Current discipline techniques and their effectiveness as implemented by elementary school principals

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Current discipline techniques and their effectiveness as implemented by elementary school principals

Abstract
Disruptive student behavior is a subject of increasing concern to educators and citizens throughout our society. The success and/or failure of teachers and other school officials is often judged in terms of their ability to maintain effective pupil control. The maintenance of order and discipline in the classroom is at the top of the list of problems which teachers consider to be their major difficulties. As the educational head of the elementary public school, the elementary principal is responsible to maintain good pupil discipline. The elementary principal may find it necessary to deal with problems during school hours and before or after school hours. The elementary principal is perhaps the single most influential person in the school with regard to the school's atmosphere or discipline. Since discipline is related to learning, and occupies a large percentage of the principal's time, the writer has chosen to explore the role of the principal as a disciplinarian.
CURRENT DISCIPLINE TECHNIQUES AND THEIR EFFECTIVENESS
AS IMPLEMENTED BY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

A Research Paper
Presented to
The Department of Educational Administration
and Counseling
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In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in Education

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Neal Hadden
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Chapter 1
THE PROBLEM

Introduction

Disruptive student behavior is a subject of increasing concern to educators and citizens throughout our society. The success and/or failure of teachers and other school officials is often judged in terms of their ability to maintain effective pupil control. The maintenance of order and discipline in the classroom is at the top of the list of problems which teachers consider to be their major difficulties.

As the educational head of the elementary public school, the elementary principal is responsible to maintain good pupil discipline. The elementary principal may find it necessary to deal with problems during school hours and before or after school hours.

The elementary principal is perhaps the single most influential person in the school with regard to the school's atmosphere or discipline. Since discipline is related to learning, and occupies a large percentage of the principal's time, the writer has chosen to explore the role of the principal as a disciplinarian.
Statement of the Problem

The purposes of this study were (1) to determine types of discipline techniques used by elementary principals, (2) to examine the effectiveness of each technique of discipline used by elementary principals, and (3) to examine the role of the principal as a disciplinarian.

Importance of the Study

Pupil discipline has frequently been cited as an important element in the maintenance of public schools. Each year the Gallup Poll has included the question: "What do you think are the biggest problems with which the public schools in this community must deal?" (1). Discipline has been the most frequently mentioned problem every year, but one, since the first poll in 1969. Finance was first in 1971 with 23%, while discipline went to third on the list with 14% of the population surveyed.

The problem of pupil discipline is a major concern to an elementary principal as it will require a portion of his time to deal with pupil discipline problems. Elsbree emphasized the importance of this problem when he stated:

Far from having been forgotten, discipline is one of the greatest concerns of principals and classroom teachers, although conceptions of the nature and application of disciplinary problems have been changing in significant
respects. Discipline is one of the most vexing problems of the beginning teacher; experienced teachers face it throughout their teaching careers; and it consumes appreciable portions of the principal's time when he is called on to handle "disciplinary cases" which the classroom teacher cannot handle alone (2).

It is important that the elementary principal be aware of the limitations and rights which have been established so that pupil discipline may be administered properly. The era when teachers and administrators had almost unlimited control over a student's behavior is quickly vanishing from memory. Since the early 1960's students and their parents have been requiring educators to defend their scope of control over student behavior in courts of law. Since 1975, the U. S. Supreme Court has rendered several decisions on disciplinary issues that have helped to clarify educators' legal rights in such matters as student suspension, expulsions, corporal punishment, and other legal issues.

Elementary principals need to be aware of contemporary discipline practices. An examination of commonly used disciplinary procedures of experienced elementary principals is included in this study. Also included in the study is how effective each method of discipline is perceived to be by the elementary principal.
Limitations of the Study

The study was limited to public elementary school principals in Area Education Agency #11. Literature used in the study for research purposes was limited to those books, periodicals, and pamphlets found in Iowa State University Library, and the author's personal collection.

Definition of Terms

Corporal punishment. Physical punishment inflicted upon an individual by another person.

Cumulative records. The file or folder which contains the total school records of a student.

Detention. Time spent by a student before or after school for inappropriate behavior.

Discipline. Those measures taken by teachers or administrators to prevent misconduct or to correct inappropriate behavior.

Elementary principal. The delegated agent of a school board to administer to the needs of the elementary school. In this study the term principal may be used as a substitute for the term elementary principal.

Expulsion. Dismissal of a pupil by the board for an indefinite amount of time.
In-school suspension. When a student is suspended from classes yet remains in the school building isolated from other students.

Suspension. The act of dismissing a pupil from school for a specific amount of time.
Chapter 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Student behavior that disrupts the classroom operation has been a constant concern of educators and citizens who take part in the educational planning process. The search for positive methods of bringing about constructive behavior on the part of students has been with us since the origins of formal education.

In dealing with the role of the elementary principal in establishing effective discipline in the public elementary school, the author has reviewed these three areas: contemporary views of discipline in the elementary school; the role of the principal as disciplinarian; and effectiveness of the disciplinary techniques used by elementary principals.

Contemporary Views of Discipline

No one can draw a blueprint for discipline. No standard model has been tested, proved and mass produced. Any practical approach, therefore, is going to appear over-simplified. Theories of discipline have changed many times since formal education began many years ago. The problems that spring from discipline are not a phenomena of contemporary society, but in fact have been around as long as the process of formal education. Schain saw it as a problem common to all teachers: "Classroom discipline is probably the most common problem for
all teachers in all grades and subjects - the teacher, the supervisor, and administrator, all of whom are concerned about the tone of the school and the effectiveness of the instructor" (3).

From this we gather that all school personnel are concerned about discipline. That brings about the question, What constitutes good discipline? McNair stated:

Good discipline maintains good working conditions. A class that responds willingly and quickly to routine requests of the teacher is a well-disciplined class. A teacher who can control noise when necessary - without pressure - has good discipline. Finally a teacher must put in considerable effort to establish and maintain good discipline. However, he will be less tired doing this than he would be from planning an inadequate program, coping with poor discipline, and then battling through to the end.

When the teacher has created and maintained a classroom atmosphere in which the child is accepted and loved as the person he is, and is thereby encouraged to find and express himself within the limitations of reasonable rules and regulations, you have good discipline (4).
Elsbree and McNally, quoting from other authors, saw discipline in slightly different light. They gave three different definitions to discipline:

1. The degree of order maintained in the classroom. This is "discipline we have."
2. The means employed to establish, maintain, or repair order in the classroom. This is "discipline we use."
3. The specific means we use to punish offenders. This is "discipline we inflict" (5).

It isn't surprising to find that an examination of literature reveals many different approaches to solving the problem of discipline. Hymes saw a new era in discipline. He stated:

The disciplines of children has been beset in recent years by many new and complicated considerations. The more we have learned about youngsters, the more ideas have changed. The more we have learned about the world we live in, the controls of totalitarianism, the freedoms of a complex democracy; the wonderful and horrible potentials of the future - the more our ideas about discipline have changed. These new elements add up to no one clear direction. Some seem to say "Be more gentle."
Some seem to urge more rigidity. Thoughtful people aware of the total picture often find themselves bemused into inaction.

All this is particularly hard on classroom teachers. Teachers above all must be thoughtful, but teachers can never escape action. No matter how complex the questions - "What should you do? When? How?" - when you live with children, these questions are insistent (6).

The most humanistic approach to discipline is the idea of self-discipline. Self-discipline is that discipline which involves the pupils in planning their own controls and training process.

Klausmeier and Dresden gave educators eight steps to follow which would foster the development of a mentally healthy self-disciplined child:

1. Learn to know each child as an individual.
2. Respect the individuality of each child.
4. Organize interesting and meaningful learning activities.
5. Set reasonable standards for achievement and conduct.
6. Evaluate on the basis of many growth factors.
7. Handle disruptive situations as they arise, and consider the use of punishment.

8. Keep yourself and the classroom cheerful.

Many schools think of discipline as a restrictive process. This is when pupil control is usually maintained by rules and regulations restricting pupils' behavior. When the rules are broken, the pupils' behavior is accompanied by penalties such as detention, expulsion, corporal punishment, or another type of action related to the severity of the misbehavior.

Recently two new approaches to school discipline have merged on the scene. They are Frederick Jones's Classroom Management Training Program in 1979 and Canter's Assertive Discipline in 1976. These two systems give teachers power to deal effectively and quickly with misbehavior.

In Jones's Classroom Management Training Program it calls upon teachers to do the following:

1. Establish work-related rules for the class.
2. Establish a back-up system with fellow teachers and building administrators.
3. Arrange room seating to allow the teacher to circulate freely and reach any student with the fewest possible steps.
4. Use body language to establish and maintain behavior limits.
5. Give help efficiently.
6. Use incentive systems.
7. Use positive reinforcement liberally with students who are behaving or working as they should (8).

Jones's system provides sound techniques for controlling behavior yet it is flexible enough to bend to the teacher's personality and style.

Lee Canter put together another approach to discipline entitled assertive discipline. Assertive discipline requires the consistent use of the following elements:

2. Enforcing limits on student behavior, without confrontation. Canter suggests the following:
   A. Recognize and operate on the basis that all students can behave properly.
   B. Use assertive response styles with students.
   C. Establish consequences for misbehavior and show consistently every time.
   D. Implement a system of positive consequences that accrue to individuals and groups for good behavior (9).
Assertive discipline is a straightforward approach, requiring little special training beyond determination to have good discipline.

The main point that must be remembered is that the purpose of disciplining a child is to help him become a better person. With this in mind, educators should be consistent and fair, restrain emotions, not publicize the wrong-doing, attempt to get the situation back to normal as soon as possible, and be careful to use only force when there is no other alternative.

The most important tool any teacher can have is an effective system of discipline. The teacher needs one that stops misbehavior, corrects it, fosters positive relationships, and builds self-discipline within each student. It is the teacher's responsibility, with the help of the elementary principal, to construct their own personal system of discipline. Their system should complement their personalities and philosophies while attending, at the same time, to realities of their students, schools, curricula, and communities.

The Role of the Principal as Disciplinarian

The rules for discipline are ultimately the responsibility of the administrator. The school's discipline is dependent, to a high degree, upon the attitude and
philosophy of the principal. The principal must be committed to helping people grow; this includes fellow administrators, teachers, students and parents. He must also have a deep conviction and belief in what he is doing. The principal's attitude and philosophy will persuade and influence the spirit and deportment of the entire staff and student body. The principal, indeed, is an important factor to discipline in the schools.

In addressing the idea of the principal's role in achieving a desirable disciplinary atmosphere, Vacca stated: "Relative to the effective use of discipline within the school, the principal holds the key. It is the task of the school principal to structure an atmosphere within the school wherein methods and procedures of discipline are particularized" (10).

Furthermore, when discussing the principal's role in establishing discipline, Elsbree and McNally stated: "The elementary school principal hold a crucial position in school organization. The quality of his leadership influences in large measure the effectiveness of the school environment in shaping the growth and development of children during formative years" (11).

After reviewing the literature it is the author's opinion that the principal's role in discipline is an integral part of
the job and difficult to separate from his total position as the educational leader of the school.

Symonds stressed the principal's responsibility for discipline when he stated:

Discipline in a school is a function of administration. The principal sets the pattern for the social relations in a school by his philosophy and interpretation of the meaning of education. . . . If the principal places great emphasis on order, system, and quiet in the classroom, it is the unusual teacher who is able to achieve these standards by which he is to be evaluated without using methods that are in a degree repressive (12).

In dealing with the factor of how teachers contribute to the discipline problems, the principal should be aware of adult behaviors that lead to student discipline problems. Froyen has identified six categories of adult behavior, when in a school situation, are closely related to poor discipline: "1) Inconsistent rule enforcement; 2) lack of classroom management skills; 3) failure to insist on compliance with school discipline actions; 4) inadequate follow-up of disciplinary actions; 5) insensitivity to student; 6) lack of reliable information about students and their behavior" (13).
Eight years earlier Duke spoke on the same subject and his six categories were: "1) Inconsistent rule enforcement, 2) noncompliance with discipline policies; 3) insensitivity; 4) lack of data; 5) lack of classroom management skills; 6) inadequate administration of disciplinary policy" (14).

Both authors identified the same six categories. The only difference being the order in which they ranked them.

The elementary principal has to set standards of conduct in the school to allow for individual teacher differences. What seems to be a behavior problem to one teacher may not be a problem to another. Many classroom activities demand different classroom atmospheres. The elementary principal must realize these differences and be able to recognize when noise or silence is constructive.

The idea that classroom control means complete quiet, regimentation, and unbending authority of the teacher has been generally rejected. What has developed is more of a "middle of the road" philosophy.

McDaniel stated that mutual respect is the quality essential for good classroom environment.

Students respect teachers who 1) know their subject; 2) approach their classes with a serious (but not humorless purpose; 3) conduct the class in an
efficient and businesslike way; 4) plan lessons thoroughly; 5) set reasonable, clearly understood, fairly administered standards of behavior and performance for the class; and 6) respect themselves and their role (15).

Since a principal cannot control each classroom himself, the only way he can effectively work is through his staff. If all members of his staff understand his rules of conduct and the goals he intends for them, the teachers will be willing to work in that direction.

It is necessary for a principal to establish a positive program of teacher orientation with regard to discipline. Teachers, when advised exactly what the administration expects, will generally become their own disciplinarians.

To develop a positive discipline program the principal should start during his in-service days prior to the beginning of school. At these programs, the administrator should be ready and willing to answer all questions raised by teachers. The administrator should be in control and, if he has planned well and acts reasonably, he may be able to sell his package.

When the meeting is over, the staff will be oriented to what the principal expects. A principal must, however, be careful that he doesn't talk a democratic atmosphere and
demand repressive control. He must also remember to back up his philosophical ideas throughout the year.

If a principal believes he can run the school from his office he is only fooling himself that he is an effective administrator. As principal, you are hired fundamentally to supervise classroom instruction.

Effective Discipline Techniques

The board of education may establish specific rules regarding proper discipline. Other times, when no rules are established, it is up to teachers and administrators to make and enforce reasonable rules to maintain the efficiency of the school.

The ability to predict or foresee every act of misconduct is an impossibility. It is virtually impossible for statutes to cover all aspects of school discipline. The courts, however, have considered many cases involving the legal exercise of control over pupils by schools. It is imperative that principals are aware of these court cases.

The elementary principal must learn that the punishment must be in proportion to the gravity of the offense. When disciplinary action has been properly motivated, the courts have supported the common law right to administer reasonable punishment.
Detention of pupils. Detention of pupils before or after school is a judicially approved method of punishment. It cannot, however, be assumed that the principal will always be legally right in actions of detention. A large number of student discipline cases have been decided against school authorities not on their merits but on the ground that procedural due process was inadequate.

The principal may detain a student after school for a reasonable length of time depending on the age of the child. For example, if a late detention subjects a pupil to hazards walking home, the detention might be held as an unreasonable act of punishment by the courts (16).

When private request for order fails, simply removing the disorderly student from the classroom activity can sometimes reduce unwanted behavior. Make sure the students know in advance that this is a possible consequence, and carry it out in a calm, business-like manner. Supervision of students removed from the classroom is necessary.

Corporal punishment. In April, 1977, the U. S. Supreme Court ruled that paddlings by school authorities do not violate the Eighth Amendment's ban against cruel and unusual punishment. Only three states - New Jersey, Massachusetts, and Maine - ban corporal punishment. Some individual school
districts, however, have decided on their own that physical punishment is bad punishment and disallow it (17).

Surveys reveal that most school systems approve the use of corporal punishment. Many teachers and administrators believe it works, and the majority of parents favor its use by school personnel (18).

These guidelines should be followed when administering corporal punishment:

1) Corporal punishment, generally, should not be used in a first offense situation.
2) The students should be aware of what misbehaviors could lead to corporal punishment.
3) Another adult witness should be present during the administration of corporal punishment.
4) The student should be told (in front of an adult witness) the reason for the punishment.
5) Upon request, the disciplinarian should inform the student's parents the reason for the punishment (19).

In the author's opinion, the use of corporal punishment is a high liability practice. What appears reasonable at the time of the offense may appear unreasonable in the courtroom. When administering corporal punishment the administrator should be calm, collected, and reasonable in the punishment administered. While no absolute standards have been
established, the courts have provided guidelines for the point at which corporal punishment becomes excessive or unreasonable. The guidelines are as follows:

1) More than three whacks with a paddle.
2) If the punishment leaves a bruise or mark.
3) If the punishment is applied anywhere else than the buttock.
4) If the punishment causes a temporary physical injury.
5) If the punishment causes any type of permanent injury (20).

_In-School Suspension._ This is a technique used by many principals as a way to isolate problem pupils from the rest of the school population. The student is suspended from classes yet remains in the school building isolated from other students. The student usually is able to complete assignments during this time.

_Suspension._ Suspensions are a temporary separation from an educational institution or the educational process. Courts have consistently ruled that educators have the right to suspend students from school. It is the procedure that frequently leads to litigation.

There are basically four types of suspension: short-term, long-term, indefinite, and extra-curricular activity suspensions (21).
A short-term suspension is an involuntary absence on the part of the pupil from school for a period of ten days or less. In 1975 the Supreme Court set out the minimum constitutional requirements in cases involving suspensions of ten or fewer days. Students must be given due process. A hearing may be informal and conducted quickly so as not to limit the school's disciplinary authority. Before a student can be suspended for ten days or less the following guidelines should be met:

1) The disciplinarian should inform the student as to what rule he or she broke.
2) The disciplinarian should tell the student how he or she became aware of the fact that the student broke the rule.
3) The disciplinarian should give the student an opportunity to tell his or her side of the story.
4) If there are contradicting facts, the disciplinarian should at least make a rudimentary check on the facts before imposing a suspension.
5) A student should not be suspended for more than ten days (22).

A long-term suspension is an involuntary absence from school by a pupil for more than ten days but for a specific period of time. To administer a long-term suspension the
courts feel a more formal hearing should be required for this type of suspension. The following steps are needed to comply with long-term suspensions:

1) The student and parents should be given written notice of the charges against the student.
2) A hearing date should be scheduled giving the student enough time to prepare a defense, but not too far in advance to damage his property interest.
3) At the hearing, the student has the right to be represented by legal counsel.
4) At the hearing, the student has the right to face his accusers.
5) At the hearing, the student has the right to cross-examine witnesses.
6) At the hearing, the student has the right to present a defense.
7) The student has the right to an impartial tribunal at the hearing.
8) The decision of the tribunal must be solely on the facets presented at the hearing (23).

Indefinite suspension is where a hearing is not practical. A student must be removed from the school atmosphere immediately, for his own well-being or the
well-being of others. Educators should feel free to utilize the indefinite suspension in an unusual situation.

Extra-curricular activity suspensions are treated the same as a suspension from school. Activities are considered an integral part of the educational program.

Expulsion. Expulsion is a permanent denial of the educational rights. It is generally accepted that the school board has the power to make reasonable rules and regulations governing student conduct. So when students consistently violate such rules, the courts have supported school boards' rights to permanently expel students from school.

Principals and teachers can only recommend students for expulsion. The courts generally hold this type of action to be a school board prerogative.

Expulsions are highly technical hearings. It is recommended that before any educator embarks on an expulsion hearing, local school board regulations and state laws should be closely examined for guidelines which should be followed.
Chapter 3

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

For the purpose of investigating the disciplinary techniques used by elementary principals, and how effective the principal perceived the techniques to be, a questionnaire was used. This questionnaire was sent to all public elementary principals in the Heartland Education Agency (Area 11), excluding Des Moines Public Schools. The questionnaire dealt with five specific disciplinary techniques: 1) detention; 2) corporal punishment; 3) in-school suspension; 4) suspension; and 5) expulsion. The questions asked whether or not each technique was used, who administered the discipline, and how effective it was determined to be.

It was inferred that most questionnaires would be returned by the deadline date. When the responses were received they were carefully compiled and studied. An examination of the responses showed what the most commonly used forms of discipline are, who administered them, and how effective the elementary principal perceived each to be.

The questionnaire also asked the principal their years of teaching, years in administration, and school population.

By using the information collected from the questionnaire it can be determined what percent of the principals use each discipline technique and who administers the discipline. Also
it can be determined how effective the principal perceived each technique to be. It can also be determined if school population, years as an administrator, and years as a teacher before becoming a principal had any effect on the type of discipline used, and how effective the principal perceived the discipline to be.
Chapter 4

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

A total of 72 questionnaires were distributed to elementary principals in Area Education Agency 11. Of this total 65 questionnaires were completed and returned for a response of 90%.

The data was analyzed by tallying the responses in the different areas: detention, corporal punishment, in-school suspension, suspension and expulsion. Comparisons were drawn between school population, years in administration and years in teaching before becoming an elementary principal.

The author divided the survey group into categories to make these comparisons. To determine if years of teaching before becoming an administrator had any affect on the type of discipline used, the following two categories were used:

GROUP A - Those administrators with less than eight years of teaching experience before becoming an administrator.

GROUP B - Those administrators with more than eight years of teaching experience before becoming an administrator.

To determine if years in administration had any effect on the type of discipline used, the following two categories were used:

GROUP A - Those administrators with thirteen and less years of experience in administration.
GROUP B - Those administrators with more than thirteen years of experience in administration.

Finally, to determine if school size had any affect on the type of discipline used, the following two categories were used:

GROUP A - Schools having an elementary population of under three hundred thirty-eight.

GROUP B - Schools having an elementary population of over three hundred thirty-eight.

These group descriptions will be repeated throughout the analysis. They will be referred to by Group A or Group B when analyzing the factors involved.

1. Detention

Detention is used as a discipline technique by 48 out of the 65 principals who responded to the survey for a total of 74%. Fifty-eight percent of the principals that responded stated that the teacher who administered the detention would also carry out this form of discipline. Eighty-three percent of the responding principals felt it was an effective form of discipline. Seventeen of the sixty-five principals surveyed for 26% do not use this form of discipline. Eleven of the seventeen for 65% stated transportation problems was their main reason for not using detention.
When years of teaching experience were analyzed for Group A, 30 of the 42 administrators surveyed, for 71%, used this form of discipline. Sixty-seven percent of this group had the teacher who administered the detention also enforce the penalty. Eighty-three percent felt it was an effective form of discipline.

Twelve of the forty-two Group A principals surveyed, for a total of 29%, did not use detention as a form of discipline. Eighty-three percent stated transportation problems as their main reason for not using detention.

In Group B, 18 of the 23 administrators surveyed, for a total of 78%, used this form of discipline. Fifty percent of the principals in this group carried out this form of discipline themselves. Eighty-three percent felt detention was an effective form of discipline.

Five of the 23 administrators surveyed in Group B, for a total of 22%, did not use detention as a form of discipline. Forty percent stated it was not necessary in their situation. Forty percent stated personal preference as their reason for not using detention.

When years of administration was compared to the use of detention, 21 of the 29 administrators surveyed, for a total of 72%, used detention in Group A. Fifty-two percent of this group had the teacher who administered the detention enforce
the penalty. In this group 67% felt it was an effective form of discipline.

In this same group, 28% of the principals do not use detention. Thirty-eight percent felt it wasn't necessary and 38% stated transportation problems as their main reason for not using detention.

In Group B, 27 of the 36 principals surveyed, for a total of 75%, used detention as a form of discipline. Sixty-three percent had the teacher who administered the detention enforce the penalty. Ninety-six percent of the administrators in this group felt it was an effective form of discipline.

Nine of the 36 administrators surveyed, for a total of 33%, did not use detention as a form of discipline. Eighty-nine percent of them stated transportation problems as their main reason for not using detention.

When school size was considered, 24 of the 36 administrators, for a total of 67% in Group A, used detention as a form of discipline. Seventy-five percent of the administrators stated the teacher who administered the detention also enforced the penalty. Eighty-three percent of the administrators felt it was an effective form of discipline.

In contrast, 12 of the 36 administrators surveyed in Group A, for a total of 33%, did not use detention as a form of discipline. Fifty-eight percent of the administrators
stated transportation problems as the main reason for not using detention. Twenty-five percent stated it was not necessary.

In Group B, 24 of the 29 administrators used detention as a form of discipline. The discipline was enforced by 42% of the teachers and 38% of the administrators. Eighty-three percent in this group felt detention was an effective form of discipline.

Five of the 29 administrators surveyed in Group B did not use detention as a form of discipline. Eighty percent of them stated transportation problems as their reason for not using detention as a form of discipline.

II. Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment is used as a discipline technique by 37 out of the 65 principals who responded to the survey for a total of 57%. Fifty-seven percent stated both the principal and the teacher were present when this form of discipline was carried out. Forty-one percent stated that they handled it themselves. Fifty-seven percent felt corporal punishment was an effective form of discipline.

Twenty-eight of the 65 principals surveyed for 43% did not use corporal punishment as a form of discipline. Personal preference was stated for the reason by 43% of the
administrators for not using corporal punishment, while 40% felt it wasn't necessary in their district.

When years of teaching experience were analyzed for Group A, 23 of the 42 administrators surveyed, for a total of 55%, used corporal punishment as a form of discipline. Sixty-five percent of this group administered this form of punishment with the teacher present. Thirty percent handled it themselves. Fifty-two percent felt corporal punishment was an effective form of discipline. Thirty percent felt corporal punishment was a very effective form of discipline.

Forty-five percent of Group A did not use corporal punishment as a form of discipline. Fifty-three percent stated it wasn't necessary while 32% stated personal preference as their reason for not using corporal punishment.

In Group B, 14 of the 23 principals surveyed, for a total of 61%, used corporal punishment as a form of discipline. Fifty-seven percent of the administrators handled the discipline themselves while 43% had the teacher present when this form of discipline was enforced. Sixty-four percent felt corporal punishment was an effective form of discipline. Twenty-nine percent felt corporal punishment was a very effective form of discipline.

Nine of the 23 administrators surveyed for 39% stated they did not use corporal punishment. Sixty-seven percent of
this group stated personal preference as their reason for not using it.

When years of administration was compared to the use of corporal punishment, 12 of the 29 administrators surveyed, for a total of 41%, used corporal punishment in Group A. Fifty-eight percent handled the discipline themselves, while 42% had the teacher present when corporal punishment was used. Fifty percent of the administrators felt corporal punishment was a very effective form of discipline while 40% stated it was just effective.

Fifty-nine percent of the administrators in Group A do not use corporal punishment as a discipline technique. Fifty-three percent stated personal preference, 24% felt it wasn't necessary, and 18% stated it was against board policy as reasons given for not using corporal punishment.

In Group B, 25 of the 36 administrators, for a total of 69%, used corporal punishment as a means of discipline. Sixty-four percent handled corporal punishment with the teacher present. Thirty-two percent of the administrators handled it themselves. Sixty-four percent felt corporal punishment was an effective form of discipline; while 20% felt it was very effective.
In Group B, 11 of the 36 administrators, for a total of 31%, stated they did not use corporal punishment as a form of discipline. Sixty-four percent felt it wasn't necessary.

When school size was considered, 19 of the 36, for a total of 53% in Group A administrators, stated that they used corporal punishment as a form of discipline. Forty-seven percent of the administrators handled the punishment by themselves; while forty-seven percent stated that they had the teacher present also. In Group A, 58% felt corporal punishment was an effective form of discipline; while 32% felt it was very effective.

Seventeen of the 36, for a total of 47% in this group, did not use corporal punishment as a discipline technique. Forty-one percent felt it wasn't necessary and forty-seven percent stated it was their own personal preference for not using corporal punishment.

In Group B, 18 of the 29 administrators, for a total of 62%, used corporal punishment as a discipline technique. Sixty-seven handled corporal punishment with a teacher present. Fifty-six percent felt corporal punishment was an effective form of discipline; while 28% felt corporal punishment was a very effective discipline technique.

In Group B, 11 of the 29 administrators, for a total of 38%, stated they did not use corporal punishment. Thirty-six
percent stated corporal punishment wasn't necessary and 36% stated it was their personal preference for not using this discipline technique.

III. In-School Suspension

In-school suspension was used as a discipline technique by 50 of the 65 principals who were surveyed for a total of 77%. Eighty-six percent stated that the principal handled the discipline themselves. Sixty percent felt in-school suspension was an effective form of discipline.

Fifteen of the 65 administrators surveyed, for a total of 23%, did not use in-school suspension as a discipline technique. Fifty-three percent stated that in-school suspension wasn't necessary in their school district.

When years of teaching experience was compared to the use of in-school suspension, it was found that 34 of the 42 administrators in Group A, for a total of 81%, used this form of discipline. Eighty-five percent handled the discipline themselves. Fifty-nine percent felt in-school suspension was an effective form of discipline and 35% felt in-school suspension was a very effective form of discipline.

Nineteen percent of the Group A principals stated that they did not use in-school suspension as a form of discipline. Thirty-eight percent stated it wasn't necessary and thirty-eight percent stated that in-school suspension took the
student away from valuable class time as reasons for not using this form of discipline.

In Group B sixteen of the 23 principals, for a total of 70%, used in-school suspension. Eighty-eight percent of the administrators handled in-school suspension themselves. Sixty-three percent felt it was an effective form of discipline.

Seven of the twenty-three administrators surveyed, for a total of 30%, stated they did not use in-school suspension. Seventy-one percent stated it was not necessary.

When years of administration was compared to the use of in-school suspension, 19 of the 29 administrators surveyed, for a total of 66%, used in-school suspension as a form of discipline in Group A. Ninety-five percent of the Group A administrators administered the discipline themselves. Forty-seven percent felt it was effective and fifty-three percent felt in-school suspension was a very effective form of discipline.

In-school suspension was not used by 34% of the Group A administrators. Sixty percent felt in-school suspension was not necessary in their school districts.

In Group B, 31 of the 36 principals, for a total of 86% of the administrators surveyed, used in-school suspension as a
form of discipline. Eighty-one percent handled this form of discipline themselves. Sixty-eight percent felt in-school suspension was an effective form of discipline.

Five of the 36 administrators in Group B, for 14%, did not use in-school suspension. Forty percent stated personal preference and 40% felt in-school suspension was not needed in their school district as reasons for not using this form of discipline.

When school size was considered, 26 of the 36, for a total of 72% in Group A administrators, used in-school suspension as a form of discipline. Seventy-seven percent of the administrators were responsible for carrying out the in-school suspension. Fifty-eight percent of the administrators in Group A felt this was an effective form of discipline and 35% felt in-school suspension was a very effective form of discipline.

Ten of the 36, for a total of 28% of the administrators in Group A, did not use in-school suspension as a discipline technique. Sixty percent felt it was not necessary to use in-school suspension in their district.

In Group B, 24 of the 29, for 83% of the administrators, used in-school suspension as a discipline technique. The in-school suspension was carried out by 96% of the principals. Sixty-three percent felt in-school suspension was an effective
form of discipline and 38% felt in-school suspension was a very effective form of discipline.

Five of the 29 principals, for 17% of Group B administrators, did not use in-school suspension. Forty percent felt it took the students away from valuable class time and 40% felt it was not necessary in their school district.

IV. Suspension

Suspension is used as a discipline technique by 31 of the 65 principals who were surveyed for a total of 48%. Ninety-seven percent stated the principal handled the suspension themselves. Fifty-eight percent felt suspension was an effective form of discipline.

Thirty-four of the 65 administrators surveyed, for a total of 52%, did not use suspension. Sixty-eight percent stated that suspension was not necessary in their school district.

When years of teaching experience was analyzed for Group A, 21 of the 42, for a total of 50% of the principals surveyed, used suspension as a form of discipline. Ninety-five percent of the administrators were responsible for carrying out this form of discipline. Seventy-one percent of the Group A administrators felt suspension was an effective form of discipline.
Fifty percent of the Group A administrators stated they did not use suspension as a discipline technique. Sixty-seven percent stated it was not necessary in their district.

In Group B, 10 of the 23, for 43% of the administrators, used suspension. One hundred percent of the administrators were responsible for carrying out this form of discipline. Fifty percent of the administrators in this group felt suspension was an effective form of discipline.

Suspension was not used by 43% of the administrators in Group B. Sixty-nine percent stated it wasn't necessary in their school district.

When years of administration was compared to the use of suspension for Group A, 11 of the 29 principals surveyed for 38%, used this form of discipline. One hundred percent of the administrators were responsible for carrying out this form of discipline. Sixty-four percent felt suspension was an effective discipline technique.

Suspension was not used by 62% of the principals in Group A. Sixty-three percent felt suspension wasn't necessary in their district.

When years of administration was compared to the use of suspension for Group B, 20 of the 36 principals surveyed for 56%, used suspension as a form of discipline. Ninety-five percent of the principals were responsible for carrying out
this form of discipline. Fifty-five percent felt suspension was a very effective discipline technique; while 25% felt it was an effective technique.

Suspension was not used by 16 of the 36 principals for 44% in Group B. Sixty-three percent stated it wasn't necessary in their school district.

When school size was considered, 14 of the 36 for a total of 39% of the Group A administrators, used suspension as a form of discipline. Ninety-three percent of the principals handled this form of discipline themselves. Seventy-one percent felt suspension was an effective form of discipline.

Suspension was not used by 22 of the 36 for 61% of Group A administrators. Sixty-eight percent felt suspension was not necessary in their school district.

In Group B, 17 of the 29, for 59% of the administrators, used suspension as a discipline technique. One hundred percent of the administrators carried out this form of discipline themselves. Forty-seven percent felt suspension was an effective discipline technique. Thirty-five percent stated that suspension was a very effective discipline technique.

Suspension was not used by 12 of the 29 administrators surveyed for 41% in Group B. Fifty percent of them stated suspension wasn't necessary in their school district. Twenty-five percent stated personal preference for not using suspension.
V. Expulsion

Expulsion was used as a discipline technique by 12 of the 65 principals who were surveyed for a total of 18%. Eighty-three percent stated the school board, which included the principal and the superintendent, were responsible for enforcing this form of discipline. Forty-two percent of the administrators surveyed felt expulsion was a very effective discipline technique. Thirty-three percent felt expulsion was an effective technique.

Fifty-three of the sixty-five administrators surveyed, for 82%, did not use expulsion as a discipline technique. Fifty-eight percent stated expulsion wasn't necessary in their school district. Twenty-one percent stated it was their own personal preference not to use expulsion.

When years of teaching experience were analyzed for Group A, 10 of the 42, for 24%, used expulsion as a discipline technique. Eighty percent stated that the school board, which included the principal and the superintendent, were responsible to carry the expulsion out. Fifty percent of the administrators felt expulsion was a very effective technique, 20% felt it was effective and 20% stated it had little effectiveness as a disciplinary technique.
Expulsion was not used by 32 of the 42 principals for 76% of Group A. Sixty-nine percent stated expulsion wasn't necessary in their school district.

In Group B, 2 of the 23 principals for 9% used expulsion. One hundred percent stated that the school board, which included the principal and the superintendent, were responsible to carry out the expulsion. One hundred percent of the administrators felt expulsion was an effective discipline technique.

Expulsion was not used by 21 of the 23 principals for 91% of Group B. Forty-three percent felt expulsion wasn't necessary in their school district and 33% stated it was their personal preference for not using expulsion.

When years of administration was compared to the use of expulsion, 5 of the 29 administrators surveyed, for a total of 17%, used expulsion in Group A. Eighty percent stated that the school board, which included the principal and the superintendent, were responsible for carrying out the expulsion. Forty percent of the Group A administrators felt expulsion was a very effective technique and 40% felt expulsion was an effective discipline technique.

In this same group, 83% of the principals do not use expulsion. Sixty-three percent felt expulsion wasn't
necessary in their school district and 17% stated personal preference for not using expulsion.

In Group B, 7 of the 36 principals surveyed, for a total of 19%, used expulsion as a form of discipline. Eighty-six percent stated the school board, which included the principal and the superintendent, were responsible for carrying out this form of discipline. Forty-three percent felt expulsion was a very effective form of discipline and 29% stated expulsion was an effective form of discipline.

Expulsion was not used by 81% of the principals in this group. Fifty-five percent felt expulsion wasn't necessary in their school district and 24% stated personal preference as reasons for not using expulsion.

When school size was considered, 9 of the 36 administrators for a total of 25% in Group A, used expulsion as a form of discipline. Seventy-seven percent stated the school board, which included the principal and the superintendent, were responsible for enforcing this form of discipline. Forty-four percent felt expulsion was an effective form of discipline and 33% stated it was a very effective disciplinary technique.

In contrast, 27 of the 36 administrators surveyed in Group A for a total of 75%, did not use expulsion as a form of discipline. Sixty-three percent of the administrators stated
expulsion was not necessary in their school district and 26% stated it was their personal preference as reasons for not using expulsion.

In Group B, 3 of the 29 administrators used expulsion as a form of discipline. One hundred percent stated the school board, which included the principal and the superintendent, were responsible for enforcing the expulsion. Sixty-seven percent of the administrators surveyed felt expulsion was a very effective form of discipline.

Expulsion was not used by 26 of the 29 administrators for 86% of Group B. Fifty-four percent stated expulsion was not necessary in their school district.

**Background Information**

When analyzing background information the following data was found:

1. Principals in the study had been teachers from 2 to 24 years with the average length being 8 years before going into administration.

2. Principals in the study had been administrators from 2 to 33 years with the average length being 13 years as a principal.

3. Forty-eight out of 65, or 74% of the districts in the survey, have an established discipline policy.
4. Schools in the study ranged in size from 70 to 910 students with the average size being 337 students.
Chapter 5
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to explore the four different issues concerning discipline. The author examined contemporary views of discipline, identified methods of discipline used by contemporary elementary principals, who administered the discipline technique, and how effective the principal perceived the discipline to be.

In looking at the disciplinary techniques, the administration, and the effectiveness of the different disciplinary techniques used by some contemporary elementary principals, a questionnaire was devised and distributed to those principals in the Heartland Education Agency (Area 11), excluding Des Moines Public Schools. The questionnaire included questions dealing with detention, corporal punishment, in-school suspension, suspension, and expulsion.

When analyzing the data on the use of detention the following conclusions were reached:

1. Principals with above average size schools tend to use detention more frequently than below average sized schools. Principals with above and below years of teaching experience and years in administration had no effect on whether or not detention was used.
2. Principals with below average years of teaching experience had the teacher who administered the detention also enforce the detention. Principals with above average years of teaching experience handled the detention themselves. Principals with above average size schools tend to equally distribute the administration of the detention between the principal and the teacher who administered the detention. Principals with below average size schools tend to have the teacher who administered the detention enforce the penalty. Principals with above and below years in administration had no effect on how detention was administered.

3. Principals with above average years in administration felt detention was an effective form of discipline. Principals with below average years in administration tend to distribute detention between being effective and very effective. Principals with above and below years of teaching experience, and school size had no effect on the effectiveness of detention as a form of discipline.

When analyzing the data on the use of corporal punishment the following conclusions were made:

1. Principals with above average years in administration tend to use corporal punishment more than principals with below average years in administration. Principals with above
and below years of teaching experience and school size had no effect on whether or not corporal punishment was used.

2. Principals with below average years of experience in teaching tend to have the principal handle the corporal punishment with the teacher present, while principals with above average years of teaching tend to have the principal handle the punishment themselves. Principals with above average years in administration tend to administer corporal punishment with the teacher present. However, principals with below average years in administration tend to handle corporal punishment themselves. Principals with above average size schools tend to have the principal with a teacher present handle the corporal punishment, while principals of below average size schools equally distributed the responsibility between the principal alone and the principal with a teacher present.

3. Principals with above average years in administration felt corporal punishment was an effective form of discipline. However, principals with below average years in administration felt corporal punishment was more equally distributed between very effective and an effective form of discipline. Principals above and below average years of teaching experience and school size had no effect on the effectiveness of corporal punishment.
When analyzing the data on the use of in-school suspension the following conclusions were reached:

1. Principals with above average years in administration tend to use in-school suspension more than principals with below average years in administration. Principals with above and below average years of teaching and size of school had no effect on whether or not in-school suspension was used.

2. Principals with above and below average years of teaching, years in administration, and school size had no effect on who administered the in-school suspension.

3. Principals with above average years in administration felt in-school suspension was an effective form of discipline. Principals with below average years in administration equally distributed the effectiveness of in-school suspension between very effective and effective. Principals with above and below average years in teaching and size of school had no effect on the effectiveness of in-school suspension.

When analyzing the data on the use of suspension the following conclusions were reached:

1. Principals with above average years in administration tend to use suspension more than those principals with below average years in administration.
Principals of above average school size tend to use suspension more than principals of below average size schools. Principals with above and below average years of teaching had no effect on whether or not suspension was used.

2. Principals with above and below average years of teaching, years in administration, and school size had no effect on who administered the suspension.

3. Principals with below average years of teaching felt suspension was an effective form of discipline. However, principals with above average years of teaching tend to think suspension was a very effective form of discipline. Principals with below average sized schools felt suspension was an effective form of discipline. However, principals with above average size schools distribute the effectiveness between very effective and an effective way to discipline. Principals with above and below average years in administration had no effect on how effective suspension was.

When analyzing the data on the use of expulsion the following conclusions were reached:

1. Principals with below average years in teaching tend to use expulsion more than those with above average years in teaching. Principals with below average school size tend to use expulsion more than those principals of above average school size. Principals with above and below average years in
administration had no effect on whether or not expulsion was used.

2. Principals with above and below average years in teaching, years in administration, and size of school had no effect on who administered the expulsion.

3. Principals with above average years in teaching felt expulsion was an effective form of discipline; while principals of below average years in teaching felt expulsion was a very effective discipline technique. Principals in above average size schools tend to think expulsion was very effective; while those of below average size schools tend to distribute evenly the effectiveness of expulsion between very effective and effective. Principals with above and below average years in administration had no effect on the effectiveness of expulsion as a discipline technique.

This study made it possible to examine the disciplinary techniques used, the administration of each technique, and how effective each technique was perceived to be by the elementary principal in Area 11 schools. Hopefully the sample of principals is representative of the majority of elementary principals in this area. It is a recommendation of the writer that for more accuracy in a study of this type a larger sampling be used.
This study was limited to five major techniques of discipline. Elementary principals are by no means limited to these techniques. A future study investigating other techniques of discipline than the ones specified in this paper is recommended. Also sending the questionnaire to elementary teachers could prove to be valuable information.

A study of this kind cannot hope to cover all of the areas of discipline and disciplinary techniques. It is the opinion of the researcher that the disciplinary measures discussed in this paper are the primary techniques used by many elementary principals.
REFERENCES


(18) McCall, R. B. "Tips on Discipline in the Classroom". Pamphlet from The Boys Town Center, Boys Town, NE.


(22) Connors, E. J. "Student discipline and the law". Bloomington, IN.: Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation, p. 16.

Dear __________:

In the process of completing my Masters of Arts in Education Degree from the University of Northern Iowa, I am doing a study of how elementary principals in Area 11 use specific disciplinary techniques.

I have looked at five specific techniques in my study: 1) detention; 2) corporal punishment; 3) in-school suspension; 4) suspension from school; and 5) expulsion. The enclosed questionnaire deals with how you use each of these disciplinary measures and how effective you perceive each to be within your school district.

I would appreciate very much if you would take a few minutes to complete the questionnaire and return it to me before March 9. All responses will be kept confidential. A stamped self-addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience. Thank you for your time.

Educationally yours,

Neal E. Hadden
APPENDIX B

Please answer the following questions about some commonly used discipline techniques and their effectiveness:

I. DETENTION

Do you use detention as a means of discipline? Yes No

If your answer is yes, go to number 2 and 3 below.
If your answer is no, go to number 1 only.

1. If no, indicate your reason why not.
   
   A. Personal preference
   B. Not necessary
   C. Board policy
   D. Transportation problems
   E. Other ________________________

2. Who is responsible for carrying out this form of discipline?

   A. Principal
   B. Teacher who administered detention
   C. Teacher on rotating basis
   D. Other ________________________

II. CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Do you use corporal punishment as a means of discipline? Yes No

If your answer is yes, go to number 2 and 3 below.
If your answer is no, go to number 1 only.

1. If no, indicate your reason why not.

   A. Personal preference
   B. Not necessary
   C. Board policy
   D. Other ________________________
2. Who is responsible for carrying out this form of discipline?
   A. Principal
   B. Principal with teacher present
   C. Teacher
   D. Teacher with principal present
   E. Other _______________________

3. How effective do you feel this type of discipline is?
   A. Very effective
   B. Effective
   C. Little effectiveness
   D. Ineffective

III. IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

Do you use in-school suspension as a means of discipline? 
Yes  No

If your answer is yes, go to number 2 and 3 below. 
If your answer is no, go to number 1 only.

1. If no, indicate your reason why not.
   A. Personal preference
   B. Not necessary
   C. Board policy
   D. Takes the student away from valuable class time
   E. Other _______________________

2. Who is responsible for carrying out this form of discipline?
   A. Principal
   B. Teacher
   C. Other _______________________

3. How effective do you feel this type of discipline is?
   A. Very effective
   B. Effective
   C. Little effectiveness
   D. Ineffective
IV. SUSPENSION

Do you use suspension from school as a means of discipline? Yes No

If your answer is yes, go to number 2 and 3 below.
If your answer is no, go to number 1 only.

1. If no, indicate your reason why not.
   A. Personal preference
   B. Not necessary
   C. Board policy
   D. Other ____________________________

2. Who is responsible for carrying out this form of discipline?
   A. Principal
   B. Superintendent
   C. School Board - includes principal and superintendent
   D. Other ____________________________

3. How effective do you feel this type of discipline is?
   A. Very effective
   B. Effective
   C. Little effectiveness
   D. Ineffective

V. EXPULSION

Do you use expulsion from school as a means of discipline? Yes No

If your answer is yes, go to number 2 and 3 below.
If your answer is no, go to number 1 only.

1. If no, indicate your reason why not.
   A. Personal preference
   B. Not necessary
   C. Board policy
   D. Other ____________________________
2. Who is responsible for carrying out this form of discipline?
   A. Principal
   B. Superintendent
   C. School Board - includes principal and superintendent
   D. Other _______________________

3. How effective do you feel this type of discipline is?
   A. Very effective
   B. Effective
   C. Little effectiveness
   D. Ineffective

BACKGROUND INFORMATION
1. How long were you a teacher before becoming a principal?
   _______________________

2. How long have you been an elementary principal?
   _______________________

3. Does your district have an established discipline policy?
   _______________________

4. How many students are enrolled in your school?
   _______________________

THANK YOU