". Occurrences involving different actions may be counted under more than one heading.)

School Action	Number	Student Infraction	Number
A. Suspension for disciplinary reasons	_____	F. Student caught selling illegal drugs at school	_____
B. Assignment to an in-school alternative to suspension	_____	G. Theft of personal item over \$10.00 in value reported by students to the school	_____
C. Expulsion	_____	H. Instance of law violation reported to police by school authorities	_____
D. Transfer to a special school for disruptive students	_____		
E. Paddling or other forms of corporal punishment	_____		

VII. Compared to 5 years ago, is the amount of disruptive student classroom behavior at your school:

Much less now |\_\_\_|; Somewhat less now |\_\_\_|; About the same |\_\_\_|;  
Somewhat more now |\_\_\_|; Much more now |\_\_\_|; Don't know |\_\_\_|?

VIII. Column A (Status): Which of the following does your school have? (Check all that apply.)

Column B (Change): Place a check in Column B if the item you checked in Column A has been initiated or changed significantly within the last 5 years.

Column C (Evaluation): For each practice you checked in Column A, please evaluate its usefulness by placing the appropriate number in the space provided.

1 = Very effective; 2 = Somewhat effective; 3 = Ineffective; 4 = Too early to tell.

School Program/Action	A. Status	B. Change	C. Evaluation
1. Discipline code	_____	_____	_____
2. Counseling program and/or methods	_____	_____	_____
3. Parent participation in school decisions	_____	_____	_____
4. Teacher training in classroom management techniques	_____	_____	_____
5. Student participation in school/classroom decision making	_____	_____	_____
6. Use of in-school alternatives to suspension for disruptive youth	_____	_____	_____
7. Use of alternative schools for disruptive youth	_____	_____	_____
8. Academic assistance programs for disruptive youth	_____	_____	_____
9. Programs involving parents of disruptive youth	_____	_____	_____
10. Other (SPECIFY) _____	_____	_____	_____

IX. To obtain an approximate socio-economic measure for your school in order to better interpret the data of this survey, please indicate what percent of students in your school currently receive federally funded, free or reduced priced lunches \_\_\_\_\_%

What was the approximate average rate of student absenteeism for 1983-84? \_\_\_\_\_%