August 1980

The Development, Implementation and Evaluation of an Alternative Approach to Learning for Selected Students

Luvenia C. Hartman
East Tennessee State University

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THE DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION
OF AN ALTERNATIVE APPROACH TO LEARNING
FOR SELECTED STUDENTS

A Dissertation
Presented to
the Faculty of the Department of Supervision and Administration
East Tennessee State University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

by
Carol Hartman
August 1980
APPROVAL

This is to certify that the Advanced Graduate Committee of

CAROL HARTMAN

met on the

_______11th______________ day of _______July__________, 1980.

The committee read and examined her dissertation, supervised her
defense of it in an oral examination, and decided to recommend that her
study be submitted to the Graduate Council and the Dean of the School of
Graduate Studies in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
Doctor of Education in Educational Administration.

__________________________
Chairman, Advanced Graduate Committee

__________________________
Dean, School of Graduate Studies

Signed on behalf of
the Graduate Council

ii
Abstract

THE DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION
OF AN ALTERNATIVE APPROACH TO LEARNING
FOR SELECTED STUDENTS

by

Carol Hartman

The problem of the study was to describe the development, implementation and evaluation of an alternative approach to learning for a selected group of students within the Kingsport, Tennessee City School System.

Literature was reviewed, researched, and presented the reader with information concerning options in public education.

An intact group consisting of 11 students enrolled in the Alternative School, Kingsport, Tennessee from August, 1979 through May, 1980 comprised the sample of the study. The students' ages ranged from 12 years through 15 years. All students were exposed to the program design.

A program was developed which was based upon objectives designed to meet the needs of the subjects involved in the study. The objectives and needs were established through psychological and vocational evaluations (pretests). Upon admittance to the program, an M-Team meeting was held in order to develop an individualized educational plan (IEP) for each student. At the conclusion of the year the subjects were posttested to determine the effects of the program on learning. Eight hypotheses were tested for significance at the .05 level. The t-test for non-independent samples was utilized to analyze the data collected in the study.

Analyses of the data indicated that: (a) there was positive change in students' attitudes toward school, but not at the .05 level of significance; (b) a positive but not statistically significant change of attitude toward self developed; (c) the mean gain scores of academic achievement were found to be lower than predicted; (d) the number of discipline referrals was significantly decreased at the conclusion of the program; (e) there was a significant reduction in suspensions/expulsions during the second semester; (f) there was a significant decrease in absenteeism during the second semester; (g) a positive, but not statistically significant, improvement was found in the analysis of data of potential dropouts; and (h) the subjects in the study showed a significant mean gain score of the potential salable skills.

Based upon the findings of this study, the following conclusions were drawn: (a) evidence based on the study indicated that the Alternative
School program in Kingsport, Tennessee should be continued; (b) a significant gain in the mastery of academic skills appears to be of secondary importance in alternative programs for disruptive students; (c) token economies permit students to meet requirements for success; (d) support services constitute an important element in ensuring student success; (e) alternative programs which contain career orientation provide a sense of responsibility and dignity to the students; (f) alternative programs provide supportive, accepting environments where students may succeed; (g) students appear to be happier in alternative schools and have more positive attitudes toward school; (h) alternative programs offer the expelled or suspended student an opportunity to continue his/her formal education; and (i) more positive attitudes are demonstrated by lower absentee rates, lower discipline referral rates and lower dropout rates. Recommendations for future research were offered.
DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the staff of the Alternative School—David Ashby, Sherry Autry, Mary Pierce, and Bill Ward—who were involved in the development and implementation of the alternative program, 1979-1980, and to Charles E. Goode, psychologist, who helped the staff grow in knowledge and learn to appreciate the alternative student.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A deep sense of appreciation and gratitude is extended to those individuals who gave of their time, expertise, and friendship during an important period in my life. A special expression of gratitude is extended to Dr. Robert G. Shepard who chaired my study when Dr. William Evernden became ill. His motivation and guidance made the conclusion of the study feasible. Gratitude is also extended to the remaining members of my Doctoral Committee: Dr. William L. Evernden; Dr. Flora C. Joy; Dr. William T. Acuff; and Dr. Floyd H. Edwards for their time and assistance.

Finally, many thanks go to Diana Rogers, a fellow student, for her friendship and support which made the completion of my Doctoral program more endurable.

vi
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relevant Academic Skills</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admission Review Board</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multidisciplinary Team (M-Team)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Development</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On Task</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On Time</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buying Privileges</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class-School Meetings</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I-Messages</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective Listening</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency Count</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Register</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypotheses</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 4</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 8</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedures</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization of the Study</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Brief History of the Alternative School Movement</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for Alternatives within the Public Educational System</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Characteristics of Alternatives</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Development of Optional Alternative Schools in the United States</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Parkway Plan</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative Schools in Berkeley, California</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro High School</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Dothan Model</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problems Encountered in Alternative School Programs</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of Alternative School Programs</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criticism of Alternative School Programs</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential Impact of Alternative Schools</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Impact</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum Impact</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Evaluation Impact</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. METHODOLOGY</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of the Study</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection of Subjects</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design of the Study</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruments Used</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Jewish Employment and Vocational Service (JEVS)</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Social and Prevocational Information Battery (SPIB)</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Valpar Whole Body Range of Motion</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT)</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Demos D Scale</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Martinek-Zaichkowsky Self-Concept Scale (M-ZSCS)</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency Count</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Register</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypotheses of the Study</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 1</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 2</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 3</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 4</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 5</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 6</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 7</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 8</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedures</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referral</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Admission</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Placement</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Program Schedule</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Behavior Modification Strategy</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis of the Data</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. PRESENTATION OF DATA AND ANALYSIS OF THE FINDINGS</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation of Data</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis of Findings</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusions</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multidisciplinary Team Report Sample</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Student Profile - Multidisciplinary Team Report - IEP Sample</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Token Form Sample</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contingency Schedule Form Sample</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Request for Psychological Evaluation Form Sample</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Consent Form I Sample</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VITA</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Demographic Representation of Students Enrolled in the Alternative Program</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Demographic Data Concerning Race and Social Class Standing of Subjects</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Analysis of Students' Attitudes Toward School When Pretest Scores Were Compared to Posttest Scores</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Analysis of Students' Self-Concept When Pretest Scores Were Compared to Posttest Scores</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Analysis of Academic Achievement Measured in Months Gained When Pretest Scores Were Compared to Posttest Scores of the WRAT</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Analysis of Discipline Referrals Between First and Second Semesters</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Analysis of Suspensions/Expulsions Between First and Second Semesters</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Analysis of Days Absent Between First and Second Semesters</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Analysis of Potential Dropouts When Pretest Scores Were Compared to Posttest Scores</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Analyses of Total Potential Vocational Salable Skills</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

During recent years a new concept has emerged in public education. In many communities students, parents, and teachers are accepting and even demanding options in public schooling. Alternative public schools are currently operating in several hundred communities in over 30 states and Canada, while many more communities are exploring, planning and developing alternative public schools. Many have not come as a response to the educational crisis, but have been developed to meet specific needs within their local communities (Smith, 1973).

Although the need for alternative public schools can be justified on psychological grounds alone, no single program could ever meet the needs of all students (Smith, 1973). Different people learn in different ways: many learn well in traditional academic public schools; some learn better in the differently structured environment of the open school; others learn better in a school developed on principles of behavior modification; and, still others learn better in an individualized, continuous progress school. The psychology of education, the study of how people learn, is less than a century old. Complete theories of learning and corresponding theories of instruction are yet to be developed, but today's educators acknowledge that some children learn well in one setting while others learn well in a different setting (Smith, Barr, & Burke, 1974).

Because most alternative schools are developed as a response to an individual community's educational concern rather than as a response to
the mainstream of the profession to a concern for the national interest, the alternatives represent the first evolutionary thrust in public education at the grass roots level (Smith, 1973). This study emphasized one school system's attempt to provide an alternative for students who could not function in a traditional academic program.

The Problem

The Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study was to develop, implement, and evaluate an alternative approach to learning for selected students within the Kingsport, Tennessee City School System.

The Significance of the Study

The study was significant for the following reasons:

1. The conclusions of this study may determine if a significant difference in the learning of selected students was a result of their enrollment in the Alternative School.

2. The results of this study may prove an alternative to meeting the needs of selected students who were unable to succeed in the school system's present program.

3. The results of the study may encourage other school systems to offer alternative programs to meet student needs.

The Purpose of the Study

The need for programs which offer options to the regular classroom in public education has been recognized in recent years. Attempts are being made to meet this need through the development and implementation
of various types of alternatives. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to describe the development, implementation, and evaluation of an alternative approach to learning for a selected group of students within the Kingsport, Tennessee City School System.

If a positive correlation could be found between an increase in learning for the behaviorally disordered and/or socially maladjusted students, as measured by pre- and posttests, then other public school systems may be encouraged to offer alternative programs to meet this type of students' needs. The program may also be used to develop guidelines for offering possible educational options.

If a significant correlation is not achieved, the current alternative offered to the behaviorally disordered and/or socially maladjusted student, within the Kingsport, Tennessee City School System would need to be re-assessed.

Limitations

The following limitations were imposed on this study:

1. The participants in the study were limited to the students enrolled in the Alternative School, located in the Ross N. Robinson Middle School, Kingsport, Tennessee.

2. The duration of the program for this study was the 1979-1980 school year.

3. The content of the school program was limited to those aspects deemed most relevant to the participants based upon a review of literature, the opinion of educators, and pretests.

4. The related literature was limited due to the nature of alternative programs.
Assumptions

In conducting the study, the following assumptions were made:

1. A lack of sufficient time was granted to test the effectiveness of the program.

2. There was a need for the study.

3. Student progress and improvement were results of being enrolled in the Alternative School's program.

4. There would be a carry-over effect when students returned to regular classrooms or entered the world of work.

5. It was assumed that the Kingsport City School System had exhausted all other attempts to meet the needs of a student before he/she was recommended to the Alternative School.

6. The related literature had been adequately covered.

Definitions of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the following definitions were considered relevant:

Alternative School

While most alternative public schools have been developed within a community in response to particular local needs, most of the schools shared the following characteristics: (1) They provide options within public education for students, parents, and teachers. (2) They have a commitment to be more responsive to some need within these communities than the conventional schools. (3) They usually have a more comprehensive set of goals and objectives than their conventional counterparts.
(4) They are more flexible and therefore more responsive to planned evaluation and change. The alternatives have been designed to rely on feedback and formative evaluation as educators develop and modify their programs. (5) They attempt to be more humane to students and teachers. Also, they tend to be smaller than conventional schools, with fewer rules and constraints for students and teachers. In many cases, the alternative has been designed to eliminate those aspects of the culture of the school which are most unpleasant and oppressive to its clientele (Smith, 1973).

**Behaviorally Disordered**

A child has one or more of the following characteristics: (1) An inability to learn which cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors; (2) an inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers; (3) inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances; (4) a general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression; and (5) a tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems (Tennessee State Board of Education, 1979).

**Selected Students**

These were the students who were identified as behaviorally disordered and/or socially maladjusted and were enrolled in the Alternative School program in Kingsport, Tennessee, during the school year of August, 1979 through May, 1980.

**Individualized Education Program (IEP)**

An IEP is a written individual education plan which includes
documentation of decisions reached about annual goals, short-term instructional objectives, content, implementation and evaluation (Tennessee State Board of Education, 1979).

**Appropriate Behavior**

Appropriate behavior is considered any behavior meeting society's expectations for the situation in which it is observed.

**Completion of Task**

The student must complete a work assignment within a specified time period.

**Independent Living Skills**

Development of independent living skills required training in skills necessary to the realization of an independent, productive life within the structure of family living.

**Social Skills**

The development of socially acceptable behavior to others within the work, play (relaxation), and school environment.

**Potential Vocational Salable Skills**

The development of the prevocational skills, which prepare students for vocationally oriented activities.

**Relevant Academic Skills**

The development of the basic skills of reading, writing, and mathematics using materials and content which have personal meaning for the alternative student.
Admission Review Board

A board which consists of the referring principal or a designee, director of special education, and director of the Alternative School. The purpose of the board is to review the recorded behavior of a student and recommend testing for the appropriate program.

Multidisciplinary Team (M-Team)

A minimum of three appropriate professional personnel, in addition to the parents of the child (the child when appropriate), whose function is to examine and evaluate all data relevant to making a decision about the special needs of the child (Tennessee State Board of Education, 1979).

Staff Development

A staff meets two or more hours a week with a licensed psychologist for training in appropriate techniques for working with the behaviorally disordered and/or socially maladjusted student.

On Task

The student performs the assigned work or activity in the order of presentation on his or her schedule.

On Time

Each student should be in a pre-designated area, ready to go "on task."

Buying Privileges

Token money could buy extra lunch items, field trips for swimming, skating, bowling, horseback riding, and short trips to the Fort Henry Mall, or out of school time.
Class-School Meetings

Students and teachers meet one or more times a week to discuss school-wide problems and possible solutions. The topics may be beliefs, values, wishes, complaints, plans, questions, and suggestions.

I-Messages

I-Messages express what the sender is feeling and describe how another's behavior makes one feel. I-Messages are specific and require a non-judgmental attitude (Curwin & Mendler, 1980).

Reflective Listening

An indication that one is trying to understand the feeling and the meaning of the student's message (Dinkmeyer & McKay, 1976).

Learning

Includes attitude toward school, attitude toward self, academic achievement, discipline referrals, number of suspensions/expulsions, attendance, number of school dropouts, and potential vocational salable skills.

Frequency Count

The number of times a behavior or event occurs within a specified period of time.

School Register

A record of the number of school days a student is present or absent.
Hypotheses

The following hypotheses, stated in the declarative format, were considered relevant to the study:

Hypothesis 1

There will be a significant difference in the mean scores of students' attitudes toward school when the pretest scores are compared to the posttest scores as measured by the Demos D Scale.

Hypothesis 2

There will be a significant difference in the pre- and posttest mean scores of the students' attitudes toward self as measured by the Martinek-Zaichkowsky Self-Concept Scale.

Hypothesis 3

There will be a significant difference in the mean scores of the students' academic achievement as measured by the pretests and the posttests on the Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT).

Hypothesis 4

There will be a significant reduction in the number of discipline referrals when the frequency count for discipline referrals of the first semester is compared to the frequency count for discipline referrals of the second semester.

Hypothesis 5

There will be a significant reduction in the number of suspensions/expulsions when the frequency count for suspensions/expulsions of the
first semester is compared to the frequency count for suspensions/expulsions of the second semester.

**Hypothesis 6**

There will be a significant decrease in the number of days absent as recorded in the school register when the first semester is compared to the second semester.

**Hypothesis 7**

There will be a significant difference in the mean scores of the pretest on the number of possible school dropouts when compared to the mean score of the posttests as measured by the Demos D Scale.

**Hypothesis 8**

There will be a significant difference in the pretest and posttest mean scores of potential vocational salable skills as measured by the Jewish Employment and Vocational Service (JEVS), the Social and Pre-vocational Information Battery (SPIB), and the Valpar Whole Body Range of Motion.

**Procedures**

The 11 subjects selected for the study were students enrolled in the alternative program for the school year August, 1979 through May, 1980. Due to the organizational structure of the school, they were considered an intact experimental group.

The content of the program was developed on the basis of information derived from a review of literature related to alternative innovative approaches for the behaviorally disordered or socially maladjusted
student. Since behavior seemed to influence student learning in school, a behavior modification system was organized to provide students an opportunity for success.

With parental approval, pretests were administered in an attempt to measure academic achievement, attitude toward self, attitude toward school, and potential vocational salable skills. Using the tests as a basis, an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) was developed for each student. Changes in programs were made when students demonstrated efficiency in task completion as perceived by the teachers.

The test instruments chosen for the study included the Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT), the Demos D Scale, the Martinek-Zaichskowsky (M-Z) Self-Concept Scale, the Jewish Employment Vocational Service (JEVS), the Social Prevocational Information Battery (SPIB), and the Valpar Whole Body Range of Motion.

During the duration of the program which was the regular school year, 1979-1980, the curriculum focused on four primary areas: social skills, prevocational training skills, independent skills, and personally relevant academic skills.

Data were collected and analyzed through pretest and posttest mean scores and by utilization of the t-test for non-independent samples. The frequency counts of observed behaviors for discipline referrals, suspensions/expulsions, and number of days absent were calculated and the t-test for non-independent samples was used to test for significance.

**Organization of the Study**

The study was organized into five chapters:
Chapter 1 includes the introduction, the statement of the problem, the significance of the study, the purpose of this study, the limitations, the assumptions, the definition of terms, the hypotheses, the procedures, and the organization of the study.

Chapter 2 contains the review of literature and research related to the problem statement.

Chapter 3 contains the methods and procedures utilized in the study.

Chapter 4 contains the presentation of the data and the analysis of the findings.

In Chapter 5, the summary, conclusions, and recommendations of the study are presented.
Chapter 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In a world in which political and religious institutions are in constant flux, it seems only reasonable that education and schooling should also be fluid. In recent years, we have seen emerge a wide range of innovative efforts in education, efforts designed to improve schooling for all American young people (Geogrades, Hilde, & Macaulay, 1977). Among the most significant efforts, perhaps, has been the development of alternative schools.

One of the hallmarks of a democratic society is the choices its citizens have in important aspects of their daily lives. Citizens in a democracy should expect to have options in government and politics, products and markets, vocations and avocations, places of residence and of work, entertainment and recreation, medical and dental care, transportation, the mass media, education, religion, and social and family life. In all but one of these areas, options are available in our society. In the past, nearly 85% of the families in this country had no choice in their child's elementary and secondary education (Smith, Barr, & Burke, 1974). The remaining 15% of American families have always had alternatives to public school. Diverse private schools, from Montessori to preparatory school, Summerhill to military, religious to secular, ethnic to multicultural, have provided choices for those who could afford it. For the masses, however, the only choice was and is a rather uniform public school system (Fantini, 1973).

Too many students fail in these uniform public school systems and
too many are hampered by the intense pressure to succeed in school.
Students fail in cities and suburbs, from elementary school to graduate
school; they fail in the crowded, impoverished central city where many
experts admit that education is defeated (Glasser, 1969).

A Brief History of the Alternative School Movement

The historical roots of the movement are closely tied to various
humanistic expressions that have dominated the minds and actions of
individuals in the Western Hemisphere. John Goodlad (1975) served a
reminder that the movement which educators called alternatives to schools
was a movement which was clearly part of a larger social struggle for
human emancipation, and yet which was also perceived by some as only
another effort in a long-term struggle to make schools more humane.

Throughout the history of American education, alternatives to public
school curriculum have always existed for a small segment of our
population—alternatives for those who could afford preparatory school,
described alternatives of the colonial period.

By the middle of the eighteenth century, the
educational institutions of provincial America constituted
a fascinating kaleidoscope of endless diversity and change.
. . . Furthermore, given the continued novelty and
unprecedented opportunity of the provincial situation,
all these institutions, each in its own way, found them­
selves wrestling in their day-to-day operations with
insistent problems of stability and change. . . . The
combinations and permutations were legion, and the larger
and more heterogenous the community, the greater the
latitude and diversity of the arrangements (of schools).
Cremin (1970) further reported that by 1800 three general types of schools would be available in the well populated areas: the English or Common School, the Latin Grammar School, and the academy. Parochial schools were common, and included Anglican, Catholic, Huguenot, Lutheran, Presbyterian, and Quaker religions. Evening schools were available in some communities to meet the needs of children and youth who worked; and individual teachers were available in reading, writing, ciphering, grammar, bookkeeping, embroidery, and many other subjects.

In spite of the diversity of schools, however, schooling was relatively unimportant to the average citizen in colonial America. The majority of the American adults at the time of the Revolution had never attended school. It was not until 1860 that the concept of universal elementary education was accepted to the point where the majority of states had established public elementary schools. By 1900, more than half of the states had compulsory attendance laws, and universal compulsory elementary schooling was assured (Smith, Barr, & Burke, 1976).

The development of compulsory secondary education required an even longer period of time. Throughout the nineteenth century youth had the option of full-time employment. However, public high schools were available for only a small minority. In 1915, records indicated that one in every four students was enrolled in a secondary school, with 10% of the total school population graduating with a high school diploma. By 1940, universal compulsory secondary education was firmly established with a majority of the 14 to 17 year old population enrolled in high school, and with nearly 40% graduating. Gradually, the diverse array of educational options was reduced to one monolithic public school system.
with little choice beyond scattered parochial schools for the individual family (Borton, 1974).

Need for Alternatives within the Public Educational System

Several authors have stated that there is a definite place for alternatives in public education. Mario D. Fantini (1973) advocated the inclusion of alternatives for four reasons. First, he felt that the provision for alternative programs enabled education to take a step towards humanization. Alternatives provide choices for students and parents and, therefore, should encourage humanistic education. Second, Fantini suggested that alternatives allow educators to approach another often mentioned educational goal, that of individualization. Third, he affirmed that the implementation of alternative programs was politically sound for any school district. One of the apparent characteristics of most alternative programs was the democratic operation of the program. As a result, it appeared that parents and students had a greater opportunity for involvement in the operation of the school. Finally, Fantini indicated that a properly organized alternative program should not cost more to operate than a traditional program. He viewed the implementation of alternatives as a redistribution of existing resources in a more equitable manner.

Terry Borton (1974) viewed alternatives as filling in gaps in our existing, traditional programs. These gaps, in his opinion, were predominantly in the area of affective education, and he believed that the thrust of all alternative programs should be in this area.

Similarly, John Bremer (1973) felt it was incumbent upon public
education to adjust to the needs of students. He stated that

if a student comes [to school] initially because he
must [compulsory education] he should continue to come
because he benefits, and if the benefit is not felt, then
the educational program, not the student needs adjustment.
(p. 451)

Bremer also argued that alternative education was essential to allow
students to gain experience in the area of decision-making. He further
stated

we learn how to make decisions by making decisions,
and to make decisions requires the existence of alternatives,
and it is thus that we must come to see alternatives as
education. (p. 451)

Bremer's final argument for alternatives within public education
was that there were no certainties in our world and life involved a
series of decisions between a choice of opinions. Education, Bremer
continued, must teach students to make responsible choices among alter­
 natives and the only way this can be done is by letting them make choices.

From another point of view, J. Herbert Weiss (1974) stated that
community involvement in education will lead to a reduction of vandalism.
To him, it seemed logical that if vandalism was committed by students
whose needs were not being met within a school district and if alternative
programs were designed to employ democratic operations to meet those
needs, a reduction of vandalism should occur.

Sam J. Yarger (1972) approached the topic of alternative programs
from another dimension. He concluded that the concept of alternatives
is compatible with a number of other approaches in education, such as
learning theory and developmental theory. In addition, Yarger felt that
alternatives must meet three necessary conditions in order to foster
creativity: accessibility to a multitude of stimuli situations,
reinforcement of novel responses, and provisions for independent study.

**Common Characteristics of Alternatives**

A review of literature indicated that alternative school programs have utilized a variety of methodologies in attempting to meet student needs. Apparently, one of the prevalent philosophies of these programs was that if students' self-concepts are positive, then learning tends to be facilitated. Philip DeTurk and Robert Macklin (1973) stated that "the learner must learn how to be comfortable in order that he may be receptive to learning of any kind. He must learn how to learn" (p. 459).

Most alternative public schools have been developed within their communities in response to a particular need and share some or all of the following characteristics (Smith, 1973):

1. They provide options within public education for students, parents, and teachers.

2. They have a commitment to be more responsive to some need within their communities than the conventional schools have been.

3. The alternatives usually provide a more comprehensive set of goals and objectives than their conventional counterparts. While most alternatives are designed to be concerned with basic skills development and with college and vocational preparation, they are also designed for improvement of self-concept, the development of individual talent and uniqueness, the understanding and encouragement of cultural plurality and diversity, and the preparation of students for various roles in our society—consumer, voter, critic, parent, spouse.

4. They are more flexible and therefore more responsive to planned
evolution and change. Since they originated in today's scientific age, the alternatives have been designed to rely on feedback and formative evaluation as programs are developed and modified.

5. The alternative school attempts to be more humane to students and teachers, partly because they tend to be smaller than conventional schools, and as a result, have fewer rules and bureaucratic constraints for students and teachers. In many cases the alternative school has been designed to eliminate those aspects of the culture of the school which are most unpleasant and oppressive to its clientele.

The Development of Optional Alternative Schools
in the United States

The first modern alternative schools were based on negative attitudes toward the existing public schools. The movement seemed to emerge from the "free school" movement of the 1960's and the influence of the British primary schools, which took place over a 40-year period in England.

British primary schools have had a particularly strong influence on the development of open education in America. The changes first blossomed in the "infant schools" for children from 5 to 7 years of age. The successful practice in the infant schools, as well as a renewed interest in child development, fostered changes in the junior schools, and in the 1960's information approaches became more common. In 1967, a report of the Central Advisory Council for Education drew worldwide attention to the informal practices occurring in large numbers of British infant and junior schools. The report was enthusiastic in its reaffirmation of the need to organize options in primary education around the needs of children, their patterns of growth, their interests, and their
play (Perrone, 1972).

In the United States some communities recognized before others that the single standard school could not meet the needs of all students. Some communities saw the need for starting new schools for talented students, such as Bronx High School of Science in New York City, 1938. Other communities provided alternatives for dropouts and potential dropouts such as the Metropolitan Youth Education Center in Denver, 1964. Some communities wanted to change all schools, as in the move toward open elementary education in North Dakota, 1965, while others attempted to provide optional schools such as the Parkway Plan in Philadelphia, 1969, Berkeley, California's alternative school, 1967, and Metro High School in Chicago, 1970 (Smith, Barr, & Burke, 1974). Still some communities attempted to provide an alternative approach to school suspension: The Dothan Model (Frith, Lindsey, & Sasser, 1980).

The Parkway Plan

The Parkway Program in Philadelphia had three important features: it was a public program—fully accredited and supported by the School District of Philadelphia; students were chosen by lottery, without special admissions criteria; and, it was committed to operate at a cost equal to, or less than, the cost required to run a traditional school for a comparable number of students.

The Parkway Program was committed to small groups. Student-teacher relationships were more casual and more humane because of the informality encouraged by the staff. Students were allowed to study in the community, were given more choices as to how to meet state mandated curriculum requirements, and were encouraged to devise their own schedules (Hutchins,
The success led, in July 1972, to the establishment of the Office of Alternative Programs in Philadelphia (OAPP). Since its initial founding, the OAPP has been responsible for the establishment of over 80 secondary and elementary alternative programs in Philadelphia (Hutchins, 1974).

Alternative Schools in Berkeley, California

The first alternative school in Berkeley began in 1967 at the district's continuation school for students expelled or referred by the city's high school. A new principal carefully selected a multiracial staff to eliminate the stigma or any disadvantage associated with attendance at McKinley Continuation School—now called East Campus, Berkeley High. The staff developed a strong reading program, a tutoring and counseling program, and classes in cultural awareness. The staff sought to provide individualized, personal, and supportive teaching. The changes in the school curriculum stimulated additional student applications for the alternative school experiences. As a result, Community High School, first operated as a summer project in 1968, was sanctioned by the board as Berkeley High's first official subschool. It offered students an informal atmosphere, flexibly scheduled classes, and a curriculum emphasizing theater, the arts, and self-exploration.

By June, 1971, 10 alternative schools were operating within the Berkeley system: six at the high school level, one in the junior high school, and three at the elementary level. In April 1971, Berkeley was one of three sites chosen by the United States Office of Education to
participate in a 5 year experiment in alternative education. A 3.6 million dollar grant to fund the first 30 months of the experiment was received, and the project began in the fall of 1971. By the end of 1974, 5,000 students were enrolled in 25 subschools, 20 of them at existing campuses and five in leased facilities. Currently the district operates nine models at the high school level, eight at the junior high level, six at the K-6 level, and two at the K-12 level (Wells, 1974).

Metro High School

Metro, an accredited 4-year school was organized in the Chicago Public School System. The Urban Research Corporation, which endorsed Metro, convinced the superintendent that the system should establish such a school. Urban Research consultants described the school to the leaders of the city's major businesses and cultural organizations. The result was community participation in the school's program. The program was funded by the school system at a per pupil expenditure similar to the other public schools in Chicago.

Metro High was designed as a school without walls and did not include the conventional school building. A major concept of the program was that the mental and physical resources of the city created the better environment for a high school education. Therefore, the staff and students developed learning experiences with the cooperation of 200 businesses, museums, universities, community groups, and individuals possessing special skills and talents.

Metro opened in February of 1970 with 150 students selected at random from a group of 1,500 applicants. The applicants were predominantly freshmen but represented the entire high school population of the city.
The student body was 55% Black, 5% Latin, and 40% Caucasian.

A staff of six teachers and a principal developed the curriculum. The first semester reflected the staff’s commitment to fundamental change in the process of education. The basic learning experiences in the program were called learning units which were taught by the staff, by the members of participating organizations, and by interested individuals. Some units contained traditional subjects and some contained the basic skills, while activities were usually offered in a high school curriculum were incorporated. Such activities were: studying the current show at the Museum of Contemporary Art, exploring insurance actuaries, assisting a veterinarian or learning film techniques of the television producers.

Students were allowed to choose from among 100 unit offerings. After 9 weeks, both students and teachers evaluated the students' progress. An evaluation form was completed and the teacher determined if a student received credit. If a student did not receive credit, the learning unit was not recorded.

The staff encouraged close relationships with students outside the class and outside the counseling groups. Since the staff was informal with the students, close relationships did appear to develop (Riordon, 1972).

The Dothan Model

The Dothan, Alabama City School System (enrollment 9,745) reduced the number of its student suspensions from 878 in 1976-77 to three in 1977-78 and 10 in 1978-79. This success was achieved by designing an alternative school program that kept students with serious disciplinary problems within the school system.
Prior to 1976, suspension of students with behavior problems was frequently used as a disciplinary measure by the administrators in the Dothan City Schools. For the next year, however, the director of instruction and other professionals in the system proposed a more constructive alternative program. It was aimed at deterring inappropriate behavior while keeping the offenders in a normal school environment. The objectives were stated as follows:

1. To modify the behavior of delinquent students in such a way as to allow them to function successfully in the regular classroom.

2. To provide students with an opportunity to better understand the nature of their personal problems through individual and group counseling.

3. To provide students with an opportunity to continue their regular academic work while being disciplined.

4. To allow students to attend school while experiencing a period of behavioral adjustment.

5. To formulate a solution to the students’ behavioral problems through conferences of all concerned, the parent(s), the teacher, the counselor, the student, and other appropriate individuals.

The Dothan model had the following components:

1. Student eligibility criteria—A student who had behavior problems which required suspension was referred to the alternative program.

2. Referral guidelines—Regular classroom and special education teachers were requested to refer students to the alternative program when they were unable to deal effectively with a student’s classroom behavior.

3. Facility—The alternative program was located in a regular
classroom in a school building adjacent to the system's administrative offices.

4. Transportation—Parents were responsible for transporting their children to and from the alternative program.

5. Expected behavior—Students referred to the alternative program were expected to complete all academic assignments. They were to attend each day, to exhibit exemplary classroom behavior, and to cooperate fully with school officials. Inappropriate behavior resulted in immediate referral to the juvenile court. Participation in extracurricular activities was prohibited while students attended the alternative program.

6. Personnel—The program was staffed by a former male coach, who had elementary/secondary certification in physical education, and a full-time counselor. A crisis counselor was also employed on a part-time basis to work with students who were referred to the program for a second or third time. These personnel were employed on the basis of their reputation as disciplinarians and their capability for relating to students, irrespective of their areas of academic certification. The staff/student ratio was approximately 1:10.

7. Record keeping—Daily records were maintained on each student. These records included: a) procedures used to modify the students' inappropriate behaviors; b) attendance; c) a description of counseling and instructional strategies; and d) a record of interactions with appropriate persons. The records were supplied to the building principal upon the students' return to their regular classes.

8. Academic instruction—While students attended the alternative
program, instructional assignments were received from the regular classroom teachers. Academic instruction was completely individualized and structured.

9. Juvenile court component—The school system's excellent working relationship with juvenile court authorities was a major reason for the program's success. When students were referred to juvenile court, the court officials were highly supportive of the school system's recommendations.

10. Parent involvement—Parents were notified of their child's referral to the alternative program. A conference with the parent(s), the student, and the school officials was a requisite for return to the regular class.

11. Evaluation design—Persons involved in the alternative program met periodically to evaluate progress. Summations were provided to the superintendent and to the Dothan Board of Education.

12. Financial dimensions—The local district paid the salaries of the alternative school teacher and the crisis counselors. Money was provided through a federal Emergency School Aid grant to defray expenses for the full-time counselor.

Referral rates demonstrated the program's success. Eighty-three percent of all students who had been referred to the alternative program had not returned during the 3½ years the program had been in existence.

Progress from 878 suspensions in 1 year to 13 suspensions over a 2-year span was a significant achievement for the Dothan schools (Frith, Lindsey, & Sasser, 1980).
Problems Encountered In Alternative School Programs

A number of writers have indicated that the alternative school programs are not without problems. Frederick S. Bock and Wanda Gomula (1973) described a program for junior high students that failed because the group consisted of a homogeneous group of school failures, which were assigned to the program by the building principal. The results were unsatisfactory.

Bonnie B. Stretch (1974) pointed out that the average life-span of a private alternative school was approximately 18 months. The main reason listed for failure was lack of money. Also listed were a number of other reasons which may be applicable to public alternative programs. These were summarized as follows: 1) teachers had a difficult time accepting student freedom; 2) freedom was not tried for a long enough period of time for it to be successful; 3) red tape; 4) public hostility; and 5) the tendency for alternative programs to become homogeneous by race or socio-economic class.

Other problems associated with alternative programs were identified. Diane Divoky (1974) cited difficulties in a description of the Berkeley alternative school program. A main problem was that the 24 alternative schools tended to become racially segregated. Fantini (1973) stated that alternative schools were started as an attack on traditional values and methods. In addition, Fantini pointed out that many alternative programs focused on potential dropouts and students with behavior problems. As a result, the negative image associated with these programs has been difficult to overcome.
Evaluation of Alternative School Programs

It appears that the evaluation of alternative programs has been subjective in nature and limited in scope. Lawrence Hickey (1973) stated that the most educators involved in alternative programs felt these programs were not subject to evaluation because the programs were working with student attributes that were not measurable. Hickey also indicated that there appeared to be a general fear of evaluation among educators.

He cited the following reasons which he felt were imperative for alternative program evaluation: 1) to attempt to improve the program; 2) to provide justification for the expenditure of public funds for programs that are generally viewed in a negative manner by the public; 3) to incorporate all positive results generated by alternative programs into traditional school programs; and 4) to determine the overall effectiveness of the alternative programs as well as to provide for the determination of student progress.

Although Hickey admitted that the evaluation of affective education is based upon crude instruments, he indicated that strides have been made in this area and that such efforts should continue. Finally, he argued that a wide variety of measurements should be taken to evaluate alternative programs and suggested such variables as attitudes, absentee rates, disciplinary problems and academic performance.

Some authors have indicated that it may not be possible to evaluate alternative programs through objective criteria. In fact, DeTurk and Macklin (1973) indicated that alternative schools should not be judged by the same standards as regular school. Similarly, Hock and Comula (1973),
in a description of an alternative high school in Southern Indiana, stated that:

> It may be difficult to evaluate empirically the success of the alternative high school . . . we feel that if two-thirds of the students with us early in the year wish to continue next fall, it will indicate success. (p. 472)

**Criticism of Alternative School Programs**

The alternative school movement has generated a number of criticisms. Jonathan Kozol (1974) stated that the reason for the high failure rate of these programs was either the inability or lack of proper motivation to teach basic skills.

H. C. Sun (1974) perceived two potential conflicts that alternative schools have not been able to resolve. First, the concept of permitting student freedom combined with the difficulty of maintaining control. Second, the concept of preparation of students for the realities of the world must continue without stifling student creativity. Sun (1974) stated other conflicts focused on

how to place the student at the center of the curriculum without sacrificing other curricular bases, how to give individualized freedom without drifting into anarchy, and how to prepare the student for the real world without so adjusting him that his creative impulses and aptitudes for change are not stifled. (p. 220)

Another writer, Roland S. Barth (1974), stated that there were two possibilities concerning alternative schools: alternatives within a district and alternatives within a school. He indicated that the concept of alternatives within a school district can be beneficial if they are voluntary, in that only persons agreeing with the philosophy of a particular school will allow their children to enroll. However, Barth
criticized these types of programs by saying:

We can put people together who are similar in one characteristic, but they soon turn out to be very different in others. This realization is causing many problems in alternative schools. (p. 15)

In addition, Barth indicated that schools with similar philosophies often are little more than a device for grouping students of similar racial, social or economic backgrounds. Where parents and teachers have been given a choice of schools, public or private, student bodies have tended to become all black, all white, all Jewish, all Catholic, all rich or all poor.

In a critical article, Harry S. Broudy (1973) attempted to analyze the claims of alternative advocates that alternatives promote freedom, promote better choices, promote creativity, and promote individual differences. With regard to promotion of freedom, he contended that there are certain constraints inherent in the formal educational processes that cannot be avoided by alternatives. These constraints included the fact that formal schooling is not a natural process and the fact that culture demands occupational, civic, and personal adequacy which must be considered by all educational programs.

With regard to the claim of improving choices, Broudy stated that the advocates of alternative programs feel that students will make responsible choices among a variety of alternatives. Broudy questioned whether students, and parents, can effectively evaluate different educational alternatives. He further suggested that if alternative programs promote creativity, the creativity must be purposeful in nature. To Broudy, creative diversity was not random pluralism, but imaginative variations of a theme.
As for the claim that alternatives provide better programs for dealing with individual differences, he claimed that not all individual differences require differentiated schooling. Individual differences such as learning readiness, talents and aptitudes, and previous achievement often can be met without setting up alternative schools (Broudy, 1973).

**Potential Impact of Alternative Schools**

The concept of options in public education does not suggest that alternative schools would replace conventional schools; rather, alternative schools would complement the conventional. Educational reform is not at issue here, but the issue is the degree to which communities can expand, through choice, the number and kinds of learning environments without increased funds, new buildings, or additional personnel. It is equally important to understand the educational implication and connotation of the term "choice." Freedom of choice in a democracy has never meant license, nor does it in alternative schools. What choice does mean is teachers and students in concert, participate in planning, designing, implementing, and evaluating the specific goals, activities and content essential to the learning process. Through optional alternative public schools the ideals of our democratic, pluralistic society are now becoming essential ingredients of mainstream American education (Smith, Barr, & Burke, 1974).

**Community Impact**

The differences within a single community among its people and their social, political, economic, and philosophical values are usually greater than the differences from one community to another. This makes
community involvement in public education essential, since our schools can reconcile these basic differences within each community only when such involvement exists. All communities share common needs, and it is these common needs with which state and federal agencies are primarily concerned. But while education responds to common needs, its success or failure nationally can be attributed directly to the way in which each local community identifies, discusses, designs, and implements school programs consistent with its own uniqueness. Thus, communities will continue to be an essential element in school improvement.

The ways in which communities become involved in the development of alternative public schools vary from community to community. A general community position on alternative schools is neither possible nor desirable because educational needs vary from one community to another. What is important is that communities develop alternatives to serve various clienteles, to meet needs not presently being met, and to expand the number of learning environments to accommodate a broader range of teaching and learning styles.

If the community role in public education has been slighted, the optional school concept provides new opportunities and challenges to renew community participation in education. Local involvement and commitment could result in more effective schools and more effective school-community relationships (Smith, Barr, & Burke, 1974).

**Curriculum Impact**

Alternative public schools not only emphasize basic skills, including reading, writing, oral and nonverbal communication, and computation; but they also include technological, personal, social and aesthetic areas,
and human relations. Furthermore, these schools are systematically developing new and different curricula along with the equally important methods, human resources, materials, learning climates, and time utilization that often determine curricular effectiveness.

In observing all types of alternative public schools, there are comprehensive sets of objectives covering six areas: 1) basic skill development; 2) cognitive development; 3) affective development; 4) talent development; 5) career development; and 6) role development (citizen-voter, consumer-critic, parent-spouse).

Alternative schools provide opportunities for exploring, designing, and developing a broad array of learning facilities. These schools are using a variety of nonconventional facilities available within their communities. For example, the St. Paul Open School was housed in a remodeled warehouse. The Brown School in Louisville began in the lobby of the old Brown Hotel. Other schools have been developed in a separate wing of a conventional school, a few regular classrooms of an existing school, unused elementary school space, or in other available quarters throughout the community.

Variations in the methodology concept of curriculum are being explored in alternative schools. Teachers are encouraged to practice in a manner consistent with their talents, interests, skills, and training. Additionally, teachers are encouraged to express their individuality in terms of teaching styles. The same is true with learning styles. Matching of the two is paramount if good teaching and learning are to take place. Teachers practicing any methodological technique are likely to be successful if that technique is a comfortable and natural one. But
teachers also attempt to help students determine their learning styles—the ways by which they learn naturally and effectively. Doing what one does best in a climate conducive to the success of a learning activity should produce more effective teaching and learning.

When curricular opportunities are expanded by establishing alternative schools, the availability of materials is usually expanded. Using community resources automatically offers a wealth of material for both teachers and students. Since students are involved in designing some of their learning experiences, they frequently bring materials or identify materials which will assist them in achieving successfully what they have set out to do. In schools-without-walls, city sidewalks literally become their hallways. Alternative schools necessarily capitalize on the expanded availability of materials, particularly as they relate to an increasingly changing society.

Educators have long recognized that the curriculum should be designed to meet local needs. More specifically, schools-without-walls, learning centers, open schools, and multicultural schools are creating closer community-school ties. Students in alternative schools are spending more time in their communities dealing with their own community's problems. Schools cannot continue to simply reflect the work-a-day-world; they must become the work-a-day-world (Smith, Barr, & Burke, 1974).

Student Evaluation Impact

Alternative schools lack sophistication in the area of evaluation. To compensate for this situation, alternative school personnel have attempted to accomplish at least two objectives in evaluation. First, they are continuing to use conventional techniques and devices to gather
and analyze data. Second, and more important, they are emphasizing the necessity of obtaining data from a variety of sources, not the least of which is simply to ask students and teachers for candid, personal responses about their educational involvement.

Since educational teaming is so much a part of alternative schools, team planning, team teaching, team decision making, and team evaluation are producing more comprehensive evaluation designs, if for no other reason than the fact they utilize a variety of talents, viewpoints, and judgments based upon what each person brings to a given task. Different people bring different sets of perceptions, resolutions, and solutions, all of which contribute to the evaluation process.

Many alternative schools have abandoned grading but have increased the emphasis on the evaluation of students. Grading and rank in class have traditionally been required because colleges wanted both for admission. A recent study of colleges and universities revealed that the majority of them admit high school graduates without grades or class ranks. Emphasis is being given to competence and performance, not to time spent in class. When an alternative school student's progress is compared first with himself and then with that of his peers, the information takes on new meaning. The trend in alternative schools is to evaluate student progress in that order. Perhaps the most important aspect of evaluation in alternative schools is the fact that the very nature of the alternative concept is so much more consistent with what evaluation is all about (Smith, Barr, & Burke, 1974).
Research findings in the area of options in public education indicated that alternative schools are consistent with a democratic philosophy, a pluralistic society and a free-market economy. Findings which were reported in the literature revealed that freedom and diversity were as desirable in education as they were in other aspects of society.

Explanations for the emergence of alternatives within public school systems were widely divergent and described both positive and negative aspects of programs. Generally, alternative programs represented conditions conducive to warm interpersonal relations, academic success, positive images of the future and enhancement of self-concept. Alternative programs tended to be small, intimate schools with a low student-teacher ratio, individualized instruction, competent and caring teachers, extensive support personnel, and a pragmatic vocational thrust. Research suggested that characteristics of the learning and interpersonal environments of alternatives contributed to a diminution in aggressive behavior and to the development of emotionally healthy individuals.

Educators proclaimed that the development of options in public education—alternative public schools—provided the most promising and viable strategy for educational reform in a decade. While recognizing that the few hundred alternative public schools in operation today have not yet had any effects on the mainstream of public education, advocates of alternatives believed that the concept of options in every community should have significant social and educational potential.

For many who advocated alternatives, an examination of the numerous attempts at educational change in the last two decades led to one
conclusion: educational renewal and reform in the present decade must come through the development of options in public education, or they will not come at all (Smith, 1973).
Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

A description of the study, selection of subjects, research design, instruments used, hypotheses tested, methods for analyzing data collected, and procedures followed are presented in this chapter.

Description of the Study

The study is a descriptive one utilizing pre- and posttests and the frequency count methods of collecting data. The primary purpose of the study was to describe an alternative approach to learning for selected students within the Kingsport, Tennessee City School System. The data were collected to try to determine if a significant difference in the learning of these selected students was a result of their enrollment in the alternative school.

Selection of Subjects

The subjects of the study included 11 students enrolled in the Alternative School, Kingsport, Tennessee, from August, 1979 through May, 1980. The students' ages ranged from 12 years through 15 years.

Prior to enrollment in the Alternative School, the students were recommended for admittance by the principals of the John Sevier Middle School and the Ross N. Robinson Middle School. Each principal's recommendations were supported by the classroom teachers' observations. The teachers' observations were based on the criteria for determining the
behaviorally disordered and/or socially maladjusted child.

After reviewing the collected data, the Admission Review Board then determined if the student was to be admitted to the Alternative School program. Psychological testing was conducted with those students considered for admission. If the psychological tests supported student placement in the alternative program, a multidisciplinary team meeting was held. During this meeting an individualized education plan was designed for the student.

**Design of the Study**

The intent of the study was to determine the effects of the Alternative School's program on the learning of selected students in the Kingsport, Tennessee City School System.

Upon admittance to the Alternative program, subjects were pretested using the following instruments: the Jewish Employment and Vocational Service (JEVS); the Social and Prevocational Information Battery (SPIB); the Valpar Whole Body Range of Motion; the Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT); the Demos D Scale; and Martinek-Zaichkowsky Self-Concept Scale (M-Z Self-Concept Scale). At the end of the school year subjects were posttested using these same instruments.

In addition, records were kept for truancy in the school register and frequency counts were recorded for the discipline referrals and suspensions/expulsions.

**Instruments Used**

The instruments listed below were used to measure student progress.
for those enrolled in the Alternative School program for the school year 1979-1980.

**The Jewish Employment and Vocational Service (JEVS)**

The JEVS was the instrument used to diagnose any barriers to employment and to detail specific data regarding the type of work adjustment before a student can be considered employable. The JEVS enables the evaluator to obtain information regarding an individual's adaptive vocational skills, such as, reaction to criticism and praise, positive and/or negative worker attitudes, and punctuality. The test diagnoses slow work rate, poor quality of work and subtle barriers to employment such as personal hygiene, interaction with co-workers, or ability to respond appropriately. If a student is seen displaying inappropriate behavior, this behavior is conveyed to his prevocational advisor-counselor, who can work toward changing this behavior, thus enabling the student to become employable (The Jewish Employment and Vocational Service, 1973).

**The Social and Prevocational Information Battery (SPIB)**

The SPIB was developed to help educators who work with adolescents. The SPIB consists of a series of tests that measure nine important areas generally included in secondary programs: purchasing, budgeting, banking, job related behavior, job search skills, home management, health care, hygiene, and functional signs.

Educators use information gained from testing students with SPIB in several ways. Classroom teachers can use SPIB to identify student needs and to program specific remedial instruction. Test results can be used
to group students with similar performances in certain areas for intensified instruction. The battery also can be used by administrators in planning programming that emphasizes instruction in areas of potential concern on a school wide or district wide basis, and in evaluating those programs (Halpern, Raffield, Irwin, & Link, 1975).

The Valpar Whole Body Range of Motion

This is a non-medical measurement of gross body movements of the trunk, hands, arms, legs, and fingers as they relate to the functional ability to perform job tasks. The Valpar test provides insight into relationships of gross body movement and finer manual dexterities. It assesses ability to successfully perform gross and fine finger dexterity tasks while kneeling, crouching, stooping, bending and stretching. It can be used as an indicator of a person's ability to perform a work task involving the above skills (Valpar Corporation, 1973).

The Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT)

The WRAT, developed by Joseph T. Jastak and Sarah Jastak and copyrighted in 1965, was reprinted in 1976. The WRAT is an individual test for clinical use, indicating level of skill in oral reading, spelling, and arithmetic computation. The examiner adjusts testing range to the achievement level of the individual, kindergarten through college. The WRAT is used in remedial and vocational studies of children and adults. A definition of reading and objective test criteria of reading disability are presented in the manual (Jastak & Jastak, 1975).
The Demos D Scale

The scale assesses interpersonal factors which influence a student's attitude toward school and the probability of dropping out of school.

The Demos D Scale consists of 29 short descriptive statements pertaining to attitudes toward school. The student answers each question by circling one of the five adverbs: nearly always, most of the time, sometimes, very few times, or nearly never.

One of the purposes of the Demos D Scale is to determine verbalized opinions which reflect attitudes presumably related to dropping out of school (Demos, 1970).

The Martinek-Zaichkowsky Self-Concept Scale (M-ZSCS)

The Martinek-Zaichkowsky Self-Concept Scale is a non-verbal, culture-free instrument designed to measure the global self-concept of students. This self-report instrument can be completed in 10 to 15 minutes and provides the user with quick, objective feedback.

The M-ZSCS can be given individually or to a group, although experience has indicated a decrease in distortion of individual responses when the scale is given on a one-to-one basis. The scale is objectively scored, thus raw data can be collected and used for the purposes of research and referral. The M-ZSCS has been validated for the purpose of determining the effects of various teaching styles on the self-concept of students (Martinek & Zaichkowsky, 1977).

Frequency Count

The frequency count of student behavior for each discipline referral was recorded by staff members and kept in the students' files. The
number of referrals for the first semester was compared to the number of discipline referrals for the second semester.

School Register

The school register is a daily record of the number of days a student is present in school. The number of days a student was absent during the first semester was compared to the number of days a student was absent during the second semester.

Hypotheses of the Study

The following hypotheses, stated in the declarative format, were developed for the study and tested at the .05 level of significance.

Hypothesis 1

There will be a significant difference in the mean scores of the students' attitudes toward school when the pretest scores are compared to the posttest scores as measured by the Demos D Scale.

Hypothesis 2

There will be a significant difference in the pretest and posttest mean scores of the students' attitudes toward self as measured by the Martinek-Zaichkowsky Self-Concept Scale.

Hypothesis 3

There will be a significant difference in the mean scores of the students' academic achievement as measured by the pretests and posttests on the Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT).
**Hypothesis 4**

There will be a significant reduction in the number of discipline referrals when the frequency count for discipline referrals of the first semester is compared to the frequency count for discipline referrals of the second semester.

**Hypothesis 5**

There will be a significant reduction in the number of suspensions/expulsions when the frequency count for suspensions/expulsions of the first semester is compared to the frequency count for suspensions/expulsions of the second semester.

**Hypothesis 6**

There will be a significant decrease in the number of days absent as recorded in the school register when the first semester is compared to the second semester.

**Hypothesis 7**

There will be a significant difference in the mean scores of the pretest on the number of possible school drop-outs when compared to the mean score of the posttests as measured by the Demos D Scale.

**Hypothesis 8**

There will be a significant difference in the pretest and posttest mean scores of potential vocational salable skills as measured by the JEVS, the SPIB, and the Valpar Whole Body Range of Motion.
Procedures

In developing the Alternative School program the following steps were taken:

1. A survey was taken to determine a need for the establishment of an alternative program for the behaviorally disordered and/or socially maladjusted students in grades six through twelve in the public schools of Kingsport, Tennessee.

2. After this need was established, the Special Education Director of the Kingsport, Tennessee City School System presented a proposal requesting federal funds for an alternative program.

3. Approval of the proposal was received and it was federally funded. The investigator of this study was appointed director of the program and began interviewing prospective staff members. As a result, three teachers and one assistant were hired to teach in the alternative program.

4. These staff members, with the help of other teachers in the school system, ordered materials to organize a life-centered career education alternative program.

5. A schedule was developed for student classes, student staggered entrances, and the school day, which was from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The same calendar schedule was maintained as observed by the rest of the school system.

6. The design of the program is described in the following paragraphs.

Referral

As the classroom teacher became aware of a student being socially
and behaviorally incapacitated, he/she made a referral to the assistant principal. The assistant principal kept discipline records for each student and when a predetermined number was met, a request for a psychological evaluation was filed with the Director of Special Education.

Student Admission

Upon the completion of the psychological evaluation, an Admissions Board meeting was scheduled in order to review the results of that evaluation. If the board determined that the Alternative School program was the appropriate placement for the student, an M-Team meeting was scheduled. The parents, the principal and/or the assistant principal of the referring school, the Director of the Alternative School, the psychologist who did the evaluation, the Director of Special Education, and the student were present.

During the M-Team meeting the student was formally accepted into the Alternative School program. Also, an individualized education plan (IEP) was developed and explained to the parents and student. The IEP included the activities, goals and objectives which were based upon the student's psychological assessment and reported observed behavior.

Student Placement

Students admitted to the Alternative School program were enrolled in grades six through twelve. In order to provide optimal learning activities the students were divided into three homeroom groups. Student behavior was the number one criterion for classroom placement. How well the students could work with each other was considered, and attempts were made to have an equal distribution of the sexes. In addition, an equal
distribution of students according to roll was desired. Students placed in the program regardless of the classroom group to which they were assigned met all of the following requirements:

a. Grade: enrolled in grades six through twelve.

b. Educational achievement: no minimum or maximum levels required.

c. Intelligence quotient: students of average intellectual abilities, with some higher, and some lower, who were generally functioning on an academic level much lower than their potential.

d. Screening: each student was required to receive a battery of tests, the minimum amount of testing included the following: (1) Wide Range Achievement Test; (2) Demos D Scale; (3) M-Z Self-Concept Scale; (4) Jewish Employment and Vocational Service; (5) Social and Prevocational Information Battery; (6) Valpar Whole Body Range of Motion.

Basic Program Schedule

Since the funds for the alternative program were obtained from the federal government's innovative programs allocation, the project was centered on career education and academic activities which were individualized for the students. Therefore, the Alternative School students' curriculum was focused on four primary areas: social skills development; prevocational skills development; independent living skills; and academic skills.

All students' schedules included home living, shop, academics, physical education, and reading lab. The prevocational and independent living skills were developed in the home living and shop areas. The social skills were developed in all areas, including the lunch period.

In the academics area including the reading lab, each student,
regardless of his class grouping, required a program designed to meet his/her needs and to fulfill the requirements of the Tennessee State Department of Education. Assignments were given at the level of the student's performance according to achievement testing. These assignments were designed to insure success for the student while at the same time providing a learning experience.

A Behavior Modification Strategy

Behavior modification is among the most widely known and researched approaches to classroom management (Curwin & Mendler, 1980). The underlying theory indicates that behavior is a learned response and that learning occurs when a response is reinforced. These concepts and practical experiences led the Alternative School staff to accept some specific behavioral techniques. These techniques are presented in brief form in an effort to identify and explain the behavioral strategies used to teach appropriate behaviors to the students who have been identified as behaviorally disordered and/or socially maladjusted.

Token economy. Students in the Alternative School were placed under a token economy system. The students earned tokens by being on time to classes, by completing tasks, and by exhibiting appropriate behavior during the task completion time. In lieu of paying tokens directly, each student was issued a schedule sheet containing class times, spaces for teacher signatures, and the activities for the day. The students were paid at the end of their school day by counting their signatures and by reporting their count. Tokens could be exchanged for a number of "privileges," including: pencil sharpening, soft cola drinks, extra lunch
items, store items, field trips, movies, and other student specified reinforcers.

Of utmost importance in the token economy was the need to balance payment and charges. An adequate balance would allow students to earn enough tokens to buy necessities and be able to save adequate numbers to purchase the more expensive privileges. To avoid confusion, exchange, and theft, the tokens were color coded, student numbered, and were valid for only 2 weeks at a time.

**Individual daily contingency schedule.** Assignments and activities were presented to the students on their daily contingency schedule. These schedules indicated to the students their tasks and activities to be completed during the day. Each time interval indicated which tasks and activities were to be completed before the task in the following time interval could be attempted. With this requirement students were placed in a position to be responsible for completion of each task before moving to the next task. The schedule also made students responsible for unexcused absences. When a student missed school and did not have a doctor or dental excuse, that student had to complete the previous day's tasks before beginning the current day's schedule.

**Verbal/social reinforcement.** Token economies, contingency schedules, and other therapeutic reinforcement techniques were not viewed by the Alternative School staff as appropriate end results of the program. In an effort to naturalize the reinforcement system and assist students in generalization of learning, social and verbal reinforcers were given each time tokens or teacher signatures were presented for reinforcement.
As the staff developed skills in "reflective listening" and the use of the "I-message," they were able to use the social and verbal reinforcements more effectively. Initially, tokens were necessary to attract attention for reinforcement and used in each situation where appropriate. As a student exhibited a higher frequency of appropriate behaviors, the token reinforcement decreased while the social/verbal reinforcement increased.

Because our society functions more on social and verbal reinforcers, when a student finds these reinforcers desirable, other therapeutic reinforcement can be discontinued.

**Logical/natural consequences.** A natural or logical consequence is an alternative to reward and punishment, allowing students to become responsible for their own behavior. This approach permits students to make their own decisions about what courses of action are appropriate and are logically and naturally related to the misbehavior. Therefore, appropriate behavior should be consistently followed by a positive or negative reinforcer. In the same light, inappropriate behavior should be followed by an effective consequence.

Effective consequences were identified by the Alternative School staff as either logical or natural. A natural consequence was one that occurred naturally in the student's environment with no actions taken by the staff. For example, a natural consequence for not being to class on time was not knowing what to do next. This natural consequence created unpleasant feelings in the student and was in effect non-reinforcing.

Logical consequences occurred somewhat naturally but had to be applied by a staff member. The logical consequences for refusing to
ride the school bus without written permission was that the student had to obtain other transportation to school. Another logical consequence to the aforementioned event was the parents' dissatisfaction toward the student if transportation had to be furnished at family expense.

The implementation of the program. The school year began with home visits by the Alternative School staff. During these visits, the program was explained to the parents, permission for further testing obtained, and the bus schedule delivered.

When the students entered school according to the prearranged schedules, they were guided through the school day. During the entrance time the staff attempted to learn about the students and to share some personal thoughts with the students. Additionally, the program, the schedule, the rules, the concept of class, and school-wide meetings were discussed.

As the year progressed the staff recognized the need for additional guidance in directing this type of student. Therefore, a staff development period was outlined for Thursday afternoons with a licensed psychologist from the Child and Family Services area of the Mental Health Organization in Kingsport, Tennessee. Permission was secured from the superintendent and the director of special education to release the students early one day a week.

It was during the staffing period, with the aid of the psychologist that the behavior modification technique was developed and implemented. Evaluation of the success of the technique was at that time subjective in nature, but the school personnel voiced optimism and praise for this approach.
Further, during the implementation phase the staff became closely associated with the juvenile justice system, because some of the students were on probation. When the juvenile judge became aware of the program he began to think of the program as one that some juveniles should try before being committed to a state institution. The judge, the probation officers, the lawyers, the secretaries, and the juvenile officers were helpful and supportive of the Alternative School program. The probation officers visited their clients during school hours if help was needed with an unruly student or occasionally to check that client's school progress.

Due to scheduling problems some students were unable to attend the Mental Health Center thereby, therapy sessions with the psychologist were offered during school hours. However, for those students who did attend the center the director or program assistant provided transportation because it was believed that the therapy sessions were extremely important for student improvement.

Other changes and techniques in the program were modified to meet the needs of students as the year progressed.

Evaluation of the program. At the conclusion of the school year, each student was given a posttest to measure change in attitude toward school, attitude toward self, academic achievement, decrease in potential number of school dropouts, and increase in the number of potential vocational-salable skills. The frequency count method was employed to analyze the data of observed behaviors for the discipline referrals, the suspensions/expulsions, and the number of days absent. A statistical analysis of the scores was performed to test for significant gains.
For the purpose of this study, the program was evaluated as a process involving the appraisal of student output, since positive correlations have been demonstrated between selected student behaviors and learning outcomes.

Analysis of the Data

The t-test for non-independent samples was utilized to analyze the data collected in the study. The hypotheses were tested at the p < .05 level of significance using a one-tail test.
Chapter 4

PRESENTATION OF DATA AND ANALYSIS OF THE FINDINGS

Introduction

A selected group of students enrolled in the Alternative School in Kingsport, Tennessee, was tested in order to determine the effects of the program on learning. Eleven subjects comprised the study group. During the program, emphasis was placed on improvement of attitudes toward school, improvement of self-concept, improvement of academic achievement, a decrease in the number of discipline referrals, a decrease in the number of suspensions/expulsions, a decrease in absenteeism, a decrease in the number of probable school dropouts, and an increase in the potential vocational salable skills.

Presentation of Data

The subjects of the study were enrolled in the Alternative program from August, 1979, through May, 1980. Seven males and four females comprised the sample. The ages of the boys ranged from 12 years 9 months to 15 years 3 months, with an average age of 13 years 9 months. The ages of the girls ranged from 13 years 4 months to 15 years 10 months while their average age was 15 years 4 months. The average school grade level for both boys and girls was 7.5 although the mean achievement grade level was 3.9 for the boys and 3.2 for the girls. Demographic data for the students concerning sex, mean age, mean school grade level, and mean achievement level are presented in Table 1.
Table 1
Demographic Representation of Students Enrolled in the Alternative Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Subjects</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>X Age</th>
<th>X Grade Level</th>
<th>X Achievement Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Males</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Females</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further analysis of the student population revealed social class, number of white students, number of non-white students, and number of students on probation. The population included three non-white students, one girl and two boys while the white student population included eight students, five boys and three girls. Social class breakdown showed 10 students in the lower class income level, with the one remaining student in the middle class income level. In addition, four students were on probation where the juvenile justice department exercised influence over them. This demographic information may be seen in Table 2.

Table 2
Demographic Data Concerning Race and Social Class Standing of Subjects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number on Probation</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Non-White</th>
<th>Lower Income</th>
<th>Middle Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Males</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Females</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Analysis of Findings

Eight hypotheses were tested in the study. The level of significance was established at .05 and a one-tailed test was used for all hypotheses. 

H₁ stated that there would be a significant difference in the mean scores of the students' attitudes toward school when the pretest scores were compared to the posttest scores as measured by the Demos D Scale.

An analysis of the data through utilization of the t-test for non-independent samples, showed that there was no significant difference in students' attitudes toward school as illustrated in Table 3. Attitude improvement was measured by a decrease in the score from the pretest to the posttest. Although scores reflected a decrease on the posttest, they actually represent improvement of students' attitudes toward school.

Table 3

Analysis of Students' Attitudes Toward School When Pretest Scores Were Compared to Posttest Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Number</th>
<th>Pretest</th>
<th>Posttest</th>
<th>Difference</th>
<th>Difference Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>-3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>+4</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>-6</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
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<td>7</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>-8</td>
<td>64</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>54</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>-37</td>
<td>1369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \Sigma d = -47 \quad \Sigma d^2 = 1503 \]

\[ t = 1.1628 \quad df = 10 \quad P > .05 \]
Examination of the total test scores in Table 3 revealed no significant difference in improvement of student attitudes toward school at the .05 level. However, an examination of individual scores did indicate that five of the 11 students had positive changes in attitudes. When the investigator considered that the students had an average of 7.5 years to form the negative attitudes toward school and only 1 year to improve or change to more positive attitudes toward school, the t-value of 1.1628 becomes more important. For example, Table 3 disclosed that subject number nine's attitude improved greatly (37 points), although this student had been involved with the juvenile court and her home environment was poor. However, during the school year the investigator observed that the student began to view members of the Alternative School staff as friends and people to turn to when there was a need, which might account for the significant change in her attitudes.

The first hypothesis was rejected. A significant difference between the pre- and posttest scores was not found at the .05 level.

H2 stated that there would be a significant difference in the pre- and posttest mean scores of the students' attitudes toward self as measured by the Martinek-Zaichkowsky Self-Concept Score. Analysis of the students' attitudes toward self indicated that there was no significant change at the .05 level as a group. However, a survey of the individual scores showed that seven of the 11 subjects' self-concept did improve. Improvement was measured by an increase of the total number from the pre- to the posttest scores. Data for H2 are presented in Table 4.

The findings may indicate that if student self-concept can be
Improved, although not significantly, in 1 year, then given additional
time in the program, self-concept could be improved at a significant
level. The second hypothesis was rejected at the .05 level since the
t-value of .6437 was less than the needed t-value of 1.812.

Table 4

Analysis of Students' Self-Concept When Pretest
Scores Were Compared to Posttest Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Number</th>
<th>Pretest</th>
<th>Posttest</th>
<th>Difference</th>
<th>Difference Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>- 2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td>- 4</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>+ 1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>+ 7</td>
<td>49</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>+ 6</td>
<td>36</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>+ 3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ΣD = 10      ΣD² = 224

t = .6437    df = 10    P > .05

H₃ stated that there would be a significant difference in the mean
scores of the students' academic achievement as measured by the pretest
and posttest on the Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT). An analysis of
the data demonstrated that an increase in academic skills was achieved by all but four subjects. Three of the four subjects remained on the same level, while one decreased in academic achievement. Pretest and posttest scores are presented in Table 5.

### Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Number</th>
<th>Pretest</th>
<th>Posttest</th>
<th>Difference (Months)</th>
<th>Difference Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>6.1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>-5</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>+7</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.9</td>
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<td>+6</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
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<td>3.2</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>49</td>
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<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \sum D = 16 \quad \sum D^2 = 166 \]

\[ t = 1.3636 \quad df = 10 \quad P > .05 \]

Change in the academic achievement level was measured in months gained within a grade level. For example, student five made a gain of
7 months (from the fourth grade, fourth month achievement level to the fifth grade, first month achievement). Statistical findings did not reveal a significant difference in the scores of the students' academic achievement at the .05 level. On the basis of the analysis of the data, the third hypothesis was rejected.

\( H_3 \) stated that there would be a significant reduction in the number of discipline referrals when the frequency count for discipline referrals of the first semester was compared to the frequency count for discipline referrals of the second semester.

As illustrated in Table 6, referrals decreased in number during the second semester. Improvement in discipline referrals was determined by a decrease in the frequency count when the first semester was compared to the second semester. Some students accomplished more in the areas of discipline than others. The smallest number of discipline referrals was reduced by two while the largest number of discipline referrals was reduced by 19.

The t-value of 6.1292 was significant beyond the .05 level. In fact, it was significant beyond the .0005 level. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis was accepted.

\( H_4 \) stated that there would be a significant reduction in the number of suspensions/expulsions when the frequency count for suspensions/expulsions of the first semester was compared to the frequency count for suspensions/expulsions of the second semester. Examination of Table 7 discloses the decrease in the number of suspensions/expulsions during the second semester. An inspection of individual frequency counts showed that some students' conduct was improved by a large margin.
Table 6
Analysis of Discipline Referrals Between First and Second Semesters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Number</th>
<th>1st Semester</th>
<th>2nd Semester</th>
<th>Difference</th>
<th>Difference Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-11</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>-3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-19</td>
<td>361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-8</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-7</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-13</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-7</td>
<td>49</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>-7</td>
<td>49</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-8</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-12</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \Sigma D = -97 \quad \Sigma D^2 = 1083 \]

\[ t = 6.1292 \quad df = 10 \quad P < .05 \]

Table 7
Analysis of Suspensions/Expulsions Between First and Second Semesters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Number</th>
<th>1st Semester</th>
<th>2nd Semester</th>
<th>Difference (Reduction)</th>
<th>Difference Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-4</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-6</td>
<td>36</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-3</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-8</td>
<td>64</td>
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\[ \Sigma D = -36 \quad \Sigma D^2 = 160 \]

\[ t = 5.2921 \quad df = 10 \quad P < .05 \]
The fifth hypothesis was accepted since the achieved results showed
a t-score of 5.2921 while a t-score of only 1.812 was needed for
significance.

H₆ stated that there would be a significant decrease in the number
of days absent as recorded in the school register when the first semester
was compared to the second semester. Observation of the analysis of
the data presented in Table 8 discloses a decrease in the number of days
absent for all subjects except subject one and subject seven. As can be
seen from the table, subject one did not miss a day the entire school
year. This information about subject one was interesting, since the main
reason for referral was truancy. On the other hand, subject seven
neither progressed nor regressed as shown in Table 8.

Table 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Number</th>
<th>1st Semester</th>
<th>2nd Semester</th>
<th>Difference</th>
<th>Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-15</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-16</td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-9</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-10</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-14</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \Sigma D = -72 \quad \Sigma D^2 = 876 \]

\[ t = 3.4132 \quad df = 10 \quad P < .05 \]
The sixth hypothesis was accepted since the results showed a significant decrease in the number of days absent for students during the second semester. A t-value of 3.4132 was achieved and a t-value of only 1.812 was needed.

H7 stated that there would be a significant difference in the mean scores of the pretest on the number of possible school dropouts when compared to the mean scores of the posttest as measured by the Demos D Scale. Analysis of the data concerning subjects' test scores on the Demos D Scale indicated that there is some probability that the students will drop out of school. As shown in Table 9, four subjects did not improve their scores, whereas six subjects did improve their scores by a small margin. Subject nine showed the most improvement on the posttest. However, when the t-test for non-independent samples was used, the data yielded no significant difference since a t-score of 1.812 was needed and a t-score of only 1.5726 was achieved.

Table 9
Analysis of Potential Dropouts When Pretest Scores Were Compared to Posttest Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Number</th>
<th>Pretest</th>
<th>Posttest</th>
<th>Difference</th>
<th>Difference Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>+11</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>-7</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>+11</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>+16</td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>78</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>+52</td>
<td>2704</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>-7</td>
<td>49</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \Sigma D = 89 \quad \Sigma D^2 = 3567 \]

\[ t = 1.5726 \quad df = 10 \quad P > .05 \]
Although analysis of the data revealed that the seventh hypothesis was rejected at the .05 level, findings were strong enough to be mentioned.

H$_0$ stated that there would be a significant difference in the pre- and post- mean scores of the potential salable skills as measured by the Jewish Employment and Vocational Service (JEVS), the Social and Pre-Vocational Information Battery (SPIB), and the Valpar Whole Body Range of Motion. A analyses of the total potential vocational salable skills showed significant gains in job related competencies. Significant gains were made in knowledge which pertained to purchasing, budgeting, banking, job related behavior, job search skills, home management, health care, hygiene and functional signs (SPIB). Significant gains were revealed for time improvement in task performances as well as rate of errors improvement when the JEVS scores were tallied. Although improvement was revealed by the test scores of the Valpar, it was not significant at the .05 level. Analysis of the data for hypothesis eight is illustrated in Table 10.

Table 10
Analyses of Total Potential Vocational Salable Skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Item</th>
<th>Pretest</th>
<th>Posttest</th>
<th>Difference</th>
<th>Difference Squared</th>
<th>t-value</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>JEVS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>time</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>1621</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>24694</td>
<td>3.0460*</td>
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<tr>
<td>rate of errors</td>
<td>354</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>5087</td>
<td>3.5469*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPIB</td>
<td>2110</td>
<td>2363</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>24694</td>
<td>2.6473*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VALPAR</td>
<td>19320</td>
<td>18320</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>2152760</td>
<td>.6647**</td>
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</table>

df = 10  
*P < .05  
**P > .05
The eighth hypothesis was rejected although findings did reveal a significant difference in all areas except the Valpar Whole Body Range Motion category.

Summary

Chapter 4 contained the introduction, presentation of data, analyses of findings, and the summary. The introduction revealed why the study was conducted and what answers were being sought. The presentation of data indicated the type of subjects who comprised the sample. Analyses of data were discussed and illustrated in the tables. As a result of the findings, hypotheses one, two, three, seven, and eight were rejected at the .05 level of significance. Hypotheses four, five, and six were accepted at the .05 level of significance.

The program was judged successful overall, because improvements were made in all areas, although the statistical analyses did not support the success to a significant degree in all areas.
Chapter 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The growing number of "alternative" programs and schools established by school districts has captured the attention of educators in recent years. The alternatives have been characterized as expressions of new responsiveness to the diversity of American society. Such diversity has resulted in the development of a wide range of programs subsumed under the rubric "alternative." A review of literature revealed that school systems might provide a few alternatives, many, or a comprehensive range of options. Approaches differed: some aimed at the total school-age population while other approaches were designed to serve special subgroups within a population. The alternative program in Kingsport, Tennessee may be classified under the second approach.

The general purpose of this study was to describe the development, implementation, and evaluation of an alternative approach to learning for selected students within the Kingsport, Tennessee City School System. Subjective evaluation by the Alternative School staff revealed that the subjects of this study were individuals who were unable to cope successfully with a traditional educational curriculum. Therefore, the staff attempted to unify the components essential to productive, meaningful living in both the world of work and the world of academia. The subjects, judged by some as "educational misfits" in traditional classroom approaches, were considered in need of special assistance. The Alternative School
afforded the assistance necessary for change of student behavior which allowed the subjects to cope within the school environment. By matching appropriately differing educational programs to students' differing developmental characteristics, school systems can assist students with special needs.

One of the criteria necessary for the recommendation of a student for assignment to the Alternative School was that the school system must have exhausted all other attempts to meet the needs of the student. Thus, the students assigned to the Alternative School were labeled as failures in the traditional classroom. Hence, a small success rate with subjects should be considered as acceptable.

Conclusions

The data were computed and analyzed and eight hypotheses were tested for significance at the .05 level. As a result of the analysis of the data collected, the following conclusions were made:

1. It was found that there was not a significant difference in students' attitudes toward school. However, it was found that students' attitudes toward school were very positive. In fact the difference was significant at the .10 level.

2. A positive but not statistically significant change of attitude, from that originally held toward self, was found to exist between the subjects' pretest and posttest scores.

3. The mean gain scores of academic achievement were not significant although seven of the 11 students showed improvement.

4. At the conclusion of the program, the number of discipline
referrals was found to be significantly decreased.

5. When the frequency count of suspensions/expulsions for the first semester was compared to the frequency count of suspensions/expulsions for the second semester, the results revealed a significant reduction in number during the second semester.

6. An analysis of days absent between the first and second semesters indicated a significant decrease in the number of days missed during the second semester.

7. A positive, but not statistically significant, improvement was found to be present when pretest scores were compared to posttest scores in the analysis of potential dropouts.

8. A significant difference in all areas except the Valpar Whole Body Range Motion category was found for the mean gain scores of the potential salable skills of the subjects in the Alternative School program in Kingsport, Tennessee.

9. The Alternative School program offered principals, parents and students an option regarding suspension and/or expulsion. Rather than students being on the street, the program allowed for a continuation of their formal education.

10. The low academic mean gains may be attributed to the staff's primary emphasis on obtaining change in student behavior. But if the academic progress for 1 year is compared to the academic progress for previous years, the success rate does appear to be higher.

11. Token economies which reward students for desirable classroom behavior and progress toward specific goals permit students to meet some of the requirements for success.
12. Support services from agencies within the community, such as the juvenile justice department and mental health organization, constitute an important element in ensuring student success.

13. Alternative programs which contain career orientation and opportunities for work may be considered a means for providing a sense of responsibility and dignity to the students. Work experiences are considered a means to develop pre-job and on-the-job skills. The training can help acquaint students with job prospects and integrate them into the marketplace.

14. The self-concept of alternative school students appears to improve, particularly for students who have not done well in conventional schools. Alternative programs provide a supportive, accepting environment where students can succeed and experience a sense of control over their lives.

15. Students tend to be happier in alternative schools and have better attitudes toward school.

16. More positive attitudes tend to be demonstrated by lower absentee rates, lower discipline referral rates and lower dropout rates.

17. Alternative programs tend to be small, intimate schools with a low student-teacher ratio, individualized instruction, a competent and caring staff, support personnel and a pragmatic vocational thrust. Research suggests that characteristics of the learning and interpersonal environments of alternatives will contribute, not only to diminution in aggressive behavior, but to the development of emotionally healthy individuals (Arnow & Strout, 1980).

18. The prospects for establishment of options in public schooling
are not encouraging. The locus of change is more likely to be at the level of individual alternative schools in which staff and students actively attempt to give shape and substance to more effective learning environments. Literature reviewed indicated that programs that worked had been developed with local initiative to meet the problems they faced.

**Recommendations**

As a result of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. It is recommended that the Alternative School program in Kingsport, Tennessee be continued since the results of the study provided evidence that there was positive gain in all areas of investigation, although not statistically significant in some areas.

2. Students who meet the following criteria should be provided an alternative to the conventional school and/or classroom: (a) demonstrate poor attitudes toward school and themselves; (b) make poor academic progress in school; (c) disrupt in the classroom and are sent to the principal or vice-principal for numerous disciplinary measures; (d) are otherwise suspended or expelled to roam the streets; (e) show high absentee rates; and (f) demonstrate a desire to drop out of school.

3. Students who demonstrate a need to develop potential vocational salable skills should be considered for an alternative program.

4. Additional studies should be made concerning the establishment of options to public schooling.

5. Research should be conducted to determine the influence of alternative programs on the learning of students.

6. Professionals, charged with responsibility for training teachers,
should be cognizant of the principles of behavior modification and developmental needs for the alternative-type student and should provide information within the domain of teacher training institutions and in-service education.

7. A follow-up study, using a larger sample, should be conducted to determine the long range effectiveness of the Alternative School program, and to determine the validity of the findings of this study.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


KINGSPORT CITY SCHOOLS  
Kingsport, Tennessee 
Multidisciplinary Team Report 

Conference Date __________

CHILD'S NAME ___________________ DATE OF BIRTH __________________

ADDRESS ___________________ TELEPHONE __________ PARENT/GUARDIAN __________

SCHOOL ___________________ CURRENT PLACEMENT __________________

I. MAJOR CONCERNS: ____________________________________________

II. EVALUATIONS ADMINISTERED: __________________________________

III. PRIMARY EDUCATIONAL NEEDS: _________________________________

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS: __________________________________________

V. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION/COMMENTS: __________________________

VI. WRITTEN EXPLANATION ISSUED BY: ________________________________

Signature ______________________________________________________

DATE  MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM MEMBERS  POSITION

1. __________  __________________________  _______________________

2. __________  __________________________  _______________________

3. __________  __________________________  _______________________

4. __________  __________________________  _______________________

5. __________  __________________________  _______________________

6. __________  __________________________  _______________________
**KINGSPORT CITY SCHOOLS**  
**INDIVIDUAL STUDENT PROFILE – MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM REPORT - IEP**

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<thead>
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<th>BIRTHDATE</th>
<th>ETHNIC GROUP</th>
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| CERTIFIED HANDICAPS | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
|---------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|

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<thead>
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<th>PRESENT LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE</th>
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<th>SOURCE</th>
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- Academic - reading  
  - math  
  - other  
- Social  
- Vocational  
- Psychomotor  
- Self-help

**ANNUAL GOALS:**

**EVALUATION PROCEDURES OF PROGRAM**

<table>
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<th>ENTRY DATE</th>
<th>PROJECTED DATE</th>
<th>OBJECTIVES MET</th>
<th>MORE TIME NEEDED</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
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<p>| SHORT TERM GOALS: | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
|                   |   |   |   |   |   |</p>
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<tr>
<th>RECOMMENDED EDUCATIONAL SERVICE AND/OR RELATED SERVICES</th>
<th>PERSON(s) RESPONSIBLE</th>
<th>PROGRAM DATES</th>
<th>TIME OF SERVICE</th>
<th>SPECIAL EQUIPMENT/ INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS</th>
<th>REVIEW DATES</th>
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**OPTION(S) OF SERVICE**

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<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- Time in regular educational program
- Time in other program

**TRANSPORTATION:**

- Regular
- Special
- Private
- Public
- None

**JUSTIFICATION OF TYPE PLACEMENT**

- Equal educational opportunities explained

**EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES EXPLAINED**

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<th>Signature Parent/Guardian/Surrogate</th>
<th>Date</th>
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**WRITTEN EXPLANATION ISSUED BY**

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**RECOMMENDED DATE FOR RE-EVALUATION**

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<th>Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
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**M-TEAM MEMBERS**

- Chairman
- Recorder
- Teacher regular
- Teacher
- Parent
- Special
- Other

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<th>Comments</th>
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79
TOKEN FORM SAMPLE

KINGSFORD ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL

NON-TRANSFERABLE

K A S

______ UNITS

STUDENT NO. ______
CONTINGENCY SCHEDULE FORM SAMPLE

<table>
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<th>Subject</th>
<th>Homeroom</th>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>On Time</th>
<th>Task Completed</th>
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<td>9:30 - 9:45</td>
<td>1:45 - 2:45</td>
<td>3:15 - 3:30</td>
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<td>9:45 - 10:50</td>
<td>12:05 - 12:40</td>
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Signatures are obtained for:
- Appropriate Classroom Behavior
- Completion of Task
- On task, on time

3:30 Dismissal

Student Name

Homeroom Teacher

Time:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Homeroom</th>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>On Time</th>
<th>Task Completed</th>
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KINGSPORT CITY SCHOOLS
PROGRAM FOR EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS
REQUEST FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Student ___________________ Sex _______ Date of Birth _______/________/_____
__________________________________________________________
Month Day Year

School _________________ Grade ___ Classroom Teacher ________________________

Parent or Guardian _________________ Address ___________________________

Telephone ______________________

Has student had previous psychological evaluation(s)? _____ Date(s) ______

Reason for Referral:

to determine classification: ______ intellectual giftedness

______ mental retardation

______ behavior disorder

______ re-evaluation-recommended by M-Team/previous exceptionality ______

______ to determine if student exhibits specific learning disability

______ to determine present level of intellectual functioning

______ to determine present level of academic functioning

______ parental request

______ other, please specify _____________________________________________

In behavioral terms, describe any problem areas (academic/learning, behavioral, perceptual, etc.) or areas of superior abilities. Include approximate grade level of functioning in READING, SPELLING AND MATH.

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

Duration of noted exceptionality ____________ Comment ______________________

What specific methods have you used when working with this student?

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________
Which methods have been most effective? 


Summary of significant health or medical information. Comment regarding:

1. presence of difficulty/handicap
2. suspected problem or
3. no noticeable difficulty. If problem exists or is suspected, please note specific information:

Vision: 

Hearing: 

Speech: 

Is student currently enrolled in speech therapy? _____ Yes _____ No

Current medication: 

General health: 

Other physical handicaps or special needs: 

Previous Test Results: (most recent)

Achievement: Name of Test __________ Date administered _________

Results (grade level): Spelling _____ Total Reading _____ Total Math_____

Total Battery _____

I.Q. Name of Test: __________ Date administered _________

Diagnostic Name of Test Results 

Please add any additional comments which would be of assistance.


Signature of Teacher Date 

Signature of Principal Date
KINGSPORT CITY SCHOOLS
PROGRAM FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

Dear ______________________________:

Additional educational services are available for student in Kingsport City Schools who may need special assistance in obtaining the most benefit from their education.

In order for us to determine if your child needs these services, we need your permission for ______________________ to be given an individual assessment by __________________________. As your child's parent or guardian, you have the right to accept or reject the proposed evaluation.

If you have any questions, please, contact ______________________________.

Sincerely,

__________________________
Teacher's Signature

I give my permission for my child to be given an individual assessment and for the results of this assessment to be given to appropriate school personnel.

__________________________
Parent's Signature

__________________________
Date
VITA

CAROL HARTMAN

Personal Data:  
Date of Birth:  February 26, 1940  
Place of Birth:  Knoxville, Tennessee  
Marital Status:  Single

Education:  
Public Schools, Greeneville, Tennessee  
East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tennessee; elementary education, B.S., 1971.  
East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tennessee; reading, M.A., 1974.  
East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tennessee; administration, Ed.D., 1980.

Professional Experience:  
Remedial Reading Teacher, Crescent Elementary School; Greeneville, Tennessee, 1977-1978.  
Graduate Assistant, East Tennessee State University; Johnson City, Tennessee, 1979.  

Honors:  
Phi Delta Kappa  
Kappa Delta Pi