

ASSESSMENT REPORT:

PROGRAMS FOR  
DYSFUNCTIONAL  
YOUTH

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NCJRS  
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In the Duval County School System

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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REPRODUCTION

## I INTRODUCTION

Since the prevention of crime is a major goal of the Office of Criminal Justice Planning, there is a need to investigate factors that lead to crime. Increasingly, national studies have focused on the rising number of major crimes committed by youth. Much attention has been directed in the past year by Congress and the media to one aspect of the problem, the spiraling rates of violence and vandalism in the nation's schools. U.S. News and World Report published a lengthy article this year, entitled, "Terror in the Schools"<sup>1</sup> which stated forcefully that violence and vandalism in the schools are reaching epidemic proportions but solutions are not readily available for coping with the problem.

Reports such as this have heightened the concern of many community groups, including the Office of Criminal Justice Planning, to assist the public school system in studying and coping with these problems. The Duval County Public School System has welcomed this interest and support.

Since the school is the one institution that has sustained contact with society's youth, it would appear that any effective solution to rising youth crime rates must take into account the natural relationship between the school and effective crime prevention strategies. Frequently, the child who comes to the attention of the juvenile authorities for delinquent acts already has a history of problems in school, including academic failure, misbehavior, hostility, and aggression, according to researchers Kobetz and Bosarge.<sup>2</sup>

Society expects the school, with minimal resources, to provide for the disparate needs of children who have been affected by its pernicious problems and ills, such as poverty, injustice, urban decay, rising crime rates, family

disintegration, and lack of economic opportunity. Moreover, the schools quite frequently are unable, with traditional approaches, to reverse the effects of these adverse forces which seem to propel youth into criminal activity.

In fact, the President's Commission on Law Enforcement declared emphatically several years ago that there are fundamental defects in the nation's educational system which act to compound the problem and increase, rather than decrease, the chances that youth, especially lower income youth, will choose the path of deviance. The Commission cited three deficiencies in the schools that contribute to delinquency: the educational enterprise is not meaningfully related to the real world outside the school; the school does not present itself as a model of the pluralistic society; and the school often fails to prepare youth for mature life in this society.<sup>3</sup> The relationship between irrelevant experience in school and an annual drop-out rate of nearly one million cannot be ignored. Nor can the fact that many unemployed dropouts commit delinquent and criminal acts and become involved in the formal criminal justice system.

Nevertheless, the Commission recognized that the school, because of its central and strategic role in the lives of youth, has the potential to neutralize or offset at least partly, the detrimental forces in the family and the community which lead to delinquency and crime. Although they believed this potential was not currently being realized, the Commission stressed the importance of major educational changes to help reduce delinquency and crime.<sup>4</sup>

Recently, the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare has focused considerable attention on the efforts of the nation's schools to work with

socially maladjusted youth. Since suspension and expulsion rates are measurable criteria, the Department plans to launch a nationwide data-gathering effort to obtain comprehensive information on all aspects of the problem, including the school's handling of students who have committed offenses leading to suspension and expulsion.

Another influential group, the Children's Defense Fund, reported in September 1975 that the use of suspension in public schools had reached mammoth proportions. Schools which enrolled 53 per cent of the country's student population suspended over one million children in 1972-73. Duval County ranked fourth in the nation in suspensions of elementary and secondary students in 1972-73.<sup>5</sup>

For this reason, this study on the socially maladjusted or dysfunctional youth in the Duval County Public Schools will scrutinize the entire suspension process, will survey special services and programs of the public schools and the community which provide services to this target group, and will make recommendations for additional measures to help counteract negative forces that lead to delinquency and crime.



# METHODOLOGY

## II METHODOLOGY

In an effort to assess and evaluate the scope of the problem concerning dysfunctional youth in Duval County, this study includes a brief review of pertinent literature a survey of existing programs and services provided by the schools and the community and an overview of those aspects of the school system which affect the target population, such as administrative structure, policy statements, communications, decision-making, utilization of resources and staff effectiveness in providing for the differentiated needs of these students and the relationship between the school system and community services agencies.

The information reported was gathered through interviews with community agency and school personnel, site visits to twelve schools, and from factual sources of information. Therefore, the study presents both objective and subjective material. A list of persons interviewed is included in the Appendix.

During the course of this assessment, staff from the Office of Criminal Justice Planning reviewed national and state publications pertaining to methods of dealing with dysfunctional or disruptive youth and visited selected sites in other counties in the state of Florida where special approaches in working with dysfunctional youth are being utilized.

The purpose of this study is to determine the general needs within the Duval County School System as they relate to crime prevention and the reduction in the number of dysfunctional pre-delinquent youth. A comparison is made between the existing Duval County School System and recognized standards/programs/concepts which relate to the schools role in crime prevention. The identification of needs is based on these

comparisons. Recommendations are offered to reduce the level of need to bring the Duval County Schools closer to a desired level of functioning.

Many of the needs and recommendations are general in nature. Further analysis is warranted to determine the specific response to the identified needs.

The recommendations vary in terms of the feasibility of implementing such changes in the near future. Several recommendations are oriented toward changes in policy and/or philosophy. These should be viewed as totally feasible. Others will require substantial financial resources to implement and should be viewed as goals which will require a longer period of time to fully implement.

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### III DEFINITIONS

The following definitions of terms used in the study are provided to increase clarity.

A dysfunctional youth is an individual between the ages of 10 and 17 who is deemed likely, because of current conditions, to be referred to the formal juvenile justice system if intervention or prevention measures are not taken.<sup>6</sup>

A delinquent child is one who violates a criminal statute for which adults are prosecuted or who violates certain behavioral proscriptions which apply to status offenses.<sup>7</sup>

Indicators of the delinquent child are: 1) school failure both academic and behavioral, 2) certain types of encounter with police, 3) unemployment of older youth out of school, and 4) youth with a record and association with institutionalization who have been through a part of the correctional system and returned to society.<sup>8</sup>

A disruptive youth is one with a school record of numerous teacher referrals, ongoing commission of serious offenses, and suspensions or expulsions. Six variables have been identified which describe the average disruptive youth as black, male, with a low sixth grade test score, a low grade point average, a low 9th grade verbal aptitude, and a record of psychological referral.<sup>9</sup>

A status offender is a juvenile who has committed offenses which would not be criminal if committed by an adult.<sup>10</sup>

EXISTING SYSTEM

#### IV EXISTING SYSTEM

##### A. Overview

Under the overall administration of the Superintendent and the School Board, the Duval County Public Schools are legally responsible for educating the county's 109,561\* children who are enrolled in its 94 elementary, 22 junior high, and 17 senior high schools (including the Alternative School.) Major areas of responsibility are subsumed organizationally under the categories of: operations, curriculum, business affairs, facilities, and personnel. The total budget for 1975-76 was in excess of \$136,500,000.

The system, under the direction of the new Superintendent, is currently in the process of reorganization.

##### B. Distribution of Support Services by School Level

Social work, counseling, and psychological services are provided by Pupil Personnel Services at the elementary, junior high, and senior high levels, except for 28 elementary schools which do not have access to a guidance counselor. The services of the occupational specialists are concentrated at the upper levels. Personnel providing these services either have offices at a particular school, commute to several schools, or render services at a specific location to which students must be transported.

Within Pupil Personnel Services, there are currently 24 General Service Visiting Teacher/School Social Workers, 13 Exceptional Student Section Social Workers, 1 Follow Through Program Social Worker, 9 Title I Social Workers, 18 School Psychologists, 1 Follow Through Program Psychologist,

\* as reported by the Pupil Welfare Services Unit in January, 1976.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART - PUPIL PERSONNEL SERVICES  
MARCH 1976

Figure 1

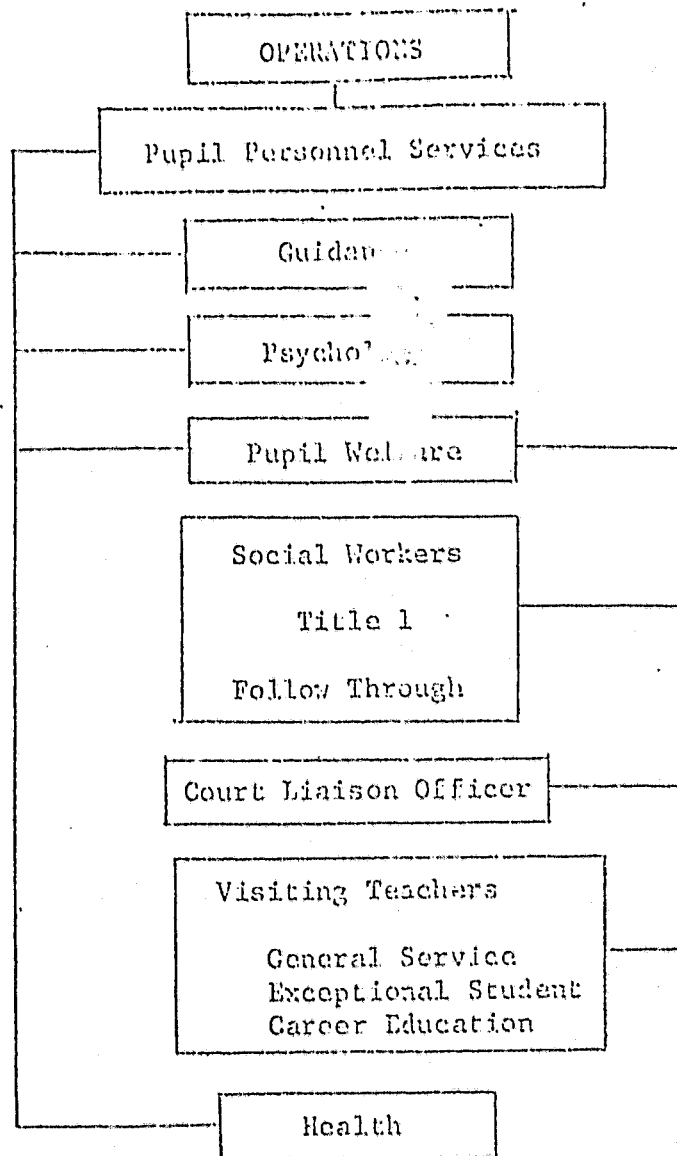




Table 1

## RATIO OF SOCIAL SERVICE PER SCHOOL LEVEL\*

<u>Grade Levels</u>	<u>Number of Students</u>	<u>Total Social Services including VT/SSW, ESS-SW, Psychologists, Federal, Guidance Counselors, Occupational Sp.</u>	<u>Ratio</u>
Elementary	51,184	112	1 to 457
Junior High	27,943	126	1 to 222
Senior High	25,299	126	1 to 201

NOTE: Occupational Specialist in Secondary Schools only  
VT/SSW - Visiting teacher/school social worker  
ESS-SW - Exceptional student section social worker  
Federal - Follow Through, Title I in elementary schools only  
\*Source: Pupil Accounting Dept. Duval County Schools  
February 3, 1976

6 Title I psychologists, 154 Guidance Counselors, and 41 Occupational Specialists. In addition, General Health Services provides 538 medically indigent children with immunizations, health record assessments, medical and dental screening, diagnosis and referral services. Under Title I participants also receive medical, dental, and vision services.

Students requiring special education placement attend facilities operated by the school system, the city, the state or the private sector. The school system provides guidance counseling, social work, and psychological services for the school-operated exceptional child programs; it also provides a school social worker from the Exceptional Student Section to work in conjunction with social workers in non school-operated facilities.

Figure I and Table I provide additional information on the organization and distribution of support services in the elementary and upper levels. It is noteworthy that the ratio of support service personnel to students varies considerably by level: 1:201 at the Senior High Level; 1:222 at the Junior High Level; and 1:457 at the Elementary Level.

#### C. Budget for Pupil Personnel Services

In 1975-76 the budget for the functions listed as Attendance and Social Work, Guidance, Health, Speech Pathology, Audiology, and Psychological services amounted to 3.84 per cent, or \$5,234,570, of a total of \$136,549,318. This is a slight increase over the previous year's provision of \$4,860,012, of a total budget of \$133,438,704 in 1974-75. However, this amount did not compensate for inflationary increases as is evident from the fact that the following pupil personnel positions were reduced or frozen in 1975-76: 7 Visiting Teacher/School Social Worker positions; 3 Exceptional Student Visiting Teacher/School Social Worker positions; 4 Psychologists; 1 Social Caseworker

Specialist; and 1 clerical position.

D. Referral Process for Students in Need of Services

There are five units within the Pupil Personnel Services Division that provide help for students in need of support services. They are: Pupil Welfare, School Health, School Psychology, Guidance, and Pupil Personnel Services Title I. The latter unit provides services only to those students participating in the Title I Program in the various schools.

The visiting teacher/school social worker is responsible for the case work and referral for other services for students. In providing casework services the worker utilizes both school service units and community service agencies as needed.

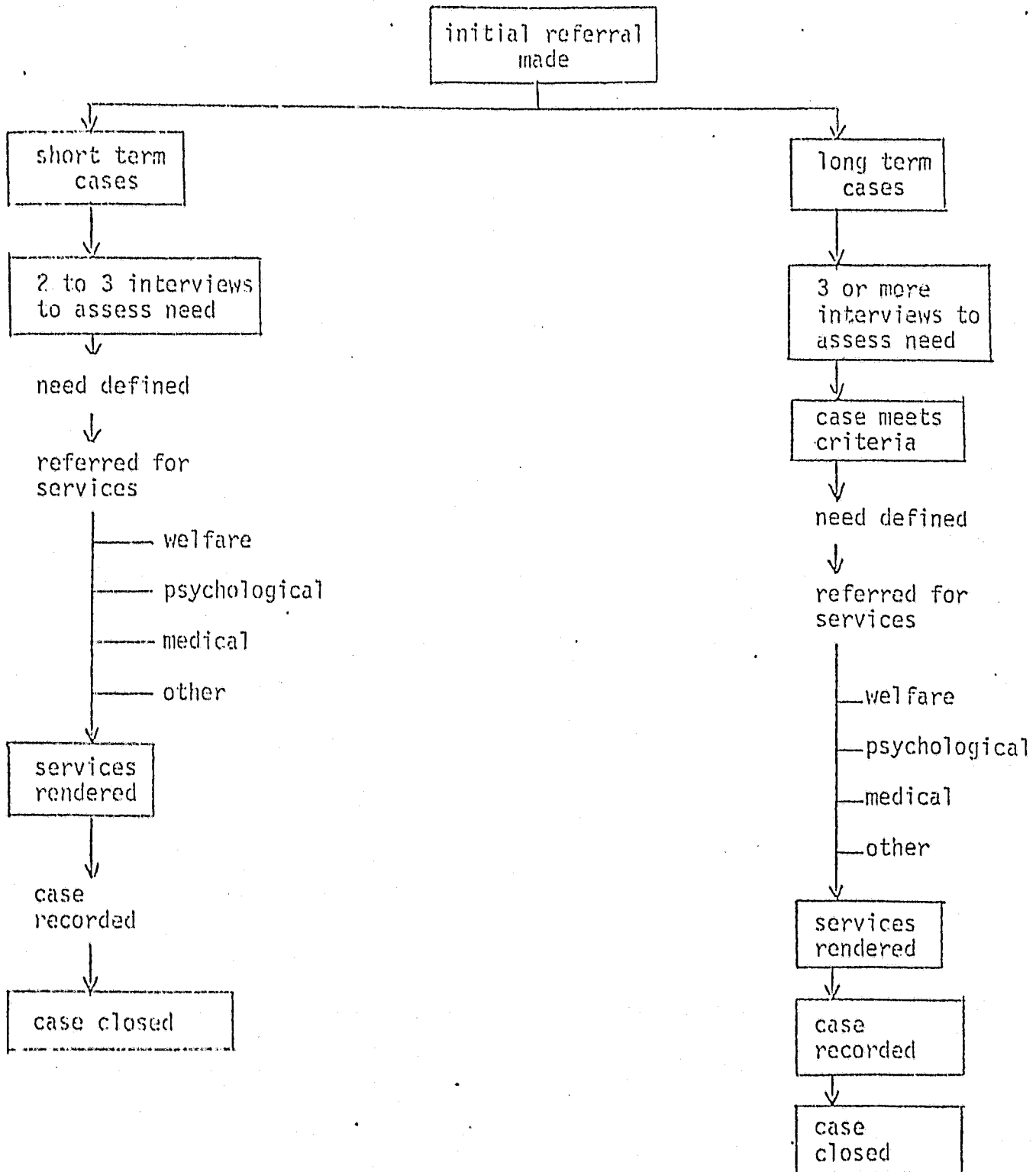
Students who are in need of services are referred by a variety of school staff for short term or long term service. See Figure 2.

Long term cases must meet one of four criteria to be opened:

1. The worker is collaborating with a social worker from another agency and reports are exchanged for the development of a plan.
2. The case must be referred to the Court Liaison Officer.
3. A study of the child's physical and mental problems are needed for special planning and/or placement.
4. A case has been closed in previous years and services are needed again.

Cases are closed when: (1) goals have been reached, (2) pupil makes adjustment, (3) pupil, parents and VT/SSW are ready to end contact, (4) pupil leaves school system, and (5) child is not benefiting from the services.

According to Pupil Welfare Services, school personnel complete a referral card and discuss the needs of the child who will be referred for service with the principal.



\* Process according to suggested procedures for referrals, case recording, and follow-up

This is done so that the principal is made aware of the problems that exist in the school and the nature of referrals that are made. The principal, or his designee, signs the card jointly with the teacher. The worker and the principal, or his designee, screens the referrals, keeping in mind the amount of time available for service in the school and giving priority to the children who can benefit the most.

#### E. Suspension of Students

The Pupil Personnel Services Annual Report for 1974-75 states that 7,857 students, or 7.57 per cent of the 103,753 enrollment, were suspended for a total of 52,617 lost school days. The highest concentrations of suspensions were reported at the junior and senior high levels which accounted for 16.89 and 11.4 per cent of their total enrollments respectively; the elementary level of .83 per cent was significantly lower. These figures reflect a change in reporting procedures of previous years in that multiple suspensions are now being subtracted from the total numbers of suspensions. Therefore, it is difficult to compare reports of previous years.<sup>11</sup>

In any case, the figures for 1974-75 are considerably lower than those reported by the Children's Defense Fund, from forms submitted in fall 1972 and fall 1973 which reported 12,644 students had been suspended, or a total of 11.1 per cent of the enrollment.<sup>12</sup>

It is evident that there is a disciplinary problem of some magnitude in the county's schools. Therefore, some consideration will be directed to the disciplinary referral process of students.

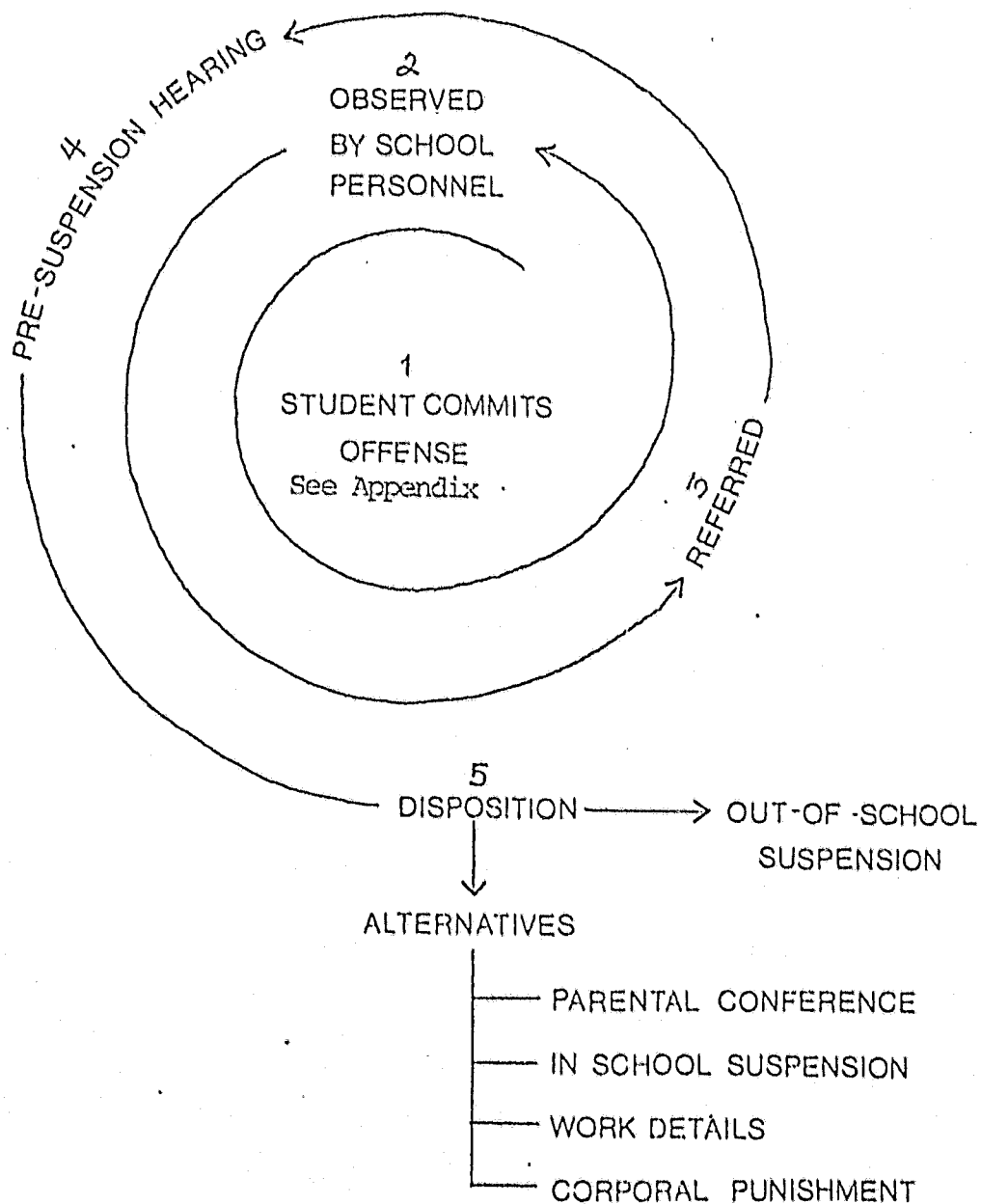
#### F. Disciplinary Action Referrals

The process of referral for disciplinary action has four steps after the commission of the offense: 1) observation by school personnel, 2) referral by school personnel, 3) pre-suspension hearing held

Figure 3

# SUSPENSION REFERRAL PROCESS

DUVAL COUNTY SCHOOLS



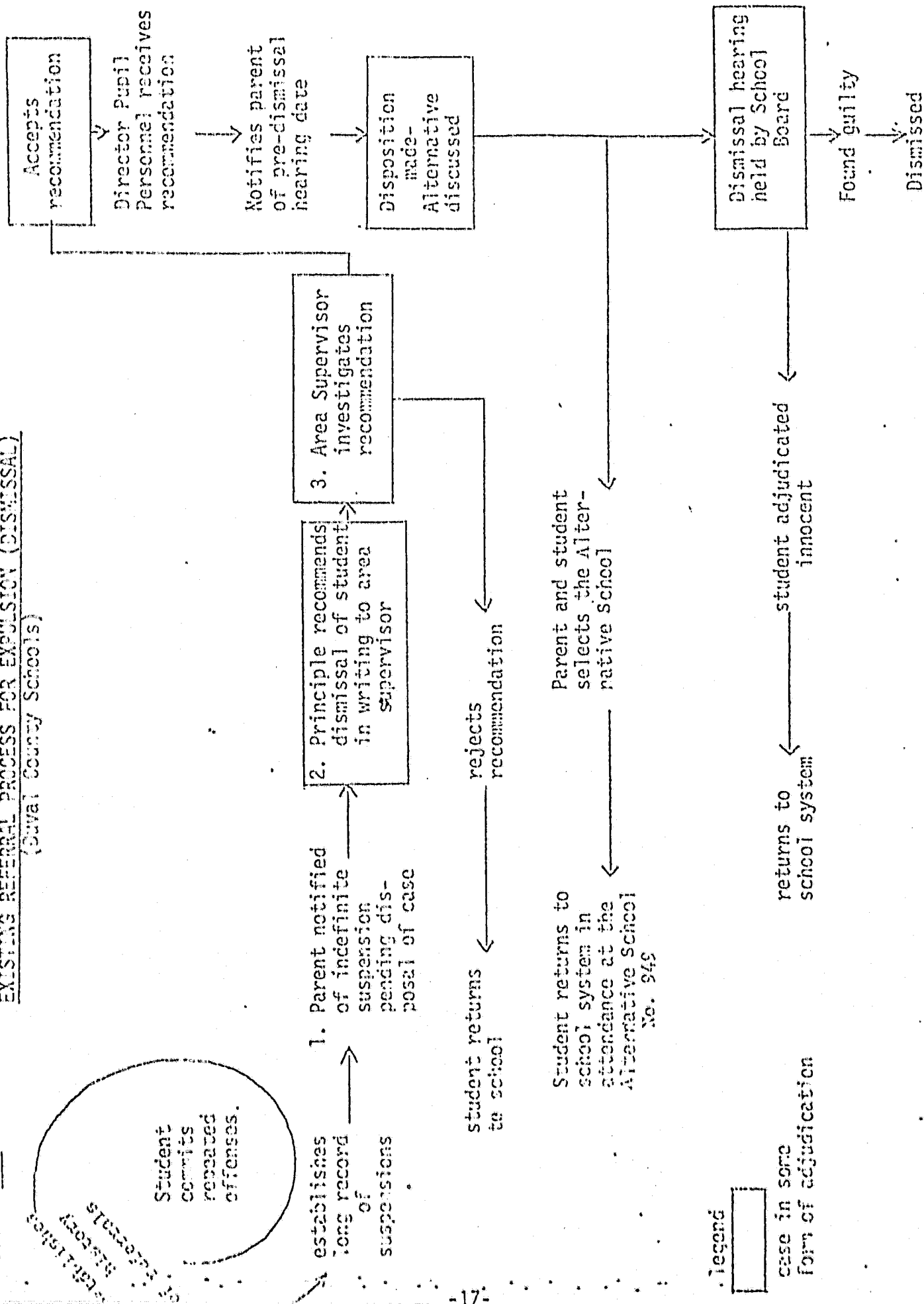
by the principal or his designee and 4) the disposition which may be to use an alternative or to suspend the student. Under disciplinary action there are three options: out-of-school suspension, alternatives to suspension (work details, in-school suspension, corporal punishment, etc.), and expulsion. Disciplinary action is carried out by the principal of the respective school or his designee.

Corporal punishment falls under alternatives to suspension and is carried out by the principal or his designee. See Figure 3. According to the School Board Policy manual, "corporal punishment must be regarded as a last resort and may be employed only in cases where other means of seeking cooperation from the student have failed. In administering corporal punishment the principal or his designee must not use any instrument which will produce physical injury to the child, and only the posterior part of the body below the waist and above the knees may be struck." <sup>13</sup>

The expulsion/dismissal of a student is the ultimate disciplinary action and is only used with severe cases where a student has had a long history of suspensions. School Board Policy states that three suspensions within a given year constitute grounds for the dismissal of a student by the School Board. Students who are dismissed usually have had several suspensions, have seriously interfered with learning activities of other students, and have violated School Board policy.

After the student is suspended for an indefinite period pending the disposition of the case, the expulsion process begins as explained in Figure 4. The first step requires that the principal submit a written report to his area supervisor recommending that a student be dismissed from the school system. The area supervisor investigates the charges brought against the student by the respective principal. If the area supervisor rejects the

# EXISTING REFERRAL PROCESS FOR EXPULSION (DISMISSAL) (Suval County Schools)





recommendation, the student returns to school. If he finds grounds for dismissal, the recommendation is forwarded to the Director of Pupil Personnel Services. After receiving the recommendation, the Director holds a pre-dismissal hearing with the student and his parents or guardians. At this time, a disposition of the case is made and alternatives are discussed. Usually the student and parents choose to select the Alternative School rather than go before the School Board for the formal dismissal hearing.

#### G. School Programs for Dysfunctional Youth

There are four specific programs within the Duval County School System for dysfunctional youth. They are the Peace Program, Project Hold, the Alternative School, and John E. Ford Career Education Center. These programs operate in separate school settings and are staffed by principals, teachers, counselors and supportive personnel i.e. visiting teacher/school social workers (VT/SSW's), psychologists, etc. Students who are rehabilitated by the programs may return to the regular school system to graduate.

##### 1. Peace Program

The Peace Program is an alternative for socially maladjusted and emotionally disturbed 11, 12, and 13 years olds who attend classes in basic skills, industrial arts, and home-making. They are counseled extensively by the program psychologist, and can return to the regular school program once it is felt that their behavior warrants it.

Students whose behavior remains unchanged by treatment in the program or whose behavior deteriorates are referred to residential treatment facilities such as the Madeline Downing Knight Home for Children. Usually the program averages about 42 students per school year. It was reported

by a program official that 50 per cent of the participants in the 1974-75 school year successfully returned to the regular school program. The staff consists of 2 administrators, a supervisor, 9 crisis intervention teachers, and supportive personnel such as Visiting Teacher/School Social Worker and school psychologist.

## 2. Project Hold

Project Hold, funded by the Emergency School Assistance Act is a joint effort between school system personnel and the University of North Florida. The program is now in its second year of operation and operates in three junior high schools.

Participants were selected at the beginning of the school year. The criteria for inclusion in the program includes low grade point averages, attendance problems, and a history of suspension referrals. Out of all the students screened, 50 from each school were selected for participation in the program.

A full-time counselor and part-time social worker service each target school. Student counseling sessions are held periodically with each student in the program participating. Students who continue to have attendance and other problems while participating in the program receive additional attention by the social worker who makes home visits and telephone calls to find out what the student needs. The program provides for field trips and family oriented activities.

## 3. The Alternative School

Students from grades 7-12 who are on the verge of being dismissed from the school system may be referred to the Alternative School for a period of rehabilitation which lasts 90 days or more. Students attend voluntarily, with parental consent. Once admitted, students and parents confer with the principal so they are informed of the purpose of the

school, its rules and regulations. Parents then sign a Master Plan contract which says that they understand matters explained to them in the conference and that they give their child permission to participate in any activities sponsored by the school. Any infraction of a school rules by a student results in his being suspended from the program.

Upon entrance, students are administered a complete battery of tests to assess their academic achievement level. Students are not furnished transportation to the school site, leaving attendance the responsibility of the student and parent. The school system, however, does provide a free lunch for students participating in the program. Library services are not provided for the Alternative School by the school system. Students are provided these services by the LOOP mobile which is a library on wheels that operates from the Haydon Burns Public Library. The program is staffed by a principal, four teachers, two teacher aides, a part-time psychologist, and a certified counselor, a visiting teacher/school social worker, and an Occupational Specialist.

#### 4. Education Career Center

The John E. Ford Career Center began operating in 1970 as a Vocational Program for disadvantaged youth, and was federally funded for three years. During the fourth year the program was funded by The Duval County School System. Since that time it has operated as an alternative for youth who have dropped out of the regular school program or who have been repeatedly suspended.

The center provides students with the following three options: (1) to meet graduation requirements at John E. Ford and receive a diploma through Stanton Senior High School (2) to leave with a marketable skill, or (3) to remain with the career center until prepared to return to his home

school and complete graduation requirements.

Once a student's academic level is determined through a battery of tests, he begins on an individualized lesson plan for the four subject areas: mathematics, english, science, and social studies. In addition, students may enroll in vocational offerings at the center such as small engine repair and service, building maintenance and custodial services, furniture repair and upholstery, cabinet-making and wood-working, service station management, bricklaying-concrete block and tile setting, home economics, and office machines, ornamental horticulture and floriculture, or printing.

A staff of 30 operates the program: a principal, assistant principal, dean of women, curriculum coordinator, counselor, 12 vocational teachers (shop) and 13 academic teachers.

#### H. Suspended Student Profile

Over the past several years the suspension rate of students from the Duval County Public Schools has been an area of concern to the general public. In recognition of this concern and the problems surrounding the use of suspension, the Duval County School Board directed the school administrative staff to study student suspensions and develop proposals to reduce them.

In March, 1976 the research and planning unit of Pupil Personnel Services released the results of an in-house study of one fourth of the 2,588 suspensions which were reported during the first two months of this academic year. Some of the factors which seem to correlate to some extent with suspensions are: Low economic status of the family; three or more children in the family; lack of education of parents; low I.Q. of the student; and the student's previous history of academic failure.

# RACIAL COMPOSITION OF SUSPENDED STUDENTS

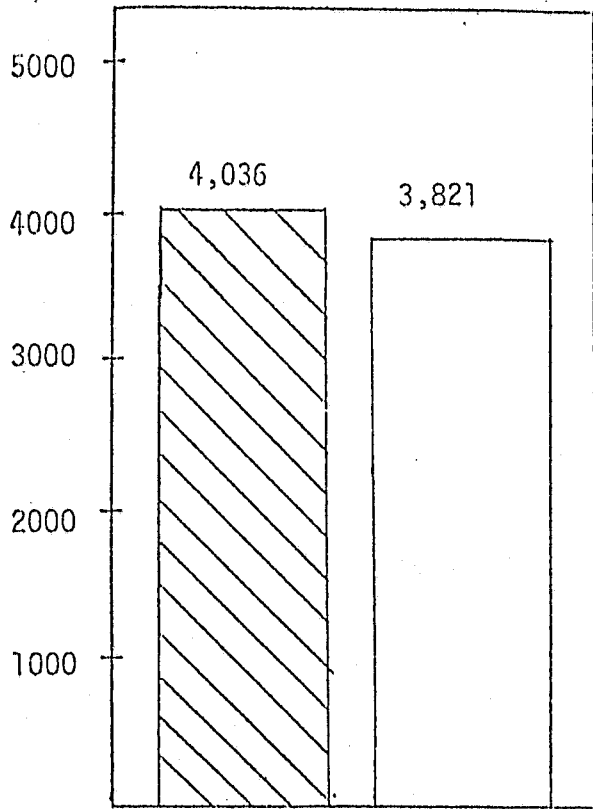
FIGURE 5

NUMBER SUSPENDED

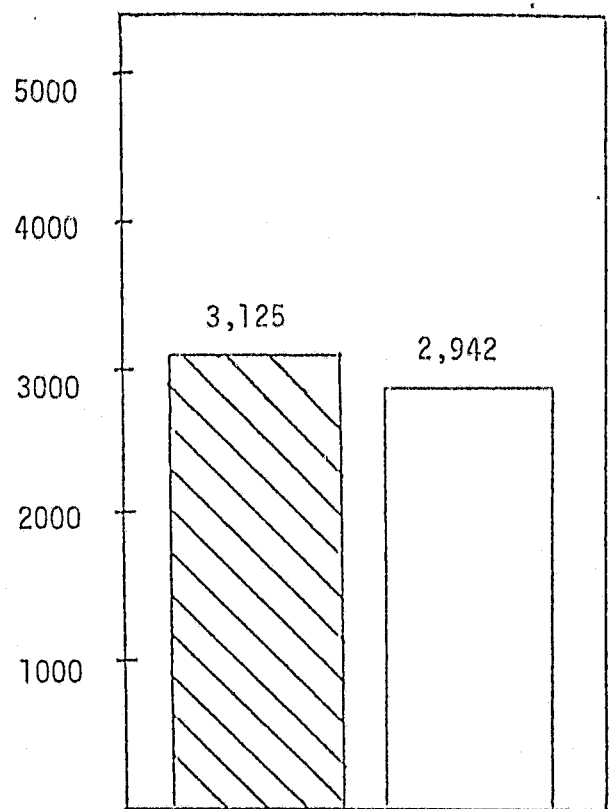
(6 months)

1974-1975

1975-1976



Black students White students

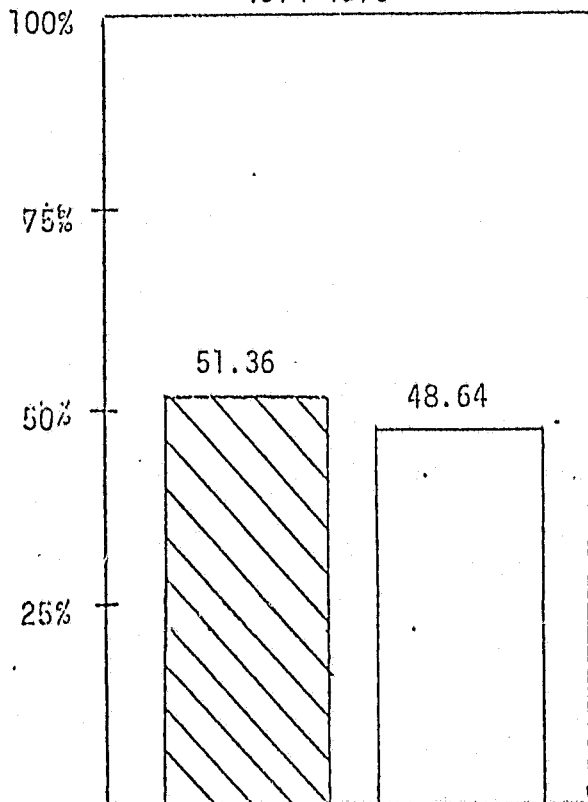


Black students White students

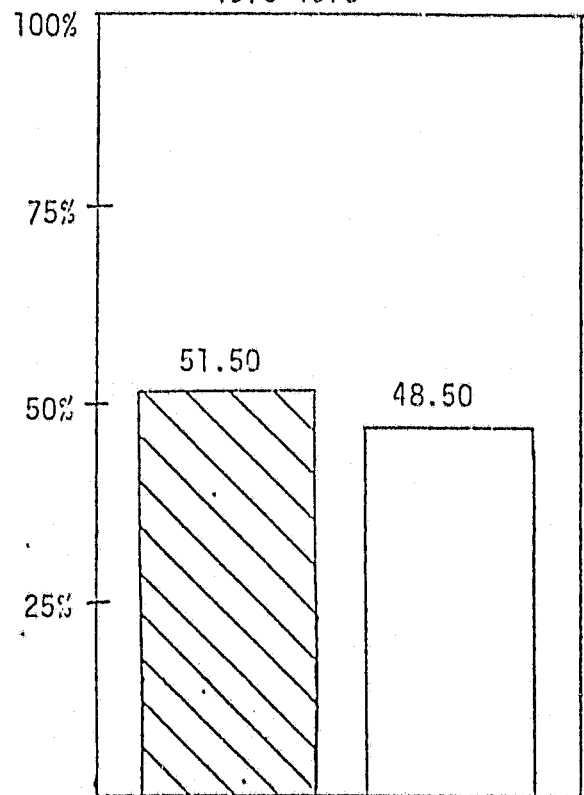
PERCENT SUSPENDED

1974-1975

1975-1976



Black students White students



Black students White students

Source: Pupil Personnel Services Duval County Public School System

Table 2.

## LEADING CAUSES FOR SUSPENSIONS \*

RACE AND SEX	SKIPPING				TOBACCO				INSUBOR- DINATE		FIGHTING		TARDINESS		LEAVING SCHOOL		TOTAL
	CLASS		SCHOOL		USE		POSSESSION										
	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	
WHITE MALE	60	28	11	4	29	13	15	7	49	23	30	13	12	6	10	5	216
WHITE FEMALE	38	29	22	16	10	8	5	4	23	17	10	8	11	8	13	10	132
BLACK MALE	34	23	0	0	4	3	1	1	50	33	51	34	4	3	5	3	149
BLACK FEMALE	20	19	4	4	4	4	2	2	29	28	36	35	2	2	6	6	103
TOTAL	152	25	37	6	47	8	23	4	151	25	127	21	29	5	34	6	600

\* According to the inhouse study by Pupil Personnel Services of March, 1976, the above offenses accounted for 75 per cent of suspensions of the sample group during September and October, 1975. In some instances multiple reasons were given for a single suspension.

The report stated that 48 per cent of the sample group had been retained in a grade at least once; 39 per cent were currently failing in three or more classes; and an additional 31 per cent were failing in at least one course. Another important factor cited was the lack of parental cooperation in working with the school to help the student. Cross-town busing has imposed hardships on some parents without telephones and cars.

The typical suspended student, according to the study, tends to be 15 years old, from a moderate to low income family, with a record of academic failures, and a possible low I.Q. The leading cause of suspension, according to the study are: skipping, tobacco, insubordination, fighting, tardiness, and leaving school. These offenses account for 75 per cent of the suspensions during that period.<sup>14</sup> See Figure 5 and Table 2.

#### I. High Reported Dropout Rate

The Guidance Unit of Pupil Personnel Services has tabulated a total of 5,491 voluntary dropouts by students in the county schools during the period of August 1975 through February 3, 1976. The monthly figures are shown below in Table 3, but do not indicate readmissions because this information is not available at this time. Reasons given by students for leaving school are varied but frequently include transfer to other schools, financial problems, lack of interest, pregnancy, and behavior problems.

Students who are below the mandatory school attendance age must receive a written release form from the Director of Pupil Personnel Services before they officially drop out of public school. However, these students may return to school later in the year.

Table 3

VOLUNTARY DROP OUTS: DUVAL COUNTY SCHOOLS

Junior/Senior High School  
 Aug. 25, 1975 to Feb. 3, 1976  
 N = 52,425

Aug. 25 Sept. 22	Sept. 22 Oct. 21	Oct. 22 Nov. 19	Nov. 20 Dec. 19	Jan. 5 Feb. 2	Total
877	1539	1413	1259	403	5491

Source: Guidance Pupil Personnel Services, Duval County Public Schools,  
 April, 1976



## J. School Security Unit

The Security Department of the Duval County School System is charged with the responsibility of investigating incidents related to school security. This unit consists of a Chief of Security and eight investigators, five of whom are police officers of the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office, funded by the School Board. All investigators have law enforcement training and the power of arrest.

The 1975/76 Budget for the Security Department amounted to \$254,000. This budget includes salaries for three (3) additional police officers from the Sheriff's Office which are assigned to three specific schools. Each law enforcement officer is responsible for maintaining law and order at that school and working to prevent problems. This effort was reduced from six officers to three this year as a result of the Florida Legislature's decision to discontinue funding for this function. School security data indicated that assigning a police officer to a high-incident school has had a positive impact:

"During 1972/73 school term, there were thirty-eight reported cases of aggravated assault on students. In 1973/74 this dropped to twenty cases.

During 1972/73 school term, there were eight reported cases of assault on teachers. In 1973/74 this had dropped to five and in 1974/75 to one.

In 1972/73, there were twelve arrests of students on drug charges; in 1973/74 this had dropped to two cases and in 1974/75 to one case.

In 1972/73 there were six reported cases of robbery. In 1973/74 this had dropped to three and in 1974/75 only one case was reported.

In 1972/73 and in 1973/74 there was one case of reported rape; in 1974/75 there was none.

In 1972/73 there were thirteen arrests for carrying concealed weapons; in 1974/75 there was none.

In 1972/73 there were forty-three miscellaneous cases covering such things as accidental deaths, riots, trespassers, racial disorders, arson, false

fire alarms, etc. In 1973/74 this had dropped to fourteen cases with no accidental deaths, racial gang fights, or riots. In 1974/75 this had dropped to ten cases with no deaths and no riots or racial disorders." <sup>15</sup>

The Security Unit also coordinates the following activities:

- 1) Mobile Home Program - This program provides a free lot and utilities to mobile home owners willing to live on school grounds. The presence of such lots on school premises is believed to have influenced the 4% reduction in school vandalism and theft.
- 2) Silent Alarm System - Twenty-seven (27) schools and two (2) school warehouses are equipped with silent alarms to notify authorities of intruders.
- 3) School Security Survey - A number of schools are surveyed by the Security Department to determine areas where security is weak and to recommend corrective action. Surveys are conducted in those schools and administrative facilities which are believed to have the greatest need for improved security.

STYTHAM VISITORS

## V SITE VISIT ANALYSIS

### A. Methodology

To determine the nature and the scope of the problem concerning dysfunctional youth at the delivery of service level in the Duval County Public Schools, twelve schools were selected for site visits by an evaluation team from the Office of Criminal Justice Planning. Selection was made on the basis of an attempt to pair a school with a low suspension rate,\* as indicated in the Duval County Public Schools Pupil Personnel Services Annual Report 1974-75, and a school of similar size with a high suspension rate, at the same educational level, in a fairly similar geographical area of the city. The study did not include schools with special populations, such as the Career Education Center, Technical High School, or the Alternative School.

Due to time and personnel limitations, the number of schools surveyed is small, about 9 per cent of the public schools in the county. The information from administrators, deans, counselors, teachers, and other staff is subjective. No attempt has been made to determine the accuracy of the information received. The data presented is primarily descriptive in nature and should not be regarded as conclusive.

The twelve schools selected for site visits represent the opposite ends of the suspension rate continuum at the elementary, junior high, and senior high levels. For the purpose of comparison, these twelve schools have been divided into two groups of schools. Each group is comprised of two elementary, two junior high, and two senior high schools.

\* Suspension rates reported by the school system are calculated as per cent of students suspended to the total enrollment.

with the highest and lowest rates of reported suspensions at each level. The terms high group and low group in this study will refer to the six schools with high reported suspension rates and the six with low reported suspension rates, respectively.

Two of the surveyed junior high schools reported very high rates of suspension in 1974-75; however, the rates at the elementary level were significantly and consistently lower than the other two levels. In fact, high rates of suspension at the elementary level are lower than the low rates at the other levels, as noted in Table 4.

Table 4

Per Cent of Students Suspended to Enrollment  
at Twelve Surveyed Schools 1974-75

<u>High Group</u>		<u>Low Group</u>	
Carter Woodson Elementary	3.38	Ruth Upson Elementary	.00
South San Jose Elementary	2.20	San Jose Elementary	.00
Jefferson Davis Junior High	35.78	Joseph Stilwell Junior High	4.77
Kirby Smith Junior High	34.70	James W. Johnson Junior High	3.74
Paxon Senior High	29.93	William Raines Senior High	4.61
Sandalwood Senior High	12.67	Samuel Wolfson Senior High	6.16

Two questionnaires were developed. One was used in interviewing principals in the four elementary schools as well as administrators, deans counselors, and other staff in the four junior and senior high schools selected. Copies of the other questionnaire were given to four randomly selected teachers in each of the junior and senior high schools visited for a total of 16 teachers in the high group and 16 in the low group.

## B. Results

At all levels, administrators, deans, counselors, staff, and teachers interviewed expressed the view that there has been a significant drop in suspension rates over the past several years because of public pressure, school policy, progress in the area of integration, and the utilization of alternatives to suspension. All respondents felt the trend in lowered suspensions was continuing.

When asked about factors which might account for the great variation in per cent of students suspended at various schools, 96 per cent of 46 respondents from high and low suspension rate schools attributed the variation primarily to differences in student body constituencies. They also listed: attitude of school personnel toward enforcing standards; more utilization of school services; interest of parents; unreported informal suspensions; and lowering of school standards as factors affecting suspension rates.

Two respondents alluded to differences between school administrators in reporting suspensions. They stated they believed reports of informal suspensions, without written verification, by students who have transferred from other schools in the district.

### Intervention in Disciplinary Process

Respondents agreed that schools attempt to intervene quite early in the disciplinary process to aid the student before suspension. They also intervene after suspension. One major use of suspension, cited in interviews, is the opportunity to enlist the aid of parents in helping the

student with specific problems. Many respondents reported they are now attempting to enlist parent involvement by scheduling pre-suspension conferences in an effort to ward off suspensions. A major obstacle to parent involvement occurs when some parents assume an anti-supportive role and discount the school's reports of behavior problems. Another expressed difficulty is making contact with a small percentage of parents who do not leave forwarding addresses when they move.

There is an over-utilization of referral for suspension by some teachers, according to 43 of 49 administrators and staff surveyed. When asked if there is uniformity in matching of disciplinary measures with various offenses, 91 per cent of administrators and staff polled at high suspension rate schools replied affirmatively compared with 63 per cent from low suspension schools.

In describing disciplinary measures used, respondents from both high and low suspension rate schools concurred that a wide range are utilized, with suspension the last resort. Most discipline problems are handled in the classroom by the teacher. More serious offenses require staff conferences with the student, parent contact, corporal punishment, work detail, written assignments, after-school detention, in school suspension, and suspension.

Throughout the schools visited, school personnel expressed a genuine desire to keep students in school. Respondents, however, appeared to be concerned about adherence to School Board policy which requires suspension for specified offenses. Some deans and administrators have indicated that

they generally interpret the School Board policy as giving administrators discretion in recommending suspension whereas others interpret the policy more literally. All school personnel agreed that offenses involving aggressive and violent behavior toward other students and staff demanded temporary separation of the offender from the school community through suspension or some other alternative measure.

A total of 23 dismissal hearings have been held in the past year and a half for students from the high suspension rate schools compared to 9 from the low group. All of these students were placed at the Alternative School or voluntarily withdrew, except for one student who was expelled in the 1974-75 academic year.

#### Teachers Views

One half of the sixteen randomly selected teachers from the high group and 44 per cent of their sixteen counterparts in the low group of junior and senior high schools surveyed indicated that discipline is a problem in their classes. There appears to be little difference between the high and low groups polled as to methods of discipline used. A majority of all the teachers (94 per cent) report they attempt to achieve uniformity in the use of disciplinary measures.

Twice as many teachers from the high group, 63 per cent compared to 31 per cent, in the low group, expressed the opinion that some teachers over-utilize disciplinary referrals. Among respondents from the high and low groups, respectively, there is a mean of 5.6 and 4.8 written referrals per month for disciplinary reasons. Most teachers of both groups stated they received adequate support and cooperation from the administration when referrals are made.



On the basis of information from teachers who completed questionnaires, it appears that those from the high group have taught an average of 13.4 years; their colleagues in the low group who have taught 6.9 years. Less than half the 32 interviewed teachers have had opportunities for staff development and training. But 63 per cent of the teachers from the high group have had some training in the area of coping with disciplinary problems compared with 31 per cent of the other group.

Only 16 per cent of 32 teachers interviewed indicated there is any special provision in the regular curriculum for dysfunctional youth to acquire the socialization skills they are lacking. A majority, 63 and 88 per cent from the low and high groups, respectively, expressed the opinion that the schools need to provide additional pupil personnel services to deal with dysfunctional youth needs. And 81 per cent of both groups stated that they believed that parents and community volunteers could assist the schools in providing for the needs of dysfunctional youth.

#### Class Size

According to school personnel, class size varies considerably. Business, advanced placement and shop classes seldom exceed 20 whereas basic education classes may total 30-35 students per class. In general, the average ratio of teachers to students in the twelve schools surveyed was 1:28.

#### Reduced School Staff

Approximately a sixth of the junior high schools' faculty were cut when the system economized this academic year and shortened the school day by one period. In addition, there was also a sizeable reduction of

elementary school counselors due to a decrease in categorical funds from the state. Twenty-eight elementary schools in the county do not receive any guidance and counseling services, including two of the elementary schools surveyed.

One elementary school respondent in a school without guidance and counseling service indicated a tremendous need for counseling at the elementary level. She explained that dysfunctional youth are often identifiable at a very early age. If each school had a full-time counselor to work with these students and their parents, the student might be able to change and grow before the behavior patterns became more ingrained. Educators estimate that 80 per cent of an individual's learning potential has been developed by the age of 8. Therefore, some students who are not provided with specialized training early in their school career, may never achieve their full potential for learning.

#### Counseling Needs

In general, respondents agreed that the County's students need more guidance counseling services than counselors can currently provide. This results from the fact that each counselor is responsible for counseling an average of 568 students. However, some counselors interviewed reported they can devote only 10 per cent or less of their time to counseling because they are also responsible for academic program planning, schedule changes, articulation with feeder schools, testing, and many clerical duties. Counselors in three schools, in an effort to reach more students, are doing more group counseling.

Table 5

Guidance Counselor/Student Ratio  
in Twelve Surveyed Schools

Carter Woodson Elementary	1:632	Ruth Upson Elementary	1:601
South San Jose Elementary	0:697	San Jose Elementary	0:603
Jefferson Davis Junior High	1:471	Joseph Stilwell Junior High	1:421
Kirby Smith Junior High	1:530	James W. Johnson Junior High	1:530
Paxon Senior High	1:582	William Raines Senior High	1:544
Sandalwood Senior High	1:525	Samuel Wolfson Senior High	1:663

All schools surveyed reported their students receive pupil personnel service from itinerant visiting teacher/social workers and psychologists from General Services.

Referral to Community Agencies

Respondents presented a range of responses concerning referral of dysfunctional youth to community agencies for additional services. These ranged from "never" to "often". In some schools, teachers, counselors, visiting teachers, deans, and principals all make referrals. In other schools respondents indicate they do not perceive referral to community agencies as part of their role. Some actually expressed a negative reaction to such referrals. Because there is no established referral system currently in operation, it was impossible to get an accurate account of referrals made since 1974-75.

Generally, respondents felt that there were adequate community services available to needy students. Several related problems in working with the Division of Youth Services. Two expressed the need for increased preventive services to work with "incorrigible youth" who have not been adjudicated. One counselor noted the need for free or inexpensive services for pregnancy testing which do not require parental consent. And two respondents stated they would like to see a drug program in the county similar to the SEED program in Fort Lauderdale.

## School Violence

Respondents from high suspension rate schools reported more incidents of assaults, school vandalism, racial and other types of school violence, such as bomb threats, than did respondents from schools with lower rates of reported suspensions. Approximately 60 per cent of both groups reported there was some disruption caused at school by non-students. This information is summarized in Table 6.

Table 6

Percent of Respondents Reporting  
Incidents of School Violence

	Assaults		School Vandalism		Racial Violence		Other School	Problems With
	74-75	75-76	74-75	75-76	74-75	75-76	Violence 75-76	Disruption at School by Non-Students
High Group	70%	82%	100%	100%	43%	35%	63%	59%
Low Group	56%	40%	77%	69%	11%	11%	57%	61%

The Security Department Activity Report 1974-75 indicates there were a total of 170 reported acts of school vandalism at those surveyed schools with high suspension rates, compared with 134 at the low group schools. However, the total amount of loss caused by damage and theft of school property amounted to \$14,890 for the low group which was higher than the \$11,831 loss sustained by the high group. Both groups reported recovery of approximately 8 per cent of this loss. There were four incidents of reported arson at high group schools compared to two at low group schools, one of which resulted in major damage.

### Parent Advisory Groups

Respondents from both groups indicated that parents serve in advisory roles on Local School Advisory Committees and also with PTA's and booster groups at specific schools. However, school personnel at two of the schools indicated that their Local School Advisory Committees are very small and function nominally.

There is widespread concern by school personnel for more input from parents. Many noted that communications and participation have lessened because distances between the home and school have increased due to busing. Many parents do not have transportation or telephones.

### Community Volunteers

There appears to be little difference in the utilization of community volunteers between the high and low groups. Volunteers are working in 8 surveyed schools, according to respondents. All four elementary schools have volunteers. One high and one low school reported have 15 "Teacher Moms" who work individually with underachievers 2-3 mornings a week.

The junior high schools surveyed are having the most difficulty recruiting volunteers. Only one low group school reported utilizing volunteers to make phone calls to check on absentee students. One of the junior high schools in the high group has actively attempted to recruit volunteers by sending out a mass mailing and also publicizing the need in the annual report with no success. An anti-volunteer stance was expressed at one school.

At the senior high level, two of the schools from the high suspension group reported that volunteers assist with schedule changes, do secretarial work in the guidance and dean's offices, serve in band and chorus booster groups, and tutor in the Learn To Read Program. One of the senior high schools in the low group does not utilize volunteer services, the other school has parent booster groups for band and chorus and parent volunteers to assist with schedule

changes during peak periods.

#### Community Use of School Facilities

Eight of the twelve schools are utilized for community classes after school hours. Three of the four schools that are not used are elementary schools which do not have classroom furniture large enough for older children and adults. Nine of the schools are utilized for community functions and ten for recreation.

#### Mobile Home Program

Five of the surveyed schools are involved in the Mobile Home Program. Respondents from three of the high group and two of the low group schools in the program agreed that citizens living on the school grounds are a deterrent to school vandalism.

#### C. Conclusion

In general, there appears to be little appreciable difference between the high and low groups of surveyed schools in terms of class size, teacher/student ratio, counselor/student ratio, input of parents and students, use of community volunteers, the use of school facilities by the community, and participation in the Mobile Home Program for school security. Teachers and school personnel from both groups try to intervene early in the disciplinary process and utilize the same disciplinary means. Teachers from both groups averaged five written referrals per month and reported they usually had cooperation and support from school administrators. There was agreement among school personnel and teachers of both groups that some teachers tend to over-utilize written referrals and that 60 per cent of teachers have not received in-service training.

Respondents agreed there is confusion among school personnel because

of recent attempts by the administration to modify School Board policy on suspension. This may be rectified this spring when the School Board re-considers the current policy on suspension.

There are two significant differences between the two randomly selected groups of teachers surveyed. The most notable is the fact that the sixteen teachers from the high group have taught 13.4 years compared to the 6.9 year average of the low group. Secondly, approximately two thirds of the high group of teachers, but only a third of the low group, indicated they have received training in coping with disciplinary problems.

However, one half of this high group of teachers indicated that discipline is a problem in their classes. This finding tends to support the contention by high and low group respondents that the variation in rates of suspension between schools may be attributed primarily to basic differences between student populations. A recent survey of suspensions in the system seems to corroborate this view.

In March, 1976, staff of the research and planning unit of Pupil Personnel Services surveyed 645 of the 2,588 secondary school suspensions which were reported during the first two months of the school year. The study revealed that there is a definite correlation between the economic status of a family and the children in that family experiencing difficulties in school. It also suggested that there is some degree of correlation between a student's I.Q. and his display of suspendable behavior. Among students in the sample group 39 per cent were failing in at least one course. Almost half of the sample group had been retained at least one grade.

This finding confirms that the existing programs in the public schools are not meeting the needs of many of the county's dysfunctional youth. These secondary school students, who continually experience failure in an academic

setting, act out their frustration by skipping classes, refusing to obey lawful directions or orders by school personnel, and fighting with another student.

These three of 45 possible offenses accounted for more than 53 per cent of the total number of suspensions during the first two months of this school year. It is distressing to note that only 16 per cent of the high and low group teachers felt there was any special provision in the regular curriculum for dysfunctional youth to acquire the socialization skills they are lacking.



# COMMUNITY RESOURCES SURVEY

## VI COMMUNITY RESOURCES SURVEY

One component of the study by the Office of Criminal Justice Planning included an analysis of the services of existing community resources. To do this, a telephone interview form was developed to assist in the overall assessment of the programs and services provided to dysfunctional, disturbed, or problematic youth by agencies which exist within Duval County.

The survey helped the Office of Criminal Justice Planning determine the relationship between the school system of Duval County and the social service agencies which work with school age children in the community. The agencies were carefully chosen from the Directory of Community Services 1975-76, the Community Services Guide Index, and from a list of participating agencies in the Youth Services Council. Specialized service programs of the school system and those agencies which do not interact with the schools were excluded.

A total of fifty-two (52) agencies were contacted by March 26, 1976. Answers to questions about agency functions, resources, eligibility criteria, referral procedures, and follow-up policies provided first hand information concerning the availability of programs and resources offered to the community and the extent to which they are used.

A number of questions were included in the survey to learn the extent to which schools are presently using the social services in the community. The following questions and the responses by community agency personnel are reported below:

Does your agency receive referrals from the public school system in Duval County?

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Yes	36	69%
No	<u>16</u>	<u>31%</u>
	52	100%

Respondents from community agencies who indicated referrals for service are made by the school system were then asked:

Would your agency be willing to accept additional referrals from the Duval County Public School System.

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Yes, with existing resources	30	83%
Yes, with additional funds	6	17%
No	<u>0</u>	<u>0%</u>
	36	100%

Respondents who reported no referrals from the school system were asked the following two questions:

Has your agency ever received referrals from the public school system?

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Yes	3	19%
No	<u>13</u>	<u>81%</u>
	16	100%

Would your agency be willing to accept referrals from the public school system in the future?

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Yes, with existing resources	9	56%
Yes, with additional funds	3	19%
No	2	12.5%
Not applicable	<u>2</u>	<u>12.5%</u>
	16	100%

Other issues dealt with in the survey included the services provided by the agencies and any eligibility criteria or requirements set forth by the agencies. It was found that many agencies render more than one service to clients. A great

range of services were provided, from mental health counseling to recreation; from services for the pregnant youth to vocational technical education for the handicapped. Further, each agency has some eligibility requirements which must be met by the clients.

Also included in the survey were questions regarding the provision of information about clients:

Does the school system provide adequate background information when making a referral?

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Yes	28	78%
No	7	19%
Not Applicable	<u>1</u>	<u>3%</u>
	36	100%

Here it was found that the nature of the services was a determinant in the amount of information exchanged between an agency and the schools.

Do you provide the schools with feedback concerning progress made by clients referred to your agency?

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Yes	26	72%
No	6	17%
Not Applicable	3	8%
No Reply	<u>1</u>	<u>3%</u>
	36	100%

Another important finding of the survey was to determine the overall relationship between the social science agencies and the school system on the basis of the following question:

How would you rate the overall relationship between your agency and the Duval

## County Public School System?

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Positive	33	92%
Neutral	2	5%
Negative	<u>1</u>	<u>3%</u>
	36	100%

### Conclusions:

The results of the telephone survey of 52 community service agencies revealed a strong interest in the needs of the community's youth and a desire and willingness to cooperate with the school system and to meet student needs.

The results indicated that these social service agencies (whether they have worked with the schools in the past or are presently working with them) are more than willing to provide their services to children of school age. Of the 52 agencies contacted, 48, (92%) replied that they were willing to accept new and/or additional referrals from the Duval County Public School System in the future. Further, it was found that of the 48 agencies willing to provide services, 39 (81%) currently possess the necessary resources to provide such services. With supplemental funding, the remaining 9 agencies (19%) would be capable of serving the public school system.

The Office of Criminal Justice Planning also attempted to determine process for referring clients to the service agencies from the public schools. Of the 36 agencies presently accepting referrals from the schools, it was found that there is no standardized referral policy in existence to facilitate the process. Eight of the agencies mentioned that the school social worker was instrumental, while the remaining 28 agencies (78%) noted alternative means by which they received referrals from the schools.

Clearly, the Duval County Public School System is unable to meet all the

needs of the problematic and dysfunctional youth within that system. It is apparent that new channels of communication must be opened between the school system and the social service community. A standardized referral process should also be enacted to simplify referrals. Only after such actions are taken can a more productive relationship exist between the Duval County Public School System and the social service agencies in the community.

NEEDS ANALYSIS  
AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## VII NEEDS ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### A. Suspensions and Drop-Outs

1. Voluntary Drop-Outs - Compulsory attendance laws exist in 49 states and the District of Columbia.<sup>16</sup> However, these states have given 35 reasons why children do not have to comply with compulsory attendance laws. States call these exemptions and use discretion in enforcing them. This means that states can choose not to serve a group of children by exempting them by statute. According to the Children's Defense Fund, "The purpose and effects of these statutory exemptions raise important issues in terms of children's rights to an education."<sup>17</sup>

Florida law prescribes "attendance of all pupils for at least one-hundred-eighty days of instruction or the equivalent as provided by law, and regulations of the state board shall be required, except for absence due to illness, or otherwise as provided by law."<sup>18</sup> However, according to the Children's Defense Fund, Florida also provides a number of statutory exemptions from compulsory attendance: (1) Official discretion, (2) Married, pregnant or parent, (3) Equivalent education, (4) Physical, mental or emotional disabilities, (5) Employment, and (6) Distance from school.<sup>19</sup> This practice of excluding students from regular school attendance is being challenged by child advocates across the country.

The Children's Defense Fund in its report entitled Children Out of School in America notes that, "states provide many reasons for excluding students from school but in reality "students, for the most part, are out of school not by choice but because they have been excluded. It is as if many school officials have decided that certain groups of children are beyond their responsibility and are expendable. Not only do they exclude those children, they frequently do so arbitrarily, discriminatorily and with impunity."<sup>20</sup>



"Overall, the U.S. Bureau of Census estimates that at any given time at least 2.4 million Americans between the ages of 7 and 19 belong to a floating army of non-enrollers, many of whom remain out of school until they pass into adulthood, according to U.S. News and World Report, March 22, 1976."<sup>21</sup>

Experts in the area of delinquency and youth crime urge that schools accept responsibility for those students for whom school is least rewarding since these students are required by law to be in school.<sup>22</sup>

There have been 5,491 voluntary drop-outs from the junior and senior high schools in Duval County for the period, August 25, 1975 to February 3, 1976. This number represents 10.4 percent of the total enrollment of the junior and senior high grades. These drop-outs include those students who transfer to private schools as well as those who may voluntarily leave more than once during the reporting period. This large number of drop-outs could have two serious effects on the school and the community: The FTE of student enrollment becomes lower and may decrease school income. Secondly, the Task Force Report on Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Crime states that "if the school system can develop programs for truants and potential drop outs it might avoid negative affects of processing offenders by the police and courts."<sup>23</sup> Therefore, specialized programs for drop-outs and truants could result in increased FTE funding to the schools as well as serving a crime prevention function. The school system should therefore consider developing programs/strategies to reduce the number of truants and voluntary drop-outs:

#### Recommendations

Alternative programs for students who are pregnant, present behavioral problems, are disinterested in school, or who have financial problems should

be developed to discourage these students from leaving school.

### Recommendations

To reduce the rate of voluntary drop-outs from junior and senior high schools, the public school system should discourage parents from permitting their children to drop-out of school. Students 16 years of age or older who do not need parental approval to drop out of school should be given increased counseling about the consequences of leaving school and should be encouraged to remain in school until they graduate.

2. Suspension, Expulsion and Due Process - In 1975 the U.S. Supreme Court reviewed the constitutionality of disciplinary exclusion from school. The court ruled in Gross V. Lopez that suspensions of up to ten days duration required at least a prior rudimentary hearing. A month later the court recognized the right of students to recover damages from school officials whose actions breached a students constitutional rights in Wood vs Strickland.<sup>24</sup> In other words, the court determined that due process requires that students be given oral and written notice of charges against them. Students must be given an explanation of the evidence against them and a chance to refute the charges.

In review of the Duval County School Board's policy on suspension it indicates that the use of the words shall suspend communicates that school staff must suspend students for violation of the policy. There is no distinction made between major or minor offenders or for acts that are violent compared with acts that are victimless. For this reason, it is not surprising that 63 per cent of principals indicated in a survey on suspensions, that the School Board policy on suspensions does not account for individual circumstances but instead requires automatic suspensions. Therefore, a need exists to build flexibility into the School Board policy on suspensions:

## Recommendations

The Duval County School Board should revise the policy on student suspension by substituting the words "may suspend" for the words "shall suspend" in order to provide school principals with descretion in handling disciplinary problems.

In March 1976 a study of suspensions in Duval County Schools, by staff of Pupil Personnel Services, found 75 per cent of the suspensions in the sample groups pertained to skipping, tobacco, insubordination, fighting, tardiness and leaving school. Although varied in seriousness, these offenses are treated uniformly by school policy. In fact, non-attendance, or truancy, is often treated by exclusion from school via suspension.

The Children's Defense Fund states that "suspension serves no purpose." The problem could have been delt with in ways other than expulsion."<sup>26</sup> In addition, the Task Force Report: Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Crime points out that "many of the schools efforts to cope with misbehaving students are ineffective largely because they seek changes in the student and overlook the faults of the system."<sup>27</sup> To develop a policy on suspension that differentiates between dangerous and non-dangerous offenses:

### Recommendations:

(1) The Duval County School Board policy on suspensions should be revised to differientate between the seriousness of student offenses. Students who commit acts of violence or law violations should be handled differently from students whose offenses are non-violent and non-law violations.

(2) Truancy and attendance related offenses should be handled by alternatives to suspension to assure that such behavior is not reinforced by exclusion from school.

3. Alternative to Suspension - School systems in Florida and the nation have developed numerous programs/strategies to provide alternatives to suspension. Such alternatives include: In-school suspension programs, specialized counseling and guidance for problematic students, parental involvement efforts, school work programs, alternative schools, individualized instruction, motivational classes and curriculum, and various combinations of these alternatives.

The Duval County school system operates an Alternative School for students who are unable to adjust to the regular classroom. However, in light of the high rate of suspensions in this system (7,857 students were suspended in 1974/75) and the questionable effectiveness of suspension as a disciplinary tool, it is suggested that:

Recommendation:

To reduce the rate of school suspensions in Duval County, school administrators should continue to develop alternatives to suspension which include, but are not limited to: in-school suspension, remedial services, social/psychological counseling, family involvement/counseling, and motivational therapy.\*

\* School administrators have recognized this need and are presently studying proposals to limit the number of student suspensions in the future.

## B. SCOPE OF SERVICES

### A. Guidance and Counseling

Serious problems exist in the area of providing adequate guidance and counseling services to all students, including dysfunctional youth in the county's schools. Currently, there are twenty-eight elementary schools which have no counseling services because of a reduction in state categorical funds last year. In addition, although the American School Counselor Association recommends a ratio of one counselor to 250 students, the schools surveyed more than doubled the recommended ratios. Thirdly, counselors, administrators, deans and teachers who were interviewed revealed that most of the guidance counselors' time is directed to guidance and clerical tasks and a very low percentage of time is spent in individual and group counseling.

At a recent workshop, counselors, administrators, teachers, parents and students of Duval County analyzed the basic weakness of counseling services. They stated that too little of the counselors' time was spent in group and individual counseling. Those in attendance questioned whether the mechanical aspects of scheduling could be handled by registrars and curriculum coordinators; and that class rankings, diploma lists, graduation requirements, organization of test booklets, schedule changes, and test score posting could be done by clerks or other paraprofessionals. Each of the groups in attendance at the conference indicated that an administration endorsed written description which redefined the counselor's role and function would alleviate problems.

According to the National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals,<sup>28</sup> the most important need of students which guidance

and counseling services can provide is access to a significant, concerned person who understands the needs and problems of students and can provide the range of support services needed to facilitate student growth in personal, vocational, academic, and social domains.

To accomplish this, the Commission urges the upgrading of counseling and other support services and the redefining of the counselor's role to achieve an action-oriented program of service delivery to maximize student potential.

Recommendations:

(1) The Duval County School System should expand support services (social work, psychological, remedial reading, guidance, etc.) to the maximum degree possible with priority given to the early elementary level.

(2) The school system should consider using paraprofessionals, clerical personnel and/or volunteers to do many of the mechanical tasks that do not require the expertise of a professional guidance counselor. The guidance counselors should, in time, devote a greater percentage of their work day to providing individual and group counseling and other direct services to students.

B. Special Education

Great strides have been made in providing additional special education services to students in the districts' public schools. This is evident when a comparison is made of the increase in enrollment from 77 students in 1964 to 10,546 in March, 1976, with an additional 1,459 students, determined eligible, awaiting placement; 810 of these students need speech and hearing services.

The State of Florida issues the guidelines which determine the criteria

for special education placement and funding. There is a thorough screening process with many safeguards to eliminate unnecessary placement.

There are, however, many students in regular classrooms who do not meet the state's criteria for special education placement but do not function effectively in a regular classroom. According to the Director of the Exceptional Child Program, many of the principles, procedures, and techniques which are utilized in teaching exceptional children are also effective with dysfunctional students. Individualized learning, more guidance, and emphasis on career or vocational education are necessary for those students who have experienced repeated failure in regular classrooms which have strong emphasis upon academic pursuits.

It is noteworthy that a cooperative agreement was approved in December which will permit personnel from the Exceptional Child Program to be involved in in-service training of regular classroom teachers. Attesting to the need for such training, 31 teachers of regular classrooms have enrolled in a University of North Florida course which focuses on special education techniques for the mildly disabled.

#### Recommendations:

School administration should continue and expand the efforts underway by the Exceptional Child Program to provide specialized in-service training to enable the classroom teachers to up-grade their abilities to work with the dysfunctional student.

#### C. Visiting Teacher/School Social Workers

There has been a considerable reduction of General Services VT/SSW staff since 1974-75. Despite this fact, efforts have been made by staff to provide social services when referrals for service are made. Currently, the ratio of General Services VT/SSW staff to students exceeds 1:4600 with

an average caseload of 555. The National Association of School Social Workers has recommended a caseload of 1:4500 for attendance services only; a ratio of 1:2500 or 3,000 for attendance and social services; and a ratio of 1:125 to 500 for direct service work. However, poor attendance is symptomatic of deeper problems which often require extensive social services.

School staff interviewed in the survey stressed the fact that cross-town busing has sharply reduced contact between schools and parents. Many parents do not have transportation or telephones. In these instances, the social worker may provide the only link between the school and the home. They also noted that efforts by the school to modify behavior of dysfunctional students generally succeed in proportion to the amount of positive input by parents. Intensive social services are needed to interpret the problem and enlist the support of parents.

The importance of parent involvement in the education process has long been stressed by educators. This was re-emphasized recently in a statement by Terrell H. Bell, U.S. Commissioner of Education, "The key to dramatic progress in American education is to gain a re-dedication to learning in the home," as reported in U.S. News and World Report, September 1, 1975.

#### Recommendation:

The ratio of VT/SSW staff should not exceed 1:2500 or 1:3000 for attendance follow-up and social services. A long range goal is to reduce the ratio to 1:500 for direct social work.

#### D. Psychological Services

During the 1974-75 school year, the general unit psychologists of the School Psychology Service Unit received 5,896 referrals; and testing was provided for 4,219 despite the fact that the unit was understaffed for part of the school year. Much of the testing is scheduled during school vacation periods.



However, the current psychologist-student ratio of approximately 1:6000 is double the ideal established by the National Association of School Psychologists and endorsed by the state association.

Under the present circumstances, psychologists have little time for other activities such as designing, supervising, and evaluating alternative classrooms.

Recommendation:

The Duval County School System should consider establishing as a goal, the National Association of School Psychologists recommended ratio of one school psychologist to 3,000 students.

B. Volunteers

Input from school administrators, teachers, and service personnel indicates many areas where the current resources within the system are unable to meet the existing needs. Areas needing additional assistance include, but are not limited to: guidance and counseling, dean's offices, social work services, nursing services, professional counseling/treatment service, para-professional services in the classrooms (to reduce teacher/student ratios), and counseling/treatment service to encourage cooperation with parents.

In light of the increasing costs, rising salaries, and limited financial resources, the possibility of increased funding to meet these needs in the near future is unlikely. The State of California is currently utilizing the services of 100,000 parent volunteers in classrooms which has drastically reduced the teacher/student ratio from 1:28 to 1:10, according to U.S. News and World Report, September 1, 1975.

Jacksonville has a reservoir of untapped talent in people of all ages, especially the retired population. Many have expertise which qualifies them to provide assistance in the above areas as volunteers, paid or unpaid.

To be effective, the National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals recommends that volunteers should be planned for, recruited with specific abilities in mind to meet felt needs within the system, trained and supervised to bring about their full participation.<sup>29</sup> A paid volunteer coordinator should be provided for efficient program operation and insurance plans should be extended to protect volunteers from any mishap experienced while participating in the program.

#### Recommendation

The school system should consider a system-wide assessment of student needs which could be met by recruiting qualified volunteers. A pilot program perhaps in cooperation with Volunteer Jax might then be implemented to recruit volunteers to fill specific needs. To be effective, volunteers should be trained, supervised, and insured. An evaluation should be made of the pilot project after a year to determine how the volunteer program should be explained/improved.

## C. SCHOOL CURRICULUM

### 1. School Curriculum and Socialization of Youth

The national Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals states that "Since deviant behavior is the result, in part, of learned socialization processes, the social environment, including the schools, can help to motivate either law-abiding or delinquent behavior." The Task Force Report: Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Crime recognizes that "all children and youth must be given those skills, attitudes and values that will enable them to perform adult activities and meet adult obligations." It further indicates the importance of curriculum by stating that public education must ensure the maximum development of general knowledge, intellectual competence, psychological stability, social skills, and social awareness so that each new generation will be enlightened, individually strong and responsible in civic affairs.<sup>31</sup>

### 2. Early Education Emphasis

Research in a number of related fields has produced significant findings which converge on the importance of emphasizing, utilizing, and shaping the formative pre-school and early elementary education years of our nations' children. Studies demonstrate that 50 per cent of a child's potential for learning is gained by age 5 and 80 per cent by age 8. Very early in life, individuals develop self concepts, use of language, role expectations, values, basic response patterns and strategies for relating to and evaluating other people and the environment.

Much of what happens to young children in their early years is outside the purview of public education. These basic differences in early childhood learning as described by the Coleman Study on Equality of Educational Opportunity,<sup>32</sup> the more recent study by Christopher Jencks<sup>33</sup>

on the same topic, and other studies indicate that schools, at best, have great difficulty in overcoming early detrimental influences. But, the earlier the intervention, the more likely the possibility of success in influencing a child's language development, behavior patterns, self control, and values. Attempts to intervene after the critical age of 10, according to Glasser, are much more likely to fail.<sup>34</sup>

The National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals recognized the importance of the social, educational, political, and economic problems confronting the nation's children and the schools when it stated:<sup>35</sup>

"A greater knowledge and sensitivity in both home and school must be developed to enable them together to create techniques and methods for reinforcing each other in the common enterprise of guaranteeing positive growth for children."

To do this, a team approach by teachers and support staff (school social workers, guidance counselors and psychologists) is needed, according to the Commission which has recommended greater emphasis on counseling and human development services in the primary and middle grades. Legislators of the State of California are allocating \$63 million this year and plan a \$35 million expansion for the Early Childhood Education Program<sup>36</sup> next year because the results thus far have been so encouraging.

In Duval County, there have been reductions this academic year of 28 elementary school counselors because state categorical funding was reduced. There was also a cut-back in visiting teacher/school social workers. These reductions in personnel, especially affecting service to elementary school students and their families, may indicate a very detrimental trend in the school system to reduce support service because it does not generate state funds. Since the County made no effort to supply funds to augment

the reduced categorical funds or to amortize the loss equitably, it would appear that the future of counseling services at the elementary level is ambiguous.

Recommendation:

The administration of the Duval County Public Schools should attempt to reallocate any additional future resources to provide for increased efforts at the early education level and should jealously guard against reduction of resources during these important early years because the weight of the research findings on early elementary efforts is overwhelming.

3. Literacy

Although a direct casual relationship between illiteracy and incarceration might be difficult to establish, it is no secret that illiteracy is present to a high degree among offenders. The National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals recognized that "illiteracy appears to be a factor in a complex of variables that indirectly leads to a youngster's frustration and rebellion against school and other authority."<sup>37</sup>

Dr. Dwight Allen, Dean of the School of Education, University of Massachusetts, strongly reinforced this view by stating emphatically in his address to the Governor's Task Force on Disruptive Youth: "...don't let anybody fool you, the kid who is speaking ghetto language and not standard English is not going to make it in this society...unless he reads and writes and speaks standard English, he is a second class citizen."<sup>38</sup>

William Glasser, in his book, *Schools Without Failure*, Stated, "...75 per cent of the children in the central city of Los Angeles do not achieve a satisfactory elementary education. That is, three out of every four children who leave elementary school have not achieved the standard sixth-grade skills in reading and arithmetic. These children will not

develop these skills in junior and senior high."<sup>39</sup> For this reason, Dr. Glasser feels that special programs beyond third grade have little effect on the child who has had difficulty ever since he entered school.<sup>40</sup> He contends, "...primary school is more important and that more money should be spent there getting children well started."<sup>41</sup> This would eliminate the crippling effects of failure, frustration, and rebellion against authority.

According to Dr. John Favors, principal of two highly successful Title I Schools in California, certain internal and external supports are necessary for the child to facilitate his ability to master reading, writing, and computational skills. These include: parental involvement and participation; respect for pupil self-esteem; administration support of innovation; and teacher accountability.<sup>42</sup>

The feasibility of establishing minimum standards of academic achievement for various grade levels is currently under advisement by the administration of the Duval County Public Schools. The following recommendation may provide additional input to proposed charges regarding local literacy standards.

Recommendation:

All elementary schools should implement programs which guarantee that every student who does not have a severe mental, emotional, or physical handicap, will acquire functional literacy in English before leaving the elementary school. Primary emphasis should be focused on efforts in grades 1-3 since students attain 80 per cent of their potential for learning by age 8.

#### 4. Alternative Classroom Education

The need for alternative classroom instruction was alluded to by the Task Force Report: Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Crime when it was suggested that, there be large scale planning efforts for secondary school straining in subprofessional and career-oriented jobs. The high rate of referrals and suspensions particularly in the categories of truancy and leaving school indicates that many students are not becoming positively involved in the traditional education process. For such students a need exists to provide alternative curriculum which is motivational and prepares the student for future employment.

##### Recommendation:

The school system should provide alternative classroom instruction, individualized teaching styles, alternative curriculum and motivational therapy to those students who are not responding to traditional classroom instruction and who do not presently qualify for existing alternative programs/services.

Vocational and career education offers another alternative to traditional academically-oriented classroom instruction. There appears to be a disproportionate balance between academic and vocational resources. It was estimated that sixty-eight per cent (68%) of the classes in Duval County's secondary schools are geared toward college preparatory training.\* However, an estimated 51.1% of Duval County high school graduates who graduated from Duval County schools during the 1974/75 school year have continued their education in college on either a full or part-time basis.\*\*

\* Based on a subjective analysis of class titles.

\*\* Based on follow-up of 2,854 students by Duval County School administration

There appears to be a need for increased career and vocationally-oriented instructional alternatives in Duval County. Students who are not responding to tradition education and students who do not have the academic ability to pursue a college education should be given preference in receiving alternative instruction.

To adequately meet the need of non-academically oriented students, the following recommendations are made:

Recommendations:

(1) Students with no desire and/or ability to pursue a bachelor's level degree should be placed in a vocationally oriented, job training track to assure that they are prepared for the labor force upon graduation from the public schools. To implement this objective, vocational education resources should be provided to meet the need of non-college preparatory students.

(2) Career awareness programs should be made available in as many of the 65 elementary schools which are presently without such programs as possible.



## D. EFFECTIVE CLASSROOM DISCIPLINE

### 1. The Role of the Classroom Teacher

The role of the classroom teacher in dealing with the dysfunctional/disruptive youth may be the most important factor in developing an effective prevention strategy.

The fact that the classroom teacher can have an effect on the number of disciplinary referrals was highlighted by a comment of a local school official when it was noted that, "eighty per cent (80%) of disciplinary referrals are made by ten per cent (10%) of the teachers." This indicates that some teachers are less capable of handling disciplinary problems than other teachers.

The influence of the teacher's attitude on student behavior and performance has been documented in an experiment by Rosenthal.<sup>45</sup> This study found that the teacher's perception of the child's abilities influenced the expectations that the teacher had for the students. The students whose teacher had high expectations performed better than a similar group of students whose teacher had low expectations.

Hiring professionally trained, and properly motivated teachers should be a priority goal in an effective crime prevention strategy. There is therefore, a need to develop, in all teachers, a high level of professional competence, particularly in the area of classroom management skills. The following recommendations are presented to meet this need:

#### Recommendations:

1. The Florida Legislature should consider adding classroom training as a prerequisite for obtaining Teacher Certification.

2. Teachers with a demonstrated inability to handle disciplinary problems in the classroom should be required, by the principal, to attend

in-service training sessions to improve their skills in classroom management. Classroom teachers who have a documented and irreversable deficiency in the area of classroom management should not be retained by the Duval County School System.

3. In-service training for school personnel should include cultural and class awareness training to aid in better understanding the behavior and attitudes of minority group and lower class students.

4. Each school principal should strive to develop a philosophy in their school which will instill in all teachers a positive attitude toward their students and a concern for their well-being. This philosophy should discourage the development of negative labeling practices and actions which could foster the development of negative self-concepts on the part of the students.

## 2. Class Size

Another important variable which effects classroom discipline is class size. Smaller classes increase the teachers ability to provide individualized instruction. Individualized instruction is particularly important for students with social/emotional problems which result in acting-out behavior.

The National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals recommend the development of special classes having a four-to-one or five-to-one student teacher ratio for students who require individualized attention.<sup>46</sup> With inflation increasing school budgets and no substantial revenue increase, the feasibility of the N.A.C. recommendation seems highly unrealistic. However, the general goal of limiting class size should be considered in light of the importance of individualized instruction for problematic students.

Recommendation:

Due to the importance of individualized instruction for problematic students, every effort should be made to decrease the size of classes in Duval County Schools.

3. Student Participation

Another variable which can effect classroom/school behavior focuses on student participation.

The National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals<sup>47</sup> has pointed out that schools unintentionally may encourage the development of negative self concepts, irresponsibility, deviance and delinquency by excluding students from participation in rule and decision making; using irrational and punitive practices and exercising too much authority over students.

To correct these inadequacies, the Commission recommends that students be involved in the democratic process as applied to school governance and enrolled in courses in legal and political education. "School students should understand the reasons for law and order in their surroundings; students should have a part in formulating the rules of behavior derived from these reasons; and these rules should be in accord with practices of justice and fairness that students encounter outside the school," according to the Commission.<sup>48</sup> This is not to imply that students should take on more responsibility than they are able or that responsible school authorities should abdicate their responsibilities. "School personnel must help set such rules for student behavior as are appropriate to forestall threats to safety or breaches of the peace, and to permit the continued availability of the resources offered by the school."<sup>49</sup> The Commission's recommendations provide for graduated involvement in participatory democracy, beginning with

classroom meetings at the elementary level, more involvement in upper grades, a legally valid written bill of rights for students which guarantees that students freedom will not be improperly curtailed, and a democratic constitution which provides for a continuing legislature or council of students.

Recommendation:

The school system should consider expanding the base of student input and student participation in the rule and decision-making processes in the school, beginning at the elementary level and increasing in the upper grades.

Implied in the concept of participatory democracy is the provision for redress of student grievances. Currently, the principal mediates in offenses between students and between students and staff. However, it would appear that there is an inherent conflict of roles since the principal disciplines students and may also act as a mediator of any grievances resulting from his decision and/or actions. A mechanism, therefore, appears needed to handle student grievances and instill in students the value of justice and fair play. Therefore, students should have a voice in electing a member of the school staff to serve as an ombudsman to mediate student grievances, advocate students' rights, and facilitate change within the system.

Recommendation:

Each secondary school should identify an adult staff member that would serve as a student ombudsman, to serve as an advocate for student needs and to mediate student grievances. The student ombudsman should be recommended and approved by the student population.

## E. EXTERNAL RELATIONS

### 1. Parents and The Schools

The importance of parental involvement in crime prevention should not be under-estimated.

"The first line of responsibility for socialization of children should rest with the parents. The home should be viewed as a learning environment. The home is the critical location where initial patterns of development will be imprinted. Fifty percent of the child's intelligence, as measured at age 17, develops between conception and age 4. Fifty percent of academic achievement that children will have attained at age 18 develops by the end of the third grade (age 9). Thirty-three percent of the variability at adolescence of intellectual interest, emotional dependence, and aggression, is predictable by age 2. At about age 5, as much as one-half of the variance at adolescence is predictable."

Little that the schools do can be effective and a great deal of what they do can be aborted if the home cannot be reconstituted to accommodate the school, or the school made to acknowledge the permanent influence of parents." 50

Parents should be made aware of the significance of their contribution to a child's overall education and development. To maximize the positive educational impact of parents and the home, parents should be provided with opportunities for training in parental skills and the use of the home as a positive learning environment.

Recommendation 6.1 of the National Advisory Commission of Criminal Justice Standards and Goals states that:

"The Commission recommends that educational authorities propose and adopt experimental and pilot projects to encourage selected neighborhood parents to become trained, qualified, and employed as teachers in the home.

A variety of methods and procedures could be adopted to attain this goal. Among these are the following:

1. Legislation to enable the establishment and continuation of home environment education as a permanent accessory to existing educational systems.

2. Programs designed to determine the most effective utilization of parents in educational projects in the home setting. A logical departure point for such projects would be to increase the level of active involvement of selected neighborhood parents in formal school operations. A carefully designed program of this sort would also benefit preschool children in the home.

3. The development of short-term and follow-through programs by teacher-training institutions to prepare parents for instructing their children.

4. The joint development by parents and school staffs of techniques and methods for using the home as a learning environment.

5. School district and State educational programs to train parents to use situations and materials in the home as a means of reinforcing the efforts of formal schooling.

6. Provision of instructional materials by school districts for use in home-teaching programs.

7. The expansion of programs to train and use parents as aides, assistants, and tutors in regular school classrooms." 51

Recommendation:

Parent effectiveness training should be made available through the community schools program and should be expanded to the maximum degree possible.

Over fifty percent of the schools in Duval County have organized Parent-Teacher Organizations (P.T.A.). Each school is also mandated to have a Local School Advisory Council (LSAC). However, some schools have inactive parent/citizens organizations and other schools have only marginally active organizations. The existing parent/citizen organizations serve as a logical starting place to expand the base of parental involvement with the schools.

Recommendation

School administrators should encourage the expansion of parental involvement through local PTA and Local School Advisory Council (LSAC) organizations. Parent/citizen organizations should be involved in school policy

making and operation. School administrators should also utilize parents in the role of volunteer to help meet manpower shortages in the schools.

Developing a close working relationship with the parent at an early stage in the child's development can help to maintain a high degree of parental involvement. Schools should strive to involve parents in their child's educational process when the child begins school.

Recommendation:

Elementary schools should develop or expand orientation programs for the parents of first grade or kindergarten children. Such orientation should stress the importance of parental involvement in the child's educational process, should encourage the parent to develop a learning environment in the home, and should orient the parent to the goals, resources, and capabilities of the public school system.

The school system holds an annual "open house". During "open house" parents are encouraged to come to their child's classes, meet the teacher and discuss goals and major learning objections for specific classes. Open house provides an excellent mechanism for parental involvement. Another mechanism to increase parental involvement in the education process system-wide are scheduled parent-teacher conferences once or twice a year. These conferences, especially at the elementary and junior high levels, provide an opportunity for parents to discuss the progress of each of the children in the family and to learn ways of assisting with problems.

Recommendation:

To increase parental involvement, schools should hold open house at least twice during the school year and should implement a system-wide plan to schedule parent-teacher conferences at regular intervals so that parents of elementary and junior high students have a opportunity to learn first hand about each student's progress and ways of assisting with problems.

## 2. Community Services Agencies

Data from the Community Services Survey indicated that 92.3% of the child serving agencies contacted would be willing to accept additional referrals from The Duval County School System. Of those 48 agencies 39 or 81% can accept additional referrals with existing resources. In light of the social/psychological service needs within the school system increased utilization of existing resources could help alleviate or reduce the level of needs within the school system.

### Recommendation:

To meet the differential needs of dysfunctional youth in the Duval County School System, the school system should make maximum use of existing community resources.

The overall relationship between the school system and the social services community was reported as 'positive' by a large percentage (92%) of the agencies surveyed which receive referrals from the schools (N=33). A majority of the service agencies responding (78%), believe that the school system provides adequate background information when making a referral. However, in assessing the referral policies of the various community agencies a variety of policies were indicated. Analysis tended to indicate the need for more uniformity and standardization in the referral of clients from the schools. Different referral processes can be expected as a result of the varied eligibility requirements of the youth serving agencies. However, the source of referrals from the schools should be clarified to facilitate the development of a simple and efficient referral process.

### Recommendation:

The Duval County School System should develop, in cooperation with the Social Service Community, a standardized and simplified referral policy.



Such policy should designate a particular person in each school who will act as a liaison between the school and community resources.

The Social Services Community should likewise communicate to the schools, basic information regarding each agency, i.e. eligibility practices, services provided; fee schedules, etc.

### 3. The General Community

Up-grading the levels of services provided in the schools and improving the quality of education can be aided by the interest and support of the public. Direct involvement of the community can help to meet specific needs through volunteer efforts and can aid in positive educational reform. This type of cooperative working relationship can also benefit the particular communities.

The National Advisory Council on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals claims that "A school that fails to provide opportunity for people to participate actively in meaningful educational programs, and in decision-making functions is obsolete and does not deserve continued support." 52 Such communities as Flint, Michigan and Worcester, Massachusetts have implemented strong community education programs. These communities have significantly revised their use of school facilities for a variety of community programs, services and activities.

The National Advisory Commission recommends the implementation of the community education program:

"The Commission recommends that school facilities be made available to the entire community as centers for human resources and adult education programs.

A variety of methods and procedures could be established to meet this goal. Among these are the following:

1. Scheduling of facilities on a 12-month, 7-day-a-week basis.
2. Elimination or amendment of archaic statutes or other legal prohibitions regarding use of school facilities; and

3. Extended use of cafeteria, libraries, vehicles equipment, and buildings by parents, community groups, and agencies." 53

A Model Schools Program in Columbia, S.C. used a comprehensive approach that resulted in a decrease in disciplinary problems at the target schools. One of the Model School Programs was to develop a mobile community education program. The objectives of this program include:

1. Provide impetus and leadership for community organization, which ultimately becomes the heart of the process.
2. Provide afternoon, evening, weekend and summer programs for people in a community. Programs are based on the desires and needs of people in a given community.
3. Involve the community in the school's daily instructional program. Volunteers are recruited and trained to help with tutoring, materials production and clerical assistance and to provide special programs and services not normally available to students.
4. Provide coordination of services, especially for youth. Schools have access to young people more than any other agency, and often more than the home; thus, any services provided should be coordinated with programs provided by the school." 54

The Community Education Program began in Duval County during the 1969-70 school year. There are presently 55 community education centers operating in Duval County Schools. The Community Education Program objective is to provide a community education program in each community that desires such a program. A community education coordinator is assigned to each community school center. The coordinator acts as facilitator to develop/coordinate the program and services desired by the community. The two major factors influencing the expansion of the Community Education Program are reported to be:

- (1) Funding - to expand program to additional schools, (2) Inter-agency Cooperation - to meet the needs of the particular community education schools.

Recommendation:

Community education should be recognized as a part of a comprehensive crime prevention strategy and given support and assistance by community agencies, the public, and the school system policy-makers.

# SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

### VIII SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study is to determine the general needs within the Duval County School System as they relate to crime prevention and the reduction in the number of dysfunctional pre-delinquent youth. A comparison is made between the existing Duval County School System and recognized standards/programs/concepts which relate to the schools role in crime prevention. The identification of needs is based on these comparisons. Recommendations are offered to reduce the level of need to bring the Duval County Schools closer to a desired level of functioning.

Many of the needs and recommendations are general in nature. Further analysis is warranted to determine the specific response to the identified needs.

The recommendations vary in terms of the feasibility of implementing such changes in the near future. Several recommendations are oriented toward changes in policy and/or philosophy. These should be viewed as totally feasible. Others will require substantial financial resources to implement and should be viewed as goals which will require a longer period of time to fully implement:

#### Recommendations:

(1) Alternative programs for students who are pregnant, present behavioral problems, are disinterested in school, or who have financial problems should be developed to discourage these students from leaving school.

(2) To reduce the rate of voluntary drop-outs from junior and senior high schools, the public school system should discourage parents from

permitting their children to drop-out of school. Students 16 years of age or older who do not need parental approval to drop out of school should be given increased counseling about the consequences of leaving school and should be encouraged to remain in school until they graduate.

(3) The Duval County School Board should revise the policy on student suspensions by substituting the words "may suspend" for the words "shall suspend" in order to provide school principals with discretion in handling disciplinary problems.

(4) The Duval County School Board policy on suspension should be revised to differentiate between the seriousness of student offenses. Students who commit acts of violence or law violations should be handled differently from students whose offenses are non-violent and non-law violations.

(5) Truancy and attendance related offenses should be handled by alternatives to suspension to assure that such behavior is not reinforced by exclusion from school.

(6) To reduce the rate of school suspensions in Duval County, school administrators should continue to develop alternatives to suspension which include, but are not limited to: in-school suspension, remedial services, social/psychological counseling, family involvement/counseling, and motivational therapy.

(7) The Duval County School System should expand support services (social work, psychological, remedial reading, guidance, etc.) to a maximum degree possible with priority given to the early elementary level.

(8) The school system should consider using paraprofessionals, clerical personnel and/or volunteers to do many of the mechanical tasks that do not require the expertise of a professional guidance counselor. The

guidance counselors should, in time, devote a greater percentage of their work day to providing individual and group counseling and other direct services to students.

(9) School administration should continue and expand the efforts underway by the Exceptional Child Program to provide specialized in-service training to enable the classroom teachers to upgrade their abilities to work with dysfunctional students.

(10) The ratio of VT/SSW staff should not exceed 1:2500 or 1:3000 for attendance follow-up and social services. A long range goal is to reduce the ratio to 1:500 for direct social work.

(11) The Duval County School System should consider establishing as a goal, the National Association of School Psychologists recommended ratio of one school psychologist to 3,000 students.

(12) The school system should consider a system-wide assessment of student needs which could be met by recruiting qualified volunteers. A pilot program perhaps in cooperation with Volunteer Jax might then be implemented to recruit volunteers to fill specific needs. To be effective, volunteers should be trained, supervised, and insured. An evaluation should be made of the pilot project after a year to determine how the volunteer program should be expanded/improved.

(13) The administration of the Duval County Public Schools should attempt to reallocate any additional future resources to provide for increased efforts at the early education level and should jealously guard against reduction of resources during these important early years.

(14) All elementary schools should implement programs which guarantee

that every student who does not have a severe mental, emotional, or physical handicap, will acquire functional literacy in English before leaving the elementary school. Primary emphasis should be focused on efforts in grades 1-3 since students attain 80 per cent of their potential for learning by age 8.

(15) The school system should provide alternative classroom instruction, individualized teaching styles, alternative curriculum and motivational therapy to those students who are not responding to traditional classroom instruction and who do not presently qualify for existing alternative programs/services.

(16) Students with no desire and/or ability to pursue a bachelor's level degree should be placed in a vocationally oriented, job training track to assure that they are prepared for the labor force upon graduation from the public schools. To implement this objective, vocational education resources should be provided to meet the need of non-college preparatory students.

(17) Career awareness programs should be made available in as many as possible of the 65 elementary schools which are presently without such programs.

(18) The Florida Legislature should consider adding classroom training as a prerequisite for obtaining Teacher Certification.

(19) Teachers with a demonstrated inability to handle disciplinary problems in the classroom should be required, by the principal, to attend in-service training sessions to improve their skills in classroom management. Classroom teachers who have a documented and irreversable deficiency in the area of classroom management should not be retained by the Duval County School System.



(20) In-service training for school personnel should include cultural and class awareness training to aid in better understanding the behavior and attitudes of minority group and lower class students.

(21) Each school principal should strive to develop a philosophy in their school which will instill in all teachers a positive attitude toward their students and a concern for their well-being. This philosophy should discourage the development of negative labeling practices and actions which could foster the development of negative self-concepts on the part of the students.

(22) Due to the importance of individualized instruction for problematic students, every effort should be made to decrease the size of classes in Duval County Schools.

(23) The school system should consider expanding the base of student input and student participation in the rule and decision-making processes in the school, beginning at the elementary level and increasing in the upper grades.

(24) Each secondary school should identify an adult staff member that would serve as a student ombudsman, to serve as an advocate for student needs and to mediate student grievances. The student ombudsman should be recommended and approved by the student population.

(25) Parent effectiveness training should be made available through the community schools program and should be expanded to the maximum degree possible.

(26) School administrators should encourage the expansion of parental involvement through local PTA and Local School Advisory Council (LSAC) organizations. Parent/citizen organizations should be involved in school policy making operations. School administrators should also utilize parents in the role of volunteers to help meet manpower shortages in the schools.

(27) Elementary schools should develop or expand orientation programs for the parents of first grade or kindergarten children. Such orientation should stress the importance of parental involvement in the child's educational process, should encourage the parent to develop a learning environment in the home, and should orient the parent to the goals, resources, and capabilities of the public school system.

(28) To increase parental involvement, schools should hold open house at least twice during the school year and should implement a system-wide plan to schedule parent-teacher conferences at regular intervals so that parents of elementary and junior high students have a opportunity to learn first hand about each student's progress and ways of assisting with problems.

(29) To meet the differential needs of dysfunctional youth in the Duval County School System, the school system should make maximum use of existing community resources.

(30) The Duval County School System should develop, in cooperation with the Social Service Community, a standardized and simplified referral policy. Such policy should designate a particular person in each school who will act as a liaison between the school and community resources. The Social Services Community should likewise communicate to the schools, basic information regarding each agency, i.e. eligibility practices, services provided; fee schedules, etc.

(31) Community education should be recognized as a part of a comprehensive crime prevention strategy and given support and assistance by community agencies, the public, and the school system policy-makers.

SECTION

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# APPENDIX

**CONTINUED**

**1 OF 2**



PERSONS FORMALLY INTERVIEWED  
(Jacksonville, Florida)

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title &amp; Organization</u>
1. Mr. Dick Bannigan	Supervisor, Career Awareness, Duval County Public Schools
2. Mr. Dean Blankenship	Associate Superintendent, Operations, Duval County School System
3. Mr. Earl Box	Assistant District Supervisor, Probation/Aftercare Division of Youth Services
4. Ms. Barbara Brooks	Director, Youth Resources Bureau
5. Ms. Carmen Caberro	Intake/Aftercare Services, Daniel Memorial Home for Children
6. Mr. Daniel Cook	Executive Director, Daniel Memorial Home for Children
7. Ms. Lucille Crysell	Supervisor, Guidance Counseling Services, Duval County Public Schools
8. Dr. Lorraine Daniels	Director, Project Hold University North Florida
9. Mr. James Geiger	President, Duval Teachers United
10. Dr. John T. Gunning	Administration, Duval County Public Schools
11. Mr. J. W. Heard	Director, School Safety, Duval County Public Schools
12. Mr. Silas Jones	Principal, Alternative School Duval County Public Schools
13. Dr. John Kennedy	Director, Pupil Personnel Services, Duval County Public Schools
14. Mr. Howard McDuffie	Principal, John E. Ford Career Education Center, Duval County Public Schools
15. Mr. Bill Marsh	Assistant Superintendent, Juvenile Detention Center
16. Mrs. Gene Miller	Member, Duval County School Board

17. Ms. Charlotte Minton Research Assistant, Jacksonville Council on Citizens Involvement
18. Ms. Julita Mitchell Director, Community Organizations Jacksonville Urban League
19. Mr. Adrian Oliver Supervisor, Pupil Welfare Services, Duval County Public Schools
20. Mr. Phillip Pruitt Counselor, John E. Ford Career Education Center, Duval County Public Schools
21. Hon. Mary Singleton State House of Representatives
22. Ms. Lisa Stienhouse Assistant to the Director, Pupil Personnel Services, Duval County Public Schools
23. Mr. Howard Sweet Administrator, Child Guidance Clinic
24. Dr. Ann Tillman Supervision, Professional Development, Duval County Public Schools
25. Ms. Harriet Thompson Supervisor, Psychological Services, Duval County Public Schools
26. Ms. Julia Wickersham Director, Exceptional Child Program, Duval County Public Schools
27. Dr. Joe Williams Special Programs, Duval County Public Schools
28. Officer M. Young Officer Friendly Program, Police Public Affairs Division

PERSONS INTERVIEWED OUTSIDE OF JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA

<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>
1. Mr. J. Alphonso	Metropolitan Planning Unit, Tampa, Florida
2. Mr. Jim Garcia	Metropolitan Planning Unit, Tampa, Florida
3. Mr. Joseph I. Grealy	Director, Internal Affairs Broward County Public Schools
4. Ms. Kaline Hassel	Counselor, Greco Junior High School, Hillsborough County Public Schools
5. Ms. Josephine Newton	ACSW, School Social Work Consultant, Student Services Section, Dept. of Education, Tallahassee, Florida
6. Mrs. Padgett	Dean of Girls, Greco Junior High, Hillsborough County Public Schools
7. Mr. Paul Rich	Supervisor, Special Education Hillsborough County Public Schools
8. Mr. Henry Verges	Principal, Natures Classroom Hillsborough County Public Schools

**END**

*7. 10. 1944*