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# BULLETIN OERI

U.S. Department of Education • Office of Educational Research and Improvement

Center for Statistics

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## SCHOOL DISCIPLINE POLICIES AND PRACTICES

The federally required due process procedures that protect a student's rights before a short-term suspension are not considered a burden by most secondary school administrators. Although other due process procedures (which are not federally mandated) are seen as burdensome by a majority of administrators, most administrators think that the procedures should be practiced. These are some of the findings from a recent Fast Response Survey by the Center for Statistics (CS).

### Background

The issue of school discipline, and its effect on the learning environment, continues to hold significant interest. Some would argue that school administrators are unduly constrained by Federal, State, and local regulations and court decisions, which make it more difficult to enforce school discipline. Some key Federal requirements are found in Supreme Court decisions of the last decade. These decisions specify certain minimal due process procedures in short-term suspensions, permit corporal punishment, and allow students to sue educators for violating their civil rights. This survey, which was conducted in 1985, was designed to obtain information on discipline policies and practices in public secondary schools and to explore any effects of external controls, particularly Federal regulations.

### Due Process Suspension Procedures

Secondary school administrators were asked about their schools' requirements and practices regarding five due process procedures associated with short-term (less than 10 days) suspensions. They were also asked whether implementing each procedure was (or would be) burdensome and to indicate whether they thought these procedures should be required or practiced.



Almost all schools followed<sup>1</sup> the two procedures that are required by Supreme Court decisions (table 1):

- 1) The student to be suspended is presented, orally or in writing, with the reasons for the suspension (99+ percent); and
- 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 (99+ percent).

Seven percent of the administrators that followed procedure (1) and 19 percent of those that followed procedure (2) did not think that the procedures were required by their school policies.

A majority of schools also followed three additional procedures not federally mandated:

- 1) If the student denies misconduct, the student's parents are invited to a hearing (88 percent);
- 2) If the facts are disputed, the student or a third party is allowed to question others involved in or witnessing the event (73 percent); and
- 3) An appeal process is made available (95 percent).

While these three procedures were practiced by many schools, only one--provision of an appeal process--was required by as many as half the schools.

In 75 to 80 percent of the schools, administrators thought that implementing the federally required procedures created only a small operational burden (table 1). Only 3 percent of the administrators indicated that these two procedures placed a large burden on their schools. The other (non-Federal) procedures, however, were considered a moderate or large burden by 50 to 67 percent of the schools.

Despite the perception of burden associated with some of these procedures, most administrators (74 to over 99 percent) indicated that each procedure should be practiced (table 1).

### **Requirements and Perceived Burden For Non-Federal Procedures<sup>2</sup>**

For each procedure that was not required by Supreme Court decisions, perceived operational burden was related to local requirements and practices. Administrators in schools that required a procedure were less likely to consider it a burden than administrators in schools that did not require the procedure but usually practiced it. Administrators in schools that neither required nor practiced the procedure were most likely to consider it a burden (table 2a). For example, in schools requiring an appeal process, 46 percent of the administrators considered this procedure a moderate or large burden. In comparison, in schools that usually practiced the procedure although it was not required, 60 percent of the administrators reported that the procedure imposed a moderate or large burden. And in schools that neither required nor practiced the procedure, 80 percent of the administrators felt it was burdensome.

Administrators generally were satisfied with the status of due process procedures in their schools (table 2b). In schools that required the procedures, most administrators (82 to 90 percent) thought the procedures should be required; relatively few (8 to 16 percent) believed the procedures should not be required but should be practiced; and almost none (less than 1 to 4 percent) thought they should be neither required nor practiced. Similarly, in schools that did not require the procedures but usually followed them, the majority of administrators believed the procedures should not be required but should be practiced. And in schools where the procedures were not practiced, most administrators thought they should be neither required nor practiced.

### **Differences by School Characteristics<sup>3</sup>**

Administrators in different types of schools did not vary much in their practice of due process procedures (not shown in tables). However, they did vary in their perceptions of the burden of implementing these procedures (table 3). Schools with high suspension rates (26 or more occurrences per 100 students in 1983-84)<sup>4</sup> considered each due process procedure a moderate or large burden more frequently than schools with low suspension rates (less than 6 occurrences per 100 students). Proportionately more junior high schools and urban schools indicated that presenting students with reasons for the suspension was burdensome, compared with senior high schools and rural schools. Allowing students to tell their version of the event was also considered burdensome more often by junior highs than senior highs. Nevertheless, these federally mandated procedures were considered a moderate or large burden by only 31 percent or fewer of the schools. In addition, large schools more often than small schools indicated that allowing students to question others was burdensome.

Most administrators were in agreement that due process procedures should be practiced. Although proportionately fewer rural than urban schools believed that students should be allowed to question others, 72 percent of the rural schools thought that this procedure should be practiced (not shown in tables).

### **Disciplining Handicapped Students**

The Education for All Handicapped Children Act (P.L. 94-142) prescribed more extensive due process procedures for handicapped students in the event that the suspension or expulsion of a handicapped student was being contemplated. Concern has been raised, however, that schools may have misinterpreted the Act and adopted more lenient rules for disciplining handicapped students in all situations. According to survey findings, leniency in disciplining handicapped students had occurred, but was far from universal. In 61 percent of the secondary schools, administrators reported that policies for disciplining handicapped students were no more lenient than those for non-handicapped students. More lenient rules were reported in 31 percent of the schools, and 8 percent reported no handicapped students (not shown in tables).

## Corporal Punishment

School administrators were asked whether corporal punishment was permitted in their schools and whether it should be permitted under certain circumstances. They were also asked to indicate the number of times that paddling or other forms of corporal punishment had occurred in the 1983-84 school year. Overall, 60 percent reported that their schools permitted it, 63 percent thought it should be permitted, and 44 percent said it was practiced in their schools. In 1983-84, schools that used corporal punishment as a disciplinary measure averaged 14 occurrences per 100 students (table 4).

Findings on whether corporal punishment was permitted, should be permitted, or was practiced were highly interrelated and showed considerable differences among schools. For example, the practice of corporal punishment (table 4) was found in:

- o 52 percent of junior high schools as compared with 37 percent of senior highs;
- o 51 percent of small schools as compared with 26 percent of large schools; and
- o 58 percent of rural schools as compared with 27 percent of urban schools.

In addition, schools with low suspension rates used corporal punishment more frequently than those with high suspension rates (54 vs. 30 percent). Large regional differences in the use of corporal punishment occurred as well: 72 percent of the schools in the Southeast, compared with 47 percent of those in the West and Southwest, 39 percent in the Great Lakes and Plains, and only 14 percent in the North Atlantic.

There were also differences in the rates of occurrence of corporal punishment among schools that practiced it, often showing a different pattern from the percentage distribution of schools practicing corporal punishment. For example, although a greater proportion of rural schools than urban schools practiced corporal punishment, their rates of occurrence within schools were similar (16 per 100 students). Schools with high suspension rates had higher rates of occurrence than those with low suspension rates (18 vs. 11 per 100), although a higher proportion of schools with low suspension rates practiced corporal punishment. Schools in the Southeast (16 per 100) had higher rates of occurrence than those in the Great Lakes and Plains (9 per 100) or the North Atlantic (3 per 100), but were matched by schools in the West and Southwest (19 per 100). Only school size showed the same pattern, with small schools having higher rates of occurrence than large schools.

## Lawsuits and Court Decisions

Although the Supreme Court decreed that students could sue educators for alleged violations of their civil rights, it awarded minimal damages (\$1.00) in a related case.<sup>5</sup> One aim of this survey was to obtain information from school administrators on the incidence of such lawsuits in their schools, districts, and States.

Only 13 percent of the administrators reported that teachers or administrators in their schools had had lawsuits filed against them during the past 5 years (table 5). An average of 1.7 lawsuits per school had been filed in those schools. Proportionately more large schools than small schools had lawsuits (21 vs. 5 percent).

Similarly, only 14 percent of the administrators were aware of discipline-related lawsuits in their districts in the past year (table 5). Administrators in large schools and urban schools were aware of such lawsuits more frequently than those in small schools and rural schools.

One-third of the administrators were aware of cases in their States in the past 5 years where the Court's decision had favored students against teachers or administrators (table 5). Administrators in senior highs and rural schools were aware of such decisions more frequently than those in junior high schools and urban schools. When administrators were aware of decisions favoring students, about half thought the decisions were warranted, while half did not (not shown in tables).

#### **Inservice Training on Student Discipline Policy**

Inservice training on student discipline policy and law was required for administrators in 29 percent of the schools, and for teachers in 26 percent (table 6). Proportionately more urban than rural schools required inservice training for administrators, but they did not differ on requirements for teachers. In schools with inservice training requirements, administrators averaged 6 hours of training on discipline policy in 1983-84, while teachers averaged 4.

#### **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 small quantities of data needed for education planning and policy, quickly and with minimum burden on respondents.

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 public schools.<sup>6</sup> The sample was allocated proportionately to the number of schools in each of four strata: junior high, senior high, combined, and other (including ungraded, vocational education, special education, and alternative schools). The schools were selected systematically with probability proportionate to the square root of school 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 7 as a general guide to the precision of the numbers. Additional findings from this survey are available in a second CS bulletin entitled Discipline in Public Secondary Schools.

## 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>Based on schools indicating that the procedure was required by school policy or that it was usually done even though not required.
- <sup>2</sup>Since almost all schools practiced the federally mandated procedures, and thought they should be practiced, they are not included in this analysis.
- <sup>3</sup>The data were analyzed by the following school characteristics: grade level, school size, metropolitan status, district size, suspension rate, region, and percent of students receiving free or reduced-price lunches (obtained in the survey as an approximate measure of socioeconomic status). Findings reported in the text focus on grade level, school size, and metropolitan status. There are occasional references to suspension rate and region when differences by these characteristics are particularly striking; all data, however, are presented in the tables.
- <sup>4</sup>Based on the sum of the number of suspensions and in-school alternatives to suspension. Data on the number of occurrences of suspension as well as other disciplinary actions are presented in CS bulletin: U.S. Department of Education, Center for Statistics, Discipline in Public Secondary Schools. Washington, D.C., 1986.
- <sup>5</sup>Carey v. Piphus, 435 U.S. 247 (1978).
- <sup>6</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.--Requirement status, perceived operational burden, and evaluation of due process procedures associated with short-term suspensions in public secondary schools: 50 States and D.C., 1985

Due process procedures	Requirement status			Perceived operational burden			Evaluation		
	Required	Not required, but usually done	Not required, nor done	Little	Moderate	Large	Should be required	Should not be required, but should usually be done	Should not be required, nor done
	(Percent)								
The student to be suspended is presented, orally or in writing, with the reasons for the suspension.....	93	7	(*)	80	17	3	94	6	(*)
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.....	81	19	(*)	75	22	3	85	14	(*)
If the student denies misconduct, the student's parents are invited to a formal or informal hearing...	43	45	12	39	45	16	47	42	11
If the facts are disputed, the student or a third party is allowed to question others involved in or witnessing the event...	23	51	27	33	36	31	30	44	26
A formal or informal appeal process is made available....	78	17	5	50	36	14	77	17	6

\*Less than 1 percent.

NOTE.--Percents are based on 26,365 public secondary schools. Percents may not add to 100 because of rounding.

Table 2a.--Public secondary schools indicating that implementation of various due process suspension procedures creates a moderate or large operational burden, by current requirement status of the procedure: 50 States and D.C., 1985

Current requirement status	Students' parents are invited to a hearing	Students or a third party can question witnesses	A formal or informal appeal is available
	(Percent)		
Required by school policy.....	52	52	46
Not required, but usually done.....	62	64	60
Not required, nor done.....	89	85	80

Table 2b.--Public secondary schools indicating whether various due process suspension procedures should be required or practiced, by current requirement status of the procedure: 50 States and D.C., 1985

Current requirement status	Students' parents are invited to a hearing			Students or a third party can question witnesses			A formal or informal appeal is available		
	Should be required	Should not be required, but should usually be done	Should not be required, nor done	Should be required	Should not be required, but should usually be done	Should not be required, nor done	Should be required	Should not be required, but should usually be done	Should not be required, nor done
	(Percent)								
Required by school policy.....	84	16	(*)	82	14	4	90	8	2
Not required, but usually done.....	23	75	2	20	75	5	37	56	7
Not required, nor done.....	4	18	79	3	11	85	9	26	64

\*Less than 1 percent.

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

Table 3.--Public secondary schools indicating that implementation of various due process suspension procedures creates a moderate or large operational burden, by school characteristics: 50 States and D.C., 1985

School characteristic	Suspension procedure				
	Students are presented with reasons for the suspension	Students can tell their version of the event	Students' parents are invited to a hearing	Students or a third party can question witnesses	A formal or informal appeal is available
	(Percent)				
Total.....	20	25	61	67	50
Grade level <sup>1</sup>					
Junior high.....	23	30	61	69	53
Senior high.....	16	21	60	65	47
School size					
Less than 400.....	18	24	59	59	47
400 - 999.....	24	28	64	71	53
1,000 or more.....	16	21	59	68	48
Metropolitan status					
Rural.....	18	24	59	60	47
Suburban.....	18	25	64	73	52
Urban.....	31	29	62	68	53
District size					
Less than 1,000.....	13	23	58	56	42
1,000 - 24,999.....	21	25	63	70	52
25,000 or more.....	26	27	59	66	54
Suspension rate <sup>2</sup>					
Low.....	19	19	55	57	44
Medium.....	18	28	63	70	51
High.....	25	28	66	74	57
Percent of students receiving free or reduced-price lunches <sup>3</sup>					
10 percent or less.....	15	18	60	68	47
11 - 39 percent.....	17	26	61	66	50
40 percent or more.....	29	30	63	67	54
Region					
North Atlantic.....	12	19	61	77	54
Great Lakes and Plains...	20	19	61	66	45
Southeast.....	25	28	61	61	53
West and Southwest.....	21	33	61	65	51

<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>Based on the sum of number of suspensions and in-school alternatives to suspension. Low = less than 6 occurrences per 100 students; medium = 6 - 25.9 occurrences per 100 students; high = 26 or more occurrences per 100 students.

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

Table 4.--Principals' beliefs, school policy, and practice regarding corporal punishment in public secondary schools, by school characteristics: 50 States and D.C., 1985

School characteristic	Percent of schools indicating that corporal punishment			Average number of occurrences per 100 students <sup>1</sup>
	Should be permitted	Is permitted	Is practiced	
Total.....	63	60	44	14.4
Grade level <sup>2</sup>				
Junior high.....	67	63	52	13.8
Senior high.....	57	56	37	14.0
School size				
Less than 400.....	68	71	51	17.2
400 - 999.....	67	61	49	13.7
1,000 or more.....	47	41	26	9.8
Metropolitan status				
Rural.....	73	75	58	16.2
Suburban.....	55	51	34	10.6
Urban.....	48	33	27	15.9
District size				
Less than 1,000.....	67	74	51	17.9
1,000 - 24,999.....	63	60	44	12.8
25,000 or more.....	56	43	34	15.6
Suspension rate <sup>3</sup>				
Low.....	68	69	54	11.1
Medium.....	66	61	45	15.8
High.....	50	44	30	18.5
Percent of students receiving free or reduced-price lunches <sup>4</sup>				
10 percent or less.....	50	47	27	6.9
11 - 39 percent.....	67	63	48	13.4
40 percent or more.....	67	67	56	19.5
Region				
North Atlantic.....	37	30	14	3.0
Great Lakes and Plains..	60	61	39	8.9
Southeast.....	88	85	72	16.0
West and Southwest.....	63	59	47	19.5

<sup>1</sup>Based only on schools that practice corporal punishment.

<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>Based on the sum of number of suspensions and in-school alternatives to suspension. Low = less than 6 occurrences per 100 students; medium = 6 - 25.9 occurrences per 100 students; high = 26 or more occurrences per 100 students.

<sup>4</sup>Obtained from the survey as an approximate measure of socioeconomic status.

Table 5.--Lawsuits regarding student discipline against teachers or administrators in the school in the past 5 years, and awareness of lawsuits in the school district in the past year, and of court decisions in favor of students in the State in the past 5 years, by school characteristics: 50 States and D.C., 1985

School characteristic	Lawsuits in the school in the past 5 years		Percent of schools indicating awareness of	
	Percent of schools with lawsuits	Average number of lawsuits <sup>1</sup>	Lawsuits in the district in the past year	Court decisions in favor of students in the past 5 years
Total.....	13	1.7	14	34
Grade level <sup>2</sup>				
Junior high.....	13	1.6	16	28
Senior high.....	13	1.7	11	40
School size				
Less than 400.....	5	1.5	8	36
400 - 999.....	15	1.5	15	33
1,000 or more.....	21	2.0	19	33
Metropolitan status				
Rural.....	11	1.6	10	36
Suburban.....	16	1.7	14	36
Urban.....	13	1.8	23	23
District size				
Less than 1,000.....	5	1.3	4	46
1,000 - 24,999.....	16	1.6	14	32
25,000 or more.....	13	2.1	27	27
Suspension rate <sup>3</sup>				
Low.....	12	1.3	10	37
Medium.....	14	1.9	14	36
High.....	14	1.6	18	29
Percent of students receiving free or reduced-price lunches <sup>4</sup>				
10 percent or less.....	16	1.9	10	36
11 - 39 percent.....	13	1.5	13	36
40 percent or more.....	11	1.8	18	30
Region				
North Atlantic.....	12	1.4	8	30
Great Lakes and Plains..	15	1.6	8	36
Southeast.....	11	2.1	23	27
West and Southwest.....	13	1.6	16	41

<sup>1</sup>Based on schools with lawsuits.

<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>Based on the sum of number of suspensions and in-school alternatives to suspension. Low = less than 6 occurrences per 100 students; medium = 6 - 25.9 occurrences per 100 students; high = 26 or more occurrences per 100 students.

<sup>4</sup>Obtained from the survey as an approximate measure of socioeconomic status.



Table 6.--Inservice training on student discipline policy or law required by schools or districts for secondary school administrators and teachers, by school characteristics: 50 States and D.C., 1985

School characteristic	Administrators		Teachers	
	Percent of schools with requirements	Average number of hours in 1983-84 <sup>1</sup>	Percent of schools with requirements	Average number of hours in 1983-84 <sup>1</sup>
Total.....	29	5.7	26	4.1
Grade level <sup>2</sup>				
Junior high.....	30	4.9	25	3.2
Senior high.....	27	6.5	26	4.7
School size				
Less than 400.....	27	5.3	27	4.6
400 - 999.....	27	5.1	25	3.7
1,000 or more.....	34	7.1	26	3.9
Metropolitan status				
Rural.....	27	5.6	28	4.2
Suburban.....	24	6.3	21	3.9
Urban.....	49	5.2	30	3.8
District size				
Less than 1,000.....	26	5.2	34	3.9
1,000 - 24,999.....	25	6.2	22	4.2
25,000 or more.....	47	5.1	29	3.7
Suspension rate <sup>3</sup>				
Low.....	25	5.5	27	4.2
Medium.....	30	5.9	25	4.0
High.....	31	5.8	25	4.0
Percent of students receiving free or reduced-price lunches <sup>4</sup>				
10 percent or less.....	20	4.8	19	3.1
11 - 39 percent.....	28	5.8	28	4.4
40 percent or more.....	37	6.1	28	4.2
Region				
North Atlantic.....	17	8.2	15	6.1
Great Lakes and Plains..	18	5.7	22	3.9
Southeast.....	45	4.3	33	3.7
West and Southwest.....	35	6.2	30	3.9

<sup>1</sup>Based on schools with requirements.

<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>Based on the sum of number of suspensions and in-school alternatives to suspension. Low = less than 6 occurrences per 100 students; medium = 6 - 25.9 occurrences per 100 students; high = 26 or more occurrences per 100 students.

<sup>4</sup>Obtained from the survey as an approximate measure of socioeconomic status.

Table 7.--Standard errors of selected items

Item	Estimate	Standard error
Percent of all public secondary schools that require the following due process procedures before a short-term suspension:		
Students are presented with reasons for the suspension .....	93.2	1.1
Students can tell their version of the event .....	80.6	1.1
Students' parents are invited to a hearing .....	43.2	2.1
Percent of public secondary schools indicating a moderate or large operational burden for the following due process procedures:		
Students can tell their version of the event, all schools .....	25.1	1.3
Students can tell their version of the event, junior high schools ....	30.0	2.8
Students can tell their version of the event, schools with high suspension rates .....	28.2	3.0
A formal or informal appeal is available, all schools .....	50.0	2.2
A formal or informal appeal is available, schools that require the procedure .....	46.0	2.1
A formal or informal appeal is available, schools that do not require the procedure, although it usually is done .....	59.7	5.6
A formal or informal appeal is available, schools that neither require nor practice the procedure .....	80.2	5.8
Percent of public secondary schools indicating that the following due process procedures should be practiced:		
A formal or informal appeal is available, all schools .....	94.3	0.7
Student or third party can question witnesses, all schools .....	73.8	2.0
Student or third party can question witnesses, urban schools .....	84.3	4.1
Percent of public secondary schools indicating that corporal punishment:		
Is permitted, all schools .....	59.9	1.7
Is practiced, all schools .....	44.1	1.9
Should be permitted, all schools .....	62.7	2.3
Should be permitted, urban schools .....	48.2	4.5
Should be permitted, rural schools .....	73.2	2.7
Should be permitted, North Atlantic schools .....	36.8	3.5
Should be permitted, Southeast schools .....	87.8	1.6
Average number of occurrences of corporal punishment per 100 students in the 1983-84 school year:		
All schools .....	14.4	1.5
Large schools .....	9.8	1.6
Small schools .....	17.2	2.7
North Atlantic schools .....	3.0	1.2
Southeast schools .....	16.0	2.2
Percent of all public secondary schools requiring inservice training on student discipline policy or law for administrators .....		
	28.6	1.8
Average number of hours of required inservice training on student discipline policy or law for administrators in 1983-84 .....		
	5.7	0.5
Percent of all public secondary schools indicating that lawsuits had been filed against teachers or administrators in their schools in the past 5 years .....		
	13.2	0.9

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 all public secondary schools that require that students be presented with reasons for the suspension), a 90 percent confidence interval is from 91.4 to 95.0 ( $93.2 \pm 1.645$  times 1.1). 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.

Affix label here

IF ANY OF THE INFORMATION PRINTED ON THE LABEL ABOVE IS INCORRECT, PLEASE ENTER NECESSARY CORRECTIONS BELOW.

SCHOOL NAME		
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CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE

RETURN COMPLETED FORM TO:  
WESTAT, Inc.  
1650 Research Boulevard  
Rockville, Maryland 20850

NAME OF PERSON COMPLETING THIS FORM	TELEPHONE NUMBER
TITLE	

NCES Form No. 2379-21, 1/85

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? \_\_\_\_\_ %