A Systematic Replication of a Survey of School Administrators' and Teachers' Views Of Discipline Referrals for Students With and Without Disabilities

Amanda Burton
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A Systematic Replication of a Survey of School Administrators’ and Teachers’ Views
Of Discipline Referrals for Students With and Without Disabilities

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presented to
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by
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Keywords: disciplinary offenses, School-wide Positive Behavior Supports (SWPBS), Office Discipline Referral (ODR), disabilities
ABSTRACT

A Systematic Replication of a Survey of School Administrators’ and Teachers’ Views
Of Discipline Referrals for Students With and Without Disabilities

by

Amanda Burton

This study investigated time lost to office discipline referrals (ODRs), systematically replicating a prior study (Church, 2015) in rural school districts. An on-line survey asked administrators, general education, and special education teachers in four county districts for: a) demographic information; 2) estimated minutes lost to ODRs generally, specific ODR types, and for students with (SWD) or without disabilities (not SWD); and, 3) whether the respondent’s school implemented School-wide Positive Behavior Supports (SWPBS). ODRs generally took 16.9 minutes. Special Education teachers’ time (mean 23.6 min.), was Lost time was affected by ODR type (aggression, noncompliance, disruption mean 23 min.; not finishing work, inappropriate language, cell phone use mean 12.33 min.) and disability (SWD mean 20.2 min; Not SWD mean 15.17 min). Respondents reporting SWPBs had longer ODR times (mean 19.13 min.) than respondents without SWPBS (mean 16.77 min.). Implications for future research and the evaluation of SWPBS programs were discussed.
DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this first to my parents, Bobby and Jo Burton, for being there for me every step of the way and encouraging me despite my obstacles. I would also like to dedicate this to my best friend, Jennifer Lynberg, for giving me the confidence and encouragement to go back to school and obtain my Master’s Degree in Special Education.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Several decades of research on teacher stress, burnout and retention consistently show a number of variables that affect these adverse outcomes (Westling & Cooper-Duffy, 2003). One particular variable is that teachers report having insufficient time (Westling et al., 2006) to plan and deliver instruction. Until recently, much of this research was based on teachers’ self-report (interviews, rating scales, etc.). Several years ago, however, Mitchell, Deshler, and Lenz (2012) repeatedly observed special educators, finding that 33% of their day involved paperwork and other instructionally unrelated activities. A more recent study found that often students with significant disabilities were passively engaged and had little opportunity to work on skill acquisition (Pennington & Courtade, 2015). Another study related to teacher stressor identified in research has been difficulties in managing student behavior problems (Abernathy, Manera & Wright, 1985; Borg & Riding, 1991; Keiper & Bussele, 1996). Indeed, these stressors are ones that have been found across different cultural groups (Borg & Riding, 1991; Kokkinos, 2007). In fact, teachers report that behavior issues and time management issues not only affect their level of stress but are major barriers to their being able to identify, develop, implement and evaluate evidence-based teaching and behavior practices in their classrooms (McGoey, Rispoli, Venesky & Scheffner, 2014). In the study by Holben, Zirkel, and Caskie (2009), it was questioned whether teachers had a fear that kept them from disciplining the students. However Holben et al. (2009) found that “teachers perceived low levels of limitations to their disciplinary actions” and “perceived fear of litigation as a greater deterrent to nonintervention than to intervention” (p. 574). Teacher stress seems to be a typical part of the job, however Klassen (2010) notes that female teachers are often more stressed than male teachers. Male teachers were less likely to find
“children’s interpersonal behaviors as less problematic than did female teachers” (p. 349). It was noted that many misbehaviors are created through transitions, especially the transition between elementary school to middle school. Theriot and Dupper (2010) says that in consideration toward the different types of office referrals, research shows that there are variances between those behaviors which are behaviorally defined versus those behaviors which are ill-defined, with more room for discussion and open for discussion and individual teacher assessment.

To be a good teacher means to be willing to be a lifelong learner and understand how to meet the needs of all the students in a classroom. Through professional development, teachers can help each other by introducing new techniques that can be useful in creating student management and discipline plans that enable a classroom to run smooth throughout the course of the school day. By using the variety of ideas from multiple teachers, there could be a decreasing amount of disciplinary problems, which can take time away from the teacher and the students. By understanding the behavior and time management issues, teachers are able to have less stressful incidents throughout the day (Mathur, Estes, & Johns, 2012).

It is quite likely that stress, time constraints and student behavior issues interact with each other in a complex fashion, one affecting the other. In any event, effective and efficient interventions that yield reductions not only in behavior discipline issues and subsequent reductions in time needed to deal with such issues would prove helpful to teachers. SWPBS particularly at the universal level might go a long way to address these stressors and teacher stress. To date, however, there have been only two limited reports of how much time, instructionally and administratively, that are lost to discipline incidents describe the Scott and Barrett (2004) and the Muscott et al. (2008) studies.
Because of its relation to teacher stress and implementation of evidence based practices, it was deemed important to systematically replicate the Scott and Barrett (2004) and Muscott et al (2008) studies to ascertain to what extent student discipline referrals impinged upon administrative and teacher time. Furthermore, it advisable to analyze to what extent different discipline referrals might take more or less such time and to what extent those time estimates might be different when committed by general education and special education students.

When in the classroom, students have expectations to meet to succeed. To meet the given expectations, teachers create a plan and behavior management system (Scheuermann and Hall, 2016). However, there can be some students who are unable to follow the plan given by the teacher and comply with the instructions given due to various reasons. Many times, with those students, positive behavior interventions and supports (PBIS) are needed. Scheuermann and Hall (2016) state that PBIS is a research-based practice that responds when challenging behaviors occur. It was created to be proactive in preventing punitive behavior and encouraging appropriate behavior. Per Scheuermann and Hall (2016), most traditional disciplinary methods are reactive and only occur after a problem behavior has taken place. Reactive approaches take an inordinate amount of time from teachers and administrators alike due to the length process that must be taken with each office referral. From taking the time to talk to the student to finding a suitable consequence, the lost time could be used for more productive and proactive strategies than those of negative consequence. Most negative consequences, which can be warnings or loss of privileges are given to repeat offenders and tend to take more time than necessary. Therefore, the effectiveness of the negative consequence does not have a lasting effect and the punitive behavior will more than likely be seen again.

Some students will require considerably more
resources than others. They will need more structure, support or more frequent feedback about their behavior to regulate it.

**School-Wide Positive Behavior Support**

To address problem behaviors and decrease office referrals, schools are adopting school-wide positive behavior interventions supports (SWPBS). School-wide positive behavior support (SWPBS) is a research-based approach created to increase positive behaviors in the classroom and in the schools (Scheuermann & Hall, 2016). This approach is presented in a three-tier model of proactive and preventative approaches to decrease negative behavior (Scheuermann & Hall, 2016). SWPBS was established to be a preventive measure instead of a reactive measure, which is common of many school disciplines (Andreou, McIntosh, Ross, & Rahn, 2014). SWPBS includes interventions that can change insufficient school and classroom conditions unable to support positive social and academically related behaviors (Carr et al., 1999). These conditions can include, but are not limited to choices, activities, and how prompts are presented as well as consequences to recognize and reinforce appropriate positive behaviors. These interventions facilitate in building positive behavior, improving lifestyle behavior and reducing problem behavior. The study by Childs, Kincaid, George, and Gage (2016) explains that SWPBIS supports the social and emotional needs of all children. SWPBIS impacts student outcomes in respect to office discipline referrals (ODRs), in-school suspensions (ISSs), and out-of-school suspensions (OSSs). With SWPBIS, it is reported that schools have higher Benchmarks of Quality (BoQ) total scores, lower ODRs, and fewer ISSs and OSSs (Childs et. al, 2016).

The goal of SWPBS is to use the behavior principles in the community to reduce problem behaviors and create appropriate behaviors that have a lasting impact on the students’ behaviors. The main result has been to expand on current interventions based on consequences including
changing the surroundings prior to an occurrence of a problem behavior and explaining appropriate behaviors to apply to reduce negative behaviors. The process has evolved into ensuring that instruction given towards appropriate behaviors make the problem behaviors ineffective and change the environment to make the problem behavior inefficient.

**Tier I, II, and III**

Per Scheuermann and Hall (2016), there are nine different levels that define SWPBS and make it different from the other disciplinary programs used in schools. First, there is a focus on every system in the school. This means that the focus is not only on the classroom, but also towards areas such as bathrooms, hallways, and dismissal times. Secondly, there is attention to the needs of all students through a three-tiered program model. This helps ensure that every student is included and targets those students with specific needs.

The first tier is the primary level prevention. It is the universal level and designed to prevent the most common behavioral issues that occur in a school setting. The next tier is the secondary level. It is meant to be used to quickly avert problem behaviors that occur despite initial efforts from primary prevention. This tier can be found to work best in small groups. The last tier is the tertiary level. It is a one-on-one level and very intensive. Its purpose is to work with those students who need individualized services (Scheuermann & Hall, 2016).

Safran and Oswald (2003) note that SWPBS have different levels of support. The primary level of support exists for all students to ensure that all students follow the school rules and exhibit appropriate behavior. Scheuermann and Hall (2016) indicate the “primary level prevention should be effective for 80% to 90% of the population of any given school” (OSEP, n.d.). There are two more intensive levels of PBS and vary depending on the needs of the students. The next level involves secondary prevention by targeting those students who are
displaying at-risk behaviors that have not responded sufficiently to the primary or school-wide level of intervention. With the secondary level, students are typically demonstrating behaviors that are not dangerous to themselves or others, but are disruptive to their learning or the learning of their classmates (Anderson & Borgmeier, 2010). At this secondary level, identified students receive increased behavior supports that typically consist of evidence-based interventions such as social skills (La Greca & Santogrossi, 1980), self-management interventions (Briesch & Daniels, 2013), or other systematic interventions such as Check and Connect (Maynard, Kjellstrand, & Thompson, 2014), Check-in, Check-out (Hawken, Bundock, Kladis, O’Keefe, & Barrett, 2014), and Good Behavior Game (Donaldson, Vollmer, Krous, Downs & Berard, 2011). These interventions were created with similar components such as explicit instruction of skills (e.g., academic skills, social skills), structured prompts for suitable behavior, openings for students to use new skills in settings that are natural, and continual feedback to the student. Using evidence-based interventions to improve social skills, Reichow and Volkmar (2010) have found that visual supports can be beneficial. The most commonly used visual supports can be social stories, visual activities or video modeling. Studies (Sansosti & Powell-Smith, 2008; Ganz & Flores, 2008; Betz, Higbee, & Reagon, 2008) have shown that visual supports are a great resource for improving social skills and creating structured interactions. Another evidence-based intervention is self-management. Self-management can be defined as an individual’s application of techniques that achieve a desired change in behavior (Carr, Moore, & Anderson, 2014; Cooper, Heron & Heward, 2007). Newman and Tan Eyck (2005) discussed a method used to improve students’ self-management such as a token exchange system, where students choose a preferred activity from a list. Carr, Moore, and Anderson (2014) also spoke of peer involvement during self-management intervention which involves students taking on different roles, whether it is
tutoring (Parker & Kamps, 2010) or giving positive reinforcement for social interactions that are appropriate (Loftin, Odom & Lantz, 2008).

Tier II may also involve fading of prompts as students show mastery of the learned skills. Progress monitoring data are used to make these decisions by using the students’ goals and recommendations for the student to positively progress in their behavior. Tier II is also designed to be a communication tool with parents. It allows parents to see their child’s progress and provide positive feedback and encouragement (Anderson & Borgmeier, 2010).

The tertiary-level is needed when challenging and inappropriate behaviors are exhibited. These behaviors are usually nonresponsive to the Tier I and II interventions. Individualized behavior intervention plans and functional behavior assessments can be created for students in this level to assist the teacher in decreasing the unwanted behavior. The interventions used at this level typically have many components, involving antecedent strategies to avert problem behaviors, strategies to teach appropriate behavior, and consequences to decrease the problem behavior and increase the wanted behavior (Anderson & Borgmeier, 2010).

Another technique that can help students become successful in the classroom is a systematic intervention such as Check and Connect. Cheney, Stage, Hawken, Lynass, Mielenz, & Waugh (2009) explains that this intervention has created a way to maintain school engagement and minimize problem behavior. Check and Connect may rely upon an adult mentor to be actively involved in situations that students face with concerns towards their behavior to give feedback and help students problem solve (Sinclair, Christenson, Evelo, & Hurley, 1998). There is another systematic intervention called Check In, Check Out. Designed for students who display nonthreatening problem behavior during academics, Campbell and Anderson (2011) define Check In, Check Out, or CICO, as a way to “provide more frequent instruction regarding
expected behavior, increase structured contact between students and adults in the school, provide
a formal mechanism for students to receive feedback on their behavior, and to increase
opportunities for reinforcement contingent on expected behavior” (Campbell & Anderson, p.315-
316). CICO is very involved in meeting with students about their behavior and school-wide
expectations to enable the students to be more independent and flourish in the classroom.
Furthermore, the Good Behavior Game is another systematic intervention for dealing with
difficult, but nonthreatening behavior. Donaldson et al. (2011) define the Good Behavior Game
or GBG as “an interdependent group contingency that involves dividing the class into teams,
creating simple rules, and arranging contingencies for breaking or following those rules” (p.605).
These systematic and evidence-based interventions will help students ultimately become
independent and able to function with fewer supports.

Per Blevins (2007), results from previously completed research on SWPBS is very
enlightening. Students with significant emotional problems are more likely to stay in the regular
classroom for most the day. Since there have been less behavior issues in the classroom, there
have been fewer office discipline referrals (ODRs). Due to decrease in ODRs, there is more time
for teachers and administrators to follow their daily routine and build positive behavior in the
classrooms and, overall the school. In a study by Scott and Barrett (2004), an urban school in
Maryland had used SWPBS for two years. It was deemed that the average amount of time the
administrators spent processing a disciplinary suspension was 45 minutes while the typical ODR
was around 10 minutes. The average student time out of the classroom was 20 minutes. Muscott,
Mann, and LeBrun (2008) conducted and found in a survey, elementary and multilevel schools
reported that a typical ODR took students 45 minutes of classroom instructional time, teachers
10 minutes of teaching time, and administrators 15 minutes of leadership time. For middle and
high schools, the estimated time costs were reported as 45 minutes for students, 15 minutes for teachers, and 30 minutes for administrators. Nevertheless, the amount of prior research on ODR and the time lost is limited. In the given studies, the estimations are not definitive and do not specify the offenses that the students have committed.

In a descriptive study by Church (2015), information about students with and without disabilities was collected on ODRs. The data collected included the type of ODR, the amount of time taken, if SWPBS was involved in the school, and whether students with disabilities were involved. The results showed that the average ODR took 15 minutes of time away from the teachers and administrators. The limitations included a small sample size and data collected from a limited number of schools. Furthermore, the method of reporting time was lost.

The current study is a systematic, descriptive replication of Church (2015). Four different schools were surveyed during this time to extend the data. This study was also an attempt to improve the response rate before the end of the school year. During this study, a more precise of estimating time lost due to ODRs by estimating the minutes taken. However, the same variables from the previously completed study by Church (2015) were used.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this investigation:

1. When principals, general educators, and special educators are surveyed, what is the reported time lost to ODRs?

2. What is the reported time lost for specific classes of ODRs (aggression, disruption, noncompliance, not completing work, cell phone use, inappropriate language) when the offending student is one with a disability and when the student does not have a disability?
3. What percentage of respondents indicates that their school is implementing SWPBS?

4. Of those respondents reporting the use of SWPBS, which of the 10 critical components of SWPBS do they indicate are implemented in their school?

5. What are the estimated times lost to ODRs in general and for specific classes of ODRs for students with and without disabilities as indicated by respondents whose schools use SWPBS and those not reporting SWPBS?
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

Evaluating School-Wide Positive Behavior Supports and Interventions

In the more than 30 years since its inception, SWPBS has increasingly been the subject of empirical evaluations of its effectiveness. Repeatedly studies have shown that SWPBS can effectively improve various outcome measures relating to student discipline and performance. Various studies have shown improvements in office discipline referrals, attendance, and drop-out rates in both elementary and high schools (e.g., Blevins, 2007; Childs, Kincaid, George, Gage, 2016; Freeman, Simonsen, McCoach, Betsy D.; Sugai, Lombardi, Horner, 2015; Freeman, Simonsen, McCoach, Sugai, Lombardi, & Horner, 2016; Horner, Sugai, Smolkowski, Eber, Nakasato, Todd, & Esperanza, 2009) when SWPBS was implemented with high fidelity.

SWPBS can be and has been evaluated in terms of a number of different kinds of measures. These measures include school generated discipline data such as office discipline referrals (ODRs), in-school (ISS) and out-of-school suspensions (OSS), attendance, various rating behavior scales such as the Student Risk Screening Scale (e.g., Lane, Richards-Tutor, Oakes, & Connor, 2014; Lane, Oakes, Carter, Lambert, & Jenkins, 2013), and faculty – staff surveys such as the School-Wide Evaluation Tool (Horner, Todd, Lewis-Palmer, Irvin, Sugai, & Boland, 2004). By far, ODRs are the most frequently reported measure in research evaluation studies of SWPBS (Fox & Blevins, 2013; Scott, White, Algozzine, & Algozzine, 2009) and perhaps one of the most valid outcome measures (Irvin, Horner, Ingram, Todd, Sugai, Sampson, & Boland, 2006; Spaulding, Irvin, Horner, May, Emeldi, Tobin, & Sugai, 2010).

Indeed, as they represent a relatively direct measure of students’ behavior problems, ODRs have further relevance for school personnel. Research has shown that student behavior
problems are a source of stress and attrition for teachers (e.g., Klassen, 2010), especially those who teach students with significant emotional and behavioral issues (e.g., Billingsley, Fall, & Williams, 2006). Thus, a focus on ODRs in evaluating SWPBS is a reasonable and valid measure for multiple reasons.

ODRs can be analyzed in a number of ways to evaluate the impact of SWPBS on student behavior. One can evaluate the change in the overall number or average number of ODRs per student in a period of time such as a grading period or a school year (Fox & Blevins, 2013). Secondly, one can examine the number of students who fall into standard categories of “behavior risk” based on the number of ODRs that a student incurs. A common categorization consists of the following: a) 0 to 1 ODR in a grading period is considered as “low risk”; b) 2 to 5 ODRs in a grading period is “moderate risk”; and, c) 6 or more ODRs in a grading period being “high risk”. Not only have SWPBS programs been shown to reduce the overall number or average of ODRs in a school, it has also resulted in decreased numbers of students who fall into the moderate and high behavior risk categories (e.g., Blevins, 2007; Blevins, Fox, Herald, Booher, & Edwards, 2015).

A third way in which ODRs can be evaluated consists of the degree to which reductions in ODRs recover lost administrative and teaching time. Scott and Barrett (2004) reported that analysis of discipline records for one year in one Maryland urban elementary school that the typical ODR resulted in the loss of 10 min of administrator time and 20 min. of student time out of the classroom. Muscott, Mann, & LeBraun (2008) reported that in a survey of New Hampshire schools that were implementing SWPBS, ODR students lost 45 minutes of classroom instructional time, teachers lost 10 minutes of teaching time, and administrators lost 15 minutes of leadership time at the elementary level while for middle and high schools, the estimated time
costs were 45 minutes for students, 15 minutes for teachers, and 30 minutes for administrators.

Given such estimates of time lost to ODRs, one can then calculate the amount of student, teaching and administrative time that is recovered when ODRs are decreased through SWPBS. Indeed, the Association for Positive Behavior Support has posted an Excel Spreadsheet on its website that allows one to enter data about the number of office referrals from one year to the next and automatically calculate the amount of recovered student time in class time and administrator time.

Recovered instructional and administrative time due to reductions in ODRs has considerable social validity. Various studies have shown that teachers in general, especially Special Education teachers, report that they have insufficient time in which to plan, implement and evaluate the effects of their instruction and that these time constraints contribute to stress and burn out (e.g., Abernathy, 1985; Klas, Kennedy, & Kendell-Woodward, 1984, Kokkinos, 2007, McGoe, Rispoli, Venesky, Schaffner, McGuirk, & Marshall, 2014). In an intensive direct observational study of seven different special education teachers, Mitchell et al. (2012) reported that special education teachers spent on average 33% of their time on non-instructional related activities such as completing paperwork.

Students with Disabilities and Office Discipline Referrals

The relationship between students with disabilities, ODRs, and the effects of primary level SWPBS has received little empirical attention. Students with disabilities are ‘overrepresented” in terms of ODRs (Tobin, Horner, Vincent, & Swain-Bradway, undated) and a recent study by Benton & Fox (2014) that examined the ODRs for two city and two county rurally located school districts indicated that certain categories of disability (emotional behavioral disorders, other health impairments, and specific learning disabilities accounted were
more likely to have higher levels of ODRS than students with other disabilities and students without disabilities. Analysis of the effects of primary/universal level SWPBS have been reported in two unpublished studies (Blevins, 2007; Tobin et al, undated) have indicated that ODR rates of students with disabilities were reduced at levels similar to or even greater than their typically developing peers. Yet it is unclear to what extent students with disabilities are typically included in SWPBS programs (see, for example, Brown & Michaels, 2006; Carr, 2006; Snell, 2006) and the extent to which the ODRs of students with disabilities result in the same, greater or lesser loss of instructional or administrative time as neither the Scott & Barrett (2004) or Muscott et al (2008) reported ODR time lost data for students with disabilities. A recent study by Church (2015) did begin to address these issues. In her study, Church (2015) conducted an electronic survey of 2 city and 2 county school districts in rural northeast Tennessee. Respondents indicated that: a) on average an ODR resulted in a loss of 14.89 minutes; b) ODRs for students with disabilities took longer (mean 15 min) than for students without disabilities (mean 13 min.) and that this was true for specific types of discipline offenses (i.e., aggression, disruption, not completing work, cell phone use and inappropriate language), c) all respondents reporting SWPBS in their schools indicated students with disabilities were included in that primary level program; and, d) ODRs for respondents reporting the use of SWPBS in their schools took longer than ODRs for respondents who did not report the use of SWPBS. Unfortunately, the survey return rate for Church (2015) was very low (only 61 of 974 surveys that were sent out or 6.26%). Thus there is a need to systematically replicate Church’s survey to better assess the reliability of her findings.
Summary: ODRs, Time Lost, Students with Disabilities and SWPBS and Research Questions

In summary, ODRs are a logical, important, and frequently used dependent measure in evaluating the effects of SWPBS programs. ODRs can be analyzed in a number of ways, typically by evaluating the overall reduction in the total number of ODRs and/or the number of students who fall into moderate and severe behavior risk categories based on ODRs, 2 to 5 ODRs being moderate risk and 6 or more ODRs being severe risk. A third but much less frequently reported metric is the amount of recovered teaching and administrative time when ODRs have been reduced through the use of SWPBS. This metric has important implications since teachers and especially special education teachers, often report high levels of stress and are characterized by high attrition rates. Student behavior issues and insufficient time to plan, conduct and evaluate their teaching activities are two of the most frequently reported sources of teacher stress and attrition. Yet this third metric regarding recovered time is based on a very limited data base, two published studies (Muscott et al. 2008; Scott & Barrett, 2004) each conducted in a particular state (New Hampshire and Maryland, respectively), that produced somewhat different estimates of time lost to ODRs. Church’s (2015) study analyzed ODR time lost in four rurally located districts in northeast Tennessee, expanding the data base by analyzing specific classes of ODRs (aggression, disruption, noncompliance, not completing work, cell phone use, inappropriate language), assessing lost time estimates separately for students with and without disabilities and comparing these data for schools that reportedly used SWPBS versus those that did not. Given Church’s (2015) low return rate and the general need to systematically replicate studies to evaluate the reliability of findings, the purpose of the present study was to conduct a replication of that electronic survey with additional school districts in rural northeast Tennessee.
CHAPTER 3

METHODS

Participants

Participants in this study were school principals, assistant principals, general education teachers, and special education teachers in four county school districts in northeast Tennessee. Demographic statistics for these districts are shown below in Table 1A – 1C

Table 1

**Demographic Statistics for the Districts Selected**

A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Grades served</th>
<th># of schools</th>
<th># of Administrators</th>
<th># of Teachers</th>
<th>ADM¹</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GC</td>
<td>PK-12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>732</td>
<td>6775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JC</td>
<td>PK-12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>2069</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UC</td>
<td>K-12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>2362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>PK-12</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>722</td>
<td>9963</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ ADM is Average Daily Membership, the average daily attendance for that district.

B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>% White</th>
<th>% Minority</th>
<th>% Male</th>
<th>% Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GC</td>
<td>79.4</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>50.3</td>
<td>49.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JC</td>
<td>94.9</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>52.0</td>
<td>48.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UC</td>
<td>87.5</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>53.0</td>
<td>47.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>95.9</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>51.4</td>
<td>48.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>% of English</th>
<th>% of SWD</th>
<th>% of Eco. Disadv²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GC</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>66.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JC</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>80.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UC</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>66.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>58.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

² Economically Disadvantaged is the percentage of students on free and reduced meals.

These districts were selected because they were located in the same region as those in the prior survey (Church, 2015) upon which this study was based. None of the school districts in this study were included in Church’s prior study.
Participant recruitment was accomplished in the following manner. The principal investigator contacted either the School’s director or his/her designee for permission to conduct the study in that system via email. A copy of the study proposal and the survey including the invitation to participate/informed consent was provided to the district administrator. Once permission was secured from that administrator, an email was sent to each school principal, assistant principal, general educator, and special educator in that district via his/her school email address. Due to the survey questions inquiring about the behaviors and attitudes of school personnel, responses were anonymous and personally identifying information was not included in the respondents’ replies to the survey. This served to protect the participants’ privacy thus encouraging more candid responses.

For three of the districts, an email with the link to the survey was sent to a district designee who then forwarded it to school principals, general education teachers, special education teachers, and other faculty. In case of the fourth district, UC, the district administrator sent a list of principal and teacher emails to the principal investigator who then sent the invitation to participate email and survey link to each school’s personnel.

Survey Design and Procedure

This study was a systematic replication of Church (2015). Therefore, the survey instrument itself was identical to that of Church (2015) with one exception, the way in which respondents were asked to estimate the amount of time taken by office referrals. In the Church (2015) study, respondents were asked to estimate ODR time within time intervals (less than 5 min., 6 – 15 min., 15 – 30 min., etc.). In the current study, respondents were asked to give a specific amount of time in minutes that it took to deal with an ODR (e.g., 17 min). This change was made to provide a more precise and replicable data set.
The survey consisted of several sections and questions: a) demographic information about the respondent – his/her role in the school, grade levels currently taught, and years of teaching experience; b) the respondent’s estimates of how long it took them to deal with a typical ODR, estimates of ODR time taken for students with and that for students without disabilities and for specific ODRs – aggression, disruption, noncompliance, not completing assignments, inappropriate language, and cell phone use; and c) the extent to which their school was implementing SWPBS. This latter component allowed for the comparative analysis of ODR times between those respondents reporting use of SWPBS in their schools and those who did not report SWPBS. SWPBS questions were focused on whether or not the respondents’ school was implementing SWPBS, the length of time it had been implemented, which of the ten components of SWPBS were being implemented, and if students with disabilities were involved in the SWPBS program in their school. A copy of the whole survey is in Appendix D.

**Data Collection**

Using *Google Docs*, the online survey was created and was then sent via school email addresses to potential participants as described above. The cut-off date for participation in the survey was May 12, 2016. After the survey was delivered to the recipients and respondents completed the survey, *Google Docs Forms* was used to view responses and conduct simple analyses of the collected data. Participant responses were then transferred to Excel Spreadsheets for more detailed analyses.

**Study Design**

This was a descriptive study that collected various demographic, office disciplinary offenses, estimates of time taken dealing with ODRs, and descriptive data about the extent to which respondents’ schools implemented SWPBS. Post hoc comparisons were then made
analyzing the ODR times, specific ODR offenses for students with and without disabilities in schools that implemented and did not implement SWPBS.
CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Response Rate

Response Rate: The response rate is also known as a completion rate. In survey research, it is in reference to the number of individual people who complete a survey divided by the number of people in the sample. This number can be found in percentage form. The return rate for this study was 4.48%. Surveys were sent out by a designee from each county to the respective schools. Seventy surveys were returned between February 17, 2016 and May 12, 2016. From April 4 – April 19, there were no surveys being returned, so another email was sent out with the survey form and link to ask the designees to resend the survey to their schools. Sending out another email helped gather more completed surveys. This information is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. With a total of 1,562 surveys having been sent out via email, a return of 70 emails produced a return rate of 4.45%.

Table 2

Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Administrators</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>722</td>
<td>769</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GC</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>432</td>
<td>455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JC</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UC</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>1,465</td>
<td>1,562</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Response Rate: 70 (4.45%)
Demographics: Role Within the School System

For survey question number one, respondents indicated their particular role within their school. Of the total 70 returned surveys, 57.14% identified as general educators, 21.42% said they were special educator teachers, 14.2% noted that they were a principal or an assistant principal, and 7.14% reported that their roles did not identify with those three categories. See Figure 1. Thus most respondents were general educators followed by special educators and then principals.

![Respondents' Role Within the School System](image)

**Figure 1. Role Within the School System**

Demographics: Grade Levels Currently Represented by Respondents’ Schools

For survey question number two asked respondents to indicate which grade levels were currently included in their schools. Figure 2 shows the number of respondents indicating a particular reporting each grade level in their school. The data indicates that the elementary and high school grades were slightly more frequently reported than middle school grades by respondents. Approximately 35% of respondents indicated that the K-4 grades were at their
school. Grades 5-8 were represented in approximately 32% of the schools and it was reported that approximately 35% of the respondents said that grades 9-12 were represented at their school.

Figure 2. Grade Levels Currently Represented by Respondents’ Schools

Demographics: Grade Levels Currently Taught by Respondents

On survey question number three, respondents were asked to report the grade level(s) that they currently taught. Figure 3 shows the number of respondents reporting teaching a particular grade level. It appears that more respondents reported teaching high school grades 9 – 12. As it was previously noted, since a teacher can teach multiple grade levels, calculations will not equal 100%. For instance, about 13% of the respondents reported that they are teaching at an elementary school (grades PreK-4). There were approximately 26% of the respondents who indicated that they are teaching middle school (grades 5-8) and 29% said that they teach high school (grades 9-12).
Survey question number four concerned the number of years a participant had been teaching. These data are shown in Figure 4 and indicate a bi-modal distribution of years seems: 16% teaching for 1-5 years, 13% teaching 6-10 years, 21% teaching 11-15 years, 16% teaching for 16-20 years, 14% teaching 21-25 years, and 20% reporting they have been teaching for more than 25 years. The years of teaching range from 2 – 38 years. The overall average amount of years teaching was approximately 17 years.

**Figure 3. Grade Levels Currently Taught by Respondents**

**Demographics: Years of Teaching Experience**
Figure 4. Years of Teaching Experience

**Time Spent with Office Discipline Referrals**

For survey question number 5, in regards to the average time spent dealing with an office referral for a student, 31% said it took them less than 5 minutes, 33% indicated that it took them from 6-15 minutes, 30% reported it took them 16 – 30 minutes, 4% said it took 31 – 45 minutes, and 1% indicated it took 46 – 60 minutes. No respondent said it took more than 60 minutes. (See Figure 5.)
Figure 5. Time Spent Dealing with Office Discipline Referrals

**SWPBS Programs in the Schools**

Survey question number eight asked if the respondents’ school was applying the SWPBS program. There were 28 respondents who reported “Yes” (40%) and 42 respondents who reported “No” (60%). See Figure 6.

Figure 6. Schools Implementing SWPBS
**Length of Time Schools Have Implemented a SWPBS Program**

Survey question number nine requested the amount of time that the respondents’ schools have been putting SWPBS programs into effect. There seemed to be a bi-modal distribution in the given responses. Given the information in Figure 7, it can be assessed that SWPBS was enacted beginning at less than a year (4%), raising to 5% for 1 year, and 11% for 2 years. 7% reported that SWPBS was being implemented for 3 years. There was no response for 4 or 5 years. 11% indicated that the SWPBS program had been in effect for more than 5 years. See Figure 7.

![Figure 7. Length of Time Implementing SWPBS](image)

**SWPBS Components Reported by Respondents**

For survey question number ten, respondents were requested to choose from a list of those SWPBS components that were being presently implemented in their schools. The percentage of respondents reporting each component is shown in Figure 8. The most frequently reported component was an acknowledgement or reward ticket system for recognizing students when they are engaged in one or more target behaviors (83%). This was followed periodic drawing for prizes (67%), a school leadership team who creates, coordinates, and analyzes the
SWPBS program (63%), and posting of target behaviors (52%). The least reported components were direct teaching of target behaviors (47%), collection and analysis of reward tickets and office referrals to evaluate the SWPBS program (33%), a written manual about the SWPBS program (20%), and a yearly survey to evaluate the opinions of faculty, administrators, other staff, students, and parents in regarding effectiveness and acceptability the SWPBS program (29%).

![SWPBS Components Reported](image)

**Figure 8. Components of SWPBS Implemented**

**Including Students with Disabilities in a SWPBS Program**

Survey question number eleven asked whether students with disabilities were typically included in SWPBS programs or not included. Figure 9 shows that 87% of respondents reported that students with disabilities were fully included in the SWPBS program while 10% reported including students with disabilities were included in some, but not all of the SWPBS program. The remaining 3% of the respondents indicated that students with disabilities were not included in the SWPBS program in their school.
Figure 9. Including Students with Disabilities in a SWPBS Program

Time Affected by Office Discipline Referrals for Schools with SWPBS

The ODR data were further analyzed by comparing those respondents whose schools reportedly used SWPBS and those whose schools did not implement SWPBS. Figure 10 portrays the overall time lost to ODRs for schools with and without SWPBS. It can be seen that respondents in SWPBS schools reported an average of 19 minutes per ODR while those in schools without SWPBS took slightly less time (17 minutes per ODR).

Figure 10. Time Spent Addressing an Office Discipline Referral
Specific ODRs in Schools With and Without SWPBS

Time Affected by Office Discipline Referrals for Aggression

*Aggression/Fighting.* Figure 11 compares the mean time for Aggression in SWPBS schools and those schools without SWPBS for students with and without disabilities. For students with disabilities, the average time for Aggression was similar in SWPBS and non-SWPBS schools (mean = 36.58 and 36.10 minutes respectively) while for students with and without disabilities, the average time for Aggression ODRs was less in non-SWPBS schools (mean = 27.86 and 24.03 minutes respectively).

Figure 11. Aggression for Students with and without Disabilities in Schools with and without SWPBS Programs

Time Affected by Office Discipline Referrals for Disruptive Behavior

*Disruptive behavior.* Shown in Figure 12 are the data for Disruptive behavior ODRs. For students with disabilities the average time for Disruption was similar in SWPBS and non-SWPBS schools (mean = 23.21 and 22.20 minutes respectively) while for students with and without disabilities the average time for Disruption ODRs was less in non-SWPBS schools (mean = 16.52 and 16.67 minutes respectively).
Figure 12. Disruptive Behavior for Students with and without Disabilities in Schools with and without SWPBS Programs

**Time Affected by Office Discipline Referrals for Noncompliance/Defiance Behavior**

*Noncompliance/defiance.* Figure 13 shows the average times for Noncompliance ODRs. For students with disabilities in SWPBS and non-SWPBS schools, Noncompliance ODRs took an average of 22.86 and 22.23 minutes respectively whereas for students without disabilities, Noncompliance ODRS took less time, an average of 17.48 and 16.26 minutes, respectively.
Figure 13. Noncompliance/Defiance for Students with and without Disabilities in Schools with and without SWPBS Programs

Time Affected by Office Discipline Referrals for Not Completing Assignments

Not completing assignments. Shown in Figure 14 are ODRS for Not Completing Assignments. These data indicate that for students with disabilities, Not Completing Assignment ODRs took an average of 16.18 and 17.88 minutes, for SWPBS and Non-SWPBS schools respectively. For students without disabilities Not Completing Assignments ODRs took less average time, 10.71 and 12.19 minutes in SWPBS and Non-SWPBS schools respectively.

Figure 14. Not Completing Assignments for Students with and without Disabilities in Schools with and without SWPBS Programs

Time Affected by Office Discipline Referrals for Cell Phone Use

Cell Phone Use. Cell phone use average times are shown in Figure 15. The average times taken for Cell Phone Use ODRs for students with disabilities were 11.13 and 10.26 minutes in SWPBS and Non-SWPBS schools respectively. For students without disabilities Cell Phone Use ODRs took an average of 11.50 and 9.58 minutes respectively.
Figure 15. Cell Phone Use for Students with and without Disabilities in Schools with and without SWPBS Programs

**Time Affected by Office Discipline Referrals for Inappropriate Language**

*Inappropriate language.* Figure 16 shows the average ODR time for Inappropriate Language. For students with disabilities the average Inappropriate Language ODR time in SWPBS and Non-SWPBS schools was very similar, 13.04 and 13.49 minutes respectively while ODR times for students without disabilities in SWPBS and Non-SWPBS schools was somewhat less, 13.2 and 10.95 minutes, respectively.
Figure 16. Inappropriate Language for Students with and without Disabilities in Schools with and without SWPBS Programs

Comparison of Current Study with Church (2015)

This current study was a systematic replication of a previous study by Church (2015) in which school personnel in four different rural school districts in northeast Tennessee were the focus of the replication study. In the Church (2015) study the overall average time taken for an ODR was 14.9 minutes while in the present study the overall average ODR time was slightly higher, 16.9 minutes.

Table 3 shows the average ODR times in the Church (2015) and present studies broken down by students with and without disabilities for specific types of ODRs.

Table 3
Average Times for Specific ODRs in Church (2015) and Current Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Church (2015)</th>
<th>Current Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SWD¹</td>
<td>Not SWD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggression</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>17.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disruption</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noncompliance</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Complete Work</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cell Phone Use</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inappropriate Language</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹SWD is “Students with Disabilities”
These data show that average times for these specific classes were consistently higher in the current study than in the Church (2015). At the same time in both the current study and in Church (2015) ODR average times were greater for students with disabilities than for students without disabilities. Finally, in both studies average ODR times were greater for Aggression, Disruption, and Noncompliance than for Not Completing Work, Cell Phone Use and Inappropriate Language.
CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION

This study was completed to systematically replicate Church (2016) to compare the time that an office discipline referral takes for students with and without disabilities with schools that use SWPBS and those that do not. The survey, previously developed by Church (2015) consisted of demographic data, questions about the time involved in administrators and teachers responding to Office Discipline Referrals (ODRs) in general and specific categories of ODRs when the offending student was one with versus one without disabilities, and questions about the respondents’ schools implementation of School-Wide Positive Behavior Supports (SWPBS). One change was made to the Church (2015) survey in that instead of asking respondents to classify their time estimates in intervals of time (e.g., less than 5 min., 6 to 15 min, etc), respondents were asked to indicate a specific amount of time to deal with the ODR (e.g., 17 min.). The surveys were sent to principals/assistant principals, general educators and special education teachers in four different rural schools.

The results were the following. Of the potential 1562 surveys sent out, 70 were returned for a return rate of 4.48%. Of these responses, general educators, accounted for the greatest percentage of responses (57%), followed by special educators (21%) and principals (14%). There was a lightly greater percentage of responses form from secondary level personnel than elementary. On average ODRs took 16.9 minutes per referral. The amount of time appeared to be related to the type of ODR with those for Aggression, Disruption, and Noncompliance taking longer than those for Not Completing Work, Cell Phone Use or Inappropriate Language. ODRs for students with disabilities typically took longer than the same ODRs for students without disabilities. ODRs for respondents who reported using SWPBS took longer than those respondents who did not report using SWPBS. These data parallel the findings of Church (2015).
with the exception that generally respondents in the current study reported longer ODR times in general, for specific classes of ODR and for students with and without disabilities than reported in the Church (2015 study). Also in contrast to the Church (2015) who reported that 57% of respondents reported SWPBS only 40% of respondents indicated that their schools implemented SWPBS.

Studies of ODR times reported earlier by Scott & Barret (2004) and Muscott et al 2008) reported somewhat different estimates of time lost to ODRs. Their estimates of time lost to ODRs ranged from 10 to 30 minutes per ODR for administrators, 10 to 15 minutes for teachers and 20 to 45 minutes for students. In the present study we found overall ODRs took about 16.9, with Principals reporting 20.4 min per ODR, general education teachers reporting 12.8 min. per ODR and special education teachers reporting 23.6 min. per ODR. Methodological differences (e.g., different assessment methods, different geographical locations, different subject populations) between the Scott & Barrett (2004) and Muscott et al (2008) studies, and the current study may account for these differences. Indeed the current study and that of Church (2015) were virtually identical and while the current ODR times were consistently larger than those reported by Church (2015), the relative times were the same (the specific ODRs that took the most time, that students with disabilities ODRs took longer than those without disabilities, that SWPBS respondents reported longer ODR times than non-SWPBS respondents).

That last finding, in which SWPBS respondents reported longer ODR times was unexpected although it replicated a similar finding by Church (2015). We had reasoned that the evidence-based practices of SWPBS would in fact reduce the time needed to deal with ODRs. The present study cannot directly address why ODR times would be greater in SWPBS schools. It may be the case that in addressing ODR infractions, SWPBS teachers and principals may be
taking time to discuss with the student the inappropriate behavior, remind or prompt the student to identify what he/she should have done, and secure some commitment from the student to engage in more appropriate behavior in the future.

Alternatively, the survey data regarding the degree to which respondents in SWPBS practicing schools implemented 10 important SWPBS components may provide some clues. While respondents indicate practicing certain components (e.g., using an acknowledgement system or reward tickets, having a school leadership team, having specific target behaviors, posting of target behaviors) other important components were much less reported by these same respondents (e.g., having a written manual of SWPBS, direct teaching/rehearsal of target behaviors, collection and analysis of reward ticket and ODR data, a yearly survey of school staff, students, and parents to evaluate the SWPBS program). Thus there is some question as to how much or how well the surveyed schools implemented SWPBS. A recent study by Childs, Kincaid, George, & Gage (2016) of 1122 Florida schools noted that schools having higher SWPBS fidelity of implementation scores had fewer ODRs, in-school suspensions and out of school suspensions. Had the schools in the current survey implemented more regularly the SWPBS components that might have produced lower ODR times compared to the non-SWPBS schools in the survey. This will remain an important question for future research.

**Limitations of the Study**

There were several limitations to this study. The first limitation is that the survey questionnaire was sent to a designee and not directly to the administrators and teachers. Therefore, knowledge of exactly how many individuals received the survey is unknown. It is also unknown how many individuals from each county participated and completed the survey. In
future studies, it would be helpful to ask to have direct access to the teachers’ and administrators’
e-mails.

The second limitation is that the participation of school personnel in the survey was very
low. With a return rate of only 70 out of 1562 surveys (4.5%) this calls into question the
reliability of the results, that is, to what extent are these data and trends replicable or represent
views of a very small sample? On the one hand, this low return rate forces one to interpret these
data with caution and indicates a need to replicate this study with provision of some way to
increase the return rate. A strategic way to increase participation would be to replicate this study
and offer incentives, such as having respondents to the survey entering a lottery for some
tangible reward (e.g., gift cares with significant value, the chance to win a tablet computer or
needed supplies for one’s classroom or school). Also, shortening the survey in some way might
be a way to gain more participants in future studies.

On the other hand, there is some reason to believe that the current results may more
reliable than one would expect given the return rate. The present results regarding the overall
amount of time taken by an ODR, the different amounts of time taken by specific classes of
ODR, that the ODRs of students with disabilities take longer than student without disabilities,
and that ODRs for students in SWPBS schools take longer than students in non-SWPBS schools
al replicate the prior findings of Church (2015) with 4 different school districts in the same,
northeast Tennessee geographic region. This replication makes for a reasonable argument for the
reliability of these findings despite the small return rate of both this study and Church (2015).
Regardless, future replications should seek to increase survey returns to more acceptable levels.
A third limitation has to do with the definition of the specific ODR categories. One of the
purposes of this study was to examine the extent to which different types of ODRs were
characterized by greater or lesser amounts of time. The specific ODR categories were selected from actual office referral data across a number of the schools in northeast Tennessee. These data are collected as a matter of course by these schools, yet the specific names used to refer to these offenses can vary from system to system and from school to school within a system. Furthermore, there is no common compendium of definitions for these ODR categories and we chose not to substitute our own definitions for the terms. Again, however, the similarities of the current findings to those of Church (2015) suggest that there is some commonality in the use of these terms in the two studies. Future research could supply brief examples of specific ODR behaviors to increase the likelihood that respondents are using the terms similarly in their time estimates.

A final limitation was that the survey only assessed the teachers’ and administrators’ perceptions of the time allotted while addressing disciplinary referrals. How well these perceptions match actual time spent dealing with ODRs is unclear. Such perceptions based on recall might be very much in error or quite close to the actual times spent on ODRs. Certainly one way to address this issue would be to conduct a smaller scale study with multiple replications in which teachers and administrators self-record the amount of time they spent in dealing with various ODRs and compare that to their later recall of that time. Alternatively, but more complicated logistically and expensive, would be have third party observers conduct observations of teachers and administrators throughout a series of school days to directly record time spent on ODRs and to examine the degree to which those observed times match participants’ recall of that time.
Recommendations for Future Research

In addition to the suggestions in the previous section for addressing limitations, there are several other recommendations for any future research based on the findings of the current research study. The first recommendation is to administer the survey at the beginning of a school year. This survey was sent to respondents after Winter break. There may be a higher rate of response if the survey was sent at a different time of the year. Furthermore, gathering emails of current administrators, teachers, and other staff would be beneficial for the study. A third recommendation would be to extend this study to reach more school districts who would be willing participants. Finally, participation in this study held no incentive and participants were not required complete the survey. Therefore, it would be helpful if there was an incentive to increase involvement from school districts.
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*Exceptional Children*, 65, 7-21.


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## APPENDIX A: Church & Fox (2015) Data on Disciplinary Offenses With and Without SWPBS

### Schools WITHOUT SWPBS: Aggresion/Fighting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Spent in Minutes</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>WITH a disability</th>
<th>WITHOUT a disability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 5 min</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-15 min</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-30 min</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-45 min</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-60 min</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 60 min</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would NOT refer</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Schools WITHOUT SWPBS: Disruptive Behavior

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Spent in Minutes</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>WITH a disability</th>
<th>WITHOUT a disability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 5 min</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-15 min</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-30 min</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-45 min</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-60 min</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 60 min</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would NOT refer</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Schools WITHOUT SWPBS: Inappropriate Language

- **Less than 5 min**: 10 responses (WITH a disability), 8 responses (WITHOUT a disability)
- **6-15 min**: 4 responses (WITH a disability), 2 responses (WITHOUT a disability)
- **16-30 min**: 2 responses (WITH a disability), 1 response (WITHOUT a disability)
- **31-45 min**: 1 response (WITH a disability), 0 responses (WITHOUT a disability)
- **46-60 min**: 1 response (WITH a disability), 0 responses (WITHOUT a disability)
- **more than 60 min**: 1 response (WITH a disability), 0 responses (WITHOUT a disability)
- **would NOT refer**: 0 responses (WITH a disability), 0 responses (WITHOUT a disability)

Schools WITH SWPBS: Aggression/Fighting

- **Less than 5 min**: 1 response (WITH a disability), 0 responses (WITHOUT a disability)
- **6-15 min**: 7 responses (WITH a disability), 6 responses (WITHOUT a disability)
- **16-30 min**: 3 responses (WITH a disability), 1 response (WITHOUT a disability)
- **31-45 min**: 1 response (WITH a disability), 0 responses (WITHOUT a disability)
- **46-60 min**: 0 responses (WITH a disability), 0 responses (WITHOUT a disability)
- **more than 60 min**: 0 responses (WITH a disability), 0 responses (WITHOUT a disability)
- **would NOT refer**: 0 responses (WITH a disability), 0 responses (WITHOUT a disability)

Schools WITH SWPBS: Disruptive Behavior

- **Less than 5 min**: 6 responses (WITH a disability), 5 responses (WITHOUT a disability)
- **6-15 min**: 3 responses (WITH a disability), 2 responses (WITHOUT a disability)
- **16-30 min**: 1 response (WITH a disability), 0 responses (WITHOUT a disability)
- **31-45 min**: 1 response (WITH a disability), 0 responses (WITHOUT a disability)
- **46-60 min**: 0 responses (WITH a disability), 0 responses (WITHOUT a disability)
- **more than 60 min**: 0 responses (WITH a disability), 0 responses (WITHOUT a disability)
- **would NOT refer**: 0 responses (WITH a disability), 0 responses (WITHOUT a disability)
Schools WITH SWPBS: Noncompliance/Defiance

- Number of Respondents
- Time Spent in Minutes: Less than 5 min, 6-15 min, 16-30 min, 31-45 min, 46-60 min, more than 60 min, would NOT refer

Schools WITH SWPBS: Not Completing Assignments/Tasks

- Number of Respondents
- Time Spent in Minutes: Less than 5 min, 6-15 min, 16-30 min, 31-45 min, 46-60 min, more than 60 min, would NOT refer
Schools WITH SWPBS: Cell Phone Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Spent in Minutes</th>
<th># of Responses (WITH a disability)</th>
<th># of Responses (WITHOUT a disability)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 5 min</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-15 min</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-30 min</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-45 min</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-60 min</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more than 60 min</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>would NOT refer</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX B: Figures

**Aggression**

![Bar chart showing time taken for an ODR regarding aggression comparing students with and without disabilities.](image)

Time taken for an ODR regarding aggression comparing students with and without disabilities

**Disruption**

![Bar chart showing time taken for an ODR regarding disruption comparing students with and without disabilities.](image)

Time taken for an ODR regarding disruption comparing students with and without disabilities
Time taken for an ODR regarding noncompliance comparing students with and without disabilities

Time taken for an ODR regarding not completing assignments comparing students with and without disabilities
Time taken for an ODR regarding cell phone use comparing students with and without disabilities

Time taken for an ODR regarding inappropriate language comparing students with and without disabilities
APPENDIX C: Sample Recruitment Email

Dear faculty/staff

I am an ETSU masters' student conducting a research study, A Survey of School Administrators' and Teachers' Views of Discipline Referrals for Students With and Without Disabilities. I invite you to participate in this survey which takes 5-7 minutes. There are no identified risks to participating in the study. Your participation is completely voluntary and you may refuse to participate without consequence. You must be at least 21 years old to participate. For more information, contact Dr. Jim Fox, Research Director at foxj@etsu.edu. You may also call the Chair of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at 423-439-6054 with any questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant. If you have any questions or concerns and want to talk with someone independent of the research team or you cannot reach the study staff, you may call an IRB Coordinator at 423-439-6055 or 423-439-6002. If you agree to participate, click the link below:

Click here to access the survey.

NOTE: (The above is the invitation and informed consent document that will be sent to each potential participant via email. Clicking the link indicates that the person chooses to participate but the person's e-mail address is not saved nor associated with their response when he/she completes the survey. Thus the survey is anonymous)

Thank you,

Amanda Burton
APPENDIX D: Survey
Modified from Church (2015)

Anonymous Opinions About Office Discipline Referrals

* Required

Demographics

What is your role within the school system? *
(Please select the role that most fits with your job description and/or duties.)

What grade levels are currently represented at your school? *
(Check ALL that apply)
- Kindergarten
- 1st grade
- 2nd grade
- 3rd grade
- 4th grade
- 5th grade
- 6th grade
- 7th grade
- 8th grade
- 9th grade
- 10th grade
- 11th grade
- 12th grade

What grade level are you currently teaching? *
(2014-2015 school year)
- Pre-K
☐ Kindergarten
☐ 1st grade
☐ 2nd grade
☐ 3rd grade
☐ 4th grade
☐ 5th grade
☐ 6th grade
☐ 7th grade
☐ 8th grade
☐ 9th grade
☐ 10th grade
☐ 11th grade
☐ 12th grade

**How many years have you been teaching?** *
(List your total teaching experience in years)

**How much time on average does it take for you to deal with an office referral for a student?** *
(Time format HH:MM; for example, 45 minutes = 00:45) List the hours and/or minutes that best describes the amount of time that you typically lose from your day for a single office referral.

Continue »

20% completed

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Anonymous Opinions About Office Discipline Referrals

* Required

Anonymous Opinions about Office Discipline Referrals
Addressing a student WITH a disability regarding various common disciplinary offenses

Looking at the discipline offense of "Aggression/Fighting", if a student WITH A DISABILITY committed this offense, provide the amount of time (HH:MM) that best describes how long it would take you to deal with this offense. *
(Addressing a student WITH a disability for a disciplinary offense of AGGRESSION/FIGHTING)

Looking at the discipline offense of "Disruptive Behavior", if a student WITH A DISABILITY committed this offense, provide the amount of time (HH:MM) that best describes how long it would take you to deal with this offense. *
(Addressing a student WITH a disability for a disciplinary offense of DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR)

Looking at the discipline offense of "Noncompliance/Defiance", if a student WITH A DISABILITY committed this offense, provide the amount of time (HH:MM) that best describes how long it would take you to deal with this offense. *
(Addressing a student WITH a disability for a disciplinary offense of NONCOMPLIANCE/DEFIANCE)

Looking at the discipline offense of "Not Completing Assignments/Tasks", if a student WITH A DISABILITY committed this offense, provide the amount of time (HH:MM) that best describes how long it would take you to deal with this offense. *
(Addressing a student WITH a disability for a disciplinary offense of NOT COMPLETING ASSIGNMENTS/TASKS)
Looking at the discipline offense of "Cell Phone Use", if a student WITHOUT A DISABILITY committed this offense, provide the amount of time (HH:MM) that best describes how long it would take you to deal with this offense. *

(Addressing a student WITHOUT a disability for a disciplinary offense of CELL PHONE USE)

Looking at the discipline offense of "Inappropriate Language", if a student WITHOUT A DISABILITY committed this offense, provide the amount of time (HH:MM) that best describes how long it would take you to deal with this offense. *

(Addressing a student WITHOUT a disability for a disciplinary offense of INAPPROPRIATE LANGUAGE)

Does your school use a school-wide positive behavior support (SWPBS) program? *

SWPBS has the following components: outcomes supporting social competence and academic achievement, data supporting decision making, practices supporting student behaviors, and systems supporting staff behavior.

- YES
- NO
Anonymous Opinions About Office Discipline Referrals

* Required

School-Wide Positive Behavior Support program

Over what period of time has your school implemented the SWPBS program? *
Choose the answer that best describes your school.

---

Which of the following components does your school use in its SWPBS program? *
Select all that apply

- Specific target behaviors
- A written manual about the SWPBS program
- Direct teaching and rehearsal of target behaviors
- Posting of target behaviors
- An acknowledgement or reward ticket system for recognizing students when they engage in one or more target behaviors
- A periodic drawing for prizes, privileges, etc. for those students who receive 1 or more reward tickets
- A periodic school-wide celebration with “out-of-classroom” activities for those students who receive 1 or more reward tickets
- A school leadership team that develops, coordinates, and evaluates the SWPBS program
- Collection and analysis of reward tickets and office referrals to evaluate the SWPBS program
- A yearly survey to evaluate the opinions/attitudes of faculty, administrators, other staff, students, and/or parents regarding the acceptability and effectiveness of the SWPBS program

---

Are students WITH disabilities typically included in the SWPBS program?
(in so far as being taught the target behaviors, receiving reward tickets, and participating in the periodic drawings, celebrations, etc.)

- Not included at all
- Included in some but not all of the SWPBS program
- Fully included

< Back  Continue >
Anonymous Opinions About Office Discipline Referrals

Comments/Feedback  
(optional)

Please include any comments/feedback for the researcher below.

Submit

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APPENDIX E

IRB Approval Letter

November 20, 2015

Amanda Burton

RE: A survey of school administrators and teachers' views of discipline referrals for students with and without disabilities
IRB #: c0415.27e

On November 19, 2015, a final approval was granted for the minor modification listed below. The minor modification will be reported to the convened board on the next agenda.

- xform modification request to: 1) change the student PI from Leslie Church to Amanda Burton; 2) replicate the previous study with 5 new school systems: Greenville City, Green County, Kingsport City, Sullivan County, and Unicoi County schools; 3) change some of the response options of the on-line survey from ones that ask participants to estimate the amount of time discipline referrals take in time blocks (e.g., 5-15 min.) to one in which we ask participants to estimate a particular amount of time (e.g. 10 min); revised email and survey (no version date)

Unanticipated Problems Involving Risks to Subjects or Others must be reported to the IRB (and VA R&D if applicable) within 10 working days.

Proposed changes in approved research cannot be initiated without IRB review and approval. The only exception to this rule is that a change can be made prior to IRB approval when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the research subjects [21 CFR 56.108 (a)(4)]. In such a case, the IRB must be promptly informed of the change following its implementation (within 10 working days) on Form 109 (www.etsu.edu/irb). The IRB will review the change to determine that it is consistent with ensuring the subject's continued welfare.

Sincerely,
Stacey Williams, Chair
ETSU Campus IRB

Accredited Since December 2001
VITA

AMANDA BURTON

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B.S. Education, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tennessee 2011

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