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EXPERIENCES WITH AND CONCEPTIONS OF SCHOOL DISCIPLINE...

Experiences with and Conceptions of School Discipline and PBIS Implementation: A
Phenomenography of Fifteen Students with Disabilities in One Title I Middle School

by

Osman Khan

A Final Dissertation

Presented in Fulfillment of Requirements for the

Degree of

Doctor of Education

In

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In the

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Kennesaw State University

Kennesaw, GA

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Abstract

In this phenomenographical study, fifteen students with disabilities were recruited from one middle-grades setting to explore the qualitative different ways they experience and conceive of exclusionary discipline (i.e., in-school suspension (ISS), out-school suspension (OSS), and detention) and Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS). The participants engaged in interviews and produced two (2) visual representations to investigate the following research questions: (1) How do students with disabilities experience and conceive of school discipline?; (2) How do students with disabilities experience and conceive the implementation of Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS); and (3) In what ways can voices of students with disabilities help transform school discipline and PBIS implementation to meet their desired learning environments? An outcome space with seven categories of descriptions emerged. Findings suggest that students collectively held negative perceptions of exclusionary practices, and their responses revealed low efficacy of punitive discipline. In theory, cycles of frustration-aggression appeared to be associated with student experiences of exclusionary discipline and punitive threats (i.e., “you have silent lunch!”), which seems to result in student apathy and undesirable teacher-student relationships. Negative teacher behaviors were also observed such as yelling and belittling comments, including low fidelity of PBIS implementation. Lastly, many student participants expressed that they desired calm learning environments that offer freedom, play, and opportunities to engage in dialogue for reconciliation. Recommendations for future research, including student suggestions for school improvement, and implications to educational practice are provided.

Keywords: exclusionary school discipline, middle grades, student perceptions, students with disabilities, restorative justice, Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS)

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to the outcasts, the isolated and alienated youth stuck in cycles of exclusion - often told without words that they do not belong in classrooms of learning. I regret not taking the time to listen to your desires for change. Who better than you to inform us of what can inspire you to learn? I must thank the fifteen students with disabilities that participated in this study. All of you have provided me with rich representative statements and powerful visual representations that have revealed factors that may contribute to discipline disparities facing other middle-grades students in our building. Your voices will undoubtedly contribute to changing the life trajectories of thousands of young people in our community and beyond.

This dissertation is also dedicated to all the individuals that help young people discover their highest potential in life – finding meaning and becoming a value to society and not a burden. Therefore, I must first dedicate this work to my Ami and Abu: Mom and Dad, without your love, I would be living in a van somewhere near the ocean – happy and seemingly content, but always searching for my place in this world. Thanks for putting up with all my wild behaviors. Thank you for being understanding of my endless thirst for freedom and for allowing me to find myself in a sea of collectivism. My high standards for ethical and moral virtue come from having you as my parents. I thank you both for modeling good decision making and taking responsibility of your decisions. This work is also dedicated to my beautiful Khala (aunt). Thanks for all you have done for me.

Mom, thanks for being my eyes and ears.

Dad, thanks for being my watchtower.

I thank my grandmother who taught me the importance of personal responsibility long before I stepped foot into a classroom. “Bada aadmi bano.” Those were the last words I

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remember her saying to me, which translates to “become a great person of value in the community.” I appreciated your unconditional love, and yes, “khana kha liya.” I ate.

This work is also dedicated to my older brother and younger sister: Imran and Saira, hopefully you two will read these words, but it is okay if you don’t. In order to develop your talents and reach your goals, you must submerge yourself in solitude, and you need to take chances. Where your focus goes - energy flows. Thanks for your support – keep moving.

I also recognize my older cousins. You were my original mentors – my heroes. I hope this work will bring you some joy. Now, you’ll know what I have been working on for the many years we’ve been apart. My door is always open.

I must thank my closest friends. Hopefully, this work will let you in on why I had to say no. Together, we have gone on some wild adventures. We’ve contemplated society and reality – attempted to make meaning of signs, deciphered conspiracies, world events, and so on, and that is one of the greatest rewards of having friends like you. You’re not afraid to go there. Thanks for pushing me to the edge because the edge where is where I have learned to grow. With your support, I found courage to express individual agency as an American.

As an educator, I am no longer afraid to question school practices that can absolutely crush the spirit of learning in young people. But, if we’re going to say something isn’t right in our world, we better have a darned good plan to implement change, and we better be prepared to do it ourselves. At thirty-two years old and with experiences as a special educator for the better part of the last decade, I am fortunate to be able to say that I spent some time celebrating the voices of young people, which has led me to generate numerous ideas for school improvement. Indeed, I have also spent time working some remarkable educators. Therefore, I must dedicate this work to my fellow colleagues - folks that come to work and show they care about their

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students through their actions. The key to “fixing” schools will not be found within policies mandated by the government, or comparing and contemplating standardized test scores, the resolve will come from grassroots level action. I believe the goal of the public education should be to create pathways for young people to reach self-actualization (Maslow, 1943), or as Carl Jung would say, “to realize one’s place in the world as an individual who has found the means to reach his or her true potential.”

Finally, I owe the completion of this study to the art that became the soundtrack to my dissertation journey: Joseph Campbell for opening my third eye; Jordan Peterson for shutting it and telling me to clean my room; Matthew Crawford for teaching me the importance and dire need for manual competence in an age of digital fragmentation; Jóhann Jóhannsson for composing music that gave me a yearning for more; Henry Thoreau and Ralph Waldo Emerson for teaching me about what it means to be an American; Hazrat Inayat Khan for teaching me about what it means to be Pakistani; Andrew Bird for giving me serenity; Ty Segall for giving me fire; Sierra Ferrell for singing her truth; Alex Honnold for embracing fear; Wakaan for keeping me touch with the spirit of rebellion; and, all the members of King Gizzard and the Lizard Wizard for providing me with the stoke to keep pressing forward. You all have shifted my levels of consciousness and helped transform me into a man with powerful individual agency.

Thank you all for seeing something through from start to finish.

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Dr. Zimmer, your honesty and patience is an example of what is needed in education. Your commitment and dedication to your students, family, and your personal research pursuits are exemplary – you never accept anything but the best from your students while you work with an ethic of care, and in turn, I have adopted similar sentiments in my own classroom.

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Dr. Young, you're not only my colleague, you're family. Your philosophy of "don't talk about it, be about it" has inspired me to make my study an intimate reflection of who I am. It is now full of resonance. You are a work of art.

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Ms. J., thanks for teaching me how to read critically in the 12th grade when I was accidentally placed in advanced composition. I told you I was in the wrong classroom, and you replied, “no, this is the right classroom.” I am here because of you. As educators, we must shift from tracking and comparing students to other students, which often only serves to restrict the potential for greatness. The only person a child should be compared to is who they were yesterday. Your classroom opened the door for me to contemplate the basic universal truths we all share as human beings by rooting me into canonical texts, which has allowed me to find new ways to look at society and reality.

Finally, I must acknowledge my future wife. I don’t know who you are, or where you are right now. I sit here in this vacant coffee shop unaware of your struggles and triumphs, of all the joyous and momentous occasions in your life, and I hope that you find the courage to keep moving forward.

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Chapter One: Introduction

“Where did we ever get the crazy idea that in order to make children do better, first we have to make them feel worse?”

- Jane Nelson, Ed. D.

United States census data indicates that the number of students receiving special education services is on the rise. In 2011-2012, the population of students with disabilities (SWD) was approximately 6.4 million, and by the 2015-2016 school year, the total population increased to about 6.7 million (National Center for Education Statistics, 2018). The large number of students that require special education services in schools is concerning because they are subjected to disproportionately higher rates of punitive school discipline (i.e. in-school suspension, out-school suspension, expulsion) than their non-disabled peers (Nowicki, 2018; Salem, 2018; U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 2019). Reports from 2013-2014 indicate that there were only 12% of students with disabilities nation-wide, but they accounted for more than 25% of all administrative referrals, which has created a large disparity in school discipline (Nowicki, 2018).

Today, many students with disabilities across the nation continue to be overrepresented in school discipline because of limited social and emotional supports and the practice of punitive school discipline that punish students through the loss of instruction (Losen, 2018). Fundamentally, these disciplinary practices can be considered the antithesis to positive academic and social learning of students. According to Cameron and Shepard (2006), punitive school discipline is linked to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, anxiety, and aggressive behaviors. Danforth (2009) argues that schools commonly place more emphasis on the characteristics of students with disabilities as defined in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs)

(i.e., current functioning, academic performance, and assessment results) over identifying and using interventions and mental health supports to meet their individual needs. It has also been documented that minor misbehaviors such as classroom disruptions and tardiness exhibited by students with disabilities often stems from minimal exposure to explicit social, emotional, and behavioral training (Losen, 2018; Merrell & Gueldner, 2010).

As a viable resolve to the reducing behavior issues in their buildings, many school leaders across the nation have adopted Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS). George Sugai and Robert Horner are credited for designing PBIS, which includes a tiered system of strategies and supports to be used by schools that to decrease inappropriate behaviors and disciplinary referrals, including suspensions and expulsions by introducing protocols for teachers and administrators to use with students that have behavioral difficulties (Negron et al. 2008; Sugai et al. 2006; Sugai, 2011). However, despite the implementation of PBIS, many low-income schools continue to witness the overrepresentation of students with disabilities in school discipline (Cook et al 2015; Vincent et al. 2012). Previous research reveals that students of color with disabilities nationwide lost more than two times as many days to suspension as compared to white students with disabilities during the 2015-2016 school year, an increase in disparity between the two groups (Losen, 2018). Regardless of holding lower rates of behavior infractions, students of color, especially young African American boys, face more severe disciplinary actions as compared to other students (Skiba et al. 2002). For example, African American youth have experienced out-of-school suspension four times more in comparison to white students resulting in disproportionate discipline rates in terms of race (Steinberg & Laco, 2017). In order to understand the influence exclusionary discipline may be having on the lived experiences of

students with disabilities, it is important to discuss the various historical policy decisions to provide more context surrounding the problem related to the current study.

Statement of the Problem

Many students in low-income neighborhoods attend what are referred to as Title I schools. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the “Every Student Succeeds Act” of 2015, provides Title I funding to school districts. The purpose of Title I is to ensure that all children, especially students with disabilities meet demanding state academic standards (Office of Federal Register, 2016). Schools receive Title I funds based on the percentage of students that qualify for what is referred to as free or reduced-price school meals (Aud, 2018). The reality of attending schools in high poverty areas is a crucial factor when considering and discussing the experiences of underserved youth since almost two million students with disabilities live in poverty (Koseki, 2017). It is becoming well understood that it may be a challenge for many students with disabilities to independently develop social and emotional skills in high poverty schools (Beyer, 2017; Merrell & Gueldner, 2010). Research has indicated that students with disabilities in poverty struggle with low self-esteem, higher levels of stress and anxiety, learned helplessness, and have had negative school experiences that results in behavior misconduct and low academic achievement (Booker, 2011; Cardichon & Darling-Hammond, 2017; Myers, 2018). It has been documented that students with disabilities are twice as likely to receive at least one out-of-school suspension in a single school year when compared to non-disabled peers (U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights, 2016).

Previous studies suggest that white students with disabilities do not face the same school discipline outcomes for violating similar school policies and enacting common misbehaviors as students with disabilities of color (Green, 2018; Skiba et al. 2011; Wilf, 2012). Data from current

U.S. Department of Education show a consistent pattern of Public schools suspending or expelling black students with disabilities at higher rates than their proportion of the population of students with disabilities (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 2019). Furthermore, a recent report from the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (2019) examined school discipline policies and connections to school-to-prison pipeline for students with color of disabilities included a statement that a large majority of out-of-school suspensions for black students with disabilities are for nonviolent behaviors. This is problematic since many students that enter the school-to-prison pipeline have disabilities and have experienced poverty, abuse, and/or neglect, and although many of them would benefit from mental health supports, they are punished through isolation and pushed out of schools (American Civil Rights Union, 2018). School-to-prison pipeline is a common term that symbolizes a national trend associated with zero tolerance policies that transition students from public schools into the juvenile and criminal justice systems.

Historically, zero-tolerance became a national policy for schools following President Bill Clinton's approval of the Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994, which was passed in response to several school shootings across the country (Cerrone, 1990). Since then, state lawmakers and school boards have extended the punishment for weapons to include automatic expulsion or suspension for drugs and alcohol, fighting, swearing, class disruptions, disobedience, truancy and more than a dozen other forms of misbehaviors (Peterson, 2005). As a result, zero-tolerance school discipline policies and the referral of students to law enforcement for disciplinary infractions have contributed to increased suspension, expulsion, and exclusion at higher rates for students with disabilities and underserved youth (Advancement Project, 2011). These zero-tolerance policies further perpetuate a racial divide and feed into the prison industrial complex by

paving pathways to the school-to-prison pipeline phenomena (Flannery, 2015; Porter, 2015). During the 2015 and 2016 academic year, more than 291,100 students were referred or subjected to school-related arrest, and more than 82,000 were students with disabilities (U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 2018).

These insights are troublesome because expulsion and suspension rates have been a growing trend among middle and high school students with disabilities as compared to their non-disabled peers, and the severity of expulsion and suspension is even higher rates for students with Emotional Behavior Disorders (EBD) (Zhang et al. 2004, Kazdin & Wasell, 2000; Rones & Hogwood, 2000). Consequently, experiences of exclusionary discipline have a negative influence on underserved youth, especially students with disabilities (Cardichon & Darling-Hammond, 2017; Ritter, 2018; Simmons-Reed & Cartledge, 2014; Zhang et al. 2014). For instance, students who experience punitive discipline become separated from school culture and end up less cooperative with school rules and course work, which lowers motivation and negatively impacts academic learning (Gregory et al. 2010). Considering the current state of educational affairs, students with disabilities are considered a highly underserved sub-group within schools because they are unreasonably sentenced to serve time in isolation as a result of punitive discipline practices.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenography was to investigate the qualitatively different ways a sample of fifteen middle school students with disabilities experience and conceive punitive and exclusionary discipline (i.e., in-school suspension, out-school suspension, and/or silent lunch and detention) and PBIS implementation. For this study, the researcher was not simply interested in people's individual experience, which is often done in a phenomenology

(Merriam, 2009), rather he adopted a phenomenographical tradition to explore the collective experiences, conceptions, and perceptions of students with disabilities who have had prior experiences with exclusionary school discipline in one PBIS middle school. Currently, despite the implementation of Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) in one Title I middle-school, office disciplinary referrals are on the rise. This increase in punitive discipline is especially disconcerting for students with disabilities, an underserved sub-group of young people who are overrepresented in exclusionary discipline practices within the building.

In pursuit of the possibility of discovering factors that may exasperate school discipline disparities facing students with disabilities, this qualitative study was performed using the phenomenographical tradition. Student participants with disabilities were provided with interviews and created visual representations (i.e., metaphors for school discipline) to elicit their experiences and conceptions surrounding school discipline practices and PBIS implementation. In the past, perception-based studies surrounding school discipline have primarily focused on teacher perceptions in early childhood and on the high school level. Consequently, there is a current shortage of qualitative studies that explore the voices of middle-grades students with disabilities. Therefore, the researcher conducted a phenomenography to explore the variances surrounding the perceptions of middle grades students with disabilities and their experiences and conceptions of school discipline and PBIS implementation.

Phenomenographies are especially valuable because they allow researchers to identify the different ways in which people experience, conceptualize, perceive, and understand various kinds of phenomena, which can help generate ideas to alleviate issues surrounding student learning (Marton, 1981). Additionally, this phenomenography was designed to inspire critical consciousness to foster a sense of emancipation and empowerment in students with disabilities,

which was achieved by engaging in rich, reflexive dialogue during the interview process. Critical consciousness occurs when individuals begin to acquire an in-depth understanding of their world through social interactions that reveal the various tyrannical elements in one's life, which includes considering the influence of social and political contradictions in a system (Mustakova-Possardt, 2003). On a fundamental level, the current study sets itself apart from most work in the field of special education because it also explored the desired learning environments of fifteen students with disabilities.

Research Questions

This qualitative study addressed the following three research questions:

1. How do students with disabilities experience and conceive of school discipline?
2. How do students with disabilities experience and conceive the implementation of Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS)?
3. In what ways can voices of students with disabilities help transform school discipline and PBIS implementation to meet their desired learning environments?

Significance of Study

Traditionally, voices of students with disabilities, especially within middle-grades settings, have been undervalued on a qualitative level. Although student perceptions are often overlooked as a resource for school improvement, their views can offer a valuable perspective on education (Spires et al. 2008). The current study contributes to the field of education because the researcher explored the perceptions of fifteen students with disabilities surrounding their experiences of exclusionary discipline and PBIS implementation. Ten (10) grade eighth graders and five (5) seventh graders were asked to partake in individual interviews and create (2) visual representations (i.e., metaphorical drawings of school discipline) each. Student participants were

asked to create two (2) metaphorical drawings of school discipline each to explore their perceptions of the ISS classroom and to see how they view teachers that frequently write referrals. More specifically, the researcher examined the diverse perceptions of the students involved with the phenomenon under investigation to apply outcomes to educational practice (Bruce, 1999). Findings from this study can be considered as a significant contribution to educational research because it examined the perceptions of fifteen students with high-incident disabilities (i.e. Specific Learning Disabilities, Emotional Behavior Disorders, and Other Health Impairments, which included students medically diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder).

Ultimately, the decision to sanction this qualitative study with the phenomenographical tradition was advantageous for revealing the collective variances surrounding student experiences with and conceptions of school discipline and PBIS implementation. Most importantly, the findings of this study have helped formulate a boundary object model (Star & Griesemer, 1989) for identifying socio-cultural factors that could be contributing to the overrepresentation of students with disabilities in school discipline (see Figure 5.0, p. 224). In addition to gathering student experiences and conceptions of the phenomenon, the researcher also collected students' desired learning environments and allocated insights regarding their suggestions for school improvement. Findings from this study led to the discovery of practical implications to educational practice and considerations for future research surrounding middle grades education of students with disabilities, school discipline, and the implementation of Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS).

Organization of Study

The following chapter describes the conceptual framework, which serves as a blueprint of the study. The conceptual framework allows researchers to explain the purpose of their study relative to the methodology and chosen theoretical framework that guides data collection and data analysis (Ravitch & Riggan, 2017). Moreover, chapter two includes a review of literature surrounding the topics associated with the current study. The researcher also discussed gaps in literature, which rationalized the need for more studies that examine the qualitative ways students with disabilities experience, conceive, and perceive their learning environments.

In chapter three, the researcher reviewed the methodology of the study, including an explanation the researcher's worldview, role as a researcher, which includes his experiences and potential biases. The goals of the study are provided, including a description of the research approach, tradition, and research questions. Next, the context and setting of the study are provided, including information about the school's demographic data and recent behavior trends. Participant selection is reviewed, including access to the site where the researcher discussed the IRB process to ensure an ethical study. Data collection protocols are provided, including the process for data collection and methods for data analysis in a phenomenography. The researcher ends chapter three by revealing strategies to ensure trustworthiness and ethical considerations. The findings for this study are described in chapter four, which begins with an overview of the participants in the study.

Afterwards, the researcher provides a report of the results that are organized based on each categorical description in relation to the research questions in the current study. The researcher discusses the quality of evidence, summary of findings, and ends the chapter with a reflection regarding newly discovered insights. Chapter five served as the conclusion of the

current study with an in-depth discussion of findings relative to each research question, including limitations to findings in this study and personal comments. Connections and relationship of findings to previous literature have also been reported, and the researcher has discussed the implications of findings regarding educational practices, as well as recommendations for future research in local context.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

“Young people have unique perspectives on learning, teaching, and schooling.”

- Alison Cook-Sather, Ph.D.

The aim of this chapter was to achieve higher levels of intellectual competence in terms of knowledge that has already been established regarding the topics under investigation (Ravitch & Riggan, 2017). This literature review provides a thorough explanation of the conceptual and theoretical frameworks, including topical research that served as the basis for the current study. Before indulging into a review of the literature associated with the research questions and methodological design of the study, relevant terms are provided, including an explanation of the theoretical framework that guides the data collection process and data analysis of the current study. The theoretical framework in a qualitative study is provided to create an organized method for revealing relationships between variables (i.e., previous literature and theories, representative statements and visual representations from the outcome space, and additional data sources), which allows one to understand and make generalizable inferences regarding factors that may contribute to a problem (Fain, 2004). However, before indulging in the specifics surrounding the theoretical framework, a conceptual framework is included to provide readers with insights into the researchers' personal relationship with the topic, intended goals, research questions, and rationale for research tradition and methods used in the present study (Ravitch & Riggan, 2017).

Conceptual Framework

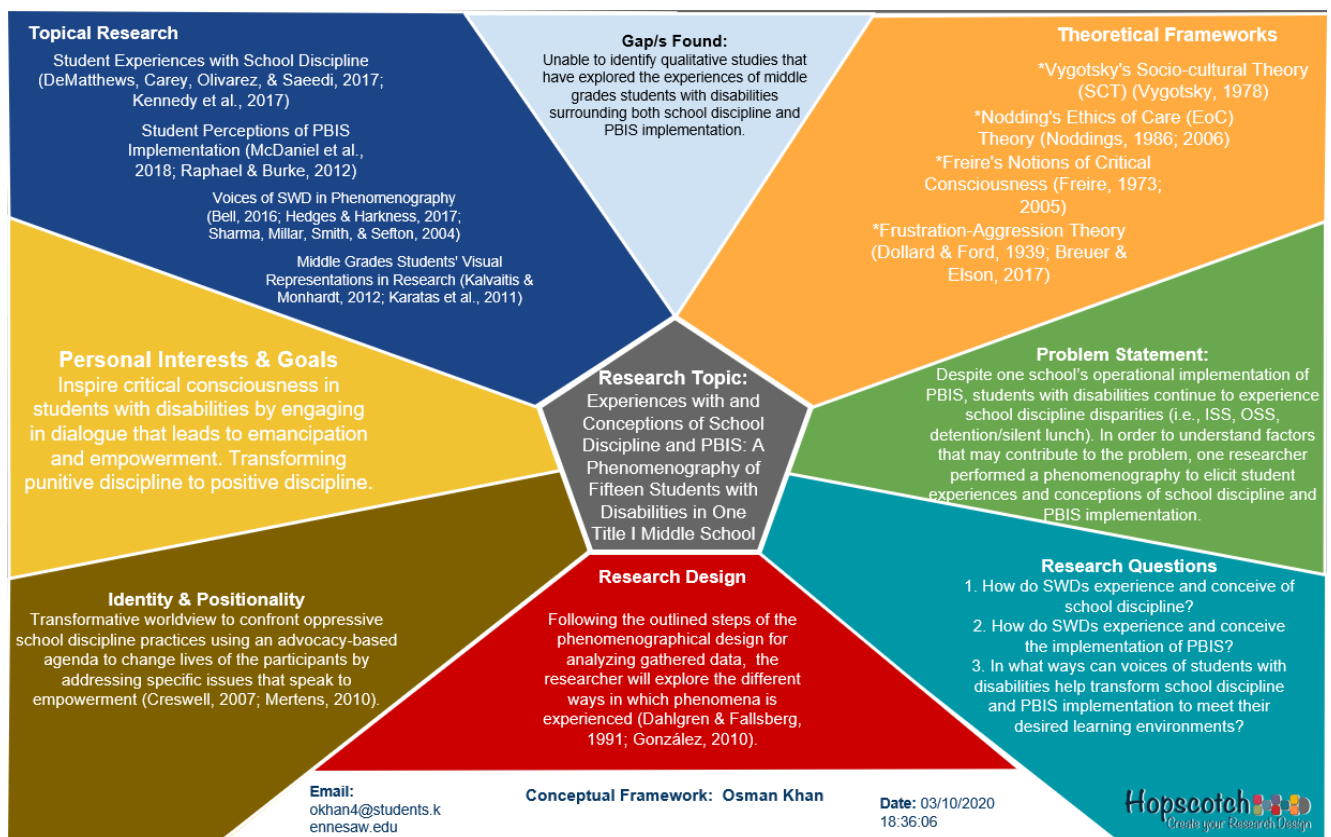
According to Ravitch and Riggan (2017), the conceptual framework of a study should include a section that expresses the researcher's personal relations with the topic, including the research questions, and a research tradition to enrich the connection between the conceptual framework and the methods employed. Fundamentally, the conceptual framework allows the

researcher to cohesively and simply explain the purpose of the study relative to the methodology. Therefore, it was helpful to use Ravitch & Riggan's (2017) expertise to explain the constructs and elements associated within the current study.

Furthermore, this study followed Jorrín Abellán's (2019) Hopscotch Model, a web-based tool that allows researchers to generate and express strong qualitative research designs. Figure 1.0 shows a graphical representation of the conceptual framework using the Hopscotch (see below).

Figure 1.0

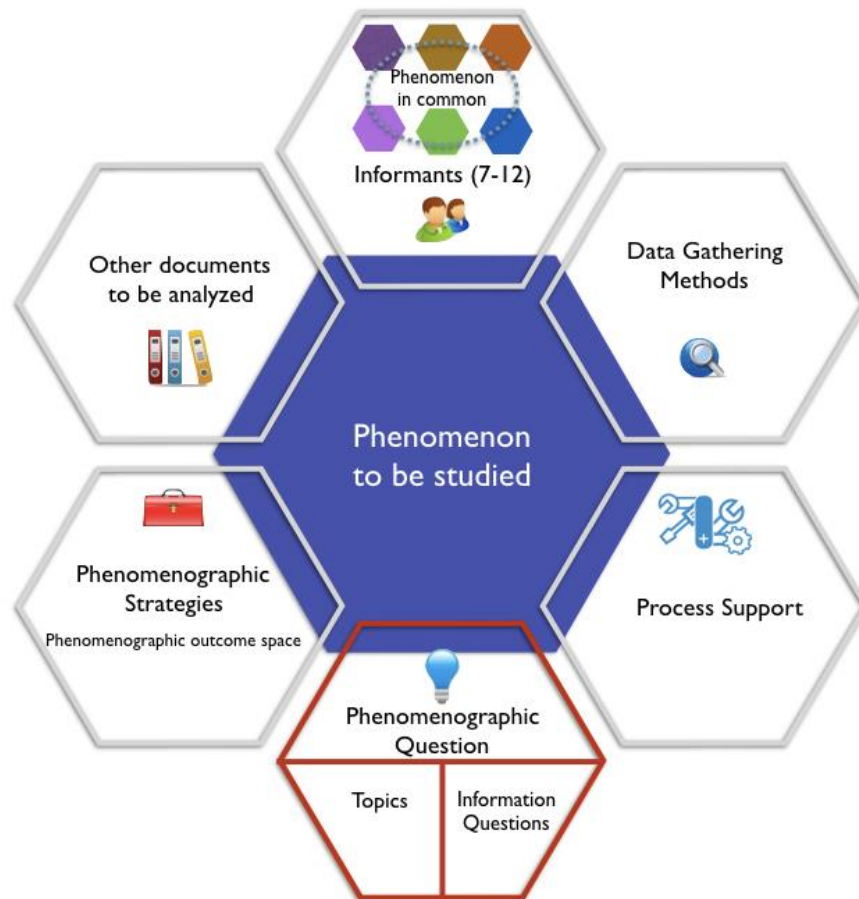
Graphical Representation of the Conceptual Framework



An example for what the graphical representation of the phenomenographical design in chapter three looks like has been produced using Jorrin Abellán's (2019) Hopscotch model (see Figure 1.1., p. 13).

Figure 1.1

Example of Graphical Representation of Phenomenographical Design



Note. This graphical representation is an example of the phenomenographical research design based on the Hopscotch model.

Ravitch and Riggan's (2017) suggest a succinct structure for conceptual frameworks and necessitate that the researcher discuss personal interests and goals, including his or her beliefs and motivations for performing the study, all of which are exemplified in Figure 1.0 (see Graphical Representation of Conceptual Framework, p. 12). Accordingly, the researcher's motivation for conducting this study are as follows: (1) become an advocate on behalf of

students with disabilities that are overserved in exclusionary disable to transform policy and curriculums that are conducive to leading young people to self-actualization, which is learning about and moving towards one's fullest potential on this planet (Maslow, 1943); (2) considering how variances in student perceptions may lead to school improvement, which includes school discipline policy and practice, including PBIS implementation; (3) inspire critical consciousness by engaging in rich discussions designed to emancipate and empower underserved youth by having them reflect on their experiences in exclusionary discipline; and (4) gain a better understanding for how design learning environments based on the desires and needs of students with disabilities in one high poverty school.

Next, the identity and positionality of the researcher is important part of a study because it increases overall credibility of the project. By discussing the researcher's position, one can gain a better understanding of how individual beliefs, biases, and understanding of the reality of the world may influence the design of the research project (Ravitch & Riggan, 2017). For this study, the researcher brought a transformative worldview (Mertens, 1981; 2010) that focused on inspiring critical consciousness in students with disabilities by engaging in an interview and data collection process that fostered a sense of emancipation and empowerment by exploring student perceptions of school discipline. Secondly, by remaining reflexive during the interview process, the researcher was able to gain unique insights regarding school discipline and teacher implementation of PBIS in terms of ethical decision making and fidelity.

Additionally, as supported by Ravitch and Riggan (2017), a rigorous literature review was conducted to identify any prior research that has helped shape the topic under investigation, which will be referred to as topical research. The empirical studies and literature reviewed assisted the researcher by helping him frame the study, identify research gaps, and analyze

various methodological designs used to explore the topic (Ravitch & Riggan, 2017). Therefore, for this literature review topical research focused on perception-based studies that use student voice to explore school discipline and PBIS implementation, as well as their desired learning environments and suggestions for school improvement. The researcher also provided an overview of prior phenomenographical studies that relied on student perceptions to further rationalize the methodological design and discuss the generalizable outcomes of using student perceptions in research.

Moreover, a supplemental source of qualitative data for this project required student participants to produce visual representations in the form metaphorical drawings to explore and reaffirm their perceptions of the ISS classroom, including the ISS teacher, and their perceptions of teachers that frequently write referrals. Accordingly, the researcher included a review of studies in chapter two that explore students' perceptions of their learning environment using student drawings and corresponding narratives. A second component to the literature review is the identification of the theoretical framework, which is the collection of well-known theories that support the researcher's conceptual framework and methodological design of the study (Ravitch & Riggan, 2017).

Finally, to better express the connections between the conceptual framework, the problem statement, research questions, and research tradition are explained. First, the problem statement in this study revealed that students with disabilities are experiencing punitive discipline at higher rates than their non-disabled peers even though they're the minority sub-group in the building. Second, the research questions explored in this study include the following: (1) how do students with disabilities experience and conceive of school discipline?; (2) how do students with disabilities experience and conceive the implementation of Positive Behavior Intervention and

Supports (PBIS); and (3) in what ways can voices of students with disabilities help transform school discipline and PBIS implementation to meet their desired learning environments? Third, the researcher used a phenomenographic research tradition to explore the collective experiences of fifteen students with disabilities who have records of office disciplinary referrals (ODRs). In summary, Ravitch and Riggan's (2017) components of a conceptual framework were followed to construct the literature review and methodology in the upcoming chapters.

Review of Relevant Terms

The following section comprises of a list of terms and their definitions to provide contextual information surrounding the study.

Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)

According to GADOE Discipline Fact Sheet (2010), a BIP defines the child's behavior that is not acceptable, and then it defines a new behavior that is acceptable. It should also include positive actions or steps to teach the student the new behavior, as well as prevent the undesired behavior. In this school, all inclusion teachers that work with students with disabilities, most often those diagnosed with Emotional Behavior Disorders (EBD), are required to implement the BIP, which is often mediated by the child's case manager.

Case Manager

A case manager is often a certified special education teacher, or another member of the IEP team. Traditionally, this person may be a special education teacher who works directly with a student with a disability. The case manager is responsible for making sure your students' IEPs are implemented with fidelity. This person, in addition to the ISS teacher, school counsel, or administrator, could act as a mediating agent for implementing restorative practices in schools.

This idea will be discussed in chapter five where the researcher provides recommendation to educational practice.

Categories

Categories are often used in phenomenographers to explore relationships within and between codes and code families to aid the formation of the collective conception of the phenomenon relative to research questions under investigation (Collier-Reed & Ingerman, 2013).

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

According to Taylor, et al. (2004), cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is targeted training to help the individual with ADHD to develop a more planned and reflective approach to thinking and behaving, including social interactions. Recent findings from Mitchell et al. (2015) reveals that CBT in the form of mindfulness practices can help individuals diagnosed with ADHD increase self-regulation skills.

Conceptions

For this study, conceptions are how students with disabilities form an idea of or understand school discipline (i.e. in-school suspension, out-school suspension, silent lunch, and/or detention), including how they understand they view the delivery of PBIS implementation by teachers within inclusion settings.

Critical Consciousness

The term critical consciousness was introduced by Dr. Paulo Freire, and it is the notion that when individuals begin to acquire an in-depth understanding of the world through dialogue that stems from rich social interactions, they can begin to act against the tyrannical elements in one's life, which includes considering the influence of social and political contradictions in a system (Mustakova-Possardt, 2003).

Detention

One of the most notoriously practiced forms of punitive discipline in schools where students are report to a designated area of the school during a specific either before or after school. Within the school context of the current study, detention is not prescribed with specific protocols to academic or social instruction, but most students are not allowed to talk or engage in dialogue and low levels to zero academic instruction have been identified. Teachers in the building are required to supervise these sessions, and it is up to them if they engage in dialogue about problems, etc. This could be a topic or issue explored in future research.

Descriptions

In phenomenographical studies, descriptions are used to describe code families, or thematic outcomes, including how participants make sense of a phenomena, which includes a review of their perceptions, conceptions, and experiences surrounding a topic.

Ethic of Care Theory

Ethics of Care is a theory in the field of education suggests that the individual working with the child evaluates situations from a perspective of care, meaning he/she will take the action to do what is best for the child. These types of responses are characterized by Nel Noddings as natural caring; “that relation in which we respond as one-caring out of love or natural inclination” (Noddings, 1984, p. 5).

Exclusionary discipline, and/or disciplinary exclusion

Punitive school discipline practices, interchangeable in this study with exclusionary discipline includes in-school suspensions (ISS), out-school-suspensions (OSS), and expulsions as common methods schools use to respond to student behavior problems. Despite the understanding students lose instructional time, form negative perceptions of school climate,

disengage with instruction, and often end up dropping out of school (Brown & Rodríguez, 2009; Gregory et al. 2010; Hambacher, 2017), these disciplinary practices are still used in many schools across the world. For this study, the researcher considers detention and silent lunch as exclusionary discipline practices because detention isolates students before and after school, and silent lunch alienates students from other student in the cafeteria prohibiting them from speaking as a form of punishment.

Emotional Behavior Disorder (EBD)

A child with EBD is a child who exhibits various emotionally based characteristics that often interferes with educational performance. EBD is an emotional disorder characterized by disturbances of behavior such as inability to build maintain interpersonal relationships with peers and/or teachers. This child may exhibit chronic inappropriate type behavior or feelings, display pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression, and may develop psychophysiological issues such as physical problems and unreasonable fears that may be associated with personal or school-related problems (GADOE, 2019).

Experiences

For this study, experiences include the observations, situations, conditions, sensations, memories, and/or feelings of students with disabilities concerning their time as students within the middle school.

Fidelity

According to IRIS (2020), fidelity, or fidelity of implementation is referred to as treatment integrity, procedural reliability, or adherence to implementing a specific program. For this study, fidelity is referred to teacher implementation of Positive Behavior Intervention and

Supports, which includes adhering by school-wide expectations, abiding by the conduct-point system, and rewarding students based on positive display of behaviors.

High Leverage Practices (HLP)

According to (McCray et al. 2017), high leverage practices (HLP) are specified activities and critical sets of practices that all special educators should use in their classrooms because they have shown to result in higher academic and social outcomes for students with disabilities.

Generalizations

In the act of performing qualitative research, which is profoundly interpretive act, generalizations are used to support claims (Payne & Williams, 2005) that are realized when analyzing the data. This is accomplished when the researcher ensures reliability and validity measures to establish a general truth, or form of understanding by including thick descriptions of contextual factors surrounding the study (i.e., participants, setting of where data is collected, process of data collection, researcher's subjectivity, and theoretical orientation), all of which are provided in this dissertation (Lecompte & Goetz, 1982; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Individual Education Plan (IEP)

According to GADOE (2007), a child's IEP is a written statement that is developed, reviewed, and revised to include the following: a statement of a child's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, how the child's disability affects the child's involvement and progress in general education, a statement of measurable annual goals, and the requirement to meet the child's needs that results from the child's disability. including additional safeguards to ensure compliance.

Inclusion

According to PBS (2013), inclusive education occurs in schools when children with and without disabilities are placed together in the same classes. For this study, the term inclusion represents individuals from inclusive classrooms, including teachers, general education and special education teachers, as well as inclusion students with and without disabilities. These are the individuals will take part in four different focus groups during the data collection process.

In-School Suspension (ISS)

For this study, the definition of ISS is a punitive discipline model where a student is removed from the classroom and forced to stay in an ISS classroom for an extended length of time, which can range from part of a day to several days. Ideally, the ISS classroom is a room where a teacher provides behavior changing strategies, ranging from punitive to rehabilitative actions that try to improve student misbehavior without having the student removed from the school (Mendez et al. 2002).

Interconnected Systems Framework (ISF)

Interconnected Systems Frameworks (ISF) are introduced in schools to implement education and mental health systems in schools to improve educational outcomes of students (Barrett et al. 2013).

ISS Teacher's Job Description

According to the school district policy, the in-school suspension (ISS) teacher is responsible for “supervising students assigned to in-school suspension and is expected to provide them with instructional assistance that enables them to learn and achieve as much as possible while assigned to in-school suspension.” Additionally, at time of study, this job was a classified

position and not a certified position, which may hold significant implications regarding the pedagogical knowledge and practices of the ISS teacher that are explored in the current study.

Manifestation Determination Review (MDR)

According to GADOE Discipline Fact Sheet (2012), a manifestation determination meeting is to be must be conducted before the 11th day of suspension for a child with a disability. The purpose of these meetings is to provide procedural protection for students with disabilities because they are more difficult to teach due to challenging behavior, and as a result, they are often unfairly removed from school (Decker & Pazey, 2017). This meeting is to decide if the behavior that got the student in trouble was due to the students diagnosed disability and/or whether the IEP, including the BIP, was implemented with fidelity. If the IEP was not implemented appropriately, or the behavior was related to the disability, then the behavior is found to be a manifestation of the disability. However, if the behavior was a manifestation of the child's disability, the student goes back to classes. Moreover, if the manifestation meeting results in a decision where the incident was not related to the child's disability, the IEP team determines the student's placement.

Although, when the behavior that gets the student in trouble is due to illegal drugs, weapons, or fighting, then the school system may send the student to alternative education placement (AEP) for up to 45 school days, no matter the outcome of the manifestation determination. The due process and fidelity of manifestation meetings is an interesting phenomenon that should be researched heavily because the outcomes of these hearings lead students with disabilities outside of learning environments where they can practice developing academic and social skills.

Mindfulness Practice

Mindfulness practices includes immersing students in guided meditation and teaching them strategies that inspire calmness and self-regulating behaviors to reduce stress, which has shown to reduce office disciplinary referrals on the middle grades level (Martinez & Zhao, 2018), including students with disabilities (Chimiklis et al. 2018; Fuchs et al. 2017; Haydicky, 2012).

Moral Education

According to Halstead (2015), moral education is implemented to help children and young people engage in hierarchies of values that teaches them what is right and wrong, which requires them to reflect on how they should behave in certain situations. Moral educators understand that young people live in a world that can be morally confusing because they are exposed to factors that destabilize their moral values (Halstead, 2015), which in our day in age includes social media (i.e., Instagram and Snapchat) and unrestricted access to streaming services such as Netflix and YouTube. Based on interactions with students, the researcher also believes moral values are compromised due to the socially interconnected world of online gaming where young people listen to and engage with strangers across the world (i.e. Call of Duty, Grand Theft Auto, etc.), and they are in desperate search for acceptance and validation within online social media platforms (i.e., Instagram, Tik Tok, etc.).

Multi-tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS)

MTSS can be defined as "the practice of providing high-quality instruction and interventions matched to student need, monitoring progress frequently to make decisions about changes in instruction or goals and applying child response data to important educational decisions" (Batsche et al. 2005).

Other Health Impairment (OHI)

According to GADOE (2019b), OHI means that a child has a limited strength, or alertness including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli, that results in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment. These may include chronic or acute health problems such as asthma, attention deficit disorder or attention deficient hyperactivity disorder (most prevalent). Students may also be diagnosed with additional health-related issues such as diabetes, epilepsy, or heart condition, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever, and sickle cell anemia; and Tourette Syndrome.

Out-School Suspension (OSS)

For this study, the definition of OSS is the removal of a student from the school for a period that does not exceed ten days (Mendez et al. 2002). For students with disabilities a manifestation determination is provided if a behavior should result in more than ten days of missing school.

Perceptions

In phenomenographical studies, perceptions are used explore how participants see, hear, and become aware of something through their senses in the environment. In this study, it was important to understand how students with disabilities perceived the ISS classroom, including inclusion classrooms where they observe teacher behaviors and hold varied interpretations of their experience in these spaces.

PBIS Conduct-Point System

Embedded within the PBIS Pyramid of Interventions, the conduct-point system is a series of warnings, procedures, and consequences teachers should follow in the classroom when

responding to student misbehavior (for a graphical representation of the PBIS Conduct-Point System embedded in PBIS Pyramid of Interventions see Appendix A)

PBIS Rewards

PBIS Rewards is a PBIS management system that assists schools in their Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support program (PBISRewards, 2019). The platform makes it a simple process to identify and reward students for meeting behavior expectations from anywhere in the school by staff members. This is the program where students accumulate points to access Fresh Air Friday and purchase items in the school store. According to their website, it also provides referral tracking and a teacher rewards system. Ideally, it is also mentioned that PBIS Rewards can help foster accountability and fidelity in schools' PBIS program (PBISRewards, 2019).

Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS)

PBIS is the implementation of a specified framework for “maximizing the selection and use of evidence-based prevention and intervention practices along a multi-tiered continuum that supports the academic, social, emotional, and behavioral competence of all students” (PBIS.org, 2018).

Punitive School Discipline

For this study punitive school discipline is interchanged often with the term exclusionary discipline to represent practices that punish students by suspension, detention, and in the context of this study, silent lunch and detention are also punitive practices used as a response to misbehavior by teachers and staff.

Punitive Threat

For this study, punitive threats are incidents which trigger frustration-aggression in students. These threats occurred when teachers informed students that they'd serve silent lunch, detention, or would be provided with an office disciplinary referral.

Tiger Class

Bayside Tigers (i.e. mascot; fictional). Tiger Class is bi-weekly segment of instruction provide to students to share the PBIS framework, as well as provide character education to all students in homeroom for about twenty minutes. Outcomes of these sessions have not been evaluated, and effectiveness on student behavior has yet to be determined.

Reconciliation

A concept related to restorative practice where the victim and offender come together to engage in dialogue and make amends to previous problems, which allows for a renewal of the relationship allowing people to redress the wrongs that were done (Lederach, 1997)

Representative Statements

For this study, representative statements (Hans & Ellis, 2019) are used to identify and indicate qualitative data that was generated to elicit student experiences and conceptions in the form of interview transcripts. These statements are also interchangeable with the term quotations.

Restorative Justice (RJ)

Restorative Justice is an alternative method of discipline used instead of retribution or rehabilitation where emphasis is placed on healing rather than hurting, moral learning, community participation and community caring, respectful dialogue, forgiveness, responsibility,

apology, and making amends to restore victims, perpetrators, and the community (Thompson, 2016).

Second Step

Second Step is social-emotional learning (SEL) program that helps transform schools into supportive, successful learning environments to help encourage children become more empathetic (Second Step, 2019). In terms of middle-grades education, second step provides lesson plans for helping students handle strong emotions, setting and meeting goals, making good decisions, and forging positive relationships (Second Step, 2019). Second Step is mentioned because the 2020 school year when the middle school in this study enrolled implementation. Students engage in bi-weekly on Friday mornings in their homeroom classes for twenty minutes. Outcomes and level of teacher fidelity with implementation has yet to be explored.

Self-Actualization Theory (i.e., Self-Realization)

For this study, the researcher adopted theoretical underpinnings of self-actualization based on the work of Abraham Maslow, which is believed to be an individual's journey to self-fulfillment, or to fully come to understand what their highest potential can be (Maslow, 1943) – to become more of what so someone is capable of becoming. Carl Jung held similar beliefs using the term self-realization, which means to embrace individuality and becoming one's true self, allowing one to combat forms tyranny (Jung, 1964).

Silent Lunch

An independent punitive discipline action taken by individual teachers at the middle school of study that excludes students from eating lunch with other students in their class in silence near proximity to teachers in the cafeteria.

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions” (CASEL, 2018).

Socio-cultural Theory

Lev Vygotsky, soviet psychologist and founder of Socio-cultural theory considered reflective thought as “social conversation internalized,” and he found that humans primarily learn through communicating not only with others around them, but internally with themselves using their voice (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory of human learning describes learning as a social process, which contributes to human intelligence in society or culture (Vygotsky, 1978).

Specific Learning Disability (SLD)

Specific learning disability is defined as a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes associated with understanding or using language, spoken or written, may inhibit a child’s ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell or perform mathematical calculations (GADOE, 2019c).

Synergy Grade Book

The school setting relies heavily on Synergy Grade Book, which is an online software program that allows teachers to upload student grades, print summary reports, which includes tracking conduct points, which is a relevant topic of the current study as it associated with PBIS Pyramid of Interventions and serves as pathways to punitive discipline for students. This gradebook is accessible by parents and students using an online login system.

Underserved youth

This study assumes the use of term underserved youth in place of two commonly used terms in education literature, “at-risk” and “urban youth.” The researcher believes the term “underserved” removes deficit-based connotations in terms of the individual(s), and/or their place of upbringing that can be associated with at-risk and urban.

Visual Representations

In this study, visual representations include student metaphorical drawings of school discipline (i.e., how students with disabilities perceive the ISS classroom and teachers that frequently write referrals). Each student was asked to individually draw two visual representations after their interview session.

Theoretical Framework

This section expresses how Socio-cultural Theory (SCT) (Vygotsky, 1978), Ethics of Care (Eoc) (Noddings, 1986), and Freire’s notions of Critical Consciousness (Freire, 1973) supported the data collection and served as a framework for interpreting and making sense of data during analysis. Accordingly, Frustration-Aggression Theory (FAT) (Dollard & Ford, 1939; Breuer & Elson, 2017) was added as a theoretical framework during the data analysis process once representative statements (quotations) of the terms and its associations relative to “frustration” and “aggression” were discovered when analyzing data surrounding student experiences with exclusionary discipline.

Nel Noddings’s Ethics of Care Theory (EoC)

Nel Noddings, professor of Child Education at Stanford University and philosopher, regards Ethics of Care (EoC) as a theory that schools should be structured in a way where caring is the foundation for ethical decision making (Smith, 2016). Simply defined, those interacting

with students should operate with an ethic of care and envision situations from a perspective of care, meaning they will take the action to do what is best for the child. The value of her theory is that it requires educators and school leaders to consider and reconsider the primary goal of education. These types of responses are characterized by Noddings as natural caring; “that relation in which we respond as one-caring out of love or natural inclination” (Noddings, 1984, p. 5). Noddings believes that for schools to deal with problems, students need more than just a simple list of rules, instead she argues that students need opportunities to engage in dialogue where they can talk through their problems with caring individual (Noddings, 2006). The current study explored student perceptions to understand whether decisions relative to school discipline and PBIS implementation was being orchestrated by teachers and school leaders with an ethic of care.

In this study, the researcher was able to create interview protocols that elicited responses to explore student experiences with and conceptions of school discipline and PBIS implementation. When asked about their conceptions of school-wide PBIS expectations, most students revealed they were not confident with their knowledge about the posted rules, or they found the acronym used to remind students of school-wide expectations irrelevant to their understanding. Interestingly, in according to Ethics of Care (EoC) theory (Noddings, 1986), for schools to be effective, students need more than just a simple list of rules to behave appropriately. Instead, she argues that students need opportunities to engage in dialogue where they can talk through their problems with a caring individual (Noddings, 1984; Noddings, 2006). This dialogue can be inspired and performed using restorative practices such as “circles” as explained by Costello, Wachtel, and Wachtel (2009). Nodding’s theory also supports the

ideology that the educator must use an urgency of ethical and natural care when working with students (Noddings, 1984).

The words “care” and “dialogue” are two concepts that resonate with a theory referred to as restorative justice, which is a compilation of procedural criminal justice practices that provides guidelines for facilitating individuals together who have caused harm by solving wrongdoings (Zehr, 2014). In the criminal justice field, the phrase used is “restorative justice” (Zehr, 1990); in social work, the term employed is “empowerment” (Simon, 1994); in education, talk is of “positive discipline” (Nelsen, 2006). With this understanding, schools invested with operating with an ethic of care will most reasonably reject the implementation of exclusionary practices for the adoption of positive discipline.

Lev Vygotsky’s Socio-cultural Theory (SCT)

The current study exemplified Vygotsky’s explanation of knowledge attainment because the researcher followed a method of thinking to advance the field of special education by engaging in meaningful interactions with students with disabilities. This process helped produce data to explore the implications of exclusionary school practices on the academic and social learning of students, as well as the negative influence of school discipline on student attitudes and teacher-student relationships. Vygotsky, a soviet psychologist and founder of Socio-cultural Theory (SCT) considered reflective thought as “social conversation internalized,” and he found that humans primarily learn through communicating not only with others around them, but internally with themselves using their voice (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory of human learning describes learning as a social process, which contributes to human intelligence in society or culture (Vygotsky, 1978).

Fundamentally, Vygotsky's Socio-cultural theory focused on the importance of social interaction in developing cognitive abilities in children, and he emphasized that social and emotional skills should be established before moving students forward into cognitive realms of development (Rimm-Kauffman et al. 2000; Vygotsky, 1978). He also found that that rich social interaction often dictates higher intellectual achievements in youth (Smagorinsky, 2009). In the context of how young people learn, Vygotsky (1978) found that children primarily grow through ample social interactions with the assistance of a teacher, parent, coach, or guide; therefore, placing students in exclusionary environments for misbehaving within schools can be considered the antithesis to social learning.

Moreover, he found that human learning assumes a specific social process by which children grow into the levels of intellectual competence of those around them (Vygotsky, 1978), and so the practice of placing students who require dialogue for social and emotional learning in isolation is rather counter-intuitive. Vygotsky found that modeling behaviors while providing verbal instructions for students through cooperative or collaborative discussions allows them to understand the tasks, actions, or instructions, which based on student experiences does not happen in the ISS classroom (Vygotsky, 1978). Overall, SCT fits nicely as a theoretical framework because this dissertation relied on a qualitative phenomenographical methodology to gather experiences, conceptual insights, and suggestions from students with disabilities regarding school discipline and PBIS implementation.

Paulo Freire's Notions of Critical Consciousness

In the book, "Pedagogy of the Oppressed," educational theorist Paulo Freire openly targets illegitimate practices by schools which is said to inhibit creativity and restrict the development of critical consciousness in students (Freire, 1973). Mustakova-Possardt (2003)

promoted the idea that inspiring critical consciousness allows individuals to acquire an in-depth understanding of the world in order to act against the oppressive elements in one's life, which includes considering the influence of social and political contradictions in a system. Freire uses the term critical consciousness in his investigation of the current model of education, which he identifies as the "banking concept of education." In his writing, Freire exposes the educational system as one where the teacher is the "depositor," and the students are simply "depositories." The teacher is the dominant speaker, and the students passively receive, memorize, and repeat. In doing so, knowledge becomes something out of the hands of those who are not certified, which are most often students. Teachers and administrators of the school system develop the instructional program content and students are forced to adapt to it, which is the case with the Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) and school discipline policy and practice.

According to Freire, the more students work at storing the deposits, the more they accept and excel in the passive role impressed upon them, and as a result, students are completely denied the opportunity to develop any ability of critical consciousness (Freire, 1973). He suggests that practitioners should develop critical consciousness in students using dialogue and open communication (Freire, 2005), which was done in the current study because the researcher engaged in dialogue with students with disabilities to elicit their prior experiences and perceptions of school discipline and PBIS.

The act of interviewing fifteen students with disabilities allowed the researcher gain critical insights that can inspire transformative change, emancipation, and empowerment of underserved youth in schools. In the case of this study, the interview protocols were reflexive in nature, which allowed the generation of student ideas and suggestions for school improvement and desired environments for learning. The data collection process of this qualitative study

triggered reflexive insights in terms of redefining the relationship between the theoretical framework and worldview, which is transformative in nature.

The researcher found himself attracted to the idea of writing his thoughts down as a memo, which are conceptual notes related to the codes and inner analytical conversations about the research data (Glaser, 1978; Lempert, 2007). According to Lapan et al. (2012), memo writing requires the researcher to take a step back and explore the experience of collecting and making sense of data. During the data analysis process, the researcher was able to express some newly found insights relative to the current study. An e-mail was written to the dissertation committee titled, “Revelations of Philosophical Paradigm During Data Collection” (see Appendix R), which expressed the researcher’s reflexivity with the process.

Frustration-Aggression Theory (FAT)

While exploring the outcome space during data analysis, the researcher began noticing student representative statements across participants that expressed feelings of frustration and aggression towards their teachers who sentenced them to exclusionary discipline such as in-school suspension, silent lunch, and/or detention. To satisfy his need to explore this phenomenon further, Google was used to search the terms frustration and aggression. Inevitably, he came across Frustration-Aggression Theory (Dollard & Ford, 1939). The origins of this theory stem from the 1930s, specifically the work of John Dollard and colleagues from Harvard University (Berkowitz, 1989), whom explored sociology, anthropology, and psychology with consideration of Freudian conceptualizations of displacement, projection, and catharsis (Mentovich & Jost, 2020).

Dollard and Ford (1939) came to hypothesize that human beings are consumed with negative emotions and thoughts when they reach certain levels of frustration, which often lead to

aggressive tendencies. In recent times, Breuer & Elson (2017) have expounded upon the definition, conception, and development of Frustration-Aggression Theory. Breuer and Elson (2017) argue that frustration-aggression is stipulated by experiencing an event, or series of events which leads one to act or react aggressively. With this understood, the researcher in this study has come to believe that exclusionary discipline practices are placing students with disabilities in cycles of frustration-aggression, which may be one factor that exasperates school discipline disparities facing students with disabilities. A deeper discussion describing how Frustration-Aggression Theory fits as an intuitive and critical feature that works as a framework for making sense of qualitative findings from this study has been provided in chapter five.

Summary of Theoretical Framework

These theoretical frameworks worked well to ungird and make sense of the outcomes relative to the current study. For instance, data collection was a socially mediated process where the researcher uses interviews to acquire data that relies on rich social interaction to construct new knowledge, which is very Vygotskian in nature (Vygotsky, 1978). Moreover, the phenomenographical design of interview protocols used in this study inspired critical consciousness in students with disabilities whom expressed desires and suggestions for transformative change relative to school discipline and the implementation of PBIS. In addition, Nodding's EoC theory was a valuable addition to this study because it provided the researcher with a lens to interpret the outcome space during analysis. The outcome space suggests that Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) is not being implemented with an ethic of care as a result of undesirable teacher behaviors. Furthermore, the negative influence of ISS classroom appears to be inhibiting the academic and social development of students with disabilities. Findings from this study affirm the notions of Frustration-Aggression Theory

(Dollard & Ford, 1939) because experiences of exclusionary discipline seem to be the event that leads students in cycles of frustration and aggression, which warrants the urgency for the school to consider alternatives to punitive discipline practices.

Context of the School's Current Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS)

Before indulging into the literature review, it is pertinent to explain the benefits of combined systems of supports. This was especially relevant to the current study because it expands upon the contextual factors of the research site, which has currently started implementing Second Step, a Social Emotional Learning (SEL) program with Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) as Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS). According to Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) (2016), SEL programming is the process through which children and adults learn to use knowledge and skills needed to manage emotions, set positive goals, understand empathy for self and others, create positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. In practice, SEL provides a framework for providing students with the resources required to help situate them in an environment that allows them to feel valued (Durlak et al. 2011). These endeavors initiate intrinsic motivation to achieve as well as develop skills that foster social and emotional competencies that prepare students for academic rigor and positive behavior (Cook et al. 2015).

In the last decade, one meta-analysis of school-based interventions that enhance students' social and emotional learning has shown promising results, Durlak et al. (2011) found SEL has the potential to increase student academic performance by 11% compared to unexposed control groups. Furthermore, SEL programs can improve student attitudes towards by developing executive and cognitive functioning, which directly influences student's ability to control negative responses to stimuli and ability to plan (Zins et al. 2004; Greenberg, 2006). It is also

reported that SEL can benefit students with disabilities with prefrontal lobe and cortex irregularities who urgently need assistance developing social and emotional competencies required to complete academic-based tasks (Greenberg, 2006).

The Effects of Combining SEL with PBIS as Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS)

Combined intervention systems, otherwise referred to as Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) provide school systems with more avenues for data-driven practices that serve as viable option for schools interested in improving the social and behavioral learning of students with disabilities. There is a current shift to use this model of supports over the rigid pyramid system. The potential of utilizing MTSS can lead to higher positive outcomes for mental health prevention, reversal, and the minimization of problems while fostering social, emotional, and academic successes for students with disabilities (Cook et al. 2015; Strein et al. 2004). Current research reveals the benefits of integrating PBIS implementation with SEL programming to form consistent and relevant model for improving student social, academic, and behavioral outcomes (Domitrovich et al. 2010).

In their study, Cook et al. (2015) examined the independent and combined effects of PBIS and Social Emotional Learning (SEL). Their prominent study targeted these two evidence-based intervention practices currently being implemented by school systems to improve mental health stability, prevent, and reduce behavior problems in young students. The researchers compare four conditions; business-as-usual (BAU), PBIS, SEL, and the COMBO condition (PBIS integrated with SEL), to identify the model which is more effective in reducing unwanted behaviors and improving overall mental health conditions of young people. Findings reveal that although both PBIS and SEL can improve the health functions on their own; however, COMBO

condition proves to be capable of reducing inappropriate behaviors and improving overall mental health at significantly higher levels (Cook et al. 2015; Durlak et al. 2011).

Researchers reveal that multi-component behavior intervention programs are superior to single-component programs (i.e. independent PBIS interventions, or stand-alone SEL curriculums) (Cook et al., 2015). The PBIS system offers a process grounded in applied behavior analysis, which consists of teaching, modeling, teacher cues as well as the reinforcement of observable behaviors that requires the development of a system that responds to exact problem behaviors (Sugai & Horner, 2009; Horner et al. 2009). Their studies regard PBIS as a framework for targeting unwanted behaviors and promotes safe and orderly school environments. In addition, the PBIS model requires schools to establish three to five core behavioral expectations. Schools should reflect on these expectations through an on-going process to respond to problem behaviors, which includes the modeling of expectations with cues, posters, and signals (Cook et al. 2015). The difference between SEL and PBIS is that social and emotional learning requires the adoption of specific curricula that offers a model to teach lessons focused on social, cognitive, and emotional skills that help shape students' decision-making and behaviors. In comparison, PBIS focuses on the teaching of observable behavior and the environmental aspects of a school that supports productive practices; in retrospect, the two significantly help create a framework that can be implemented with limited drawbacks (Elias, Arnold, & Hussey, 2003; McIntosh et al. 2014).

Weist et al. (2018) recently wrote a position paper regarding the improvement of MTSS for students with emotional and behavior problems. Weist et al. argue that there is an urgent need to improve programs and services for students presenting "internalizing" disorders such as those related to trauma, depression, and anxiety. In their article, researchers discuss relevant issues

regarding evidence-based practices and databased decision-making. Tobin, Horner, Vincent, and Swain-Bradway (2012) advocate for schools to use a full three-tiered approach to PBIS because of its benefits students in special education in terms of improving behavior and reducing school discipline. Tobin et al. also indicate that in PBIS schools it may be easier to resolve behavior problems in general education students than those of students in special education using universal Tier 1 supports because of the needs of students with disabilities as documented by their IEPs. Malloy et al. (2018) encourage that three-tiered implementation of PBIS is studied in secondary school environments.

Relatively, the focus is placed on school mental health within MTSS frameworks. Weist et al. (2018) promote the idea that specified teams should spend time screening students, monitoring school discipline, and problem solve to ensure the implementation of intervention strategies across all three tiers to groups of students and individual students. Schools should consider providing systemic approaches that utilize an interconnectedness of supports instead of independent support strategies to improve mental health, academic, and behavior of students. This framework is referred to as interconnected systems framework (ISF) (Weist et al. 2018).

Literature Review

Student perceptions are a crucial component to the methodological design of the study. Spires et al. (2008) contend that student perceptions are “often overlooked as a resource, students can contribute a valuable perspective on education” (p. 1). The criteria for the literature review was set to include parameters that searched for recent studies related to perceptions surrounding PBIS implementation and school discipline in middle-grades settings. The literature search was broken down into four distinctive categories based on the topics associated with the methodological design, problem statement, and research questions: (1) student experiences of

school discipline; (2) student perceptions of Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) Implementation; (3) voices of students with disabilities in phenomenography; and, (4) metaphorical drawings as visual representations for learning in educational research. The search procedures for this literature review included the use of Google Scholar, as well as the university's library system, which included peer-reviewed research. The introduction sections of each of the following literature review topics includes the search process, relevant studies, and findings that relate to the current study.

Search Process

An initial literature review for studies surrounding student experiences and/or perceptions of school discipline using Google Scholar resulted in a total of 1,340,000 results using the following keywords: "middle grades student experiences and/or perceptions of school discipline." From that pool of literature, it was learned that most studies focused on student perceptions of school climate and safety, and they were quantitative in design with primary perspectives from high school students. The criteria for this review required literature to focus on middle-grades education, school discipline, and students with disabilities. Next, the university's library system was used to acquire more literature surrounding student experiences of school discipline. This search resulted in 414,000 search results with most of them focusing on safety, school climate, and bullying.

The next literature review included student perceptions of PBIS implementation. Google Scholar resulted in 138,000 results. The keywords used in this search included: "student perceptions of positive behavior interventions and supports," "PBIS," "middle grades," "special education." Many of these studies included student perceptions of school environment and/or academic achievement. One case study examined elementary student perceptions in a PBIS

school exploring their understanding of safety, school expectations, and bullying, but none of the students in this study were in special education (Kelm et al. 2014). Next, the University library system was consulted using similar keywords used previously with Google Scholar. The search resulted in 4,307 peer-reviewed articles. The researcher found it necessary to include qualitative perception-based studies of teacher perceptions surrounding PBIS because of the limited research that has explored student perceptions, especially on the middle grades level. The search resulted in finding a total of seven studies that fit the criteria.

The next literature review included an examination of studies that have employed voices of students with disabilities in phenomenographical research. A search query using the keywords “students with disabilities,” “phenomenography,” and “middle grades” resulted in 1,870 peer-reviewed articles. Out of this pool of literature, it was learned that most phenomenographical studies examined early childhood and upper level student conceptions and perceptions of Science and Mathematics education, and most elicited student voices using visual representations. Using the University library database, a search query of similar keywords resulted in 440 studies. Of these studies, most explored high school level perceptions of transitioning out of school to life (i.e., employability), and when positive behavior intervention and supports was included in the search with phenomenography, zero studies were found.

In a search for literature that relied on visual representations for learning in middle grades qualitative research, Google Scholar resulted in 18,000 results (i.e., keywords: “student drawings” “metaphors for learning,” “middle grades,” “visual representations,” “qualitative,” and “school discipline”). Most studies came up focused on children’s perspective of Math and Science education. The same search query was performed using the University library system,

which resulted in 4,809 results. Out of this pool of literature, only four studies were suitable and fit the criteria for the current study.

After reviewing a few hundred studies while looking for relevance to the current study, including gaps in the field from the previous decade and beyond, approximately twenty three were selected for the current literature review; however, the literature review does allude to specific studies outside the scope of criteria to expound upon findings from early childhood, upper grades, teacher perceptions, including fields outside of special education and school discipline research such as Math and Science education as they provide a better understanding of the topics and issues relative to the research questions under current investigation.

Student Experiences with and Conceptions of School Discipline

Based on the above search query, studies that explore student experiences and/or perceptions surrounding school discipline are lacking. In their book, *Prelude to Prison: Student Perspectives on School Suspension*, Weissman (2015) collected student perceptions surrounding punitive discipline and found such practices resemble processes linked to arrest, trial, sentence, and imprisonment. Weissman argues that school exclusionary discipline practices such as ISS prepares young people from poor communities for incarceration. Perry-Hazan and Lambrozo (2018) performed a qualitative research study using semi-structured interviews. given to seventy children aged seven to ten from nineteen public schools. Their intention was to elicit student perceptions surrounding due process in schools' disciplinary procedures. Findings reveal negative perceptions of the due process system based around lack of compassion and understanding of students' academic and social difficulties, including a disregard of students' voice and the low efficacy of punishments.

Additional findings from this literature review indicate that student perceptions to elicit experiences surrounding school discipline are limited and most perception-based studies surrounding that have relied heavily on teacher and administrator as participants (DeMatthews, et al. 2017; Timor; 2015). Moreover, an analysis of literature revealed that a bulk of perception-based studies relied on quantitative methods or qualitative studies from early childhood students (Atiles, Gresham, & Washburn, 2017; Khoury-Kassabri & Ben-Harush, 2012; Perry-Hazan & Lambrozo, 2018), elementary-aged students (Gilmore, 2013; Hambacher, 2018), students from alternative settings (McCluskey, 2014), and high school level students (Bracy, 2011; Caton, 2012; Haight et al. 2016). Consequently, there a gap in literature surrounding experiences of students with disabilities at the middle-grades level surrounding exclusionary/punitive school discipline, which is why the current study is both valuable and necessary.

Student Perceptions of Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) Implementation

In a dissertation completed by Walker (2018), a mixed-method approach was used to interview and survey eleven middle school students and teachers in a PBIS school to explore classroom culture, achievement, and attitudes toward learning and behavior. The findings revealed that inconsistent implementation of positive behavior and supports guidelines negatively impacted classroom culture, as well as overall school climate. Students did not know how to understand expectations from teachers and staff and continued to display misbehaviors and receive infractions. Limitations of this student include selection of students, the time frame for interviews, and the teachers available to be interviewed. Further limitations, like the current study, include interviewing 8th grade students, rather than students from all three grades. Furthermore, only one middle school in the district was included in the study. It is also important

to note that perceptions of students with disabilities were not included in Walker's dissertation, and her study does not explore student perceptions of school discipline

In a recent qualitative study, Alissa Briggs (2012) explored perceptions of teachers and students in a high school implementing PBIS. Briggs performed a case study to evaluate PBIS and its relationship to student well-being from a social justice perspective in a junior high. She utilized a mixed-methods approach to examine the process and outcome of implementing PBIS at the universal level from the perspective of students, administration, faculty/staff, and universal team. She employed the use of semi-structured interviews. Their findings suggest that successful PBIS implementation requires administrative support, communication, and data-driven decisions. Limitations of their study include small sample size in focus groups.

In a similar qualitative study, McDaniel et al. (2018) examined four insights from educators regarding PBIS implementation in high-needs contexts using focus groups. Participants included one elementary teacher, one elementary school counselor, one middle school assistant principal, and one school psychologist who served a cluster of schools in the district. Participants were from high-needs schools defined as having above average rates of free reduced lunch, identified as low achieving, or failing school, and having minority student populations. A total of sixteen questions were developed to address the following gaps in literature: (a) general PBIS implementation; (b) outcomes; (c) adaptations to tier one implementation; and (d) leadership. An open coding process was used to perform data analysis where iterative process helped break down and create short descriptive labels. A constant comparison method was used to identify broader themes. The final themes identified included perceptions, challenges, supports required in high-need schools, and suggestions for improving PBIS in high-needs schools.

McDaniel et al. (2018) found that secondary schools struggle to provide higher fidelity implementation because of lower expectations for student behavior and limited options of reinforcers for secondary students. Challenges regarding implementation were related to lack of state, district, and administrator level support, teacher training and buy-in, lack of parent/community involvement, and poverty issues. Participants also expressed a need for further support to implement Tier 2 and Tier 3 strategies, as well as classroom management guidelines and mental health supports for students. Recommendations were also requested for implementing culturally responsive school wide PBIS. Limitations were acknowledged regarding case study methodology, which included four participants whom provide initial voices from those who work in the schools.

In their quantitative study, Shuster et al. (2017) explored the experiences and perspectives of special educators regarding the inclusion of students with disabilities in PBIS. Their study included a statewide compilation of 849 special educators across elementary, middle, and high schools in Tennessee. Researchers explored the following questions: (a) their involvement in their school's PBIS framework, (b) the ways their students with disabilities participate, (c) potential barriers to such participation, and (d) the topics and avenues through which they desire professional development. Shuster et al. used two surveys based on previous research on tiered systems. One survey was for special educators who reported on their school's implementation of PBIS, and the other was for special educators who indicated their schools did not implement PBIS. Those that indicated their school used PBIS, were provided with an eight-item survey to provide their knowledge of participation of SWDs in PBIS. The same were teachers were also asked about their participation with PBIS.

Shuster et al. (2017) used descriptive statistics to summarize findings to their research questions. Their results show that full implementation was in the following areas: (a) establishing school-wide expectations for all students and (b) having faculty and staff model those expectations. Results also indicate that the highest involvement of SWD participation was in school-wide rewards such as school store and school-wide raffles. The lowest involvement was found in whether SWDs were screened the same as general education students to gauge their need for more intensive behavioral interventions and supports. Moreover, further results indicate that 20% of all educators did not even know PBIS was being implemented in their school. Involvement also varied in terms of special education teachers who provided services to low-incidence SWDs and high-incidence SWDs. Their analysis revealed more involvement with PBIS implementation for educators of students with high-incidence disabilities and reveals that many special educators are uninvolved or isolated from school-wide PBIS initiatives.

In terms of professional development, more than 90% of special education teachers responded that they would likely attend in-district PBIS training/workshops. Shuster et al. (2017) discuss several implications regarding the outcomes of their study. For example, they encourage special education teachers to learn more about PBIS implementation at their schools while advocating for SWD to be provided with all three-tier supports of the PBIS framework, particularly tier two and tier three interventions. They also recommend that lesson plans on school-wide expectations be supplemented with visual supports and multiple opportunities to practice. Shuster et al. also suggest schools to provide high-quality PBIS trainings to include special educators.

In another perception-based study, Caldarella et al. (2011) used a quasi-experimental approach to investigate the effect of PBIS on middle school climate and student outcomes using

teacher and student perceptions based on survey responses. Their findings revealed that school climate improved significantly with the implementation of PBIS because of decrease in students' tardiness, unexcused absences, and office discipline (Caldarella et al. 2011). Regarding future research surrounding teacher and student perceptions of the impact of PBIS on school climate, Caldarella et al. (2011) suggest the potential benefits of using interviews to increase fidelity of outcomes, which was used in this current phenomenography.

Regarding students with disabilities, Bambara et al. (2009) performed a qualitative interview study to investigate the perceived barriers and factors that enable the implementation and sustainability of PBIS across the K-12 spectrum. Bambara et al. employed the use of semi-structured interview questions using purposeful sampling of two building principals, three special services program administrators, five special educators, and one general education teacher. Their findings reveal that school culture that is enveloped in PBIS is a significant indicator for full implementation. Additional findings reveal misconceptions regarding the role of PBIS. For instance, many participants found PBIS to be unfair to some students since targeted students receive special treatment that differs from standard discipline practices. Moreover, Bambara et al. found that there is a lack of school inclusion facing students with disabilities in terms of PBIS.

For instance, students with disabilities who engage in challenging behaviors are not well understood or valued as members of the school community. It was also found that when teachers do not implement positive strategies with fidelity, some colleagues feel isolated working again mainstream culture. It is also noted that additional professional development regarding the basic tenets and processes of PBIS, or in this case IPBS, would benefit staff members. The following elements were noted to promote positive outcomes of PBIS implementation: (a) include regularly

occurring and structured meeting; (b) a strong facilitator with expertise in PBIS, people or team leadership skills to motivate team members and resolve team conflicts; and, (c) strategies to promote good working and interpersonal relationships among team members.

In addition, frequent opportunities for team members to experience and celebrate success, and opportunities for team members to communicate with one another outside of meetings for additional team support may improve implementation. Although the Bambara et al. study targeted special education students by employing qualitative surveys to gain insights in teacher perspectives, it did not consider student perceptions of PBIS implementation, nor did it include school discipline, which was performed in the current study. The next section will provide a literature review of student voice in phenomenographical studies.

Voices of Students with Disabilities in Phenomenography

Phenomenographical studies have been used to uncover practical implications within the field of education such as informing teacher practice (Bell, 2016), the development of new instructional material (Hedges & Harkness, 2017), the redesign the delivery of curriculums and academic learning programs and the use of student perceptions and experiences to improve pedagogy (Sharma, et al., 2004). However, phenomenographical studies often only rely on participants with disabilities outside of middle grades settings (Kubiak, 2015) and most include student voices from higher education (Kubiak, 2015; Van Kessel, 2017; Melanlioglu, 2013). For instance, Kubiak (2015) explored the experiences of University level students with intellectual disabilities surrounding learning. The findings from that study relied on the voices of eighteen students with intellectual disabilities to develop insights regarding four categories: (1) Cognitive Stages of Learning; (2) Self-regulation and Learning; (3) Learning as Collective Meaning Making; and, (4) Supportive Environments and Learning. Preconceptions regarding the learning

of students labeled with intellectual disabilities were disrupted and redefined in a positive manner in this study.

Furthermore, phenomenographical studies have been used predominantly in science education to explore undergraduate level student perceptions or teacher perceptions (Dare et al. 2019; Hans & Ellis, 2019; Newton & Martin, 2013; Stonebraker et al., 2019), but the benefits of phenomenographical studies are bountiful. For example, Deveci (2017) performed a phenomenography with twenty-four middle-grades, science teachers. Results indicate that teachers possess limited training regarding entrepreneurship in science curriculum. Based on this study, it is evident that phenomenographical studies can be used to inform teacher training, which has been done with the current study. In terms of student perceptions, one study was conducted by Karatas et al. (2011) using images of engineers to elicit student perceptions of the nature of engineering.

Their study included twenty sixth grade level students without disabilities using semi-structured interviews, drawings, and field notes. Findings suggest that students in the study believed that engineers were individuals that made or built products or tested products to ensure they work right and safe to use. Outcomes from this study indicate that students' concepts of engineers and the field of engineering were unstable, which warranted curriculum designers bring a better understanding of engineering into the middle-school classroom to increase awareness and disrupt misconceptions of the field of engineering. In another phenomenography performed by Cunningham and Williams (2018), students, parents, teachers, librarians, IT personnel, and administrators from one middle school community were used to explore the qualitative different ways that stakeholder groups understood informational literacy (IL). Findings indicate the benefits of exploring a diverse sample to explore multiple people's

perceptions and experience of a phenomenon. It was not indicated if students were identified with disabilities.

In another study that relied on student perceptions, Kalvaitis and Monhardt (2012) explored elementary level students' relationships with nature using a phenomenographical methodology. 176 students ages six through eleven, which is rather large for a phenomenography, produced drawings of themselves outside doing something and wrote about their picture and their relationship with nature. Findings indicate that younger children in this study identified family, friends, insects, and animals, while older children included more natural environments, chores, and hiking. Their findings indicate educational decisions for curriculum development, educational practice, and policy that provides students with more exposure to nature based on their understanding that human relationship with nature is an important part of life.

In summary, a literature review of phenomenographical studies that elicit student voices in the field of middle grades education are majorly funded with work that explores conceptions and perceptions of non-disabled students. Considering this understanding that most phenomenographical studies focus on science education, or they explore voices of elementary and secondary aged students, including University level students, the need for middle-grades students in phenomenographical work is in demand. The current study fills this gap in phenomenographical research because it explores the experiences and conceptions of fifteen students with disabilities on the middle grades level. Moreover, the search for phenomenographical studies that explore student perceptions of school discipline and PBIS implementation have come up null, and the current study appears to be the first of its kind.

Visual Representations as Metaphorical Drawings to Elicit Middle Grades' Students Perceptions in Qualitative Research

In the past, a limited number of phenomenographical studies have used visual representation as metaphorical drawings to elicit student perceptions in education (Kalvaitis & Monhardt, 2012; Karatas et al., 2011), and the popularity of relying on this method as a source of qualitative data is increasing, but it is often used to elicit perceptions from early childhood students or post-secondary students. For example, in a recent dissertation, (Singh, 2020) used visual representations to explore three first-year college students with disabilities and one senior high school student with disabilities perceptions surrounding the influence of transition planning on postsecondary education outcomes. Their findings reveal that students with disabilities need opportunities to explore post-secondary options, critical guidance and support during transition planning, active involvement in the transition planning process, parent involvement in the planning process where they are provided with coaching and advisement, and collaboration from external stakeholders, especially if students with disabilities are to attend postsecondary education.

Relative to middle-grades, Akbaşı et al. (2018) employed a phenomenology to reveal the perceptions of middle school students using metaphors to interpret students' thoughts on their teachers and school directors, also known as school principals. Interviews were the main data collection tool. A total of 204 middle school students participated in the research. Content analysis method was used during data analysis phase. Some participants wrote descriptions instead of creating a metaphor image. Others used multiple metaphor images. It was learned that seventh grade students overwhelmingly categorized school principals in negative characteristics. Their metaphors revealed that they did not see their school directors/principals much and could

not establish communication with them. Fifth and sixth graders viewed teachers as a source of love; whereas, 7th and 8th graders viewed teachers as source of information. Limitations were not mentioned in this study, but insights to specific demographic of middle school participants, such as whether they are students with disabilities would have been beneficial.

The use of visual representation in mixed-methods research has also been performed relying on middle grades students' perceptions. For example, McHatton et al. (2014) performed a mixed-method study to explore middle-grades students' perceptions of their learning environment using student drawings and corresponding narratives. A total of 132 middle grade students participated in this study. Metaphors were interpreted to elicit students' perceptions of teacher pedagogy, interactions between teacher-student and student-student, and school climate, as well as how these differ based on service delivery model (i.e., gifted, special education, or general education settings). Quantitative measures included student drawing analysis that included variables in accordance to classroom environment, student characteristics, teacher characteristics, and student preference towards the teachers and classrooms drawn. Additionally, four questions were provided to students and later analyzed in a statistical fashion. Qualitative analysis was performed based on student comments and description of a typical class. Findings revealed that students in middle-grades settings perceive differential classroom experiences in terms of instructional methods, interactions, and behavior management based upon different service delivery models.

Students in the McHatton et al. (2014) study revealed that their learning environments ranged from social, connected, supportive, and stimulating to isolated, disconnected, threatening, and uninteresting. Students in gifted classes produced drawings that were positive learning environments, which represented relevant and engaging instruction; whereas, general education

students revealed drawings that revealed classrooms were disconnected and critical thinking activities were absent. Learners in general education classrooms were also apathetic about teachers, academics, and learning tasks. Moreover, drawings by students served in special education settings depicted environments that focused more on behavior than academics and negative teacher-student relationships. McHatton et al. (2014) found that negative teacher talk was also noticed, as well as students sleeping and engaged in social exchanges unrelated to learning. Limitations were expressed as having a small sample size from one school in one geographic area, which is why authors acknowledged that generalizations were limited.

Summary of Literature Review

The goal of this chapter was to review theoretical frameworks and topical research associated with the conceptual framework and research problem. The researcher was unable to locate any qualitative studies that have explored the experiences, perceptions and/or conceptions of students with disabilities in a middle-grades education surrounding school discipline and PBIS implementation. Moreover, voices of students with disabilities in phenomenography are also limited, with many studies in early childhood and higher education. The current study sets itself apart from existing literature in the field because it explores the experiences of middle-grades students with disabilities, which is encouraged by McDaniel et al. (2018) whom recommend researchers use of qualitative methods to explore perceptions about PBIS from more participants across varying school settings.

Moreover, a bulk of literature regarding perceptions and attitudes of teachers and/or students regarding school discipline examined perceptions of early childhood students (Atilas, Gresham, & Washburn, 2017; Khoury-Kassabri & Ben-Harush, 2012; Perry-Hazan & Lambrozo, 2018), elementary-aged students (Gilmore, 2013; Hambacher, 2018), students from alternative

settings (McCluskey, 2014), and high school level students (Bracy, 2011; Caton, 2012; Haight, Kayama, & Gibson, 2016), which reveals a gap in literature for exploring the perceptions of middle-grades students. Additionally, it appears that empirical work that has explored the perceptions of PBIS implementation in middle-grades settings primarily focuses on teachers' experiences of school culture and climate (Caldarella et al. 2011; Walker et al. 2018), academic outcomes and fidelity of implementation (Briggs, 2012; McIntosh et al. 2011), two caring teachers (Garza et al. 2014; Tosolt, 2010), and the four studies that do focus on perceptions of implementation (Bambara et al. 2009; Tillery et al. 2010; Tyre et al. 2018; McDaniel et al. 2018) did not include student voices. Walker's (2018) mixed-method study does include the perceptions of special education teachers, but it does not include the perceptions of students with disabilities, nor does it explore student experiences and conceptions of PBIS implementation. Findings from this literature review suggests that an overwhelmingly number of studies included quantitative approaches to elicit teachers' and/or students' perceptions (Jones & Hensley, 2012; Tyler & Boelter, 2008; Wang and Holcomb, 2010), which limits gaining personable and unique insights from students with disabilities (Cook-Sather, 2006).

Based on this newly acquired knowledge, it is evident that previous studies have not explored the perceptions of students with disabilities regarding their experiences of school discipline and Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) implementation. Unlike many perception-based studies in the past, the current qualitative study adopted a phenomenographical tradition to elicit middle school student experiences to better understand teacher implementation of PBIS within inclusion settings, as well as the experiences of students with disabilities surrounding exclusionary discipline. The current study also inspired critical consciousness in undeserved youth to explore the qualitative different ways students desire to change school

discipline and PBIS implementation, which provided unique and valuable insights for transforming teacher training and professional development relative to the needs of students with disabilities.

The upcoming chapter includes a thorough explanation regarding the methodological process that guided the phenomenographical design for the current study. The researcher has provided an overview of his worldview and role in the research site, as well as goals associated with the dissertation. Moreover, the next chapter discusses the research tradition, methodological approach, research questions, as well as contextual information associated with the research site. Next, participant selection criteria is defined, including data collection methods, which primarily included interviews. The study also relied on visual representations, observations, and documentation review. Finally, the data analysis processes used in this study are discussed, followed by a report of the various strategies used to promote trustworthiness of findings.

Chapter Three: Methodology

“Caring teachers listen and respond differentially to their students.”

-Nel Noddings, Ph.D.

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the experiences and conceptions of students with disabilities to understand the role of punitive school discipline and Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) implementation on their learning and behaviors. More specifically, this study followed a phenomenographic tradition to elicit the perceptions of fifteen middle-grades students (i.e., ten (10) eighth graders and five (5) seventh graders) with prior experiences with exclusionary school discipline (i.e., in-school suspension, out-school suspension, silent lunch, and/or detention). All students were enrolled within inclusion classrooms with teachers trained to implement PBIS. Furthermore, this qualitative study was designed to inspire critical consciousness, emancipation, and empowerment of participant students by engaging them in rich discussions that elicited their desires and suggestions for improving school discipline policy and practice, as well as PBIS implementation. A detailed description of the intended goals of the study, methodological approach to conducting a phenomenography, sampling procedures, including data collection methods used to guide the study are provided in the current chapter. An overview of the data analysis procedures that were used to produce the findings has also been included. Finally, strategies to ensure trustworthiness, worldview and role of the researcher, including ethical considerations are discussed.

Goals of the Current Study

By discussing the goals that drive a study, one can answer the “why” of their research. According to Maxwell (2012), personal, intellectual, and practical interests are motivating factors that help individuals complete their research. Ravitch and Riggan (2017) suggest that

inquiry into research questions is secondary to dissecting and understanding the researcher's experiences and personal preferences when it comes to exploring relevant issues under investigation. Accordingly, there are three types of goals a researcher should define to conduct a high-quality study: personal, intellectual, and practical.

Intellectually, the researcher in this study wanted to contribute to the field of education by revealing how the voices of underserved youth can provide a better understanding about the influence of school discipline on academic and social learning. Moreover, the researcher was interested in inspiring critical consciousness in students with disabilities (see interview protocol in Appendix B). Student participants engaged in reflexive dialogue and practices that fostered a sense of empowerment and emancipation regarding their experiences in exclusionary discipline (i.e. ISS, OSS, detention, and/or silent lunch) (for templates of visual representations see Appendix C and Appendix D). Additionally, the researcher wanted to understand teacher behaviors in the classroom to understand the level of care relative to fidelity and PBIS implementation, which was elicited through the interview process. These insights allowed the researcher to consider new recommendations to educational practice.

On a practical level, the researcher found this study to serve as a viable tool that he can use in the future to help him advocate on behalf of students with disabilities who are currently overrepresented in punitive school discipline. The researcher can now move forward and suggest new strategies, interventions, and evidence-based practices, including alternatives to punitive school discipline, to help alleviate the disproportionate number of students with disabilities who end up in isolated environments that are the anti-thesis to academic and social learning. Moreover, by tapping into students' desired learning environments, he was able to learn about specific practice that may increase student engagement and improve student behavior.

Finally, on a personal level, the researcher wanted to learn about what it will take to reduce discipline disparities facing students with disabilities. So many of his own students are often taken away from his classes and subjugated to punitive discipline, which leaves him feeling like he can do more to help them reach self-actualization. It is hopeful that other educators will identify with the outcomes of this qualitative study, and maybe they will consider reflecting on their own behaviors in the classroom relative to providing services with an ethic of care. Perhaps, more practitioners will consider the voices of their students and conspire towards creating environments that foster academic, behavioral, social, and emotional learning of all students. Accordingly, implication of findings to personal pedagogy, connections/relationships to previous literature, educational practice, and recommendations for future research will be discussed heavily in chapter five.

Research Approach

For this study, a qualitative approach was followed to investigate factors that contribute to discipline disparities facing students with disabilities by exploring student experiences with and conceptions of school discipline and Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) implementation. According to Sharan Merriam (2009), qualitative studies are interested in how people interpret their experiences and how they construct their worlds. The overall purpose of a qualitative study is to understand how people make sense of their lives based on their experiences (Merriam, 2009). The current study relied heavily on Merriam's guidelines for conducting a qualitative study, with specific attention provided to the data collection of qualitative data, and the analysis and reporting of qualitative data, which requires dealing with validity, reliability, and ethics (Merriam, 1998). Researchers often adopt the qualitative approach over quantitative (i.e., numerical data often achieved from survey instrumentation) when they are

interested in understanding more about the human condition (Merriam, 2009). The qualitative approach allows one to explore the meaning of human experiences and introduce change through increasing awareness and action (Merriam, 2009). Once an approach is considered, the researcher must then adopt a research tradition within the selected overall approach to research.

Traditionally, the qualitative approach offers various traditions that produce varied implications to data collection (i.e., phenomenology, ethnography, grounded theory, case study, and/or mixed methods) (Merriam, 2009). As a result of being interested in exploring the various experiences, conceptions, and perceptions of students with disabilities surrounding school discipline and PBIS implementation, a phenomenographic tradition to qualitative inquiry was adopted based on the pivotal work of Marton (1986). The term “phenomenography” is etymologically derived from two Greek words: (a) “phainomenon,” which is the appearance of things; and, (b) “graphein” – to write or describe. Therefore, phenomenography can be considered the description of the way reality is experienced (Hasselgren & Beach, 1997). Phenomena can be understood as the observable occurrences within environments and the levels of awareness of individuals in their lived realities (Vagle, 2016). Discussing the origins of phenomenography should help readers develop a contextual understanding surrounding nature of how this approach has become a popular tool to advance qualitative inquiry.

Research Tradition

Phenomenography is a qualitative research tradition that has been designed to help researchers explore how people collectively experience the world in terms of categories of descriptions (Marton, 1981). Ference Marton, a researcher out of Sweden, helped develop the phenomenographical method in the 1970s to explore first-year undergraduate students’ learning outcomes because he was interested in understanding the qualitative difference in how individual

students understood and experienced their learning (Dall’Alba, 2000; Marton, 1997). Marton (2000) described phenomenography as a tradition that helped him understand academic learning by investigating the variation between the students’ learning outcomes. Instead of focusing on quantitative variables to explore a phenomenon, and their outcomes led to describing the quality of the learning process and its implications (Marton & Booth, 1997).

Essentially, phenomenographies allow researchers to uncover lived experiences of group of people engaged in various situations (Marton, 1981). Phenomenography aims at describing the different ways a group of people understand a phenomenon (Marton, 1981), whereas phenomenology, aims to clarify the structure and meaning of a phenomenon (Giorgi, 1999), as it is experienced by a group of individuals. For this study, the researcher was not simply interested in people’s experience, rather he wanted to understand the experiences, conceptions, and perceptions of students with disabilities who have experienced the phenomenon of exclusionary school discipline in one environment that implement Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports. More specifically, the researcher was interested in evaluating the ISS classroom relative to academic and social learning of students with disabilities, including teacher behaviors in terms of PBIS implementation on a classroom level. Therefore, a phenomenography was employed to examine the diverse perceptions of fifteen students with disabilities involved with the phenomenon under investigation to apply outcomes to educational practice (Bruce, 1999).

Furthermore, Marton and Booth (1997) indicate that the ways of experiencing phenomenon require understanding the relationships between the participant and the phenomenon. Moreover, when performing phenomenographies researchers must adopt what is referred to as a “second order perspective,” where peoples’ ideas about or experiences with what specified phenomenon are examined (Lam, 2019; Richardson, 1999). Later, the outcome space

of data is analyzed and interpreted from the researcher's own perspective. Accordingly, the researcher in the current study elicited the experiences and conceptions of fifteen middle grades students with disabilities to explore and describe their relationship with exclusionary environments and inclusion PBIS classrooms. This process led to developing codes/categories defined as an outcome space (Trigwell, 2006), which now only allowed him to better make sense of their lived realities and conceptions of punitive practices, but he was also able to examine and generalize the implications of exclusionary discipline on students' academic and social learning, attitudes, identities, behaviors, and teacher-student relationships. Student voices were allocated by conducting interview, and additional perceptions were collected by having students draw visual representations as metaphorical depictions of the ISS classroom and teachers that frequently write office disciplinary referrals. The results of phenomenographic studies are presented as categories of description, which can be interchangeably referred to as themes (Collier-Reed & Ingerman, 2013; Marton, 1981). For this study, seven distinctive categories emerged to help answer the three research questions.

Research Questions

This phenomenographic study elicited the voices of students with disabilities to generate an outcome space of data to explore the following three research questions:

1. How do students with disabilities experience and conceive of school discipline?
2. How do students with disabilities experience and conceive the implementation of Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS)
3. In what ways can voices of students with disabilities help transform punitive discipline and PBIS implementation to meet their desired learning environments?

Context and Setting

This qualitative study used a phenomenographical tradition to elicit student perceptions within one Title I middle school that is deemed operational with its Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) implementation. The primary data for this study relied on interviews, metaphorical drawings to serve as artifacts, and observations of the ISS classroom and inclusion classrooms. Ten (10) eighth grade students and (5) seventh grade students participated in this study based on the criteria outlined in the participant selection section of this study. Bayside middle school (BMS) (pseudonym for confidentiality purposes) was the research site selected for the study. It is in the suburbs of a large city in the Southeast with a population of almost 45,000 inhabitants. About 52% of the city population is White, 31% are Black, 20% are Hispanics, and 3% are two or more races which reveals a large disparity when compared to the student ethnic demographic at the school. Overall, 10% of children in this area live in poverty, and the middle school is above the district average for those who receive free and reduced lunch, which reveals districting and attendance zoning is comprised of a large proportion of students living in the poverty level.

The school began implementing PBIS in 2013-2014 school year, and three years later has been marked operational because of a large decrease in discipline referrals and classroom-level implementation. The multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) framework includes Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) with Response to Intervention (RtI), and recently the school has been providing bi-weekly twenty minutes lessons from Second Step's online modules to work social and emotional skills during Ravel Class. All teachers are also expected to use the Tiger Class blog to introduce and re-teach school wide PBIS expectations and cover other issues relevant to student learning. It is important to note that teacher training with Second Step

implementation is limited and outcomes to student learning are unidentified, which may be another topic of exploration for a future study.

Demographic Data

The demographic data from Table 3.0 reveals a large disparity in terms of racial difference and socioeconomic status (SES) within the school district (see Table 3.0, below). For instance, the Hispanic population is the majority demographic of BMS followed by Black students, but the district majority is predominantly made up of White students followed by Black students. Moreover, BMS has 83.4% of students provided with free-reduced lunch indicating the school is in an area of low-socioeconomic status (SES) within a district that shows 41.4% of free and reduced lunch on a countywide level. In the 2017-2018 school year, school discipline data indicates that BMS had a total number of 1,082 ODRs.

Table 3.0

Demographic Data of School District and Bayside Middle School (BMS) (18-19 Academic Year)

Enrollment	Total Students within District 112,097	Total Students within BMS 997
Characteristic	% of Students in District	% of Students in BMS
Race/Ethnicity		
Black	30.2%	40%
Hispanic	22.8%	51%
White	37%	5%
Multicultural	4.1%	4%
Asian	5.8%	4%
American Indian	<1%	<1%
Pacific Islander	<1%	<1%
Gender		
Male	51.0%	52.4%
Female	49.0%	47.6%
Other Demographics		
Special Education	13.4%	15.6%
Multilingual Services	9.4%	14%
Gifted Education Services	18.6%	7.8%
Free/Reduced Lunch	41.4%	83.4%

According to Table 3.0, students with disabilities (SWD) made up approximately 15.6% of the total school population, but they accounted for 27.6% of all disciplinary referrals based on 2017-2018 data provided by the schools' academic coach, which created a large disparity in school discipline for students with disabilities (see p. 63). Additional review of exclusionary discipline data reveals that sixteen students were expelled during the 2017-2018 school year. Disciplinary records also indicate that four of these individuals, or 25% of all students expelled, were students with disabilities. These students were removed from BMS and provided with alternative education placement (AEP) where disruptive students receive educational services in a setting other than their home school. A more relevant description of behavior data trends in terms of incidents associated with office disciplinary referrals is provided.

Recent Behavior Data Trends and Office Disciplinary Referrals

As a member of the PBIS committee, the researcher has direct access to discipline data. On February 3rd, 2020, the academic coach provided a PowerPoint with behavior trends in comparison to the prior year. This information also provided PBIS rewards disbursement data, which affirms representative statements from student participants in the current study that have indicated that some of their teachers are not rewarding positive behaviors in the classroom. Readers will find artifacts associated with behavior trends captured from school documentation in the appendix. A bulk of office disciplinary referrals occurred because of issues that occurred in the classroom followed by hallway and restrooms (see Appendix E). The number of referrals in terms of policy violations were led by insubordination, followed by classroom disruptions, and aggression, profanity, and skipping classes (see Appendix F).

Last school year, the school experienced 803 total referrals (see Appendix G). This year, the school has achieved 70% of the number of referrals of school year 2019, and during the

period the Power Point was acquired, it had only been 63% of the school year (see Appendix H). The most referrals accrued by any seventh-grade students was accumulated by Matthew, a participant who took part in the current study. Moreover, behavior problems appeared to be a rampant issue across the district when Bayside middle school was compared to the district average of total incident counts for the current school year (see Appendix I).

In the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 school years, the discipline data revealed that the numbers of office disciplinary referrals (ODRs) were on the decline, which had deemed BMS as an operational PBIS middle school. However, many underserved students, especially students with disabilities, were still overrepresented in school discipline as a response to minor misbehaviors. The major reasons students with disabilities are provided with ODRs were due to classroom disruptions, non-compliance, and insubordination, which has become a more exasperated issue the current school year.

Participant Selection

In phenomenographic research, given sampling requirements for purposeful variation, a participant group size of between fifteen and twenty is acceptable and large enough to reveal most of the possible variations and to allow for a defensible interpretation (Dunkin, 2000). Marton and Booth (1997) suggest that there is a relation between how people experience a situation and how they act in the situation. Therefore, finding out the different ways that young people experience, perceive, and conceive school discipline and PBIS implementation can be highly valuable, as their environment may dictate their behaviors. The sampling for this study followed Merriam (1998) suggestions for using what is referred to as purposeful sampling. This process of purposeful sampling allows the researcher to discover understand and gain insights from a sample where the most can be learned (Merriam, 1998). These participants are considered

information rich because they have special expertise and competence that can provide information about the issues of central importance to the purpose of the study.

Accordingly, the researcher used purposeful criterion sampling (Marton & Booth, 1997) to conduct interviews with fifteen middle school students with disabilities that met the following criteria: (1) the student has experienced school discipline in the last five years (i.e. Office Disciplinary Referral in their school record can be found); (2) the student has an active IEP; and, (3) the student must have experience with PBIS implementation. Fifteen eighth grade students were originally considered as the primary sample because they have most likely had more experiences with PBIS implementation. Older students were also favorable participants for this study because they have had more time in school, which could a higher likelihood for more experiences in school discipline. However, during the selection process, the researcher was only able to identify ten eighth grade students with a record of disciplinary referrals, and so five seventh grade students that fit the criteria participated in this study to expand the sample.

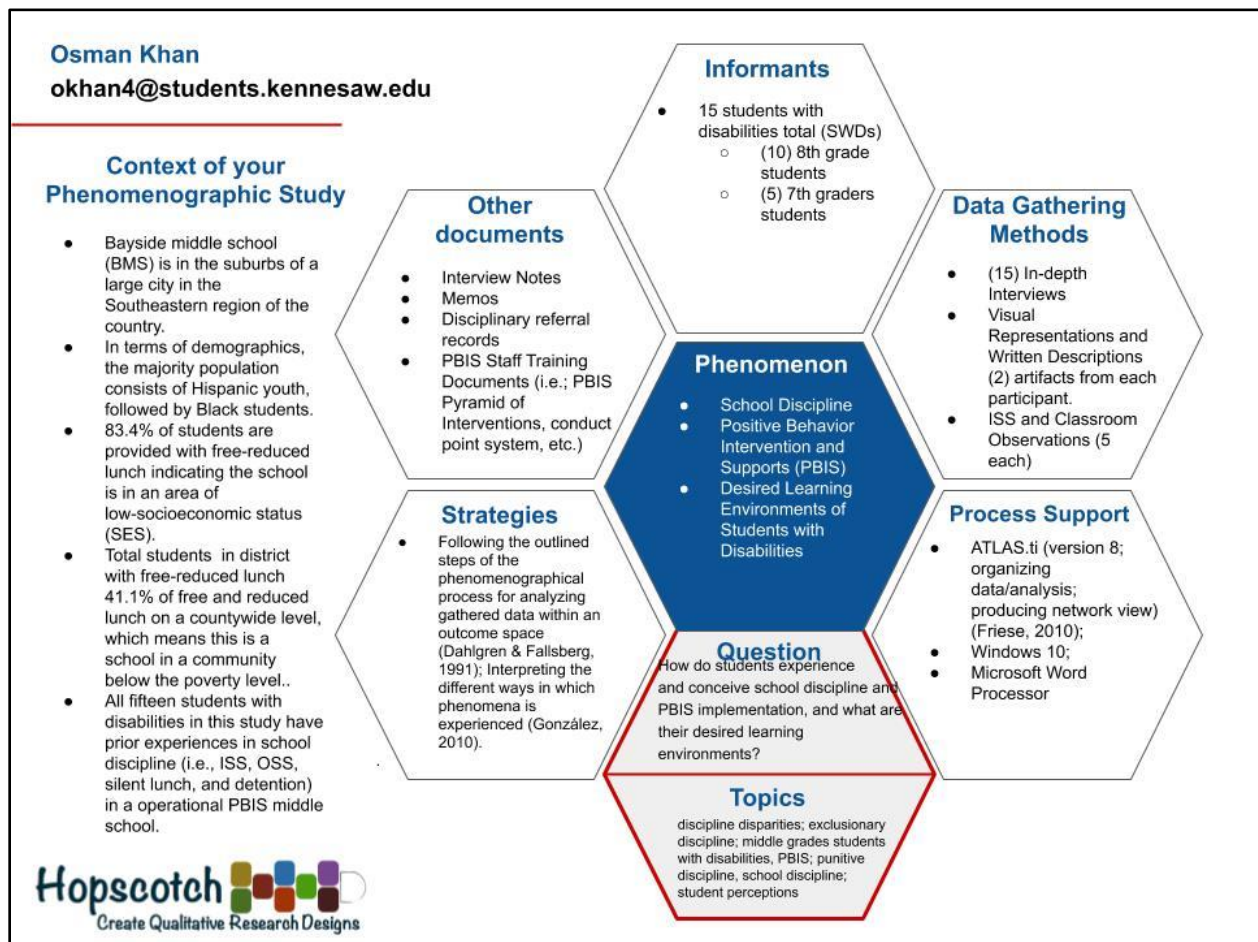
Access to Site

In order to gain access to the site, Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was acquired by the researcher from the University prior to data collection to ensure all human participants in this study were safe and protected (see Appendix J). According to the Department of Health and Human Services (2009), IRBs are regulatory committees that approve, oversee, and maintain ethical standards for human subjects of research. The criteria for IRB approval require the following: (1) Risks to subjects are minimized; (2) Risks are reasonable in relation to any anticipated benefits; (3) Subject selection is equitable. (4) Voluntary informed consent is sought; and (5) Informed consent and assent is appropriately documented. Once approved by the University IRB, the researcher went to the district academic division for approval.

After receiving approval from the district's IRB process (see Appendix K), the researcher met with his building level principal to explain the research study. It is important to note that the researcher is a teacher at the school where data was collected. After the principal signed the parent consent form (see Appendix L) and the student assent form (see Appendix M), copies were made, and student participants were recruited based on specific criteria. The recruitment for minors was performed by following ethical standards and approaching students and explaining the study in detail. Parents were contacted to explain the study and to request and attain signed parental consent to use their child as a student participant for the qualitative study. Once consent forms were secured, student participants were introduced to the study, and upon approval to participate, signed the assent form. Students were assisted with reviewing the assent forms as needed to ensure they fully understood what the interview sessions requested of them.

Data Collection

When conducting a phenomenography, it is important to make sure that participants convey their connection and relationship with the same phenomena (Collier-Reed & Ingerman, 2013). Therefore, data for this study was collected from participants who have directly experienced exclusionary discipline and PBIS implementation. With an intent to help readers develop a clearer understanding of the research method employed, including data collection a graphical representation of the phenomenographical design has been provided based on the Hopscotch model created by Jorin Abellán (2019) (see Figure 3.0, p. 68).

Figure 3.0*Graphical Representation of Phenomenographical Research Design*

As indicated in Figure 3.0 (above), primary data for the current study was collected using written texts and verbal discussions, which were elicited through open-ended interviews and participant created visual representations (Glesne, 2015; Merriam, 2009). Glesne (2015) suggests that qualitative data collection should allow the researcher to “unravel in order to make sense of the words that their questions generate” (p. 96). This data included direct quotations from people about their feelings, experiences, opinions, and knowledge, and the interviews generated detailed descriptions of students’ activities, behaviors, and actions (Merriam, 1998). Furthermore, documents served as secondary source of data in this study, which included relevant materials

associated with PBIS implementation and school discipline. Observations were also conducted and serve as secondary sources of qualitative data. The researcher made five observations of the ISS classroom, and he conducted five observation of inclusion classrooms. According to Merriam (1998), interview transcripts, documents, artifacts, and observations can help researchers uncover meaning, develop understanding, and discover insights relevant to the research problem. An overview of the protocols, observation protocols, visual representations (metaphorical drawings of school discipline), and documents that were collected as qualitative data for the current study are provided.

Interviews

Interviewing was primary method for collecting data in phenomenography (Walsh, 2000); therefore, the researcher developed interview protocols (see Appendix B) that expounded upon the research questions, topic, and issues surrounding the phenomena. The questioning followed a tentative design, which allowed the researcher to modify, dispose, delete, or replace them, and then add new ones during the process, and later follow up with previous participant students based on new insights (Glesne, 2015). In phenomenographies, interviews should also follow an open-ended model, which was done in the current study (Bowden, 2000). For instance, while asking student participants questions, the researcher relied on follow up questions, and he used the following types of questioning to reveal a deeper understanding of the phenomenon: (1) could you explain that further; (2) What do you mean by that; and (3) is there anything else you would say about that? (Trigwell, 2006).

Visual Representations

According to Booton (2018) visual representations can allow participants to express their perceptions in different ways, and their drawings can serve as triangulation of findings further enhancing validity. Additionally, the visual representations in the current study included an area for

student participants to write descriptions of their metaphorical drawings. Moreover, it is important to note that there are some issues with visual representations. For instance, Singh (2019) relied on the use of visual representations in her recent dissertation where she explained that negative aspects and challenges can arise when using visual representations to generate data because the drawings depend on the participant's ability to translate their experiences from memory and artistic abilities. Accordingly, it has been documented that "visual data" can be misinterpreted by the researcher during data analysis because of the possibility of misconstruing what the participant intended to depict in their drawing (Bessette & Paris, 2019).

Therefore, it was essential to include an area in the graphic organizer of visual representation where students produced descriptions of their metaphors for school discipline. For this study, two graphic organizers were provided to student participants: (1) Side A. Prompt 1: Draw a metaphor for what you think ISS/OSS/Expulsion looks like for you, or other students at your school. Describe and explain the metaphor you drew for Prompt 1 by writing a brief summary (see Appendix C); and (2) Side B. Prompt 2: Draw a metaphor for how you see or view teachers that frequently write disciplinary referrals that lead you, or other students to ISS/OSS/Expulsion. Describe and explain the metaphor you drew for Prompt 2 by writing a brief summary (see Appendix D).

Observations

Observations are effective tools for qualitative research because they provide the researcher with directly acquired information that can be seen directly by the researcher allowing him/her to find out who, what, when, where, and why of perceived actors and phenomena regarding the research question (Stake, 2010). Additionally, Yin (2011) encourages that the researcher looks at the following during the observation process; people's gestures, social interactions, actions, scenes and the physical environment.

The researcher followed Creswell (2007) protocols for observations, which required to include location, date, time of day, length of observation, descriptive notes, reflective notes, and diagram of environment. For this study, ten observations were performed. Five were completed in the in-school suspension (ISS) classroom, and the other five were performed in various inclusion classrooms. These observations were transcribed and uploaded into ATLAS.ti as primary documents, and they can be found in the appendix of the current study (for observations of the in-school suspension classroom, see Appendix N; for observations of inclusion classrooms, see Appendix O).

Documents

For this study, student participant disciplinary records and Individual Education Plan (IEP) information were used to generate participant profiles (see Table 4, p. 93). Moreover, Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) professional development and school protocols materials were included (PBIS Pyramid of Interventions, see Appendix A). The researcher also acquired the county specific job description of the ISS teacher (definition; see p. 40). Additionally, to assist with triangulation of findings, school-wide behavioral/disciplinary data, including PBIS rewards implementation trends have been provided (see Appendix P).

Data Collection Process

The interview questions and the prompts for metaphorical drawings were guided by the primary three questions driving the research study. An anticipated data reduction matrix (see Appendix Q) was created during the early stages of this dissertation by reflecting on topics, issues, and possible codes relative of the study to assist with developing interview questions and protocols. The anticipated data reduction matrix also included timeline of study. Initial start date of data collection was October 15th, 2020, and the study was on-going until end of February

2020. It provided a road map for creating interview protocols and structure for where to start with coding data. Moreover, follow up questions were provided as verbal prompts to help participants in this study expand and reflect more critically regarding their relationships and experiences with the phenomenon (Sin, 2010).

The fifteen students with disabilities were interviewed separately face-to-face. Each interview was completed in approximately twenty to twenty-five minutes, and the artifacts took approximately ten minutes to complete. Verbal consent was obtained from each participant, including signed consent forms from parents, and signed assent forms from students before proceeding with the interview process. The interviews were recorded using a handheld USB recorder, as well as the Voice Recorder program on Windows 10, which is secured with a password. The interviews and specific sections of student descriptions associated with the metaphorical artifacts were transcribed in Microsoft Word.

Next, the metaphorical artifacts were scanned individually and organized as primary documents with interviews and observations into ATLAS.ti software. The use of metaphorical artifacts served as additional data to help triangulate, affirm, and conceptualize the meaning of the phenomenon being studied during data analysis. It is important to stress that students were not interviewed on the same day, and they did not have access to other student participant's drawings. In terms of the interview process, the researcher followed Vagle's (2016) recommendations, which required to have students think chronologically about their experiences and to describe their knowledge of what was seen, said, heard, and how the experience made them feel, especially in terms of being in the ISS classroom. The researcher assigned individual pseudonyms as required to ensure confidentiality, which in this study included names of participants, including their peers and teachers.

Data Analysis

Phenomenographical studies require researchers to set aside their preconceived views to avoid establishing conclusions in order to preserve a more concise understanding of the collective experience through analysis of transcriptions (Akerlind, 2005). This process allows for the creation of descriptive categories created by the researcher that signifies a structured set of data within what is referred to as an outcome space (Marton, 1994). The outcome space allows the researcher to examine participant experiences from a variety of perspectives because the phenomena can be understood differently by various participants in the study (Akerlind, 2005). It is recommended that those employing a phenomenological design transcend their own perceptions of a phenomena/subject, and they are to seek out counter examples to validate their interpretations using participant experiences and conceptions surrounding a topic (Marton, 1994).

During the data analysis process, phenomenographers are aware that the conceptions become recognizable when conflicting themes arise by the qualitative differences in the outcome space (Collier-Reed & Ingerman, 2013). This requires researchers to make connections to establish meaning through interpretation using a second-order process of analysis (Marton, 1978; Marton, 1981). The outcome spaces within a phenomenographic study include a set of logically related categories, in this case, categories relative to student experiences and conceptions of school discipline and PBIS implementation. The categories are used to describe the range of different ways in which fifteen middle school students with disabilities understand their environment, including teacher behaviors and the policies and structures that guide their behavior and learning. The questions posed are designed to encourage the participants to think

about why they experience the phenomenon in certain ways, including how they make meaning of a phenomena (Loughland et al. 2002).

In order to create a cohesive study, and to assist with the logistical aspects that arose during the analysis process, the researcher designed an anticipated data reduction matrix (see Appendix Q). This matrix allowed the researcher to express what questions were to be asked and why as they relate to the research questions. The intention of phenomenographic research is to report on the variation that emerges from the whole group's understanding and derive to findings through interpretation (Loughland et al. 2002). For this study, the researcher followed the protocols provided by Dahlgren and Fallsberg (1991) (see Figure 3.1, below) and McCosker, et al. (2004) for analyzing data in a phenomenography.

Figure 3.1

Phenomenographic Data Analysis Process

Process	Description
1. Familiarization	The data is viewed, and details are explored before coding.
2. Condensation	The most representative statements are selected to identify patterns in the data.
3. Comparison	Unpack similarities and differences in data to identify sources of variations.
4. Grouping	The statements are sorted out by similarities.
5. Articulating	The similarities are extracted in terms of essence by categorization and description, including representative statements.
6. Labeling	The categories are represented linguistically.
7. Contrasting	The categories are contrasted.

Note. (Dahlgren & Fallsberg, 1991)

As shown in Figure 3.1, the first step was to become familiar with the data, and so accordingly the researcher examined artifacts and re-read the empirical material within transcripts (Dahlgren & Fallsberg, 1991). Next, the researcher searched through qualitative data sources, interview transcriptions and student descriptions of metaphorical drawings, to identify

and correct errors in transcripts before compiling answers from respondents to a certain question, which allows for a more accurate generation of significant elements in an answer provided by participants (Dahlgren & Fallsberg, 1991). It is important to note, that students misspelled a lot of their words, and the language and misspellings will be kept as is to continue a valid study. None of their language was incomprehensible, but some of the handwriting took a few trials to transcribe with accuracy. It was also vital that the researcher condensed and reduced individual answers to find central parts of longer answers in a dialogue, which allowed for identifying quotations relative to questions under investigation (Kahn, 2014). During the quotation process, the researcher was able to create comments to aid with making connections to previous literature, as well as triangulate responses to other forms of data.

This entire coding process was supported by ATLAS.ti, which allowed the researcher to highlight and segment parts of various transcriptions using free coding/open coding and list options available in ATLAS.ti. Friese (2014) describes ATLAS.ti as a valuable computer software that allows researchers to simplify data collection and project management, code data to help with theme identification, analyze transcriptions, and multimedia data (Hwang, 2008), and perform and catalogue transcription of interviews. It should be noted that the researcher understands that the software does not perform the analysis in qualitative inquiry, but the use of software to assist with organization, coding, and presentation of findings will assist with the qualitative analysis process (Gibbs et al. 2002). Saldaña (2009) regards coding as the researcher's ability to identify words and phrases that capture the essence of a phenomena, or research topic. The researcher acknowledges that the use of computer assisted data analysis is beneficial as it can help the researcher organize data, locate/retrieve and code data, as well as see things that they would not catch in primary documentation (Creswell, 2007).

The use of ATLAS.ti proved to be a beneficial tool, which allowed the researcher in this study to gracefully visualize data through concept mapping which lead to triangulation of findings to create outcome spaces. During the analysis process, ATLAS.ti helped the researcher explore network views that provided a depiction of triangulation from all sources of data (i.e. interviews, metaphorical drawings of school discipline artifacts, observations of the ISS classroom, and observations of inclusion classrooms to interpret and configure tables to assist with making sense of the outcome space. Finally, tables were the next step to express findings. The first table is representative of categories of description and their associated codes by research questions serving as an outcome space to share student experiences and conceptions of school discipline and PBIS implementation. These tables provided access to navigate representative statements, or quotations, as well as connecting pieces of data to previous literature and empirical findings.

Furthermore, student metaphorical drawings and their supplemental narrative descriptions were accumulated during this process of analyses, which allowed the researcher to create a system with organized and similar statements from various sources of data. Later, these responses contributed to creating categories, which were named to emphasize their essence and thematic qualities relative to answering the research question(s) (Dahlgren & Fallsberg, 1991). The researcher relied on the use of Excel, a spreadsheet software program created by Windows operating system, to logistically manage figures that were used to affirm and discuss findings. This process greatly helped with organizing and updating the appendix.

As additional pieces of primary data, ten observations performed by the researcher were transcribed and uploaded as documents into the ATLAS.ti system. Five observations took place in the in-school suspension (ISS) room, which allowed the researcher to observe the ISS

classroom, including interactions between isolated students and the ISS teacher. An additional five observations were performed within inclusion classrooms where teacher and student behaviors were recorded, which allowed me to critique teacher-student relationships and decisions relative to PBIS implementation.

Strategies to Ensure Trustworthiness

The act of performing qualitative research is a profoundly interpretive endeavor. Generalizations are made to support claims and theories based on findings (Payne & Williams, 2005). Based on representative statements and visual representations, the researcher believes that cycles of frustration-aggression are induced in many of the students with disabilities in this study based on their experiences with exclusionary discipline and punitive threats (i.e., “You have silent lunch!”). Although these insights may not be applicable in other schools even with similar contexts, it is an important factor in the current setting when considering various factors that contribute to exclusionary discipline disparities facing student with disabilities. This understanding has been reached because the researcher engaged in a rigorous process to ensure reliability and validity measures to establish a general truth, or form of understanding by including thick descriptions of contextual factors surrounding the study such as participant selection, setting of where data is collected, process of data collection, researcher’s subjectivity, and theoretical orientation, all of which are provided in this phenomenography (Lecompte & Goetz, 1982; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Accordingly, for this dissertation, the researcher assumed Shenton’s (2004) criterion based on the work of Lincoln and Guba (1985) to produce a trustworthy qualitative study. This required abiding by the following processes: (a) credibility; (b) transferability; (c) dependability; and (d) confirmability.

Credibility

According to Shenton (2004), credibility leads to trustworthiness; therefore, the researcher will ensure that data gathering protocols and data analysis are consistent throughout the research. Although qualitative research is not statistically generalizable, one can use in depth descriptions to produce resonance, where the writing influences, or impacts the reader/audience (Tracy, 2012). Essentially, thick descriptions are provided in this study as it was conceptualized in a manner that may influence the field through aesthetic merit (Tracy, 2016). Merriam (1998) defined thick descriptions as providing a complete and literal description of the research topic, including documentation of events, quotes, and artifacts, which are all a part of the case design of the current study. By relying on visual representations of the research design, supplemented with simple, yet powerful and cohesive writing, the researcher believes he has produced a phenomenographic study that can be transferable to settings with similar contexts on a procedural level (Tracy, 2016).

Transferability

When considering transferability, the researcher has come to learn that fifteen student participants in a phenomenographical study offered a large pool of experiences, quotations, and viewpoints within the outcome space. The process for transcribing, organizing, and shifting through transcripts during the data analysis process was exhaustive, yet he found satisfaction with the process. He believes the process he followed for analyzing data may be of great assistance to other doctoral candidates in the field considering the phenomenographic tradition. The results and findings from this study can suggest, or perhaps, even encourage other researchers to consider the same process for performing a replication of this study (Shenton, 2004). This work may provide individuals with insights into how to introduce transformative

change into the lived realities of underserved youth by engaging in critical discussions about policies and practices that place them in environments of exclusion and isolation as a punitive response for discipline. It is important to note, that the number one thing about transferability of a study requires that the future practitioner abide by the methods introduced by this study, and that the characteristics of the school are similar. It is understood that similar data collection methods, time-period, and data analysis methods are to be utilized (Shenton, 2004).

In order to ensure that biases are not impeding with research outcomes, the researcher relied on representative statements/quotations and artifacts from informants, and he also performed member checks a week apart from initial interviews to clarify on their ideas and experiences (Shenton, 2004). Furthermore, triangulation assisted with confirmability as reflective commentary regarding data outcomes, which assists with formulating new theories about a research topic and problem (Shenton, 2004). Based on this understanding, the researcher relied heavily on representative statements and visual representations produced by participants to explicate that students with disabilities exhibit cycles of frustration-aggression based on events and experiences related to exclusionary school discipline, including punitive threats. He also encourages other researchers to take his phenomenographical method and design framework to explore the experiences and conceptions of students with disabilities in similar contexts to better understand the implications of exclusionary discipline on their learning and behaviors using a second order perspective (Marton, 1981).

Dependability

The researcher ensured that his methods are easy to follow for others as they critique the study, which can be done by providing a step-by-step data-oriented approach in relation to my findings (network graphing, images and models showing the interconnectedness of

coding/themes), and can be easily identified through diagrams (Shenton, 2004). For instance, the data analysis process for this phenomenography utilized triangulation features of ATLAS.ti, a qualitative analysis software, which allowed the researcher to create a visual network representation of interview data, metaphorical drawings from student participants (i.e., visual representations), and observation data of the ISS classroom and inclusion classrooms to show interconnectedness of findings to help generalize factors associated with exasperating school discipline disparities facing a group of fifteen students with disabilities in one PBIS middle school.

Confirmability

Additionally, quality indicators for this study include insights into researcher's subjectivity and orientation to the study. The researcher also provided the context, participant information, data collection methods, and process for data analysis were provided in detail by referencing Figure 3 (for Graphical Representation of Phenomenographical Design, see p. 80). The researcher added additional quality indicators of research such as additional reflectivity throughout the study, which are represented in memos. Trustworthiness is evident in this study, as the researcher has provided systematic procedures of data analysis. The researcher has tried to present his epistemological approach and philosophical paradigm to inquiry while discussing the conceptual framework. The researcher also includes an in-depth subjectivity where he provides positionality and worldview insights to portray his full position as a practitioner researcher, including his personal biases. Moreover, the researcher has included interview notes and memos (see Appendix S), which serve as an audit trail, including personal field notes that were written during the data collection process.

Researcher as Instrument

The researcher in this study facilitated the interview process and made direct observations of various inclusion classrooms and the in-school suspension (ISS) classroom. Therefore, the researcher served as an instrument in this study. Accordingly, the characteristics of the researcher can influence the collection of empirical materials as this person is an active respondent in the research process (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995). Discussing the researcher's background and connection to the research is an essential step to increasing trustworthiness. As a special education teacher and member of the Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) committee in the middle-school where the research was conducted, the researcher is an employee working with some of the student participants that took part in this phenomenography. As a result, there can be various biases that can cloud this study. It is important to be aware of these biases, uncover and disclose what they are, and ensure they do not impede in any part of the process. The next few sections will shift into first person perspective, which will allow the researcher to express his voice and individual experiences surrounding his positionality relative to the current study.

At this time, I teach small group Read 180, which is a Scholastic reading intervention and curriculum designed to help students whom are reading far below grade level. I provide instruction to approximately ten to fifteen students with disabilities in each of my four classes where we work on foundational reading exercises to strengthen comprehension and phonics skills. Currently, in my small group rotations, we are reading Gary Paulsen's book, "The Hatchet," which has resulted in high level of engagements with almost all students. When I am not engaged in reading to students and having them read aloud in our literature circles, students participate what is referred to as a blended learning environment where they participate in

rotations. They work one-one with me on reading skills, engage with independent reading, and then work independently with the Scholastic Read 180 software application on desktop computers.

In the building, I am also responsible for training new special education teachers, facilitating out-of-district individual education plans (IEP), in-take paperwork, assisting other teachers develop IEPs, and I specialize instruction for students with disabilities based on their individual needs in one co-taught, inclusion reading class. Last year, my pedagogical focus was finding new ways to provide students with disabilities active performance feedback for writing using Office 365 Word Online. The last seven years as a special education teacher, I have worked with many students from my community, including different teachers, parents, and siblings of former students. During that time, I have always attempted to handle discipline issues in house, meaning without the need to write office referrals. I choose to avoid power struggles with my students, and when I am in the wrong, I always apologize. Additional responsibilities include updating the Tigers Class blog, and soon I will be the web master of the school's district website.

Graduate Research Assistant

In 2018-2019, as a second-year graduate research assistant (GRA), I spent a lot of time coding lesson plans and videos of pre-service teachers using High-Leverage Practices (HLPs) in mixed reality simulation environments. That experience has provided me with insights as to how HLPs and evidence-based practices (EBPs) can help teachers deliver optimal instruction to students with disabilities. For example, HLPs can help improve academic and social outcomes by providing teachers with collaboration insights, assessment guidelines, social/emotional and behavioral supports, and instructional methods that meet the needs of students with disabilities

(McCray et al. 2019). During this time, I also designed observation protocols for HLPs while compiling a literature review using position papers and recent empirical studies. My experiences as previous research assistant has taught me a lot about the logistical aspects of research, as well as how to keep deadlines and maintain academic responsibilities.

In early 2017, I worked as a research assistant at the Assistive Technology and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Lab. I was responsible for interacting with undergraduate students, teachers and administrators in the field by showing them how to effectively utilize assistive technology with students with disabilities. I analyzed survey data and using an open-coding system to identify themes found during keyword analysis of open-ended questionnaires, all of which I believe has benefited me as a doctoral candidate. When considering an area of research, I was asked of my superiors to identify a problem that I can investigate, and eventually solve in the field of education. After reflecting on the many issues that face teachers and students at my middle school, I found that one of the biggest problems in my school building revolves around misbehaving students and the use of exclusionary practices (i.e. ISS, OSS, silent lunch, and detention) as methods for punitive discipline.

During my first semester as a doctoral student, in between intermittent bursts of adventures exploring the mountains, I spent most my days teaching students with disabilities in the English Language Arts classroom. I had time to focus on education inquiry and research where I thought critically about past and present world affairs, culture, society, and of course, issues facing my own school. This type of discourse helped formulate a personal mission to identify methods to improve academic and social outcomes and experiences for students in my community. I have come to learn that there appears to be a disconnect between many students'

social and emotional ability and the academic demands of state content and curriculum standards.

Early Experiences as an Educator

As a new teacher in the world of special education, I was tasked to form highly individualized and personalized academic and content related processes with students working as a cross-curricular resource teacher in 2013. As a second-year teacher, I was responsible for a group of seven boys diagnosed with Learning Disabilities (LD) and Emotional Behavior Disorders (EBD). I floated with my caseload of students from class to class all day every day for an entire school year. I became familiar with multiple preps and taught a daily early morning social/study skills class that I designed on my own. These tasks ranged from self-regulation and executive function training, which included daily agenda checks, organization coaching, foundational math and reading practice, writing exercises, science vocabulary previewing, project completion, and time to work on homework since many of my students admitted they did not have a spot at home to work. I was with students all day where I was assisting co-teachers in all subject areas. I specialized instruction and provided students with their IEP accommodations.

Overall, my current role and position as a special educator in the school building has made it a straightforward process recruiting students with disabilities, collecting documents, and generating a powerful outcome space of student experiences and conceptions surrounding exclusionary school discipline. Before the interviews started, I asked students if any adult/teacher had ever asked about their ideas and experiences related to school discipline and PBIS, and all fifteen student participants made it clear that I was the only person to ever engage in such a conversation. I believe this phenomenography has allowed me to foster critical consciousness by

having students reflect on their desired learning environments and experiences within Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) and exclusionary discipline.

Worldview

According to Creswell (2014), a worldview is a general philosophical understanding about the world and the nature of research an individual brings to a study. Essentially, the worldview rationalizes the actions taken by a researcher (Guba, 1990). For this study, I adopted a transformative worldview because one of my goals with this dissertation was to foster a sense of empowerment and emancipation in fifteen students with disabilities. This was accomplished by engaging in dialogue that inspired critical consciousness regarding oppressive experiences in isolation that result from the practice of exclusionary school discipline. Although epistemologically, I maintain that constructivism is a theoretical aspect of my study where knowledge is shared through social interactions within a setting where individuals hold multiple perspectives of reality, a transformative worldview was a better fit as my work assumes an advocacy-based agenda to help underserved groups (Creswell, 2007; Freire 1973; Mertens; 2010).

A transformative worldview was selected as the primary worldview for the current study because I am heavily pushing for transformative change in my school with the intent to disrupt cycles of exclusionary discipline facing underserved youth, specifically students with disabilities. According to Mertens (2010), research that uses the transformative approach confronts social oppression using an action agenda to change lives of the participants by addressing specific issues that speak to empowerment and inequality. This dissertation allowed me to act as an agent of transformative change in my own school by conducting open-ended interviews and having

participant students draw metaphors for school discipline to better understand their perceptions about the phenomena (Creswell, 2014; Glesne, 2015).

Additionally, this study was designed to explore voices of fifteen students with disabilities to inform and transform the level of care relative to PBIS implementation and school discipline practice and policy. The data collection process in this study required me to engage in dialogue and collect student created visual representations (metaphors drawings of school discipline), which provided a collective of representative statements within the outcome space of data (Akerlind, 2005). During the data collection process, students drew their drawings separately after the commencement of their interviews. As a result, seven categories emerged reflecting the qualitative different ways in which students with disabilities experience school discipline and PBIS implementation (González, 2012).

Moreover, qualitative research is interpretivist research (Merriam, 2009); therefore, the researcher also assumed an interpretive stance towards the methodological paradigm used in the current study. According to Crotty (1998), the interpretivist explores the conceptions of reality that are constructed through experiences where metaphors serve to allow the researcher to express realities in a way to describe understanding. Bochner (2009) argues that the interpretivist is consumed by making sense of meanings and values with a desire to put lived experience in an “intelligible frame” that can enlighten, emancipate, and alleviate suffering, which serves as bridge between the transformative and interpretive worldviews of the researcher in the current study.

Accordingly, the outcome space in this phenomenography served as a pool of representative statements that assisted as the building blocks for the narrative/storytelling. By relying on direct quotations from participant students, factors that may be associated with

exasperating discipline disparities facing students with disabilities were discovered. Initially, I was considering the use of a case study tradition to explore the problem; however, after consulting with my methodologist, it became clear that because I was not so much interested in the actions that take place in the building surrounding school discipline and based on the understanding that I was more consumed with understanding student attitudes, experiences, and understanding of school discipline and PBIS implementation, a phenomenographical tradition was adopted.

During the interview process, student participants gave me the words needed to make sense of their experiences. In fact, narrative writing became a pivotal and essential part of data analysis apparent in chapter four of the current study. Crotty (1998) describes human beings as “language beings,” and he values language as the vessel that allows individuals to make sense of the situations. Using an interpretivist lens, we expand our knowledge to further classify and define the world around us. (Crotty, 1998). In this study, use of student voice allowed me to explore their unique realities, which further helped me develop an understanding of how to transform school-based policies and practices that influence their behaviors, including factors that may contribute to school discipline disparities facing students with disabilities (Crotty, 1998).

Lastly, the reflexive nature of qualitative research has revealed new topics for future research that go beyond the scope of the three research questions that guide the current study (Creswell, 2014). Chapter five includes a deeper discussion regarding the implications of these newly gained insights. Generalizable outcomes of this study also hold policy implications that can help the school confront oppressive social practices (Mertens, 2010) such exclusionary school discipline which appears to be placing students in cycles of frustration-aggression.

Fundamentally, punitive practices may be one contributing factor contributing to the overrepresentation of students with disabilities in exclusionary discipline.

Ethical Considerations

When conducting research and collecting data from people, it is necessary to have proper access in order to conduct ethical research. The researcher is aware that time and access to students and the school is a crucial part of the study, and it is a part of the consent procedures. Therefore, parents of student participants were provided with consent forms that were approved and signed before data collection (see Appendix L). Accordingly, student assent forms (see Appendix M) were reviewed, approved, and signed by student participants before engaging in the interview process. The researcher also secured county approval through the academic division, as well as approval from the building level principal before first contact with participant students (see Appendix I). Additionally, all the data that was secured through questioning was audio recorded, saved in a secure location, and this entire process was expressed in the consent and assent forms.

More crucial, it is important to note that during the data analysis process, the researcher came across information that was unfavorable for certain groups and individuals relative to school discipline. Unanticipated data was provided by students through their visual representations and interviews. Therefore, in order to prevent harm, the researcher adopted an asset-based approach to discuss findings while protecting parties involved. To ensure not to harm certain individuals, the researcher withheld data. Specifically, some student quotations were removed, and direct observations of the ISS classroom made by the researcher were revised to honor ethical standards of performing research with living individuals.

Summary of Chapter Three

Chapter three provided readers with insights into the worldview and role of the researcher, including goals, research approach and tradition, as well research questions that helped guide the current phenomenography. Additionally, the researcher provided insights to the context and setting of the research site, which includes demographic data and recent behavioral trends associated with disciplinary referrals and PBIS implementation. Furthermore, a review of participant selection, access to site, and data collection was provided. Finally, chapter three ended with an explanation of the data analysis process and strategies to ensure trustworthiness, including ethical considerations. Findings associated with the current study are included in chapter four. The researcher has discussed contextual factors surrounding student participants and provided a report of results and analysis as they're associated with each research questions based on emergent categories of description. Afterwards, the quality of evidence is provided before moving into a summary of findings, and an overview of chapter five is also included.

Chapter Four: Findings

“It is dark like you are lost in the middle of nowhere. You are in jail. You have no one to talk to. You feel like you are in Andersonville prison.”

- Mariah

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences and conceptions of students with disabilities surrounding school discipline and PBIS implementation while generating a collective understanding of their desired learning environments and suggestions for school improvement. Thick descriptions of research findings from this phenomenography are provided in the current chapter (Sin, 2010). The three questions that drove this qualitative research study were:

1. How do students with disabilities experience and conceive of school discipline?
2. How do students with disabilities experience and conceive the implementation of Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS)
3. In what ways can voices of students with disabilities help transform school discipline and PBIS implementation to meet their desired learning environments?

The findings are presented with an overview of the participants in the study followed by a report of the results and analysis, which are organized based on each categorical description in relation to the research questions above. Afterwards the researcher reviewed the quality of evidence, summary of findings, and concluded the chapter with a reflection regarding newly discovered insights. The conclusion to the current study and summary of findings relative to each research question, including limitations to findings, researcher comments, relationship of findings to previous literature, implications of findings for educational practices, and recommendations for future research in local context are disclosed in chapter five.

Study Participants

The participants in this study were fifteen students with disabilities, which consisted of ten eighth grade students and five seventh grade students. Each participant had prior records of exclusionary discipline within a middle school deemed operational with its implementation of Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS). Due to their experiences with current school discipline practices and school-wide implementation of PBIS, all student participants were able to provide unique insights of their perceptions of each phenomenon generated through one-on-one interviews and two metaphorical drawings of school discipline that served as artifacts. To ensure confidentiality of minors in this study, it was prerogative for the researcher to assign pseudonyms to each participant. Table 4.0 consists of student participant profiles, which provides more context for analysis purposes (see below).

Table 4.0

Student Participant Profiles

Student Number	Participant Pseudonym	Grade Level	Disability	TI	Days in ISS	Days of OSS	TDL	GPA
1	Jesus	8	LD	33	27	33	60	F
2	Mariah	8	OHI	3	6	0	6	B
3	Danny	8	EBD	15	5	24	29	D
4	Xander	8	LD	2	0	7	7	F
5	Matthew	7	LD	36	24	22	46	F
6	Stephen	8	OHI	2	4	0	2	C
7	Kyle	8	LD	2	3	0	3	F
8	Anne	7	OHI	1	3	0	3	C
9	Sheldon	7	OI	1	0	1	1	C
10	Megan	7	LD	6	6	7	13	F
11	Shelly	8	LD	3	1	12	13	F
12	Kevin	7	LD	2	5	0	5	F
13	Emmanuel	8	OHI	47	27	25	53	F
14	Jordan	8	LD	1	2	0	2	F
15	Nancy	8	LD	4	4	0	4	C

Note. LD indicates that student's primary disability is Learning Disability, OHI indicates Other Health Impairments, OI indicates Orthopedically Impaired, and EBD indicates Emotional Behavior Disorder. ODR indicates Office Disciplinary Referrals. TI indicates total number of incidents. Not all incidents resulted in exclusionary discipline, and some incidents were combined with other referrals. TDL indicates total days loss of instruction. Total number of detentions and silent lunch incidents were not included based on documentation availability. Matthew is a repeating 7th grade student. GPA indicates grade point averages of each student participant (i.e., academic classes only). It was beneficial to ascertain each students' disciplinary records, which provides total number of referrals and days spent in in-school suspension (ISS) and out-school suspension (OSS), as well as total number of instructional days lost. Furthermore, since all participants are identified as students with high incident disabilities, the researcher found it necessary to include each informants' diagnosed disability.

Results and Analysis

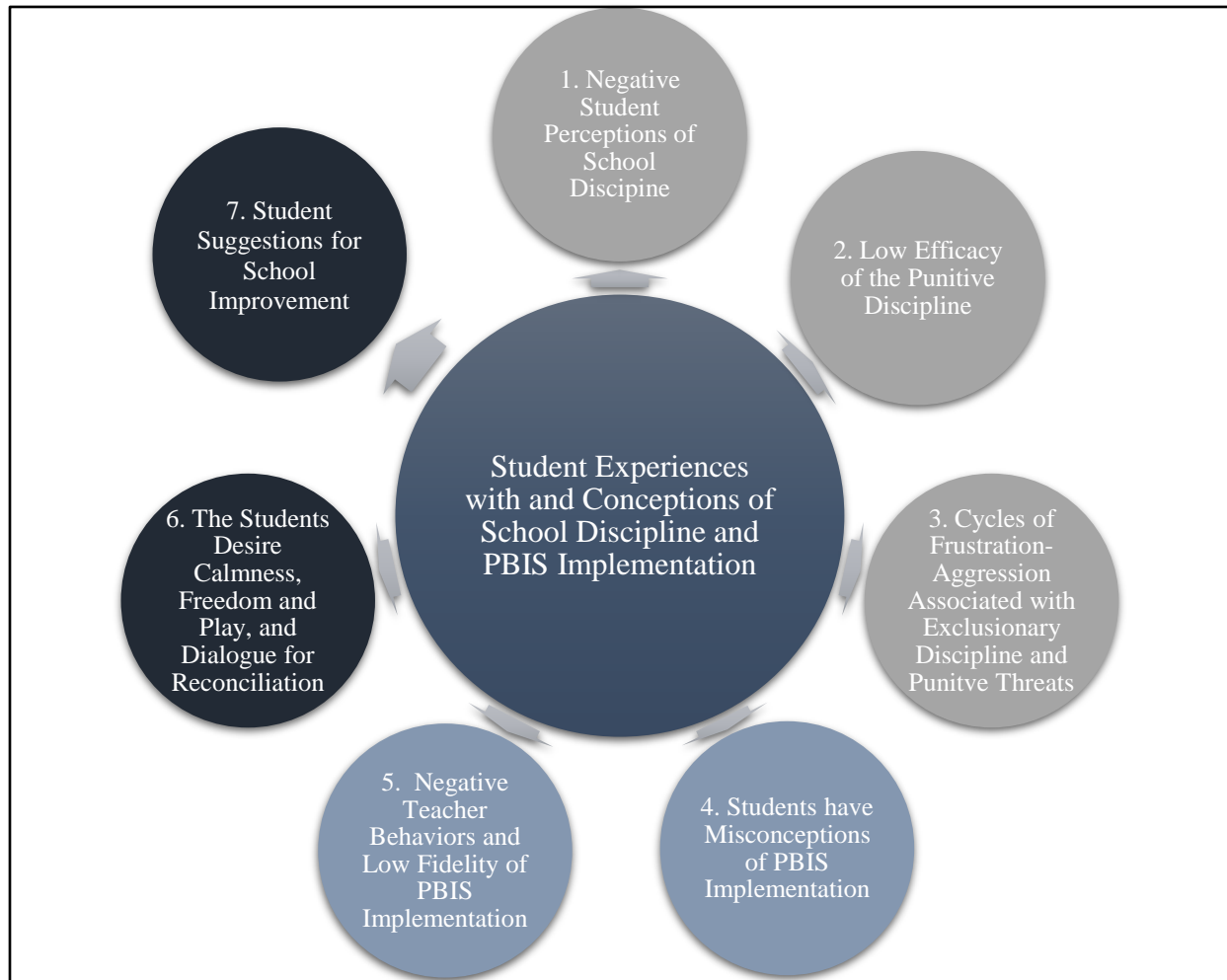
The researcher relied on the following four primary data sources: (1) interviews; (2) visual representations as metaphorical drawings of school discipline; (3) observations of the ISS classroom and inclusion classrooms; and (4) documents. The rationale for using these data sources was to elicit the experiences and conceptual understandings of fifteen students with disabilities surrounding exclusionary discipline and PBIS implementation. Once interviews were performed, and descriptors written by students in their metaphorical artifacts were transcribed, the researcher scanned each visual representation (i.e., thirty drawings) and proceeded to upload everything as primary documents in ATLAS.ti.

Next, the phenomenographical analysis process started (Dahlgren & Fallsberg, 1993). The researcher relied on open coding while sifting through each interview transcript and visual

representation. By using the ATLAS.ti function, he began to create codes and organize quotations that emerged during the analysis process (McCosker et al. 2004). This iterative process resulted in a total of seven emergent categories (see Figure 4.0, below).

Figure 4.0

Emergent Categories of Description



According to Figure 4.0 (above), emergent categories of descriptions answer the three research questions associated with the current study. Findings suggest that students collectively hold negative perceptions of school discipline and identified low efficacy with punitive discipline policies. In theory, cycles of frustration-aggression appear to be associated with

Note. This figure serves as example of a word cloud using Xander's interview transcript. The researcher was able to see frequency of words with largest words signifying most utterances. By double clicking on specific words in the cloud, ATLAS.ti brings up secondary windows to explore the keyword in context as it is embedded within the primary document/data source. Keywords with minimal utterances in association with data sources were discarded if no significance, or variances relative to experiences or conceptions were identified.

After the coding and categorizing process, an outcome space was determined using various functions in ATLAS.ti such as the network view tool, which made the triangulation a more manageable process. The outcome space is comprised of emergent themes described as categories, codes families and descriptions, and major representative statements (quotations) and visual representations (metaphorical drawings) organized by research question. The creation of an outcome space as a table adapted based on the work of Hans and Ellis (2019), whom in their recent article discuss the implications of using phenomenography as a qualitative approach to learn about major challenges in science education. In their phenomenography, Hans and Ellis created an outcome space table that is comprised of categories, descriptions, and representative statements, which greatly influenced the outcome space design and data analysis process in the current study (see Appendix R for the outcome space table that assisted with organizing data).

Furthermore, the researcher relied on the network feature accessible in ATLAS.ti to produce and visualize representative categories their respective coded families and descriptions and artifacts, a pool of which served as major representative statements in the outcome space (see Appendix O). These visual representations were generated using the network tool revealing a concordance between data sources, categories, and their quotations, including the thirty metaphorical drawings of school discipline that were created by student participants. All of these

were exported as bitmap (image) files to be used during a review of findings. Essentially, this process of analysis made it simple to produce thick descriptions in this study as it was conceptualized in a manner that influenced aesthetic merit (Tracy, 2016). These thick descriptions were produced by following the phenomenographical data analysis process recommended by Dahlgren and Fallsberg (1993), and the use of participant quotations that served as major representative statements, including metaphorical artifacts and observations (Merriam, 1998).

Overall, the phenomenographical data analysis process (Dahlgren & Fallsberg, 1991) has allowed the researcher to conduct an analysis of the collective experiences, perceptions, and conceptions of participants surrounding exclusionary discipline and PBIS implementation. The researcher adopted a bracketed approach to reduce bias, which was also used by Meyers (2019) by including interview notes and memos (see Appendix S), which were created during the data collection and analysis process to record any emergent insights relative to the findings, and the researcher made notes and kept a journal during the data collection process to reflect on preconceptions and biases. The findings of this qualitative study have been constructed using three primary data sources: interviews, metaphorical drawings from students that serve as artifacts, and observations of the ISS classroom and inclusion classrooms.

These findings were established by focusing on each research question, and its associated categories, coded families and descriptions, and representative statements/quotations based on each of the three data sources, which will be shared using figures and tables. Connections to previous literature, and newly founded insights relative to the experiences, conceptions, and perceptions of students with disabilities surrounding school discipline and PBIS implementation are provided. The following sections will expound upon the findings embedded in the outcome

space which includes the categories/themes, descriptions, and representative statements (i.e., quotations, artifacts, and observations) (Appendix R). Additionally, insights from visual representations, which served as metaphors drawn by student participants, including the researcher's observations will be included as supplemental sources of triangulation that serve as affirmations to support the findings within emergent categories.

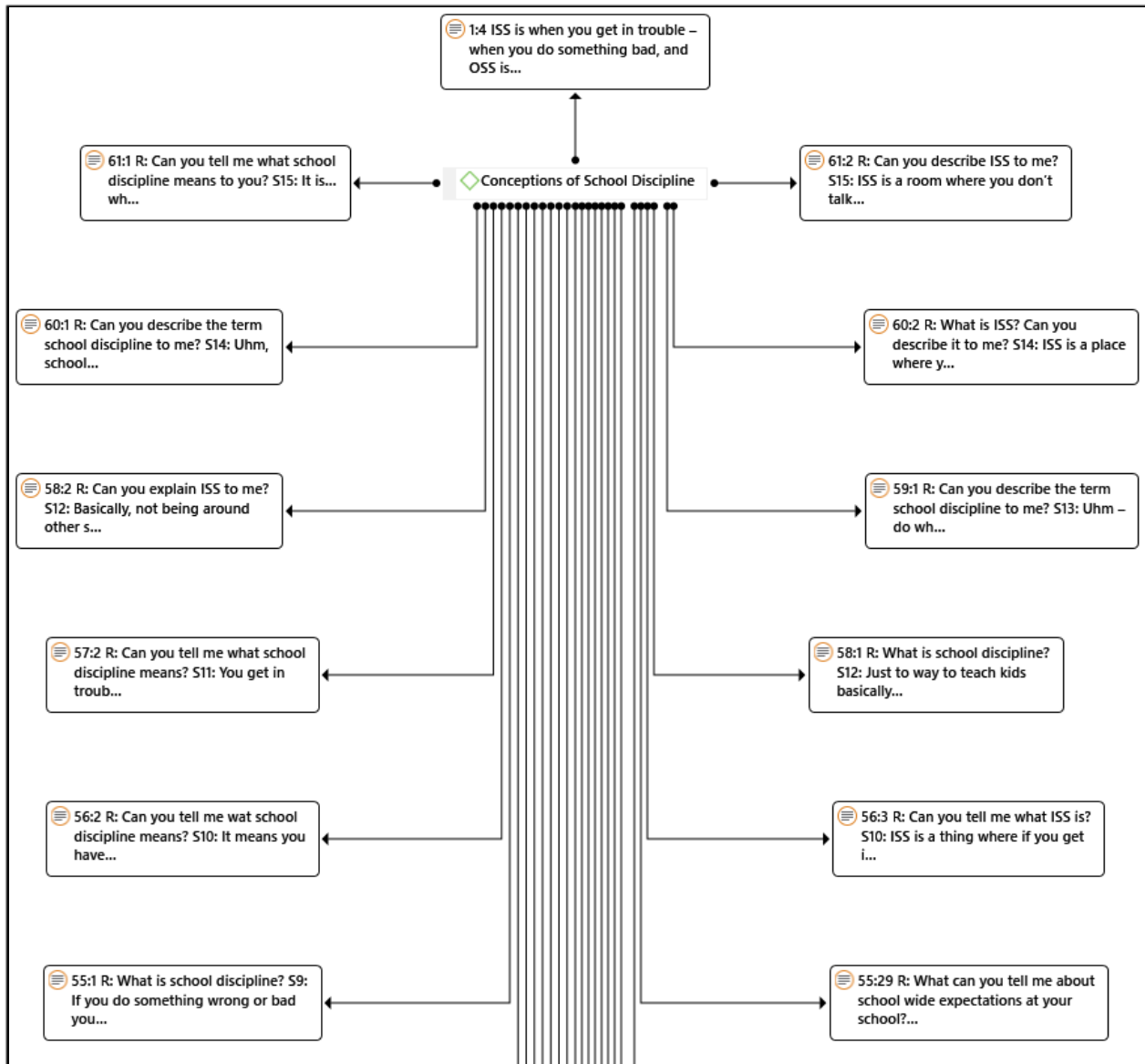
Research Question One

RQ1. How do students with disabilities experience and conceive of school discipline?

The outcome space for research question one indicated that student understanding of school discipline is multi-faceted, including a range in qualitative variances for understanding exclusionary school discipline practices such as in-school suspension and out-school suspension. Figure 4.2 shows a graphical representation of the network view, which contains participant conceptions of school discipline using a polyline routing structure with a perpendicular layout (see p. 98). To assist with analysis, the researcher found it helpful to fragment school discipline conceptualizations into two entities: (1) conceptions of in-school suspension and (2) conceptions of out-school suspension, which served as two distinctive categories of description. Later, based on a reduction of representative statements and visual representations, they were combined to create Category One: Negative Student Perceptions of School Discipline.

Figure 4.2

Network View of Participant Conceptions of School Discipline



Note. The network views provided using ATLAS.ti produce all data (i.e., quotations, visual representations, and observations) that were tagged during the data analysis process, which greatly assists with triangulating findings.

The following sub-sections provide categorical descriptions of the outcome space to answer research question one. Each sub-section includes representative statements/quotations

and exemplars of the metaphorical artifacts produced by student participants during the interview process. The researcher has also included a sample visual representations of network views for sharing the interconnectedness of categorical level of the outcome space, which provides a triangulation of sources to increase the level of resonance in terms of discussion and interpretation of qualitative data (Tracy, 2016).

During analysis, three descriptive categories emerged in association with research question one: (1) Negative Student Perceptions of School Discipline; (2) Low Efficacy of Punitive Discipline; (3) Cycles of Frustration-Aggression Associated with Exclusionary Discipline and Punitive Threats. The following sub-sections will provide an in-depth review of findings relative to how fifteen students with disabilities experience and conceive of school discipline.

Category One: Negative Student Perceptions of School Discipline

When asked to define school discipline, many student participants with disabilities reported that it was a process schools use to punish students, and they referred to in-school suspension, or the ISS classroom, as a quiet, boring, dark, and restrictive place that makes them feel like they're in prison/jail. A collective of students conceived the ISS classroom as a place where students go to serve a consequence for misbehaving, a place where "troublemakers," or "bad kids" go when they get in trouble. Students understand the ISS classroom as place away from other peers where they are forced to work alone as a form of punishment. These understandings were achieved by creating multiple networks.

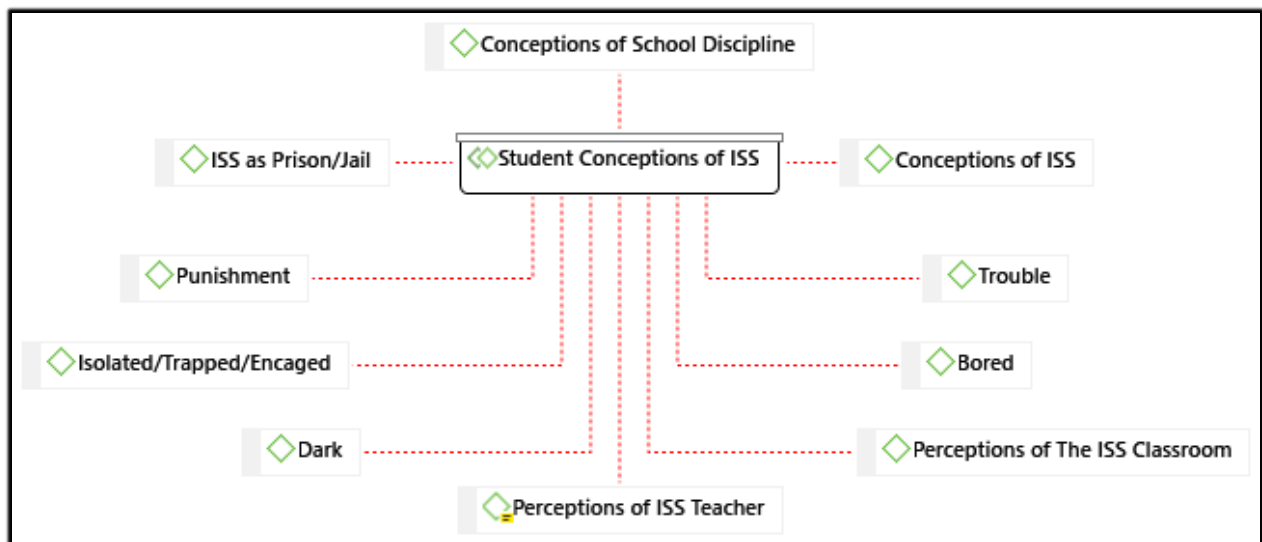
For example, data related to category one included student conceptions of in-school suspension (ISS). The researcher turned to the network feature in ATLAS.ti to produce a visual

representation of student conceptions of ISS, which reveals the supportive level of categorical units of data (i.e. isolated, trapped, encaged; dark; ISS as Prison/Jail, etc.).

Figure 4.3 has been included to provide a visual representation of how the network tool was used to generate a concordance of associated code families surrounding student conceptions of ISS (see below).

Figure 4.3

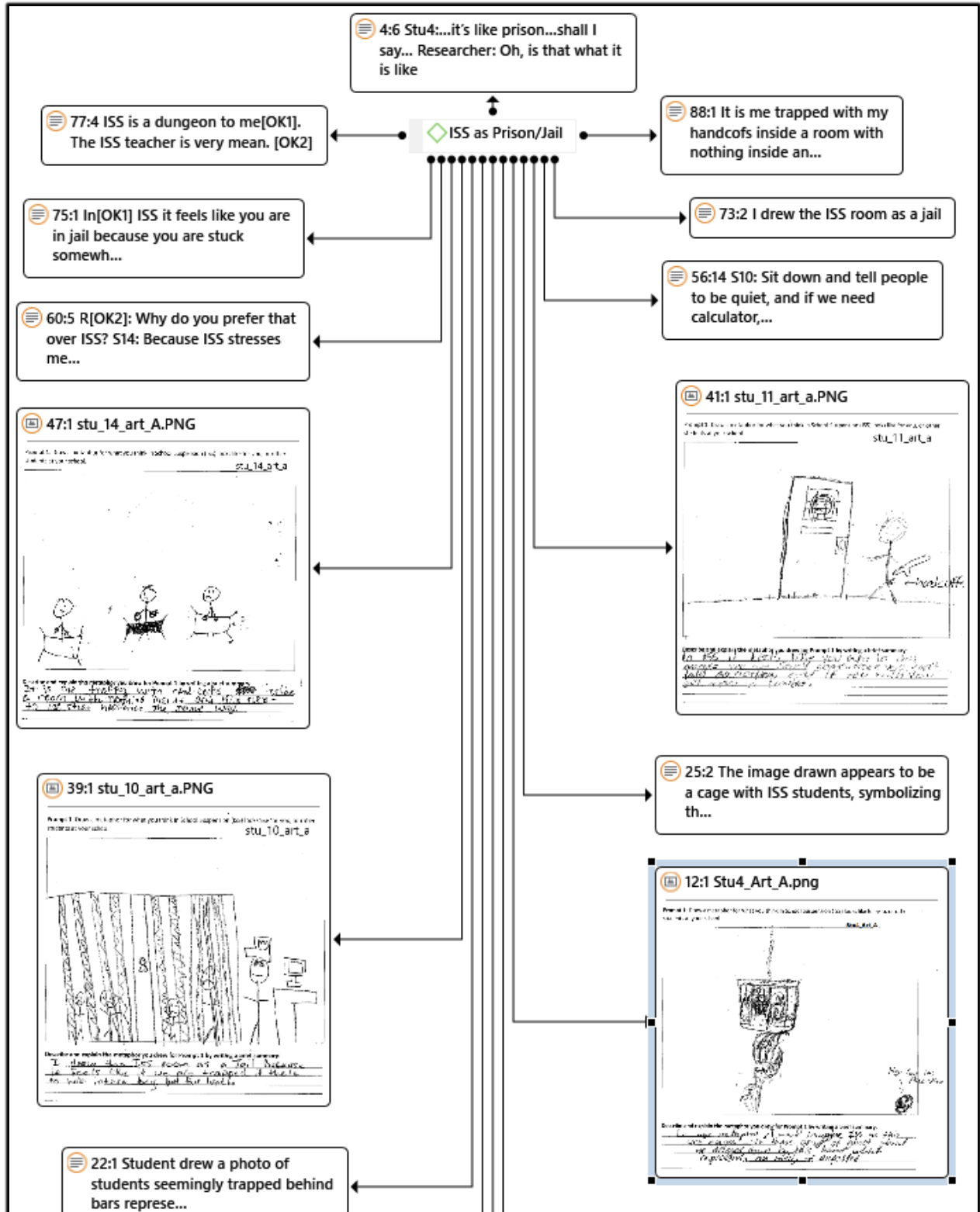
Network Concordance of Student Conceptions of ISS and Associated Code Families



Next, an example of how each categories of descriptions are associated with representative statements is provided in Figure 4.4, which includes a network of quotations, metaphorical drawings, and observational transcription data of the ISS classroom and inclusion classrooms. Figure 4.4 reveals representative statements and visual representations surrounding the ISS is a Prison/Jail code family. This image is an example of how the network feature was used to generate associations among representative statements and category of description for each of the seven categorical units of description (see Figure 4.4., p. 101).

Figure 4.4

Sample Association of Representative Statements and Categories of Description



By creating visual network views of the sample association of representative statements and categories of description, the researcher was able to perform thematic content analysis of student conceptions of school discipline and PBIS implementation. A separate Word document was created to assist with this process. The table option was utilized to create seven categories, including level two code families and descriptions. The researcher used a split screen method and began copying quotations and exporting metaphorical drawings into the new document from ATLAS.ti network feature, which assisted with organizing the outcome space.

Furthermore, Figure 4.5 was included to show the design of the tables for organizing representative statements associated with the categorical level outcome space for student conceptions of the ISS classroom (see p. 103). Although the resolution came out slightly blurry having been a low-resolution screenshot that was taken while working inside of Microsoft Word, the table represents a sample of representative statements and visual representations (seen as metaphorical drawings in the table), including observational data in a concise manner, which greatly helped with the narrative writing and reporting of findings in the current chapter (see Figure 4.5, p. 103)

Figure 4.5

Sample of Representative Statements and Visual Representations Associated with Categorical Descriptions

Category One: Conceptions of ISS


A Dark and Boring Place Where Kids are Trapped, Encaged, and Isolated When They Get in Trouble.

Interview Quotations

- "Windows – it needs light in there. It was so gloomy in there – it needed more...yes like I understand you need to be quiet, that is understandable, but put some windows in there. It was so dark you feel so isolated and alone, it doesn't feel right." – Anne when asked, "If you had the power to change ISS, what would you do?"
- When explaining his metaphorical drawing of the ISS classroom, Jordan wrote, "It is me trapped with my handcufs inside a room with nothing inside and kids next to me that happened the same way."
- "ISS stresses me out and like I feel like I am trapped somewhere with a lot of people" – Jordan
- "So just imagine yourself like – you have been arrested for something like a crime and you're sent to a jail cell, but the cell is like a room with uhm 8 prisoners, and you're the 9th one that is added – so it is a small room, a small cell, and you have to stay with 9 prisoners, while a police officer is watching you, watching every single move you do" - Xander
- "They receive ISS or OSS, uhm they usually feel isolated you know..." - Xander

Metaphorical Drawings


Figure 4.5: Drawing by Megan for what she had in school suspension (ISS) classroom, see, or other students at your school.



stu_10_art_a


Megan, description "I drew the ISS classroom as a jail because it feels like it we are trapped if there to hole intera bay but for lunch," which when interpreting errors can be read as "...trapped in there the whole entire day, but for lunch."

Figure 4.5: Drawing by Xander for what she had in school suspension (ISS) classroom, see, or other students at your school.



Xander, description "In my metaphor, I would imagine ISS as this one cage with these groups of ghost about to be dragged down by this hand which represents an bodily of expelled."

Figure 4.5: Drawing by Danny for what she had in school suspension (ISS) classroom, see, or other students at your school.



Danny, description "I drew a classroom with metal bars around them because their in an isolated room and they don't leave until their instructed too."

Note. In order to consistently report findings, the researcher went clockwise looking for triangulation in the following order: interview transcripts (quotations), visual representations (metaphorical drawings), observations of the ISS classroom, and observations of the inclusion classroom to create thick descriptions to ensure credibility and trustworthiness of findings in this study. The researcher was able to turn to the document represented in Figure 4.5 and pull necessary representative statements to support interpretation of code families as they relate to the research question.

The following section reveals student conceptions of the ISS classroom, which will be followed by conceptions of the OSS classroom. The results continue in this process through each of the categories, and then a summary of findings is provided. Ultimately, it appears that a collective of students held negative perceptions of school discipline.

ISS is a Dark and Boring Place Where Troublemakers/Bad Kids are Trapped, Encaged, and Isolated When They Need to be Punished. When asked to explain what ISS means to her, Megan responded:

ISS is a thing where you get in trouble, you might have to go to ISS for two days or a whole week or something. So, if you do something bad like bad bad you go to ISS and then you don't go to connections and stuff like that – you stay in there for the whole entire day and do work.

Kevin expressed similar sentiments when asked to describe ISS, he reported:

Basically, not being around other students. Being somewhere where you work and stuff because I don't think the teachers would like you being around students if you're a troublemaker and stuff – so, to take that consequence in school suspension, is just a room I guess where you have to work instead of doing other things like not be able to do things that children really would do... like taking to other kids or playing games with them.

The researcher then provided a follow up question to Kevin asking him why kids prefer talking to each other. Kevin responded, “Communication really,” which may reveal that he

possesses a level of understanding related to the importance of dialogue required for social development (Noddings, 1983; Vygotsky, 1976).

The construct of “troublemaker/bad kid” is evident within Stephen’s metaphorical drawing of the ISS classroom in Figure 4.6 (below).

Figure 4.6

Stephen’s Metaphorical Drawing of the ISS classroom

Prompt 2: Draw a metaphor for how you see or view teachers that frequently write disciplinary referrals that lead you, or other students to ISS/CSS/Expulsion. stu_6_art_b

Describe and explain the metaphor you draw for Prompt 2 by writing a brief summary:

The metaphor I drew was teachers giving their students work in ISS like getting his work the teacher feels bad because he is a good kid who never gets in trouble. The bad gives him more work because he is a trouble maker and disruptive.

Note. All quoted descriptions in this analysis are included in his report word for word exactly how students wrote their explanations for their visual representations. The following narrative will include misspelled words, including the researcher's interpretations of those words.

Stephen's artifact depicts a teacher giving the "good kid" less work and the "bad kid" more work in ISS. In his description, Stephen wrote:

The metaphor I drew was teachers giving there students work in ISS. Jake is getting his work the teacher feel bad because he is a good kid who never gets in trouble. The bad give him more work because he is a troublemaker and disruptive.

Consequently, it appears that experiences of ISS may be having a negative influence on student perceptions of self where they may be adopting identities of "bad kid," or "troublemaker" based on their conceptions of the ISS classroom and the alleged behaviors of their teachers. When asked to define the ISS classroom, Nancy reported, "ISS is a room where you don't talk and you do the work all day if you talk they add another day – it is boring in there." These sentiments reveal that the ISS classroom is being conceived as a prison or jail where punishment gets more severe when students do not abide by the roles within that environment. The idea that ISS is a boring place can also be affirmed by Anne's metaphorical drawing off the ISS classroom (Figure 4.7, see p. 107).

Figure 4.7*Anne's Metaphorical Drawing of the ISS Classroom*

Prompt 1: Draw a metaphor for what you think In School Suspension (ISS) looks like for you, or other students at your school.

stu_8_art_a

Describe and explain the metaphor you drew for Prompt 1 by writing a brief summary:

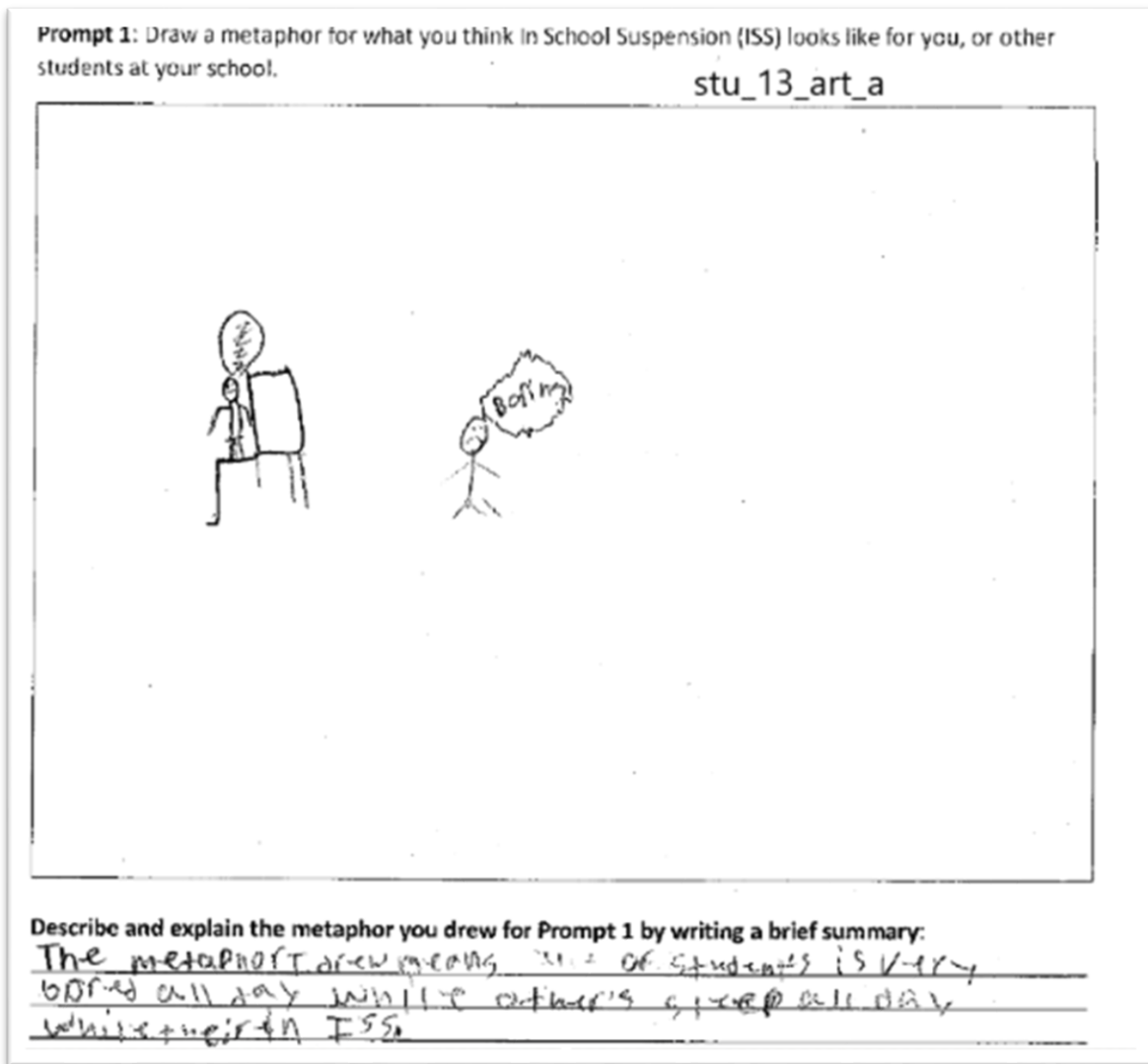
It's people being in this small class for the whole day doing nothing but work. And when we meet with the work the iss teacher can't help us cause he doesn't know either. And when you're done with work all you do is get on the computer or read. Or be bored all day long.

In her visual representation, Anne created a box with four kids (see Figure 4.7, p. 107). One student is sleeping, and the others have their work in their hands looking puzzled. Anne's description includes the following:

It's people being in this small room class for the whole day doing nothing but work and when we need with the work the ISS teacher can't help us cause he doesn't know either. And when your done with work all you do is get on the computer or read. Or be bored all day long.

Once again, Anne affirms that the ISS classroom is boring place where students are expected to work on their own. Interestingly, she also expresses the role of the ISS teacher as someone that can't help because "he doesn't know either." The role of the ISS teacher is explored further in the description of Category Two: Low Efficacy of Punitive Discipline. However, it is important to note that ethical considerations were upheld to protect individuals related to the study. Accordingly, some data was withheld, including the researcher's personal observations of individuals involved, or mentioned by student participants. An asset-based approach was adopted to consider what must be done to improve discipline practices in the building, which is further explored in chapter five where implications of findings of the current study are discussed.

The notion expressed by students such as Anne that have indicated that the ISS classroom is boring place can be affirmed by Emmanuel. In his metaphorical drawing of the ISS classroom, Emmanuel drew a photo of one child that appears to be sleeping, and another child with a word bubble literally saying, "boring" (see Figure 4.8, p. 109).

Figure 4.8*Emmanuel's Metaphorical Drawing of the ISS Classroom*

In his description, Emmanuel wrote, “The metaphorical drawing means a lot of students is very bored all day while others sleep all day while their in ISS,” which supports this idea that ISS is a boring environment where students are disengaged and possibly sleeping. When asked to explain ISS, Jesus also mentioned it is a place where kids go when they get in trouble. He voiced, “ISS is when you get in trouble – when you do something bad, and OSS is when you something really really bad and you got to go home for a days.” In this statement, he also makes

it clear that OSS is where kids go when they do something that requires a more severe consequence than ISS.

When asked what she would change in ISS, Mariah demanded and explained, “Windows – it needs light in there. It was so gloomy in there – it needed more...yes like I understand you need to be quiet, that is understandable, but put some windows in there. It was so dark you feel so isolated and alone, it doesn’t feel right.” The state of being isolated is also evident in Danny’s metaphorical drawing of the ISS classroom. In his description, Danny explained, “I drew a classroom with metal bars around them because their in an isolated room and they don’t leave until their instructed too.” Jordan affirms this in the description of his metaphorical drawing where he described ISS as “a place where you can’t do anything just the work your teachers give you and beginning of class you have to write the rules of ISS.” The conception of ISS as a prison/jail was also observed in Xander’s explanation of ISS. During his interview, he reported:

It is like uh, how do I describe this – it is like a room filled with like one teacher – now the teacher is like uhm the one that is watching you to see if you’re like not doing anything because I know that you know ...it’s like prison...shall I say...

In his interview, Xander expounds upon this ISS is a prison paradigm further. He said the following:

So just imagine yourself like – you have been arrested for something like a crime and you’re sent to a jail cell, but the cell is like a room with uhm 8 prisoners, and you’re the 9th one that is added – so it is a small room, a small cell, and you have to stay with 8 prisoners, while a police officer is watching you, watching every single move you do.

In this loaded statement, Xander is revealing that he conceives the ISS classroom as a prison, which means for this student, the school is a system that operates much like the real world. This would mean students are prisoners, or criminals. Also, if ISS classroom is a prison, it would mean that the ISS teacher is the police officer, which has been expressed by multiple students with disabilities in the follow sub-section.

ISS is a Prison/Jail. Sentiments of being trapped, isolated, or imprisoned in a cell were expressed in student metaphorical drawings of the ISS classroom. A visual representation of the ISS classroom as a prison or jail drawn by Megan, Jordan, Xander, Shelly, and Danny as a collage is provided (see below).

Figure 4.9

A Collage of Students' Visual Representation of ISS as a Prison or Jail

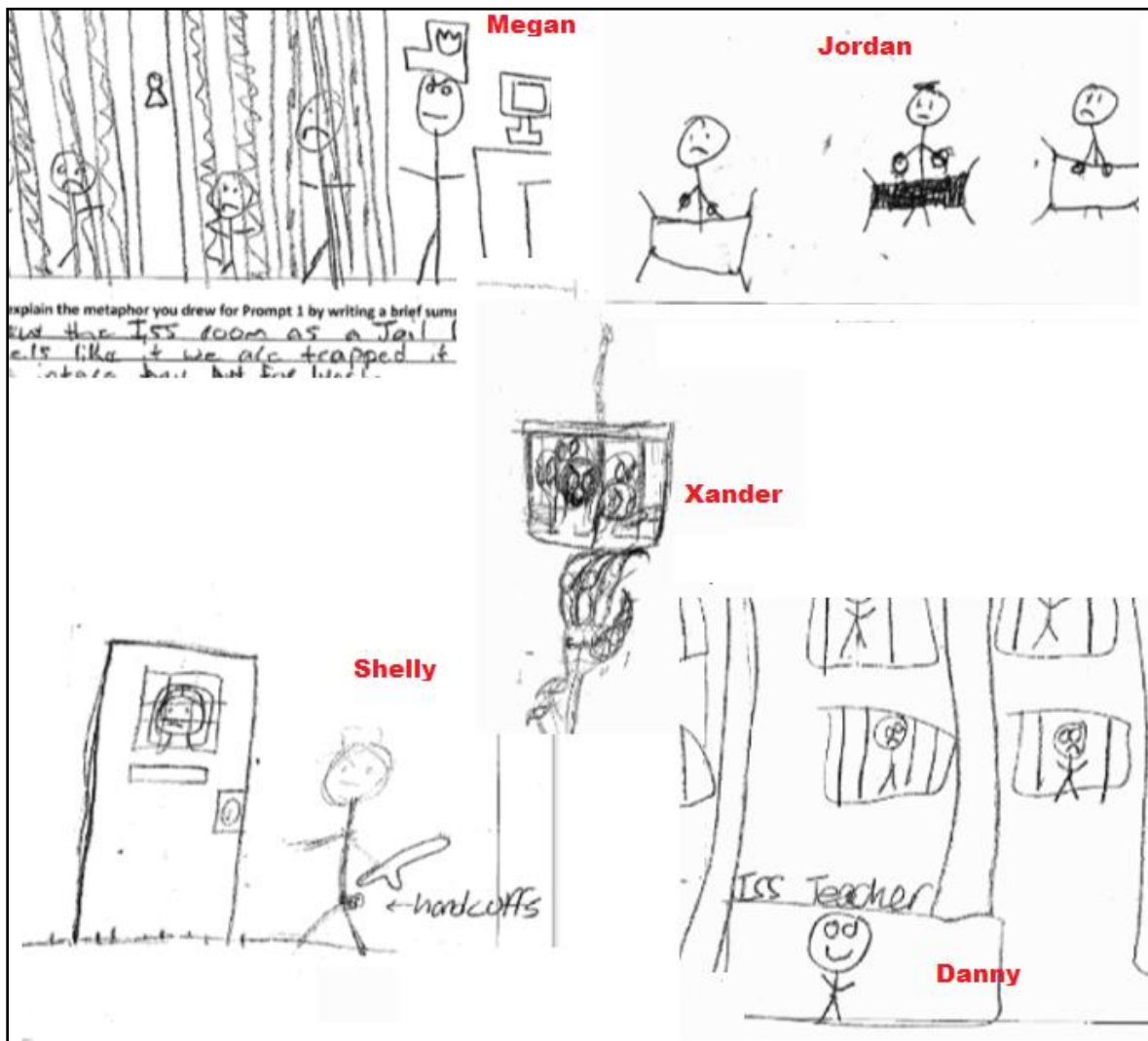
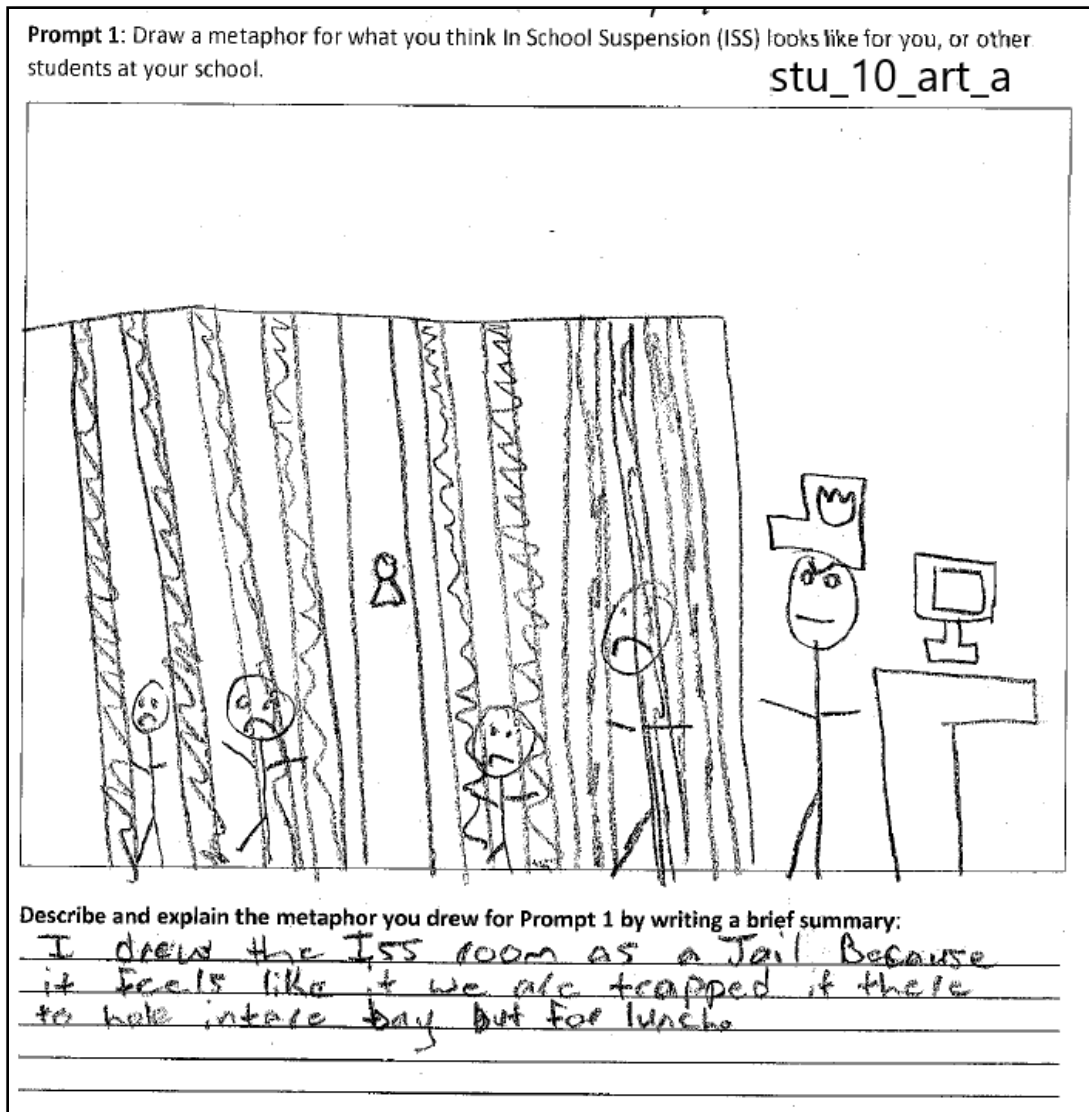


Figure 4.9 serves as a source of triangulation to reveal multiple students view the ISS classroom as a jail, or prison. A deeper analysis of each visual representation provides more

insights to student drawings, including their narrative descriptions. When asked to draw a metaphor for the ISS classroom, Megan drew an image of children behind bars (see Figure 4.10, below)

Figure 4.10

Megan's Metaphorical Drawing of the ISS Classroom



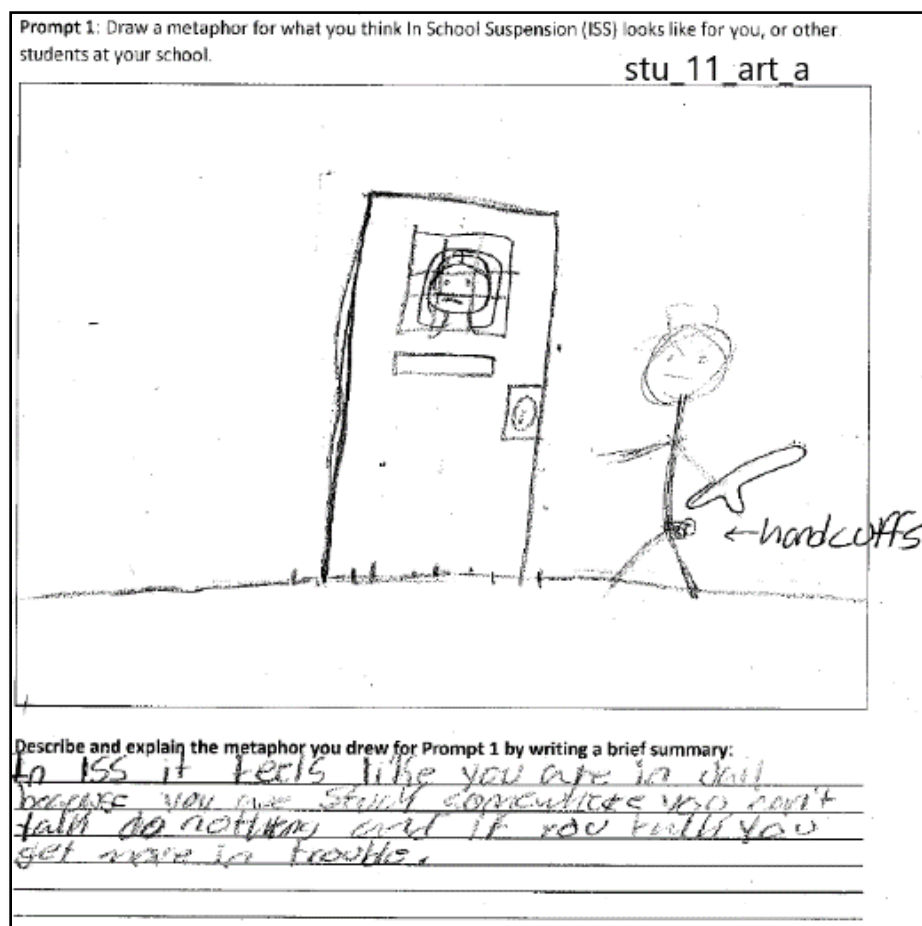
An interpretation of Megan's metaphorical drawing of the ISS classroom depicts what appears to be depressed/sad students locked behind bars, which indicates a prison or jail cell. The

outsider appears to be a police officer based on the insignia on the hat. This person can be interpreted as the ISS teacher, who Shelly may perceive to be angry based on his down angled eyebrows and straight and slightly curved line for his mouth. In her description, Megan wrote, “I drew the ISS classroom as a jail because it feels like it we are trapped if there to hole intere bay but for lunch,” which when interpreting errors can be read as “...trapped in there the whole entire day, but for lunch.”

In her visual representation, Shelly also provides an affirmation that the ISS classroom is conceived as prison/jail (see Figure 4.11, below).

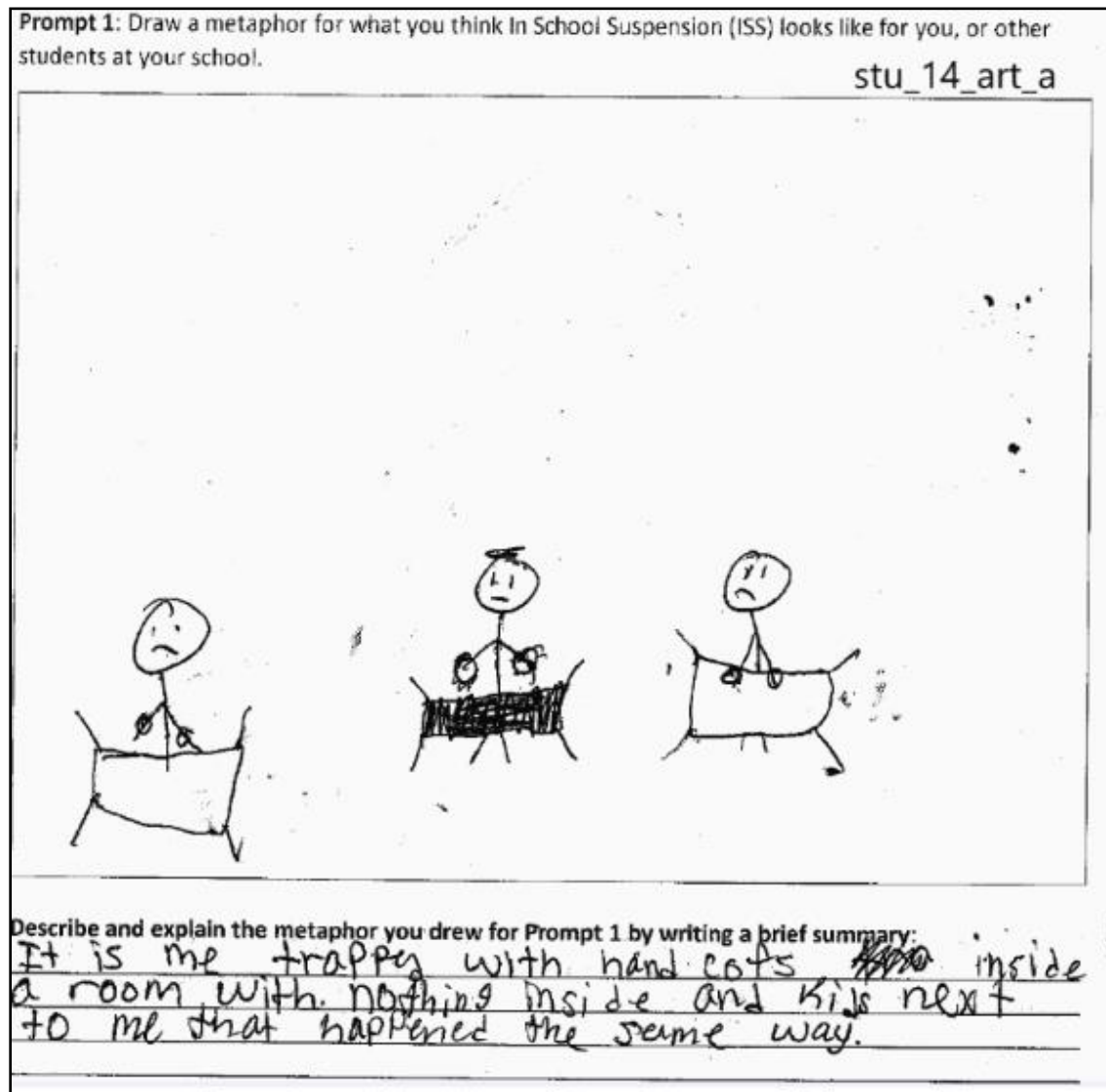
Figure 4.11

Shelly's Metaphorical Drawing of the ISS Classroom



It is evident in Shelly's drawing that a student is locked behind a big door with bars for windows, and the guard outside appears to be the ISS teacher with handcuffs holding a weapon/baton. The similarity of the expressions on both the students' faces and ISS teacher's expression in Shelly's and Megan's is also very intriguing; the students are frowning, which could represent sadness, depression, or perhaps fear and anxiety, and the ISS teacher appears stern and angry.

Further analysis of Shelly's description of her metaphorical drawing expresses her conception of the ISS classroom. She wrote the following, "In ISS it feels like you are in Jail because you are stuck somewhere you can't talk do nothing and if you talk you get more in trouble," which confirms similar sentiments of multiple students with disabilities that hold a collective conception of ISS classroom as a prison. Feelings of being trapped were also disclosed by Jordan. In his interview he said, "ISS stresses me out and like I feel like I am trapped somewhere with a lot of people." These sentiments are also expressed in his metaphorical drawing of the ISS classroom where students are noticeably handcuffed behind desks (see Figure 4.12, p. 115).

Figure 4.12*Jordan's Metaphorical Drawing of the ISS Classroom*

In Jordan's metaphorical drawing, he includes three kids all with sad faces and handcuffs on their hands. His description states, "It is me trappy with hand cofs inside a room with nothing inside and kids next to me that happened the same way." The idea that students are handcuffed were also witnessed in Megan's metaphorical drawing (see Figure 4.10, p. 112). This idea of being confined, locked up, and trapped are affirmed by multiple students with disabilities in this

study. For instance, when asked to draw a metaphorical drawing of the ISS classroom, Kevin describes it with the following description:

Well it is a big room with a bunch of uhm desks with loads of work with a lot of students that got ISS and the teacher is telling them to do the work and no talking so that's how I see ISS. ISS is a dungeon to me. The teacher is every mean.

As an affirmation to the collective conception of ISS as being a prison is also evident within the description of Mariah's metaphorical drawing of the ISS classroom. Her description read, "It is very depressing. It dark like. You are lost in the middle of nowhere. You are in jail. You have no one to talk to. You feel like you are in Andersonville prison." Similarly, Kevin's description of his metaphorical drawing revealed that he viewed the ISS classroom as a dungeon, which can be interpreted as a dark place that restricts freedom, thus affirming the sentiments of other students with disabilities who view the ISS classroom as a prison/jail. Figure 4.13 is provided for further analysis and interpretation of Kevin's visual representation (see p. 117).

Figure 4.13*Kevin's Metaphorical Drawing of the ISS classroom*

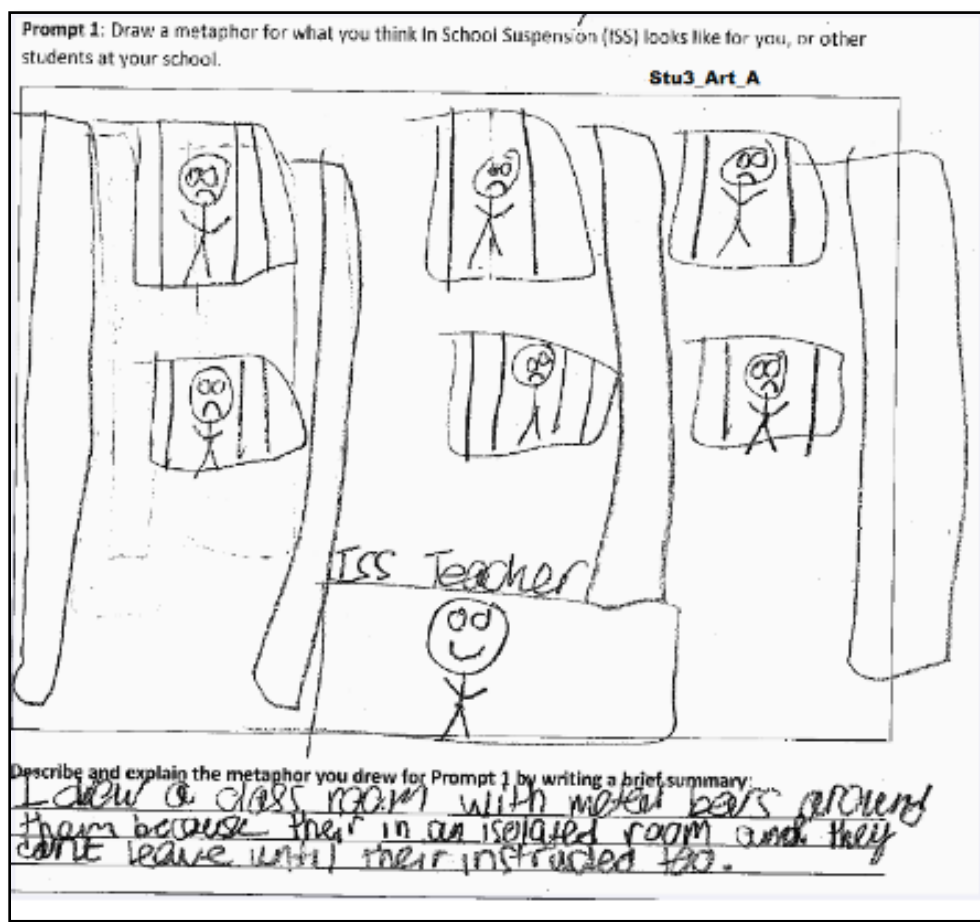
Kevin's metaphorical drawing of the ISS classroom is loaded with visuals that signify a lot of meaning. For example, the devilish looking cyclops have the word "cameras" written next to them, which signifies that students are being watched very closely. Moreover, the teacher appears aggressive, or in Kevin's words "mean" with horns, and the finger in the air symbolizes a person with authority. The teacher is saying "No Talking," and the kids are sitting in their

desks with stalks of work. One student appears to be saying, “why,” and another, “ugh.” The final student appears to be saying, “uhm what,” which could signify he/she is confused and doesn’t know what to do with all the work. A giant poster says, “Respect Your Teachers!” with horns coming from the frame. Also, it is important to notice the placement of the door, which is behind the ISS teacher. It appears to have bars on the window.

Danny, who was previously mentioned describing ISS as an environment with metal bars that places students in an isolated environment, drew the following metaphorical drawing of the ISS classroom (Figure 4.14, see below).

Figure 4.14

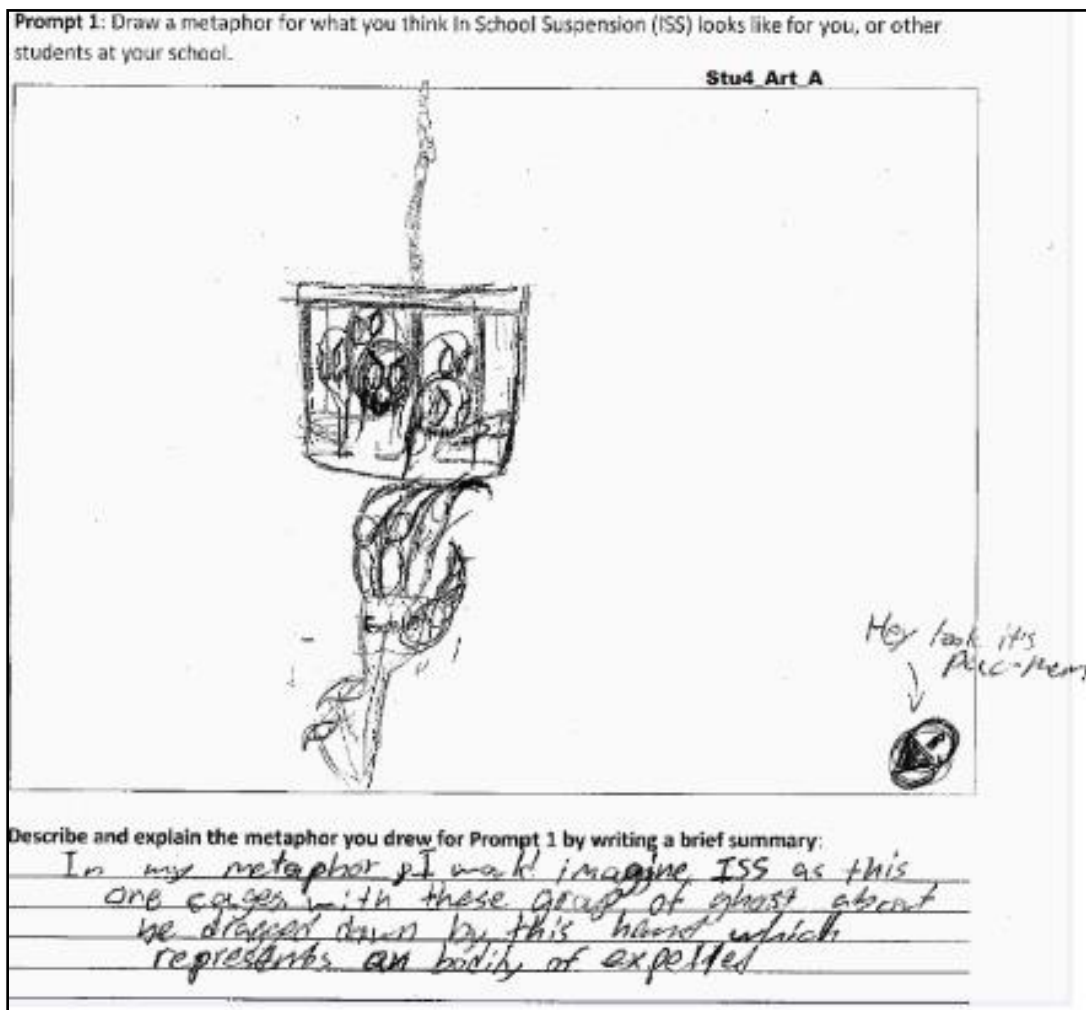
Danny’s Metaphorical Drawing of the ISS Classroom



In Danny's metaphorical drawing of the ISS classroom, it appears students are locked in their own cages, or jail cells, all with what appear to be sad faces (see Figure 4.14, p. 118). The ISS teacher on the other hand has a huge smile. Danny's description reinforces and affirms the conceptions of other students that ISS is an environment that isolates students. This notion that the ISS classroom is the equivalent to Xander's metaphorical drawing also reveals a similar image where students are locked and confined in cages (see Figure 4.15, below).

Figure 4.15

Xander's Metaphorical Drawing of the ISS Classroom



In this rather artistic piece, Xander has drawn a hand of some sort, perhaps the hand of the ISS teacher, which is holding what can be represented as a group of students in a cage hung by chains. In his description, he wrote, “In my metaphor, I would imagine ISS as this one cage with these groups of ghost about to be dragged down by this hand which represents an bodily of expelled.” An interpretation of his metaphorical drawing and his description reveals that he views ISS as a place where students are ghosts locked up in a cage being dragged down.

OSS, a More “Worse/r” Punishment than ISS. Student conceptions of OSS were mixed where some participants found it to be a fun experience, and others actualized that it was a bad situation where they felt they couldn’t complete their work at home and fell behind with learning. Receiving OSS also had an influence on one student’s relationships with her parent. When asked about her experiences with OSS, Shelly, who was provided with OSS because an incident related to alcohol, fell silent for a moment, and then chokingly informed, “When I got in trouble my mother wouldn’t talk to me.” Although seeking to understand the influence of school discipline on relationships with family members was not an aim for the current study, it does appear to hold lasting implications on student attitudes and emotions. Xander had similar experiences with his family. When asked about OSS, he stated, “my mother and father were always disappointed in me.”

Additionally, students reported that OSS was provided as a punishment because ISS wasn’t as severe of a consequence for misbehaving. For example, when asked to explain OSS, Emmanuel declared, “OSS is worser than ISS because you can’t do the work.” As an affirmation to this collective conception that OSS is a more severe, and perhaps even detrimental punishment than ISS, Nancy reported, “You are not allowed to go to school any specific time they give you – you have to stay home, sometimes they send you work and sometimes they don’t.” Kevin also

revealed that OSS is a more severe discipline practice than ISS. He explained, “I guess the consequence get bigger – you can’t be at school at all.” Emmanuel held a similar understanding to Nancy and Kevin, he explained OSS as “a bigger consequence depending on what I did.” Kyle affirms these sentiments surrounding OSS by stating students end up in OSS when “they do something really bad.” Matthew had a similar understanding of OSS as Nancy, Kevin, and Emmanuel. He explained OSS as, “It’s when you do something really bad uhm like either break something you get OSS – the days they give you depends on the action that you did.” A similar view of OSS was also expressed by Danny, who mentioned, “It is when the consequence is higher than ISS... it means you can’t come back to the school.”

The understanding of not being able to come back from school when OSS is described by Megan as when “you stay at home and you can’t come onto school property, and you have to do your work at home.” Sheldon held a similar conception of OSS, and during his interview he mentioned, “You stay at home, you’re not allowed to be at school – you do all the work they send you.” Kyle adds to this collective conception of OSS by saying, “You just stay at home you don’t come to school,” and when asked why kids get OSS, he replied, “They do something really bad.” Other students, conceived OSS as a fun place where they are free to do whatever the pleased at home.

OSS is Fun, a Free Day, and it is Kind of Like Being in Heaven. Although OSS is considered as a more severe punishment than ISS, students had varied experiences of being sent home for discipline issues. For example, when asked to describe OSS, Anne reported the following:

I mean people say it is fun. You get to stay home and do basically what you want, unless their mom is strict, ooh you gotta clean – but, people say it is fun, it’s like a break from school – you don’t really have to do anything – it is a free day, like ooh I don’t have to do

anything. So, OSS isn't really effective. It just gets you out of school.

The ineffectiveness of OSS was also revealed based on Jesus' understanding of OSS. He explained, "From what I've heard you don't get to do your work, you get behind – you're at home all day and so you miss school depending on how much OSS you got for whatever it is that you did."

When asked to describe OSS, Xander remarked, "OSS, okay...I have experienced OSS before – actually... twice... So, to me OSS feels like uh...like...like heaven." He was then asked to elaborate, and he mentioned the following:

Well you feel like you're isolated – you have no one else to talk to. Your possessions have been taken away from you – though in my experience in OSS, my mother and father were always disappointed in me, but they never punished me. I'm like the uhm...the angel in my family. I am very kind.

The idea that OSS is conceived by a collective of students with disabilities as a fun experience can also be affirmed based on Jesus' explanation when he reported:

at home you don't learn anything – you just sit there and watch Netflix and all that that's all – and then when you get your work, you're not going to know what to do. And ISS, you don't learn anything in there they just give you the work – they don't explain nothing.

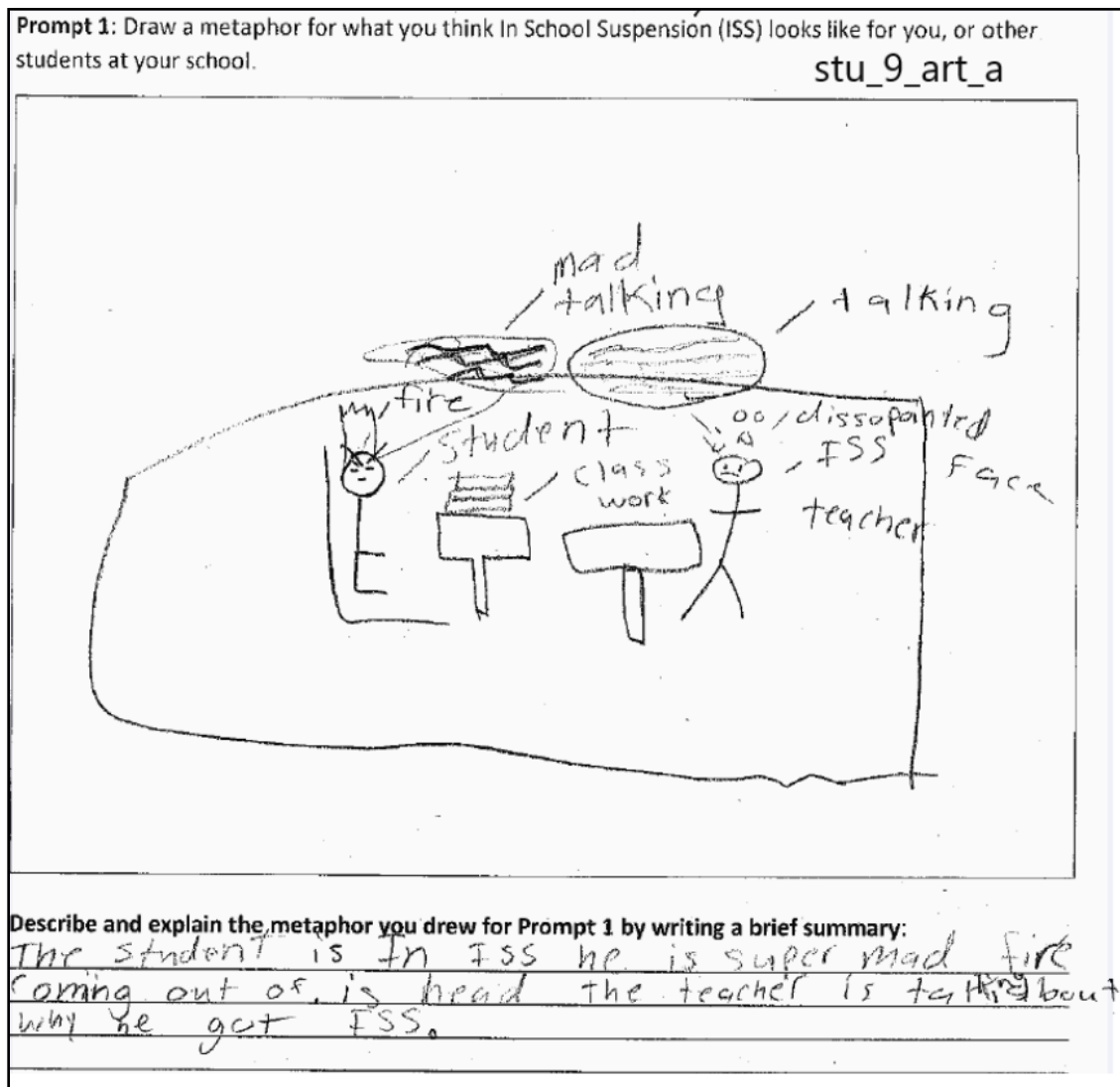
Evidently, it appears student many student participants in this study understand that OSS places them away from instruction and in a place where they do not have access to learning. An affirmation to this is evident in Stephen's response when asked what kids do when they have OSS. He disclosed, "They don't care – they sit around play games and do what they want."

Category Two: Low Efficacy of Punitive Discipline

An analysis of the outcome space resulted in the creation of category two, which includes student experiences of punitive and exclusionary discipline. This section reveals student perceptions of the ISS classroom, including learning dynamics between students with disabilities

and the ISS teacher. Collectively, students hold negative perceptions of the ISS classroom, identify a disassociation between themselves and the ISS teacher, and provide the understanding that the ISS classroom impairs high levels of academic learning and social engagement via dialogue.

Negative Perceptions of the ISS Classroom. According to representative statements, the ISS classroom is a restrictive environment that negatively influences student attitudes. When in the ISS classroom, students have perceived it to be a place where they do not experience freedom. Students reveal that the role of the ISS teacher is primarily that of a supervisor. When asked to explain ISS, Shelly mentioned, “quiet – you can’t do nothing – you can’t put your head down,” and then she adds, “All you do is work, and you can’t make noises.” Students also expressed that some of them experience aggression in the ISS classroom as a result of interacting with the ISS teacher. For example, Sheldon’s metaphorical drawing of the ISS classroom reveals a student’s head on fire (see Figure 4.16, p. 124).

Figure 4.16*Sheldon's Metaphorical Drawing of the ISS Classroom*

In Sheldon's artifact, we see a lot of textual features. For instance, fire is used to label how mad the student is in ISS. The student has classwork, and the ISS teacher has a disappointed face and is saying some words to the student. Sheldon's description reads, "The student is in ISS he is super mad fire coming out of his head the teacher is talking about why he got ISS." It would have been interesting to have received a better understanding of what the ISS teacher was

saying to the student in Sheldon's visual representation of the ISS classroom to get a better understanding of the teacher-student dynamics in the environment.

The Role of the ISS Teacher. The potential role of the ISS teacher was presumably uncovered by student participants by analyzing representative statements and visual representations. It is important for readers to understand that student perceptions are based on their individual attitudes and experiences, which are biased, and these insights should be taken with caution. Based on a collective of student experiences and perceptions surrounding the ISS classroom reveals that the ISS teacher is conceived as an authoritative figure like a prison guard or police officer. Some students view him as an adult that sometimes helps them when they need assistance, but most students with disabilities in this study describe the ISS teacher as someone who could provide more academic supports in the classroom.

Moreover, through verbal discussions and metaphorical drawings of the ISS classroom, students also perceive there to be a dissociation between themselves and the ISS teacher, describing his location from the classroom as being distant in proximity often seated away from them. An analysis of Mariah's visual representation reveals that the ISS teacher is seated away from the students. She indicated that the ISS teacher was telling kids to be quiet (see Figure 4.17, p. 126).

Figure 4.17

Mariah's Metaphorical Drawing of the ISS Classroom

Prompt 1: Draw a metaphor for what you think In School Suspension (ISS) looks like for you, or other students at your school.

Stu2_Art_A

Describe and explain the metaphor you drew for Prompt 1 by writing a brief summary:

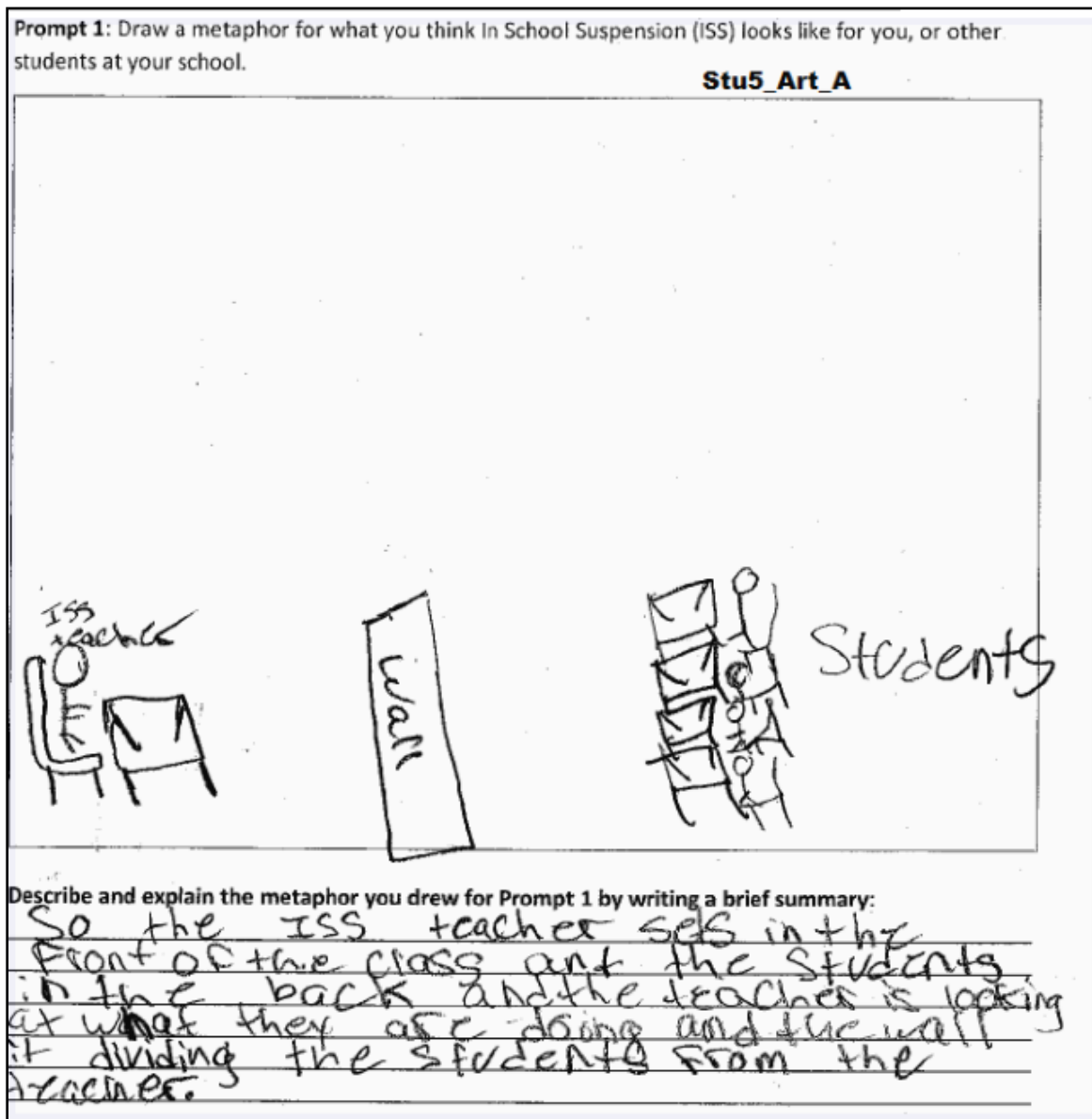
It's quite, you do your work and you don't talk with anyone except for the adults. It's very depressing. It's dark, like you are lost in the middle or nowhere, you are like in jail, you have nowhere to talk to. You feel like you are in Andersonville Prison. Some kids in the back get away with sleeping, etc, but the ones in the front have to do all the work, write the teacher sits and laughs at his/her's show.

Note. One section of Mariah's visual representation has been blacked out to protect certain individuals involved in the current study.

This notion that the ISS teacher is often in proximal distance from students in the classroom is affirmed based on Xander's interview where he explained that the role of the ISS teacher may be that of a police officer. He stated, "...now the teacher is like uhm the one that is watching you to see if you're like not doing anything because I know that, you know ...it's like prison...shall I say." This notion that the ISS teacher is perceived as a police officer by some students is also evident in Megan and Shelly's metaphorical drawings (see Figure 4.10, p. 112; see Figure 4.11, p. 13). For instance, in Megan's metaphorical drawing, apparently the ISS teacher wearing a hat with an officer's badge/emblem on it, and in Shelly's visual representation, the ISS teacher with handcuffs and a police baton often used to subdue suspects.

When asked to describe what the ISS teacher does, Matthew also reveals that the role of the ISS teacher is to supervise students. Matthew reported, "I don't know... he uhm walk around and tell us to bring him finished work." Megan also held similar sentiments when she explained the authoritative role of the ISS teacher as someone who tells students to "sit down and tell people to be quiet, and if we need calculator, glue or scissors. Gives us one example. Stands us up, walks us around, and take us to the lunch." Megan mentioned the ISS classroom reminds her of jail, and the ISS teacher "...he's kind of like a police officer." Here, we learn that the ISS teacher is providing resources and examples for how to do work in the ISS classroom.

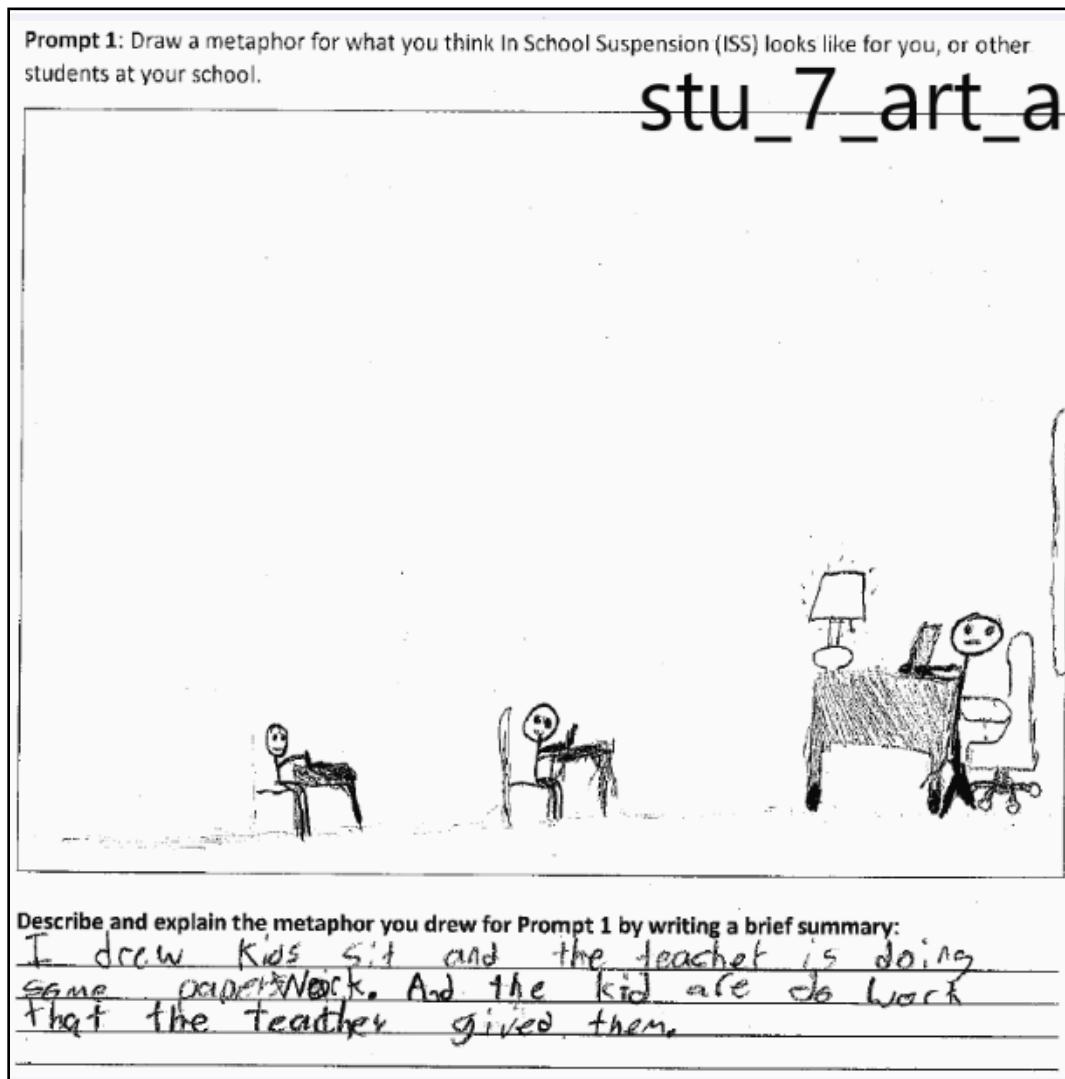
Disassociation Between the ISS Teacher and Students. Numerous representative statements collected from multiple qualitative sources in this study reveal that there is a disassociation between the ISS teacher and students in the ISS classroom. For instance, Matthew's metaphorical drawing of the ISS classroom (see Figure 4.18, p. 128) depicts a row of students and their ISS teacher separated by a rectangular shaped wall.

Figure 4.18*Matthew's Metaphorical Drawing of the ISS Classroom*

Matthew's visual representation (above) reveals a disassociation between the ISS teacher and students in the ISS classroom. He drew a wall that separates the adult from the children in this environment. His description reads, "So the ISS teacher sets in the front of the class and the students in the back and the teacher is looking at what they are doing and the wall it dividing the

students from the teacher.” The word “dividing” is very crucial here as it reaffirms that there is a disconnect or division between student and ISS teacher.

Similarly, Kyle also revealed that ISS teacher is disassociated from the students in his metaphorical drawing of the ISS classroom. However, he provides more of why this may be happening. In his metaphorical drawing, Kyle reveals that the ISS teacher is occupied with other things outside of providing instruction to students. For his metaphorical description, Kyle wrote, “I drew kids sit and the teacher is doing some paperwork. And the kid are do work that the teacher gived them” (see Figure 4.19, p. 130).

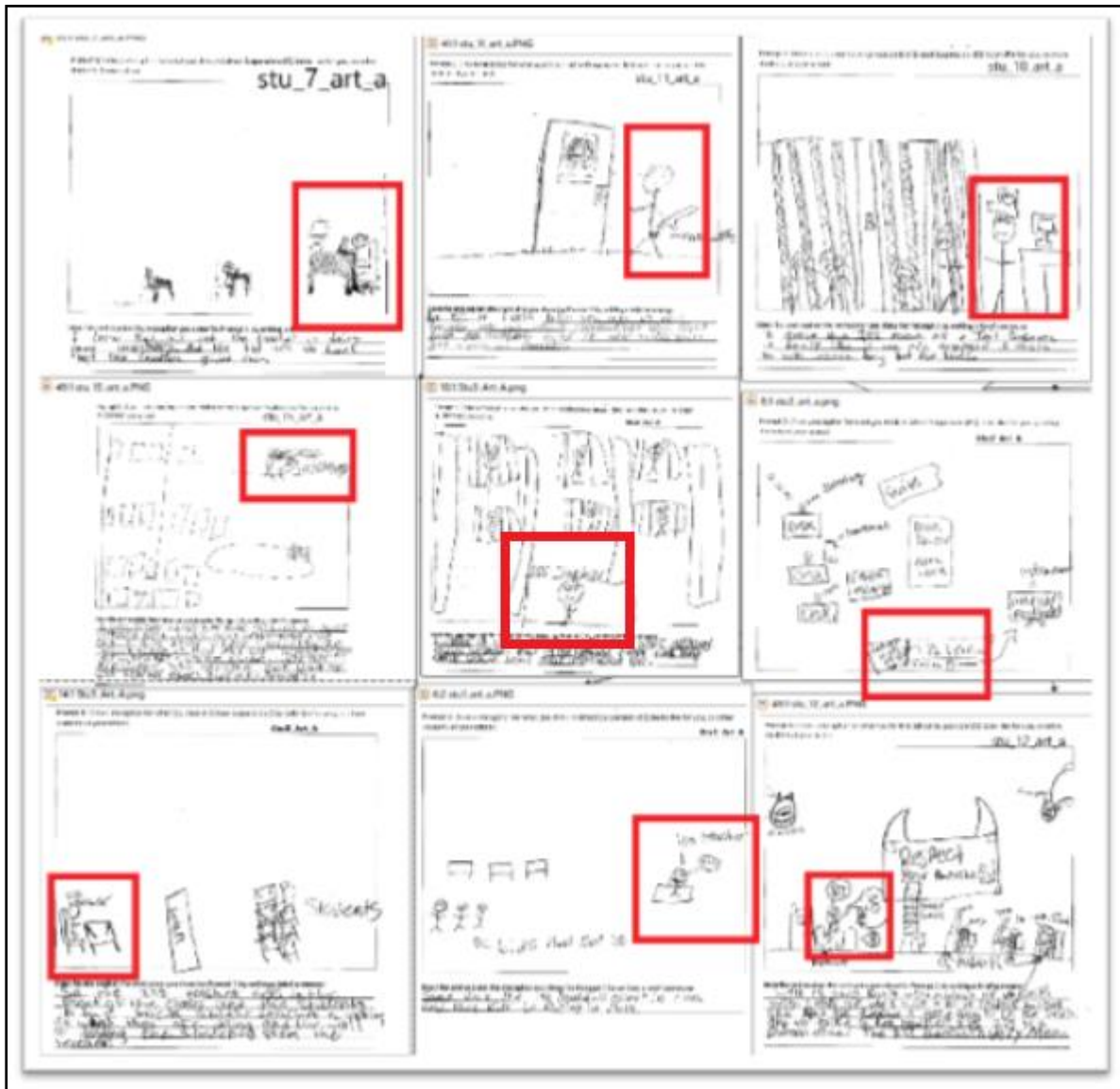
Figure 4.19*Kyle's Metaphorical Drawing of the ISS Classroom*

In his description, Kyle affirms the notion that the ISS teacher is too busy to help students with work in the ISS classroom. Furthermore, multiple student metaphorical drawings of the ISS classroom depict that the ISS teacher is separated, or seated/standing away from the students, which reaffirms the notion of disassociation between ISS teacher and students (a collage of students' visual representations depicting disassociation between the ISS teacher and students is provided, Figure 4.20, see p. 131).

Figure 4.20

A Collage of Students' Visual Representations Depicting Disassociation Between the ISS Teacher and Students

Teacher and Students

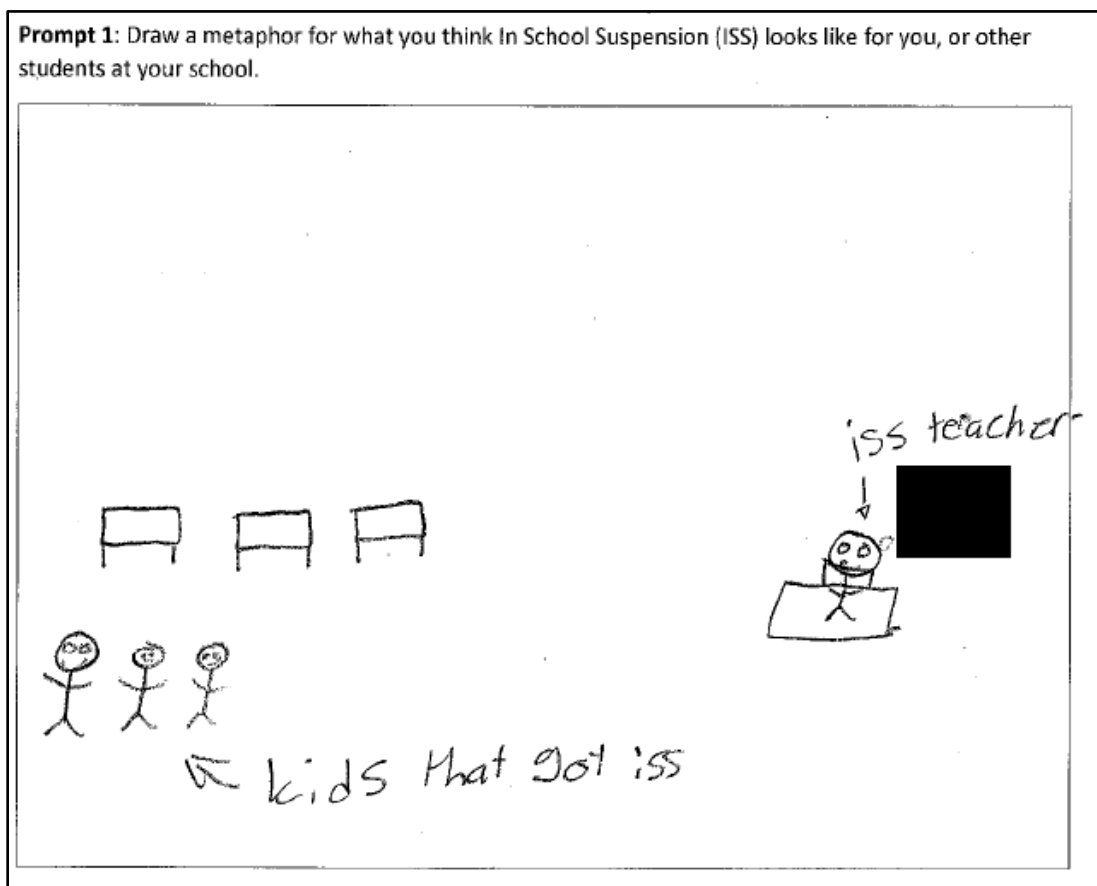


Note. The resolution of the above collage makes it difficult to see details in the images; however, this figure is provided to reveal the disassociation between the ISS teacher and students as evident in nine visual representations of the ISS classroom as drawn by student participants in the current study. The red boxes exemplify the location of the ISS teacher in the image.

Respectively, Figure 4.20 was created to serve as a source to triangulate representative statements and metaphorical drawings that suggest that students may require more academic instruction in the ISS classroom. For example, students have drawn the ISS teacher far from them, and in two distinct cases, on the other side of a prison door and jail cell. The ISS teacher being seated or standing away from students contributes to the idea that his role is that of a supervisor. This is evident in Jesus' visual representation (see below).

Figure 4.21

Jesus' Metaphorical Drawing of the ISS Classroom



Note. A part of this visual representation has been blacked out, and Jesus' description has been removed to protect certain individuals involved within the study.

Regarding the location of the teacher in the classroom, PBISWorld (2018) suggests that students benefit when teachers move around the classroom and these actions are referred to as active proximity control, a component of PBIS tier one intervention strategies. It is understood that walking around the classroom can help keep students focused, and it allows them to ask questions when in need of clarification. According to the school district's job description for the ISS teacher, which was mentioned in the relevant review of terms section of this study (see Chapter Two, Review of Relevant Terms, p. 21), district policy mandates that this individual is expected to "supervise students assigned to in-school suspension and to provide them with instructional assistance that helps them learn as much as possible while assigned to in-school suspension."

In retrospect, uncovering the dynamics surrounding the interplay between students with disabilities and the ISS teacher was not the primary goal of the current study, rather the researcher was interested in student experiences with and conceptions of school discipline. This resulted in gaining insights about what the experience of what ISS may be like for students with disabilities, including their perceptions surrounding the role of the ISS teacher. Readers should not generalize the role of the ISS teacher, or other ISS teachers based solely on information provided by fifteen students with disabilities in this phenomenography.

Negative Influence of School Discipline on Academic Learning. This description explores the negative outcomes of school discipline on student learning and behaviors. Based on representative statements, it is apparent that the experiences in exclusionary discipline was having a negative influence on students' academic learning. For instance, many students expressed sentiments of being "left behind."

Left Behind. During Emmanuel's interview while discussing ISS, he stated "Uhm, ISS I think it doesn't help you learn at all because it stops you from being in class and getting help from other teachers." Considering his experience, it appears that there is that not a lot of academic instruction is provided by the ISS teacher in the ISS classroom, which could result in students feeling like they are being left behind. When asked if ISS has an influence on her ability to learn to learn academic material, Mariah reported:

Yes very much because a lot of kids nowadays, including myself, are visual or hands on learners, if you give us a packet and tell us we need to know this by the end of the week, it'll be very difficult for us to learn it because we have no one to teach it to us. School is where you go to learn, and so if I am in school, I should still be able to learn.

Mariah's response is multi-faceted and very insightful. Here, Mariah reveals that students learn best when they are working with visuals using a hands-on approach. In addition, Mariah reveals that in the ISS classroom, content area teachers are simply dropping off work with the expectation that students will somehow miraculously complete the work independently, but from what Mariah is saying, there is no one in ISS to teach the students. She then throws in a powerful declaration, "School is where you got to learn, and so if I am in school, I should still be able to learn." Based on her interview and metaphorical drawings, Mariah's participant profile has produced unique qualitative data, which should be pursued further through a case study, or some other form of qualitative inquiry. When asked what could have been done differently instead of providing her with ISS for the incident that happened between her and another student, Mariah replied:

I feel like I did deserve ISS because it was a physical altercation, which I know is in the rule book, or handbook or whatever it is called, but I feel like three days of ISS is too much, that was three days, that was an entire week that I missed, yes It was my fault, but I got behind in my work, and whenever I test, I have an IEP, and I get modified testing, and all of that, so I as messed up by a lot.

Mariah's statement reveals that she is a responsible student. She says, "I got behind in my work." She also has knowledge of her IEP, which is her Individual Education Plan provided to assist her with learning in the general education environment based on her diagnosed disability of Other Health Impairment. A closer look in her IEP reveals that she is provided services for Attention Deficit Hyper-activity Disorder (ADHD). She understands that she receives supportive aids and services that allows her to better access the material. She said, "I have an IEP, and I get modified testing." As an affirmation to the assertion that students may experience being left behind academically in ISS, Kyle disclosed that if he was the ISS teacher he would do the following: "I would give kids the – I'd give them help to understand how to solve problems, Instead of just sitting there not learning."

Similarly, when asked if students are learning in the ISS classroom, Kevin said, "a little bit..., but the ISS teacher is not explaining what they're doing." This belief is also affirmed by Matthew, who when asked about academic learning in the ISS classroom reported, "Well – you can't the teachers can't go over there and teach you – you just got to do it for yourself – get a science book or what you need to help you on the work they give you." This reveals that general education teachers may not be reviewing the work provided to students in the ISS classroom. Danny has had similar experiences in the ISS classroom. Similarly, when asked what influence ISS has on his academic learning, he explained, "Sometimes when you're missing experience in class it is harder to learn it without the teacher instructing you." Xander's experience of the ISS classroom are similar when it comes to academic learning. He stated, "It doesn't help you because you only get a paper you get your work and just a pencil you gotta learn yourself." This reveals that the ISS teacher is not providing academic instruction to him in the ISS classroom.

Likewise, this notion is affirmed by Kevin when asked if the ISS teacher assists him or other students with academic material, he informed, “Not that I have seen, but maybe.” Kevin has had similar experiences in terms academic learning in the ISS classroom. When asked how ISS influences his ability to learn academic material, he reported:

Sort of – because you’re not really learning anything – you’re just doing work, you’re not in a classroom learning anything like in a classroom. But, you’re in trouble and you’re learning how other kids are.

Kevin was then asked how it was different from being in a regular classroom, and he responded, “Learning – being able to get an education because you’re learning new stuff.” The researcher asked him what that looks like, and he said, “Uh, having teachers explain how to do certain stuff – and once the kids understand what they’re supposed to be doing, there is work to go over what you learned.” Jordan affirms the idea that the ISS teacher does not help students learn in the ISS classroom. He said, “The ISS teacher doesn’t show you what to do on assignments– you gotta figure it out on your own.” Nancy further explained the influence ISS has on her academic learning:

You’re missing your time in class over like a lesson especially in math it is hard to keep up on what you’re learning – a new unit or something, or if you miss a test the teacher can go over it

Nancy’s statement reveals that in ISS students are provided with tests, which is problematic because they are most probably not receiving accommodations mandated in their IEPs in the ISS classroom. Megan held similar sentiments that suggest that the ISS classroom is not conducive to academic learning. When asked how ISS could be improved, she disclosed:

Maybe, this ISS teacher will like tell them what they need to do on this assignment. So, that will give us two examples, or three, and then if we don’t get it, they can give us one more, and if we do – they’ll let us do it

Next, the researcher followed up and asked what form of instruction is provided in the ISS classroom, and Megan reported, “Like one example only.” The researcher then asked what the ISS teacher normally does in the classroom, and she said, “Sit down and tell people to be quiet.”

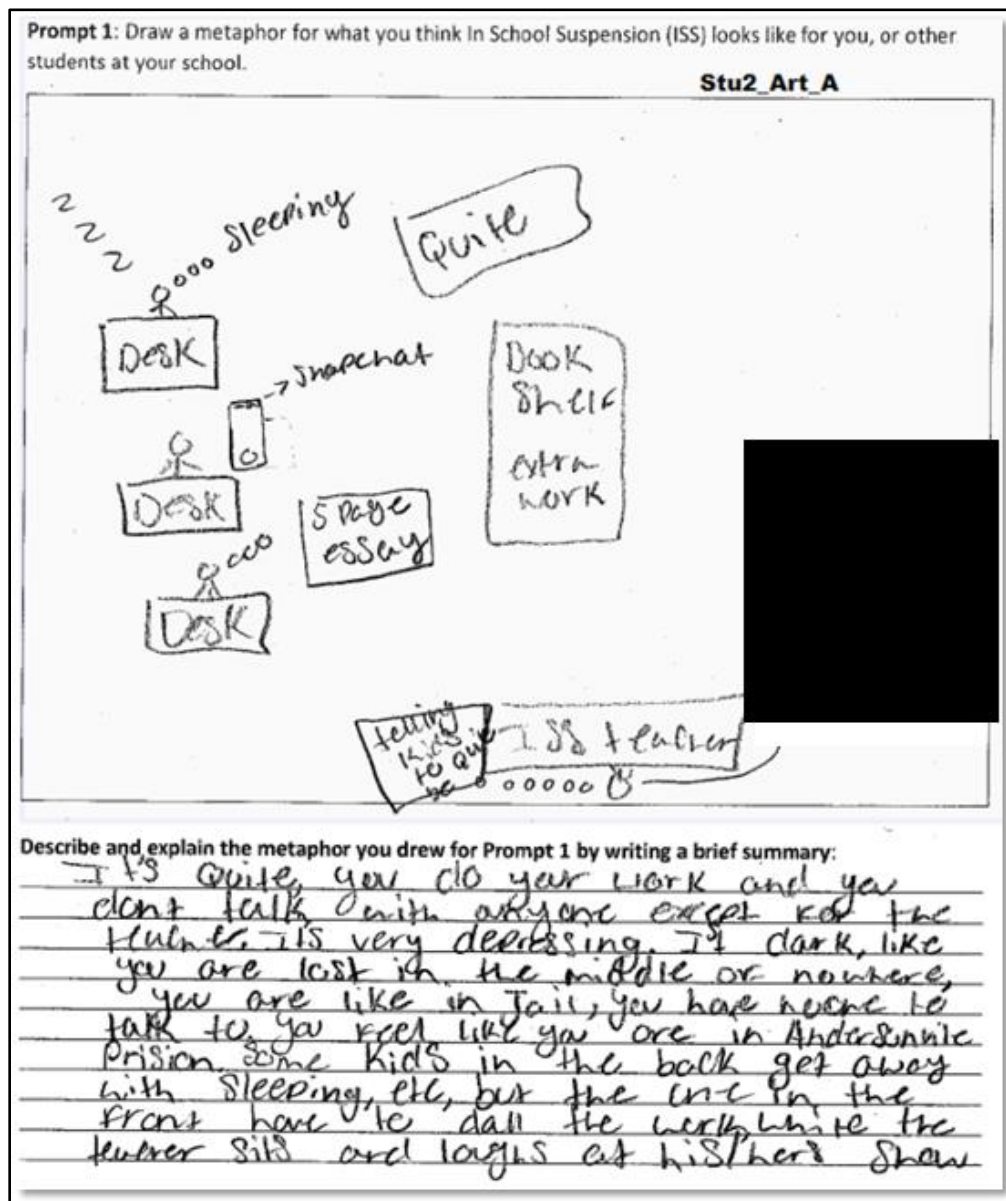
On the topic of professional development, Anne’s statement supports the notion that the ISS teacher could benefit from teacher training regarding academic instruction. The description of her metaphorical drawing supports this assertion. She wrote:

It’s people being in this small class for the whole day doing anything but work and when we need help with the work the ISS teacher can’t help us cause he don’t know either and when your done with work all you do is get on the computer or read or be bored all day long.

Anne’s statement reveals that the ISS teacher may not know what to do in terms of providing instruction, which may indicate a need to provide collaboration, professional development, and additional training to the ISS teacher. As another triangulative source of qualitative data to explore academic learning in the ISS classroom, Mariah provides insights to peer behaviors in this setting in her metaphorical drawing of the ISS classroom (see Figure 4.22, p. 138).

Figure 4.22

Peer Behaviors in Mariah's Metaphorical Drawing of the ISS Classroom



As another form of data to triangulate findings relative to the student experiences of the ISS classroom, the researcher's ISS observations also indicate that the ISS classroom is restrictive of academic learning. For instance, on November 6th, 2019 at 1:00 PM, the researcher visited the ISS classroom for an observation. The following was learned:

Asked the student what he was doing in ISS. He had math work the teacher dropped earlier in the morning, and he was confused on how to solve a math problem that required the use of volume of a cylinder formula (ISS Observation #2, see Appendix N).

These observations affirm sentiments of students such as Nancy and Megan, who have expressed that they are not sure about how to complete some of the work in the ISS classroom, which would restrict their ability to learn academic material. This also confirms the assertion that the ISS teacher is not providing academic instruction in the ISS classroom. Additional observations also indicate that the ISS classroom may not be supporting the academic learning of students with disabilities. For instance, students were observed sleeping in ISS on October 20th, 2019 at 12:45 PM during Observation One. An excerpt from that observation includes the following: “Two students were sleeping, and one student had his head down.” Students sleeping in ISS were also observed on December 13th, 2019 at 11:00 AM during Observation Four (ISS Observation #4; see Appendix N). An excerpt from that observation is provided: “One student was sleeping, another was on her cell phone listening to music, and three students were in the back of the room pretending to complete an assignment.”

It is also evident that these students may not be provided and expected to complete some of the work assigned by their content area teachers in the ISS classroom. For example, during the fourth observation in the ISS classroom on December 16th, 2019 at 10:15 AM, the researcher went in to visit two of his sixth period students with disabilities. The following was observed:

When I approached an 8th grade student from my 6th period class, her desktop showed that she had copy pasted applications over and over on the home screen. I then redirected her to the assessment she was assigned for my class. I informed the ISS teacher of the two students who needed to take the End of Workshop assessment, as well as how to get them logged in. These two students were also assigned a reading assessment that was forwarded to the ISS teacher on Friday, 12/13/2019. When I asked the students if they worked on that assignment on Friday, they said it was never provided to them.

The researcher came to provide guidance for what his own student should be working on in the ISS classroom. Instead of working on the End of Workshop assessment, she was wasting time manipulating icons on the desktop screen of the computer. These assignments were forwarded in advance to the ISS teacher, yet both students were not working on it. The researcher set them up on the correct application to get started with End of Workshop assessment in Read 180. He then went to the ISS teacher and explained what both students should do, and left. When the students came back the class the next day, this End of Workshop assessment was not completed. Therefore, based on personal accounts, as well as student experiences, the assertion that ISS is not a place where academic learning is taking place seems appropriate.

Before discussing how OSS influences his academic learning, Jesus affirms the collective sentiments of students with disabilities in this study. He informed, “you don’t learn anything in there they just give you the work – they don’t explain nothin.” He also has a lot to say about the implications of OSS on student learning, which are also expounded upon by other students. He mentioned, “At home you don’t learn anything – you just sit there and watch Netflix and all that that’s all – and then when you get your work, you’re not going to know what to do.” The idea that OSS is not helping students with academic learning is also supported by Xander’s experiences and understanding of OSS. Xander reported, “Oh well – see uhm whenever I get OSS – I get left behind with subjects.” He then goes on to say, “...they usually like forget about the material, and they usually get left behind. If they don’t have anything to learn, their brains are going to rot.”

An affirmation to the non conducive academic learning that occurs as a result of OSS is also evident by Shelly. When asked what she learned at home during OSS, Shelly reported, “There was no teacher there to explain the things – I was all alone.” Nancy also provided some

unique insights to the phenomena of OSS relative to academic learning. She said, “Sometimes they send you work and sometimes they don’t.” This reveals that sometimes students who are served with OSS do not receive work from teachers to work on, which would most likely mean they fall behind in their classes, and ultimately, students fail. The understanding that the ISS teacher is not providing students with the work assigned is further established in personal accounts of the ISS classroom allocated during observation four. Holding similar sentiments, Emmanuel disclosed, “OSS is kind of worser than ISS because you can’t do the work,” and when asked how OSS influences the learning of other kids, he said, “It stops them.” Jesus affirmed the assertion that OSS has a negative influence on student academic learning. He stated:

From what I’ve heard you don’t get to do your work, *you get behind* – you’re at home all day and so you miss school depending on how much OSS you got for whatever it is that you did.

Matthew’s experience of OSS also reveals that he didn’t do much work. When asked what he did work-wise for OSS, he reported, “Yes. I did math, but other than that I did not have work.” This means that he did not do work for three days at home involving Science, Social Studies, English Language Arts, and Reading. This means students that are provided with OSS have a lot of time on their hands, especially if they are not going to work with their parents, or chores, etc. Stephen provides some insights as to what students may be doing if they’re not learning at home when provided with OSS. He explained, “They sit around play games and do what they want.” In a future study that explores the implications of OSS on student learning, it would be paramount to explore what students do with their time outside of school when they’re served with OSS. For example, Anne provided some more information regarding what happens during OSS. She reported:

I mean people say it is fun. You get to stay home and do basically what you want, unless their mom is strict, ooh you gotta clean – but, people say it is fun, its like a break from

school – you don't really have to do anything – it is a free day, like ooh I don't have to do anything. So, OSS isn't really effective. It just gets you out of school.

Therefore, according to the collective experiential description of students with disabilities, ISS and OSS does not appear to be conducive to academic learning. Moreover, the social ramifications of exclusionary discipline were also revealed by students with disabilities in this study.

No Talking Allowed in ISS. When asked if ISS was having an influence on student social learning, which was explained as ability to build social skills and being able to positively communicate and interact with others, student participants overwhelmingly revealed that the ISS classroom environment is not a place where communication occurs. For example, Mariah explained:

You're all by yourself, so that time you could have spent getting to know somebody, seeing one of your friends or anything like that – you don't get to see them or talk to them – it makes you be less social – it makes you be more quiet, it makes you not want talk to people – it makes you think if I do not talk to anybody, I won't get in any trouble.

Mariah's statement reveals that talking in ISS leads to getting in more trouble. These sentiments are shared with Kevin who mentioned, "In ISS you're not allowed to talk you're just working, you can't communicate at all." The researcher followed up by asking Kevin about communication, and he responded, "So you can get to know the person better to gain a friendship, or you know, just really bond," which reveals his eagerness to gain friendships and bond with other people. The assertion here is the ISS is not conducive to the development of social skills because students are restricted from communicating with other students. Sheldon affirms this notion by stating, "You're not talking to anyone - you're by yourself. You couldn't be good at talking to people." The researcher then asked why Sheldon wanted to talk to people, and he responded, "To build social skills and do good in the real world," and so, it is evident that

there is a desire for dialogue amongst multiple students with disabilities that have been served with ISS.

Similarly, Xander found ISS to be restrictive in terms of social development. When asked about this issue, he mentioned, “uhm they usually feel isolated you know...” The researcher then asked what it means to be isolated, and Xander responded, “That is basically when you’re alone and no one to talk to.” The researcher then asked if being isolated influences the development of social skills. Xander replied, “Well, you don’t have any individuals around you...” The researcher then asked what he would talk about if he could talk to others in ISS, and he reported, “Talk about my life and talk about my goals and stuff. I want to be an artist when I grow up – just trying to be the next Walt Disney.” His desire for dialogue and social development also reveals an interest to set life-long goals, and based on his metaphorical drawings, he does have artistic ability.

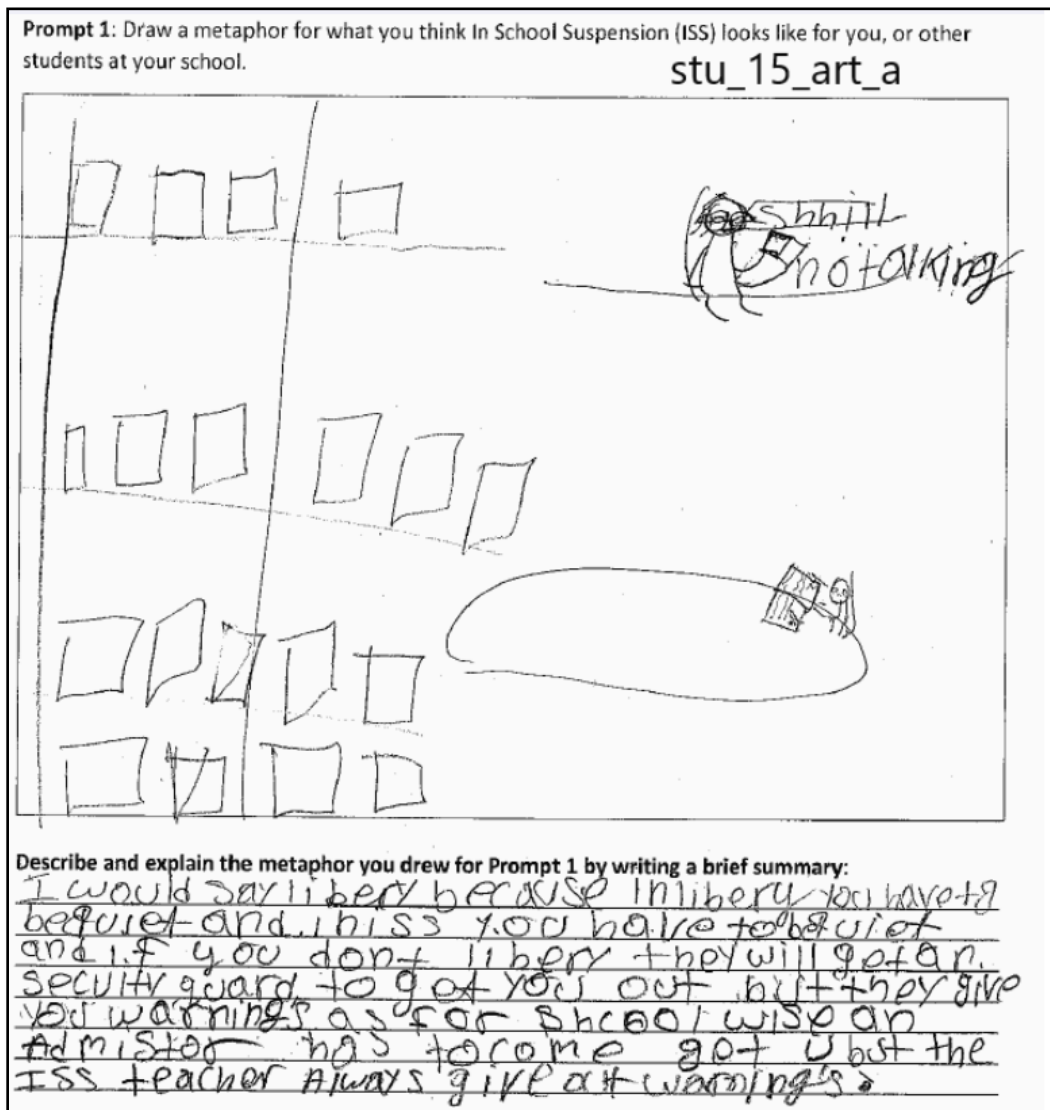
Likewise, Danny expressed similar sentiments when he revealed, “if youre like in ISS or out of school, it’s taking away time from getting to know more people.” Sheldon also supports the assertion that ISS is restricting opportunities for dialogue, which inhibit social learning in the ISS classroom. He reported, “You’re not talking to anyone - you’re yourself. You couldn’t be good at talking to people.” This reveals that he believe that in order to get “good” at talking to people, you should be able to talk to people. He reveals the importance of talking by adding, “To build social skills and do good in the real world.” Accordingly, based on these collective perceptions and experiences of the ISS classroom, this exclusionary practice is not preparing students for the real world. Furthermore, it experiences in school discipline also appears to be having a negative influence on shaping students’ perceptions of self.

Dialogue is Restricted in the ISS Classroom. In terms of experience, a collective of students with disabilities perceived the ISS classroom as place where no talking is allowed, which inhibits opportunities to engage in dialogue for social development (Vygotsky, 1978).

Mariah affirms this Vygotskian notion by stating the following:

You're all by yourself, so that time you could have spent getting to know somebody, seeing one of your friends or anything like that – you don't get to see them or talk to them – it makes you be less social – it makes you be more quiet, it makes you not want talk to people – it makes you think if I do not talk to anybody, I won't get in any trouble.

In her metaphorical drawing, Mariah confirms these sentiments again by describing ISS. She writes, "It is quite you do your work and you don't talk with anyone except for the teacher." When asked to describe her experience in ISS, Nancy mentioned the following in her interview, "There really is no communication – there are consequences when you talk, or give any comments like sign language, passing notes, anything," which relates quite closely with Mariah's experiences in the ISS classroom. Similarly, the understanding that ISS classroom is a place that restricts communication is evident in Nancy's metaphorical drawing of the ISS classroom (see Figure. 4.23, p. 145).

Figure 4.23*Nancy's Metaphorical Drawing of the ISS Classroom*

In her visual representation, Nancy designed tiny squares which could represent tables, or perhaps bookshelves that are divided. In the top right corner of the image there appears to be a person exclaiming “Shh!!, no talking.” The description of her drawing is provided:

I would say libery because in library you have to be quiet and in ISS you have to be quiet and if you don't library they will get an security guard to get you out but they give you warning as for school wise an admistor has to come get u but the ISS teacher always give out warnings.

Nancy's explanation of her metaphorical drawing compares the ISS classroom to the library where there is absolutely no talking allowed. She also views the administrator as security guard whose job, to her understanding, is to come remove disruptive students from the environment. When interpreted on a deeper level, this could mean that she views that the school is a place that requires security. Shelly also affirms this in the description of her metaphorical drawing of the ISS classroom (see Figure 4.11, p. 113), she wrote, "In ISS it feels like you are in jail because you are stuck somewhere you don't talk do nothing and if you talk you get more in trouble."

Moreover, when asked to provide suggestions for helping students behave at the school, Nancy exposed a bit more about the social environment embedded within the current ISS classroom. She recommended that bad kids should be sent to another classroom, and when asked how the class would be different than ISS, she said, "...it'll be kind of hmm.. it'll be different – they can talk sometimes – they can share why they are in that room." The researcher then asked, "You don't talk about why you got in trouble in ISS," and Nancy responded, "No you just go there, sign in, and do work." When asked if it is important for kids to talk about they got in trouble, she explained, "Yes to see and hear what they are doing and know themselves what they did wrong." In his metaphorical drawing of the ISS classroom (see Figure 4.19, p. 130), Kyle's description read, "And the teacher is telling them to do the work and no talking so that how I see ISS," which affirms that ISS is not a place where there is much dialogue.

All of these insights support the assertion that the ISS classroom may not be conducive to helping students develop better social skills and resolve issues between teacher-student and/or teacher-peers thus placing them in cycles of frustration-aggression, which leads to exclusionary discipline.

Category Three: Cycles of Frustration-Aggression Associated with Student Exclusionary Discipline and Punitive Threats

Based on an analysis of the outcome space, it appears that exclusionary school discipline practices such as ISS, OSS, silent lunch, and detention are having a negative influence on student attitudes and teacher-student relationships. For instance, a collective of student sentiments indicate that students become annoyed and depressed, as well as frustrated and aggressive when provided with punitive threats (i.e., “You have silent lunch!”). In the next sub-section, the researcher triangulated observations and representative statements produced by student participants and discusses the implication of Frustration-Aggression Theory to further explain the outcomes of school discipline on student attitudes and teacher-student relationships.

Punitive Threats. For this study, punitive threats are regarded as the event where teachers inform, or threaten, a student with exclusionary discipline. The use of a punitive threat and the negative influence on student behavior was observed and recorded in Classroom Observation One (see Appendix O). On October 21st, 2019 at 11:30 AM in an 8th grade inclusion mathematics classroom, an incident was observed between a teacher and her students. An excerpt is provided:

Teacher started giving instructions, but three students continued to talk. Teacher told students repeatedly to stop talking. Two students stopped talking, but one continued to talk, and then got up and picked up a pencil that was thrown a few desks over. Teacher told the student that he had silent lunch – student clicked his mouth and said a few words under his breath. Seemingly agitated, he sat in his desk and put his head down. Two other students smirked and thought it was funny.

This observation reveals that sentencing the student to silent lunch was a punitive threat that triggered agitation and apathetic behaviors because the student clicked his mouth, mumbled, and put his head down. This observation also serves as a form of triangulation to the assertion that cycles of frustration-aggression may be linked to situations associated with experiences of

exclusionary discipline and even punitive threats. The personal practice of silent lunch should be reconsidered by staff members at the middle school because it is not a part of the PBIS Pyramid of Interventions (see Appendix A). When the researcher asked Anne why some teachers behave or act good in some teachers' classes but not in others, her response was insightful, "Some kids I know, they just don't like teachers. So, they'll do anything in their power to annoy their teachers or get on their nerves. And some of them, they just want attention because their friends in there." Here, we see that students may resent some of their teachers, and so they act out in their classes. A future study could explore experiences of exclusionary and the influence it has on teacher-student relationships to provide additional affirmations to the negative influence of punitive discipline on student attitudes and behaviors.

Finally, when asked to explain who students would benefit from talking to when they have behavior problems, Anne reported, "Some kids feel like the teachers are going to win instantly; maybe our counselors, or the administrator." This "Us vs. Them" mentality was also witnessed in Shelly's response when asked how she views teachers that frequently write students up. She said, "Sometimes – I feel like... they are up against me, or something like that." Based on Anne's representative statements, it is reasonable to assume that the school is not providing enough mental health supports to students with disabilities, which indicates the need for offering students with more mental health programming. Moreover, the experience of exclusionary discipline is also having a negative influence on students' identity development and perceptions of self. These psychological changes could be a result of the interactions they have with their teachers and peers, including the ISS teacher.

Students Are Showing Signs of Being Annoyed, Depressed, Frustrated, and Aggressive when Provided with Punitive Threats. When asked to describe how detention

makes students feel, Mariah replied, “Makes them annoyed because they could be still asleep, or could be at home starting homework, or doing something else.” When asked how students feel towards the teacher that assigned them with detention, she reported, “Annoyed, or frustrated.” Next, she was asked if she had silent lunch. However, when asked how silent lunch made her feel, she felt it was justified because she was talking in class. However, when asked how other students feel when provided with silent lunch, she mentioned, “Annoyed.” Later, when asked how students feel towards the teacher that gave them silent lunch, she stated:

A little annoyed, or a little frustrated – we don’t get very much free time, and that (lunch) is our only free time, and when they take that away from us, we get frustrated because we have no time to just be children again, just talk to our friends because we don’t get to do that in the hallway, we don’t get to do that in class

A desire for free time and talking with peers was expressed in her response, as well as the notion that students provided with silent lunch have negative attitudes towards the teachers that provided them with the exclusionary experience.

Similarly, when asked how detention makes students feel, Shelly responded, “Annoyed.” When asked how students feel towards teachers that gave them detention, she provided cautionary insights by reporting, “Start to hate them, or start not to do their work,” which affirms the notion that students form negative attitudes towards teachers that provide them exclusionary experiences. Even more troublesome, is the idea that they stop doing their work, which has profound implications on academic learning as a result of exclusionary discipline. When asked how students feel towards the teacher that assigned them with detention, Mariah mentioned, “annoyed or frustrated.” Kevin also responded that students feel “a little frustrated” when provided with ISS or OSS, which affirms the assertion that exclusionary discipline may be linked to cycles of frustration-aggression.

When asked about how silent lunch makes student feel, Shelly said, “Mad because they can’t talk to their friends.” She continued:

Because we are kids and we have a lot of energy, and sometimes we get bored. For us kids, we need free time to talk. What happens when you don’t have a fun, and what if you can’t spend time at friends houses because your parents are strict?

Shelly’s statement reveals the desire to engage in dialogue with her peers, and she feels some students have a lot of energy that they must release. This reveals that current school environments are restrictive and create a sense of boredom, which could lead to misbehaviors in the classroom that result in disciplinary action. Nancy also reveals some interesting insights relative to the PBIS Pyramid of Interventions. She indicated that students get increasingly “mad” and apathetic when provided with conduct-points.

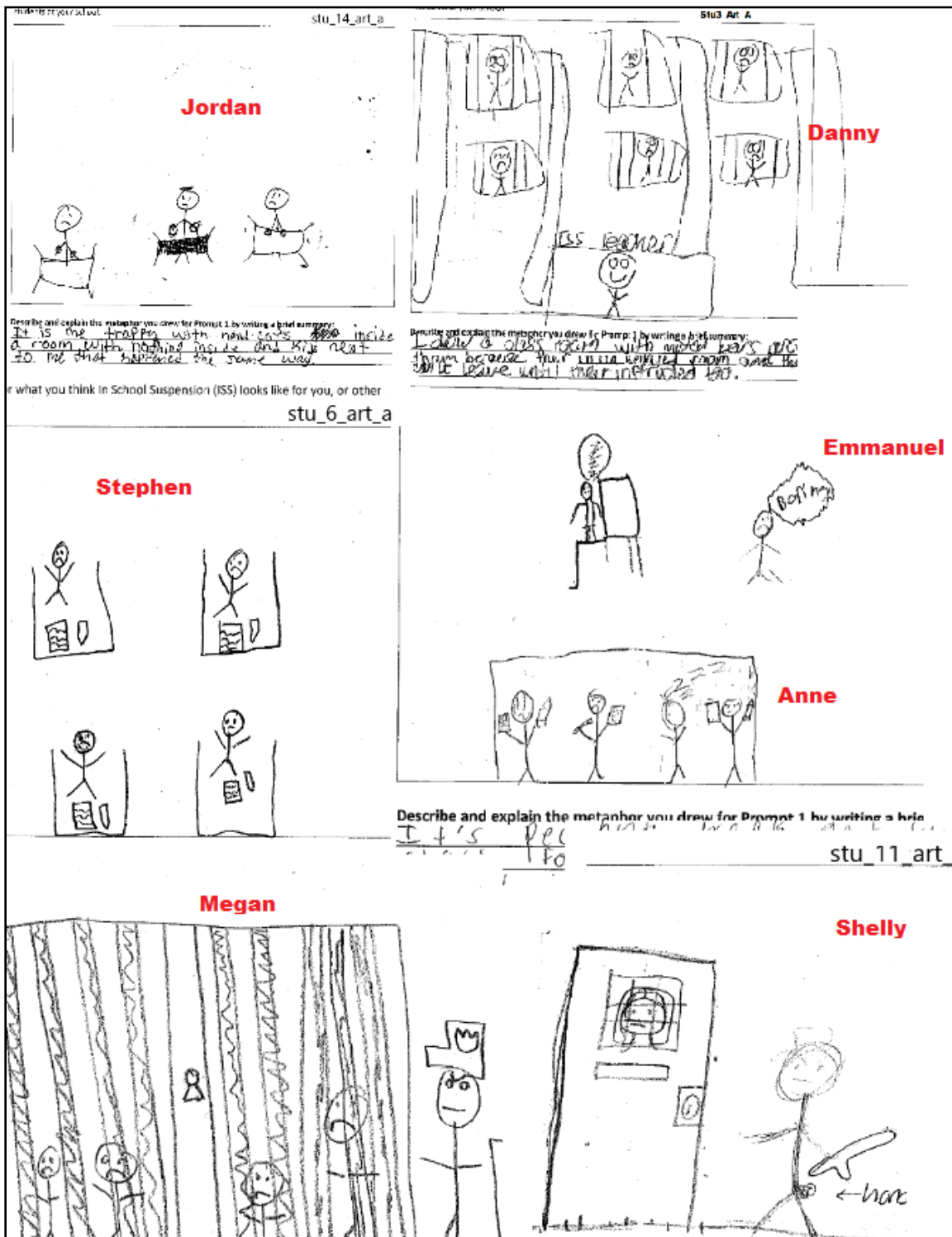
For example, when she was asked about what happens after a student received their first conduct-point, she revealed, “Depends on the student.” “What about the second point?” “At first they don’t care” “What about the third point?” She replied, “They just like really don’t care at that point, but when detention comes around, they’ll be talking back, and they’ll ends up with Mrs. Rogers (pseudonym for administrator) picking them up.” Here, we learn that students “talk back” to teachers when they’re provided with conduct-points, which further adds an affirmation to the notion that cycles of frustration-aggression are linked to events that surround the experience of exclusionary discipline. The researcher went on and asked, “What about the fourth point?” She replied, “At that point the person is going to accept detention.” “Fifth point?” “He is going to get hot and mad at that point” The researcher then asked, “Students get mad when they get conduct points?” Nancy responded, “Yeah 1-3 they don’t care, but when they get four and five – that is when it gets really bad.”

Additionally, the experience of exclusionary discipline may be leading students to depression. For instance, in her metaphorical drawing (see Figure 4.17, p. 126), Mariah's wrote, "It is very depressing." An affirmation of depression is witnessed in Kevin's response to how detention makes him feel. He said, "Not so happy, just upset." Likewise, Megan mentioned that detention made her feel, "kind of mad and sad because it is my fault that I did it," and on the topic of silent lunch, she felt, "Kind of bad because I like uhm socializing with my friends and sometimes when I talk, I feel bad." Xander held similar sentiments when asked about detention, he said, "It made me very sad."

Furthermore, metaphorical drawings serve as a source of triangulation to affirm this notion that exclusionary practices result in depression in students. A collage of visual representations of depression has been created to reveal signs of depression by the following students in their metaphorical drawings: (1) Danny; (2) Stephen; (3) Anne; (4) Megan; (5) Shelly; (6) Emmanuel; (7) and Jordan (see Figure 4.24, p. 152).

Figure 4.24

Visual Representation of Sadness in Student Faces within the ISS Classroom, a Collage



Note. A closer examination of select visual representations reveals that many students drawn are depicted with sad faces, which could represent depression. However, a variance to these findings are apparent in Jesus' metaphorical drawing (see Figure 4.21, p. 132) where the kids in his visual representation are all smiling.

Student Apathy. When asked if he cared about PBIS rewards/points, Emmanuel responded, "No." The researcher asked, "Do others?" He responded, "Some do, and some don't." The researcher asked, "why do some students not care about PBIS rewards?" He replied, "No real benefits – just going to school store, or Fresh Air Friday." The researcher asked Emmanuel if he liked Fresh Air Friday, and he said, "Sometimes." The researcher followed up with asking why, and he responded, "Because it's cold outside." When asked what the school could offer instead of Fresh Air Friday, Emmanuel recommended, "Let you play in the gym." The researcher inquired what students would do in the gym, and Emmanuel mentioned, "Play basketball." The researcher asked what students would do if they don't like basketball, and he reported, "Soccer, or walk around and talk to friends." The researcher asked, what if they don't have friends? Emmanuel suggested, "Make some." The researcher asked how? Emmanuel explained, "Talk to others." The researcher then asked if the school provided opportunities for students to talk to each other, and he disclosed, "No." The researcher asked why. He revealed, "Most of the time we're just in class."

Additional examples of apathetic behaviors were noted based on Kevin's experiences within inclusion classrooms. He mentioned sometimes he has his head down and not paying attention. He recommended that teachers can help him if they tap on his shoulder or call his name. When asked if he has his head down a lot, Kevin responded, "Sometimes." The researcher asked, why?

He reported, “Sometimes I am not really into the lesson and I can go off somewhere else, and they can call my name and I will refocus, and that way I don’t get too off track.”

Moreover, it appears that the practice of detention is linked to student apathetic behaviors, as well as resentment. For example, when asked how students feels towards teachers that give them detention, Shelly responded, “Start to hate them, or start to not do their work.” Similarly, apathetic behaviors can also be linked to experiences with out-school suspension. For instance, when asked what kids do when they have OSS, Stephen responded, “They don’t care – they sit around and play games and do what they want.” This could mean that the severance period between students who are served with ISS may result in feelings of apathy towards academic learning. An affirmation to students not caring about school was also disclosed by Nancy, who reported, “Some people don’t care about school and they don’t care about where they are going. In the future, they will depend on their parents.”

Additionally, apathetic behaviors of students are presented in metaphorical drawing created by Kevin, Mariah, Emmanuel, and Anne within the ISS classroom. For instance, in Kevin’s visual representation (see Figure 4.13, p. 117) reveals students are seated with mounds of work on their desks asking, “what?” and “why?” In Mariah’s visual representation, one student is sleeping, and another student is on Snapchat (social media app) (see Figure 4.17, p. 126). Emmanuel’s visual representation had one student sleeping, and another student is drawn with a speech bubble with the words “boring’ (see Figure 4.8, p. 109). One student is also seen sleeping in Anne’s visual representation (see Figure 4.7, p. 107).

As a supplemental affirmation to the idea that students form apathetic behaviors because of experiencing exclusionary discipline, the researcher turns to inclusion classroom observations. For example, on October 28th, 2019 at 12:15 PM in an 8th grade English Language Arts

classroom, the researcher observed the following: "...students in the back of the class were talking about an incident that happened at lunch." During this time, students should have been choosing research topics and developing a thesis for their essays. Additionally, the researcher observed one girl that was on her cellular phone, and when he saw her, she put her phone away. This reveals that the girl was distracted, and perhaps disinterested in the instruction being provided.

Furthermore, apathetic behaviors also seem to be associated with PBIS. For instance, when asked how to improve PBIS, Shelly responded, "I don't know what it is for... I don't pay attention." This reveals that there is something standing in the way of her and understanding the purpose of PBIS, which may indicate needing to redeliver PBIS to students with disabilities using other methods. In another example of student apathy, Emmanuel was questioned about hallway transitions and arriving to class on time. He expressed often being tardy. When asked why he walks slowly, he responded, "To be there late." Here, we see a conscientious decision to be late to class. Many factors may be linked to why he doesn't want to go to class. Emmanuel may be resentful towards the teacher who was the agent responsible for providing him with the exclusionary experience through an office disciplinary referral, or perhaps, he is bored in the class as a result of inadequate instructional practice.

Furthermore, Emmanuel also expressed that when he gets to class, he immediately feels tired. He revealed, "I don't get enough sleep." This reveals that for him, a very important physiological need is not being met. Potentially, students may act out and cause disruptions, or even be insubordinate because the individual's first concern is not learning, but instead it may be that they need sleep. Without achieving ample amount of sleep, Emmanuel, including other students that have expressed being sleep deprived, may not be capable of reaching high levels of

self-esteem, or even self-actualization, which most likely increases engagement with academic instruction. Possibility of sleep deprivation is also evident in Sheldon. When asked how he feels when he first arrives to class, he mentioned, “Tired. I just woke up, and I don’t want to do work yet.”

Shelly also expressed that she struggles to sleep at home. When asked what she thinks about when she first comes to class, she responded, “Sometimes I feel tired.” The researcher asked why? Shelly revealed, “Because we have a lot of classes, and we have a lot of work. I have trouble sleeping – it takes me awhile to fall asleep.” The researcher asked, do you think a lot of kids have trouble sleeping? She responded, “Yes.” The researcher asked why? Shelly explained, “Because some kids stay up late and fall asleep in class, and they get in trouble for falling asleep in class.” Here, we have evidence that sleeping in class results in school discipline. Therefore, if students’ physiological needs of achieving adequate sleep at home are not being met, their chances of ending up in exclusionary discipline could be increased as compared to students that do get enough sleep.

Additional affirmations to the notion that students are not getting enough sleep is evident based on researchers’ observations of the ISS classroom. For instance, on October 20th, 12:45 PM, the researcher witnessed the following: “Two students were sleeping, and one student had his head down.” On December 13th, 2019 at 11:00 AM, when he entered the ISS classroom, he witnessed one student sleeping, and another student was on her cell phone listening to music (ISS Observation, Appendix N). Evidence of potentially sleep deprived students are also depicted in the following collage of the ISS classroom (see Figure 4.25, p. 157).

Figure 4.25

Students Sleeping in Visual Representations of the ISS Classroom, a Collage

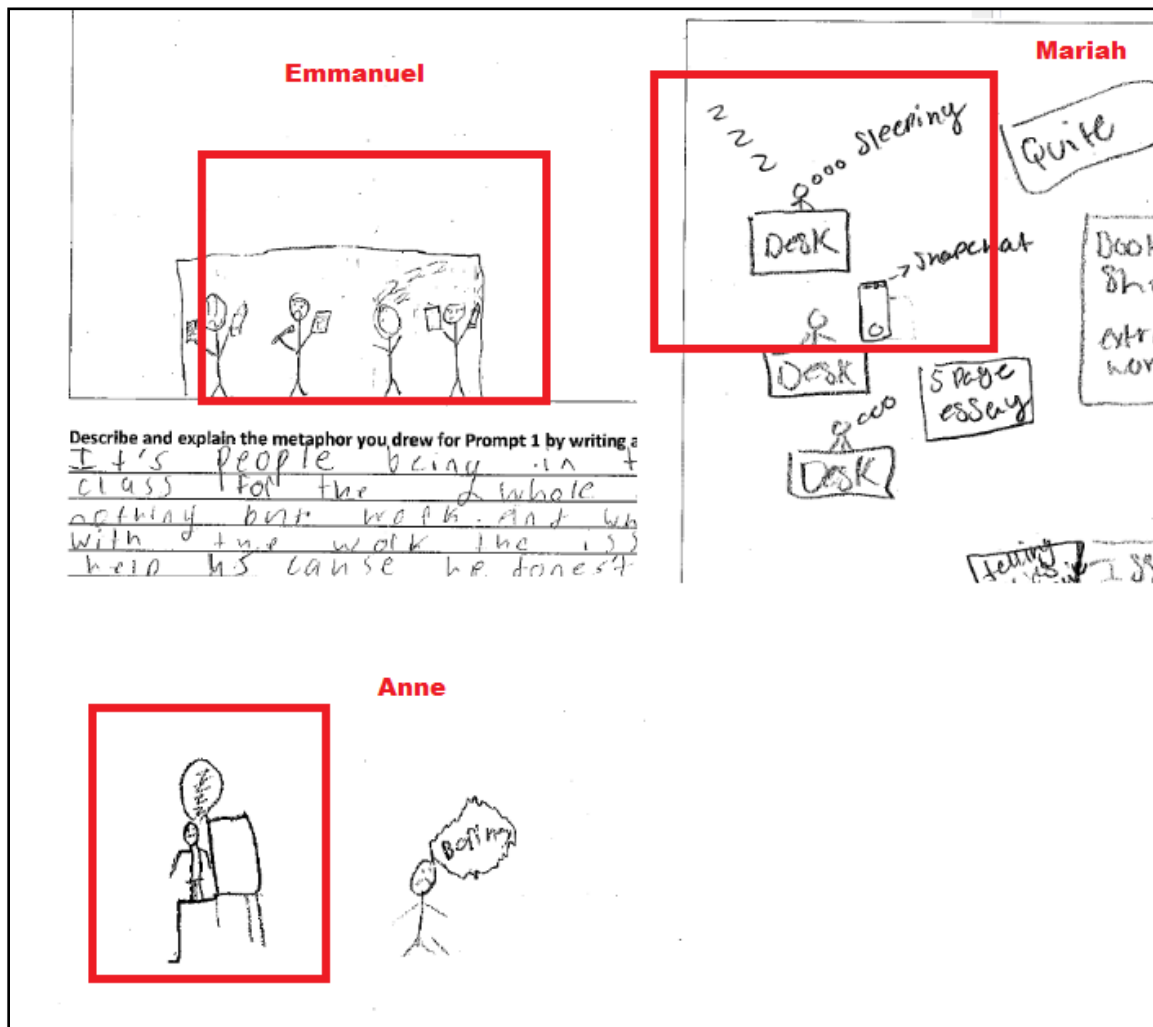


Figure 4.25 serves as a source of triangulation as it reveals multiple students sleeping in the ISS classroom, which affirms the idea that students are either sleep deprived, or bored. In Emmanuel's metaphorical drawing (see Figure 4.8, p. 109), his description included: "The metaphor I drew means a lot of students is very bored all day while others sleep all day while there in ISS."

Undesirable Teacher-Student Relationships. When asked how detention makes students feel, Sheldon responded "mad at the teacher." The researcher then asked, "What

influence does detention have on their relationship?” He stated, “They might in the future disrespect the teacher for making them gat mad.” Mariah held similar sentiments when asked how she feels or views teachers that have sent her to ISS/OSS. She expressed:

Uhm in a way – for me whenever I get was assigned to ISS, they look at you different – the person that assigned you ISS just looks at you and says, “Oh, you could have done better, you could have done this...” They just guilt trip you – I don’t like that... Just give me ISS, I know I did something wrong. I’ll take my punishment and be done with it because otherwise it’ll effect my day and my emotion, and my effort, and my work.”

This loaded response reveals that punitive discipline influences her emotions, including her effort and work productivity, which means experiences in exclusionary discipline has a negative influence on her relationship with that teacher. It also reveals negative teacher behaviors in the form of belittling students through forms of facial expression, including “guilt tripping” them as Mariah has expressed. Similarly, when Jordan was asked how he feels after a teacher refers him to ISS, he responded, “I feel like they want me to stay more in the ISS and not be in their class.” The researcher asked why, and he replied, “I give them stress and a hard time.” Emmanuel held similar attitudes towards teachers that wrote him up in the past. He said, “It makes me not really like them as much,” and when asked about administrators that process the referral, he remarked, “The same. It makes me not like them as much.”

Moreover, when Kevin was asked about students he and other students feel after a teacher writes him, he mentioned, “You might get mad, or upset if you get ISS or OSS Because you know you don’t want it.” The researcher then asked how Kevin often feels when he comes back to the classroom from serving time in ISS or OSS. He revealed, “a little frustrated,” which supports the generalization that frustration-theory linked to experiences in exclusionary discipline may be a contributing factor to discipline disparities facing students with disabilities. It also appears that teachers resent specific students based on previous incidents that involved

school discipline. On a similar note, Emmanuel disclosed some teachers are mean to him in the form of skipping over certain students and helping other students. He said, "...they skip you and go to other students, and then come to you last, knowing you been having a hard time." The researcher asked, what does that do to behavior, and he replied, "It makes us want to do more badly because we are upset." This representative statement is extremely powerful because it indicates negative teacher behaviors that result in undesirable teacher-student relationships that result in loss of adequate instruction.

Likewise, evidence of undesirable teacher-student relationships associated with experiences of punitive discipline were expressed by Shelly. When the researcher asked her if school discipline changes how she views her teachers, she replied, "Honestly, there is a teacher here, and if she don't like you, she just says she talks a lot, or doesn't pay attention, and she'll try and get you in ISS." The researcher then asked, "So, are there teachers in the school you think do not like you," and she responded, "I would say like two or three." Megan affirmed the notion that there is a rift between teachers and students who have experienced exclusionary discipline because of the teacher wrote a referral.

For instance, when asked if experiencing ISS changed how she viewed her teachers, she reported, "That is a hard one – yes and no – because some teachers you can get along with and some teachers, you can't, and you just have to work with them anyway – so yes and no both." Anne supports this notion by explaining how her peers feel when they get silent lunch. Her words, "Irritated... one of my friends feels like the teacher doesn't like him at all, and she is always giving him silent lunch, so he hates her." And on the topic of detention, she reported, "They probably just don't like their teachers. One of my friends says she doesn't like the teacher because the teacher always gives her detention, and so she hates that teacher now." The word

irritated can be interpreted as frustrated as synonyms are associated with the word anger.

Therefore, both of Anne's statements triangulates with various sentiments from other students on this phenomenon.

Research Question Two

RQ2. How do students with disabilities experience and conceive the implementation of Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS)?

Research question two was explored by generating a collective of student participants' conceptions of PBIS implementation, as well as experiences in PBIS inclusion classrooms. The following two categories emerged from this process: (4) Student Misconceptions of PBIS Implementation; and (5) Negative Teacher Behaviors and Low Fidelity of PBIS Implementation. The next sub-sections include a report of findings based on representative statements that explored how participants experience and conceive the implementation of PBIS.

Category Four: Student Misconceptions of PBIS Implementation

When asked about their experiences with and conceptions of the Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) implementation, students with disabilities expressed that they believe it is specifically used for rewards that permitted access to Fresh Air Friday. This event requires them to pay five PBIS rewards, or e-Cash as it may called, to go outside behind the school. This Fresh Air Friday event happens bi-weekly, rewarding students with about twenty to twenty-five minutes to socialize with peers and/or play sports. Primarily, it was discovered that they do not fully understand school-wide expectations, including the PBIS conduct-point system embedded in PBIS Pyramid of Interventions (see Appendix A), which is linked to processes that lead students to exclusionary school discipline. In general, when asked about why PBIS was used

in school, students' responses indicated that they conceive it to be reward system for good behavior.

For instance, when asked if he was familiar with PBIS and why it is being used at his school, Jesus responded, "It is used for everybody to know what it means to follow it and not do bad stuff." Similarly, Jordan conceives PBIS to be a reward system for behaving good. When asked what PBIS means to him, Jordan responded, "It is points that teachers give you if you do something good and you can use those points to go outside or buy paper or pencils from your teachers." Here, we learn that some students are not coming to school with proper supplies such as paper, or pencils, which could be linked to poverty. When asked why it is being used, Jordan disclosed, "I think we use it because like for special events, so we can use those point to go to those events." For Jordan, it appears PBIS is simply points to go to special events. When asked how PBIS is linked to student behavior, Jordan mentioned, "Students that will behave more because they want to go to those events like Fresh Air Friday and all that."

Likewise, when asked why PBIS is being used at the school, Kevin replied, "I feel like it is to reward the good students if they've done something good." Similarly, when Megan was asked to describe PBIS, she responded, "I am not familiar with PBIS, I think it stands for rewards – I just know that." When asked why the school uses PBIS, Megan replied, "Because for kids that have good behavior, they get points, and if they have bad behavior, they get conduct points." Here, it is revealed that Megan knows that there are good points and bad points. Similarly, when Anne was asked what PBIS means to her, she reported, "I don't know what it stands for but for me it means getting rewards for good behavior." When Kyle was asked about why PBIS is being used in the school, he revealed, "I don't know." Similarly, Danny replied to

the same question with “I don’t know,” which reveals some students are not sure about the role or reason for PBIS in their building.

Mariah, in keeping the tradition of being straight-forward and highly descriptive with her responses had more insightful conceptions of PBIS. She responded:

Uh, PBIS...I do not know what it stands for, but I know PBS is where we put like fake money for Fresh Air Friday, dress down, popcorn, and teachers have their own stores, and they’ll say five Tiger Cash for a pencil you can keep, or a copy of a paper...

Mariah’s statement reveals that she has more knowledge of PBIS as it is used in the building. For instance, she agrees that it is a reward system to buy Fresh Air Friday, but she adds additional elements to this phenomenon. For example, the school also provides other items or access to events such as popcorn, teachers’ personal stores, and dress down (there is a dress code student must follow). Also, we see once again that teachers sell pencils, which once again indicates some students do not have supplies with them, which could be as a result of low executive functioning skills, or poverty. Moreover, she says teachers sell copies of paper, which could mean students are losing, or misplacing their work. This indicates that some students need instruction that could help improve their self-regulation, executive functioning, and study skills.

When asked why the school uses PBIS, Mariah responded, “I feel like they use it as a reward system – kind of like some teachers use Class Dojo, I feel like PBIS is our Class Dojo. I would say.” The researcher was intrigued. During analysis, a Google search revealed that Class Dojo is a communication application that teachers can use to share reports between themselves and parents tracking conduct and performance using a feed where photos and videos can be uploaded (ClassDojo, 2020). The researcher then moved on to the next question instead of asking her where and how she learned about Class Dojo. This should have been explored on a deeper level.

Moreover, when Xander was asked to describe PBIS, he said it stood for “Public Service Announcement,” and when asked why it was being used at the school he replied, “You know to tell them to not do it...give to not do bad, or be a criminal” PBIS conceived as a system to reward good behavior was also revealed by Stephen. When asked about why PBIS is used in the building, Stephen reported, “If you do something good you get PBIS rewards. Like picking up trash in the hallway.” Similarly, when asked the about PBIS, Anne described it as “it means getting rewards for good behavior.”

Student Misconceptions of PBIS School-wide Expectations. When asked about school-wide expectations, Jesus responded, “When you come to school you need to be good, and if you’re not, your parents would hate to come to school and pick you up.” Jordan provided procedural insights to PBIS school-wide expectations. For instance, when asked about school-wide expectations, he responded, “like... I don’t remember it...uhm be quiet, stand in a single file line?” Jordan reveals that he is not competent with school-wide expectations, but the little he does inform the researcher indicates the students are apparently required to be quiet and stand in a single file line. Likewise, when Emmanuel was asked to describe school-wide expectations, he reported, “Uhm, to... do our work, respect our teachers, and respect others,” and when asked what the three letter acronym for the school wide expectations stands for, he replied, “Uhm...I think it stands for our dress code I think.”

Additionally, Kevin was also unsure of the acronym for school wide expectations, which are three words that dictate how students should act in specific or common areas around the school – a series of words which represents how students should behave in various settings around the school. Anne provided a deeper understanding of school-wide expectations. When asked, she responded:

Uhm...I think in all honesty; their expectations are stupid because more people aren't going to follow them. Keep your hands and feet to yourself and be quiet when the teacher is talking – stuff we have heard for years. We already know what it is.... Most people just don't follow them.

Anne's representative statement reveals that she has negative attitude towards PBIS. She makes it seem the expectations are not effective because kids already have a basic idea of what is right and wrong. However, when asked what would happen if expectations were taken away, she responded, "It would be bad because without expectations everyone would run wild."

When asked about PBIS, Shelly was not sure about what it was, and she could not explain PBIS school-wide expectations. Similarly, when Xander was asked to describe school-wide expectations, he was not able to explain what each acronym stood for. However, Sheldon had revealed a pretty solid understanding of the expectations. When asked, he replied, "Respect, Excellence, and Dedication – respect your teachers, respect all the staff members, and all the people who work at the school."

A student that revealed he was unsure why PBIS what PBIS school-wide expectations were at the school was Kyle. His response when asked was, "I don't know." The researcher followed up with asking about the acronym for school-wide expectations, and Kevin replied, "I don't listen to Tiger XXX (omitted as an identifier). I've read it before... I've seen it in the hallways, but I don't remember it." However, Danny was able to explain the acronym for school-wide expectations, but when asked if it helps him behave, he replied, "Not really because I don't pay attention." When asked what would help him learn, Danny responded, "Someone that I am familiar with instructing me, or someone I am close to," which indicated the need for more mentors in the building. The researcher created this sentiment as a code called "mentorship," and began searching in transcripts for students that also had inclinations for wanting to learn from

someone they were closer to. Stephen was also able to recall the three words represented by the acronym for school-wide expectations word for word.

This desire for a mentor is also evident in Shelly's response when asked who she would prefer talk to. She replied, "You would be with a person that you trust." The researcher asked, "So, do you have that right now at the school?" She replied, "No."

When she was asked about school-wide expectations, Mariah was able to say all the words in the acronym. The researcher then asked if she thought the school-wide expectations were effective. She once again had a lengthy response:

I think a part of it is... I feel like it needs more, yes... X, X, and X (acronym for school-wide expectations) are things we need, but how is that going to help us in our future? I feel like we are stuck on just now and the present – yes that is a good thing, but they need to be teaching students for their future – how to apply to a different high school, magnet programs, we do half of it, but we need more.

Mariah's statement reveals that she doesn't think school-wide expectations are helping her or her peers with their futures. She demanded to be taught about more real-world knowledge and skills. The researcher, during the interview, thought to himself, this is valuable information and insights.

Student Misconceptions of PBIS Conduct-Point System. A collective of student conceptions surrounding the PBIS conduct-point system reveals that many are not familiar with the PBIS Pyramid of Interventions (see Appendix A). For instance, when asked about PBIS conduct-points, Jesus replied, "It tells you that you're not doing good," and when asked what happens as points increase, he believed students are to be assigned silent lunch after the second point. This either means that one of his teachers is providing silent lunch to their students after they accrue their second conduct-point, or Jesus is just unsure of the process. Jordan once again provided more procedural insights regarding PBIS. When asked what happens when students

receive their first conduct-point, he said, "Warning," and then he proceeded to reveal that he knew exact outcomes for accruing all the points that lead to a referral.

The variances between Jesus' and Jordan's conceptions of PBIS require a deeper analysis. A look at their participant profiles reveals that Jesus has a discipline record of thirty-three incidents; whereas, Jordan only has one. Implications of these disparities should be explored. For instance, perhaps because Jordan has a more solid grasp of the PBIS Pyramid of Interventions, and accordingly, he displays less misbehaviors in the classroom? Or, perhaps, maybe due to having frequent experiences in exclusionary discipline, Jesus has adopted an apathetic perception of PBIS. Furthermore, what is being learned is the conduct-point system is often implemented based on teachers' competency levels and discretion, which could hold major implications surrounding students' variances in knowledge and understanding of PBIS implementation, as well as their individual experiences with school discipline.

Additionally, when Emmanuel was asked to describe what and why PBIS is being used at the school, he reported, "I don't really know." Kevin was also uncertain about the PBIS conduct-point system. When asked to describe what happens after the first point, he was silent. When asked about the second point, he was also silent. After I asked about the third point, he asked, "A call home?" He then expressed that he thought the fourth point accrued would result in ISS, and the fifth point OSS, and six point, he said, "Referral." Danny was also unsure about the PBIS conduct-point system, and replied "I don't remember," when he was asked.

When asked what conduct points are, Megan said, "Conduct points are something if you do something bad and then get one if you be bad." She was then asked what happens after the first point, and she replied, "You get a call home," which is not the procedural process of PBIS Pyramid of Interventions. In response to what happens after the second point, she disclosed,

“Detention,” and after the third point, “You get ISS.” Megan holds misconceptions of the PBIS conduct-point system, which could be a result of her teachers implementing PBIS Pyramid of Interventions incorrectly, or she was never learned it properly when it was taught to her.

When Anne was asked to describe the conduct-point process, she reported that after the first point students should get their points taken away. When asked about the second conduct point, she replied, “silent lunch,” which reveals she held misconceptions about the PBIS Pyramid of Interventions. On the role of conduct-points, Shelly explained that the second point was given to students to assign them detention, which revealed she held misconceptions of the conduct-point system. When asked how to improve PBIS, she responded, “I don’t know what it is for... I don’t pay attention.” Similarly, when asked about what PBIS means, Sheldon replied, “I don’t know... Public School Reward System?” Which reveals that most of students cannot tell you what the acronym stands for. And, when asked why it is being used, he stated, “To reward the kids are doing and not being disrespectful and respecting the rules.”

In terms of the different levels of consequences for PBIS Pyramid of Interventions, Kyle described it as, “Points in Synergy like there’s different levels, 1st is a warning, 2nd one is a warning, 3rd is detention, 4th is a call home, and 5th is ISS or something,” which reveals that he holds misconceptions of the correct order of consequences for misbehaving in the classroom. Mariah described the conduct-system as, “Uhm, its like a warning? Just like here’s a conduct point, you need to calm down, or you’re going to get more.” When asked about the second point, she replied, “2nd point is another warning... If I’m not mistaken, it is either 3rd is uh detention, and 4th is call home, I’m not sure what the 2nd one is...” What about the fifth one, asked the researcher. She replied, “Uh... think that is a referral?” There is obviously some confusion here,

and so Mariah also holds misconceptions of the conduct-point system. The second point is a warning and the third point is a call home and not detention.

Xander explained that after the first point, “usually they get a warning.” When asked about the second point, he replied, “Uhm I think to call home?” Third? “Silent lunch.” Fourth? “Detention, obviously.” Fifth? “In-school suspension.” Here, we learn Xander is another student that believes silent lunch is a part of the PBIS Pyramid of Interventions, which it is not. Stephen described the conduct-point system as something teachers use when students are “acting up.” He said, “give them a warning or two – go outside if they’re disruptive.” When asked about the points progression after the 3rd progression, he said, “Silent lunch,” which also reveals another student believed that silent lunch is a part of the PBIS Pyramid of Interventions, which it is not.

Student Conceptions of PBIS Rewards. In terms of PBIS rewards, many qualitative variances in the way students conceive rewards were collected. For example, Jesus described PBIS rewards as, “If you behave you get something good – like come on time to class you get a prize,” which reveals that an extrinsic urgency is presented to this student for him come to class on time. Jordan once again provides deeper insights to the procedural aspects of PBIS. For instance, when asked about PBIS rewards, he described, “The PBIS system is an app that students use to check their points online and teachers are the ones that put those points in.”

Another student also viewed PBIS rewards as avenue to go outside. He explained the PBIS reward system as, “Extracurricular activities outside from learning and from people who get points for doing good in their class.” His response indicates that students receive rewards for learning in class and doing a good job, another affirms the assertion that PBIS appears to be placing an extrinsic urgency on learning and behaving good in class. Similarly, Sheldon

explained the reward system is to “reward kids with activities like Fresh Air Friday so they can buy their way outside. It is online cash you get for being good and respectful.”

Similarly, when asked about PBIS rewards, Shelly said, “They give us points to buy things.” Kevin held a more descriptive response when replied, “The reward system has things like Fresh Air Friday.” When asked about PBIS rewards, Danny replied, “I don’t know much about it.” Xander described the PBIS reward system as “a program that lets teacher to uhm have the ability to give rewards.” The researcher followed up with, “What can students use rewards for?” He replied, “A break from their work.” Stephen explained the PBIS reward system as something that helps students do things. He reported, “It helps us do certain things, buy things at the shore, go to Fresh Air Friday, buy popcorn with PBIS rewards – lunch on the lawn – stuff like that.” Lunch on the lawn is where students spend about three PBIS reward points to buy twenty-minute to eat and socialize outside with peers during their lunch time.

Category Five: Negative Teacher Behaviors and Low Fidelity of PBIS Implementation

Collectively, students produced visual representations and quotes that suggest negative teacher behaviors and low fidelity of PBIS implementation within inclusion classrooms. Some students perceive teachers that frequently write referrals as monsters, or the devil. Moreover, students reported inconsistent disbursement of PBIS rewards to within inclusion classrooms because some teachers have been not been rewarding students with PBIS rewards/e-cash for displaying positive behaviors in the classroom. Students also identified negative teacher behaviors in the classroom such as yelling and belittling students, both of which are antithesis to creating positive learning environments.

Improper Teacher Implementation of PBIS Pyramid of Interventions. Teachers are expected to abide by the PBIS conduct-point system when responding to misbehaviors in the

classroom. These protocols are embedded in the PBIS Pyramid of Interventions (see Appendix A). However, based on students' representative statements, this has not been a consistent practice. According to a collective of student experience surrounding teacher implementation of PBIS response to misbehaviors, some teachers are skipping this practice. It is important to mention that there are variances within the qualitative data surrounding this phenomenon. For instance, when Jesus was asked if teachers followed the point system regularly, he replied, "sometimes not all the time." The researcher then asked, "Do your teachers go through all the points before you go to ISS," and Jesus responded, "Yes." Matthew also affirmed that most his teachers implement the PBIS conduct-point system correctly; however, he wasn't sure what happens after students are provided with a second conduct point.

Similarly, Stephen agreed with Jesus' sentiments when asked, "Do all teachers use the point system the right way?" Stephen reported, "That I know of yes – most teachers use it – they give you a warning, and then again if you do the same thing." It is also important to note that Stephen, like Matthew, held misconceptions of the conduct-point system. For example, after the 3rd infraction point he believed students are to get silent lunch, which is not even a PBIS intervention.

He also revealed an experience where silent lunch was provided as a group punishment, and he mentioned no use of warnings or conduct-points provided by the teacher. The researcher asked, "Can you share with me a situation where teacher sees you or other students engage in negative behaviors in the classroom?" He mentioned, "When we were talking during announcements last week, we got silent lunch for that." The researcher then asked, "How does silent lunch make you feel?" Jesus replied, "no type of way." The researcher followed up with

asking how silent lunch makes other students feel, and he said, “Upset because they feel like they didn’t deserve silent lunch – they didn’t do nothing wrong.”

Adversely, many students have held a different experience related to teachers’ practice with the PBIS Pyramid of Interventions. For instance, when Jordan was asked if teacher’s follow the conduct-point system correctly, he replied, “Not really – third point is a conduct point.” Next, the researcher asked Jordan about silent lunch, and he said, “That happens when teachers don’t want to give you a conduct point, but they want to give you a consequence, so they give you silent lunch, so you stay quiet when you eat in front of the teachers.” Here, it is revealed that some teachers may avoid to give conduct points because they don’t want to provide punitive punishment to the student; however, they do turn to silent lunch, which has shown to have a negative influence on students with associations to cycles of frustration-aggression. Perhaps, teachers do not understand how to fully implement PBIS Pyramid of Interventions? It would be wise to conduct a study with teachers to understand their perceptions of self while implementing PBIS on a classroom level.

Likewise, Emmanuel provides an affirmation to the assertion that teachers are not following the PBIS Pyramid of Interventions conduct-point progression with fidelity. When asked if teachers practice giving out PBIS rewards regularly, he responded, “Not that I can think of... some don’t give points, they give silent lunch, or detention.”

Anne also provides insights to how some teacher’s may not be implementing PBIS with fidelity. When asked how the school can improve student behaviors, Anne replied:

I mean, some kids just don’t learn. The school tries all they can, but sometimes they can you check with the teachers to make sure they’re taking the proper steps. Some of them just skip over everything; Like, “Oh, you get a call home!” It is a bit frustrating, but they can’t really change it.

Anne has revealed that some teachers “skip over everything,” and students get a call home, which means they haven’t been provided with the first two conduct points as warnings. She also mentions that this phenomenon is a frustrating event in students’ lives, which affirms the notion that cycles of frustration-aggression are linked to student experiences with punitive discipline. Anne also goes on to say that administrators should check on teachers to see if they’re implementing PBIS correctly. For instance, she said, “I mean ask a student who gets calls home, or detentions frequently – are the teachers’ taking the steps? Because some of them just give kids silent lunch immediately.”

When asked why some students behave in some teachers’ classes, but not others, Shelly responded, “They give them warning and chances – some teachers write them up right away,” which affirms the notion that some teachers are not implementing PBIS Pyramid Interventions with high levels of fidelity.

Inconsistent and Improper Disbursement of PBIS Rewards. There is also evidence that teachers are not disbursing PBIS rewards to students on a consistent basis, or perhaps students are not displaying positive behaviors? According to Nancy only half her teachers give out PBIS rewards regularly. When asked, “Do teachers give out a lot of Tiger cash,” which is the same as PBIS rewards or e-Cash, Anne replied, “I would say third and fourth only. If she sees you do your warm-up you get it. I would say half of them give it.” To affirm to this assertion that teachers are not rewarding students, when asked if teachers regularly give out PBIS rewards, Shelly responded, “No.”

Similarly, when asked the same question, Megan also said, “No.” Mariah, also reported the same as Shelly and Megan. She said, “No, depends on the teacher” when asked about how teachers are rewarding students with PBIS e-Cash. Sheldon also revealed that teachers are not

disbursing PBIS rewards to students. His response when asked, “Not really, only to like two or three people – just a couple.” Likewise, when asked about teachers’ habits with providing PBIS rewards, Emmanuel informed, “They don’t give a lot of PBIS cash – some does, but others don’t really give out points.”

Furthermore, when Anne was asked how some teachers reward students, she provided some profound insight. “Most people do it just for Fresh Air Friday.” This could mean some teachers in the building may unwarrantedly be rewarding students just because its Fresh Air Friday. Therefore, students may internalize that behavior as, I will get to go outside even if I don’t display positive behaviors throughout the week. Serving as a source for triangulation, PBIS Rewards Implementations Trends (see Appendix P) affirms that teachers are not rewarding students with PBIS rewards consistently. The graphical representation reveals a drop in the amounts of points awarded to students in the last few months.

Negative Teacher Behaviors. Student representative statements and visual representations reveal that some teachers behave negatively towards their students such as yelling and belittling comments. Moreover, it appears the act of writing referrals is perceived as a negative behavior by a collective of students with disabilities in the current study (i.e., punitive threat). Moreover, visual representations of teachers that frequently write referrals overwhelmingly indicated that students view some of these teachers as devils or monsters, which reveals they have negative experiences with teachers that rely on punitive discipline. A few signs of empathy towards teachers from students were also noted.

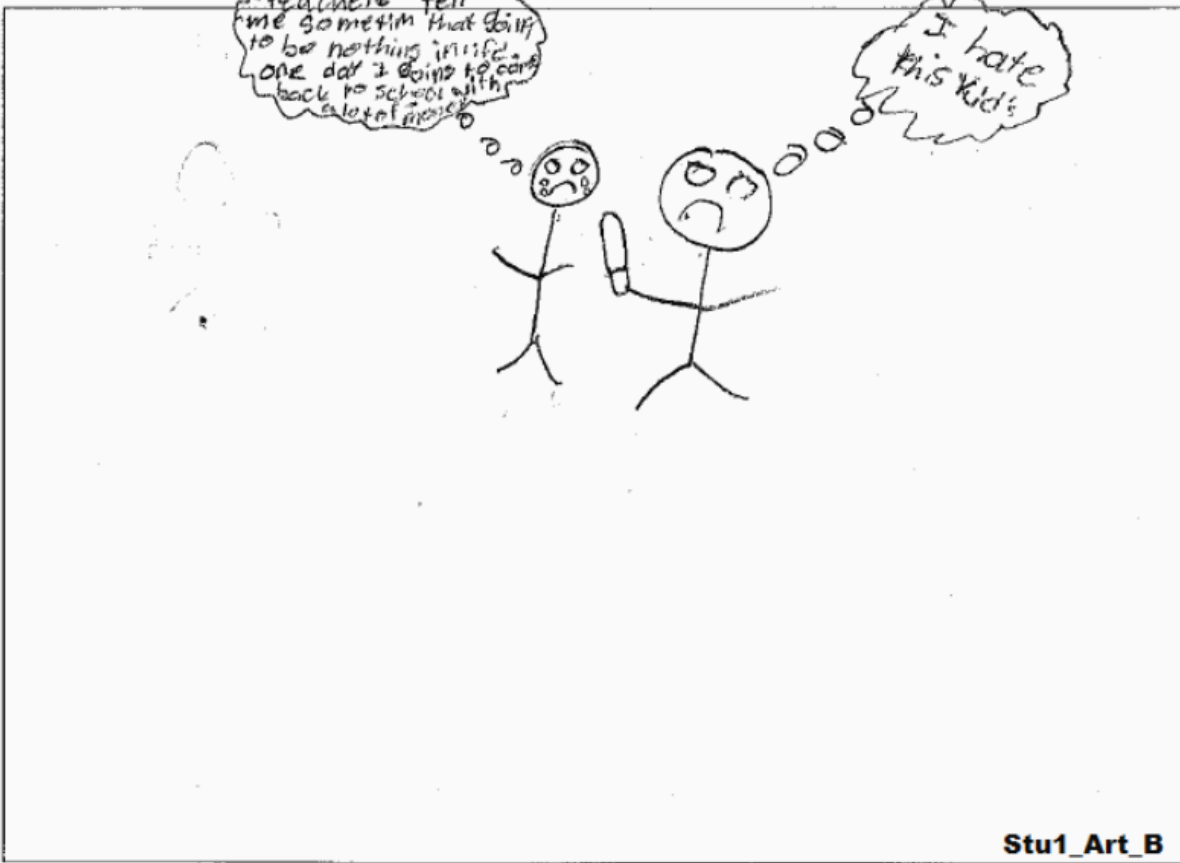
The Teacher is Yelling at and Belittling Students. Embedded within speech bubbles in Jesus’ visual representation, a teacher clearly displayed negative behaviors. In his drawing, a student is seen saying the following: “Teacher tell me sometime that I am going to be nothing in

life. One day I am going to come back to school with a lot of money." The teacher is also seen expressing that he/she hates the child (see below).

Figure 4.26

Jesus' Metaphorical Drawing of Teachers that Frequently Write Referrals.

Prompt 2: Draw a metaphor for how you see or view teachers that frequently write disciplinary referrals that lead you, or other students to ISS/OSS/Expulsion.



Describe and explain the metaphor you drew for Prompt 2 by writing a brief summary:

teachers get mad when you do stuff bad cause they got to take some their time to give you iss, but some time teachers be giving kid's iss for nothing, in MY drawing teachers be telling me that I going to be nothing life that why I am going to love everyone worked,

In Jesus' metaphorical drawing of teachers that frequently write referrals, we can see that he has perceived a teacher telling him we will never become anything in his life, which is a belittling comment (see Figure 4.26, p. 174). In his description, he wrote:

teachers get mad when you do stuff bad cause they got to take some their time to give you iss, but some time teachers be giving kids iss for nothing in my drawing teachers be telling me that I going to be nothing life that why im going to pove everyone worred (prove everyone wrong)

Jesus has revealed that teachers are mad because referrals take time for them to process. He's also expressed once again that teachers may have told him he is going to be nothing in life. In terms of teachers yelling, Matthew revealed that teachers struggle to get students attention. He reported, "They say pay attention." How do they say that? "In a yelling voice because the kids are talking – they don't hear the teacher, and then she repeats it, and if they still don't listen, she like yells it out."

Emmanuel describes what the teacher is doing at the end of the day. He reported, "Oh like uh in 7th period it is very – the teacher is always trying to calm the students, but their attempts are falsely – they don't work at all – the only way to calm them down is to yell – make their voice loud." When asked if teachers should have yell to control the classroom, he responded, "No." Likewise, Megan mentioned teachers must yell to get students to be quiet. The researcher asked, "Why do they have to yell?" She responded, "Because people can't hear them when they are talking."

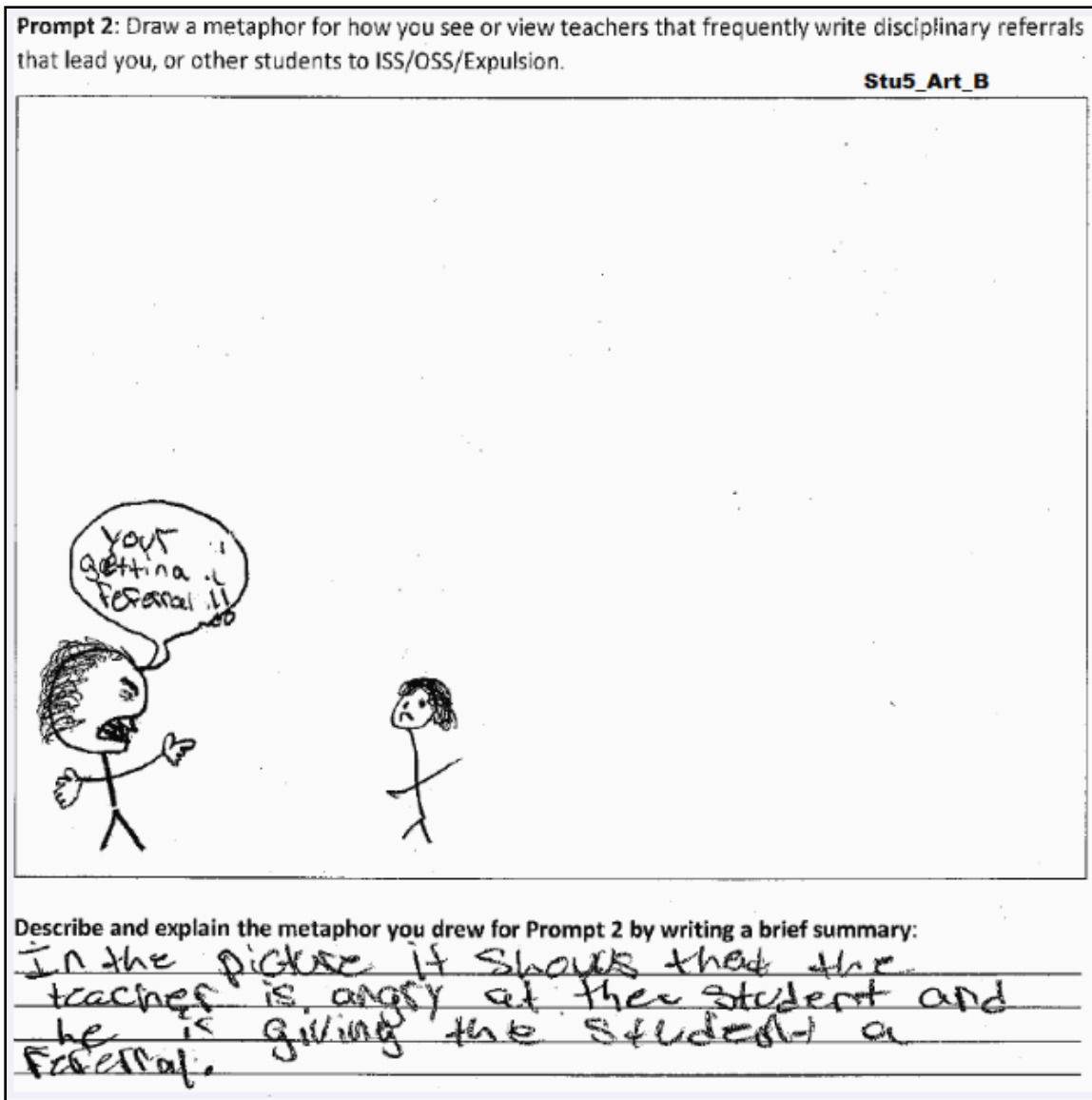
Similarly, when asked what teachers do that students like to be around, Sheldon disclosed, "When they are disrespected, they don't yell at the students – they are calm and don't get mad easily." What else can teachers be doing to help students learn and behave? "Not get mad when they don't get their way." The researcher asked what the teacher is doing when students first walk in. He mentioned, "Trying to teach – talking about behavior, and sometimes

they yell.” How do you think yelling makes the teacher feel? “Uncomfortable – because they yell at the students being disrespectful, and the students stop.”

Matthew’s visual representation reveals a teacher yelling at a student:

Figure 4.27

Matthew’s Metaphorical Drawing of Teachers that Frequently Write Disciplinary Referrals



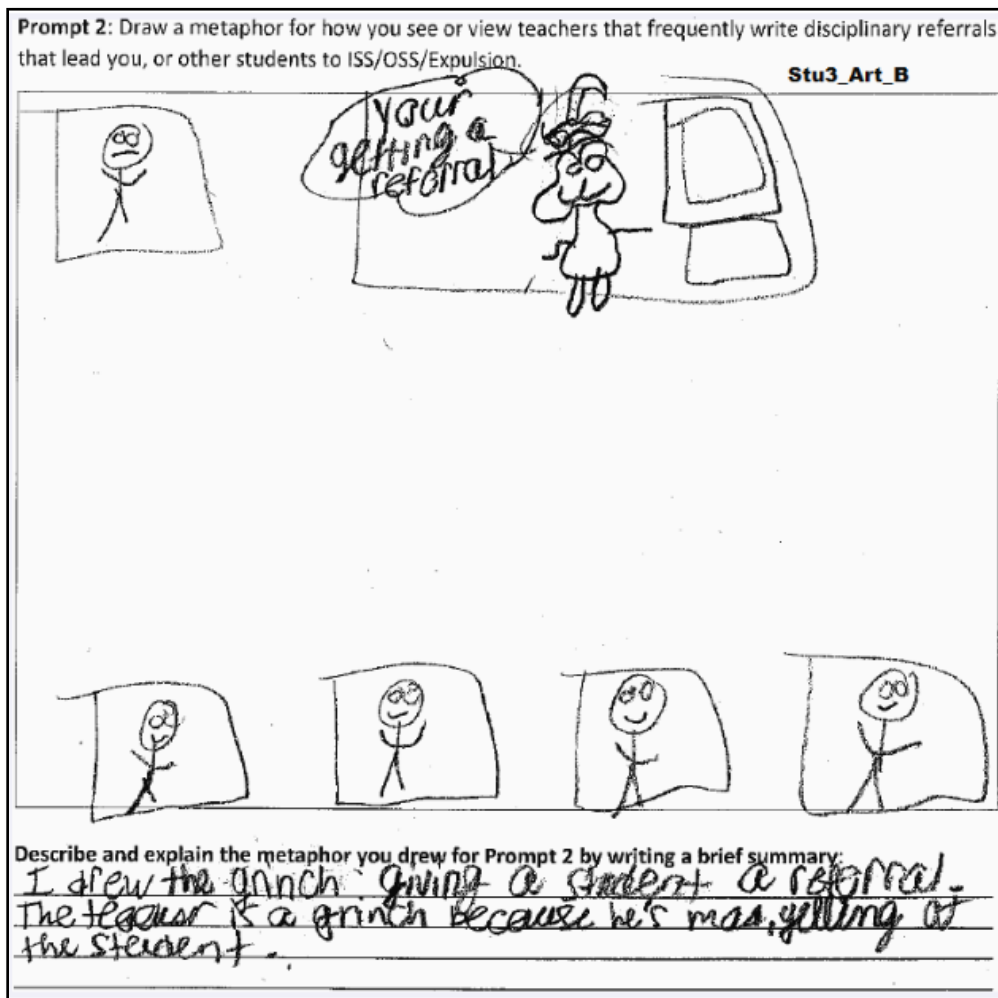
Serving as a data source for triangulation, Matthew’s visual representation depicts a teacher that is yelling the speech bubble (see above). He drew the teacher yelling, “Your getting

a referral!!” This can be considered a punitive threat. The teacher also appeared to have sharp fangs, which indicated this visual representation should be coded at teacher as devil or monster.

In another visual representation of teachers that frequently write referrals, Danny drew the teacher as the Grinch, a green monster-like creature from a Christmas cartoon (see below).

Figure 4.28

Danny’s Metaphorical Drawing of Teachers that Frequently Write Disciplinary Referrals



In Danny’s drawing we see four kids smiling, and the student next to the teacher as Grinch is not smiling. In the speech bubble it reads, “Your getting a referral.” In the description, Danny wrote, “I drew the grinch giving a student a referral. The teacher is a grinch because he’s

mad, yelling at the student. This visual representation serves as another data source to affirm the teacher is yelling in the classroom, and it reveals another incident, or event of a punitive threat.

When asked why some students behave for some teachers and not others, Jordan replied, “Some classes stress that teacher out.” What do those teachers do differently? He indicated:

They act nice to the class that is more quiet and give them more freedom and the students that don’t do their work and just talk the teacher gets mad and starts screaming at them that they should sit down and do their work

Jordan’s statement reveals that teachers may display positive behaviors for classes with quiet students, but when teachers get mad, they start screaming at their students. Negative teacher behaviors were also indicated by Stephen. When asked, “Do teachers respond more to positive behaviors or negative,” he replied, “negative.” In terms of triangulating classroom observations with student affirmations, the researcher witnessed a teacher yelling in an 8th grade math classroom:

Student was talking during instruction in Math, and the teacher began yelling at the student, “If you don’t want to do math! Put your head down because I am tired of your attitude! If I must redirect you one more time, you’re in trouble! Try it, I dare you! Don’t get it twisted” (Inclusion Classroom Observation 5; see Appendix O).

During this incident, the teacher did not implement PBIS Pyramid of Interventions. In another observation, the researcher observed the English Language Arts teacher yelling in her 8th grade inclusion classroom. While trying to get students to quiet down during the activator/warmup segment of class, the following was observed: “Finally, after about five minutes into the class, the teacher stood up and yelled, “Alright! Let’s get started – everyone into your assigned seats!” (Inclusion Classroom Observation 4; see Appendix O)

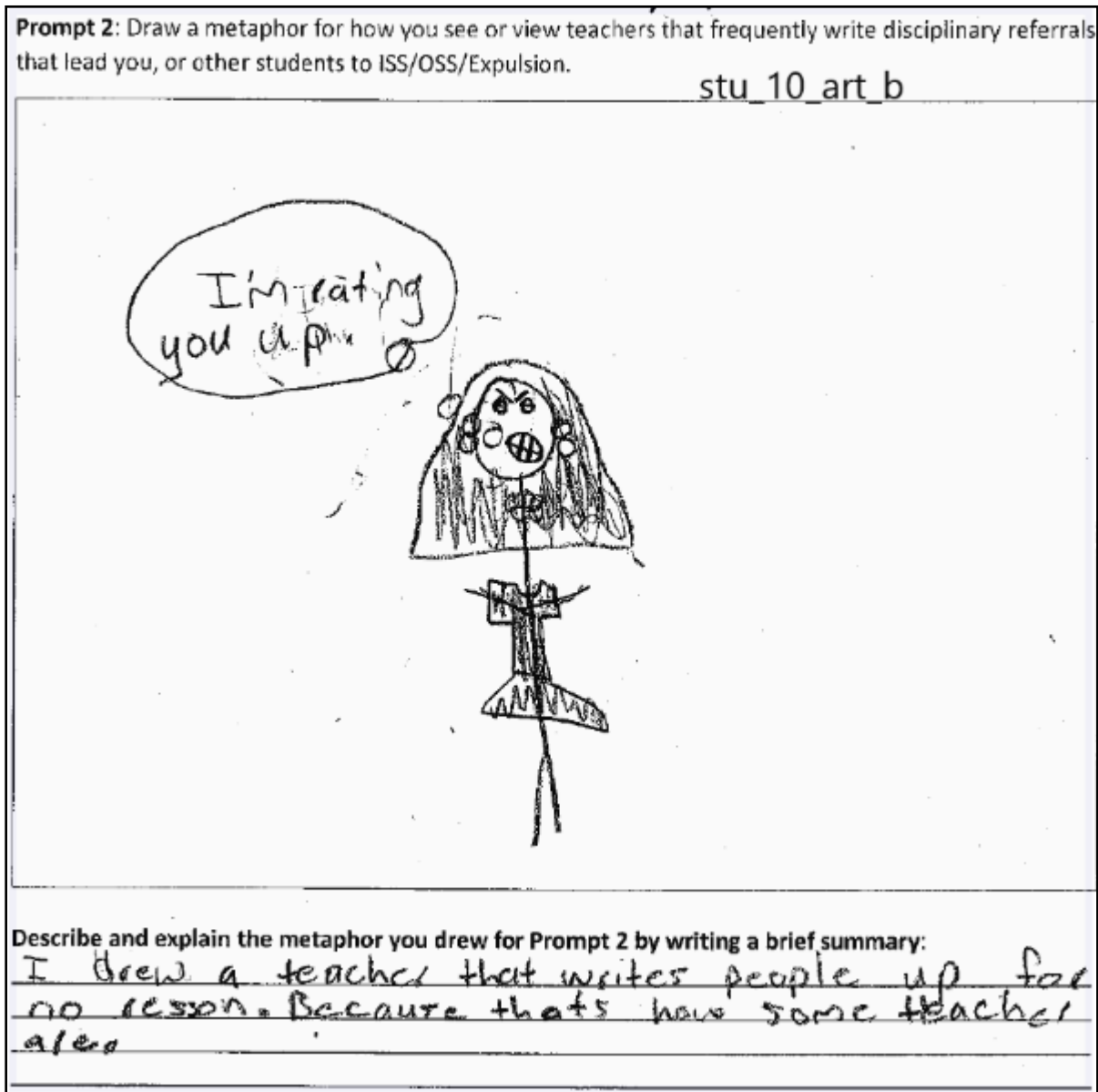
Negative Perceptions of Teachers that Frequently Write Referrals. When asked to describe how she views teachers that frequently write referrals, Mariah replied:

I feel like if that if you're going to continuously write up a student, it should be for a good reason, and so whenever I see a teacher go to that for their first option, or continuously do it, it makes me feel like they are an unkind teacher, very harsh, or very strict.

Mariah's representative statement indicates that some teachers rely on referrals as their first option before they try any other approach to deal with misbehavior. This behavior, from Mariah's perspective, results in a teacher becoming unkind in the eyes of their students. This notion that teachers write students up for no reason is affirmed by Megan. In her visual representation, she wrote, "I drew a teacher that writes people up for no reason. Because that's how some teachers are" (see Figure 4.29, p. 180).

Figure 4.29

Megan's Metaphorical Drawing of Teachers that Frequently Write Disciplinary Referrals



Note. The speech bubble in this photo says, “I’m eating you up,” but it could also mean, “I am writing you up,” or perhaps being written up is like getting eaten up?

Similarly, Kyle affirmed the notion that teachers may be writing students up unwarranted. For example, in his visual representation (see Figure 4.30, p. 181), his description reads, “I think

the teacher are just childish and kids do the same thing all the time and make noise and making dumb excuses that make no sense some teachers write referrals for no reason.” This notion is also affirmed in Emmanuel’s interview. When asked about what “mean” looks like based on a previous response, he replied, “The try to find an excuse to write you up” Why? “I guess some teachers doesn’t like other students.”

Figure 4.30

Kyle’s Metaphorical Drawing of Teachers That Frequently Write Disciplinary Referrals



In this visual representation, Kyle drew a teacher as a child because he views teachers that frequently write referrals as “childish.” Similarly, to expound upon Kyle and Emmanuel’s perception that teachers write students up without reason is noted in Shelly’s interview. When

asked how experiencing ISS or OSS makes feel towards her teacher, she responded, “Honestly, there is a teacher here, and if they don’t like you, they can just say she talks a lot or doesn’t pay attention, and they’ll try and get you in ISS.”


In another visual representation, Mariah has drawn negative teacher behaviors. For instance, in the speech bubble coming a teacher with devil horns, it states, “I hate kids, I don’t listen to them.”

Figure 4.31

Mariah’s Metaphorical Drawing of Teachers that Frequently Write Disciplinary Referrals

Prompt 2: Draw a metaphor for how you see or view teachers that frequently write disciplinary referrals that lead you, or other students to ISS/OSS/Expulsion.

Stu2_Art_B



The drawing depicts a teacher with devil horns, a headband, and a wide, toothy grin. A speech bubble next to the teacher contains the text: "I hate kids, I don't listen to them".

Describe and explain the metaphor you drew for Prompt 2 by writing a brief summary:

A mean teacher who never listens, like they are trapped in a bubble where they can only hear themselves. It's like an dictatorship.

Mariah's visual representation reveals the teacher as a devil, or monster. She drew a teacher with sharp teeth that and horns, which could be perceived as threatening – meaning, teachers that write frequent referrals may be a threat to some students. Another metaphorical drawing, which had the words, “I hate this kid” in a teacher's speech bubble was Jesus'. This visual representation also indicates negative teacher behavior, which is included the previous sub-section (Jesus' metaphorical drawing of teachers that frequently write disciplinary referrals; see Figure 4.26, p. 174).

Anne has different perceptions of negative teacher behaviors. When asked to describe “bad” teachers, which was introduced by her in a previous response, she reported, “...if you do something wrong, they instantly get a referral or silent lunch. Because... we are kids, give us a second to speak!” She then added, “

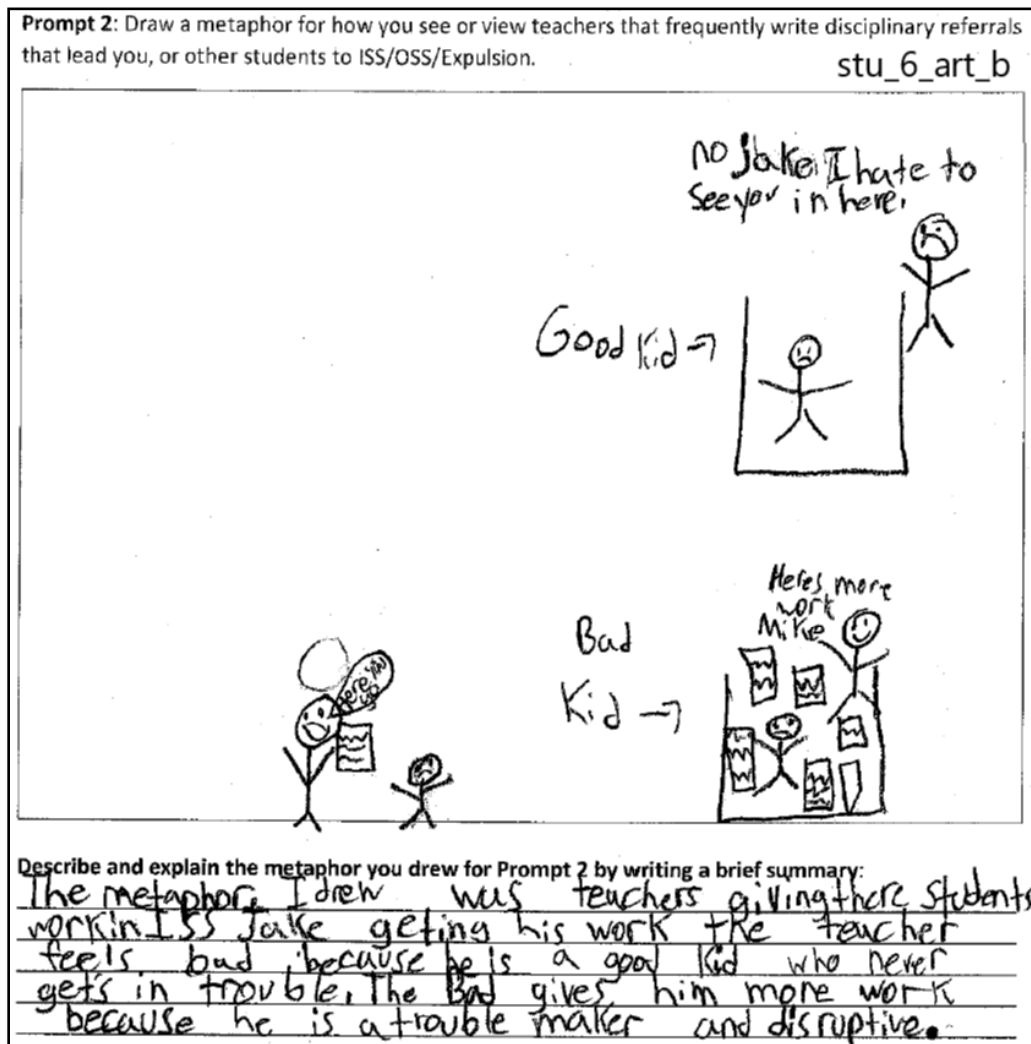
some teachers cannot handle the noise, but if you're a teacher and you work with kids and you don't expect noise – doesn't even make sense. And so, I think a bad teacher is a teacher who doesn't like kids state of their opinion – doesn't hear them out. For example, a kid besides them is yelling I guess, and the teacher blames the other kid, and doesn't give the other kid to explain and instantly gives him silent lunch. That is what I call a bad teacher.

Anne's statement reveals that she believes teachers should be able to tolerate noise in their classrooms. She also indicates negative teacher behaviors in the form of punishing the wrong student for yelling in class, which could lead to mistrust and cycles of frustration-aggression in some students.

Another negative behavior that should be mentioned was found in Stephen's visual representation of teachers that frequently write disciplinary referrals (see Figure 4.32, p. 184).

Figure 4.32

Stephen's Metaphorical Drawing of Teachers that Frequently Write Referrals



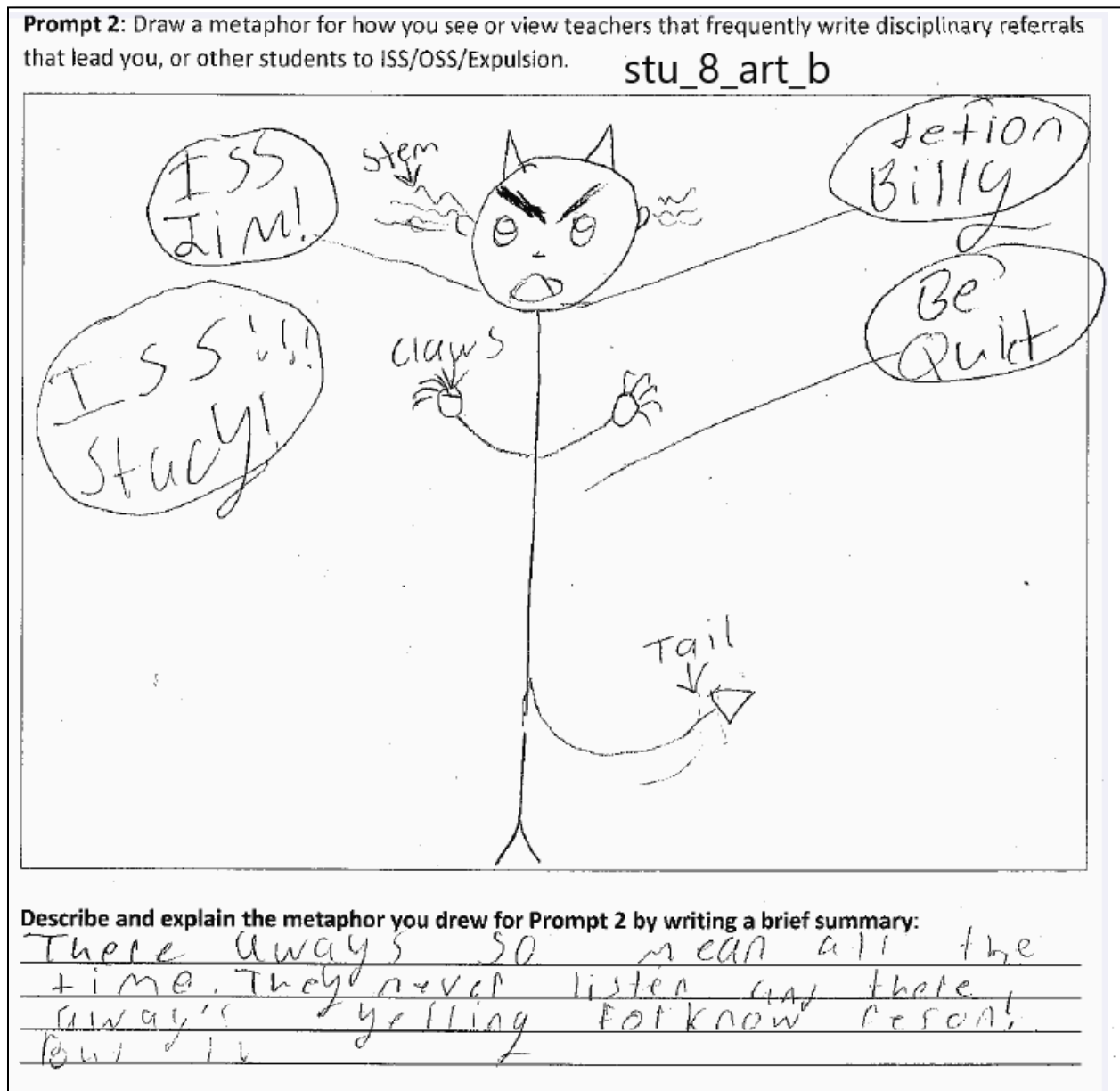
In Figure 4.32, Stephen depicted a teacher visiting ISS and giving one student more work because she viewed him as a “bad kid,” and another student who was in ISS for the first time with less work. These types of behavior could lead students to feel resentful towards some teachers.

Teachers Seen as a Devil or /Monster. A collective of student visual representations, which requested students to draw metaphors for teachers that frequently write referrals resulted

in representing teachers as devils and/or monsters. For example, in Anne's visual representation she drew the following image:

Figure 4.33

Anne's Metaphorical Drawing of Teachers that Frequently Write Referrals



In this visual representation, Anne drew a teacher with horns, a tail, claws, and what should probably read “steam” to express frustration, rage, or anger coming from the head. The

horns could represent the devil, which is seen in other students' visual representations of teachers that overly engage in exclusionary discipline, as well. Speech bubbles indicate the following: "ISS Jim!," "ISS Study!!!," "Detion (detention) Billy," and "Be Quiet." Her description reads, "There always so mean all the time. They never listen and there always yelling for know reson But it". Here, Anne has expressed that teachers don't listen (negative behavior) and they're yelling (negative behavior). Similarly, Nancy draw her teacher as a lion, which could be interpreted as a monster. Her visual representation is provided (see below).

Figure 4.34

Nancy's Metaphorical Drawing of Teachers That Frequently Write Disciplinary Referrals

Prompt 2: Draw a metaphor for how you see or view teachers that frequently write disciplinary referrals that lead you, or other students to ISS/OSS/Expulsion.

stu_15_art_b

Describe and explain the metaphor you drew for Prompt 2 by writing a brief summary:

I'm a lion because if someone do something stupid towards the lion there's will probably eat you and if you do something stupid towards teacher that the teacher does not like she will probably write you up and you don't like get eaten by a lion.

In this visual representation, Nancy drew her teacher as a lion (see Figure 4.34, p. 186). The drawing reveals one kid in the center thinking “I went too far,” and a speech bubble that says, “She’s ugly I don’t care what u say.” One student is above screaming “ahhh.” Another figure on the left is saying, “Imma __ write up!”

The description reads:

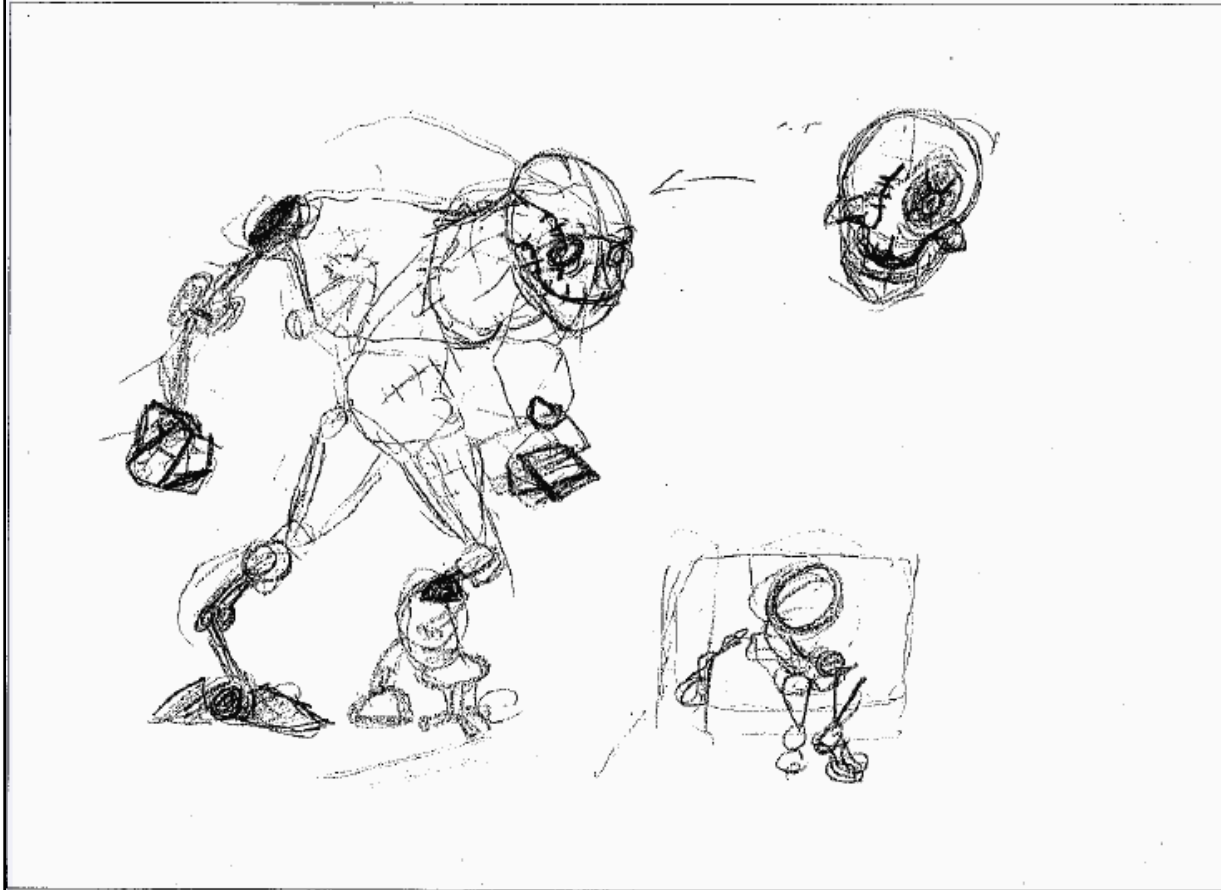
I pick an lion because if sometone do something toward the lion thers’ will probably eat you and if you do something stupid towards teacher that the teacher doesn’t like she will probably write you up and you don’t like get eaten by an lion.

Nancy’s statement clarifies that she viewed teachers that frequently write referrals as a lion, and an interpretation would reveal that for her getting a referral by a teacher is the same as getting eaten by a lion. Once again, we see an affirmation for teachers that write frequent referrals as a threat, which could further explain cycles of frustration-aggression in students with disabilities that experience exclusionary discipline.

Likewise, a teacher as a monster was drawn by Xander in his visual representation (see Figure 4.35, p. 188).

Figure 4.35*Xander's Metaphorical Drawing of Teachers That Frequently Write Disciplinary Referrals*

Prompt 2: Draw a metaphor for how you see or view teachers that frequently write disciplinary referrals that lead you, or other students to ISS/OSS/Expulsion.

Stu4_Art_B

Describe and explain the metaphor you drew for Prompt 2 by writing a brief summary:

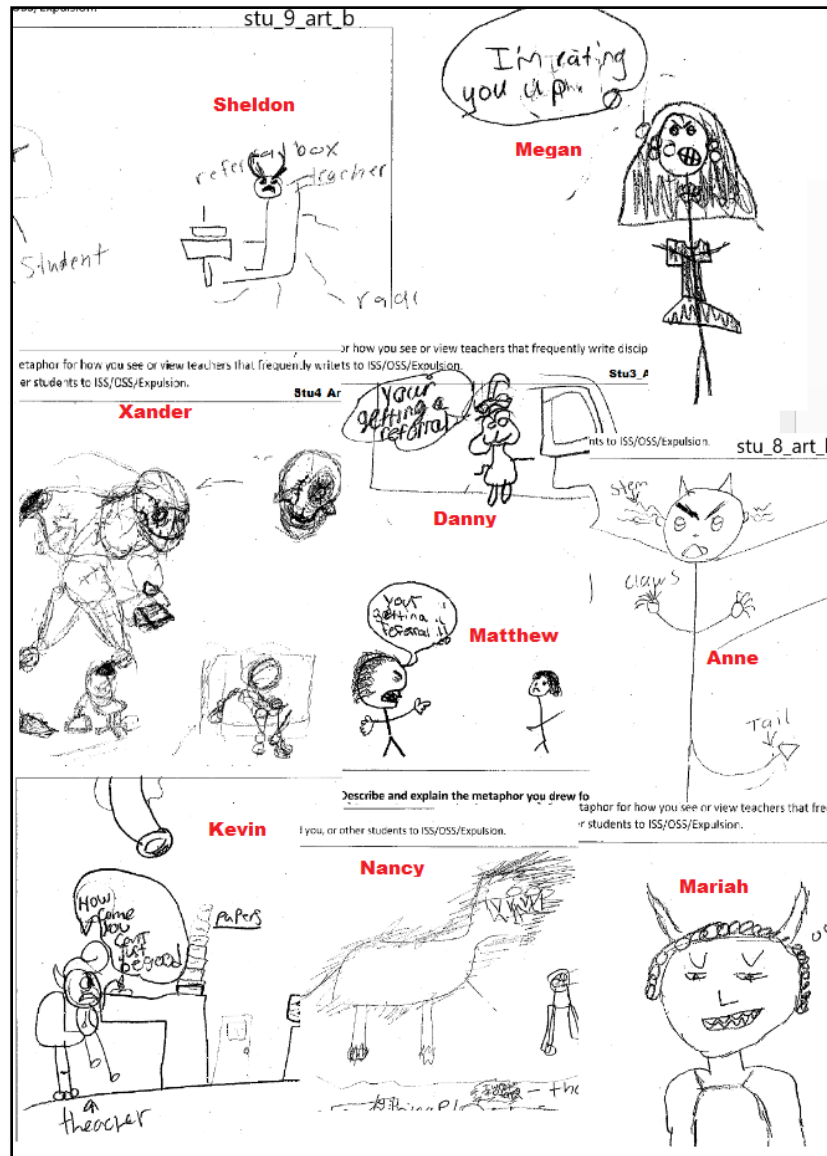
In this metaphor, the whole of some teacher writing up a student is like some horror movie scene, with this big huge monster.

In Xander's visual representation (above), a skull creature, or devil like figure, holding what could be interpreted as a referral has been drawn. His description reads: "In this metaphor the whole of some teacher writing up a student is like some horror movie scene with this big

huge monster.” This drawing also serves as a triangulation source to affirm the assertion that some students view teachers that write referrals as a devil or monster, which could be associated as someone that is a threat (see below).

Figure 4.36

A Collage of Visual Representations of Teachers as a Devil or Monster



A total of nine student drawings can serve as triangulated data sources to affirm the notion that teachers that write disciplinary referrals are perceived as devils or monsters that can

be a threat to the child, which may also cause students to experience cycles of frustration-aggression linked to exclusionary discipline. The collage of teachers as devils or monsters includes visual representations from the following students: (1) Mariah; (2) Anne; (3) Matthew; (4) Nancy; (5) Danny, (6) Kevin; (7) Megan; (8) Sheldon; and (9) Xander (see Figure 4.36, p. 189).

Research Question Three

RQ3. In what ways can voices of students with disabilities help transform school discipline and PBIS implementation to meet their desired learning environments?

While exploring representative statements associated with student suggestions for school improvement, it became clear that students had internal desires that were being exposed while asking them about their experiences and conceptions surrounding school discipline and PBIS implementation. As a result, the following two categories emerged: (6) The Students Desire Calmness, Freedom and Play, and Dialogue for Reconciliation; (7) Student Suggestions for School Improvement.

Category Six: The Students Desire Calmness, Freedom and Play, and Dialogue for Reconciliation

A collective of student voices indicated desires for calm learning environments. For instance, when asked how he would make ISS a better learning environment, Xander responded, “Uhm... maybe like perhaps ISS would require the students to calm – make more positive and not aggressive – not trying to make them rebels you know...” Here we see an affirmation to the notion that experiences in exclusionary discipline are associated with cycles of frustration-aggression. Additionally, Xander advises that the ISS room be a place where students can learn to be calm, which may indicate a need for practices rooted in mindfulness training.

Desires for Calmness. Another indication that the school is not a calm environment is expressed when Xander explains what 7th period is like for him at the end of the day. He said, "...the teacher will always try to calm the students, but their attempts are falsely – they don't work at all – the only way to calm them down is to yell."

Likewise, when asked what teachers could do to better help her focus and start learning in the beginning of class, Mariah replied:

Get everybody to quiet down, calm down – make it not absolutely quiet because some people I know, even like me sometimes, I work well when I hear someone talking – I have to a little noise around me to keep working.

Mariah's statement affirms the notion students desire calm learning environments. She would like the classroom to quiet down, but not be completely silent.

When asked what the teacher is doing at the end of the day, Emmanuel mentioned, "Trying to get us to calm down and do our work at the end of the day." He then added that his ideal classroom would be "a quiet classroom – less people get in trouble for horse playing." These representative statements from Emmanuel reaffirm student desires for calm learning environments, which may help reduce discipline problems such as "horse playing" in the classroom.

Similarly, when asked what the teacher is doing in class at the end of the day, Kevin indicated the teacher is trying to get students to be quiet. He explained that teachers can get a little mad and use "high" tones. When asked what voice he preferred, he responded, "Normal voice, but if no one wants to listen, they can raise their town a little but so others can hear them." This could mean that he's grown accustomed to teachers yelling, or perhaps that is something he experiences outside of school. In terms of Kevin's ideal classroom, he described it as such:

When you get in class everyone is seated working on homework, or waiting for the teacher, and once class starts, everyone is quiet, paying attention to the teacher and not

doing anything else, answering questions, and after that, they are working when they are assigned to work, and at the end of class they get.

Kevin then explained this can be accomplished if teachers give an example of how to do that in class so they can do the right think, which is line with Vygotsky's Socio-Cultural Theory (Vygotsky, 1978), and from the researcher's experience as a graduate research assistant, can be accomplished by implementing High-Leveage Practices (HLP).

In another incident, Anne explained her preferene for teachers who talk about how to correct misbehaviors. She explained:

they usually take the proper steps, like conduct point – warning, and if that doesn't work you get kicked out of class, but they don't do it in a mean way – they don't yell at you and like call you out, or do the most, they're just like, "Okay, I warned you a few times now, please go to another classroom." That's a good teacher!

Anne's statement reveals that some teachers who follow the PBIS Pyramid of Interventions are seen as good teachers when they don't do it in a "mean" way. For example, Anne would rather have teachers that do not yell, or "call you out," which is a negative and belittling behavior. She also provides what that looks like, which could mean a teacher at the school is doing their job with an Ethic of Care (Noddings, 1986).

When Stephen was asked to describe what he wants his ideal classroom to look like and send like when he walks in, he explained, "Silent, quiet, everybody doing their work and not talking to their neighbor." As an affirmation to students' desires for calm environments, Kyle revealed the following classroom. "Kids quiet I guess, kids being quiet and trying to learn what is on the board." Sheldon added to this shared desire for calm leanring environments. He reported wanting to enter a class this "quiet when the teacher is talking, and students following what the teacher says, and doing exactly what the behavior is in the class."

The recommendation for teachers to use music to create calm learning environments was revealed by three students: (1) Danny; (2) Xander; and (3) Emmanuel.

Peaceful and Relaxing Music. The recommendation to use music to help students focus and start learning was provided by a few students in this study. For instance, when asked this question, Xander replied, “The teacher could provide music that is like peaceful – shall I say – like a piano – because...” He then scrambled to find the word melody, but finally figure it out. When asked why peaceful music, he replied:

It would calm them down – there is an effect of peaceful melodies would uhm increase student intelligence, if there is like you know certain songs like rap – you know chicks and money and murder then I guess the music would make them aggressive...

Similarly, Danny recommended classrooms with a “cool” look and “music” to help students concentrate. He reported, “I would have my classroom look cool and fun - like decorated with col stuff on it, and like LED lights.”

The researcher then asked what it would link in the classroom, and Danny revealed, “Relaxing music.” Why would that help? “For some students, music helps them concentrate.” When would be the best time to be playing music? “Uhm, during work.” What influence would it have on student behavior? “It would help them keep calm.” These representative statements reveal that Danny perceives music as something that potentially calm students down, which should be studied further.

A keyword search for music, resulted in identifying Megan as someone else that favored the use of music in the classroom. When asked what her ideal classroom would look like, she responded, “It would like kind of like – it would have speakers in it....microphones.” Why? “Because chorus is my thing... drums... and, oh colorful – pink, green, and blue and stuff like

that.” What would it sound like? “Probably music because I never forget the lyrics... like Flocabulary helps you learn with beats when you learn.” What about student behavior? “Quiet.”

Here, we learn that not only does Megan desire a quiet environment, but she also favors music in the classroom. She also revealed the potential for music to help her learn by referencing Flocabulary, an online websites suiteable for kids that uses hip-hop music to engage and eudcate students to help increase academic learning (Flocabulary, 2020). Moreover, on this topic of student intererst in music as a mediator for calmness, the researcher did observe a student in ISS listening to music via headphones: One student was sleeping, another was on her cell phone listening to music, and three students were in the back of the room pretending to complete an assignment (ISS Observation Three; see Appendix N).

Desires for Freedom and Play. When asked to describe new ideas or suggestions to help Mariah, or her peers at school, she replied:

Uhm, I feel like we should have more time to just be children – not just have Fresh Air Friday like every other week, uhm... I feel like we should have some point have a break to be kids and talk because they want us to act good, but we have no time to act like children besides two days on the weekend, and whenever we get home – and whenever we get home we usually we have to do chores, homework, shower, eat, and go to bed. I feel like we need more time to be children, and be free, to socialize, and make friends.

Mariah’s statement reaffirms the notion students desire freedom and play, and she has declared that the school does not allow students’ to be children. Her comment also makes it seem that Fresh Air Friday every other week is not providing her and her peers enough time for students to have a break or engage with peer groups in social settings outside the classroom.

This notion that the school is a restrictive place in terms of freedom is evident in Mariah’s metaphorical drawing of teachers that frequently write disciplinary referrals (see Figure 4.31, p. 182). In description, she wrote, “A mean teacher who never listens like they are trapped in a bubble where they can only hear themselves. It’s like a dictatorship.” Mariah’s conceives the

school to be a dictatorship. The words associated with dictatorship include: (1) absolute rule; (2) tyranny; (3) Fascism; (4) oppression; and (5) repression – to name a few (Merriam-Webster, 2020). An affirmation for the repression experienced in ISS is revealed by Jordan. He explained ISS as “a place where you can’t do anything just the work your teachers give you and beginning of class you have to write the rules of ISS.”

Some school stores, which are personally curated by classroom teachers, allow students to purchase “free time” with PBIS rewards. When asked what some teachers offer at their school store, Megan replied, “they use to do candy, treats, pencils, and sit in comfortable chair for Tiger cash, but now they only do it on Fridays... So, when teachers’ in-class stores are nice.” What do those teachers do differently than other teachers outside of the class store? “They give us free time and uhm...”

Likewise, when asked why students like to go outside, Sheldon responded, “Because they don’t have recess in the normal day, and they’re inside not getting sunlight.” Why recess? “To get all their hyper-ness out because all they do is sit in class and they want to run around.” Here, we see a physiological and holistic desire to be outside running in the sun, which Sheldon believes would alleviate hyperactive issues. As an affirmation that kids have a lot of energy and need a release, Shelly mentioned, “We are kids and we have a lot of energy, and sometimes we get bored. For us kids, we need time to talk. What happens when you don’t have fun? What if you can’t spend time at friends’ houses because your parents are strict?” Energy and boredom – perhaps, there is a lack of engagement in the classroom because of how instruction is being delivered to students?

The desire for freedom is also apparent in Anne's take on what she would do if she had the power to change ISS. We also see a variance in her attitude towards ISS as compared to many of the students with disabilities in the current study. She reported:

I wouldn't change it, ISS is not that bad. But I think they should take break, because you're working all day. That is what I don't like about school. We don't even get breaks. We don't have recess anymore. We get lunch, but technically that isn't a break. But I think they should have a five-minute break at least, and then go back to their work

Anne's statement reveals that she doesn't think ISS is "that bad." However, she requests breaks, and reminisces about recess.

Moreover, an affirmation to the idea that some students feel they're oppressed in the classroom is revealed in Jordan's response to what teachers do that has helped students behave. He reported, "Give free will and allow students to move around instead of paperwork."

Fresh Air Friday and Free Seat Friday. In line with student desires for freedom and play, students have the option to engage in throwing the football, kicking the soccer ball, or sit in the bleachers and socialize. This desire for play is evident in Emmanuel's perceptions and attitudes towards PBIS rewards. When asked if he cared about points, Emmanuel responded, "No." Do others? "Some do some don't." Why do some kids not care? "No real benefits, just going to school store, or Fresh Air Friday." Why do you not like it? "Because its cold outside." What could they do instead of Fresh Air Friday? "Let you play in the gym."

Regarding Free Seat Friday, where kids get to sit at any table with their peers for twenty-five minutes while they eat lunch, Anne provided some additional insights on what makes kids happy. She said, "Free Seat Friday where we're able to sit with our friends that is basically it..." Why are Free Seat Fridays important to kids? "Because I see kids at lunch that look so lonely because kids are on entire other side of the table... Lunch is a time where you talk and have fun,

I am not going to talk to myself like I am crazy.” Here we see Anne’s desire to be able to sit wherever in the lunchroom and engage in dialogue with friends.

Desires for Dialogue and Reconciliation. When asked Matthew what administrators could have done instead of providing him with OSS, he replied, “They could have talked to me about consequences I had gotten and done something to help me do better and behave.” The researcher asked what that would look like, and he said, “Like a meeting – sitting in a room with all the administrators in the front office – talking about consequences what I can do to be good.” When asked what advice he had for the school to help those kids instead of sending them to exclusionary discipline, Matthew said, “To make a little class to talk about the behaviors and try and help us do what is right.” Likewise, when asked what administrators could have done differently when she got in trouble, Mariah replied, “Could have just talked to me maybe.” When asked what that would like, she replied, “It would be with a person that you trust.” She then disclosed that she did not have that person in the building at that time. When asked what happened when she was provided with OSS, she responded, “There was no teacher there to explain things – I was all alone.”

The importance of dialogue has been expressed by a collective of student participants in this study. When asked what some teachers do that helps him start learning when he comes to class, Danny replied, “They will talk to me when I first come to class and ask me to see if I am okay – see where my head is at.”

Talk to Me. When asked what would help students behave better, Sheldon replied, “Send them to a room to chill out and be calm and not get super mad at the teacher.” When asked about what else would take place in this chill out room, he responded, “It is quiet – they get to talk to the principal and the administration... why they chose to do the bad behavior and uhm what

happened – why get mad... so they know what is wrong – to help the child...” Likewise, when explaining what teachers can do to help kids that at the end of the day that are “happy and hyper about leaving school,” Sheldon reported, “Talk to them about it – it is the last class of the day, but you still need to be respectful.”

When asked about how she felt towards teachers that frequently write referrals, Anne responded, “that is pretty dumb...they’re just going to hate you even more – I mean, you should just try to talk it out – something else... There’s this one teacher that does it all the time, and then you get a referral, and they don’t even get points, which isn’t fair.” She then outlines procedures teachers should take to alleviate issues with students, “you should have three steps – talking, ask them what they’re doing – telling them to be quiet, get a conduct point, and then a call home – but a straight referral is kind of messed up.” Here, we are presented with unique and profound insights surrounding the importance of dialogue, which indicates one student has internalized a process related where teachers and students come together for reconciliation.

Similarly, when asked how teachers should interact with students when correcting misbehaviors, Anne reported:

take the proper steps, like conduct point – warning, and if that doesn’t work you get kicked out of class, but they don’t do it in a mean way – they don’t yell at you and like call you out, or do the most, they’re just like, “Okay, I warned you a few times now, please go to another classroom.” That’s a good teacher!

Anne has expressed her desire to engage in dialogue with a teacher in a humane and reasonable fashion. Her conception of a good teacher is someone that follows PBIS Pyramid of Interventions without yelling or calling out their students.

A deep conversation about mental health supports when the researcher engaged with Xander regarding alternatives to exclusionary discipline. The researcher asked, “What could they

have done that could have helped you instead of OSS?” He responded, “What would help me? Actually... therapy...”

Xander shared that he had prior experiences in therapy. The researcher asked, “What happens in therapy.” Xander replied, “We usually discuss... like...we get information about what is going on in my life...” You like that? “Yeah – you know therapy (therapist) that I have is very nice – I gotta say.” You go there regularly? “No.”

Later, the researcher engaged in a discussion about the implications on ISS and student learning. Xander said, “They receive ISS or OSS, uhm... they usually feel isolated you know...” What does that mean? “That is basically when you’re alone and no one to talk to.” What impact does that have on social skills? “Wel, you don’t have any individuals around you...” What would you talk about? “Talk about my life and talk about my goals and stuff – I want to be an artist when I grow up – just trying to be the next Walt Disney.” Based on Xander’s visual representation, he is a skilled artist, and these talents should be developed with the assistance of the school.

When asked if he had ever been provided with alternatives to exclusionary discipline like ISS or OSS, Danny mentioned, “Yeah sometimes they’ll just talk to me.” How does that help you? “It changes what is on my mind, my perspective about it.” What is it? “How I was feeling about it.” Do you feel like teachers and administrators need to talk more to students?” He firmly replied, “Yes.” We learn that talking about problems and issues with Danny is helpful. It is apparent from this study that students with disabilities experience a wide range of emotions, and in order to come to terms with self-regulating behaviors, engaging in dialogue with trusted adults, or mentors, seems highly favorable in terms of social development (Vygotsky, 1978).

When asked what his definition of a bad teacher is, Danny reported, “A teacher that is always screaming at students – won’t talk to them - ...always sending them out of class – writing them up.” Danny expressed that bad teachers are those that do not engage in dialogue and rely on exclusionary practice to deal with misbehaving students.

When asked how good teachers handle student misbehavior, Danny replied, “They will take them into the hall and talk to them to see where their head is at.” Here, we get another hint towards students internal desire for reconciliation, restorative practice, and dialogue to make amends and solve behavioral issues in the classroom.

On a discussion surrounding talking, Mariah reported:

It (talking) develops social skills... If you go all of your elementary school, middle school, and high school not having any freedom to talk to people, you are going to become very non-social, you’re going to lose those social skills that you could use in the future for a job interview, meeting new people, high school, all of those things lead up to social skill.

Mariah statement reveals that she understands the value of being able to engage in dialogue to develop social skills, which she expresses is an important of life and the future, which is powerful Vygotskian sentiment (Vygotsky, 1987). Mariah shares further insights on why she believes engaging in dialogue is important. When asked what teachers that are positively able to work with misbehaving students do differently than other teachers, she revealed:

Pull them aside, and talk to them – they take a moment to say okay, “You guys keep doing your work, I’m going to try and see what is going on with this student,” – Not call them out in class because they are already seeking that attention – by giving that to them, they’re just going to do that (misbehavior) more.

The desire for dialogue to help students improve their behaviors is something that Mariah mentioned throughout her interview. For instance, when asked how teachers should help a student that had accumulated conduct points to lead to a referral, Mariah said:

I think if they were going to a referral, they should get more options - don't just say, here are a few days in ISS, you should do better. Talk to them about how they could do better, bring a teacher in that they are comfortable with because I feel like every student here has at least one teacher they have some sort of bond with – For me, I have my teacher I have some sort of bond with, and after I get in trouble I always go and talk to her because not everybody always likes going to a counselor, and not everybody always wants going to an administrator, some people want to go see a teacher they have a connection with.

Once again, Mariah recommends talking to the student, and she even goes as far as to have the student talk to someone they “bond” with, which could be interpreted as a mentor. In her perception, teachers that students really get along with are individuals that can help mediate problematic behaviors.

Relative to innate desire for a mentorship in the building, Shelly requested, “More trusting teachers – someone to talk to.” Apparently, it could be that some teachers in the building are not doing their jobs with an Ethic of Care (Noddings, 1986) because she doesn't trust teachers enough to talk to them. The researcher followed up with, “You'd like someone to talk to – what about the counselor, you ever go to the counselor?” She replied, “Last year, I'd go because my teacher she would make me go to the counselor.” The researcher then asked, “Do you think there needs to be more people for students' to talk to?,” and she mentioned, “Yes, because sometimes counselors don't have enough time to talk to us.”

The desire for more dialogue is evident in Nancy's response when asked how she believed teachers could get students to “care” about school. She recommended, “We have to talk to them. They have to talk to them. Talk to parents – anybody – understand if you don't do anything, you'll be living on the streets one day and that is not good. You want a house, and a nice car – if you want anything like that – so, something needs to go through them.”

Category Seven: Student Suggestions for School Improvement

Aside from desired learning environments, students with disabilities were also asked to provide suggestions for school improvement, specifically regarding school discipline and PBIS implementation. Four themes emerged while analyzing category seven regarding research question three. They included: (1) student suggestions for school discipline; (2) new classroom wanted; (3) student suggestions for PBIS implementation; and (4) student suggestions for teacher practice.

Student Suggestions for School Discipline. When asked what he would do if he had the power to change ISS and OSS, Jesus replied:

They need a teacher to teach in there, and at home you don't learn anything – you just sit there and watch Netflix and all that, that's all. And, then when you don't get your work, you're not going to know what to do. And ISS, you don't learn anything in there they just give you the work – they don't explain nothing – sometimes the ISS teacher will help you, but not all the time.

Jesus explains ISS and OSS are ineffective because there's no learning taking place.

Based on his statement, he believes a teacher should provide academic instruction in the ISS classroom.

Similarly, when asked about ISS and academic learning, Mariah mentioned, “a lot of kids nowadays, including myself, are visual or hands on learners. If you give us a packet and tell us we need to know this by the end of the week, it'll be very difficult for us to learn it because no one to teach us.” This reveals that the ISS room is a place where teachers may be forwarding packets for students to complete. Based on Mariah's statement, this is not something that helps her, or fellow students learn.

Although engaging in dialogue was a desire held by a collective of students with disabilities in this study, it is also important to note that much of that dialogue involved school

discipline and student behavior. For instance, when asked for how he would improve ISS if he had the power to do so, Danny replied, “Take them into the hall and talk to them to see where their head is at,” and then regarding ISS, he said, “Students get to like stretch because when I was in there, I had to sit down the entire day – get to move around or exercise.”

When asked what he would do if he had the power to change ISS, Kyle responded, “I would give the kids – I’d give them help to understand how to solve problems, instead of just sitting there not learning.” When asked what that would look like, he added, “Basically, I’d be with the teacher for the rest of the day, and the teacher helps them learn everything they’re suppose to learn that period.” What would that look like? “Help out.” How? “Them giving them instructions on what to do with the problems.” Relative to the role of the ISS teacher, Megan explained, “Maybe, the ISS teacher will like tell them what they need to do on the assignment. So, that will give us two examples, or three, and then if we don’t go to it, they give us one more, and if we do – they’ll let us do it.”

When asked about new ideas or suggestions for what can be done to help him or other students behave better, Sheldon replied, “Send them to a room to chill out and be calm and not get super mad at the teacher.” When asked about what else would take place in this chill out room, he responded, “It is quiet – they get to talk to the principal and the administration... why they chose to do the bad behavior and uhm what happened – why get got mad... so they know what is wrong – to help the child...” Although this representative statement was mentioned in the “Talk to Me” sub-section, it is relevant for improving school discipline.

When asked how to what new ideas or suggestions she had to improve her behavior, Shelly replied, “More trusting teachers – someone to talk to,” which indicates a desire for a mentor in the building. Regarding teachers that students prefer over other teachers, Shelly

revealed, “When the student is uhm good in the other classes is because they like the teacher, or they don’t really have good grades or won’t pay attention in another class is because they don’t like that teacher.” Why do they like some teachers? “Because they treat them different.” How? “They give them warnings and chances – some teachers write them up right away.” Here, Shelly provides another affirmation for the notion that teachers skip PBIS Pyramid of Interventions and write students up without going through the conduct-point process. This will require updating measures to make teachers more accountable with PBIS implementation.

When asked how he would change ISS, Kevin responded, “Give students a little assistance on how... just a little bit of help on just work, but still they’re doing it on their own, just give a little assistance.”

Jordan held similar sentiments to Kevin, and explained, “I would like...I would take that class of ISS and replace it to a class like the one I just said.” Earlier, Kevin mentioned the desire for a new classroom where the referring teacher would come and meet with him, talk about the problematic behavior, and provide him with academic instruction. Based on Kevin’s statement, the researcher is reminded of restorative practices and reconciliation through restorative circles, which will now be discussed in chapter five.

When asked what new ideas, or suggestions she had to help her or other students behave better in school, Nancy reported, “I would just like – stick to really – in the class as student is most talkative, he should work in a different classroom, and see if that helps him good or bad.” What would this classroom look like? “Like a small classroom for troubled kids.” How is that different from ISS? “Not really talk, it’ll kind of hm... it’ll be different... they can talk sometimes – they can share why they are in the room.” You don’t talk about why you got in trouble in ISS? “No. You just go there, sign in, and work.” Do you think it is important to talk

about why you got in trouble? “Yes, to see and hear what they are doing and know themselves what they did wrong.” Who would teach this class? What qualities would this teacher have? “Someone that can really handle attitude and be with bad kids.” What else would they have to know? “All the academics and subjects because they’ll need help in that class – the students.”

New Classroom Wanted. Students participants suggested that that there needs to be a new classroom for students to learn PBIS and go to when they need behavioral support. For instance, when asked about school-wide expectations, Danny said the acronym out loud word for word. When asked what that meant to him, he said, “It means they have expectations for us to follow.” Does that help you knowing those three words? He responded, “Not really because I don’t pay attention to it.” When asked what would help him pay attention to school rules and expectations, Danny stated, “Someone that I am familiar with instructing me, or someone I am close to.” What would that look like, and where would it take place?” He reported, “In a classroom.”

Similarly, when asked how to improve PBIS, Matthew once again said, “In a class.” Afterwards, when asked what advice Matthew had to help kids that misbehave instead of referring them to ISS and OSS, he replied, “To make a little class to talk about the behaviors and try and help us do what is right.” When asked how it would be different than ISS he said, “Because you get to talk to a partner when you need help. In ISS, you can’t really talk, you got to do it for yourself.” What could the ISS teacher do to help you learn? “Teach us, I guess.”

Essentially, based on student representative statements surrounding suggestions for a new classroom, it appears a class that teaches students with disabilities with experiences in exclusionary discipline about PBIS strategies and helps them with academic learning could be a highly favorable model for improving student behavior.

Likewise, when asked what new programs, ideas, or strategies would help him behave in school, Jordan replied, “There should be a class like if you get in trouble instead of ISS where you stay in there for a class period and talk about what you did and fixing your mistakes and what to do next.” Tell me more about this class. “The same teacher the one that gave us ISS can talk about how we can learn from mistakes and doing them again.” So, the same teacher that wrote you up” “Yeah.” Why do you think that would be important?” Next time, when you go to his class, you’ll already know what to do and not to do.”

Student suggestions for PBIS Implementation. When asked what the school can do to improve PBIS, Jesus requested, “Uhm... add more prizes, or add more stuff we can do.” Mariah, when discussing the implications of school-wide expectations added, “I feel like it needs more. Yes, school-wide expectations are things we need, but how is that going to help our future? I feel like we are stuck on just the now and the present.” She continues to discuss how the future matters to her. “How to apply to a different high school, magnet programs, we do half of it, but we need more.” From her perspective, it appears interventions should prepare students for the future and the real world. Furthermore, when discussing her ideas for improving PBIS she said:

Give us something to hold – sure it is online look I have this much Tiger cash, what is that going to do to me? Before we had the actual Tiger cash, that was like oh look, handing it to me... that is you showing me you did a good job, versus just clicking something on a computer and half the time you aren’t even telling me you’re giving me Tiger cash – I don’t know, so I don’t know when I am doing something right, or when I am doing something wrong - ...that I was talking quietly or not...

Mariah’s suggestions for improving PBIS is highly valuable because she remembers what it was like to off digital-based PBIS rewards. She requested that students have something to hold, and when teachers reward them, there is a physical exchange that is indicating that they did a good job. Whereas now, she mentioned that students do not even know they’re being rewarded,

which invalidates the process. Additionally, she mentioned that she is unable to track her behavior.

When asked what can be done to improve PBIS, Danny requested, “Someone that I am familiar with instructing me, or someone I am close to.” When asked where this instruction would take place, he replied, “In a classroom.” He then mentioned this “PBIS class” would have a total of ten students. He recommended that someone “Like someone explaining and teaching us what that is about, and how we can earn points and stuff.” How often? “Once a week.” What else can they do to help these ten students outside of PBIS? “Talk about their work and how their grades are going.” What else can they provide since you mention work and grades? “Extra help.” Danny has expressed that a new classroom would be something that would benefit him in learning about PBIS and improving his grades.

When asked about how PBIS could be improved, Xander informed, “Uhm – I guess we can provide uhm a survey to like – after a film about PBIS is over.” Why would a film help you? “Maybe like they could provide like – what would this consequence do to you... like there was a PBIS about rape – it can affect your life, but also like you know... it can destroy relationships and families and stuff.” Here, Xander has revealed that a film could help students learn about the consequences of their decisions; however, rape discussions might be inappropriate for middle school students.

Moreover, when asked what can be done to improve PBIS, Kyle replied, “I guess get it stick into my head from a song, or something.” Additionally, he said, “I would improve it (PBIS) by giving kids the advantage to use PBIS as a like they can go on the APP and use their points to purchase something, and teachers can get a notification on what they purchased.” This is an intellectually reasonable and sound response, and it should be forwarded to the developers at

PBISrewards.com. Regarding Tiger Class, Kyle added, “At least make it a little more fun.” Shelly held similar sentiments and suggestions regarding Tiger Class. She requested, “Do activities like games and stuff, or guessing games.”

As a contradiction to other students, when Kevin was asked what to do to improve PBIS, he responded, “I wouldn’t it is perfect, it is normal how it should be.”

Relative to how to help students learn and behave, Nancy provided some insights. She suggested, “Uhm... an assembly.” What does this assembly look like? “All the bad kids would have a place to listen to the teacher talk.” About what? “Why they should be changing the way they act, and how it can affect you in the future in the long run – how it stays on your record – how to help a career.” Once again, we see another student in addition to Mariah and Sheldon that wants teachers to talk to students about the real world and the future.

Reparations of PBIS Rewards. When discussing Mariah’s suggestions for improving PBIS, the idea of taking Tiger cash away from students for bad behavior was mentioned. She explained, “I feel like that would make them feel disappointed in themselves. It would affect them like – I had this and I lost this, what could I have done better?” She continued, “I think it is something they should try, but I feel like again, it would have worked better when we had actual physical cash – otherwise, “click,” and okay, but you didn’t physically take something from me – it is just online – and so, it has no effect on me that I can physically see, unless I log onto my PBIS account online.

The idea of reparations of PBIS rewards based on student misbehavior was also suggested by Sheldon. When asked about how to improve PBIS, he said, “You can take some away if people are not behaving and being disrespectful – not doing their work – talking when the teacher is talking – all that stuff.” How is that different than what is being done now?

“They’re just rewarding people – we should take away Tiger cash if they’re not being respectful.” Researcher then asked, “Taking Tiger cash away from students would help them behave more?” He replied, “Yes, if they get less and less – they’ll try and get enough to like – if they take away a lot in a day and then they can’t go to Fresh Air Friday, and they’ll try to get more, and they’ll be respectful.” Sheldon believed that if students know they’re going to lose something, they’ll start behaving.

Suggestions for Teacher Practice. When asked what teachers that are positively working with misbehaving students do differently than other teachers, Mariah replied, “Pull them aside, and talk to them. Take a moment to say okay, “You guys keep doing your work, I’m going to try and see what is going on with this student.” – Not call them out in class because they are already seeking that attention – by giving that to them, they’re just going to do that more.” Here, it appears that Mariah is advocating for teachers that employ an ethic of care and use dialogue to solve issues with students. Teachers in Mariah’s perspective should also avoid power struggles with students.

In terms of what some teachers do that helps student focus, Mariah described: Uhm – think positive, don’t walk in and say, “Alright here are the rules, do not talk! Do not do this!” Just be positive and say, “I’m alright with you talking, but keep it down, or otherwise I’m going to have to cut you off – no more talking,” Be positive. Be polite. Don’t start off the day because of what another class did to you – let that mess up the rest of day because that’ll put a perception to your students’ what kind of teacher you’ll be for the rest of the year.

From Mariah’s viewpoint, it looks like there needs to be a compromise created in the classroom in terms of being able to talk. She also advocates that teachers be positive and polite to students, which is something that is associated with teachers that practice and ethic of care in the classroom (Noddings, 1986). She also tells teachers not to take their personal issues out on students when that negativity is coming from “what another class did to you.”

When asked what teachers can do to help students focus and start learning after transitions, Stephen responded, “The best thing they can do to help me focus and start learning is giving me one-on-one time. Your teacher helping you just you alone and no one else if you can’t get anything.” Similarly, Anne provides insights to how dialogue can be used by teachers to provide one-on-one instruction, which relates to the concept of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) (Vygotsky, 1978) where rich social interactions between teacher and student is essential to learning through a scaffolded process. She also desired to talk in groups with peers to help each other complete assignments. She explained, “More one-one-one time – if I could say that. In math, I am not good, and so I need a teacher to help me. But, in Language Arts, I’d rather work with friends because it gets boring. After I finish the work, I have someone to talk to, or I can help another person, and so group work helps me learn better.” Here, we learn Anne desires more face time with her math instructor, and more engaging instruction in English Language Arts where she may not be getting challenged enough.

When asked what teachers could do better to help him starting learning, Kyle responded, “They could get me what I need to learn and what I need to focus on...” What does that look like? “They walk up to me and say you need to pay attention to this, or do you need me to help you with this question? What do you not understand?”

Furthermore, when Danny was asked what teachers can do to help students behave and learn, he replied, “They need to have more control of their students.” He explained that sometimes when the teacher is talking students are talking a lot and laughing. He then recommended that teachers begin using music because “it would help keep them calm.” Later, when asked what would help students behave and learn, he replied, “Relaxing music.” When asked why that would help, he said, “For some students, music helps them concentrate.”

Similarly, when asked what teachers could help students learn and focus, Xander replied, “The teacher could provide music that is like peaceful – shall I say... like a piano.” In this discussion, an affirmation to Danny’s notion that music could help students calm down. Xander added, “It would calm them down... there is an effect of peaceful melodies would uhm... increase student intelligence.”

When discussing how she felt towards teachers that frequently write disciplinary referrals, Anne provided insights into a process she believes teachers should take when responding to misbehaviors. She suggested, “you should have three steps – talking, asking them what they’re doing – telling them to be quiet – get a conduct point – and then call home, but, a straight referral is kind of messed up.” She then revealed that some teachers simply don’t use the PBIS Pyramid of Interventions in their classrooms, which is a breach of ethics and fidelity of implementation. When asked about new ideas or suggestions to help her or other students behave in school, Anne responded, “I mean some kids just don’t learn. The school tries all they can, but sometimes they can check with the teachers to make sure they’re taking the proper steps.” Here, we learn that she has an understanding that teachers are not implementing PBIS with fidelity in the classroom. She added, “Some of them just skip over everything. Like, “Oh, you get a call home!” It is a bit frustrating, but they can’t really change it.”

Interestingly, Anne also provided suggestions for administration in terms of teachers following PBIS Pyramid of Interventions. She said, “I mean ask a student who gets a call home, or detention frequently – are the teachers taking the steps? Because some of them just give kids silent lunch immediately.” She continued, “Some kids have bad teachers.” The researcher asked, “Describe bad teachers.” She reported:

In my opinion a bad teacher is someone that wants it quiet all the time, and if you do something wrong, they instantly get a referral or silent lunch. Because... we are kids,

give us a second to speak! Let us do something interesting like more hands-on activities or being in groups – groups really helps me because its easier, but some teachers cannot handle the noise, but if you're a teacher and you work with kids and you don't expect noise – doesn't even make sense. And so, I think a bad teacher is a teacher who doesn't like kids state of their opinion – doesn't hear them out. For example, a kid besides them is yelling I guess, and the teacher blames the other kid, and doesn't give the other kid to explain and instantly gives him silent lunch. That is what I call a bad teacher

Anne's statement reveals that she recommends providing students with hands on activities and opportunities to engage in dialogue. She also suggests teachers should be able to handle a bit of noise. The researcher asked her to define a good teacher. She responded:

A funny nice teacher, but they're also strict at the same time. Because you can't just be a funny and nice teacher and let the kids do everything – they let you work with group and do fun stuff, so a fun nice teacher, and a funny teacher – most of my teachers are funny...

Anne recommended that teachers should be funny and nice, but also strict, and they should do fun step in class like letting students work in groups. Later, when asked to describe how good teachers handle and correct misbehaviors, she reported:

they usually take the proper steps, like conduct point – warning, and if that doesn't work you get kicked out of class, but they don't do it in a mean way – they don't yell at you and like call you out, or do the most, they're just like, "Okay, I warned you a few times now, please go to another classroom." That's a good teacher!

Similarly, when asked what some teachers do that students don't like, Sheldon replied, "They teach boringly," and in terms of describing what teachers do that students like, he said, "They do fun activities." When he described what teachers that students like being around do, he added, "When they are disrespected, they don't yell at students – they are calm and don't get mad easily." Therefore, it appears teacher training on how to remain calm in the classroom should be considered.

On this notion of teaching kids based on how they like to learn, Megan provided some unique insights. To get students to want to learn, she said:

Probably do something that they like – if they like drawing you could say, “I want you to draw this, uhm... this picture of what we’re learning about, and stuff like that.” Or, if they like playing video games, they can use USAtestprep or something because that has educational games too.

Megan’s statement alludes to student preferences with working with technology to produce work and express knowledge. Moreover, when asked what she would recommend to teachers to help get classrooms quiet, she said, “Show people how to be quiet.” How would you show people how to be quiet? She replied, “Like sit in your chair, take your stuff out, and close your mouth, and then people will stare at you and ask you questions, and they will finally get it, and then they know what is going on.”

When asked what teachers can do to help him behave and learn, Kevin replied, “Just uhm... you know – little frequent reminders, but sometimes.” Reminders for what? “Just for you to catch up and keep working so you’re not behind.” The researcher then asked Kevin if he feels like he is behind in his classes, and he said, “Sometimes.” When asked what teachers can do to help students focus and behave in class, he reported, “When I walk into class and teachers are like take out your work, and let’s get started with the lesson.” Preparation? “Yeah they help us get ready.” What else can they do to help you? “Tap on your shoulder., or call your name sometimes to help you focus, so you’re not having your head down not paying attention.”

Quality of Evidence

Qualitative researchers strive for ensuring credibility over validity and dependability rather than reliability because they do not work with numbers and statistics. Therefore, all qualitative research requires high degrees of interpretation where generalizations are used to support claims (Payne & Williams, 2005). These generalizations are often realized during the data analysis process. This is accomplished when the researcher attempts to establish a general truth, or form of understanding by including thick descriptions of contextual factors surrounding

the study (i.e., participants, setting of where data is collected, process of data collection, researcher's subjectivity, and theoretical orientation), all of which are provided in this dissertation (Lecompte & Goetz, 1982; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The researcher also included multiple sources of data in this phenomenography to ensure high levels of evidence in terms of quality.

For instance, the researcher relied on the following qualitative data sources to produce categories and associated representative statements presented in the outcome space: (1) interviews; (2) visual representations (metaphorical drawings of school discipline); observations (i.e., ISS classroom and inclusion classrooms); and documents (i.e. behavior data trends, which indicated a decrease in PBIS points rewarded, and PBIS pyramid of interventions, which were used to triangulate sentiments from students regarding fidelity issues relative to PBIS implementation). In this chapter, the researcher has included numerous figures (i.e. visual representations), and by providing visual networks to express triangulation of data, a collective description of the phenomenon being examined was produced (Marton, 1981). Finally, the researcher found himself continuously in a reflexive process during data collection where interview questions were refined. As a result, previously interviewed students were provided with member-checking to ensure validity (Merriam, 2009).

Summary of Findings

According to Kahn (2014), when performing a phenomenography, it is essential to identify the relationships amongst the research questions and the phenomenon under investigation. The goal of the current study was to generate an outcome space with representative statements and visual representations from students with disabilities to elicit their experiences with and conceptions of school discipline and PBIS implementation. Moreover, in addition to

gathering student experiences and conceptions of phenomenon, the researcher also collected students' desired learning environments and allocated insights regarding their suggestions for school improvement. One could argue that this current phenomenography consists of three studies in one, which was logistically cumbersome, but most necessary to uncover the factors that may be contributing to the discipline disparities facing students with disabilities.

Accordingly, this current chapter analyzed the variances/differences surrounding the perceptions students with disabilities as they're currently facing an overrepresentation in exclusionary discipline.

Retrospectively, this qualitative dissertation projected the relationships amongst seven descriptive categories:

1. Negative Student Perceptions of School Discipline
2. Low Efficacy of Punitive Discipline
3. Cycles of Frustration-Aggression Associated with Student Experiences of Exclusionary Discipline and Punitive Threats
4. Student Misconceptions of PBIS Implementation
5. Negative Teacher Behaviors and Low Fidelity of PBIS Implementation
6. The Students Desire Calmness, Freedom and Play, and Dialogue for Reconciliation
7. Student Suggestions for School Improvement

Overall, this study revealed multiple possible factors that may be contributing to school discipline disparities facing students with disabilities. For instance, student experiences with and conceptions of exclusionary discipline indicate the negative influence punitive discipline may be having on students' academic and social learning, behavior, perceptions of self, all of which could result in undesirable teacher-student relationships. In theory, it appears that students with

disabilities are placed in cycles of frustration-aggression resulting from experiences with exclusionary school discipline and punitive threats (i.e., “You have silent lunch!”). More specifically, in terms of PBIS implementation within inclusion settings, representative statements reveal chaotic environments where teachers are yelling and belittling students, improperly and inconsistently following PBIS Pyramid of Interventions, as well as providing minimal distribution of PBIS rewards to students. All of this appears to cause some students develop feelings of resentment and discontent, which could result in preventable misbehaviors. Additionally, when asked, a collective of students with disabilities desired calmness, freedom and play, and dialogue for reconciliation as desirable learning environments.

Regarding their suggestions for school improvement, students with disabilities in this study have expressed ways to improve school discipline, such as offering opportunities for reconciliation between teacher and students in a new classroom. Moreover, a collective of students requested that teachers should stop yelling at them and their peers, it was recommended that they simply engage in dialogue and just talk to the about problematic behaviors. In terms of instructional practices, students expressed wanting “one-on-one” teacher-student opportunities, including the support of scaffolding and modeling to help them learn. Lastly, in order to increase engagement in the classroom, students also suggested the use of peaceful and relaxing music to help them and their peers “calm down” and “concentrate.”

Reflection of Findings

Ultimately, the decision to sanction this qualitative study with the phenomenographical tradition was advantageous for revealing the collective variances surrounding student experiences with and conceptions of school discipline and PBIS implementation. Most importantly, the findings of this study have helped formulate a boundary object model (Star &

Griesemer, 1989) for identifying socio-cultural factors that could be contributing to the overrepresentation of students with disabilities in school discipline (see Figure 5.0, p. 224).

Moreover, pedagogical insights for how to incite moral education within schools using a holistic approach has been contemplated by the researcher, which will be further developed in future work. The outcomes from these findings have also provided practical recommendations for transforming educational practice to be more inclusive to the needs and desires of students with disabilities. Additionally, the reflexive nature of qualitative research has resulted in realizing new directions for future research surrounding middle-grades education, school discipline, and PBIS implementation discussed further in chapter five.

Finally, by celebrating the voices of youth with exceptionalities, this study has helped identify and comprehend issues that may be exasperating discipline disparities facing students with disabilities such as low efficacy of punitive discipline, unethical teacher behavior such as yelling and belittling comments to students, as well as improper implementation of Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS). It also appears that physiological setbacks such as sleep deprivation, which may stem from poverty-related issues. Moreover, the experience of exclusionary discipline and punitive threats alone appear to be associated with placing students with disabilities in cycles of frustration-aggression that leads to student apathy and undesirable teacher-student relationships. With all of this being known, it is appropriate to report low efficacy of punitive discipline for correcting student misbehaviors.

Chapter Five: Discussion

“If they keep doing what they’re doing, kids are just going to keep getting in trouble.”

- Shelly

This phenomenography explored the perceptions of fifteen students with disabilities with experiences in exclusionary discipline to better understand the implications of school discipline and PBIS implementation on their learning and behavior. Possible factors that exasperate school discipline disparities facing student with disabilities were uncovered such as cycles of frustration-aggression linked to experiences in exclusionary discipline, as well as teacher fidelity issues with the implementation of PBIS Pyramid of Interventions within inclusion classrooms. Additionally, the researcher generated an outcome spaced that revealed the desired learning environments of students with disabilities, including their suggestions for school improvement.

This qualitative study was guided by the following three research questions:

1. How do students with disabilities experience and conceive of school discipline?
2. How do students with disabilities experience and conceive the implementation of Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS)?
3. In what ways can voices of students with disabilities help transform school discipline and PBIS implementation to meet their desired learning environments?

The current chapter is the conclusion of this dissertation. The researcher has engaged in a discussion of implications surrounding findings that emerged from conducting this phenomenography. But first, it included a summary of findings for each of the three research questions, relationship of findings to previous literature, limitations of findings, researchers’ comments (i.e. personal reflections), implications of findings for educational practice, and recommendations future research in local context.

Summary of Findings

Research Question One

How do students with disabilities experience and conceive school discipline?

In seeking to understand student experiences with and conceptions of school discipline, the researcher came to three categories of description: (1) Negative Student Perceptions of School Discipline, (2) Low Efficacy of Punitive Discipline, and (3) Cycles of Frustration-Aggression Associated with Exclusionary Discipline and Punitive Threats.

Negative Student Perceptions of School Discipline

Findings from prior studies regarding punitive discipline have linked weaker attendance, lowered test scores, failure in academic classes (Cholewa, et al., 2018, and higher chances of dropping out of school for students who have experiences with in-school suspension (ISS) (Chu & Ready, 2018). In their book, *Prelude to Prison: Student Perspectives on School Suspension*, Weissman (2015) collected student perceptions surround punitive discipline and found such practices resemble processes linked to arrest, trial, sentence, and imprisonment. Weissman argues that school exclusionary discipline practices such as ISS prepares young people from poor communities for incarceration.

As an affirmation to the notion that ISS is microcosmic foundation and pipeline to prion, students with disabilities in the current study, conceived ISS as a dark and boring place where “troublemakers” and “bad kids” are trapped, encaged, and isolated in prison/jail as a form of punishment. Moreover, based on representative statements and visual representations, students revealed that the ISS classroom inhibits their academic and social learning. Regarding OSS, students found it to be something that didn’t help them learn, but it was also time away from school where they could play games and watch Netflix. They also revealed that teachers do not

provide work for them to do, which means protocols for providing services to students with disabilities must be revisited.

Low Efficacy of Punitive Discipline

Findings regarding category two are in line with previous literature that has documented the use of punitive discipline as a mechanism that results in students becoming less cooperative with school rules and work (Cardichon & Darling-Hammond, 2017; Ritter, 2018; Simmons-Reed, 2014; Zhang, et al., 2014). Consequently, these experiences result in lowered academic achievement and lowered levels of motivation (Gregory, et al., 2010). In affirmation, the dispirited supervisory role of the ISS teacher appears to compromise students from engaging with academic material dropped off by general education and special education teachers. Some students mentioned being “left behind” in the ISS classroom with feelings that indicated desires to learn, but limited access to learning. Negative influence of exclusionary discipline on social learning was also identified based on the restrictions placed on dialogue between students (i.e., No Talking Allowed in ISS) and minimal engagement with the ISS teacher, which is the antithesis to Socio-Cultural Theory, which suggest rich social interactions results in higher social outcome for young people (Vygotsky, 1978). The ISS classroom as also expressed as a place where students may engage in off-task behaviors such as sleeping and being on their cell phones, which goes against school policy.

Moreover, the ISS classroom policy of no talking appears to be having a negative influence on students’ social learning. Student experiences and perceptions of ISS indicate a need to redefine the role of the ISS teacher and transform the ISS classroom. Outcomes that arose from exploring student experiences and conceptions of school discipline affirm previous literature and research that indicates that punitive school discipline has negative outcomes on

student learning and often leads to academic failure (Arcia, 2006; Scott, et al. 2001; Skiba & Noam, 2001). Findings from this outcome space suggests that if the ISS classroom is not abolished, it must be transformed into a place that fosters academic learning, which is a primary responsibility of the ISS teacher based on district guidelines.

For instance, a major theme that was uncovered is the notion of being left behind, which was reported by multiple students. This assertion is supported by multiple students with disabilities based on their experiences in exclusionary environments. Pyne (2019) argues that exposure to suspension results in emotional disengagement from school forcing students to adopt negative academic identities and perceptions of adults in the school building. In search of understanding student experiences and perceptions of out-school suspension, academic literature is absent. However, based on experiences of students with disabilities in the current study, a collective of them view this exclusionary discipline practice as a “worse/r” punishment than in-school suspension. In variance, some students indicated OSS as a fun, a free day where they get to stay home. One student even regarded OSS as if it was like being in heaven. Outcomes suggests that OSS restricts students from engaging with peer groups, and this exclusionary practice also had adverse influences on students’ academic learning since most of them don’t receive work, nonetheless the instructional support needed to learn content. Furthermore, it was concluded that students who are provided with OSS may be spending time watching Netflix, and the implications of unrestricted access to the content provided via that streaming service is unfounded, but most likely negative to developing hierarchies of moral and virtue.

Collectively, students perceive the ISS teacher as a supervisor, which is a part of the job description. Student statements and visual representations also indicated disassociation between the ISS teacher and students, which is indicative of qualitative evidence that suggests minimal

social interactions and academic instruction provided. Similar findings are evident in Perry-Hazan and Lambrozo (2018) study where students expressed that discipline practices were out of touch with students' academic and social needs, including the ineffectiveness of punishments surrounding discipline practices.

These findings serve as an affirmation to previous literature surrounding the role of school discipline on student behavior and learning, which suggests punitive practices are linked to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, anxiety, and aggressive behaviors (Cameron & Shepherd, 2006; Valdebenito et al. 2018). According to McHatton et al. (2014), visual representations of metaphorical drawings expressed in their study indicate students served in special education settings depicted environments that focused more on behavior than academics and negative teacher-student relationships. Likewise, findings from the current study suggest negative outcomes of teacher in-class disciplinary practices, including student experiences of punitive threats, which appear to have an undesirable influence on teacher-student relationships.

Based on representative statements in the current study, it seems that experiences with exclusionary discipline is leading students to develop negative perceptions of self, such as the loss of innocence, and the development of deviant identities portrayed by language such as "troublemaker," or "bad kid" by teachers and peer groups. Student representative statements and visual representations revealed signs of being annoyed, sad/depressed, frustrated, and aggressive as a result of events surrounding exclusionary discipline practices, including punitive threats from teachers. Previous literature in the field indicates that students with disabilities in poverty struggle with low self-esteem, higher levels of stress and anxiety, learned helplessness, and have had negative school experiences that results in behavior misconduct and low academic

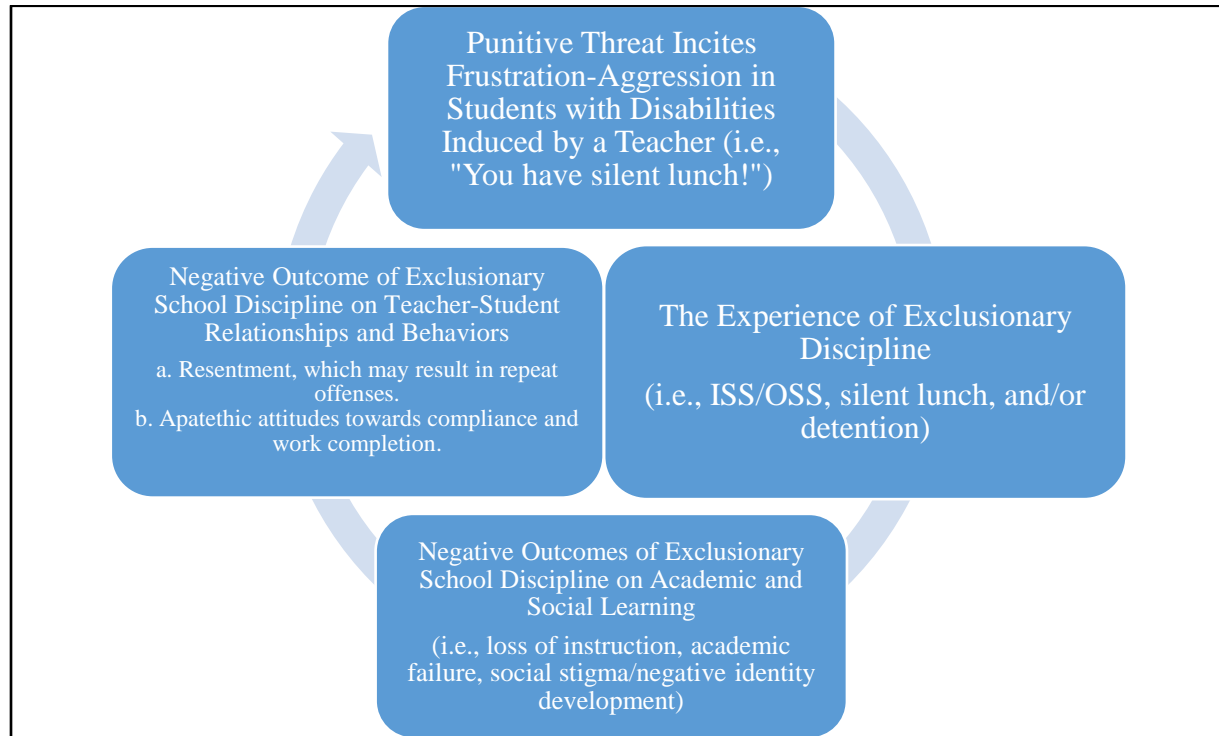
achievement (Booker, 2011; Cardichon & Darling-Hammond, 2017; Myers, 2018). The current study serves as an affirmation to those findings because representative statements and visual representations revealed that fifteen students with disabilities have had negative experiences that result from being placed in cycles of frustration-aggression associated with experiences in exclusionary discipline. Consequently, it appears experiences of exclusionary discipline forces students in cycles of frustration-aggression, which leads to feelings of resentment towards teachers and apathetic behaviors in the classroom. Additionally, a glimpse into student participant profiles revealed that students with the highest numbers of disciplinary incidents and total days loss of instruction held failing grade point averages. Although it cannot be generalized that as a result of experiencing punitive discipline is the sole reason why some participant students are failing their academic classes, exclusionary experiences are not favorable for ensuring positive academic and social outcomes of students with disabilities.

Cycles of Frustration-Aggression Associated with Student Experiences of Exclusionary Discipline and Punitive Threats

While considering the implications of Frustration-Aggression Theory (Dollard & Ford, 1939; Breuer & Elson, 2017) in the context of exclusionary discipline and punitive threats, the experience of exclusionary discipline appears to be forcing students with disabilities in cycles of frustration-aggression. According to Frustration Aggression Theory (Dollard & Ford, 1939; Breuer & Elson, 2017), an undesirable event often occurs to act as a catalyst for frustration-aggression in human beings. An original model expressed in the following figure has been designed and provided to explain the theory of cycles of frustration-aggression associated with student experiences of exclusionary discipline and punitive threats (see Figure 5, p. 224).

Figure 5.0

Model of Cycles of Frustration-Aggression Associated with Student Experiences of Exclusionary Discipline and Punitive Threats



Note. The above model serves as a boundary object (Star & Griesemer, 1989), which acts as a knowledge representation tool for explaining cycles of frustration-aggression associated with student experiences of exclusionary discipline and punitive threats. This model will surely be updated and transformed in coming times as the researcher gains more data in the field relative to the socio-cultural context of the current study.

According to Vygotsky (1978), tools and signs are directly related to the actions of and thinking of various socio-cultural situations, which allows individuals to make meaning and move towards cognitive development and higher levels of learning. Based on representative statements provided by student participants in this study, the event that appears to incite frustration-aggression in students with disabilities is the act of being told an office disciplinary

referral is being processed, or when a teacher sentences the student to silent lunch/detention (i.e., punitive threat). Next, the student has experiences time in isolation within exclusionary spaces (i.e., in-school suspension, out-school suspension, silent lunch, or detention). This experience results in undesirable outcomes on student learning and behaviors. For example, student representative statements reveal students became “mad,” or “pissed off” at teachers following the event. Additionally, some students experience depression when served with exclusionary discipline. A representative statement produced by Xander included becoming “sad” when provided with detention. To support to this assertion, visual representations also reveal student expressions drawn by participants as unhappy, which could be interpreted as depression in students within the ISS classroom (see Figure 4.24, p. 172).

Moreover, Figure 5 also expresses the unintended and negative outcomes of school discipline on student learning and behaviors. For example, students experience a loss of academic instruction due to the environment of the ISS classroom. Students are also placed in places that are not conducive to social learning because “no talking is allowed” in ISS, silent lunch, and detention. When they are sent home for OSS, students said they were alone, which means they are severed from environments that foster dialogue with peer groups. Therefore, exclusionary practices appear to be the antithesis to social development in young people, which requires students to be immersed in dialogue (Noddings, 1986; Vygotsky, 1986). Feelings of resentment towards the teacher may result in future offense and exclusionary experiences may be leading students to develop apathetic behaviors.

For instance, when asked how students feel towards teachers that gave them detention, Shelly provided cautionary insights by reporting, “start to hate them, or start not to do their work,” which affirms the notion that students form negative attitudes and behaviors towards

teachers that provide them exclusionary experiences. According to representative statements in terms of participant perceptions of self, it appears students with disabilities that have experienced exclusionary discipline undergo a loss of innocence and adopt identities of “bad kid” by their peers and “trouble-maker” by their teachers. This could result in further developing deviant identities as young adults. These insights are in line with decade old studies that have argued that the reliance on punishment as a response to misbehaviors is problematic because it shames and stigmatizes wrongdoers, which pushes them into a negative sub-culture and fails to change their behavior (Glaser, 1964; Braithwaite, 1989).

For example, many students admitted to sleeping in class or witnessing peers sleep in class, which was reaffirmed during direct observations of the ISS classroom. McHatton et al. (2014) revealed that students’ learning environments, dependent on being social, connected, supportive, and stimulating to isolated, disconnected, threatening, and uninteresting classrooms influence student behaviors and may be linked to apathetic behaviors. Representative statements from the current study also revealed that students often have their head down in class, and the use of cellular devices within inclusion classrooms and the ISS classroom were identified. Furthermore, students also admitted that they purposefully go to class late, which reveals another apathetic behavior.

Consequently, it appears that is evidence to suggest that the experience of exclusionary discipline might be a major a factor that results in cycles of frustration-aggression that could contribute to discipline disparities facing students with disabilities. Furthermore, physiological implications as a result of students experiencing punitive school discipline seems relevant to this discussion. Signs of student apathy and sleep deprivation have been observed based on representative statements from student participants in the current study. Therefore, it appears

exclusionary discipline compromises students' ability to elevate into higher realms of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1943).

Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs as a Theory to Understand the Factors that Inhibit Behavioral Motivation in Students with Disabilities that have Experienced

Exclusionary Discipline. According to Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, humans are motivated by a desire to achieve goals, and individuals must have their basic physiological needs met before progressing to self-actualization (i.e., spontaneity, acceptance, experience, purpose, meaning, and recognizing inner potential (Maslow, 1943). Self-actualization can also be interpreted using the Jungian notion of self-realization (Mayes, 2003), which ultimately requires that the teacher helps students recognize their true potential.

Based on Maslow's work, it is understood that attaining goals helps humans satisfy specific needs and desires; however, needs are categorized into a hierarchy, in which certain needs must be met before others (Maslow, 1943). The levels contained with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1943; Burleson & Theron, 2013), are as follows: (a) Physiological needs such as breathing, food, water, shelter, clothing, and sleep; (b) Safety and security, which includes health, employment, property, family and social stability; (c) Love and belonging in the form of friendships, family, intimacy, and sense of connection; (d) Self-esteem that includes confidence, achievement, respect of others, and the need to be a unique individual; and, (e) self-actualization, which is the ability to live life with moral virtue, and the ability to express oneself creatively.

As a result of experiencing punitive practice, students with disabilities in poverty may be susceptible to office disciplinary referrals because their basic physiological needs are not being met at home nor at school. An inquiry into students' home-life-school dynamic in relation to

their physiological dispositions is warranted. Findings from this study indicated that students with disabilities are showing signs of sleep deprivation, which may be linked to limited discipline structures at home and misuse and overuse of technology devices such as cell phones and video games that impair the child's ability to achieve a full night's rest. Sleep, according to Maslow's hierarchy is a critical component for humans to move up into higher realms of motivation and goal attainment (Maslow, 1943). Student representative statements reveal that many students choose to sleep in the in-school suspension (ISS) classroom, any some of them may have ended up ISS because they chose to sleep in their content area classroom, which from what I've witnessed as a teacher in the building has resulted in office disciplinary referrals.

Weist et al. (2018) recently wrote a position paper regarding the improvement of MTSS for students with emotional and behavior problems. Weist et al. argue that there is an urgent need to improve programs and services for students presenting "internalizing" disorders such as those related to trauma, depression, and anxiety. As a resolve, Tobin et al. (2012) advocate for schools to use a full three-tiered approach to PBIS because of its benefits students in special education in terms of improving behavior and reducing school discipline. Tobin et al. also indicate that in PBIS schools it may be easier to resolve behavior problems in general education students than those of students in special education using universal supports because of the needs of students with disabilities as documented by their IEPs, which is why it important to find ways to ensure higher levels of fidelity.

Relatively, the focus must be placed on school mental health within MTSS frameworks. Weist et al. (2018) promote the idea that specified teams should spend time screening students, monitoring school discipline, and problem solve to ensure the implementation of PBIS. Schools should consider providing systemic approaches that utilize an interconnectedness of supports

instead of independent support strategies to improve mental health, academic, and behavior of students (i.e., Interconnected Systems Framework (ISF) (Weist et al. 2018). Accordingly, the researcher believes implementing restorative practices using High-Leverage Practices (HLP) may help create calm learning environments that should, in theory, increase student engagement and improve behaviors. HLP are defined as “tasks and activities that are essential for skillful beginning teachers to understand, take responsibility for, and be prepared to carry out in order to enact their core instructional responsibilities” (Ball & Forzani, 2009, p. 504).

Prior research has revealed promising outcomes of implementing High-Leverage Practices (HLP) in special education, which can improve instructional practices within inclusion settings that lead to higher student academic achievement and social outcomes (Akalin & Sucuoglu, 2015; Ball & Forzani, 2009; Cohen, 2015; Grossman, Hammerness, & McDonald, 2009; McLeskey & Brownell, 2015). More specifically, HLP are a set of specific teacher practices that can improve student outcomes by enriching professional knowledge, classroom practices, skills, and behaviors that can be taught to teachers using highly structured and well-supervised opportunities where feedback is essential to field experience (McCray, Kamman, & Brownell, 2017). For instance, the Gradual Release of Responsibility model was alluded to by Megan (see p. 167). Her statement relates directly with HLP practices. According to McLeskey et al. 2017, scaffolded supports are provided to students and then faded, or removed when students become more proficient with solving the problem on an independent level, which is what Megan has suggested in her comment. Moreover, these supports come in the form of dialogue, modeling, hints, questions, partial completion of tasks, and informative feedback with the use of additional materials (i.e., anchor chards, cue cards, checklists, models of completed tasks).

Based on this knowledge, it could be that students may act out in class with an intrinsic and subconscious desire as a result of the experiential conception that they have of exclusionary environments where they can sleep (i.e., the ISS classroom, or even OSS). Furthermore, the experience of exclusionary discipline may also be inhibiting the physiological needs of students in the realms of safety and security, love and belonging, as well as self-esteem, which are basic processes linked to environmental factors (Panskepp, 2011). Therefore, punitive discipline appears to also be responsible for restricting students' ability to achieve self-actualization, which includes creativity, acceptance, and purpose within learning environments (Maslow, 1943). All these insights warrant a future study that explores the influence of exclusionary discipline on the primary-process emotions and physiology of students with disabilities.

Research Question Two

How do students with disabilities experience and conceive the implementation of Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS)?

While exploring the outcome space relative to research question two, the following two categories emerged: (4) Students Misconceptions of PBIS Implementation and (5) Negative Teacher Behaviors and Low Fidelity of PBIS Implementation.

Student Misconceptions of PBIS Implementation

According to Shuster et al. (2017) school-wide expectations should be supplemented with visual supports, and multiple opportunities to practice should be provided to help students with disabilities learn. The current study exposes the experiences of fifteen students with disabilities surrounding the implementation PBIS. The researcher uncovered variances surrounding their qualitative representative statements. For instance, some reported PBIS implementation simply as "rewards," as if all of it was is a rewards system for "good" behaving students. Other students

were unable to explain school-wide expectations, but still associated PBIS with points/e-Cash provided for “good” behavior. Some students also revealed that the school-wide expectations were unrealistic and irrelevant to their needs to behave in the building. For instance, some say they see the school-wide expectations’ acronym around the building, but don’t really pay attention to it. which means the delivery of PBIS needs to be changed to focus on more explicit teaching of PBIS expectations and strategies. These findings are in line with the Walker (2018) study, which revealed that inconsistent implementation of positive behavior and supports guidelines negatively impacted classroom culture, as well as overall school climate. According to Walker, many students did not know how to understand expectations from teachers and staff and continued to display misbehaviors and receive infractions. Moreover, some students in the current study have expressed what needs to be done in a “new classroom” with “one-on-one” supports for delivering PBIS content.

In terms of PBIS conduct-point system, a majority of students were unsure of the tiered consequences relative to the PBIS Pyramid of Interventions, and some even thought that “silent lunch” was one of the consequences teachers had to follow when implementing PBIS, which is actually not a PBIS practice – the researcher argues that the use of silent lunch to respond to student misbehaviors should be abolished because it revealed links to cycles of frustration-aggression that has negative outcomes on student-teacher relationships. Moreover, students also held mixed conceptions of PBIS rewards. One student felt that the rewards were fine how they were, but most students wanted more opportunities to engage in freedom and play. Based on the understanding that students hold misconceptions of Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS), another factor that may lead students with disabilities to experience higher incidents of exclusionary discipline could be that they do not hold a solid grasp of what PBIS is and why it is

being used in their school. For example, a variance in misconceptions were collected surrounding PBIS school-wide and conduct-point systems. Students that had a better understanding of PBIS Pyramid of Interventions (i.e. Jordan) held less disciplinary referrals than other students who held misconceptions of the conduct-point system (i.e., Jesus) (see student participant profiles, p. 93). Therefore, student with disabilities need to be provided with a redelivery of PBIS in a way that caters to their individual needs.

Negative Teacher Behaviors and Low Fidelity of PBIS Implementation

In addition to findings associated with exploring student experiences and conceptions of PBIS implementation, student perceptions of inclusion classrooms were generated. According to representative statements and visual representations, some students are loud and not listening in the classroom because they don't like some of their teachers. These findings are line with McHatton et al. (2014) whom found that negative teacher talk was also noticed, as well as students sleeping and engaged in social exchanges unrelated to learning. Furthermore, negative teacher behaviors were identified such as yelling at and belittling students. Students also held negative perceptions of teachers that frequently write referrals, and some of them even internalize them as devils or monsters based on their metaphorical visual representations. However, variances towards teachers were noted. For instance, some students revealed empathy towards their teachers, where they admitted that some kids have unreasonably disrespected them and engaged in power struggles to gain attention from peers.

McDaniel et al. (2018) found that secondary schools struggle to provide higher fidelity implementation because of lower expectations for student behavior and limited options of reinforcers for secondary students. Their findings suggest challenges regarding implementation were related to lack of state, district, and administrator level support, teacher training and buy-in,

lack of parent/community involvement, and poverty issues, as well as classroom management guidelines and mental health supports for students. In terms of fidelity issues surrounding teacher implementation of PBIS in the current study, it was learned that teachers are improperly implementing PBIS Pyramid of Interventions, which a process linked to placing students in exclusionary discipline such as ISS, detention, and OSS.

For example, students expressed that teachers are skipping the interventions and going straight to writing referrals, or they're providing students with silent lunch as a response to misbehaviors. This could be that teachers need more training with the PBIS Pyramid of Interventions, or they are simply choosing not to follow protocols. Therefore, guidelines to ensure accountability with implementing PBIS Pyramid of Interventions are warranted, which should decrease the overrepresentation of students with disabilities in exclusionary discipline. Furthermore, it appears more can be done to inspire dialogue between teachers and students when conduct points reach the third tier of interventions where teachers are directed to call parents about the issue in the classroom. Lastly, in terms of fidelity, it also appears that teachers are inconsistently and improperly disbursing PBIS rewards. Many students expressed teachers were not rewarding positive behaviors, which correlated with PBIS data provided by the academic coach (a figure of PBIS Rewards Implementation Trends is included, see Appendix P). One student indicated that some teachers wait until the day of Fresh Air Friday to undeservingly reward students in homeroom so they can access free-time outside with their peers, which is unethical and could potentially undermine the entire process and goal of PBIS, which is to get students to behave in the building.

Research Question Three

In what ways can voices of students with disabilities help transform school discipline and PBIS implementation to meet their desired learning environments?

In the search for finding new ways to transform school discipline and PBIS implementation, the researcher relied on voices of students with disabilities to generate an understanding of their desired learning environments and individual and collective suggestions for school improvement. This process led to the discovery of two final categories of description: (6) Desired Learning Environments of Students with Disabilities and (7) Student Suggestions for School Improvement.

The Students Desire Calmness, Freedom and Play, and Dialogue for Reconciliation

Regarding students' desired learning environments, it was learned that a collective of student participants held desires for calmness, where they expressed interest in peaceful and relaxing music to calm down hyperactive and aggressive students, including themselves. Furthermore, desires for freedom and play were discovered, especially with the iterations surrounding Fresh Air Friday where they spend PBIS rewards to run, play, and socialize with peers outside on a bi-weekly basis. Students also expressed desires to engage in dialogue, especially with their teachers when they are identified for misbehaving. Jordan Peterson (2017), a clinical psychologist and professor, in a recent lecture uploaded on YouTube titled, "Personality 17: Biology and Traits: Agreeableness," explained how undesirable sociological and psychological elements lead to aggressive and anti-social behaviors, and later in life, criminality largely in young male life trajectories.

In his lecture, Dr. Peterson's references the big five traits of agreeableness, which are founded in the dimension of care system akin to Jaak Panksepp's primary process emotional

systems. According to Panksepp (2011), primary emotional systems motivationally shape engagement with the environment and serve to direct learning processes. For example, according to Panksepp (2011), a child will not explore its environment or actively seek out novel stimuli if it is experiencing fear or panic, which could be something that occurs during the cycle of frustration-aggression associated with experiences of exclusionary discipline (see p. 257). From earliest childhood, basic emotions provide the motivation for exploring and learning about the environment or for retreating to the relative safety of what is comfortable (Panksepp, 2011).

Psychologically, when the seeking system of a human is activated, the person will feel alert and expectant - having the feeling that something potentially good is nearby (Panksepp, 2011). Accordingly, the individual explores and seeks out positive, physically enhancing, experiences such as food social interaction (Bonn, 2011), which in exclusionary disciplinary environments are restricted. On the other hand, if the fear system is stimulated, people feel intense anxiety, like they are being chased or their life is threatened, which could also be associated with the aforementioned model that explains cycles of frustration-aggression associated with student experiences of exclusionary discipline and punitive threats (see p. 224). Fear is said to stimulate the need to hide or run away, essentially the opposite of seeking (Panksepp, 2011). Through experience, it is understood that the activation of particular emotional systems become associated with various stimuli such as people, places, objects, and a basic form of symbolism takes root (Bonn, 2015), which in exclusionary settings, based on representative statements from the current study, is a place with minimal dialogue where pro-academic and social interactions often do not occur.

According to Bonn (2015), emotions motivate us to stay close to trusted individuals, or people we feel safe and secure around. However, when we are not in environments that we feel

safe in, we may feel anxious, angry, and hateful when that presence is threatened, which could be a stimulation that is actuated during cycles of frustration-aggression associated with experiences of exclusionary discipline. Therefore, if students perceived teachers as a threat, which they may have based on their visual representations of teachers as the devil or monster (see Figure 4.36, p. 209), students may display panic, fear, or rage, which correlates with and affirms frustration-aggression theory (Dollard & Ford, 1939).

Essentially, it appears punitive measures of school discipline appeared to result in altering teacher-student relationships where trust is broken when teachers initiate students into the exclusionary discipline process. As a result, the experience of exclusionary discipline may be negatively influencing emotions and behaviors of students, which could result in having a detrimental impact on the academic and social development of the child. Based on these assertions, it would be wise to abolish, or turn to alternatives to punitive school discipline that foster what are referred to as “comfort zones” (i.e., states of being that support survival) over “discomfort zones” (i.e., states of being that have negative influence on survival) (Panskepp, 2010), which can be accomplished through non-punitive discipline policies and practices that inspire dialogue between teachers-students.

In reference to students desire for freedom and play, in his lecture, Jordan discussed the benefits of “rough and tumble” play, which he explained is a beneficial experience for children because they learn about their physiology and learn about what their limitations. This sort of play, Jordan explained, teaches them body fluency, which results in becoming well-situated inside themselves. He then alluded that the ability to engage in rough in trouble play in rats inhibits aggression; however, when deprived from opportunities to engage in rough and tumble play, they show prefrontal cortical development deficits that manifests behaviors that are related

to attention deficit disorders, which are then treated with medication. Jordan explained that adolescent boys who are often medicated for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) will find that their “natural proclivity” to engage in robust and troublesome acts of play is not appropriate for school environments where you’re supposed to sit, be quiet, and do the work, which is something students express via representative statements in the current study.

Instead, Dr. Jordan explained, that this restriction of play results in hyper-active behaviors, which could be linked to misbehaviors displayed in the classroom that result in exclusionary discipline. He argued that young people should be provided regular opportunities to run around outside until “they fall over half exhausted,” which is probably why a collective of students with disabilities were iterating the notion that Fresh Air Friday was something that was highly motivating factor to accrue PBIS rewards. In terms of student desires for play, Dr. Peterson explained that instead of providing opportunities to play, especially for medicated students diagnosed with ADHD, instead students are restrained in classrooms, thus impeding their exploratory systems (Panskepp, 2011), which Peterson described as the activity which is facilitated by the dopaminergic agonist (i.e., that’s the ADHD medication, which suppresses the play function). Jordan then explained that most kids around the age of four learn how to regulate their aggression and learn how to engage in “fictional play structure” with other kids.

Essentially, Dr. Peterson explained that young people should learn how to cooperate and compete, which is not something being learned in the ISS classroom. Jordan then discussed the advantage of having a “well-socialized disagreeable” young adult because they’re likely to become forward moving agents of change, and if they have not learned these regulatory behaviors by the age of four, their peers reject them, which is something that was noted in a number of representative statements such as Mariah who alluded her peers to “class clowns”

who simply want “attention” in the classroom, which leads them to be disruptive and disrespectful to the teacher. If a child has not learned to self-regulate aggression and emotions because they have not been provided with proper discipline structures, or it is missing because of cycles of poverty. Peterson argues that the child is going to “experience nothing but rejection from other children, and false smiles from other parents and adults,” and so being subjugated to isolation within the ISS classroom where students are deprived of academic learning opportunities and rich social interactions appears to be highly unethical and discouraged. Peterson described those students as one that grow up to be anti-social, further explaining that they’re probably already aggressive, and those tendencies do not decrease. On a final note, Dr. Peterson discussed the level of aggression that spikes in young adolescent boys when their testosterone levels rise as a result of puberty, which we see happen in middle school-aged students. Consequently, Peterson explained males are most notably criminals between the ages of roughly sixteen and about twenty-five, and it matches what he called the “creativity curve,” which spikes around that age-span, and the criminality line correlates with the spike in creativity.

Based on this understanding, exclusionary discipline, especially in-school suspension (ISS), does not appear to be conducive to accelerating students to self-actualization, where creativity is in the highest realm of Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1943). Thus, the practice of exclusionary discipline is likely to be restrictive to the physiological development of students and their psychological emotional and motivational systems, especially those with disabilities that may have internalized aggression, frustration, and depression. These issues may be exasperated from being over-exposed to punitive discipline that places them in isolated environments away from their peer groups where exposure to rich social interactions are severed. In line with Dr. Peterson’s explanation of the development of aggression and anti-social

behaviors, including affirmations to these notions made by participants such as their collective desires for freedom, play, and dialogue, recommendations for PBIS rewards and school discipline policy that cater to these needs are highly encouraged.

Student Suggestions for School Improvement

In reference to student suggestions for school improvement, a few participants held ideas for a new classroom where students could engage in dialogue and academic instruction with the same teachers that they had issues with prior. These insights further incited the researcher to learn more about restorative practices, which are deeply rooted in providing avenues for reconciliation between teachers and students. More specifically, based on Anne's desire for scaffolding and Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) (Vygotsky, 1978), it is appropriate to consider implementing High Leverage Practices (HLP) in inclusion settings within the building.

The Potential to Increase Self-Regulation in Students with Disabilities by Implementing Interconnected Systems Frameworks (ISF) to Introduce Mindfulness Interventions Using High Leverage Practices (HLP). In the late 1970's, Vygotsky found that modeling behaviors while providing verbal instructions for students through cooperative or collaborative discussions allows them to understand the tasks, actions, or instructions, which based on student experiences does not happen in the ISS classroom (Vygotsky, 1978). These opportunities can be provided if teachers are trained to properly implement High-Leverage Practices (HLP) with students with disabilities such as direct social, emotional, and behavioral supports, and explicit instruction that incorporates flexible grouping and strategies to support student engagement like constructive feedback and scaffolding (McCray et al., 2017). The use of HLP are in line with Anne's desire for more hands-on learning opportunities, dialogue, and scaffolding provided by teachers (see p. 246). Although basic implementation of HLP can lead to

improved student academic and social outcomes (Akalın & Sucuoglu, 2015; Ball & Forzani, 2009; Cohen, 2015; Grossman, Hammerness, & McDonald, 2009; McLeskey & Brownell, 2015), the researcher is under the impression that additional mental health supports need to be introduced to students with disabilities.

Based on student representative statements from the current study, a collective of students suggest using music to calm students and help them focus in the classroom, which should be considered to help promote self-regulation in students with disabilities using Interconnected Systems Frameworks (ISF). According to Barret, et al. 2013, Interconnected Systems Frameworks (ISF) are introduced in schools to implement education and mental health systems in schools to improve educational outcomes of students (Barrett et al. 2013). Existing research on cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) suggests Mindfulness Music Intervention (MMI) has shown to increase self-regulatory abilities in students with disabilities (Mitchell et al. 2015; Antonietti et al. 2018). Mindfulness practices are often implemented by immersing students in guided meditation and teaching them strategies that inspire calmness and self-regulating behaviors to reduce stress, which has shown to reduce office disciplinary referrals on the middle grades level (Martinez & Zhao, 2018), including students with disabilities (Chimiklis et al. 2018; Fuchs et al. 2017; Haydicky, 2012). According to Taylor, et al. (2004), cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is targeted training to help the individual with ADHD to develop a more planned and reflective approach to thinking and behaving, including social interactions. Recent findings from the work of Mitchell et al. (2015) reveals that CBT in the form of mindfulness practices can help individuals diagnosed with ADHD increase self-regulation skills.

In terms of interventions and alternatives to punitive school discipline, Martinez and Zhao (2018) performed a quasi-experimental study to explore the impact of mindfulness training

on middle grades students' office disciplinary referrals. Their goal was to determine if mindfulness training would decrease office discipline referrals for middle grades students. The students used a Muse brain-sensing headband paired with an app to train them to focus on calming and self-regulation of their behaviors. Findings reveal that there was a statistically significant correlation between using the headband for three minutes a week and a lower number of times students were sent to the office for behavior redirection. Limitations included a small sample size.

Therefore, the implementation of ISF to introduce MMI using HLP with students with disabilities seems practical and rationale based on the outcomes of the current study, which suggest students with disabilities are hyper-active and desire environments that foster calmness. Additional implications of the findings from the current study suggest that the school needs to provide additional safeguards surrounding their PBIS framework for students with disabilities. This can be accomplished by integrating current PBIS Pyramid of Interventions with restorative practices. This would require updating the current intervention model by integrating restorative circles as an intervention for students with disabilities who have reached a third conduct point (see Appendix T).

Furthermore, implications of findings associated from student desires and suggestions for school improvement are considered. The researcher also explains what can be done to redeliver PBIS to staff and students to clear up misconceptions and increase fidelity of implementation, which were discovered based on findings from the current study. Finally, ideas for redefining the role of the ISS classroom and new protocols for the ISS teacher are provided after considering representative statements and visual representations that indicate the current environment is not one conducive to the academic and social learning of students with disabilities.

Providing Alternatives to Punitive Discipline for Students with Disabilities.

Alternatives to punitive discipline (i.e., in-school suspension, out-school suspension, detention, and silent lunch) may help the school decrease discipline disparities facing students with disabilities, which can be integrated into Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) using restorative practices (Costello, et al. 2009). According to Costello et al. (2009), from their Restorative Practices Handbook, restorative practice is response to punitive discipline which allows individuals in schools to develop relationships while restoring a sense of community where students feel connected to the school in a positive manner. Pavelka (2013) describes restorative practice as one vital method for improving school culture by addressing disciplinary standards and creating a process that peacefully solves the issue of conflict and misbehavior.

Many districts have started adopting alternative approach to punitive school discipline by integrating restorative practices (RP) into their schools (Guckenburg et al. 2016). Costello et al. (2009) believe that restorative practices allow individuals in schools to develop relationships through reconciliation while restoring a sense of community where students feel connected to the school in a positive manner. Pavelka (2013) describes restorative justice as one vital method for improving school culture by addressing disciplinary standards and creating a process that peacefully solves the issue of conflict and misbehavior. The implementation of restorative practices in schools holds the potential to disrupt the school-to-prison pipeline, improve student-teacher relationships, foster positive conflict resolution through meaningful dialogue, and improve academic and social achievements of students (Ortega et al. 2016), which based on student desires for dialogue seems like a logical step for the middle school in the current study to consider.

In order to integrate restorative practices, Pavelka (2013) encourages administration and teachers to be aware of the three main components to restorative justice: (1) repairing harm, (2) reducing risk, and (3) empowering the community. School administrators and teachers can use collaborative solutions to address disciplinary violations such as peer mediation, peer/accountability boards, conferencing, and circles, a process where the wrongdoer and those affected by the occurrence work together to discuss how they were affected by the situation as well as converse on difficult topics and problem resolution (Pavelka, 2013). These steps were considered during the creation of new tools and guidelines to help school leaders and teachers integrate restorative practices into their existing PBIS framework (modified PBIS Pyramid of Interventions with Restorative Practices for Students with Disabilities is included, see Appendix S).

Opportunities to Engage in Free-time and Play

Additionally, suggestions for PBIS included desires for more opportunities to engage in free time and play, as well as reparations of PBIS rewards. Some students felt like their peers would behave better if teachers took away PBIS rewards from them. Although this practice of reparations would be practical and relative to the real-world, it is the anti-PBIS. Moreover, Mariah mentioned that it has become difficult for students to track how many PBIS rewards they're earning because the entire process is digital. She advocated for physical transactions, which she interprets as more meaningful for students when they are provided rewards for behaving well in class.

Lastly, students also provide suggestions for teacher practice, which was highly relative to ethical care practices, mindfulness, and the use of dialogue to solve problems. Students were highly expressive that teachers stop yelling at students because it makes students not like them.

They would also like their teachers to follow PBIS Pyramid of Interventions because they have internalized that some teachers are relying on exclusionary discipline in an unreasonable manner. At this time, the researcher believes that additional mental health supports should be implemented in the building based on the findings from this study that suggest students are hyper-active, loud, and engaging in undesirable and aggressive behaviors with teachers. The researcher has expounded upon the potential of integrating Interconnected Systems Frameworks (ISF) to increase student self-regulatory skills using mindfulness interventions embedded in High-Leverage Practices (HLP).

Limitations of Findings

Although the qualitative research, especially in the phenomenographic tradition, is valuable because it provides analysis of the context and processes involved in the phenomenon under study (Marton, 1981), it does have limitations. Therefore, it is very important that the researcher rely on observations to triangulate emerging findings, which is why the researcher conducted observations following predefined protocols (Creswell, 2007). To counter loss of validity, the researcher is also aware of social desirability that can occur from self-reporting, which is why he included visual representations as the metaphorical student artifacts regarding school discipline, including observations of the ISS classroom and inclusion classrooms. The study could have been enhanced by incorporating a mixed-methods design, which would allow the researcher to explore the perceptions of more students using a survey or other quantitative methods (Roeser & Eccles, 1998).

Further limitations to the study include performing a qualitative phenomenography in a large middle school with a primarily high Hispanic and Black student population living below the poverty level. Therefore, the outcomes illustrated here may not be generalizable to middle

schools with a difference in demographics or difference in environments (i.e., schools in higher socioeconomic areas, or schools with less diverse groups of students). Additionally, it would be beneficial to compile experiences and conceptions of more members of the school such as teachers, including the ISS classroom teacher, and building administrators surrounding school discipline and PBIS implementation to create a saturated outcome space. Equally noteworthy, the researcher's association to the school where he is an educator may also induce bias towards the study. Therefore, the researcher has explained his subjectivity, in which he discusses his own biases, in this dissertation. The researcher believes that a delimitation to this study is his own knowledge of the social actors within the research site, as well as his perceptions of PBIS implementation and school discipline of students with disabilities. He also relied on his ease of access to school discipline data, as well as direct lines of communication with the academic coach and school leadership. The researcher also found that his rapport with students put participants at ease, which seemingly allowed them to be more open and honest during interview sessions. At the same time, he is aware that his rapport with students may have also influenced their responses.

Implications of Findings for Educational Practice

The findings from this study have made it clear that exclusionary discipline and punitive threats serve as the antithesis to positive academic and social learning of students with disabilities, and perhaps even unethical when considering the intended implementation of Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) in the building. It is recommended that school leadership push for abolishing silent lunch because it is a personal punitive practice implemented by individual teachers that leads to cycles of frustration and aggression in students with disabilities, and it not a school wide PBIS initiative, which leads to improper

implementation of PBIS Pyramid of Interventions. The goal of the school should be to disrupt cycles of frustration-aggression by limiting or abolishing exclusionary discipline practices, or at the least, redefining the role of the ISS classroom and the protocols of the ISS teacher. It would be the prerogative of school leadership to discuss what can be done to improve the academic and social learning of students with disabilities in the ISS classroom. The team could consider providing collaboration time, professional development, and additional training amongst the ISS teacher and content area teachers within the building. This may help create dialogue amongst professionals, as well as help the ISS teacher garnish resources and gain curriculum insights to help improve the quality of instruction provided to students in the ISS classroom.

Ultimately, this out of sight mentality must be interrupted in order to ensure all students have an opportunity for engaging in pro-social and academic learning environments. In terms of implications of findings for educational practice, the researcher has designed guidelines and protocols for helping school leaders integrate restorative practice (i.e., restorative conferencing) by modifying existing PBIS Pyramid of Interventions as Restorative PBIS Pyramid of Interventions (see Appendix S), accompanied with a restorative conference script (see Appendix V), and a self-monitoring tool created for classroom teachers (i.e., general educators and special education teachers) (see Appendix U). These tools have been designed to provide additional safeguards to potentially reduce discipline disparities facing students with disabilities and they are intended to help disrupt cycles of frustration-aggression in students with disabilities.

Disrupting Cycles of Aggression-Frustration by Implementing PBIS Restorative Pyramid of Interventions for Students with Disabilities

The recommendation for the school is to integrate additional Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS) to their existing framework of Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports

(PBIS) programming, which can be achieved by implementing restorative conferences (Wachtel et al. 2010). The school should consider revising current PBIS Pyramid of Interventions to include restorative practices, which would be in line with student desires for dialogue for reconciliation. Restorative circles added into the current PBIS Pyramid of Interventions can help prevent students from feeling shame which causes internalization of primary deviance that impacts student identity through stigmatic conditions (Costello et al. 2009). The use of restorative practices as a response to wrong doings eliminated the chance for repeat offenses by students (Costello et al. 2009).

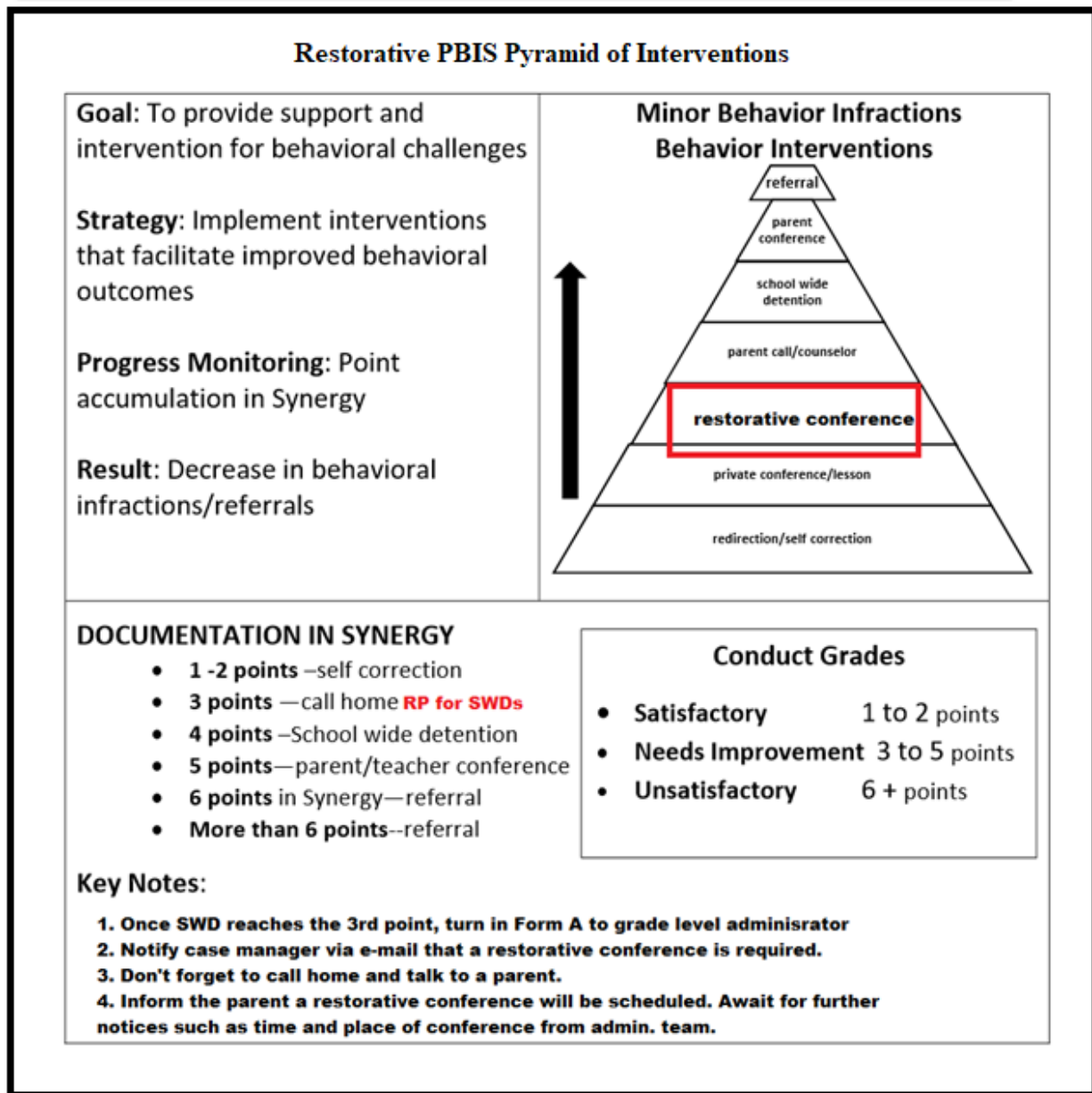
Restorative practices call for disciplinary action that focuses on consequences instead of punishment and the goals for addressing wrongdoings should maintain the following as suggested by Costello et al. (2009) is to accomplish the following:

1. Try and foster an understanding of the impact of the behavior.
2. Seek to repair the harm that was done to the people and relationships relative to the incident.
3. Attend to the needs of victim(s) and others in the school.
4. Avoid imposing on student's intentional pain, embarrassment, or discomfort.
5. Become active with involving others as much as possible.
6. Include the teacher in the restorative process.

Specifically, the PBIS Pyramid of Interventions currently used by teachers in the school has been modified (see Figure 5.1, p. 268).

Figure 5.1

Restorative PBIS Pyramid of Interventions



Note. This image is a modified version of the current PBIS Pyramid of Interventions being implemented school wide. Notable changes are the red marks, as well as key notes on the bottom of the form.

According to Figure 5.1, when students with disabilities reach their third conduct point, which warrants a phone call home, restorative circles should be implemented, and Form A should be submitted to administration (see p. 248). Teachers in the inclusion classroom, which normally includes the general education teacher and the special education teacher should be completing the self-monitoring tool on a weekly basis (see PBIS Restorative Practice Self-Monitoring Tool, Appendix U; Figure 5.2, below).

Figure 5.2

PBIS Restorative Practice Self-Monitoring Tool

PBIS Restorative Practice: Conduct-Point/Rewards Self-Monitoring Tool							FORM A	
Teacher Name:					Week of			
Class Period	# of Rewards Given End of Period					Notes/Comments		What negative behaviors have been observed?
	M	T	W	TH	F	Conduct Points	Student Name(s)	
Total Points End of Week						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If < 10 in any class period, adjust for following week. • Identify students that are displaying positive behaviors. • Touch base with students with disabilities 		
Conduct Points end of Week						Reminders Update Synergy Regularly and Follow: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-2 Points: Self-Correction • 3 Points: Call home & forward names to administrator to begin Restorative Practice process. 		
Restorative Practice Procedures								
Names of students who received three or more conduct points: 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____ 6. _____					Any student with IEPs? Yes No Students with IEPs: 1. _____ 3. _____ Contact case manager: BIP? PSP?		Restorative Process: 1. Has parent been called? 2. E-mail administrator names of students. 3. Wait for Admin. Directives for Restorative Conference (i.e., date, location, facilitator)	
If any student has accrued three conduct points, turn this form into grade level administrator.								

Note. A larger image of the self-monitoring tool (Form A) is accessible in Appendix U.

Form A has been designed to increase accountability and transparency with tracking conduct points for students with disabilities, as well as rewarding positive behaviors (see p. 269). It should be turned into administration once any student with a disability has reached the third conduct point, which warrants restorative circles. Once the administrator receives the form, this individual is responsible for scheduling restorative circles between the teacher and the student. The facilitator for this meeting can include the child's case manager, school counselor, ISS teacher, or the administrator themselves. The case manager must be notified once a child has reached the third conduct point to ensure that the child's IEP is being implemented properly, this includes implementation of a Behavior Intervention Plan, or Positive Support Plan, if it is a part of the child's IEP. Form A has a location for recording this information. Moreover, the case manager should contact the parent and inform them of the time and place the restorative conference will take place, and they should be asked to join in the process.

During the conference, the facilitator will follow the Restorative Conference Facilitator's Script, labeled Form B (see Appendix V), which follows a script that has been modified based on the work of Wachtel et al. (2010). Form B includes fourteen steps that the facilitator needs to take with the teacher and student during the restorative conference. An agreement needs to be reached towards the end of the conference, including a place for signatures of all parties. It is likely that this process will help bring teachers and students together to talk about problems that have occurred in the classroom, which will create pathways to dialogue for reconciliation. If implemented with fidelity, this process modified framework may reduce school discipline disparities facing students with disabilities.

Based on representative statements from students, they desire opportunities for dialogue to achieve reconciliation; therefore, the restorative conference may decrease detention and disciplinary referrals because this intervention is provided at the third conduct point.

Figure 5.3

Restorative Conference Facilitator’s Script

Restorative Conference Facilitator’s Script	FORM B
Date: _____ Student Name: _____	Teacher _____
Facilitator:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Welcome, as you know, my name is (your name) and I will be facilitating this conference. 2. <i>Introduce each conference participant and state his/her relationship with one another.</i> 3. Thanks for coming. I am sure this is difficult, but this is an opportunity for all involved to repair harm that has been done. 4. This conference will focus on an incident that happened on (state date, place, and nature of offense without elaborating). 5. It is important to understand that we will focus on what _____ did and how that unacceptable behavior affected others. 6. We are not here to decide whether _____ is/are good or bad. We want to see how people have been affected and find a way to repair the harm that has resulted? Is everyone clear? 7. I must inform you that you do not have to participate in this conference and are free to leave at any time. If you do leave, the matter may lead to an administrative referral using school disciplinary policy. 8. <i>Say to Student:</i> This matter may be finalized if you participate in a positive manner and comply with the conference agreement. Do you understand? 9. We’ll start with Student <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What happened? 2. What were you thinking about at the time? 3. What have you thought about since the incident? 4. What do you think has been affected by your actions? 5. How have they been affected? 10. Teacher/Peer <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. What was your reaction at the time of the incident? 11. How do you feel about what happened? 12. What has been the hardest thing for you? 13. Outcome: What would you like from today’s conference? (Reaching an agreement). At this point the participants discuss what should be in the final agreement. 14. Before I prepare the written agreement, is there anything else anyone would like to add? 	
Written Agreement	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px; width: 100%;"></div>
Signatures of all members of conference members:	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> Teacher _____ Student _____ Facilitator _____ Date: _____ </div>
Closing the conference: Thank you all for coming. Good job today. I will be providing you all copies of the agreement.	

Note. Form B (script) is adopted and modified from the work Wachtel et al. (2010). A larger image that is more legible is provided in Appendix V.

The facilitator is required to go through the entire script to ensure fidelity of the conference. A written agreement should be completed by both parties, and all members of the conference should sign and date the form. After the conference, a copy of Form B should be made and provided to the case manager and grade level administrator. It is hopeful that this process will provide additional oversight ensuring that all students are being provided with proper implementation of PBIS Pyramid of Interventions. Moreover, research question three generated student ideas for improving school discipline and PBIS implementation, which is discussed in the following sub-section.

Student Insights for School Improvement

Based on representative statements from students regarding their desired learning environments and suggestions for school improvement, it was uncovered that students are interested in freedom, play, and dialogue, which can be administered using PBIS rewards. Moreover, redelivery of PBIS to staff and students is recommended because of fidelity issues relative to implementation and misconceptions of PBIS conduct-point system and school-wide expectations held by students with disabilities.

Upgrading PBIS Rewards Based on Student Desires for Freedom, Play, and Dialogue

According to representative statements in accordance with category nine (desired learning environments of students with disabilities), a collective of student participants expressed desires for calmness, freedom and play, and dialogue. Each grade level could designate a classroom, or a computer lab and provide students to buy their way into a lounge where they can listen to appropriate music, talk to friends, and work in groups, facilitated by a teacher,

administrator, or a certified staff member. Additionally, more opportunities to exert their energy should be provided.

Redelivery of PBIS to Staff and Students Based on Findings

Schools interested in ensuring teachers and students understand the role of Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS), will abide by Shuster et al. (2000) recommendations to supplement student training with visual supports, and multiple opportunities to practice should be provided to help students with disabilities learn, which are in line with findings from the current study that reveal students would like videos (i.e., Xander) and songs (i.e., Kyle) to help them learn about the role of PBIS in the building, which includes conduct-point system and school-wide expectations. In terms of staff training, it is important that administrators follow up on teacher implementation of PBIS Pyramid of Interventions. More importantly, it is recommended that inclusion teachers are delivered a training on how to implement the newly designed Restorative PBIS Practice Pyramid of Interventions, which should be implemented to cater to the needs of students with disabilities (see Appendix T).

Redefining the Purpose of the ISS Classroom and New Protocols for the ISS Teacher

Based on the understanding that the in-school suspension (ISS) teacher is showing dispirited attitudes toward fulfilling his obligations as the instructor in the ISS classroom, it would be beneficial to discuss how to integrate collaboration and professional development for this individual. Moreover, it would it is also important to consider calling this place the in-school suspension, or ISS classroom because of the pre-existing stigma that has been associated with the environment, especially if students that are sent to this location are being perceived by peers as “bad kids,” and adults in the building as “trouble-makers.” The entire conception of the ISS classroom could be substitute based on student desires for dialogue and reconciliation. It could

also be a place where students go to engage in restorative conferences with the ISS teacher as facilitator between teacher and student using the scripts and guidelines provided.

Recommendations for Future Research

Based on the summary of findings and implications for educational practice, future research in this field should explore the role of school discipline practices and PBIS implementation by relying on larger samples of students with disabilities at the middle-grades level. The outcomes of the current study have revealed the unique lived experiences of fifteen students with disabilities that have unreasonably experienced exclusionary discipline, including their desires for transforming the school to meet their individual needs, which may hold promising outcomes on both academic and social development of students. Students in this study have also provided insights regarding teacher behaviors in terms of implementing Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS), which will be used to inform future professional development and redelivery of PBIS training, including the integration of restorative practices in the PBIS Pyramid of Interventions.

In order to generate a better understanding of teacher behaviors in terms of PBIS implementation and school discipline, it would be beneficial to shift perspectives and generate teacher perceptions by employing a similar qualitative study. Furthermore, it is critical that student voices continue be celebrated and that critical consciousness is fostered by recruiting students with disabilities as participants in future studies to learn more about the dynamics of PBIS implementation and school discipline. Moreover, since the school has started implementing Second Step, it is vital to see what influence, if any, it is having on students social and emotional skills, as well as levels of fidelity in terms of implementation. It is also critical to uncover more of what is occurring in ISS classrooms, and since the job of the ISS teacher is now a classified

position, the researcher wants to know the influence it is having on students' learning and behaviors across the district. Finally, since students' physiological needs appear to be an additional factor that may be restricting them from moving toward self-actualization, a study designed to explore their home-lives and discipline structures outside of the school building seems warranted and necessary.

Shifting Perspectives

It is important to seek perspectives from teachers since this study primarily focused on student voices surrounding school discipline and PBIS implementation. The use of varied voices in qualitative research is also recommended by McDaniel et al. (2018). Although student voices are a unique source of qualitative data that can inform decision making, which should be pursued further based on the implications of findings, it would also be wise to tap into teacher perceptions of self and decision-making within PBIS classrooms. In order to continually advance that tradition of phenomenographic inquiry, a similar qualitative approach could turn to interviews and visual representations to elicit teachers' perceptions of the same topics and issues that were presented in the current study. Data from this process can be used as a source to promote triangulation that may either affirm or refute findings from the current study. By tapping into teacher voices, the researcher can expect a better picture of teachers' perceptions of self, especially for understanding why they may display negative behaviors such as yelling/belittling students, as well as their reasons for relying on silent lunch as a form of personal punishment. This future study would also provide a better understanding, and perhaps even advance the model of cycles of frustration-aggression associated with student experiences of exclusionary discipline and punitive threats as promoted in the current study. Future studies should be posed

to further rationalize the need for mindfulness training for teachers and students, including High-Leverage Practices (HLP) as a form of instruction in inclusion classrooms.

Inspiring Critical Consciousness in Underserved Youth

The current study inspired critical consciousness in students with disabilities, and in doing so, it required students to think critically about their experiences in exclusionary spaces and PBIS classrooms. This data collection process pushed students to think about their desired learning environments, including suggestions for school improvement, and as a result we now understand that fifteen students with disabilities desire environments conducive to calmness, freedom and play, and dialogue for reconciliation. Furthermore, in terms of school improvement, it has been learned that students request more dialogue and one-on-one time with teachers where scaffolding and modeling is provided to learn academic content.

Exploring Desired Learning Environments of Students with Disabilities using Photo Voice: Participatory Action Research

Based on the valuable insights provided by students and the goal to disrupt cycles of frustration-aggression, which appears to be exasperated by events and experiences related to exclusionary discipline, it would be wise to inspire critical consciousness in underserved youth. The researcher recommends the use of visual representations in the form of photo voice to further explore perceptions of students with disabilities surrounding school discipline and classroom practices. According to Adams and Brooks (2014), PhotoVoice is an empowering method of combining photography and storytelling with the purpose of learning about student cultures by allowing them to voice opinions and beliefs by engaging students to write and use art to express their experiences, conceptions, and perceptions of a phenomenon.

Evaluation of Second Step, a SEL Program Currently Implemented in the School

The middle school that took part in the current study has recently started the implementation of Second Step, a Social Emotional Learning (SEL) program. At this time, the researcher believes it would be beneficial to explore the outcomes of Second Step in an evaluative manner. For instance, what are the levels of fidelity in terms of Second Step implementation? Based on students' and teachers' experiences and conceptions, what influence, if any, is Second Step having on their mental health, self-regulation, and behaviors? What more do teachers require in terms of professional development to better implement Second Step? What lessons in Second Step would be more practical and valuable for students based on their behaviors and individual needs?

What's Really Going on in the ISS Classroom?

Based on findings from the current study, which suggest that the ISS classroom is non-conducive to the academic and social learning of students, the researcher is interested in understanding if students with disabilities in other schools with similar contexts are also subjected to loss of instruction and severance from academically rich and social environments as a form of punitive discipline. An examination of why sixty percent of all students that participated in this study are failing their academic classes would also be practical because there must be additional factors outside of experiences with exclusionary discipline that is contributing to academic failure (see Table 4.0 for student participant profiles, p. 91). It would be beneficial to select about five students with disabilities with records of office disciplinary referrals in schools across the county. This would allow the researcher to achieve a larger sample of student perceptions surrounding the implications of the ISS classroom, role of the ISS teacher, and students' academic and social development.

Moreover, future researchers should be mindful for upholding ethical standards when describing the role of the ISS teacher based on student perceptions as was done in the current study. It was learned that students will provide data that may be disconcerting to teachers, other students, and staff members in the building, and so it is critical to shift through data with an asset-based lens. It may also be beneficial to seek the perceptions, experiences, and conceptions of the ISS teacher surrounding the ISS classroom. For example, probing into their individual needs and suggestions for improving the academic and social learning of students with disabilities should serve to be highly beneficial. On a policy level, the implications surrounding the change from the ISS teaching position from a certified to a classified position should be explored. Outcomes from that study, can be used to inform educational practice and policy.

Investigating the Physiological Needs of Students with Disabilities in Title I Schools

Findings from this study suggests students are experiencing physiological setbacks in the realm of sleep deprivation. Accordingly, I find it imperative to explore the physiological needs of students with disabilities in poverty on a local level. There are many methods to explore this problem. I recommend continuing the use of the phenomenographic tradition because it reveals personal and real-life experiences of individuals regarding the phenomenon (Marton, 1981). A mixed method study also could be used to achieve a larger sample of student participants, which would help with triangulation and validity and reliability of findings.

Future practitioner researchers, or scholars interested in understanding the physiological, psychodynamics, and emotional processes of students with disabilities should plan to identify students that reveal patterns of sleeplessness and apathetic behaviors by exploring the influence of teacher practice and home-life on academic and social learning. It is recommended that they

choose five students and five parents or guardians for this recommended phenomenographic study.

Researcher's Reflections

In retrospect, I believe that the adoption of a phenomenographic tradition to elicit perceptions of students to explore their own experiences within learning environments helps achieve critical consciousness in young people. Middle grades students can serve as a highly unique and informative sources of information, and those interested in promoting academic and social learning, as well as self-regulatory behaviors in students with disabilities living in poverty, should follow suit. Furthermore, the use of ATLAS.ti assisted well with organizing primary documents and coding data, as well as producing network graphs and views that became essential to creating and further explaining categorical descriptions that emerged during analysis. This qualitative study may also serve as a cohesive framework to assist future doctoral candidates considering the tradition of phenomenographical research. Moreover, this spiritual and cognitively demanding quest has allowed me to enter in higher realms of intellectual competence and self-realization, and it has armed with data that can further allow me to advocate on behalf of students with disabilities that are consistently overrepresented in school discipline.

I would like to mention that there were some moments of epiphany that struck me during the data collection process, and especially while performing data analysis. I quickly realized that I had probably selected a few too many participants for a solo phenomenographical mission. It was not much longer before I realized that I was performing three studies in one. Fortunately, I was able to learn a lot about the interconnected relationships between students with disabilities, teachers, and their experiences with and conceptions of school discipline and PBIS implementation. Furthermore, I was astonished by some of the well-articulated, shockingly

mature and resonating statements made by student participants in this study. They have provided unique insights that can inform and rationalize the selection of targeted and relevant educational reform. Their representative statements and visual representations allowed me to sit back and analyze how discipline policy and practices, including the implementation PBIS may be negatively influencing the relationships between students and teachers. This allowed me to come up with a few pragmatic resolutions and considerations to educational practice.

Armed with my myriad arrangement and selection of theoretical frameworks that served as tools to make sense of this journey, I am now able to conspire towards implementing innovative practices that cater more to the desires and learning needs of students with disabilities, especially in response to problematic classroom behaviors. In the future, if I am to consider using the phenomenographical tradition to perform research independently, I believe it would be wise to reduce the number of participants to around ten, which is an appropriate number for phenomenographical qualitative studies (Trigwell, 2006). In addition, I would focus on one or two research questions, which would reduce the logistical aspects of the outcome space, as well as create a more cohesive report of topics and issues as they relate to the findings.

Finally, the completion of this dissertation has allowed me to improve upon my personal pedagogy and realize that understanding the implications psychodynamics (i.e., the relationship between and conscious mental and emotional forces that determine personality and motivation) and moral education is needed to create a more relevant public educational system. Although it is uncertain what the dynamics of home-life are in terms of students' physiological dispositions, the influence of punitive discipline and inadequate classroom practices, including teacher infidelity of Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) implementation appear to be leading some students with disabilities to adopt apathetic behaviors and resentment towards

learning and adults in the building. Furthermore, based on representative statements and visual representations from the current study, I was able to formulate a model to explain cycles of frustration-aggression appear to be associated with student experiences of exclusionary discipline and punitive threats, which could impair students' process-emotions and attitudes making it challenging for them to engage in higher levels of competence and attainment towards self-actualization.

Ultimately, my findings revealed that the practice of punitive school discipline appears to be an unethical and an irresponsible approach to handling student misbehavior in the building. The implementation of punitive disciplinary protocols even if they're embedded in Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) such as detention and ISS should be disrupted and transformed to meet the needs and desires of students with disabilities. This can be done by implementing Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS) that includes PBIS combined with restorative practice, and perhaps, mindfulness-based interventions and cognitive behavioral therapies such as Mindfulness Music Intervention (MMI) (Antonietti et al. 2018). The children are yearning for real learning environments that offer calmness, freedom and play, and reconciliation through dialogue, and it is the responsibility of the school to help get them there.

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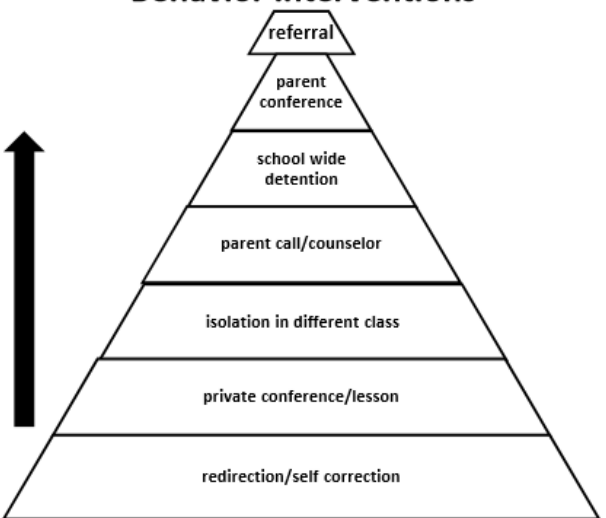
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Appendix A

PBIS Pyramid of Interventions

<p>Goal: To provide support and intervention for behavioral challenges</p> <p>Strategy: Implement interventions that facilitate improved behavioral outcomes</p> <p>Progress Monitoring: Point accumulation in Synergy</p> <p>Result: Decrease in behavioral infractions/referrals</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Minor Behavior Infractions Behavior Interventions</p> 
<p>DOCUMENTATION IN SYNERGY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 -2 points –self correction • 3 points –call home • 4 points –School wide detention • 5 points—parent/teacher conference • 6 points in Synergy—referral • More than 6 points--referral <p>Key Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Minimum of two behavior interventions during class period. --Students should not receive multiple points within one class period. --Continue documenting points if student reaches more than 6 points. 	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Conduct Grades</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfactory 1 to 2 points • Needs Improvement 3 to 5 points • Unsatisfactory 6 + points </div>

Appendix B

Interview Protocols

School Discipline and PBIS Interview Questions for Students

1. Has anyone before this interview ever talked to you about your thoughts about school discipline before? What about PBIS?

2. Can you tell me what school discipline means?

Probe A: If students do not explain in-school suspension (ISS), or out-school suspension (OSS), ask them if they know what these two forms of school discipline mean.

3. What does it mean to be expelled from school?

4. Describe the last time you were served with ISS/OSS.

Probe A: What could the teacher have done instead of providing you with ISS/OSS?

5. Does going to ISS/OSS influence, or impact your ability to learn academic material (i.e. Science, Math, ELA, Reading, Social Studies)? **If so, how?**

Probe A: Does ISS/OSS influence, or impact your social skills (i.e. the ability to positively communicate and interact with others)? **If so, how?**

Probe C: Does being in ISS change how other students perceive you? If so, do you think experiencing ISS changes student identity? How?

6. Does experiencing ISS/OSS change how you view and feel about your teachers? **If so, how?**

Probe A: Have your teachers and/or administrators ever provided you with alternatives to school discipline when you've misbehaved in school? **If yes, what did they do?**

Probe B: Have you ever had to serve detention? **If so**, how did it make you feel? How did you feel about the teacher that sent you detention?

Probe C: Have you ever had to serve silent lunch? **If so**, how did it make you feel? How did you feel about the teacher that sent you to silent lunch?

7. How do you view, or feel towards teachers that frequently write up students with office referrals?

Probe A: What is your definition of a bad teacher?

Probe B: What is your definition of a good teacher?

8. What new ideas/suggestions do you have to help you/other students behave better in school?

9. If you had the power to change ISS, what would you do differently?

Probe A: What does that look like?

10. Why do some students behave (i.e. act good) in some teachers' classes, but not others?

Probe A: What do those teachers do differently?

Probe B: What else do you think your teachers and your school could be doing to help students learn and behave?

11. How do you feel and what do you think about when you first arrive to class?

Probe A: Can you describe what some teachers do that helps you focus and start learning when you enter their class?

Probe B: What could teachers do better to help you focus and start learning in the beginning of class?

12. What does your typical classroom look like at the end of the day when you walk into 6th, or 7th period?

Probe A: Describe the sound and perhaps what the students are doing.

Probe B: Describe what the teacher is doing.

Probe C: What are your feelings towards teachers that often have to deal with misbehaving students?

13. What would your ideal (i.e. perfect) classroom look and sound like?

14. Are you familiar with PBIS and can you tell me what it stands for?

Probe A: Why do you think your school uses PBIS?

Probe B: What can you tell me about school-wide expectations at your school?

Probe C: What does (school acronym) stand for?

15. Can you explain the PBIS reward system?

Probe A: In what ways do teachers use the PBIS conduct point system when responding to misbehaviors in the classroom?

Probe B: Do teachers consistently give students Tiger Cash?

Probe C: What happens after a student receives the first conduct point, ...second – all the way to 6 conduct points?

16. How would you improve PBIS?

Probe A: What would that look like, and how is it different than what is being done now?

Appendix C

Visual Representation Template: Prompt A

Metaphors for School Discipline [Student Version] Side A

Student ID: _____ Date: _____

Prompt 1: Draw a metaphor for what you think In School Suspension (ISS) looks like for you, or other students at your school.



Describe and explain the metaphor you drew for Prompt 1 by writing a brief summary:

Appendix D

Visual Representation Template: Prompt B

Metaphors for School Discipline [Student Version] Side B

Student ID: _____ **Date:** _____

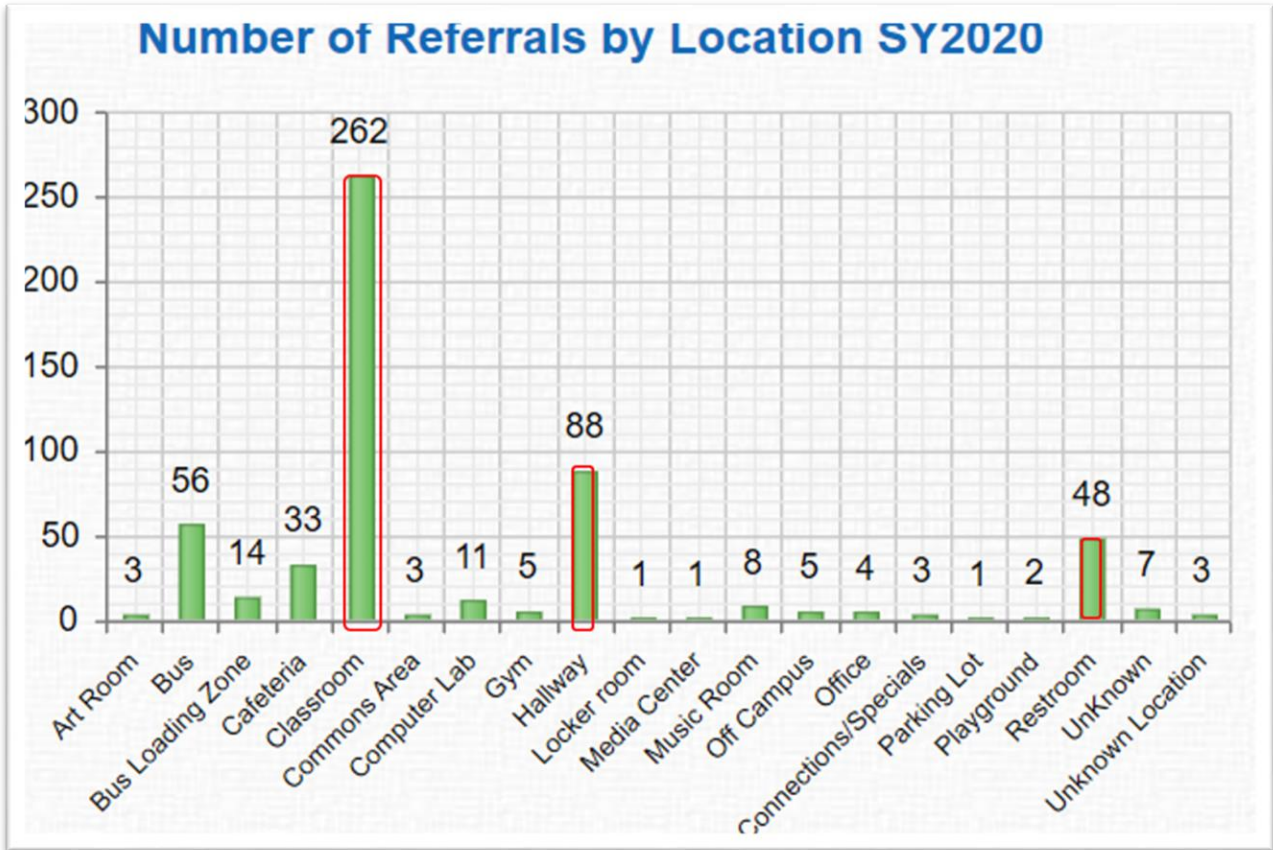
Prompt 2: Draw a metaphor for how you see or view teachers that frequently write disciplinary referrals that lead you, or other students to ISS/OSS/Expulsion.



Describe and explain the metaphor you drew for Prompt 2 by writing a brief summary:

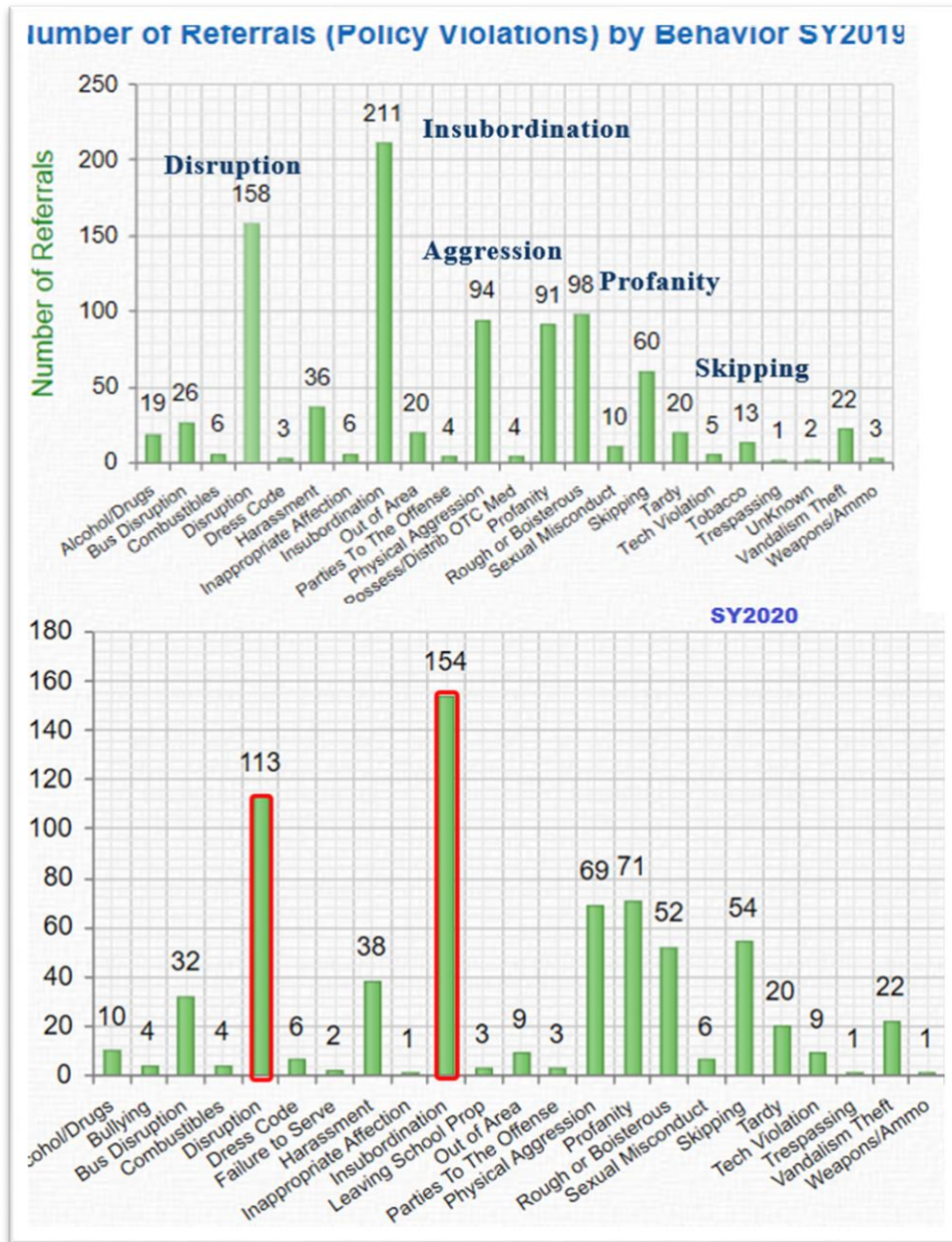
Appendix E

Disciplinary Referrals by Location



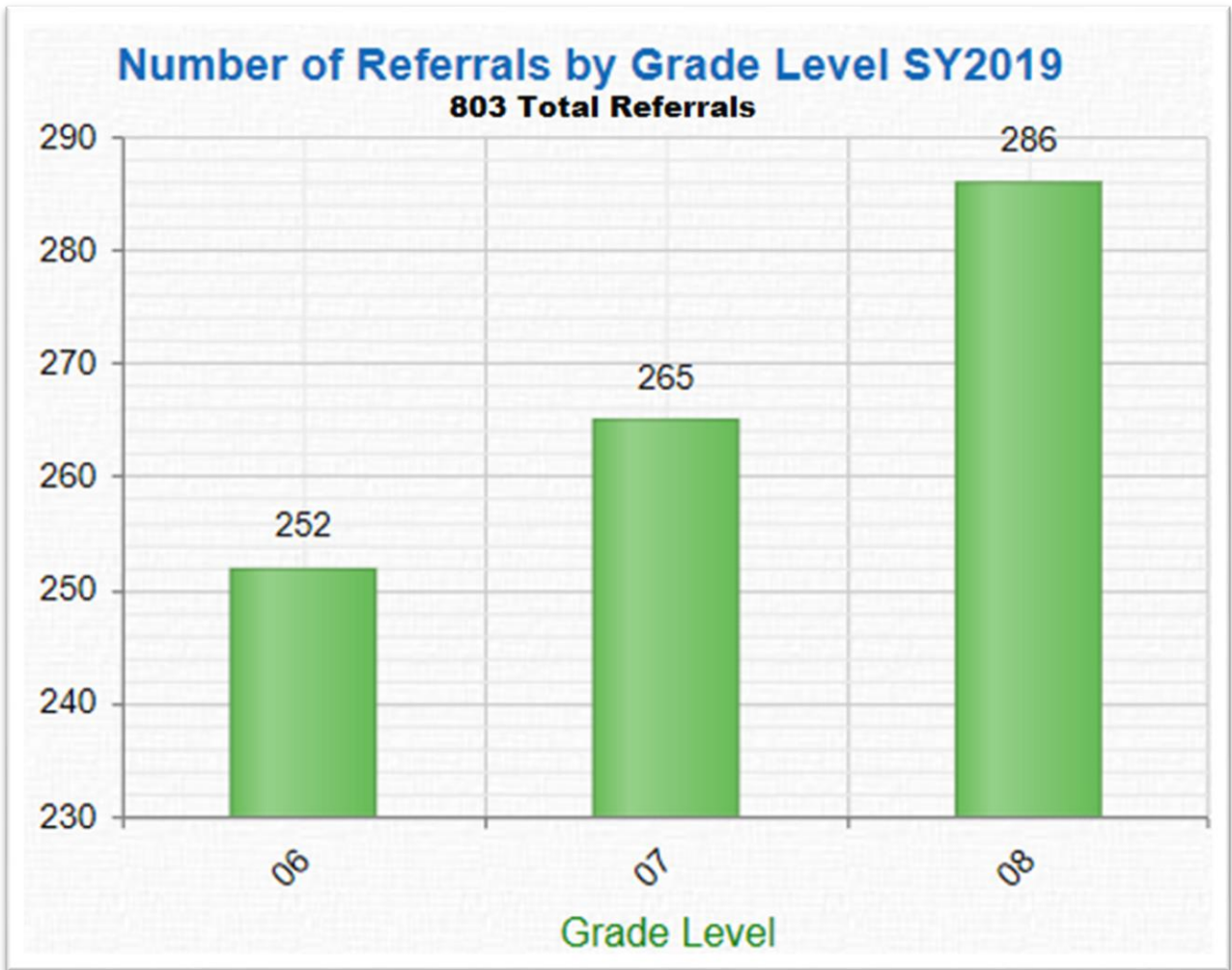
Appendix F

Disciplinary Referrals in Terms of Policy Violations



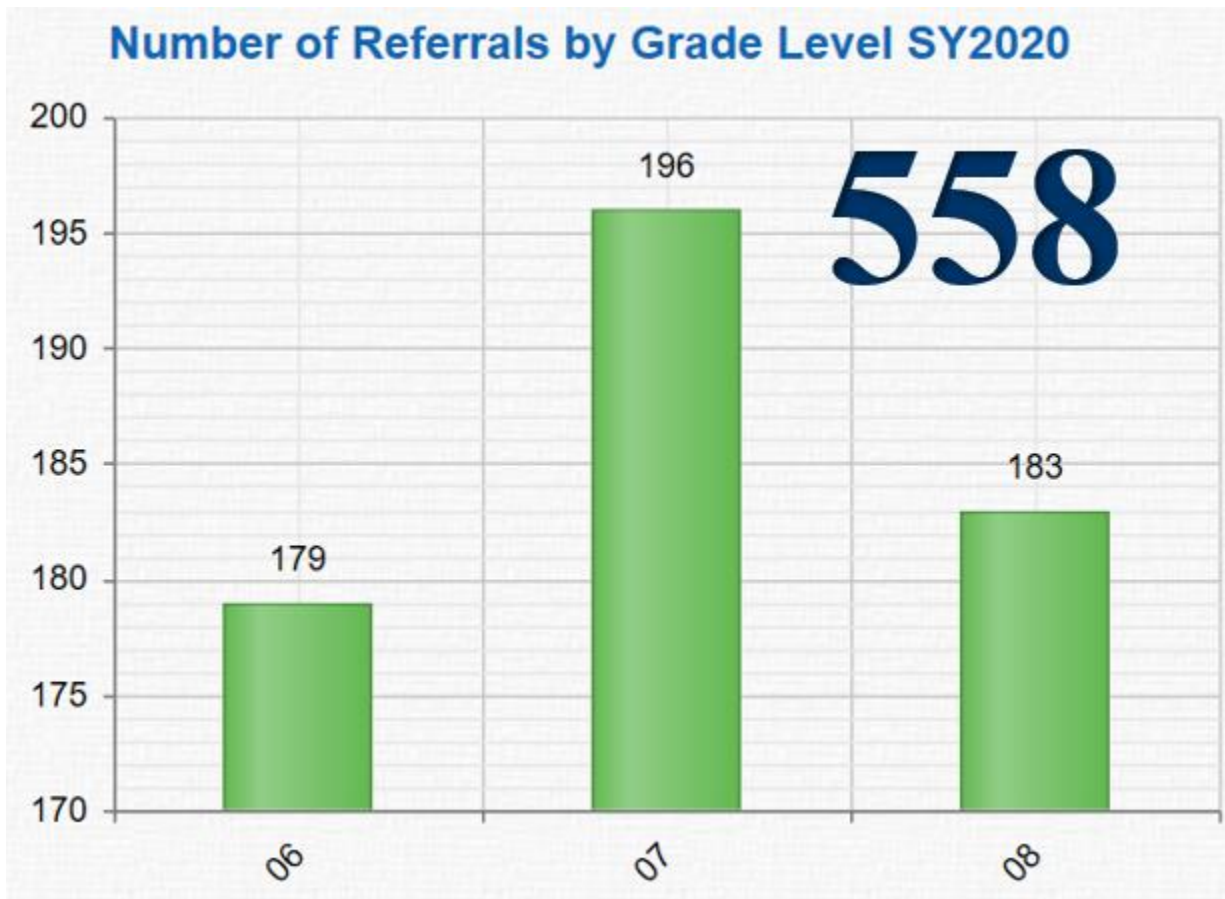
Appendix G

Total Number of Referrals from Previous School Year



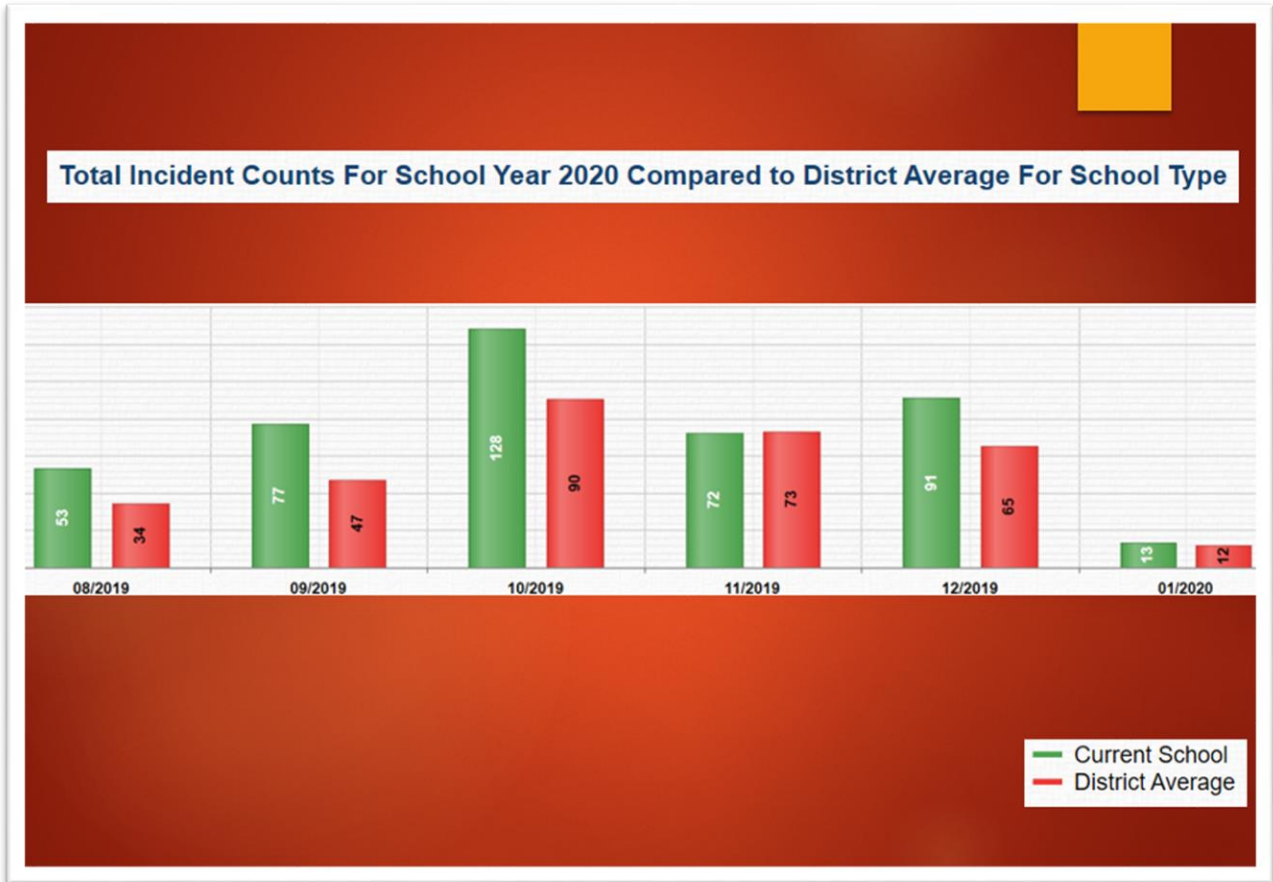
Appendix H

Current Number of Referrals Compared to Last School Year



Appendix I

Number of Current Referrals as Compared to School District



Appendix J***University IRB Approval***

Study #19-499: Experiences with and Conceptions of PBIS and School Discipline: A Phenomenographic Study of Students with Disabilities in One Middle-grades Setting

Hello Mr. Khan,

Your application for the new study listed above has been administratively reviewed. This study qualifies as exempt from continuing review under DHHS (OHRP) Title 45 CFR Part 46.101(b)(1) - Research in established or commonly accepted educational settings. The consent procedures described in your application are in effect. You are free to conduct your study.

NOTE: All surveys, recruitment flyers/emails, and consent forms must include the IRB study number noted above, prominently displayed on the first page of all materials.

Please note that all proposed revisions to an exempt study require submission of a Progress Report and IRB review prior to implementation to ensure that the study continues to fall within an exempted category of research. A copy of revised documents with a description of planned changes should be submitted to REDACTED for review and approval by the IRB.

Please submit a Progress Report to close the study once it is complete.

Thank you for keeping the board informed of your activities. Contact the IRB at REDACTED or

at REDACTED if you have any questions or require further information.

Sincerely,

REDACTED

Appendix K

School District IRB Approval

October, 15, 2019

Osman Khan

Your research project titled *Experiences with and Conceptions of PBIS and School Discipline: A Phenomenographic Study of Students with Disabilities in One Middle Grades Setting* has been approved. Listed below is the school where approval to conduct the research is complete. Please work with the school administrator to schedule administration of instruments or conduct interviews.

School

(REDACTED)

Should modifications or changes in research procedures become necessary during the research project, changes must be submitted in writing to the department of REDACTED prior to your implementation. At the conclusion of your research project, you are expected to submit a copy of your results to this office. Results cannot reference (REDACTED) County Schools and District Schools or departments.

Research files are not considered complete until results are received. If you have any questions regarding the process, contact my office at (REDACTED)

Sincerely,

REDACTED

Appendix L

Parent Consent Form

Osman Khan is conducting a research study at my child's school. My signature below indicates that I have read the information provided and have decided to allow my child to participate in this study titled, "Experiences with and Conceptions of PBIS and School Discipline: A Phenomenographic Study of Students with Disabilities in One Middle-grades Setting" to be conducted between the dates of October 15th, 2019 and December, 2020. I understand that the signature of the principal indicates they have agreed to participate in this research project.

I understand the purpose of the research will be to explore my child's experiences and understanding of PBIS implementation and school discipline. I understand that my child will participate in the research in the following type of activities:

1. My student will participate in an interview with the researcher.
2. This interview will be audio recorded to help the researcher interpret and transcribe responses.
3. Towards the end of the interview, your child will be asked to draw a metaphor describing his/her thoughts about school discipline.

A potential benefit of this study will be that your child will consider his/her experiences and understanding of Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) and school discipline, which will allow them to reflect on how these experiences have impacted their behaviors and learning using a critical lens. Our school relies on PBIS to encourage students to make positive decisions about behaviors during the school day. The mission at our school is to promote positive behavior in all school settings. Your child will discuss teacher behaviors, including personal

experiences with school discipline. He/she was selected as a participant because of the valuable insight he/she can contribute to exploring PBIS implementation and the nature school discipline at his/her school. Your child's input in this study will help to determine the next steps for improving PBIS implementation and school discipline.

By signing, I agree to the following conditions with the understanding that I can withdraw my child from the study at any time should I choose to discontinue participation.

- The identity of participants will be protected. Researcher will not interview your child alone – additional faculty member will be present. All information is confidential and will only be used for research purposes. Anonymity is assured. Additional steps to maintain confidentiality and provide safeguards will be to remove all direct identifiers from the data as soon as possible. Student names will not appear in any written reports that stem from data collected from the researcher. Demographic data side from student disability status, grade level, and gender will not be dispersed.
- Information gathered during the project will become part of the data analysis and may contribute to published research reports and presentations.
- There are no foreseeable inconveniences or risks involved to my child participating in the study.
- Participation in the study is voluntary and will not affect either student grades or placement decisions. If I decide to withdraw permission after the study begins, I will notify the school of my decision.

If further information is needed regarding the research study, I can contact (provide contact information, including phone numbers and addresses).

Name of Child: _____

Signature

Parent

Date

Signature

Principal

Date

Signature

Classroom Teacher

Date

Appendix M

Student Assent Form

Hello, my name is Mr. Osman Khan. I am completing a study titled, “Experiences with and Conceptions of PBIS and School Discipline: A Phenomenographic Study of Students with Disabilities in One Middle-grades Setting.” My goal is to learn about your experiences and understandings of PBIS implementation and school discipline (i.e. ISS, OSS, or expulsion). Your parent or guardian has given you permission to participate, but you get to make the final choice. I am asking for your help because I do not know how students experience and understand PBIS and school discipline. You hold valuable information about these two topics, and your insights can help provide us with new ideas that we can consider as we seek to improve school practices that impact your education and learning.

If you agree to participate in the study, I will ask you some questions in an interview. Responses during this interview will be audio recorded to make sure that I can fairly interpret what you have said. You can ask questions about this study at any time. If you decide at any time not to finish, you can ask us to stop.

Towards the end, you will be asked to draw a metaphor describing your thoughts about school discipline. I will explain in detail about this activity during our session. The questions I will ask are only about what you think. There are no right or wrong answers because this is not a test.

Participation will not impact your grades, and you can withdraw from this focus group without any consequence. You may be asked to follow up for clarification up until December of 2020.

If you sign this paper, it means that you have read this and willingly choose to participate in the study. If you choose not to participate in the study, do not sign this paper. Remember

participation is optional, but I would really appreciate your help and participation. Demographic data side from student disability status, grade level, and gender will not be dispersed.

Please initial to the following research activities to indicate your willingness to participate

_____ I agree to participate in the study by participating in a focus group/interview.

_____ I agree to be contacted by the researcher to participate in a follow-up focus group or interview. My survey ID is _____(lunch number).

Student Printed Name

Date

Student Signature

Date

Researcher's signature

Date

Principal's Signature

Date

Appendix N

Observations of the ISS Classroom

ISS_Obs_1

Date and Time: October 20th, 12:45 pm

Upon entering the ISS classroom, I saw six students in isolation. The ISS teacher was seated at his desk reading a book away from the students. All students were spread out around the room. Two students were sleeping, and one student had his head down. Two students were working on math work, and another student was reading an eBook on a desktop computer.

ISS_Obs_2

Date and Time: November 6th, 2019 1:00 pm

Entered the ISS classroom, five students were present, the ISS teacher was at his desk when I entered. I proceeded to walk around the room and visited a familiar student. Asked the student what he was doing in ISS. He had math work the teacher dropped earlier in the morning and was confused on how to solve a math problem that required the use of volume of a cylinder formula.

ISS_Obs_3

Date and Time: December 13th, 2019 11:00 am

One student was sleeping, another was on her cell phone listening to music, and three students were in the back of the room pretending to complete an assignment. The ISS teacher was stationed at their desk.

ISS_Obs_4

Date and Time: December 16th, 2019 10:15 am

Entered into the ISS classroom, the ISS teacher was on his cell phone while three students were on desktop computers, and two other students were on iPads. When I approached an 8th grade student from my 6th period class, her desktop showed that she had copy pasted applications over and over on the home screen. I then redirected her to the assessment she was assigned for my class. I informed the ISS teacher of the two students who needed to take the End of Workshop assessment, as well as how to get them logged in. These two students were also assigned a reading assessment that was forwarded to the ISS teacher on Friday, 12/13/2019. When I asked the students if they worked on that assignment on Friday, they said it was never provided to them.

ISS_Obs_5

Date and Time: December 18th, 2019 at 12:50 pm.

When I entered the ISS classroom where four students were in isolation. Three were on iPads, and one of them was on www.coolmathgames.com playing Snowball Christmas World, an animated game where a little snowman is controlled by the user to jump over obstacles, rescue lost mice and birds, and find the missing keys – not relative to any academic learning.

Appendix O

Observations of Inclusion Classrooms

Class_Obs_1

Date and Time: October 21st, 2019 11:30 am

Subject: 8th Grade Math (Inclusion)

Entered 8th grade Math classroom and sat by a computer. Teacher started giving instructions, but three students continued to talk. Teacher told students repeatedly to stop talking. Two students stopped talking, but one continued to talk, and then got up and picked up pencil that was thrown a few desks over. Teacher told the student that he had silent lunch – student clicked his mouth and said a few words under his breath. Seemingly agitated, he sat in his desk and put his head down. Two other students smirked and thought it was funny.

Class_Obs_2

Date and Time: October 28th, 2019 12:15 pm

Subject: 8th Grade English Language Arts (Inclusion)

When I entered the classroom, some students were choosing research topics and developing thesis. The teacher was only working with four students for the ten minutes I observed the classroom while students in the back of the class were talking about an incident that happened at lunch. The teacher was aware that some students were not working. The co-teacher took two kids and went next door to her room. Normally, there are about 7-10 students with disabilities in inclusion classrooms, and so not all students were working with the co-teacher during this time. One girl was on her cellular phone and when I saw her she quickly put her phone away.

Class_Obs_3**Date and Time:** November 12th, 2019 12:45 pm**Subject:** 8th Grade Science (Inclusion)

Teacher was requesting students to sit down and begin warm up; however, some students in the back of the classroom continued talking. The teacher was seated at her desk. I move towards the middle of the room with my laptop. There were about twenty-four kids in the classroom. After she requested that the students in the back sit down and begin the warm up the third time, they complied. The teacher reviewed the warm up and then introduced the new unit on electricity.

Class_Obs_4**Date and Time:** December 12th, 2019 3:17 pm**Subject:** 8th Grade English Language Arts (Inclusion)

Students had just transitioned from their 6th period classes and their lockers. There were approximately twenty-five students in the classroom. Only four students were seated, the rest were up and around the room. The teacher was sitting on her laptop as students entered and there was no warm up or activator being used to start instruction/work session. The noise level was loud, and I found it difficult to talk to one of the students. Finally, after about five minutes into the class, the teacher stood up and yelled, "Alright! Let's get started – everyone into your assigned seats!" Most students complied, but three or four students lingered, and the teacher had to redirect them multiple times before they complied. The teacher requested that students take out their work from the previous day (flash cards), and then began providing instruction. I noticed a handful of students did not have the work from the previous day.

The teacher was trying to explain to students the page numbers needed to make the remaining flash cards for the assignment, but many students were talking during her instruction. She redirected a young black male for continuing to talk, and then said to him, “You have silent lunch tomorrow.” The kid replied with, “whatever,” after receiving his punishment, and then he put his head down. The teacher did not mention PBIS, nor conduct points that need to be recorded.

Class_Obs_5

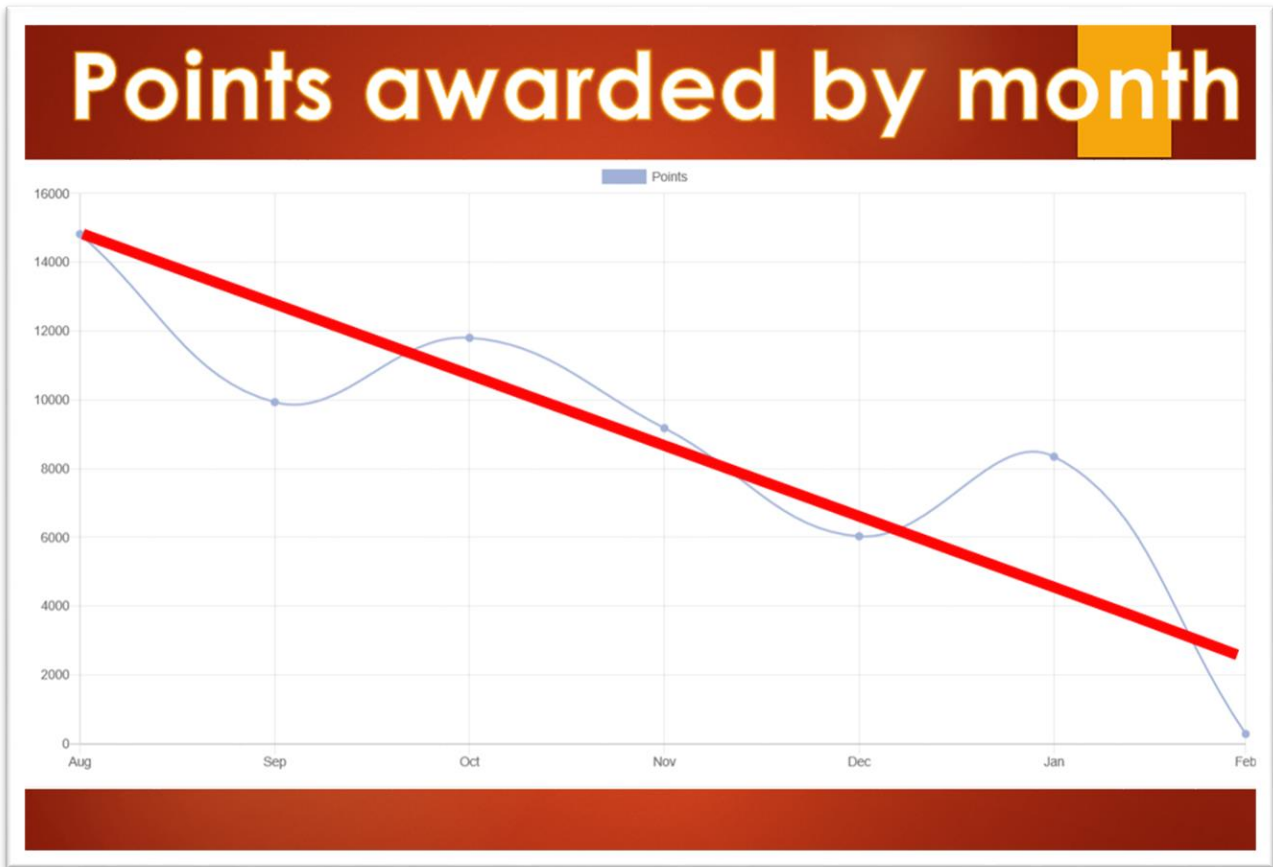
Date and Time: December 16th, 2019 10:45 am

Subject: 8th Grade Math (Inclusion)

Student was talking during instruction in Math, and the teacher began yelling at a student, “If you don’t want to do math! Put your head down because I am tired of your attitude! If I must redirect you one more time, you’re in trouble! Try it, I dare you! Don’t get it twisted.” “Enough is enough.” She then walked to the student and said, “If you don’t want to do work, that is fine, but you are not going to sit here and distract everybody else!” At this point, I walked out. Teacher did not mention PBIS conduct points, nor did she implement response to misbehavior pyramid.

Appendix P

PBIS Rewards Implementation Trends



Appendix Q

Anticipated Data Reduction Matrix

Purpose of Study	The purpose of this study is to explore the perceptions of students with disabilities surrounding school discipline and PBIS practices by engaging in dialogue that elicits information and inspires critical consciousness by generating an outcome space of student experiences and suggestions for school improvement.		
Context	Title I middle-school in the Southeastern region of the United States implementing Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS). Students with disabilities are overrepresented in exclusionary discipline. Demographic data indicate that more than 80% of all students are below the poverty level.		
Research Questions	Topics	Issues	Codes/Categories to Analyze Data
RQ1: How do students with disabilities experience and conceive school discipline?	Experiences of School Discipline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What insights can students with disabilities provide regarding the influence of exclusionary discipline on academic and social learning and teacher-student relationships? • Visual Representations • Describe the last time you were served with ISS/OSS. • What new ideas/suggestions do you have to help you/other students behave better in school? • If you had the power to change ISS, what would 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conceptions of School Discipline • Experiences of School Discipline • Perceptions of School Discipline • Suggestions for School Discipline

<p>Influence of School Discipline</p>	<p>you do differently? Probe A: What does that look like?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning and Behavior
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why are students misbehaving? What influence is exclusionary discipline having on their behaviors and attitudes? • Visual Representations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceptions of Teachers
	<p>What does your typical classroom look like at the end of the day when you walk into 6th, or 7th period?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Probe A: Describe the sound and perhaps what the students are doing. • Probe B: Describe what the teacher is doing. • Probe C: What are your feelings towards teachers that often have to deal with misbehaving students? 	
<p>RQ2: How do students with disabilities perceive the implementation of Positive Behavior</p>	<p>Experiences of PBIS Implementation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you familiar with PBIS and can you tell me what it stands for? • Experiences and Conceptions of PBIS

Intervention and Supports (PBIS)?

Probe A: Why do you think your school uses PBIS?
 Probe B: What can you tell me about school-wide expectations at your school?
 Probe C: What does (school acronym) stand for?

Desired Learning Environments

- Can you explain the PBIS reward system?

Probe A: In what ways do teachers use the PBIS conduct point system when responding to misbehaviors in the classroom?

Probe B: Do teachers consistently give students Tiger Cash?
 Probe C: What happens after a student receives the first conduct point, ...second – all the way to 6 conduct points?

- Conceptions of PBIS
- PBIS Reward System
- Schoolwide Expectations
- Conduct Point System

Professional Development

- 17. How would you improve PBIS?

Probe A: What would that look like, and how is it different than what is being done now?

- Student Suggestions for PBIS

RQ3: What suggestions do students with disabilities have for improving school discipline and PBIS implementation?

Suggestions for School Discipline
 Dialogue for Social Development
 Desires of Students with Disabilities

- What can the school do differently to help students learn and behave better?

Perceptions of PBIS
 Desires of Students with Disabilities

Suggestions for
PBIS
Implementation

- What would you do to improve ISS?
- What suggestions do you have for improving PBIS Implementation?

Suggestions for
Improving PBIS?



What do I need to know?	Why do I need to know this?	What kind of data will answer the questions?	Where can I find the data?	Who do I contact for access?	Timeline for acquisition
Student Experiences and Conceptions of School Discipline	To learn about the influence exclusionary practices may be having on student learning and behaviors, as well as the implications of the ISS classroom learning environment, including what students do when they're served with OSS. This information can help inform educational practice to better meet the needs of students with disabilities.	Qualitative	Interviews Visual Representations Observations Student Participants	University School District IRB Building Principal	October, 2019-February, 2020
Student Experiences and Conceptions of PBIS Implementation	To better understand teacher implementation of PBIS, as well as inform professional development and delivery methods of strategies to students.	Qualitative	Interviews Visual Representations Observations Student Participants Documents	University School District IRB Building Principal	October, 2019-February, 2020
Student Desired Learning Environments	To increase student engagement, learning, and	Qualitative	Interviews Visual Representations Observations	University School District IRB	October, 2019-February, 2020

behaviors on an
intrinsic level

Student
Participants

Building
Principal

Appendix R

Outcome Space Table

Categories	Descriptions	Representative Statements
RQ1. How do students with disabilities experience and conceive school discipline?		
1. Negative Student Perceptions of School Discipline	1. ISS is a Dark and Boring Place where Troublemakers and Bad Kids are Trapped, Encaged, and Isolated When They Need Punishment. 2. ISS as a Prison or Jail	<p>Quotations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I don’t think the teachers would like you being around students if you’re a troublemaker and stuff” - Kevin • “I feel like they want me to stay more in the ISS and not be in their class.” - Jordan • “ISS is a dungeon to me.” – Kevin • “It is very depressing. It dark like you are lost in the middle of nowhere. You are in jail. You have no one to talk to. You feel like you are in Andersonville prison.” – Mariah • “I would imagine ISS as this one cage.” – Xander <p>Visual Representations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Collage of Students’ Visual Representation of ISS as a Prison or Jail (see Figure 4.9)
	3. OSS, A More “Worse/r” Punishment Than ISS. 4. OSS is Fun, A Free Day, and it is Kind of Like Being in Heaven	<p>Quotations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “OSS is worser than ISS because you can’t do the work.” – Emmanuel • “It is when the consequence is higher than ISS... it means you can’t come back to school.” – Danny • “I mean people say it is fun. You get to stay at home do basically what you want.” – Anne • “So, to me OSS feels uh...like...like heaven.” –

Xander

5. Negative Perceptions of the ISS Classroom
6. The Role of the ISS teacher
7. Disassociation Between the ISS Teacher and Students

Quotations

- “All you do is work, and you can’t make noises.” – Shelly
- “The student is in ISS he is super mad and fire coming out of his head.” – Sheldon, Description of Visual Representation
- “He’s kind of like a police officer.” – Megan
- “the wall is dividing the students from teacher.” – Matthew, Description of Visual Representation
- “I drew the kids sit and teacher is doing some paperwork.” – Kyle, Description of Visual Representation

Visual Representation

- A Collage of Students’ Visual Representations Depicting Disassociation Between the ISS Teacher and Students (see Figure 4.20)

2. Low Efficacy of Punitive Discipline

1. Negative Influence of School Discipline on Academic Learning
 - a. *Left Behind*
2. No Talking Allowed
 - a. *Dialogue is Restricted in the ISS Classroom*

- “I got behind in my work, and whenever I test, I have an IEP, and I get modified testing, and all of that, so I as messed up by a lot.” – Mariah
 - “The ISS teacher doesn’t show you what to do on assignments” – Jordan
 - “In ISS you’re not allowed to talk you’re just working, you can’t communicate at all.” – Kevin
 - “uhm they usually feel isolated you know...” – Xander
 - “There really is no communication – there are consequences when you talk” -
-

 Mariah

Visual Representation

- Peer Behavior's in Mariah's Metaphorical Drawing of the ISS Classroom (see Figure 4.22)

 3. Cycles of Frustration-Aggression Associated with Exclusionary Discipline and Punitive Threats

1. Students Are Showing Signs of Being Annoyed, Depressed, Frustrated, and Aggressive.
2. Student Apathy
3. Undesirable Teacher-Student Relationships
4. Negative Influence of School Discipline on Student Identities
5. Some Students are Loud and Not Listening Because They Don't Like Their Teachers

- "Teacher tell me sometime that I am going to be nothing in life." - Jesus
 - "Annoyed, or frustrated" – Mariah
 - "They will feel pissed off by their own teacher if they get written up" - Xander
 - "Not so happy, just upset." – Kevin
 - "kind of mad and sad" - Megan
 - "Start to hate them, or start not to do their work..." – Shelly
 - "Mad because they can't talk to their friends." – Shelly
 - "It is very depressing." – Mariah
 - "It made me very sad." – Xander
 - "the teacher is always trying to calm the students" - Emmanuel
 - "...Not call them out in class because they are already seeking that attention" – Mariah
 - "there's this one kid that is super smart and does good in all his classes, but soon as he gets in his last period, he acts like an idiot" – Mariah
 - "Some people like they like to be the class clowns, and all they do is get in trouble" – Anne
 - "In a yelling voice because the kids are talking" – Matthew
-

-
- “some teachers don’t do anything – like they’re just like, “oh, stop that,” but they won’t say anything. Like do something about it. They just sit there and let it happen” – Anne
 - “They like that teacher and they do the work, and if they don’t like the teacher, they don’t do the work.” – Emmanuel
 - “She tries to get us quiet for warm up – no one gets quiet, everybody noisy.” - Nancy

Visual Representations

- Visual Representation of Sadness in Student Faces within the ISS Classroom, a Collage (see Figure 4.24)
-Jesus’ Metaphorical Drawing of Teachers that Frequently Write Referrals (see Figure 4.26)
-Matthew’s Metaphorical Drawing of Teachers that Frequently Write Disciplinary Referrals (see Figure 4.27)
- Visual Representation of Teachers as a Devil or Monster, a Collage (see Figure 4.36)

RQ2. How do students with disabilities experience and conceive the implementation of Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS)?

-
- | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>4. Students have Misconceptions of PBIS Implementation</p> | <p>1. Student Misconceptions of School-wide Expectations</p> <p>2. Student Misconceptions of PBIS Conduct-Point System</p> <p>3. Mixed Conceptions of PBIS Rewards</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “It is points that teachers give you if you do something good...” – Jordan • “I feel like it is to reward the good students” – Kevin • “but I know PBS is where we put like fake money for Fresh Air Friday” - Mariah • “Public Service Announcement” – Xander • “If you do something good you get PBIS rewards.” – Stephen • “Uhm...I think it stands for our dress code I think.” – Emmanuel • ““I don’t remember...” – Danny • “silent lunch” – Anne • “silent lunch” – Xander • “They give us points to buy things” - Shelly |
| <p>5. Negative Teacher Behaviors and Low Fidelity of PBIS Implementation</p> | <p>1. Improper Teacher Implementation of PBIS Pyramid of Interventions</p> <p>2. Inconsistent and Improper Disbursement of PBIS Rewards</p> <p>3. Negative Teacher Behaviors</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">a. The Teacher is Yelling and Belittling Students</p> <p>4. Negative Perceptions of Teachers that Frequently Write Referrals</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “sometimes not all the time.” – Jesus • ““When we were talking during announcements last week, we got silent lunch for that.” – Jesus • “That happens when teachers don’t want to give you a conduct point, but they want to give you a consequence, so they give you silent lunch” – Jordan • “Not that I can think of... some don’t give points, they give silent lunch, or detention.” – Emmanuel • “Some of them just skip over everything; Like, “Oh, you get a call home!” It is a bit frustrating” – Anne • “Most people do it just for Fresh Air Friday.” – Anne |

a. Teacher as Devil or Monster

Triangulation (Documentation)

- PBIS Rewards Implementations Trends (see Appendix P)

RQ3. In what ways can voices of students with disabilities help transform school discipline and PBIS implementation to meet their desired learning environments?

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>6. The Students
Desire
Calmness,
Freedom and
Play, and
Dialogue for
Reconciliation</p> | <p>1. Desires for
Calmness
a. <i>Peaceful and
Relaxing Music
Wanted</i></p> <p>2. Desires for
Freedom and Play
a. Fresh Air
Friday and Free
Seat Friday</p> <p>3. Desires for
Dialogue for
Reconciliation
a. Talk to Me</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “maybe like perhaps ISS would require the students to calm – make more positive and not aggressive” – Xander • “Get everybody to quiet down, calm down” – Mariah • “Trying to get us to calm down” – Emmanuel • “The teacher could provide music that is like peaceful” – Xander • “It would calm them down – there is an effect of peaceful melodies would uhm increase student intelligence” – Xander • “Relaxing music.” – Danny • “It would help them keep calm.” – Danny • “I feel like we should have more time to just be children” – Mariah • “To get all their hyper-ness out because all they do is sit in class and they want to run around.” – Sheldon • “We are kids and we have a lot of energy.” – Shelly • “They could have talked to me about consequences I had gotten and done something to help me do better and behave.”- Matthew • “Could have just talked to me maybe.” – Mariah • “Talk to them about it – it is the last class of the day, but you still need to be respectful.” – Sheldon |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
-

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “that is pretty dumb...they’re just going to hate you even more – I mean, you should just try to talk it out” - Anne
<p>7. Student Suggestions for School Improvement</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Suggestions for School Discipline <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. New Classroom Wanted 2. Suggestions for PBIS Implementation <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Reparations of PBIS Rewards 3. Suggestions for Teacher Practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “They need a teacher to teach in there, and at home you don’t learn anything – you just sit there and watch Netflix and all that, that’s all.” – Jesus • “Take them into the hall and talk to them to see where their head is at” – Danny • “Students get to like stretch because when I was in there, I had to sit down the entire day – get to move around or exercise.” – Danny • “I would give the kids – I’d give them help to understand how to solve problems, instead of just sitting there not learning.” – Kyle • “Someone that I am familiar with instructing me, or someone I am close to.” – Danny • “There should be a class like if you get in trouble instead of ISS where you stay in there for a class period and talk about what you did and fixing your mistakes and what to do next.” – Jordan • “Give us something to hold – sure it is online look I have this much Tiger cash, what is that going to do to me?” – Mariah • “Uhm – I guess we can provide uhm a survey to like – after a film about PBIS is over.” – Xander • “I guess get it stick into my head from a song, or something.” Kyle

-
- “You can take some away if people are not behaving and being disrespectful” – Sheldon
 - “The best thing they can do to help me focus and start learning is giving me one-on-one time.” – Stephen
 - “More one-one-one time” – Anne
 - “They need to have more control of their students” – Danny
 - “A funny nice teacher, but they’re also strict at the same time.” - Anne
-

Appendix S

Interview and Memo Notes as Audit Trail

Student 2 Interview notes 10/12/23 ①

1) - Get serious

5) → Confusing

Rever → describe it
 of this 2 days
 No more
 missed - get them
 in my box

4. small hand on

o pocket is difficult
 need someone to help

Probe A yes - all by yourself
 (talk) to 10 others

→ Probe A → They use it on different
 of South trip

people → annoyed → annoyed
 frustrated

Temporary to work
 down side skills to talk

Non - Social if you can't

Student 2 Interview notes 10/12/23 ②

10) a part of mind
 doesn't do
 don't do when done
 in the house is always

11) Love - → student → student
 running around / noisy
 → trying to beat each other
 out class

12) - Time passing
 - one window
 - change
 - different seating options
 - Beam bags
 - Bouncing ball

13) not sure what it stands for
 from group - p. 10/12/23

Student 2 ③

people toward systems
 A Class days

(B) → is it effective
 if you have
 what you →
 feel would work

→ Plan
 → Planning
 → not enough cash give
 out
 fidelity

④ → Give us something to hold
 together
 → There are bad cash
 → like on computer
 does not have to
 show money

disappointed
 in person

Student 3 12/4/19 ①
 10/21/20

② consequence
 JBS - classroom alarm
 OSS - higher consequence

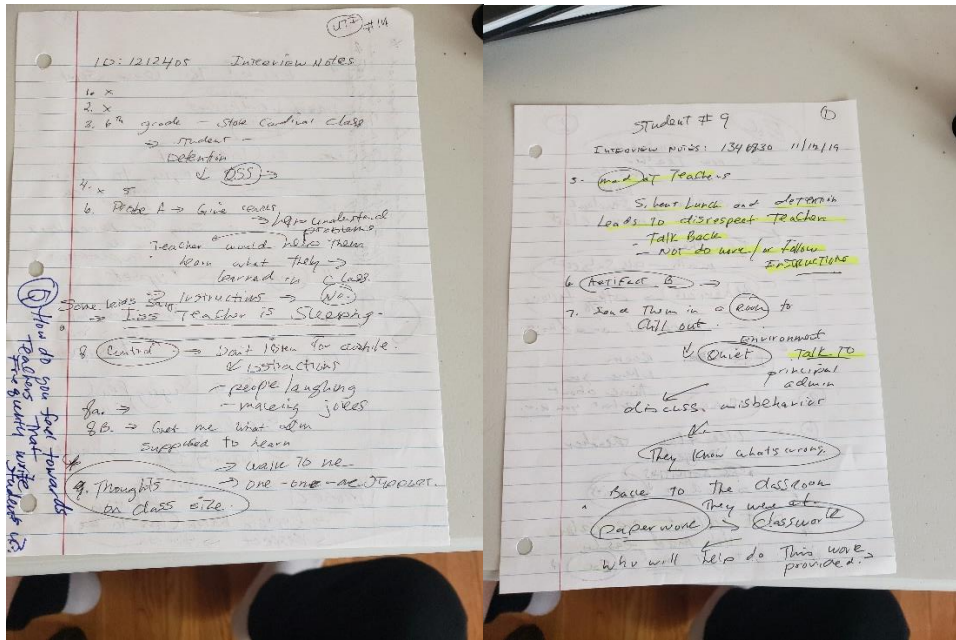
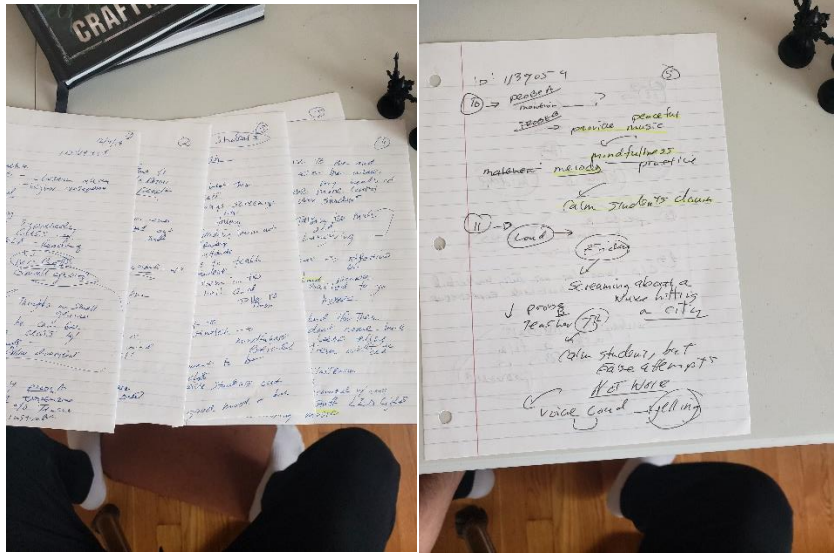
③ expelled

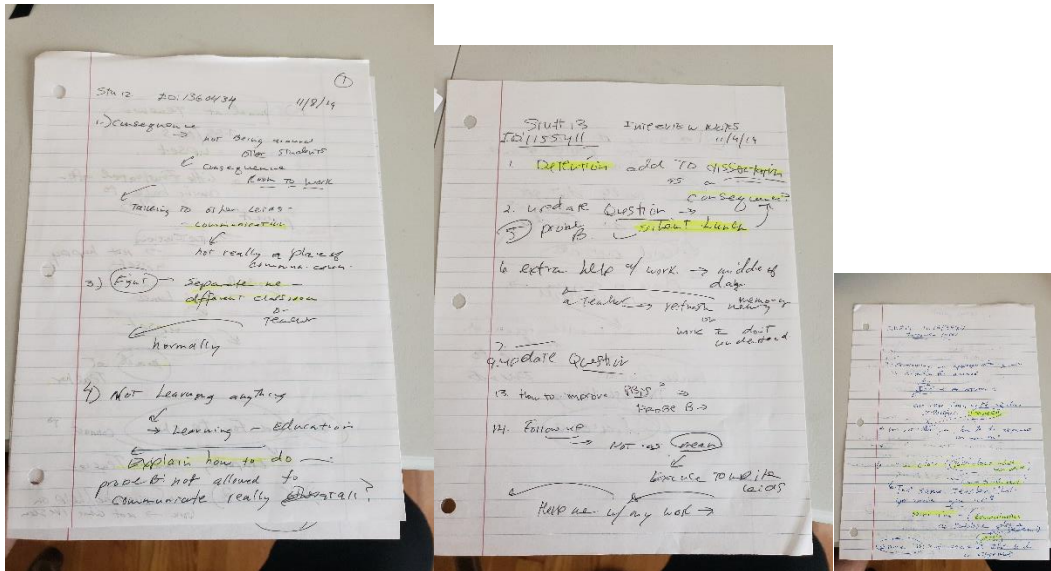
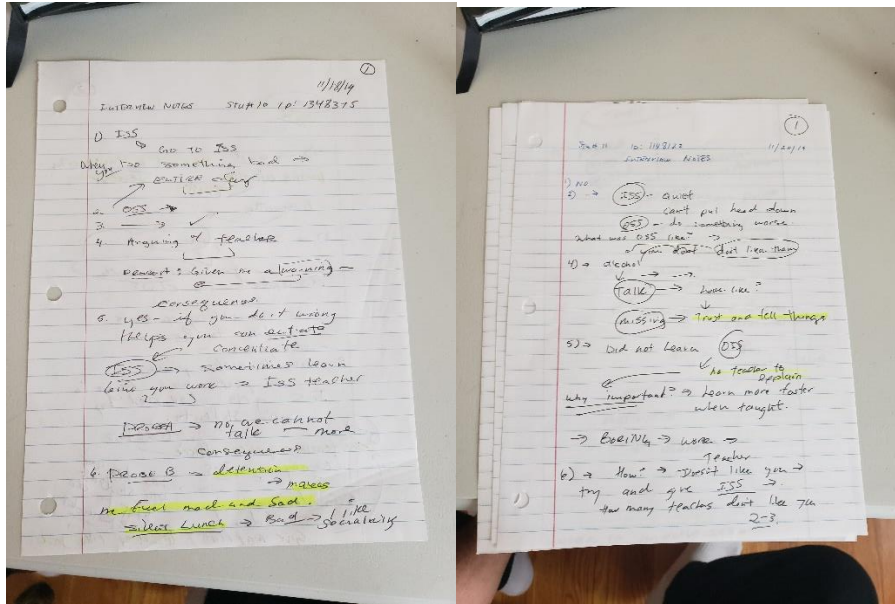
④ yesterday
 supposed to
 skip class →
 @A - leading

class → Mr. Patti's
 small group

← thoughts on small
 group
 Feel like he can be
 in a class w/
 here leads -
 follow directions
 January

⑤ → ~~all~~ y probe A
 5. because missing experience
 in class w/ teachers
 instructor





Memo 1, 12/7/2019

I have now interviewed all fifteen student participants regarding their perceptions of school discipline and PBIS, a logistical triumph. As I embark on the next stage of my study, I am coming to some new realizations that I believe are related to my philosophical paradigm in accordance to transformative research and critical consciousness.

The words reflexive and advocacy come to mind when considering that act of interacting with student participants during the interview process, especially when considering the design of my interview protocols, which not only generate student experiences of school discipline, but also elicit student suggestions for change in terms of school discipline practices and implementation of PBIS.

The process of interviewing middle school aged students with disabilities about their school discipline experiences and directly asking for suggestions for how they believe the school can improve school policies and practices appears to have inspired high levels of reflexive engagement through the use of dialogue that raises critical consciousness and empowerment. As I think about writing the next two chapters of my dissertation, I am considering the implications that may have risen from interviewing students with disabilities about their experiences involving school discipline. For instance, when asked, a majority of my student participants have disclosed that no adult has ever asked them about their thoughts and/or suggestions regarding school discipline, or PBIS, which holds powerful implications regarding the pedagogical prowess of my study. At this time, I feel, my study has also taken on what appears to be an emancipatory and empowerment-based paradigm, and I feel like I have to vocalize and describe these revelations in my upcoming two chapters as it may inspire future researchers interested in student perceptions of school discipline to consider the approach used in my dissertation to elicit student voice on a more critical level.

I am also realizing that my questions that probe student perceptions and conceptions of PBIS have so far provided the following insights:

1. fidelity of implementation issues relative to the conduct and reward procedures as used by teachers,
2. A majority of student participants hold misconceptions of the role of PBIS in their building, and
3. Students with disabilities suggest the school should provide more explicit instruction of PBIS, which can be delivered through a PBIS class - meaning not enough time and focus is provided to fully teach student PBIS strategies to improve misbehavior, and instead it appears to be reactive framework for responding to student misbehavior with arbitrary school-wide expectations delivered through an acronym such as Raven R.E.D. (Respect, Excellence, and Dedication).

Moreover, it appears that students with disabilities are confused as to why PBIS is used in the building outside of reward system, and multiple students have mentioned that the newly digitalized PBIS reward system has made it difficult for them to see the value in rewards because it is not a tangible item that they can hold such as actual cash. One student also mentioned that they are unaware when teachers actually provide PBIS cash to them for displaying positive behaviors, which could reduce the effectiveness of the reward initiative, and it also means procedures need to be adjusted via a new reward plan, which will require teacher training. In addition, reparations of PBIS cash was also something two, or maybe three students believe would be beneficial. Although this would not be following the nature and tenets of PBIS, on a pragmatic level, it makes sense.

-Khan, 12/7/19 (Location: Cool Beans Coffeehouse, Marietta, GA).

Memo Two, 2/1/2020

I came into the study slightly emotional, and this is partially because the topic of the study is very personal to me - the life trajectories of students with disabilities who are provided with unreasonable experiences in exclusionary discipline is troublesome. This is something that weighed on my shoulders as a special educator in the field. However, after my first interview, I really learned the importance of becoming detached, and I adopted more of an objective basis where I placed myself as an outsider looking in. I started interacting with participants using a more critical lens, and I didn't feel like I was a researcher up until I started taking interview notes. That dialogue pushed me to think about the psychology of qualitative research - in that I am simply a vessel that pushes certain buttons to elicit information/data from the participant, and in order to get a true and accurate picture I must be careful not to guide responses based on my own perceptions, and so that required being very selective with follow up questions. This required a high level of self-regulation and self-control in terms of bracketing my own biases. It is important not to jeopardize the process, and by tapping into that essence, I was able to produce this body of work. I do feel that fifteen students were a lot of participants to interview, and the transcriptions were heavy, but worth it. I also realized that three questions in a phenomenography is too many, and that the outcome space becomes conflated, especially if it is someone's first time performing qualitative research using this tradition.

Appendix T

Restorative PBIS Pyramid of Interventions

Restorative PBIS Pyramid of Interventions

<p>Goal: To provide support and intervention for behavioral challenges</p> <p>Strategy: Implement interventions that facilitate improved behavioral outcomes</p> <p>Progress Monitoring: Point accumulation in Synergy</p> <p>Result: Decrease in behavioral infractions/referrals</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Minor Behavior Infractions Behavior Interventions</p>
<p>DOCUMENTATION IN SYNERGY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 -2 points –self correction • 3 points – call home RP for SWDs • 4 points –School wide detention • 5 points –parent/teacher conference • 6 points in Synergy –referral • More than 6 points –referral 	<p style="text-align: center;">Conduct Grades</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfactory 1 to 2 points • Needs Improvement 3 to 5 points • Unsatisfactory 6 + points
<p>Key Notes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Once SWD reaches the 3rd point, turn in Form A to grade level administrator 2. Notify case manager via e-mail that a restorative conference is required. 3. Don't forget to call home and talk to a parent. 4. Inform the parent a restorative conference will be scheduled. Await for further notices such as time and place of conference from admin. team. 	

Appendix U

PBIS Restorative Practice Self-Monitoring Tool (Form A)

PBIS Restorative Practice: Conduct-Point/Rewards Self-Monitoring Tool								FORM A	
Teacher Name:					Week of				
Class Period	# of Rewards Given End of Period					Notes/Comments		What negative behaviors have been observed?	
	M	T	W	TH	F	Conduct Points	Student Name(s)		
Total Points End of Week						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If < 10 in any class period, adjust for following week. • Identify students that are displaying positive behaviors. • Touch base with students with disabilities 			
Conduct Points end of Week						Reminders Update Synergy Regularly and Follow: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-2 Points: Self-Correction • 3 Points: Call home & forward names to administrator to begin Restorative Practice process. 			
Names of students who received three or more conduct points:						Restorative Practice Procedures			
1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____ 6. _____						Any student with IEPs? Yes No Students with IEPs: 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ Contact case manager: BIP? PSP?		Restorative Process: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Has parent been called? 2. E-mail administrator names of students. 3. Wait for Admin. Directives for Restorative Conference (i.e., date, location, facilitator) 	
						If any student has accrued three conduct points, turn this form into grade level administrator.			

Appendix V

Restorative Conference Script

Restorative Conference Facilitator's Script	FORM B
Date: _____ Student Name: _____ Teacher _____	
Facilitator:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Welcome, as you know, my name is (your name) and I will be facilitating this conference. 2. <i>Introduce each conference participant and state his/her relationship with one another.</i> 3. Thanks for coming. I am sure this is difficult, but this is an opportunity for all involved to repair harm that has been done. 4. This conference will focus on an incident that happened on (state date, place, and nature of offense without elaborating). 5. It is important to understand that we will focus on what _____ did and how that unacceptable behavior affected others. 6. We are not here to decide whether _____ is/are good or bad. We want to see how people have been affected and find a way to repair the harm that has resulted? Is everyone clear? 7. I must inform you that you do not have to participate in this conference and are free to leave at any time. If you do leave, the matter may lead to an administrative referral using school disciplinary policy. 8. <i>Say to Student:</i> This matter may be finalized if you participate in a positive manner and comply with the conference agreement. Do you understand? 9. We'll start with Student <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What happened? 2. What were you thinking about at the time? 3. What have you thought about since the incident? 4. What do you think has been affected by your actions? 5. How have they been affected? 10. Teacher/Peer <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What was your reaction at the time of the incident? 2. How do you feel about what happened? 3. What has been the hardest thing for you? 11. Outcome: 12. What would you like from today's conference? (Reaching an agreement). At this point the participants discuss what should be in the final agreement. 13. Before I prepare the written agreement, is there anything else anyone would like to add? 	
Written Agreement	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px; margin-bottom: 10px;"></div>
Signatures of all members of conference members:	Teacher _____ Student _____ Facilitator _____ Date: _____
Closing the conference: Thank you all for coming. Good job today. I will be providing you all copies of the agreement.	

Modified from Wachtel et al. (2010)