

EFFECTIVENESS OF THE ALTERNATIVE EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT  
PROJECT

AT SOUTHWEST TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY

THESIS

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## ABSTRACT

### EFFECTIVENESS OF THE ALTERNATIVE EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT PROJECT AT SOUTHWEST TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY

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EMILY MILLER PAYNE

This qualitative, multi-site, bounded, case study serves as a summative evaluation of the Alternative Educational Support Project (AESP). A total of 117 educators, administrators, support staff, and law enforcement personnel from San Antonio, Richardson, the Bexar County Learning Center, Galveston, and El Paso were selected by random sampling to evaluate workshops conducted by AESP. This research presents the experiences of workshop attendees and how these experiences impacted their knowledge and implementation of the guidelines contained in Texas Education Code, Chapter 37.

Analysis of data revealed a variety of conclusions. Failure of AESP to provide sufficient follow-up to the training sessions limited its impact on workshop attendees. Some participants could not remember the training topics or attending the workshop. Police officers reported that the information learned was good, but had no impact on their job performance. Educators, administrators, and support staff who remembered the training sessions found the workshops informative, relevant, and gave them the ability to deal effectively with troubled students.



## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The Alternative Educational Support Project (AESP) at Southwest Texas State University provides training and technical assistance throughout Texas in support of disciplinary alternative education programs operated through school districts and county juvenile boards (CIE, 2000). This study is being conducted to determine the effectiveness of AESP on improving disciplinary educational services in the state of Texas.

The Office of the Governor, Criminal Justice Division awarded a five-year grant beginning in fiscal year 1997, to the Center for Initiatives in Education at Southwest Texas State University to provide funding for AESP. AESP relies on Education Service Centers to invite them to host workshops in their areas.

School districts across the country report significant increases in both the number of students expelled and the lengths of time students are excluded from their schools (U.S. Dept. of Education, 1998). Many states have considered how to keep children within the education system when those children are disruptive or even dangerous to teachers or other students. Most educators and government officials agree that a child who is dropped from the education system is deprived of the opportunity of acquiring knowledge and experiences necessary for future success. Most also agree, that once expelled, these children are more

likely to create both an increased cost to society and an enhanced risk of criminal behavior (Bickerstaff, Leon, & Hudson, 1997). The dilemma faced by school and elected officials is that, regardless of the potential benefit to these students of keeping them in the system, some teachers and the parents of other children within the schools object to the potential danger of continuing forced association with disruptive and possibly hostile children, particularly those believed to have committed criminal acts. As a result, these parents and teachers insist on the removal of the disruptive students.

In 1995, the 74<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature passed Senate Bill 1 that provided guidelines for the elimination of traditional suspension by requiring the creation of alternative education programs in the public school system, and for the most serious offenders, the juvenile justice system (SEDL, 1995). Previously, expulsion or suspension to the streets has been seen as the simplest and most effective all-purpose solution to the very complex problems posed by students who violate school policies (Jacobs, 1995). However, according to research conducted by The National School Board Association students frequently regard suspension as a reward rather than a punishment (Sautner, 2001). According to Henderson & Friedland (1996), there is little evidence that suspension and expulsion are effective in bringing about changes in student behavior. As a disciplinary procedure, suspension is often abused and its use deprives students of the school services they urgently need. Suspension does not address the problems of learners. A student who, after a few unsuccessful years, claims that

school is a lousy place to spend six hours a day is not necessarily a “reluctant” learner but may be a “discouraged” learner (Conrath, 2001).

There is a growing perception that not all public schools are safe places for learning and media reports highlight specific school-based violent acts. In September of 1989, President George W. Bush and 50 governors met at the Education Summit in Charlottesville, Virginia, to set education goals for the nation. In February of 1990, President Bush announced the National Education Goals that were subsequently adopted by the governors (NGEP, nd). The seventh goal of the National Educational Goals states that by the year 2000, “all schools in America will be free of drugs and violence and the unauthorized presence of firearms and alcohol, and offer a disciplined environment that is conducive to learning” (NCES, 1998). In response to this goal, Congress passed the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1994, which provides for support of drug and violence prevention programs.

In 1994, Congress also passed the Gun-Free Schools Act, which required states to legislate zero-tolerance laws or risk losing federal funds (Martin, 2000). Responding to concerns over school safety, state legislatures and school boards enacted a range of zero-tolerance policies focused on combating weapons, drugs, violence, and antisocial behavior (McAndrews, 2001). Zero tolerance policies are administrative rules intended to address specific problems associated with school safety and discipline.

Texas has a three-tiered approach to zero tolerance. At the most serious level are four school-related offenses that merit expulsion: bringing a gun,

bringing a knife with a blade long enough to reach the heart, bringing drugs the nature and amount of which would constitute a felony, and aggravated assault (Tebo, 2000). Texas students expelled for these reasons are usually expelled to the Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program (JJAEP).

The second level of offenses include simple assault, misdemeanor drug possession, use of alcohol and a few other violations that result in a temporary placement in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP). Students are required by state law to attend either of the alternative education programs in their own school district and are required to complete a limited academic program to be explained later.

At the lowest level are offenses for which school officials have discretion to determine the severity of the offense and the punishment (Tebo, 2000). Examples of offenses that fall under discretionary removal include persistent offenses. Persistent is defined as two or more violations of the student code of conduct in general or repeated occurrences of the same violation (SMHS Student/Parent Handbook, 2000-2001). These discretionary reasons are determined by local communities in their student codes of conduct and are in addition to those required in the Safe Schools Act.

When students are placed in alternative educational settings because of zero tolerance policies, questions arise as to the nature and quality of these alternative programs. Who is educating the juvenile offender? What type of training is provided for the men and women who work with these youth? The effective administration of juvenile justice and disciplinary alternative education

programs helps to contribute to community safety. When young people are provided with effective conflict resolution, mediation strategies, the tools to make better decisions, and their academic and social skills are improved, community safety is enhanced (DeVore & Gentilcore, 1999).

In order to serve the thousands of Texas children who have been removed from school without the benefit of education in an alternative placement, the 74<sup>th</sup> Legislature adopted the Safe Schools Act (Chapter 37 Discipline, Law, and Order of the Texas Education Code). This Act was designed to allow disruptive students to be removed from regular classes yet provide a safety net assuring that students removed from classrooms, suspended or expelled from public schools in the state would remain within the education system and would continue to have an opportunity for public education. The Act mandated that all students must be provided an education outside the regular classroom which focuses on academic disciplines, provides supervision and counseling, and provides for students' educational and behavioral needs (Leon, 1999). Further, this legislation provided for a system of disciplinary alternative education programs (DAEPs) to be operated by the 1062 school districts within the state of Texas and juvenile justice alternative education programs (JJAEPs) operated by county juvenile boards where population exceeds 125,000 and mandated the cooperation of school, law enforcement, and judicial personnel necessary to make the system work. Of the 3.9 million students in Texas public schools, about 59,000 attended DAEPs and 4,000 attended JJAEPs during the 1997-1998 school year (Alwin, 1999).

Are those students remanded to disciplinary alternative or juvenile justice alternative education programs in accordance with Chapter 37 Discipline, Law, and Order? This qualitative research study, which is based on a bounded, multi-site, case study tradition, investigates the statewide program developed to provide training and technical assistance on implementing the Texas Safe Schools Act. This research presents the experiences of AESP workshop attendees and how these experiences have impacted their knowledge and implementation of the guidelines contained in Chapter 37. This study also represents the first study that examines the effectiveness of training alternative education staff on Chapter 37.

#### Rationale for the Study

During the spring and summer of 1997, The National Center for Education Statistics commissioned a survey to obtain current data on school violence and other safety issues in our nation's public elementary and secondary schools. The survey was conducted with a nationally representative sample of regular public elementary, middle, and high schools in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Schools were asked to report only those incidents for which the police or other law enforcement representatives had been contacted. During 1996-1997, about 4,000 incidents of rape or other types of sexual battery occurred in our nation's public schools. There were about 11,000 incidents of physical attacks or fights in which weapons were used and about 190,000 fights or physical attacks not involving weapons. Occurring along with about 115,000 thefts were 7,000 robberies and 98,000 incidents of vandalism (NCES, 1998).

The Texas Safe Schools Act requires expulsion of students who commit felony offenses on campus. However, school officials use broad disciplinary authority to decide when to expel and remove students (Alwin, 1999). Officials do not consistently remove violent students to alternative education programs as required by the Act (see Table 1; Alwin, 1999). Some school officials may not have received adequate training on the Act's requirements and need additional help to implement the law.

Table 1

## Reasons Students Were Placed in Disciplinary Settings, 1997-1998 School Year

Disciplinary Reasons	Number of Incidents Resulting in Placement		
	DAEP	JJAEP	No Placement
Disruptive Behavior (Sec. 37.002)	18,749	95	542
Violation Not in Sec 37.006	11,634	61	297
Other Reason in Student Code of Conduct	10,889	115	78
Possessed or Sold Controlled Substance	7,664	324	121
Assault or Terroristic Threat	5,126	96	63
Possessed Alcoholic Beverage	1,600	7	2,835
Serious Misconduct in DAEP	1,383	790	325
Conduct Punishable as a Felony	951	24	22
Off Campus Felony in Title 5, Penal Code	640	13	5
Off Campus Felony Not in Title 5, Penal Code	510	4	1
Possessed Illegal Knife	417	88	26
Criminal Mischief	405	16	12
Aggravated Assault	352	61	14
Possessed Weapon	299	66	17
Public Lewdness	278	3	54
Retaliation Against School Employee	274	15	4
Abuse of Glue or Aerosol Paint	124	5	18
Possessed Firearm	121	102	30
Arson	95	43	7
Indecency with a Child	56	26	0
Emergency Placement/Expulsion	31	7	4
Possessed Club	28	14	2
Reason Not Reported	24	2	1
Murder, Attempted Murder	5	2	1
Aggravated Kidnapping	2	1	0
Other	2,436	14	74
<b>Total</b>	<b>64,093</b>	<b>1,994</b>	<b>4,553</b>
Note: The TEA data for JJAEPs does not match that reported by the Juvenile Probation Commission for the same period.			

Source: TEA's Safe Schools data as of April 1999 (represents 80% of the statewide student population; Alwin, 1999).



The AESP is currently the only statewide training available for staff working in DAEPs and JJAEPs. AESP is designed to enhance program operation and coordination of services, increase parental involvement, and facilitate students' transition between alternative education programs and their assigned school campus (CIE, 2000). In 1999, the Juvenile Probation Commission released a report on Safe Schools Programs. The report noted that the six Centers that had not participated in workshops had irregularities in their Safe Schools data that indicated that they might benefit from training (Alwin, 1999). The purpose of this study is to assess the effectiveness of the statewide AESP program in increasing understanding of the requirements of Texas Education Code, Chapter 37 Discipline, Law, and Order.

### Research Questions

Alternative education programs are expanding in the United States due to zero-tolerance policies, changes in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), increases in youth violence and school failure, and knowledge of the developmental paths leading to antisocial behavior (Tobin & Sprague, 2000). Alternative education must resist being used as a depository for students who are falling behind in the conventional schools or are difficult for conventional schools to deal with (Conrath, 2001).

The central research question for this study is, *How effective do attendees of the Alternative Educational Support Project find its workshops to be as a strategy for implementing the Discipline, Law, and Order principles of Chapter*

37, *Texas Education Code* (see Appendix A)? Supporting the central research question are the following subordinate questions:

1. *What AESP workshop information was new and relevant to teaching in the alternative education setting?*
2. *What information could be used in your work setting?*
3. *How did you use the information in your work setting?*
4. *What were some significant outcomes?*

#### Definition of Terms

The following operational definitions will be used in the study:

**Admission, Dismissal, Review (ARD):** the name for the team of individuals made up of school staff and the child's guardian that meet to determine eligibility, develop the IEP and decide which related services will be provided (Alwin, 1999).

**Alternative Education Program (AEP):** disciplinary programs conducted by school districts in which students are placed for a variety of offenses specified in state laws and in the district's code of conduct (Alwin, 1999).

**Alternative Educational Support Project (AESP):** program operated by Southwest Texas State University and funded by the Office of the Governor Criminal Justice Department to provide training and technical assistance to school districts on implementation of Chapter 37 (*CIE brochure*, 2000).

**Browser:** a computer program providing access to sites on the World Wide Web.

**Chapter 37:** adopted in 1995 as part of the revision of the Texas Education Code. It governs the rules and regulations of juvenile justice and disciplinary alternative education programs in the state of Texas.

**Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP):** serves students in all school districts who are removed from their regular classroom due to disruptive behavior or for committing felonies off campus. TEA oversees DEAPs (Alwin, 1999).

**Felony:** a serious crime punishable by imprisonment for more than a year (Tebo, 2000).

**Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP):** the protocol that tells the server what to send to the client so the client can view web pages, FTP sites, or other areas of the net.

**Individual Education Planning (IEP):** the written program that details the special education and related services that must be provided to each student who receives special education. Parents and school personnel work together to write the IEP at the ARD meeting. The IEP must be reviewed and revised every year (Arc of Texas, 1999).

**Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA):** formerly known as Public Law 94-12, it guarantees every eligible student a free, appropriate public education (Arc of Texas, 1999).

**Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program (JJAEP):** serves students who commit serious or violent offenses in the 22 largest counties of Texas with population of 125,000 or greater (Bickerstaff et al, 1997).

**Memorandum of Understanding (MOU):** an agreement between the county juvenile board and school districts that details the operation of the JJAEP.

**Misdemeanor:** a minor crime punishable by fine or imprisonment in a city or county jail rather than in a penitentiary. Misdemeanors are less serious offenses for which one can be imprisoned for a year or less (Tebo, 2000).

**Professional development:** concerned with improving teachers' instructional methods, their ability to adapt instruction to meet students' needs, and their classroom management skills (Wanzare & da Costa, 2000).

**Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS):** contains only the data necessary for the legislature and TEA to perform legally authorized functions in overseeing public education.

**Section 504:** part of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Provides that no otherwise qualified individual with handicaps in the United States shall, solely by reason of his/her handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

**Simple assault:** an unlawful physical attack by one person upon another where neither the offender displays a weapon, nor the victim suffers obvious severe or aggravated bodily injury involving apparent broken bones, loss of teeth, possible internal injury, severe laceration, or loss of consciousness (Tebo, 2000).

**Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol (TCP/IP):** this set of protocols makes TELNET, FTP, e-mail, and other services possible among computers that don't belong to the same network.

**Zero tolerance:** included in Senate Bill 1 (1995), empowered teachers to remove from class students who disrupt the learning process (Martin, 2000).

### Significance of the Study

Too often, alternative schools are viewed as dumping grounds. Students in alternative education programs are oftentimes students who are classified under the Education Code as at risk of dropping out (Alwin, 1999). School officials do not consistently remove violent students to an alternative education program as the Safe Schools Act requires. During the 1997-1998 school year, 850 incidents occurred that did not result in expulsions to JJAEPs, although the incidents warranted expulsion (Alwin, 1999).

A school's Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) Committee may not know how to determine if the discipline problem of a special education student is related to the student's disability. During the 1997-1998 school year the state average enrollment of special education students was 12%, but ranged from 17% to 37% in DAEPs. The average percentage of students eligible for special education services in DAEPs in the 22 largest Texas counties was twice that of regular Texas schools (Alwin, 1999).

Research has been conducted on the effectiveness of alternative education, characteristics of effective alternative education programs, and professional development of alternative education faculty and staff. A need exists to study the effectiveness of the Alternative Educational Support Project in increasing the knowledge base regarding implementation of the Discipline, Law, and Order principles of Chapter 37. It is also important to verify if the needs of

the local community are being met or if there is a need for program modification. We must have a better understanding of the knowledge base of those involved in the education of violent or disruptive youth.

As the number of students remanded to DAEPs and JJAEPs increases, the need for training on the tenets of Chapter 37 also increases. Inappropriate placements in alternative education programs increase the risk of charges of discrimination, inequity, and civil rights violations. The goal of AESP is to provide and expand training and technical assistance for DAEPs, JJAEPs, and schools throughout the state of Texas. A qualitative case study examining the participants' knowledge, understanding, and implementation of Chapter 37 can provide vital information to strengthen the community's ability to establish and maintain effective disciplinary alternative education programs.

### Scope of the Study

This study is delimited to teachers, administrators, counselors, AESP staff, and independent school district police attending workshops conducted by the Alternative Educational Support Project. It is assumed that those subjects who participate in the study answer the survey questions about their AESP professional development experiences accurately. Accuracy in responding is insured by keeping the subjects anonymous. This study represents the first survey of the Alternative Educational Support Project.

### Limitations

For the purpose of this thesis, alternative education programs consist of DAEPs and JJAEPs. This study does not include non-disciplinary alternative

education programs such as those for dropout recovery, pregnant and parenting students, and students in at-risk situations.

### Summary

The 74<sup>th</sup> Legislature adopted Chapter 37 that set the guidelines for removing disruptive students from the classroom. The Alternative Educational Support Project (AESP) was organized to provide and expand training and technical assistance on implementing the requirements of Chapter 37.

As the number of students remanded to DAEPs and JJAEPs continues to rise due to zero-tolerance policies, the need for training local school districts, Education Service Centers, juvenile probation departments, local law enforcement and social service agencies is imperative. Zero-tolerance policies were enacted to combat the seemingly overwhelming increase in school violence during the 1990s (McAndrews, 2001). There is a due process procedure required before sending a student with disabilities to an alternative education program.

This study was designed to survey participants of the AESP workshops in order to determine if communities are being provided with the tools necessary to foster fair enforcement of school behavioral standards. The definition of program evaluation is to establish the impact or worth of a program. This summative evaluation is being conducted to understand how the program, techniques, and materials are impacting the participants' job performance.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

The focus of this research is to determine the effectiveness of the Alternative Educational Support Project (AESP) designed to promote educators', administrators', and law enforcement agencies' understanding and implementation of Chapter 37 Discipline, Law, and Order. Chapter 37 governs the rules and regulations of juvenile justice and disciplinary alternative education programs in the state of Texas. This literature review discusses the evolution of the alternative education system, juvenile justice and disciplinary alternative education programs, Chapter 37 and its impact on special education students, and professional development for alternative education staff. The elements of the student code of conduct are examined and the administration of alternative education programs in other states is reviewed.

#### Alternative Educational Support Project

In fiscal year 1997, the Criminal Justice Division (CJD) of the Governor's Office placed new focus on the needs of communities. Funding decisions for local and regional projects were to be based on how agencies and citizens work together as part of an overall community strategy to address an identified problem (Governors, 1997).



Texas Education Code, Chapter 37, requires each school district to enforce a school code of conduct and operate an alternative education program. In counties with populations of 125,000 or more, operation of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program (JJAEP) subject to the approval of the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission is required. Cooperation and networking of services are mandated in these alternative education programs. The Alternative Educational Support Project (AESP) facilitates collaboration and provides ongoing support through technical assistance and training. The goal of AESP is to provide and expand training and technical assistance for DAEPs, JJAEPs, and schools throughout Texas. AESP will increase understanding of the requirements of Texas Education Code, Chapter 37 Discipline, Law, and Order (which requires keeping youth in school), increase awareness of available youth services and promote information sharing and collaboration among DAEPs, JJAEPs, schools, and community agencies (*CIE brochure*, 2001).

The 76<sup>th</sup> Legislature amended the Texas Education Code to require that school districts provide staff training on the Safe Schools Act and discipline strategies, including classroom management, district discipline policies, and the local student code of conduct (Alwin, 1999). The Center for Initiatives in Education located at Southwest Texas State University was awarded a five year grant beginning in fiscal year 1997 to provide training and technical assistance throughout Texas in support of Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs operated through school districts and Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Programs. AESP operates in collaboration with the Texas Juvenile Probation

Commission, Regional Education Service Centers, and school districts. Program objectives include the following:

- A. Reduce student disruptive behavior by training staff in anger management, classroom discipline and management, and effective communication.
- B. Provide technical assistance for implementing best practices in alternative education settings.
- C. Improve coordination among pertinent educational, juvenile probation, and community agencies for more efficient delivery services to students in the alternative educational environment (CIE, 2000).

Participation in AESP is drawn from schools statewide and open to school administrators, teachers, counselors, juvenile judges, probation officers, law enforcement officers, mental health workers, social workers, school and juvenile board members, parents, and other youth service providers and advocates. Austin, Corpus Christi, Dallas, El Paso, Fort Worth, Houston, and San Antonio receive priority in support and services. These cities represent the seven largest areas in the state and experience significant juvenile crime and related problems.

An advisory board of persons from juvenile justice, education and/or youth advocacy groups reviews evaluation procedures and instruments prior to their use and reviews results of both the needs assessments and the completed evaluations. The board provides general oversight of the program operation and delivery systems, offers recommendations and guidance for program operation, monitors workshop scheduling and participation, and receives program updates. Training is offered in eight-hour blocks as either a one or two-day session at sites

throughout the state. Participants can choose beforehand some of the topics dealt with in workshops so that participants' specific needs and interests are addressed. The basic training focuses on discipline, law and order mandates, student transition, program management, and coordination.

A typical workshop begins at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 4:00 p.m. Participants register for the workshop in order to receive a certificate for their attendance. Upon arrival participants receive a welcome, introduction of speakers, and a program overview. Depending on the length of the workshop, as many as six different topics are offered based on the needs and interests of the group. Closing comments and completion of workshop evaluations end the session. See Appendix B for workshop agendas for those sites involved in the study.

In the first year of the program, 1,200 need assessments from across the state were conducted and analyzed. The results from that study determined training topics that AESP would offer. No other need assessments have been conducted. Available training topics include the following: Student Transition Models, Student Assessment, Chapter 37 Implementation Issues, Overview of Best Practices, Prevalence of Drug/Alcohol Abuse Among Adolescents, Special Education Issues, Gang Intervention and Prevention Issues, Developing Pro-Social Youth Behavior, Adolescent Self-Esteem Building, Multicultural Respect & Understanding, Student Team Building, Conflict Resolution & Anger Control, Community Networking, Techniques of Mentoring and Tutoring, Pertinent Legal and Law Enforcement Issues, Contemporary Youth Issues and Problems, and Classroom Management, Discipline and Control. Workshop program scheduling

is based upon the expressed needs, interests, and requests of local education programs and youth service agencies.

Approximately six months after attending a workshop, the project distributes a follow-up survey to participants. Respondents are informed that their views are important and their opinions will help to improve and update the program. Demographic information regarding their occupation is gathered. The survey consists of seven items. Item 1 lists topics from the workshop and respondents are to check the ones that were helpful in the successful operation of DAEP/JJAEP and related programs. Item 2 asks, *Do you feel more confident in your role relevant to the AEP or JJAEP in your district as a result of participation in the AESP training?* Item 3 asks, *Have you used any of the training materials for reference, and Has the training information or materials been helpful to others in your school or district?* Item 4 asks, *Are there topics which you think should be added or deleted from the workshop?* Item 5 asks, *Do you recommend any new speakers for our program? Please give name, address, telephone number, and area of expertise.* Item 6 asks, *Do you believe AESP should.* The participant is then given three choices. The choices are: *Include follow-up training, Increase number of presentations and number of days for training, and Expand number of workshops from 8 per year to 20 per year (1 for each ESC).* Item 7 allows respondents to make general comments (see Appendix C).

The need for the Alternative Educational Support Project became evident because there was no program to support successful implementation and

operation of the legislatively mandated discipline related alternative education programs. According to Stephens and Arnette (2000), there is generally little understanding or sharing of information between schools and juvenile probation departments. The ultimate goal of information sharing is to avoid stereotyping or stigmatization of the juvenile offender and to increase the probability that he or she will successfully exit the juvenile justice system, avoid future contact with the system, and complete school and/or secure gainful employment. Few educators have received training that adequately prepares them for working with the difficult student population assigned to alternative education programs (Ashcroft, 1999). The AESP, a professional development project, was established to fill this gap in training.

#### Student Code of Conduct

Texas Education Code Section 37.001 states that each school district shall, with the advice of its district-level committee established under Section 11.252, and jointly, as appropriate, with the juvenile board of each county in which the district is located, adopt a student code of conduct for the district. The student code of conduct must be posted and prominently displayed at each school campus. The Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) Policy Service recommends that the student code of conduct be distributed in the same manner as the student handbook. Educators in alternative education programs should have some input in writing the student code of conduct. In addition to establishing standards for student conduct, the student code of conduct must:

- A. Specify the circumstances, in accordance with the subchapter, under which a student may be removed from a classroom, campus, or alternative education program;
- B. Specify conditions that authorize or require a principal or other appropriate administrator to transfer a student to an alternative education program; and
- C. Outline conditions under which a student may be suspended or expelled (Chapter 37).

A teacher with knowledge of a violation is required to file with the school principal or administrator a written report of any violation of the code. The principal or administrator is to notify the student's parent or guardian within 24 hours after receipt of the teacher's report. The board of trustees must approve any change or amendment of the student code of conduct. The scope of the student code of conduct should be limited to the behaviors that are acceptable and unacceptable to the district and the consequences that will result if certain misbehaviors occur.

#### History of Alternative Education

During the 1960s, the first schools known as "alternatives" emerged in predominantly urban and suburban areas. These alternative schools were modeled after the Summerhill Society in England started by A.S. Neill in the 1920s. Summerhill schools sought to create non-authoritarian personalities resulting in a utopian society (Baumann, 1998).

The social and political activism of the 1960s also influenced the alternative school movement. The term alternative associated innovation and

possibility within school systems. During the early 1970s, alternative schools were taken into a broader political agenda as they were incorporated into much larger desegregation plans. The term “magnet” replaced “alternative” as many educators, administrators, and school boards tried to find another approach to bussing (Lange, 1998). The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention first promoted alternative education programs for delinquency prevention in the 1980s. The Delinquency Prevention through Alternative Education Initiative was based on the premise that schools could play a significant role in curbing youth crime (Cox, 1999).

Over the past several years “alternative” has meant different things to different people. As early as 1978, controversy over the definition of the term alternative existed. Alternative schools fall into three different categories: Type I schools offer full-time, multi-year, educational options for all kinds of students. These types of schools provide full instructional programs so that students can earn the credits they need to graduate, and students choose to go. Type II alternatives are programs to which students are sentenced-usually as one last chance prior to expulsion. These programs focus on behavior modifications. The curriculum is limited to a few basic courses or assignments supplied by the home school. Type III alternatives are for students who need remediation or rehabilitation-academic, social/emotional, or both (Lange, 1988). Although the programs target at-risk groups, students can decide not to attend. Alternative schools are still used to reach students.

The term “alternative” has re-emerged. But in the late 1990s the term did not carry its original connotation. Most students now attend alternative schools not because of the school’s innovative, creative curricular approaches, but because they no longer succeed in the more traditional school environment. Alternative education can denote programs for court-adjudicated youth, advanced placement students, special education or disabled students, or home-schooled children (Koetke, 1999).

Alternative schools are now categorized as Innovative, Last Chance, or Remedial.

#### Innovative Schools

- Alternative to traditional schools with organizational and administrative structure different
- Programming innovations intentionally different
- Make education more humane, challenging, and compelling

#### Premise of Innovative Schools

- Traditional public schools have failed
- Some seek to fix broken students on the belief that it is the individual’s ability to fix problem

#### Last Chance Schools

- Punitive programs to which students are assigned or sentenced
- Last chance prior to expulsion or more restrictive placement
- Students who have failed to meet behavior or achievement norms
- Student has few or no options or choice



- Offer traditional curriculum
- Change attitudes and behaviors

#### Remedial Schools

- For students needing academic and/or social and emotional remediation or rehabilitation
- Assumption is that students will return to less restrictive environment
- Offer traditional curriculum (basic or functional skills for work)
- Provide intensive counseling and support
- Change attitudes and behaviors (Read & Hamm, 2001)

The Safe Schools Act created disciplinary alternative and juvenile justice alternative education programs to remove disruptive and violent students from public classrooms and to ensure that they are educated.

#### Professional Development

Professional development is concerned with improving teachers' instructional methods, their ability to adapt instruction to meet students' needs, and their classroom management skills (Wanzare & da Costa, 2000). It also establishes a professional culture that relies on shared beliefs about the importance of teaching and learning and that emphasizes the relationship among teachers. The primary purpose of professional development is school improvement as measured by student success (Overview, 1997). Currently 24 states require that schools or districts set aside time for professional development. Forty-four states fund professional development, and 33 of these

states provide professional development funds to all districts in the state (Education Week on the Web, 2002).

In the past, professional development meant people attending workshops where experts touted the latest ideas about teaching and learning. Professional development was viewed as something primarily for teachers. Several times a year, students are released for a half or full day and in-service programs are held that may or may not be relevant to teachers' professional development needs (Corcoran, 1995). Teachers typically spend a few hours listening and leave with some practical tips or useful materials. There is seldom any follow-up to that experience and subsequent in-services may address entirely different sets of topics. Research indicates that when in-service programs are presented for the sole purpose of transmitting information, there is little change in the practices of the participants (Cline, Billingsly, & Farley, 1993). For in-service programs to be effective, they must allow participants to become actively involved in learning and translating new knowledge into practice. Most researchers agree that local professional development programs typically have weak effects on practice because they lack focus, intensity, follow-up, and continuity (Corcoran, 1995).

In virtually every state in the country, reform efforts are dramatically raising expectations for students and teachers. To meet these expectations, teachers need to deepen their content knowledge and learn new methods of teaching. They need opportunities to develop, master and reflect on new approaches to working with children. Time is needed to work with colleagues, examine new standards being proposed, and to revise curriculum (Corcoran,

1995). According to the literature and from emerging practice, four areas of teacher competency can be identified:

- A) Knowledge and skills in instruction/strategies
- B) Behavior/responsibility
- C) Community/language
- D) Institutions/culture (Guerin & Denti, 1999).

Professional development is now thought of as a component of lifelong learning that includes training programs with intensive follow-up and support as well as other experiences that individuals may select to enhance and develop their capacity to help all students achieve high standards. From a school system's point of view, professional development is a planned, comprehensive, and systematic program designed by the system to improve all school personnel's ability to design, implement, and assess productive change in each student, staff, and in the school organization (Burke, 2000).

According to Ashcroft (1999), few universities offer a single course directed at teachers of delinquent children and youth. No special license is required for teachers who teach high-risk youth in alternative and correctional settings beyond general education certification. Teachers who work in institutionalized or alternative community settings typically receive no special training to equip them to serve their often difficult to teach students. Alternative education teachers have reported that their students often present legal, social, behavioral, emotional, psychological and instructional challenges that they are unequipped to address (Ashcroft, Price, & Sweeney, 1998). The unique

challenges in the field of alternative education require a high degree of dedication and specialized training becomes essential. According to Gregory (1998), in a questionnaire distributed to alternative educators in Oregon, the teachers felt that teacher training education programs may be too general for a teacher working within this population. A 1987-1989 study conducted by the U.S. Department of Education concluded that too few teachers were familiar with new teaching strategies and practices (Pfannenstiel, 1993). A 1998 study of thirty-two alternative high schools in Virginia highlighted the continuing need for improved teacher competencies. That need resulted from both the problems presented by the youth and the unusual and sometimes restrictive settings in which instruction occurs (Guerin & Denti, 1999). California has created two certificate programs designed to respond to the training needs of professionals in institutional and alternative educational settings. The Certificate Program in Alternative and Correctional Teacher Training utilizes three components: university course work, in-service modules, and regionalized in-service course work. The combination of these components offers the alternative education teacher a chance to learn strategies that will be useful for unusual situations (Ashcroft, Price, & Sweeney, 1998). California's other certificate is aimed at reclaiming at-risk youth. The planning and administration of effective staff development programs should be grounded in and guided by research and best practice. Such a foundation should result in staff development that promotes school improvement, a school climate and culture supportive of change, and individual and institutional professional learning (Wood & Thompson, 1993).

State law places responsibility for training school officials on the Safe Schools Act on regional Education Service Centers. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) provides training to the Centers on the Safe Schools Act and its requirements. TEA relies on the Centers to pass this information on to school districts. The 76<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature amended the Education Code to require that school districts provide their staff training on the Safe Schools Act and discipline strategies, including classroom management, district discipline policies, and the local student code of conduct. Any time a teacher is better trained, a student's school experience is likely to be more successful.

### Workshops

The term "workshop" applies to training situations that overtly seek to develop skills and involve a great deal of supervised activity (Mayo & DuBois, 1987). The goals of a workshop are specified in advance and activities are confined to those that lead directly to the achievement of those goals. According to Stevens (1996), workshops are the most popular form of employer-sponsored career support and are commonly used as a method for faculty development. They vary in topics, instructional methods, target populations, length, and timing in the academic year. In describing a workshop, Mayo & DuBois (1987) write, "The workshop leader provides a description of the workshop content and a demonstration of the skill to be acquired. The participants, either working individually or in small groups, strive to achieve the skill. Before the end of the workshop session, the participants reconvene as a total group to exchange experiences, ask questions, and achieve closure to the session (pg. 76)."

In 1991, Weimer and Lenze reviewed the literature on the effectiveness of workshops. They reported that instructor satisfaction was the outcome most measured in the research on workshop effectiveness. They found no published research on the effectiveness of short (less than four hours in length) workshops in producing changes in instructors' teaching. Weimer and Lenze concluded that the longer the workshop program, the more likely it has an opportunity to affect teachers' skills. Research on longer programs (between four hours and six days) suggests that workshops may contribute to better explanation and increased equity in classrooms (Lenze, 1996). Research on the optimum length of a workshop is inconclusive. Mayo & DuBois (1987) concluded that workshop results are best when the workshop is conducted in no more than two days. However, Nasmith and Steiner (1999) indicated that behaviors could change following one half-day workshop. Stevens (1996) contends that career development programs fail if they depend on workshops as the only learning medium. Stevens also reported that more effective results come from a workshop design that allows for two consecutive days to be followed by a follow-up day of training at least five but not more than eight weeks later.

How do workshops rate in improving teaching? Participants typically rate workshops good to very good. Most studies rely heavily on self-report and self-reports have been shown to have a poor correlation with what teachers actually do (Hartman & Nelson, 1992).

### Web-Based Training

Web-Based Training (WBT) is computer-based training that uses Web technologies (TCP/IP, HTTP, browser) and is delivered across networks (Kilby, 1999).

WBT may include:

- Text, graphics, and animations
- Streaming video and sound
- Database connections
- Interactivity
- Discussion forums
- Electronic mail
- Chat

Some advantages to using Web-based training are: no travel expenses, no instructor fees, or no facility costs. The cost of lost time on the job when employees are in training represents some of the savings that are realized through Web-based training. Other advantages of Web-based training are: training is available to anyone with no limitations on numbers of students and there are no difficulties in finding a suitable geographic location (Brown, 1998). Enormous amounts of information can be available on the Web and in custom WBT training materials.

According to the book, *Technology Assessment in Education and Training*, studies have shown that technology-based instruction may significantly reduce the costs of achieving instructional objectives by 30% to 60% (Smith &

Diamond, 2000). Studies also indicate that technology-based instruction either reduces time to achieve instructional objectives or it increases skills and knowledge, depending on whether achievement or time is held constant.

Web-based training does have its limitations. The institution delivering the training has no control over the at-home systems. The web page must be designed for the lowest common platform so that all persons have access to the information. Some learners may need new technology skills before being able to access the information provided on the web site. In order to combat this lack of skills, learners should receive training necessary to make effective use of any technology involved in WBT.

The virtual classroom falls into two categories-asynchronous and synchronous. Asynchronous classrooms allow the instructor and participants to engage in learning activities without being online at the same time. Synchronous classrooms allow the instructor and learners to be online at the same time (Brown, 2000). E-mail, online forums, bulletin boards, chat rooms, and discussion groups are a few of the tools available to learners.

### Types of Alternative Education Programs

#### Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Programs (JJAEPs)

When it comes to the education of youth under the care of the juvenile justice system, placement into either state operated, or locally operated or contracted programs may determine who provides educational services, the level of funding for education, and even if the academic credit earned while in the juvenile justice system is transferable (Wolford, 2000). Students placed in these



programs usually require not only academic attention but also counseling for social and emotional problems. In Texas, Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Programs (JJAEPs) serve expelled students who have committed serious or violent offenses in the 22 largest counties in the state. Under the law, the juvenile boards of all counties with a population of 125,000 or greater are required to have a memorandum of understanding (MOU) in place with each of the school districts in the county (Bickerstaff et al., 1995). In 1999, the population requirement was reduced to allow counties with populations as low as 72,000 to operate a JJAEP (Alwin, 1999). Section 37.007 of the Texas Education Code established the guidelines for the joint memorandum of understanding (MOU) required by the school districts and the county juvenile board. In 1999, JJAEPs operated in 22 mandatory counties and 9 non-mandatory counties, using funds from the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission (NCJJ, 2000). During that same year, 31 JJAEPs served 5,644 students (NCJJ, 2000). The Texas Juvenile Probation Commission (TJPC) oversees the operation of JJAEPs by providing funds and technical assistance to support the program and setting minimum standards for program operation.

The MOU is an agreement between the juvenile boards and school districts that details the operation of the JJAEP. A detailed MOU is particularly important for the county because it controls whether expelled students can be ordered back to a district or district alternative education program as a condition of probation. Under Texas Education Code Section 37.101 a juvenile court may no longer order a juvenile to attend school in the regular classroom or school

district alternative education program as a term or condition of probation without a written agreement between the county juvenile board and the school district setting out the juvenile probation department's role in supervising or providing other support services for students in school programs (Bickerstaff et al., 1997). The joint MOU also establishes a plan that provides transportation services for students placed in the JJAEP.

The academic mission of JJAEPs is to enable students to perform at grade level. The intent of the program is to keep expelled students learning and off the streets during the day (SMCISD student code of conduct, 2000-2001). Chapter 37 of the Texas Education Code requires the long-term tracking of academic performance data on students attending a JJAEP in order to determine the effectiveness of the JJAEP in enabling students to perform at grade level. During the placement process students complete diagnostic testing in reading, writing and math. The program at the JJAEP must focus on English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and self-discipline. Expelled students should receive services to help modify their behavior and provide for an adequate education. It is not required to provide a course necessary to fulfill a student's high school graduation requirement other than those courses previously mentioned. JJAEPs are required to operate 7 hours a day for 180 days. They are not required to employ certified teachers except in the case of special education and ESL teachers. Educators can potentially range from qualified professional instructors to certified teachers who are not teaching in

their fields to individuals without any type of teacher certification or training.

However, in practice most teaching staff are certified.

### Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs (DAEPs)

What began as a discussion on how to deal effectively with serious student offenders quickly expanded to a much broader initiative to increase educators' prerogatives to remove any disruptive student (Cortez & Montecel, 1999). The Safe Schools Act created disciplinary alternative education programs (DAEPs) to serve students in all school districts who are removed from their regular classroom due to disruptive behavior or for committing felonies off campus. A disciplinary alternative education program is defined as a program, including shared service arrangements, established in conformance with Texas Education Code (TEC) 37.008 or to serve expelled students pursuant to TEC 37.011 (k). Prior to this Act, many school districts lacked an alternative setting for disruptive students. Students were suspended from school either to their homes or to in-school suspension, neither of which offered quality educational support. In-school suspension was developed to show that schools were tough on discipline while not sending students home (Maughan, 1999). Texas requires that DAEPs physically separate referred students from other students. On-campus DAEPs must use certified personnel; however, off-campus DAEPs may use non-certified instructional personnel for students not receiving special education or bilingual education services (Alwin, 1999).

Other program stipulations include a provision that students referred to a DAEP are officially removed from their school of assignment during the

alternative placement. Chapter 37 of the Education Code forbids students who committed offenses that require placement in a disciplinary alternative education program from participating in a school-sponsored or school-related extracurricular and non-curricular activities (SMHS Student/Parent Handbook, 2000-2001). Students who violate this rule can receive additional punishment ranging from extended time at the alternative center to expulsion or referral to a juvenile justice alternative center. A student's placement in a DAEP must be reviewed by law at least every 120 days. The review must include an accounting of the student's academic progress (SMCISD code of conduct, 2000-2001). Elementary students may not be placed with non-elementary students. Students younger than six years old may not be placed in DAEPs. Students between the ages of six and ten who commit an expellable offense must be placed in an AEP and they cannot be expelled. The only exception for the expulsion of children under ten is where expulsion is required by federal law for the possession of a firearm at school (Bickerstaff et al., 1997). The Texas Education Agency oversees the operation of DAEPs.

### Special Education Issues

The need for special education teachers, especially in the field of alternative education, is ever increasing. Studies indicate that as many as 30% of the special education teachers in the United States do not meet the special education teacher certification standards of their state (Hume, 1989). Special education students may require support services such as speech therapy, social

work service, occupational therapy, transition services, psychological services, and adapted physical education (Smith, 1998).

Special education is individualized education for children with special needs such as mental retardation, speech or language impairments, visual impairments, hearing impairments, physical disabilities and health impairments (Parker, 1995). Youth with disabilities in alternative educational settings share some of the following characteristics:

- A) Poor literacy and academic skills
- B) Inadequate social, emotional, and behavioral skills
- C) Alienation from school
- D) Low self-esteem
- E) Limited language proficiency
- F) Ethnic or racial discrimination
- G) Impulsivity and poor judgment
- H) Limited or unavailable family support
- I) Antisocial peer influence; and
- J) Lack of positive adult role models (Guerin & Denti, 1999).

### Special Education and Chapter 37

With the 1997 Amendments to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA; PL 105-17), the mission of alternative education programs expanded from the education of youth who have dropped out, or were at-risk for dropping out, to students with disabilities whose behavior warrants special attention outside the general educational setting (Quinn, Rutherford, & Osher, 1999).

After passage of Texas' SB133, President Clinton signed into law the reauthorization of the IDEA to assure all students with disabilities receive a free and appropriate public education. Among the changes to IDEA were amendments addressing the discipline of special education students, removal of special education students to alternative education settings, and the requirement that special education services continue to be provided subsequent to a special education student's expulsion from school (Bickerstaff et al., 1997). For students in special education who have serious discipline problems, the 1997 amendment to IDEA stimulated interest in the design of interim alternative education programs that would be more effective than the common resort to homebound placements with tutoring and other restrictive placements (Tobin & Sprague, 2000). IDEA also requires state improvement plans to contain specific strategies for professional development and improvement for all school personnel who work with students with disabilities.

The education of special needs students who have already been expelled from school raises unique legal issues as applied to the JJAEP. Under the Texas Education Agency's administrative rules, if a special education student is expelled from school according to Chapter 37 for conduct unrelated to the student's disability, the student's Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) committee determines the instructional and related services to be provided during the time of expulsion (Bickerstaff et al., 1997). The ARD committee meets at least once a year to develop, review and revise the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP). The IEP is a written plan designed for just one student

and it is an agreement between the school and parents on how the student will be educated (Arc, 1999). The IEP states what special education and related services the school will provide and when and where those services will be provided. When special education students are placed in an alternative education setting, the IEP team should review and revise the IEP to include goals that directly relate to the behavior that warrants the placement. These goals should be based on a functional behavioral assessment and lead to a positive behavior intervention plan (Quinn et al., 1999).

Under IDEA, students who are expelled for carrying a weapon to school or at a school function, or for knowingly possessing or using illegal drugs, or selling or soliciting the sale of a controlled substance while at school or a school function may be placed in an appropriate interim alternative educational setting or be suspended for not more than 10 school days (Bickerstaff et al., 1997). A school district may place special education students in an alternative education setting for the same amount of time that a child without a disability would be subject to discipline, but not more than 45 days. After a student with a disability has been removed from his or her current placement for more than 10 school days in the same school year, during any subsequent days of removal, the public agency must provide services to the extent necessary (Tobin & Sprague, 2000). Schools do not have to provide services during the first 10-day removal. According to Throop (personal communication, June 5, 2001) as of June 2001, two bills had been proposed to the Texas Legislature. Senate Bill 1735, proposed by Senator Cain and Representative Dunnam, requires that before placing a student in a

DAEP an ARD must be conducted. Senate Bill 189, proposed by Lindsay and Dutton, requires that special education students expelled to a JJAEP must have an ARD and a JJAEP representative must be present. If the JJAEP cannot meet the needs of the special education student, the home school must be notified. Another ARD must be held to decide if the student will be sent to the JJAEP even though services cannot be met or the student is returned to the home campus. The researcher confirmed on June 24, 2002, that both bills passed. This information was found at the Texas Council of Administrators of Special Education website: <http://www.tcase.org/policywatch.htm>

### Alternative Education Administration

#### Educating Juvenile Offenders

According to Pfannenstiel (1993), youth in juvenile correctional facilities are the most educationally disadvantaged in our society. Many are functionally illiterate when they enter such institutions. The juvenile probation population is expected to grow after stabilization of around 39,000 juveniles in 1998 and 1999. The main reason for this increase will be demographic (Fabelo, 2001).

Since 1974, federal education funds for juvenile offenders have been allocated to state operated correctional institutions under Chapter 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (Pfannenstiel, 1993). In 1999, a national examination of the administration of juvenile justice education was focused on existing administrative structures for the education of youth in the juvenile justice system. Twenty state juvenile justice agencies participating in the survey were: Arizona, Alabama, California, Colorado, Delaware, Florida,



Georgia, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Michigan, Missouri, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, Virginia, and Washington.

Although state level juvenile justice agencies were found to be the primary providers of educational services to youth in state-operated programs, the public schools were responsible for educating the majority of youth in the juvenile justice system (Wolford, 2000). There was considerable diversity in the administrative arrangement for the delivery of educational services. In 60% of the states surveyed, an independent juvenile justice agency existed; in 35% of the states, juvenile justice was a unit within a child welfare agency; in 1 state, juvenile justice was a unit within a department of corrections. In 13 states there was special legislation that governed the administration of the juvenile justice education system. The legislation dated back to 1972 in one state and was as recent as 1999 in another state. With such diversity in administration of juvenile justice programs, it is difficult to find a benchmark program.

The Texas Youth Commission is responsible for the administration of juvenile justice services in Texas. It operates a special school district and employs teachers who are required to be certified. Youth in non-state operated programs, juvenile detention centers, as well as child welfare and mental health placements are serviced by the local education agency. The Windham School District that serves offenders in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice educates youth under the age of 18 who are sentenced as adults.

## Summary

The National Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention first promoted alternative education programs for delinquency programs in the 1980s (Cox, 1999). The lack of an education can make an enormous difference in a juvenile's life. Alternative schools remove disruptive students from traditional public schools and provide them with a chance for success in a smaller and more supportive environment (Garrison, 1987).

Chapter 37 outlines new requirements regarding school discipline. It addresses the need for district level committees to work jointly with county juvenile boards to adopt a student code of discipline. The legislation mandates policy for student removal by a teacher, for establishment of a placement review committee, suspension, and/or removal of a student to an alternative education program, as well as basic requirements for the operation of alternative education programs. AESP operates as a bridge between school districts and local agencies to collaboratively implement services and educational programs required by Chapter 37 of Senate Bill 1.

Each day teachers work to bring educational success to students who display a variety of personalities, learning styles, and ambitions. In the field of alternative education, these varieties push the limit. Teachers in alternative education settings face challenges they have not been specifically trained to address. If teachers aren't given adequate opportunities to learn, they may have little chance of meeting the ever-increasing demands placed upon them.

Workshops are a common method for faculty professional development. They vary in topics, instructional methods, target population, length, and timing in the academic year. Research on the effectiveness of workshops varies based on the length of the workshop.

Chapter 37 raises unique legal issues when applied to special education students. No special education student may be deprived of services required by the IEP while being educated in an alternative education setting.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODS

The Alternative Educational Support Project (AESP) provides training and technical assistance on implementing the Texas Safe Schools Act. Local school districts, Education Service Centers, juvenile probation departments, local law enforcement, and social service agencies are contacted and encouraged to participate in local training sessions. State law mandates training on the Texas Safe Schools Act. However, participants voluntarily attend training sessions.

The qualitative research tradition of a bounded, multi-site, case study was followed in this research. A qualitative case study provides an in-depth study based on a diverse array of data collection materials, and the researcher situates this case within its larger setting (Creswell, 1998). The case study showed the participants' experience of attending the workshops and how their attendance impacted their understanding and implementation of Chapter 37. Testimonials from participants regarding the program's impact on their beliefs, attitudes, and values are important sources of documentation.

In order to evaluate the AESP, workshop attendees were given a daily session evaluation and an end-of-workshop evaluation. A mail-in questionnaire was distributed to those attendees who had participated in workshops within 12 months from the time of workshop attendance. A telephone or electronic mail

interview was conducted in order to gather more in-depth data describing how workshop information was used and how that information may have affected job performance. Through the use of daily session evaluations, workshop evaluations, questionnaires, and telephone or electronic mail interviews, the researcher collected data, analyzed it, and made meaning of the experiences from those participating in the workshops. A chronological view of AESP workshops and AESP evaluation schedule is shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Timeline for AESP workshops and AESP evaluation schedule

<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>
2/25 Galveston	2/26 Bexar County	3/16 *Telephone & e-mail interviews
3/28 Waco	3/1 Change in End-of-Workshop Eval.	4-5 *Analyze data
4/7 Houston	4/11 El Paso	6 *Turn in rough draft
4/20 Amarillo	6/5 & 6 San Antonio Change In Daily Session Eval. *Attended workshop	7/13 *Thesis defense
5/3 & 4 Mt. Pleasant	8/8 *Thesis proposal defense	
5/16 Kilgore	8/18 *Mailed pilot study surveys	
6/8 & 9 San Antonio	9/21 *Telephone calls to pilot group	
6/13 & 14 El Paso	10/6 *Mailed surveys to workshop attendees	
7/24 Odessa	11/1 *Telephone calls to workshop attendees	
8/24 & 25 Richardson		

**Note. \* = researcher participation.**

## Subjects

The population selected for this study was those persons who voluntarily participated in one of five workshops throughout the state of Texas between June 2000 and June 2001. This timeframe gave the researcher the opportunity to query those who had assessed the information gained at the workshop and put those principles into practice. Those who had not had the opportunity to use the information but drew conclusions as to how this knowledge impacted their job performance were also queried.

The subjects were chosen through the use of purposeful sampling of 193 participants. Sampling is the act, process, or technique of selecting a suitable sample or a representative part of a population for the purpose of determining parameters or characteristics of the whole population (Fridah, nd). Through the use of inferential statistics the researcher determines a population's characteristics by directly observing only a portion of the population (Fridah, nd). A sample is expected to mirror the population from which it comes, however, there is no guarantee that any sample will be precisely representative of the population from which it comes. Data gathered from the most recent workshop attendees gave a more current analysis of the program. Participants were selected from a service center, independent school district, law enforcement, and an individual campus in order to provide a wider perspective on the effectiveness of AESP.

A pilot test of the questionnaire was conducted prior to its being mailed to those in the sample. The pilot questionnaire was sent to 25 participants who

were not in the sample group. A letter of explanation accompanied the questionnaire (see Appendix D). The pilot group responses were documented. Based on the results of the pilot study no revisions were made.

#### Participants' Rights

A Human Subjects Consent to Participate Form was distributed to participants (see Appendix E). This form explained the participants' right to voluntarily withdraw from the study at any time and acknowledged respondent confidentiality. There are no known risks associated with participating in this study.

#### Instruments

A combination of data collection methods was used to evaluate the program: daily session evaluations, workshop evaluations, questionnaires, telephone interviews and communication through electronic mail. This diversity of methods helped to increase the validity of the research as the strengths of one method compensated for the weakness of another and as methods yielded corroborative information.

#### Daily Session Evaluation

The daily session evaluation gave the workshop attendee the opportunity to evaluate the training topics. Topics were evaluated through the use of three statements and an overall session evaluation. Two forced response statements concluded the evaluation (see Appendix F). A Likert scale ranging from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much) was used. A Likert scale entails a five-, seven-, or nine-point rating scale in which the attitude of the respondent is measured on a

continuum from highly favorable to highly unfavorable, or vice versa, with an equal number of positive and negative response possibilities and one middle or neutral category (Rea & Parker, 1997). The statements were as follows: 1. *The presentation was informative.* 2. *The presentation was well organized.* 3. *The printed materials were beneficial.* 4. *Overall session evaluation.* The forced response statements were: 1. *What I liked most about the presentation sessions.* 2. *Suggestions for improving the sessions.* In June 2001 at the San Antonio workshop, an updated evaluation was distributed. All information was the same except the Likert scale ranged from 1 (disagree) to 5 (agree). Ratings for 4, 3, or 2 had no value on either the original or revised evaluation.

#### End-of-Workshop Evaluation

At the end of each AESP workshop, participants were asked to complete an eleven-item evaluation to determine the extent to which the workshop met their needs and the program's objectives (see Appendix G). First, participants were instructed to circle the number that best expressed their reaction to 6 items. A Likert scale ranging from 5 (excellent) to 1 (poor) was used. The items evaluated are as follows: 1) *organization of the workshop*: 2) *workshop management*: 3) *knowledge of the presenters*: 4) *ideas and activities presented*: 5) *printed materials*: and 6) *overall evaluation of the workshop*. Participants then responded to Item 7 that rates the value of their attendance at the workshop. The Likert scale ranged from 5 (very beneficial) to 1 (no benefit). Ratings 4, 3, and 2 have no value. Item 8 asked, *Would you like further training in an area discussed today?* Item 9 requested suggestions for future workshops. Item 10



asked participants to agree or disagree with the following statement: *Southwest Texas State University should continue to sponsor Alternative Educational workshops*. Item 11 allowed for optional comments. After March 2001, an updated version of the evaluation was distributed. The wording for items 8, 9, and 10 were changed. Item 8 asked, *What topic areas discussed in the workshop do you need additional training in?* Item 9 asked, *What topic areas not discussed in the workshop are needed in your school district or agency?* Item 10 asked, *What were the overall strengths and weaknesses of the workshop?*

### Questionnaire

The mailing included a cover letter, questionnaire, and a stamped, self-addressed envelope in which the subjects would return the questionnaire (see Appendix H.). The cover letter included a description of the purpose of the questionnaire, instructions for completing the questionnaire, and the date by which it should be returned.

The questionnaire consisted of four forced response questions and a final comment that allowed for an open response. Forced response questions allowed respondents to determine the direction of the response. The major advantage of the forced response question is that it reveals what is on the subject's mind as opposed to what the interviewer suspects is on the subject's mind (Krueger, 1998). At the end of the questionnaire participants responded to a statement that they would/would not like to participate in the telephone or electronic mail interview. E-mail addresses were requested at this point.

Participants were asked to respond to the following questions. 1) *What AESP workshop information was new and relevant to teaching in alternative education setting?* 2) *What could be used in your work setting?* 3) *How did you use the information in your work setting?* 4) *What were some significant outcomes?* The final comment asked, *Are there any other comments or concerns you would like to mention.*

### Telephone Interview

Telephone interviews were conducted based on the responses received from the questionnaire. A few limitations to telephone interviews are the lack of visual communication between interviewer and interviewee, the cost of long distance calls, and the availability of the participant to devote time and attention to a telephone interview. If the respondent is unfamiliar with a caller, there might be indifference and/or poor cooperation. One of the benefits of using telephone interviews is that the interviewer can explain questions not understood by the respondents. Telephone interviews provide feedback on the initial summaries. According to Creswell (1998), taking information back to informants is a key verification step in research. The interview consisted of two forced response questions that required the participant to give details on how the information received at the workshop was used and if the workshop related strategies that were implemented worked (see Appendix I.) Forced response questions allow respondents the freedom to reflect their personal reality in their individually determined responses (Hecht, 1993). Data were analyzed according to themes or concepts that emerge from the data. According to Hecht, (1993), forced

survey questions should have the purposeful intent to: a) gather information about a particular concept, issue, or subject, b) gather opinions about the concept, issue, or subject, c) gather suggestions for improvement of a particular implementation, and d) increase the researcher's understanding of a concept, issue or subject. The interview consisted of these questions.

- 1) *How has attending the workshop impacted your performance on the job?*
- 2) *Describe an incident where you were able to apply information learned at the workshop and what was the outcome.*

#### Electronic Mail Interview

E-mail surveys are an effective and inexpensive method to obtain the attitudes and opinions of a wide variety of respondents (SurveySite Inc., 2002). Electronic mail has been used to distribute surveys and collect data from online users for almost fifteen years. Participants in this study were given an opportunity to respond using this media on the mail-in questionnaire.

E-mail surveys work well because busy respondents may not have time for a face-to-face or telephone interview. It also gives the interviewee time to respond carefully. There are limitations to using an e-mail study. Size limitation of an e-mail survey is a key limitation. Large e-mail files are difficult to download. Bad e-mail addresses are another limitation. As people move from one company to another e-mail addresses become obsolete. In an e-mail interview you cannot change direction if a more promising line of data emerges from the conversation. You cannot get the interviewee back on track if the conversation strays or ask follow-on questions if your first questions do not elicit enough information.

### Procedures

The researcher gathered data through the following steps: 1. Analyzed workshop evaluations. 2. Developed and piloted a questionnaire. 3. Administered questionnaire. 4. Developed interview protocol. 5. Conducted interviews. 6. Analyzed interview data. The interviews were conducted via telephone or electronic mail during February 2002. A pilot questionnaire was conducted prior to the mailings to ensure that the questions were unambiguous, comprehensive, valid, and reliable.

Analyzing a qualitative case study includes techniques such as: putting information into different arrays, making a matrix of categories and placing the data within such categories, creating flowcharts and other devices for examining the data, and putting information in some type of scheme (Yin, 1989). Data analysis of the workshop evaluations requiring numerical responses was exhibited in bar graph form. The data obtained from the questionnaire were grouped into themes and compared to the workshop evaluations. Telephone interview or electronic mail interviews were analyzed to discover the reported effects of attending an AESP workshop on the participant's job performance. The telephone or electronic mail interviews acted as a means of comparing data received from the workshop evaluation and survey questionnaires.

### Pilot Study

The mail-in questionnaire was distributed to 25 alternative education personnel employed in the following positions: social worker (1), juvenile probation officer (1), counselor (3), school administrator (6), teacher (6),

AEP aide (1), secretary (1), law enforcement officer (1), school district staff (1), AEP coordinator (1), education service center consultant (2), and school staff (1). The number in parenthesis represents the number of people in that position. This group attended workshops between June 2000 and June 2001 at these locations: El Paso, Odessa, Mt. Pleasant, Robstown, and Lubbock. The questionnaires were mailed August 18, 2001 with a requested return date of September 10, 2001.

The pilot study gave the researcher an opportunity to determine if the research questions were relevant and appropriate to the study, whether the questions were phrased in the appropriate language to enable the interviewee to properly understand the questions, and to assure that the questions elicited the type of information needed to evaluate the survey. Three questionnaires were returned. Only one questionnaire was complete. Two respondents wrote that they did not remember what the AESP workshop covered. Two questionnaires were returned by the post office due to incorrect address.

On September 21, 2002, fifteen telephone calls were made to encourage return of the questionnaire. Thirteen of the workshop attendees chose not to return the questionnaire due to their inability to remember having attended the workshop. The other five participants could not be contacted due to incorrect telephone numbers or no one answered the telephone. In light of these results, in order to remind workshop attendees of the AESP workshop, a sample agenda was included in the final mailing. Due to the limited number of responses received, no wording changes were made to the questionnaire.

### Summary

Daily session evaluations, end-of-workshop evaluations, questionnaires, telephone interviews, and electronic mail interviews were examined to evaluate the effectiveness of the Alternative Educational Support Project. Evaluation questions relate to the extent to which participants met the objectives set forth by the program by attending the workshops. The evaluation was intended to assess the AESP during the 2000-2001 training sessions and establish a baseline on which to track the long-term progress of AESP participants.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

The result of this program evaluation was to measure the Alternative Educational Support Project's (AESP) effectiveness in support of training disciplinary alternative and juvenile justice alternative education program staff members. The central research question for this study is, *How effective do attendees of the Alternative Educational Support Project find its workshops to be as a strategy for implementing the Discipline, Law, and Order principles of Chapter 37, Texas Education Code?* Supporting the central research question are the following subordinate questions:

1. *What AESP workshop information was new and relevant to teaching in the alternative education setting?*
2. *What information could be used in your work setting?*
3. *How did you use the information in your work setting?*
4. *What were some significant outcomes?*

In order to evaluate the AESP conducted by Southwest Texas State University, workshop attendees were given a daily session evaluation and an end-of-workshop evaluation. A mail-in questionnaire was distributed to those attendees who had participated in workshops within 12 months from the time of workshop attendance. A telephone or electronic mail interview was conducted in

order to gather more in-depth data describing how workshop information was used and how that information may have affected job performance. Participation in the telephone or electronic mail interview was based on the participants' submitting a telephone number or electronic mail address in the space provided on the mail-in questionnaire. Electronic mail was used to provide a more convenient avenue of responding to the survey questions for those persons who were not readily available by telephone.

The matrix that shows type of response received from each site is provided in Table 3. If there is no "x" in the column, this source of data was not received from the site. Workshop participants from Galveston did not provide questionnaire, telephone, or electronic mail data. Eleven Galveston participants volunteered to participate in the follow-up questionnaire by providing their home address and telephone number on the registration information form. Job titles for those attending were teacher, social worker/special education counselor, school administrator, and paraprofessional. The researcher could find no specific reason for the "no return" rate from this group. Participants from El Paso were predominantly police officers. Only two police officers provided data for this study. Both responded that although the information provided at the workshop was good, they did not feel that it was relevant to their work setting. The researcher can only conclude that the relevancy of the information provided at the workshop may have been the reason that more police officers did not respond to the questionnaire.



Table 3

Matrix indicating form of responses received.

Site	Questionnaire	Telephone	Electronic mail
Richardson	X		
El Paso			X
San Antonio	X	X	X
Bexar County L C.	X		
Galveston			

*Note.* X = form of response received

### Daily Session Evaluations

One-hundred-thirteen daily session evaluations were analyzed from Richardson (Region 10), El Paso, the Bexar County Learning Center, and San Antonio (Region 20). These were administered at the beginning of each workshop. The evaluation was designed to rate the popularity or participant approval of the training topics. The responses to three statements and two forced response statements were analyzed. The statements used to evaluate the session were: *The presentation was informative*, *The presentation was well organized*, and *The printed materials were beneficial*. All responses were based on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much). Ratings for 2, 3, or 4 have no value attributed to them. The overall session rating ranged from 1 to 5 with no explanation for the ratings. Data for the 113 daily session evaluations are provided in Table 4. For those topics presented at multiple sites, gang awareness received the highest overall rating with an average rating of 4.7. Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) training sessions

averaged a 4.6 rating and Special Education and Alternative Education Issues and Chapter 37 each averaged a rating of 4.4. The Student Centered Activities is the only topic that received a 5.0 in each of the four categories. This was a hands-on activity that centered on team building and relationships and was only offered at one of the sites analyzed for this study. The Mesquite Academy received one of the lowest overall evaluations. C. Gunter (Personal communication, June 23, 2002) stated the Mesquite Academy is a collage of programs that encourages youth to stay in school. GED, at-risk programs, and Chapter 37 are housed within the Academy. Region 10 requested this presentation in order to give other districts an idea how to merge supplemental programs to help students graduate. One reason given by Gunter for the low rating was that there was a change in scheduling and the presenter's time was reduced. One participant responded, "The Mesquite Academy presentation was good but not relevant to AEPs".

A total of seven daily session evaluations could not be used because they were incomplete. Topics were evaluated by circling ratings, but topic names were not recorded. The researcher could not determine which topics were being evaluated. Daily session evaluations from Galveston were not included in this part of the study because the researcher did not receive this information.

Two changes were made to the daily session evaluation that was distributed in San Antonio. On the evaluation that was distributed at Richardson, El Paso, and the Bexar County Learning Center the two forced response statements were placed at the end of the evaluation. The San Antonio

evaluation had the forced response statements placed beneath each training topic so that each topic received a specific forced response evaluation.

The second change on the daily session evaluation involved the rating scale. A “5” represented agree and “1” represented disagree. Numbers 2, 3, and 4 had no explanations attributed to each value.

**Table 4****Analysis of Daily Session Evaluations**

<b>Site</b>	<b>Informative</b>	<b>Well organized</b>	<b>Materials beneficial</b>	<b>Overall evaluation</b>
<b>Training topics</b>				
<b>Bexar County (n = 22)</b>				
Gang Awareness	5.0	5.0	4.4	4.7
Spec Educ. & Alt Issues	4.4	4.4	4.3	4.5
<b>El Paso (n = 17)</b>				
Gang Awareness	4.6	4.7	4.8	4.6
PEIMS	5.0	4.7	4.9	4.7
JJAEP	4.5	4.6	4.6	4.5
<b>Richardson (n = 22)</b>				
Gang Awareness	4.8	5.0	4.8	4.8
Spec Educ. & Alt Issues	3.9	3.6	4.4	3.9
Mesquite Academy	3.9	4.0	4.0	3.8
Student Centered Activities	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
Chapter 37	4.7	4.2	4.4	4.4
Juvenile Probation	4.0	3.7	4.3	3.8
School Safety	4.5	4.5	4.7	4.7
<b>San Antonio (n = 52)</b>				
Gang Awareness	4.8	4.8	4.6	4.6
Spec. Educ. & Alt Issues	4.1	4.4	4.1	4.7
PEIMS	4.5	4.4	4.3	4.4
Chapter 37	4.3	4.5	4.6	4.3
Anger/Conflict Mgmt	4.1	2.5	4.3	4.2
Bullying	4.2	4.3	4.2	4.2

n = 113

*Note.* The highest rating for each topic is 5.0. Spec. Educ. = special education; Alt. = alternative; Mgmt = management; PEIMS = Public Education Information Management System.

Data were also grouped by topics in order to give an average topic rating (see Table 5). Training topics were not standardized throughout the sites. Gang awareness was the only topic offered at all four sites.

Table 5

Training topic average

Training Topic	Informative	Well Organized	Materials Beneficial	Overall Evaluation
Gang Awareness	4.8	4.9	4.7	4.7
Spec. Educ. & Alt. Issues*	4.1	4.1	4.3	4.4
PEIMS*	4.8	4.6	4.6	4.6
JJAEP*	4.5	4.6	4.6	4.5
Mesquite Academy*	3.9	4.0	4.0	3.8
Student Centered Activities*	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
Chapter 37*	4.5	4.4	4.5	4.4
Juvenile Probation*	4.0	3.7	4.3	3.8
School Safety*	4.5	4.5	4.7	4.7
Anger/Conflict Mgmt.*	4.1	2.5	4.3	4.2
Bullying*	4.2	4.3	4.2	4.2

n = 113

*Note:* \* = Topic not covered in all workshops. The highest rating for each topic is 5.0 (very much). Spec. Educ. = special education; Alt. = alternative; Mgmt =management; PEIMS = Public Education Information Management System.

### Forced Response Statements

Forced response statements for the daily session evaluation were designed to gather specific feedback on the training topics. The statements presented were: *What I liked most about the session/presentation* and

*Suggestions for improving the session/presentation.* One-hundred-sixteen evaluations were reviewed. Thirty-three participants did not respond to the statement. Overall session evaluations were positive with a mean score of 4.4. Participants reported being pleased with the knowledge and preparedness of the speakers. Gang awareness presentations were well received with a mean score of 4.7. Good information that could be used immediately was also emphasized. Examples of responses for, *What I liked most about the session/presentation* follow: "The speaker was knowledgeable," "Relative to the school setting," "Very creative models to enhance learning," and "Very informative, held my attention, beneficial to my campus." Comments about the gang presentation were: "Gangs was very informative and well organized," "Made me more aware of gang influence and what to look for," "Gang recognition and statistics were very beneficial," "It was based on material we face everyday and I had questions about," and "Street gang trends."

Suggestions for improving the session/presentation were varied. Comments concerning facility location and topic relevancy were reported. Length of time for the session was also addressed. Examples of responses for suggestions follow. Comments such as, "Maybe some more time," "This should be a two-day session," and "It could be longer and it would be beneficial," confirm the data from the literature on time allotment for training sessions. Studies conducted by Mayo & DuBois, 1987; Weimer & Lenze, 1991; and Stevens, 1996 concluded that workshops conducted in no more than 2 days had better results. However, length of training sessions was not addressed in either of these

studies. Two suggestions dealt with the environment. They were, “Easier to locate facility” and “Overhead transparencies were hard to see because of glare/dark spots.” Suggestions for organization/content of the session were, “Back off with all the games. A few examples would have been plenty,” “Boring and dry,” and “Let PEIMS be a concurrent session so that those of us who are not involved in attendance recording do not have to sit through the presentation.” One participant reported relevancy of a training topic. “Mesquite presentation wasn’t relevant to AEPs. It was informative but didn’t apply to AEPs.”

### Summary

Evaluation of the training topics produced the following results. The gang awareness presentation was the most highly rated topic of those offered at all four training sites. PEIMS training, offered at El Paso and San Antonio, received the next highest rating. Special education and alternative issues, offered at the Bexar County Learning Center, Richardson, and San Antonio received the third highest rating.

Forced response statements to, *What I liked most about the session/presentations*, show that workshop participants were most pleased with the knowledge and preparedness of the speaker. Gang presentations, which were also listed under topic, were also well received. Although gang presentations should appear under the topic category, it was listed under the forced response statement. Other participants reported that information was useful, relative to school setting, and could be used immediately. Hands-on activities, plenty of visual materials, and the group activity with ice breakers

impressed workshop participants. Responses to *Suggestions for improving the session*, show that respondents at the Bexar County Learning Center, El Paso ISD, and San Antonio, felt that the session would have been more beneficial if it had been longer. This comment was made in reference to the length of the training session and not the length of the workshop. Respondents said the extra time was needed to discuss campus specific issues. Training sessions at each of the sites were 1 hour and 45 minutes. The San Antonio group provided the most suggestions for change including requests for having the latest legislative updates on paper and requested more information on anger management. Suggestions made at other sites include: an easier to locate facility, better overhead transparencies, and relevancy of topic offered.

#### Workshop Evaluation

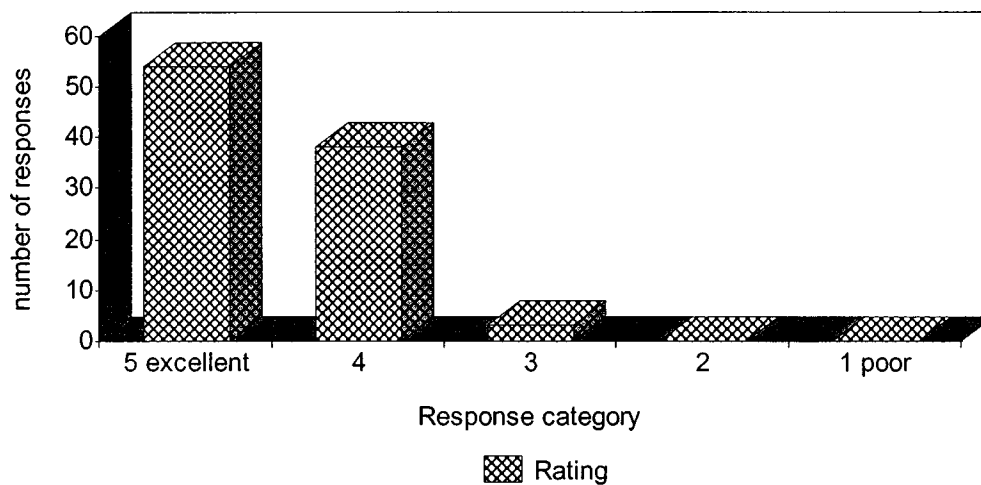
Ninety-five end-of-workshop evaluations were analyzed from Region 20, Region 10, the Bexar County Learning Center, El Paso Independent School District police officers, and Galveston Independent School District. The workshop evaluation was designed to determine if the attendees' needs and program objectives were met. The responses to seven questions were analyzed. All responses were based on a Likert scale ranging from 5 (excellent) to 1 (poor). Ratings for 4, 3, and 2 were not categorized. Two evaluations were incomplete; therefore, the number of responses ranges from 93 to 95. An unexpected response was received on three of the evaluations. Three participants rated specific training topics by circling the number and writing the topics above the number on four questions. Responses are in graph form.



Organization of the workshop was standard throughout the five sites. Question 1 asked attendees to rate the organization of the workshop. Fifty-four (57%; N=95) rated the workshop a 5 (excellent); thirty-eight (40%) rated the workshop a 4; and three (3%) gave it a 3 (see Figure 1). There were no 2 or 1 responses.

Figure 1.

#### Organization of Workshop

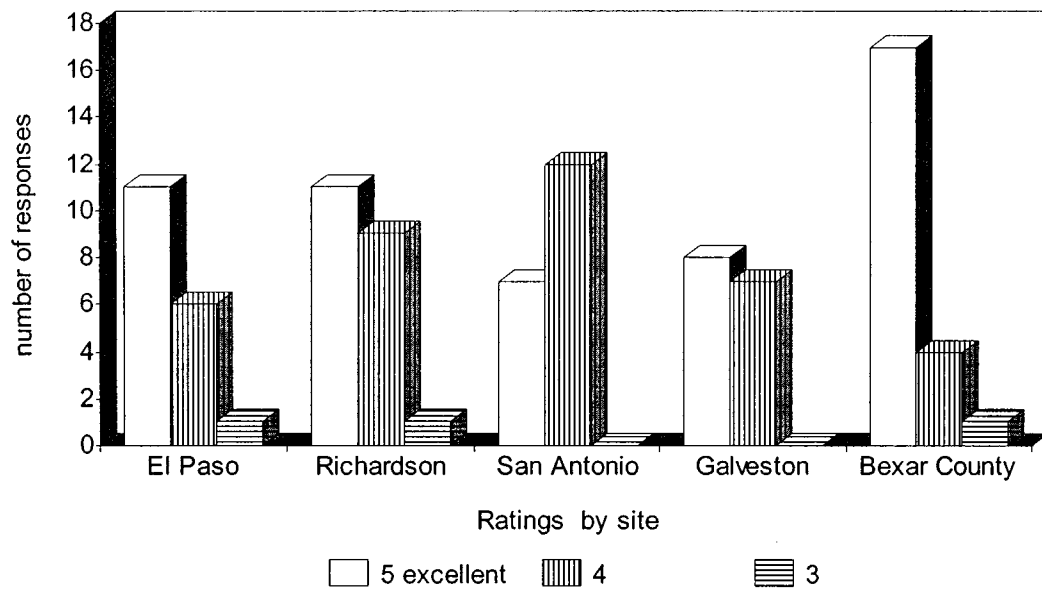


n = 95

Data analyzed by site reveals that the Bexar County Learning Center rated organization of the workshop most favorable (see Figure 1A). This was a half-day training session. Presentations on Gang Awareness and Special Education and Alternative Issues were made.

Figure 1A.

Organization of workshop by site

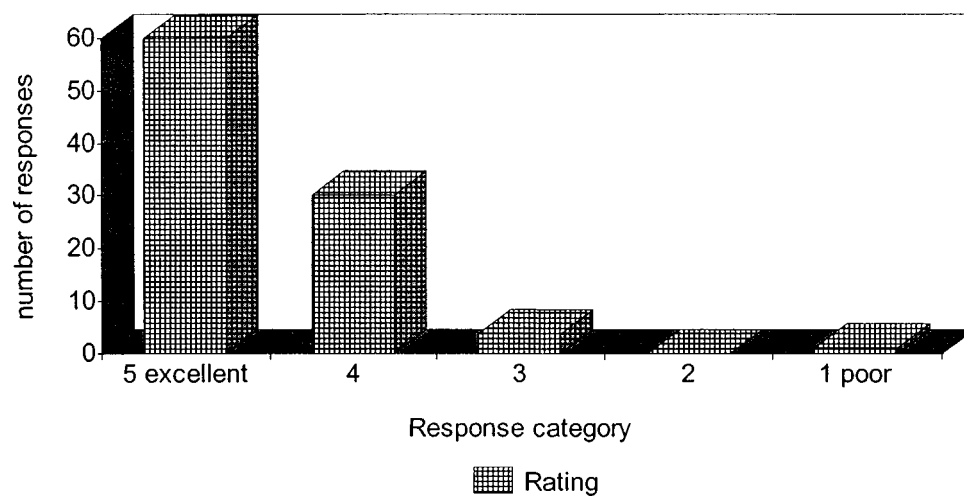


n = 95

Question 2 asked attendees to rate the workshop management. Sixty (63%; N=95) rated management of workshop a 5 (excellent), thirty (32%) rated it a 4; four (4%) rated it a 3; and one (1%) rated it a 1 (poor; see Figure 2). There were no 2 or 1 responses.

Figure 2.

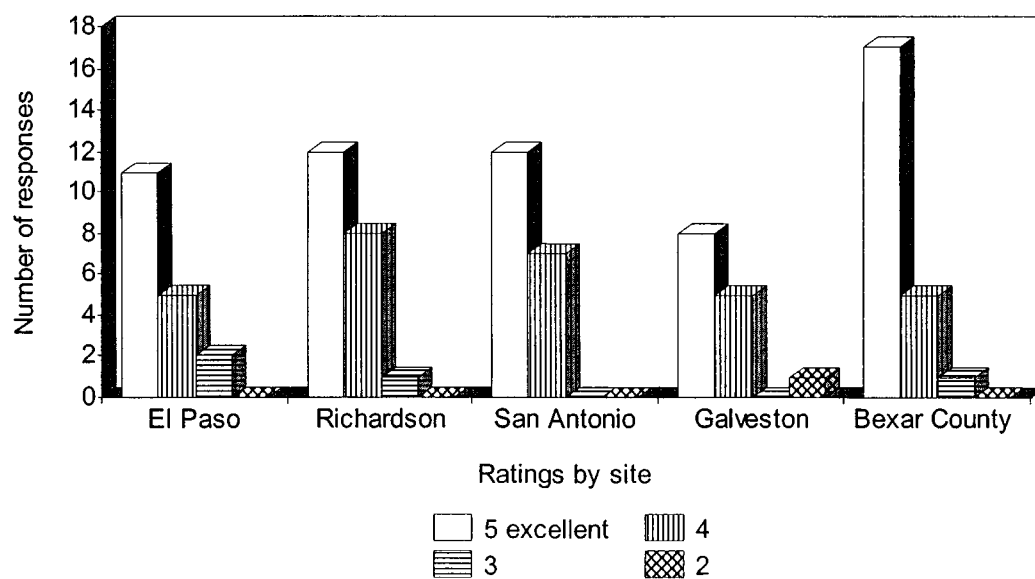
Workshop management ratings



n = 95

Figure 2A.

Workshop management ratings by site.

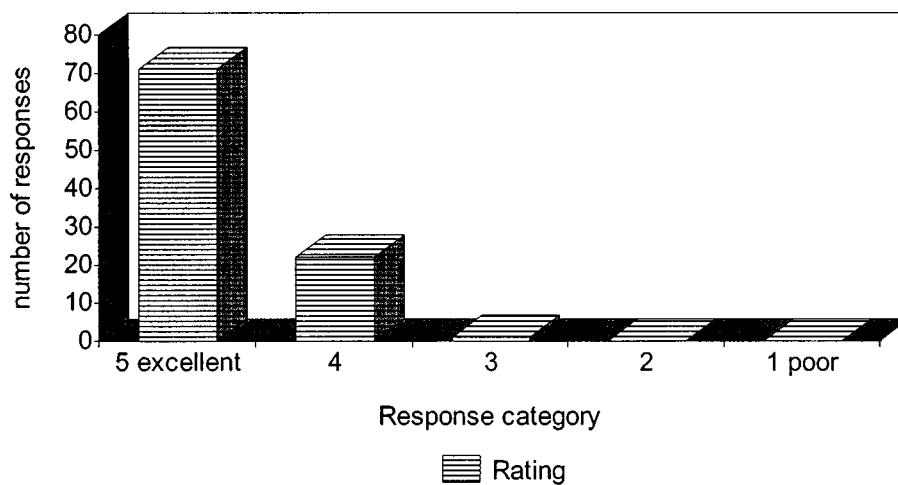


n = 95

Informed presenters have a positive impact on the workshop evaluation. Question 3 rated the knowledge of the presenters. Seventy-one (76%; N=94) rated the presenters a 5 (excellent); twenty-two (23%) rated them a 4 and one (1%) rated them a 3 (see Figure 3). There were no 2 or 1 responses.

Figure 3.

Rating for presenters' knowledge

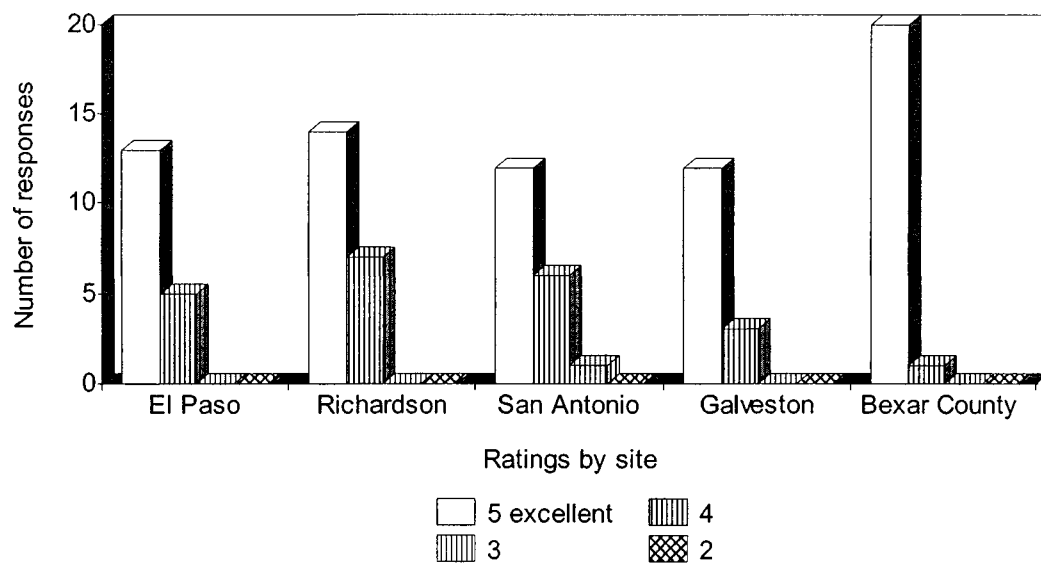


n = 94

The Bexar County Learning Center provided the most favorable responses to this question (see Figure 3A).

Figure 3A.

Knowledge of the presenter by site



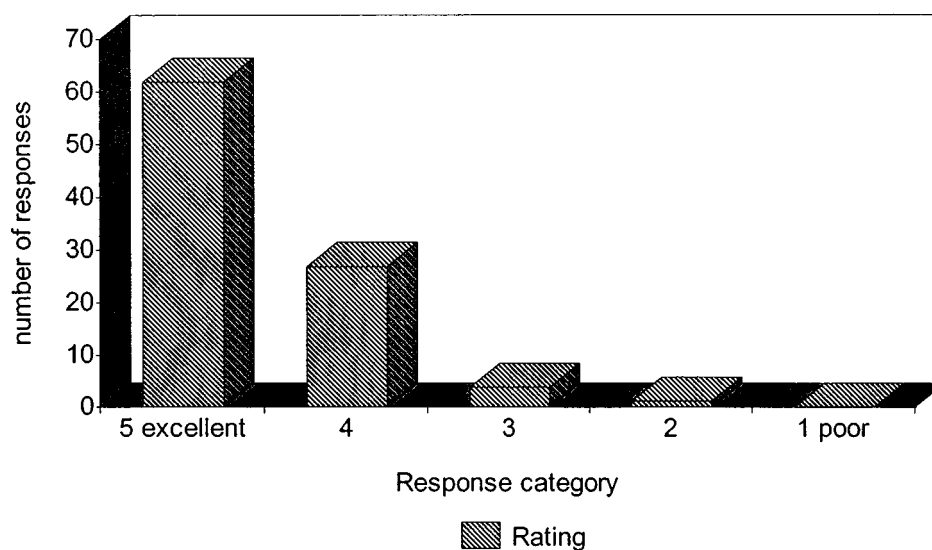
n = 94

Presenters provide their own ideas and activities for training sessions.

Question 4 rated those ideas and activities. Sixty-two (66%; N=94) rated the ideas and activities a 5 (excellent); twenty-seven (29%) rated a 4; four (4%) rated a 3; and one (1%) rated the ideas and activities a 2 (see Figure 4). There were no 1 responses.

Figure 4.

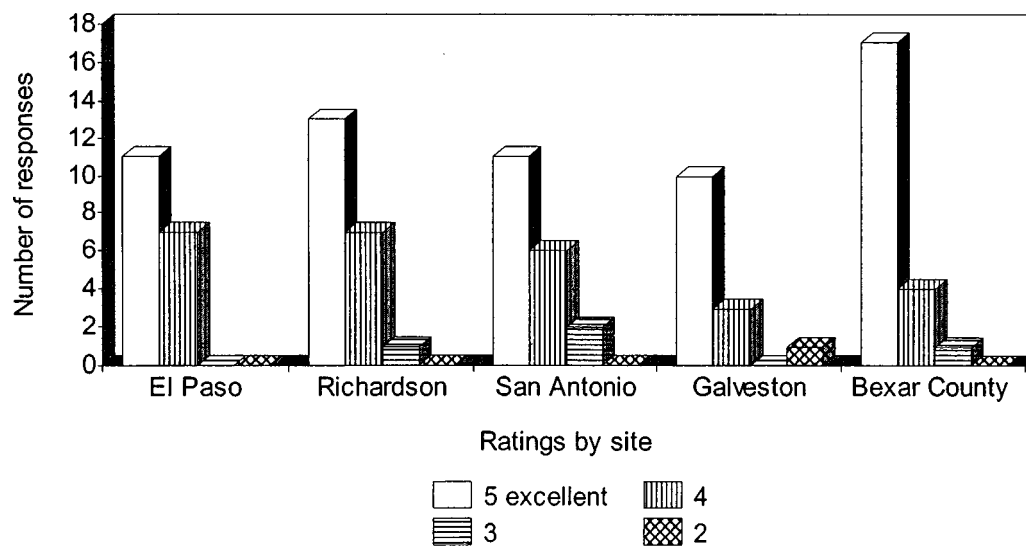
Presenters' ideas or activities



n =94

Figure 4A.

Presenters' ideas or activities by site

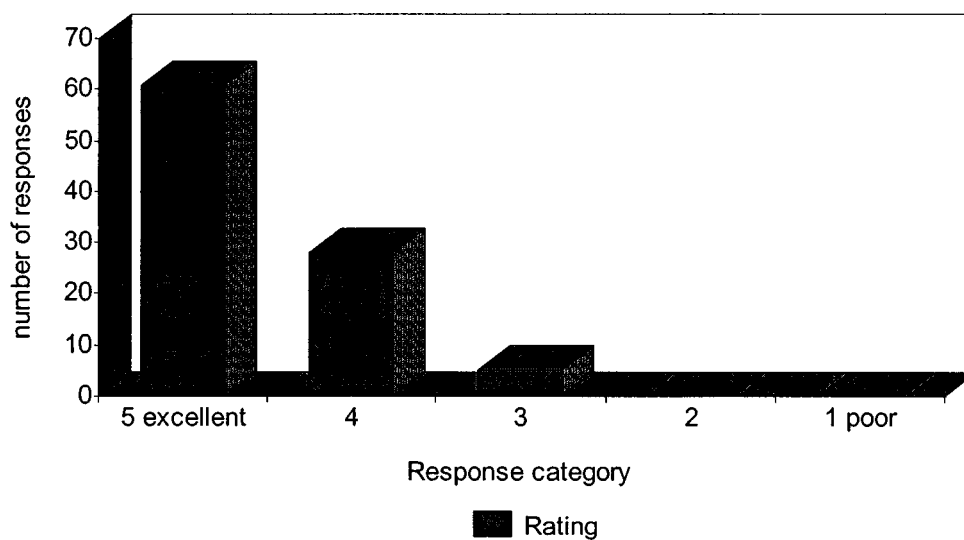


n = 94

Each presenter provided his/her own printed materials. Participants were not given the opportunity to comment on AESP materials separate from presenter materials. AESP provided copies of the Guidelines to Chapter 37 Discipline, Law and Order. Question 5 rated the printed materials. Sixty-four (68%; N=93) rated them a 5 (excellent); twenty-six (28%) rated a 4; and three (3%) rated a 3 (see Figure 5). There were no 2 or 1 responses.

Figure 5.

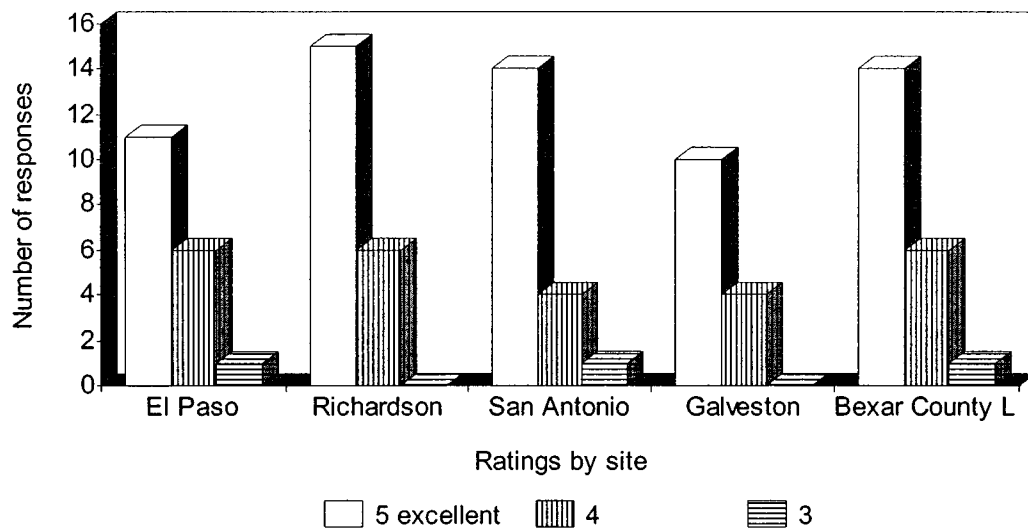
Ratings for printed materials



n = 93

Figure 5A.

Printed material ratings by site



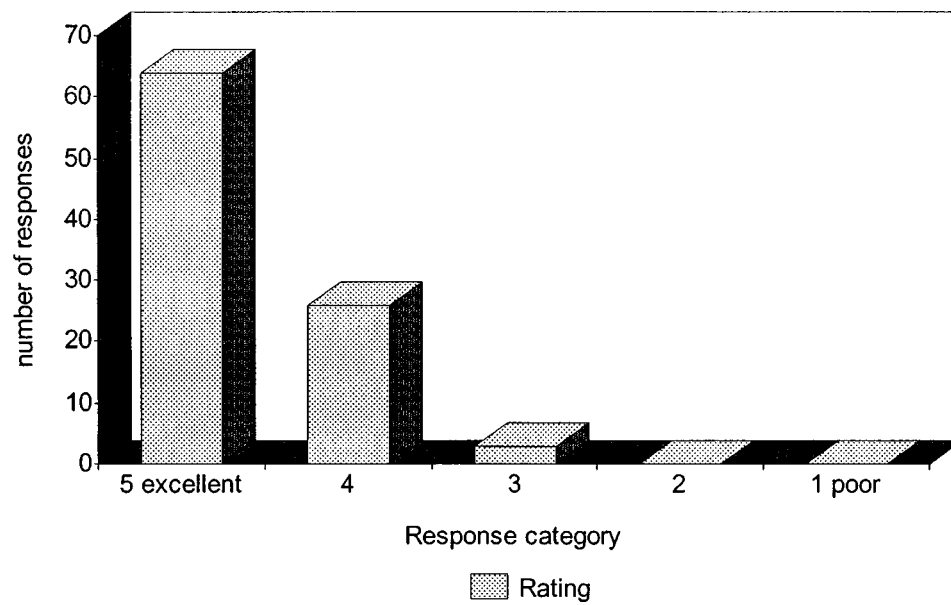
n = 93

Question 6 asked attendees to give the workshop an overall rating. Sixty-one (65%; N=94) rated the workshop a 5 (excellent); twenty-eight (30%) rated a 4; and five (5%) rated a 3 (see Figure 6). There were no 2 or 1 responses.



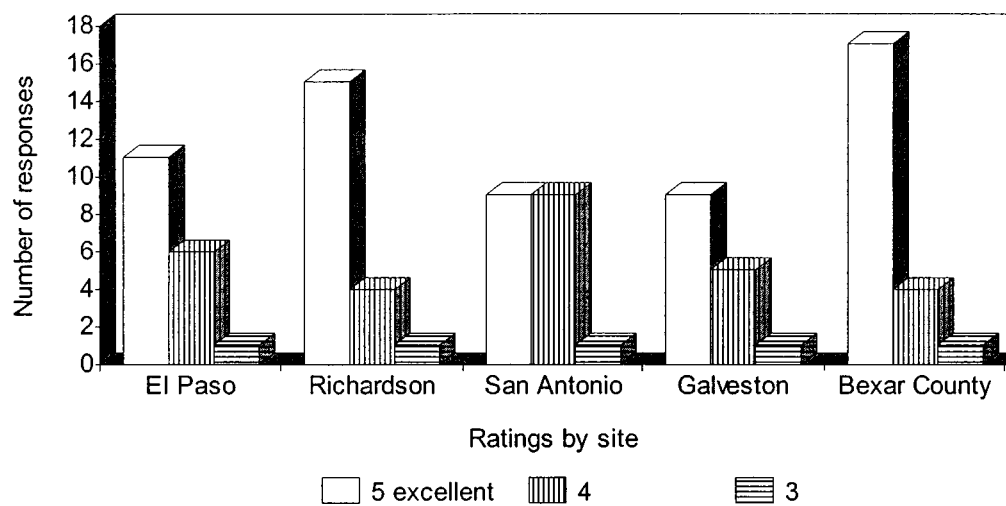
Figure 6.

Overall workshop rating



n=94

Figure 6A. Overall workshop evaluation by site

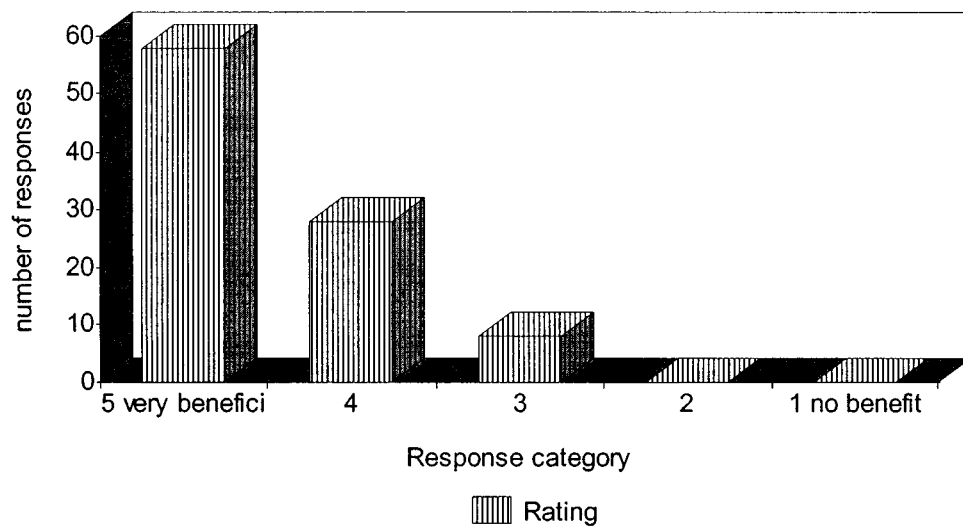


n = 94

The Likert scale for question 7 ranges from 5 (very beneficial) to 1 (no benefit). Question 7 states, my attendance at this workshop should prove, was rated by fifty-eight (62%; N=94) a 5 (excellent); twenty-eight (30%) rated a 4; and eight (8%) rated a 3 (see Figure 7). There were no 2 or 1 responses.

Figure 7.

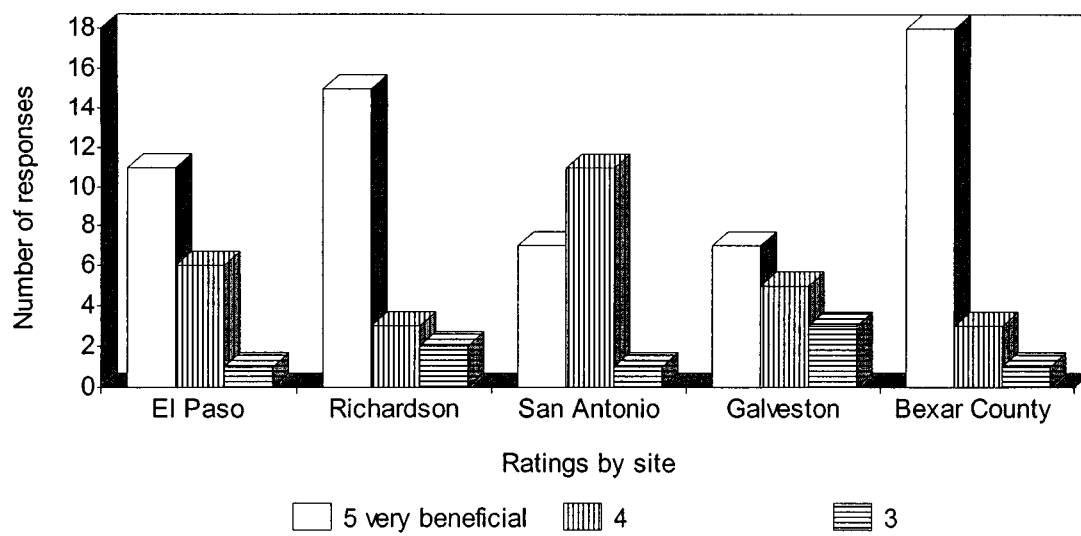
Benefit of workshop by response category



n = 94

Figure 7A.

Data by site for "My attendance should prove."



n = 94

### Forced Response Questions

On the initial evaluation, *Would you like further training in an area discussed today?* received yes/no responses. This question was asked on 67 evaluations from El Paso, the Bexar County Learning Center, Richardson, and Galveston. Thirty-one participants did not respond to the question. There were 21 “yes” responses and 5 “no” responses. These responses did not provide AESP with sufficient information needed to determine which topics needed more training. In spite of the phrase used, several training topics were requested. There were 8 requests for gang training, 3 for anger management, and 1 each for social skills, conflict resolution, and classroom/discipline management. After March 2001, the statement was changed to read, *What topic areas discussed do you need training in?* At the El Paso workshop, April 11, 2001, both forms of the evaluation were distributed. On 67 evaluations suggestions for future Alternative Education workshops were requested. Sixteen people responded to the statement. “Jobs for students” was the only topic suggested for which AESP did not already hold a training session. An explanation of the type of information requested for this topic was not addressed. All other suggestions were already being offered as training topics. A question on both initial and revised evaluations asked respondents to agree or disagree with the following statement: *Southwest Texas State University should continue to sponsor Alternative Education workshops.* Of the 95 evaluations analyzed, 89 agreed, 0 disagreed, and 6 did not respond to the question. The researcher could ascertain no reason

for asking this question. Its impact on the evaluation of the program cannot be determined.

Participants were asked, *What topic areas discussed in the workshop did they need additional training?* Thirty participants responded to this question. “Gang presentation” received 14 requests for additional training. “Anger management” received eight requests. “Chapter 37 and other legal issues” received five requests. “PEIMS reporting” received three requests.

Participants were asked, *What topic areas not discussed in the workshop are needed by staff in your school district or agency?* This question received 16 responses. There were three requests for “Special Education Law and Section 504,” two requests each for “anger management” and “the effects of alcohol and substance abuse,” and five requests for “behavior management.” Training sessions on “how to increase/encourage parent involvement in AEP,” “job shadowing,” “student transition to regular school” and “gang prevention” were also requested. Special Education Law and Section 504, anger management, behavior management, and gang prevention were offered at some training sites and not others. Standardization of training topics among sites would have prevented these topics from being requested.

Twenty-eight evaluations asked respondents to list workshop strengths and weaknesses. Twelve participants responded to the statements. Workshop strengths were based on the speakers’ knowledge, workshop organization, and training materials provided. Examples of comments were:

- Good handouts.

- Organization.
- Speakers' knowledge of their subject.
- Informative to all personnel.

Workshop weaknesses focused on allocation of time for the training sessions. Examples of comments were:

- Pace of workshop.
- Not enough time to discuss concerns.
- Need updates and follow-ups sent.
- Great topics but little time for depth.

#### Summary of strengths and weaknesses

Responses to workshop strengths and weaknesses compare with responses received from daily session forced responses. Useful information and knowledge of presenters were seen as workshop strengths. Organization of the workshop was also reported as a strength. Seen as workshop weaknesses were length of time allocated for the workshop did not allow for discussions of site-specific concerns and the need for updates and follow-ups sent.

#### Questionnaire

One-hundred-seventeen questionnaires were mailed on October 6, 2001 with a requested return date of October 26. As of November 16, only sixteen completed questionnaires were returned yielding a response rate of 3%. Three other questionnaires were returned by the post office due to incorrect address. Telephone calls were made to those participants who did not return the questionnaire. Each person who was contacted had decided not to return the

questionnaire because he/she could not remember attending the workshop. The return rate and participant response mirror those from the pilot study. The mail-in questionnaire consisted of the four subordinate questions. The questions were stated in forced response form so that participants could express themselves without constraints. Subordinate questions were:

*What AESP workshop information was new and relevant to teaching in the alternative education setting? What could be used in your work setting? How did you use the information in your work setting? What were some significant outcomes?*

Responses to the forced response statements were grouped into the following categories: legislative issues (includes Special Education and Chapter 37), gang awareness, classroom/behavior management, center operations, and in-service training.

#### Legislative Issues

One of the stated objectives of AESP was to increase the knowledge base regarding relevant legal issues and this category received the most responses. The responses to the question, *What AESP workshop information was new and relevant to teaching in the alternative education setting?* indicate that the training was successful in meeting this objective. The respondents reported that the review of legislation and implementation of new laws is a good session. Comments include: "Good information on a timely basis is needed to avoid problems." "Proper implementation of Chapter 37 and Special Education issues play an important role in the administration of alternative education programs."

### Gang Awareness

In response to the question, *What could be used in your work setting?* the AESP gang intervention and prevention received many positive responses. AESP promoted information sharing and collaboration by DAEPs and JJAEPs with local community initiatives to reduce serious, violent and chronic juvenile crime. A representative comment by the attendees is “our staff was relatively uninformed about the recent trend in gangs and their purpose and workings. This training helped bring them up to speed. Staying current on gang issues helps in recognizing potential problems.”

### Classroom/Behavior Management

Another AESP objective was to increase the knowledge base regarding the removal and disposition of violent, dangerous, and disruptive students in accordance with Chapter 37. Respondents wrote of their ability to deal effectively with troubled students. A representative response was, “Information received provided better classroom/behavior management techniques.” Respondents wrote, “they better understand elements of behavior in this environment and (can) identify potential problems among students in the classroom” which indicates that AESP is successful in meeting the objective.

### Center Operations

One program had a change in operation due to information gained at the workshop. In response to the question, *What were some significant outcomes?* a principal wrote that attending the workshop caused him to “change some of the aspects of their program in terms of how they address students’ need for



probation.” Another person reported, “there is a better relationship in the DAEP setting--less conflict.”

### In-service Training

AESP provided technical assistance and training for DAEPs and JJAEPs throughout the state of Texas. Three of the respondents have taken information gained at the workshops and conducted in-service training sessions on their home campuses. One person reported, “As coordinator of JJAEP for Dallas County, I encouraged AEP administrators to attend the conference and shared the information with 15 districts.” Another respondent wrote that he, “presented contents/information to other staff.”

### Telephone/Electronic Mail Survey

The telephone or e-mail survey consisted of two questions. These questions were designed to gather more specific details as to how AESP training impacted job performance.

#### Question 1: *How has attending the AESP workshop impacted your job performance?*

Responses to the question about the workshop impacting performance corroborate those responses on the mail-in questionnaire that attending AESP workshops served as a means of keeping up with the latest in legislative action. These workshops also served as a way for practitioners to get together and discuss the impact of legislative and court actions on their programs. Some examples of comments follow. “Good to find out the latest.” “Confirms what you are doing is best for the setting.” “Basically how the workshop impacted my job

was that I had the opportunity to hear about how other programs are run..both curriculum and organizationally.” “It is always encouraging to hear about all the innovative ways other schools are doing things, especially the AEPs, and still keeping our goal of ensuring that all children learn at the forefront of all we do.”

A first year administrator reports, “he had the confidence to deal with sometimes hostile kids in a somewhat calm, steady manner and diffuse potentially bad situations.” Parole and police officers view the training as helpful and report that it is good to know the education end of the law. One officer commented that, “although it has not really impacted my performance on the job, it has made me aware of the problems and benefits associated with AESP.” Another officer wrote, “as a police officer, I am occasionally called upon to assist with some problem children.”

Question 2: Describe an incident where you were able to apply information learned at the workshop and what was the outcome.

This question on application of workshop information received a range of responses. An administrator remembers an incident involving a student activating the school sprinkler system. The administrator’s knowledge of Chapter 37 guided him in “properly disciplining the student.” Another person used the information in an ARD meeting. He felt that he “now had the power not to let the special education people run over him.” A first year head DAEP staff member shared the following incident.

“In October a kid had his head down and I told him to sit up. He went off with a profanity-laced tirade directed at me. I calmly removed him from

the room, called the assistant principal and he was removed from the setting and suspended. Three days later we met with the superintendent and the kid was sent to juvenile for the remainder of the year. I think the workshop gave me the background to better deal with this type of situation.”

Not all responses were positive. Two people were not able to relate any specific incidence where they applied information learned at the workshop. One person reported that he “has attended many trainings and cannot remember if strategies he has implemented were learned at AESP workshop or Boystown.” Police and parole officers report that they “rarely have an opportunity to apply what they learn at the workshops.”

#### Workshop Format

Of the five workshops evaluated, the Bexar County Learning Center received a half-day of training, El Paso and Galveston received one day of training, and San Antonio and Richardson received two days of training. The half-day workshop at the Bexar County Learning Center provided the highest overall workshop evaluation. The two-day training session at El Paso provided the next highest evaluation.

#### Summary

The five sources used to evaluate AESP were: daily session evaluations, workshop evaluations, questionnaires, telephone, and electronic mail communication. One hundred-thirteen daily session evaluations, ninety-five workshop evaluations, and data from sixteen questionnaires were analyzed.

Five people were interviewed by telephone and six by electronic mail. Forced response data gathered from the questionnaires were analyzed and divided into categories. Numerical data from the workshop evaluations were presented in bar graphs. Data gathered from the daily session evaluations were put into a table.

The central research question, *How do attendees of the AESP find its workshops to be as a strategy for implementing the Discipline, Law, and Order principles of Chapter 37, Texas Education Code?* provided data to determine the effectiveness of the AESP. Four subordinate questions were asked to gather specific data in order to answer the central research question.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The goal of the Alternative Educational Support Project (AESP) was to provide and expand training and technical assistance for DAEPs, JJAEPs, and schools throughout Texas. AESP will increase understanding of the requirements of Texas Education Code, Chapter 37 Discipline, Law, and Order (which requires keeping youth in school), increase awareness of available youth services, and promote information sharing and collaboration among DAEPs, JJAEPs, schools and community agencies (CIE brochure, 2001).

The central research question for this bounded, multi-site, case study is, *How effective do attendees of the Alternative Educational Support Project (AESP) find its workshops to be as a strategy for implementing the Discipline, Law, and Order principles of Chapter 37, Texas Education Code?* Supporting the central research question are the following subordinate questions: *What AESP workshop information was new and relevant to teaching in the alternative education setting? What information could be used in your work setting? How did you use the information in your work setting? What were some significant outcomes?*

The findings obtained in this study show those workshop participants view AESP as a professional development tool for keeping abreast of the latest

legislative issues and providing gang prevention and intervention awareness training. Workshop topics such as classroom/behavior management and Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) reporting provided attendees with knowledge and skills to be used in their work settings. Information provided at the workshops was used to develop and provide in-service training at the home campus. Training on special education issues also provided workshop attendees with knowledge used in the work setting. Special education students placed in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP) or Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program (JJAEP) provide a challenge to adhering to the principles of Chapter 37. No special education student may be deprived of services required by the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) because of placement in a DAEP or JJAEP. Another finding revealed that delayed or no follow-up may have caused some workshop attendees to forget the training they received. Some attendees could not remember attending any training sessions at all. Other participants reported using skills learned at training sessions, but could not attribute those skills to attending any AESP workshop.

### Discussion of Results

The researcher found limited literature on professional development for educators in alternative education settings; however, the data developed by this study support the findings of other researchers concerning the nature of professional development in alternative education settings. Most educators are trained in a particular discipline and/or grade level(s) but have had little or no

experience or preparation for managing a classroom in a juvenile justice or alternative education facility (McGee & Wolford, 1998).

### Daily Session Evaluations

Data from the daily session evaluations show that gang awareness was the most highly rated training session of those offered at multiple training sites. Other highly rated training sessions offered at multiple training sites in order of their ratings are PEIMS, Special Education and Alternative Education Issues, and Chapter 37. The Student Centered Activities received the highest rating of those topics offered at a single training site.

Forced response statements on the daily session evaluation were, *What I liked most about the session/presentation* and *Suggestions for improving the sessions*. Daily session evaluations from Galveston were not received; therefore, all responses are from San Antonio, El Paso, the Bexar County Learning Center, and Richardson.

*What I liked most about the session/presentation*, received a variety of responses. Workshop participants were most pleased with the knowledge and preparedness of the speaker. Gang presentations were also well received. Participants reported that information was useful, relative to school setting, and could be used immediately. Hands-on activities with ice breakers impressed workshop participants.

*Suggestions for improving the sessions*, provided a surprising consistency among the sites. More time for the session was requested at each of the sites. Research was inconclusive as to whether the workshop should be half-day, one-

day, or two-days. There was limited literature reviewed that confirms the optimal length of a training session. Each of the training sessions averaged 1 hour and 45 minutes. There was no explanation offered as to why the training sessions for AESP workshops were scheduled as they were.

Based on overall workshop evaluations, the length of the workshop may have affected its evaluation. The general finding was the shorter the workshop, the higher the rating. The Bexar County Learning Center participants rated its workshop the highest; this was a half-day training session. El Paso and Galveston ratings were next; these were one-day sessions. Richardson and San Antonio had the lowest ratings; they were two-day training sessions.

This study did not provide sufficient evidence to link workshop evaluations with topics presented. The most highly rated training topics were Student Centered Activities and Gang Awareness. These were presented at Richardson, one of the sites that received one of the lowest overall workshop evaluations. Several respondents reported that more training time was needed. Those respondents who requested more time in training were referring to the length of time devoted to the topic and not the time allocated for the entire workshop.

Research shows that environment and the facility have an impact on workshop evaluation (Pike, nd). Although these areas were not specifically addressed on the evaluation, they were mentioned in the suggestions. At the El Paso site, an easier to locate facility was requested. One suggestion from the Richardson site noted that the overhead transparencies were hard to see because of glare/dark spots.



The issue of topic relevancy for professional development has been researched. Research data confirm that some training topics are irrelevant (Corcoran, 1995). Participants at Richardson reported that the Mesquite presentation wasn't relevant to AEPs. C. Gunter (personal communication, June 23, 2002) stated the Mesquite Academy is a collage of programs that encourages youth to stay in school. GED, at-risk programs, and Chapter 37 are housed within the Academy. Region 10 requested this presentation to give other districts an idea how to merge supplemental programs to help students graduate.

#### End-of-Workshop Evaluations

Workshop evaluations from the five sites were generally positive. All responses were based on a Likert scale ranging from 5 (excellent or very beneficial) to 1 (poor or no benefit). Ratings for 4, 3, or 2 had no value. At the point when evaluation data were gathered, participants felt that the information gained at the workshop would be very beneficial. *My attendance at this workshop should prove very beneficial* received an average rating of 4.8 out of 5 at the Bexar County Learning Center, 4.7 at Richardson, 4.6 at El Paso, and 4.3 at Galveston and San Antonio. The overall workshop evaluation received an average rating of 4.7 at the Bexar County Learning Center, 4.6 at El Paso, 4.5 at Galveston and Richardson, and 4.4 at San Antonio. A rating of 5 was the highest possible for each category.

Forced response questions provided further insight into the workshop evaluation. The initial evaluation asked, *Would you like further training in an area discussed today?* This question was asked on 67 evaluations from El Paso, the

Bexar County Learning Center, Richardson, and Galveston. Thirty-one participants did not respond to the question. There were 21 “yes” responses and 5 “no” responses. Several participants requested training in the following areas: 8 requests for gang training, 3 for anger management, and 1 each for social skills, conflict resolution, and classroom/discipline management. After March 2001, the statement was changed to read, *What topic areas discussed in the workshop do you need additional training?* Some of the responses to this statement were: PEIMS reporting, gang awareness, anger management, dealing with disruptive outburst, Chapter 37, legal issues, responsibilities of schools and police to share information, follow-up on identified gang members, and the Boystown Model.

The revised evaluation also asked, *What topic areas not discussed in the workshop are needed in your school district or agency?* The following topics were requested: Gang prevention; Boystown Model; how to deal with students who are fetal alcohol damaged; different effects/affects from specific drug abuse; Section 504; student transition to regular school; special education law; classroom discipline and management; anger management; social skills; TEA reports; dealing with the students who refuse to work, behave or try; and working without being trashed by TEA; adolescent self-esteem; and adolescent psychology. Most of the topics requested were offered at some sites but not others. This could have been avoided if training topics were standardized among all sites.

The initial evaluation requested suggestions for future Alternative Education workshops. Of the 76 evaluations reviewed, only 10 had responses to

this statement. Suggestions for future workshops were: stress in students and staff, profiling psychological behavior, law enforcement's ideas on school safety, more workshops, student disorders along with anger management, AEP management strategies, assessing AEP students' individual needs, AEP handbooks/guidelines, gang trends, goals/jobs for students, and more details on behavior management.

### Questionnaires

Data from the mail-in questionnaire provided specific information as to how the training was used in the work setting. Based on the number of questionnaires received, the presentations that provided information on legislative issues (Special Education law and Chapter 37) were the most widely used in the work setting. Teachers felt that being aware of Special Education laws and Chapter 37 empowered them to deal with students within the realm of the law. AESP gang awareness presentations provided information that was used at campus in-service training sessions and in the classroom; lack of prior information on gang awareness seems to be prevalent among alternative education personnel. To a lesser degree, respondents wrote of using techniques learned in AESP classroom/behavior management workshops.

### Telephone/E-mail Interviews

Data gathered from the telephone or electronic mail survey supported the data received from the mail-in questionnaire. One workshop attendee recommended that all teachers new to alternative education should be required to attend the training sessions. Another person responded, "the meetings have

been useful not only with the timely information presented, but it also gives us the opportunity to learn from other school districts to see what they are doing to address various problems unique to AEPs and DAEPs.” Only one person, other than the police officers, reported that there was no change in her job performance after having attended the AESP workshop. Over the years she had attended several training sessions facilitated by other organizations and could not credit AESP with her job performance.

Two police officers responded to the electronic mail survey. They both felt that the information provided at the workshop was important but not relevant to their work setting. They also reported that attending the workshop made no impact on their job performance. Chapter 37 sets the guidelines for expelling students from school and police officers are not involved at this point. If a student commits a felony off campus, the police department should forward this information to the proper administrator so the student will be properly disciplined according to Chapter 37.

### Findings and Past Research

Wanzare and de Costa (2000) describe professional development as training concerned with improving teachers’ instructional methods, their ability to adapt instruction to meet students’ needs, and their classroom management skills. Teachers who work in alternative settings typically receive no special training to equip them to serve their difficult to teach students (Ashcroft, 1999).

There is a considerable body of literature that supports intensive follow-up as an essential element of professional development (Corcoran, 1995).

AESP failed in this area. Many of the workshop attendees who did not return the questionnaire were contacted by telephone. Each one reported that he/she could not remember having attended the workshop and, therefore, would not return the questionnaire even though each one had attended training sessions less than one year prior to distribution of the questionnaire. An effective follow-up could have avoided this. Review and reinforcement is a key to every training process. If people are exposed to an idea one time, they retain less than 10% at the end of thirty days (Pike, nd). According to Mayo and Dubois (1987), workshop participants have a tendency to forget detailed information to a marked degree within a few hours after the initial learning and continue to forget at a slower rate with the passage of time. Newby confirmed this. "If people do not use what they learned in training quite soon after that training is completed, their learning suffers from what psychologists call decay of learning and the rest of us call forgetting (1992, p. 25)." As part of the process evaluation, AESP was to contact participants six months after training to determine utility of the training, but this was not done on a consistent basis. The subordinate questions provide insight into the program's effectiveness.

#### Subordinate Question 1

The first subordinate question is, *What AESP workshop information was new and relevant to teaching in the alternative education setting?* According to Ashcroft, Price, and Sweeney (1998), alternative education teachers reported that their students often present legal, social, behavioral, emotional, psychological and instructional challenges that they are unequipped to address.

In a 1999 study of alternative education educators, Ashcroft concluded that teachers who work in institutionalized or alternative education community settings typically receive no special training to equip them to serve their often difficult to teach students. Due to the nature of its population, specialized training becomes essential in the field of alternative education.

According to the data collected in this study, training topics on Chapter 37 legislative issues, gang prevention and intervention, and special education issues were new and relevant to teaching in the alternative education setting.

Respondents wrote of the need to stay informed of the latest rules and regulations concerning their programs. One participant reported, "the review of legislation and implementation of new laws is always a good session. Good information on a timely basis is needed to avoid problems." Participants reported the need for information about juvenile gangs. Reports issued by the Texas Attorney General indicate that delinquent youth gangs are located in communities and cities throughout the state and that as many as one out of every ten youth in Texas is a gang member (AESP Summary, 1999). Special education updates provided workshop participants with important tools to use in conducting ARDs and properly disciplining special education students.

Training topics on Chapter 37 legislative issues, gang prevention and intervention, and special education issues were new relevant to teaching in the alternative education setting. PEIMS training was also relevant.

### Subordinate Question 2

The second subordinate question is, *What information could be used in your work setting?* According to Corcoran (1995), few universities offer a single course directed at teachers of delinquent children and youth. No special license is required for teachers who teach high-risk youth in alternative settings beyond general education certification. In a 1998 study conducted by Gregory, results of a questionnaire completed by alternative educators showed that teachers felt that teacher training programs may be too general for a teacher working within this population.

Based on the number of responses received, information disseminated during the gang intervention and prevention training was the most widely used in the work setting. This training provided workshop attendees with the knowledge and skills needed to handle difficult students and gave attendees an awareness of gang presence on their campuses. Training on special education issues was used during ARDs. Classroom management techniques for disruptive students provided attendees with the skills needed to better manage their classrooms. Updates on legislation, state rules and requirements were used in the work setting. One respondent wrote, "Updates on legislation were reviewed before and during the revision of our student handbook and district administrator's meetings."

Training sessions on gang intervention and prevention, special education issues, classroom management techniques, and updates on legislation and state

rules, and requirements provided information that could be used in the work setting.

### Subordinate Question 3

The third subordinate question is, *How did you use the information in your work setting?* According to Newby, “A skill-training objective is unlikely to be achieved through a passive training method such as lecture (1992, pg. 51).” Research conducted by Mayo & DuBois (1987) indicated that learning does not take place simply because information is presented to the learner. Data gathered through this question is contrary to research data. One reason for this difference may be that handouts were issued that could be used as reference material after the training. Of the five sites evaluated, PEIMS training was provided at El Paso and San Antonio. This topic was highly rated at both sites. Respondents from each of these sites reported that the training helped them to better understand and use the new form for coding absences. Information learned during the classroom management training helped workshop attendees to identify potential problems among students in the classroom and helped them to better understand and communicate productively with their students. Several respondents reported providing in-service training on gang awareness at their campuses. Information provided on gang awareness was used to work with expelled students. As gang awareness increased, staff were able to identify different types of “gang script” and bring it to the attention of someone in authority.



The information provided at the training sessions was used in a variety of ways. Gang awareness information was used in the classroom and to develop and conduct campus in-service training. Classroom management training provided workshop participants with the skills needed to identify potential problems in the classroom and to communicate more productively with their students. Training on special education issues was used during ARDs and for revising the student handbook.

#### Subordinate Question 4

The fourth subordinate question is, *What were some significant outcomes?* Only three respondents reported a significant outcome. In one program, certain positions were combined and others eliminated. Another person reported that the training changed some of the aspects of their program in terms of how they addressed students' need for probation. One respondent reported that there was a better relationship in the DAEP setting with less conflict. In another instance, the AEP was closed and replaced by a private service.

Training on Chapter 37 brought change to some DAEP campuses. There was less conflict on one DAEP campus and in another program there was a change in the way students' need for probation was addressed. As educators are made aware of the rules and regulations governing their programs and act upon these regulations, students benefit.

### Limitations of the Study

Based on the number and quality of legislative issue responses received, the services provided by AESP helped inform alternative education personnel of the requirements of Chapter 37. Training topics such as gang prevention and intervention, special education and alternative issues, and anger/conflict management were offered to provide support for those educators to be successful in their work setting and that choice of topic plays an important role in evaluating workshops. There are limitations to this study that decrease its effectiveness in evaluating AESP.

Speakers and the environment have an impact on workshop evaluations. Participants must have a chance to evaluate everything that impacts the training. The instructor's attitude, availability, and knowledge are important, but so is the temperature of the meeting room. The evaluation materials did not weigh the impact of speakers or the environment as factors.

One-hundred-thirteen daily and ninety-five end-of-workshop evaluations were sufficient to yield reliable data. One-hundred-sixteen questionnaires were mailed in late August with a return date of mid-September. Three questionnaires were completed and returned. Three others were returned by the post office due to incorrect address. The first few weeks of school are quite hectic which may account for the three percent return rate. An October mailing date may have yielded a higher return rate. However, telephone calls to those participants who did not return the questionnaire revealed that the participants' inability to remember the workshop had a greater impact on their decision not to return the

questionnaire. One gentleman called to find out why he received a questionnaire. He had not completed a registration form nor attended any AESP workshops during the period this study covered.

Workshop participants from June 2000 to June 2001 received mail-in questionnaires. These participants had not received the initial follow-up evaluation. With no initial follow-up evaluation, the probability of the participant forgetting the information learned in the workshop is high. A survey of those workshop participants who attended training sessions within six months of the survey may have yielded more data.

A change in the wording of the end-of-workshop evaluation made it a challenge to analyze data within the same context. The initial statement was, *Would you like further training in an area discussed today?* This question received yes/no responses that did not provide AESP with sufficient information needed to determine which topics needed more training. The revised statement read, *What areas discussed do you need training in?* The responses to this statement provided the information needed to develop or modify training topics.

The scale used for the evaluation form was not completely effective. The highest and lowest ratings were categorized but the middle numbers were not. A "5" represented excellent or very beneficial and "1" represented poor or not very. Four, three, and two had no meanings attributed to them. According to Rea and Parker (1997), it is acceptable to label each numerical category on the scale. The middle number should be labeled as a point of neutrality.

### Recommendations for Practice and Research

Based on the findings from this study, the following recommendations are suggested for improving the research study and revising and implementing the Alternative Educational Support Project.

#### Study Recommendations

Due to limited follow-up, participants chosen for this study should not have attended training sessions more than six months prior to receiving survey instruments. Lack of follow-up on training reduced the number of responses to the survey instruments.

In order to increase the return rate of survey instruments, choose a mailing period that does not coincide with the beginning of the school year.

Compare the type of referrals written by those teachers attending training with the type of referrals written by teachers who did not attend training. If the types of referrals written by teachers who attended training differs from those written by teachers who did not attend training, this could verify program effectiveness. This data can also be used to evaluate the impact of workshop topics on practice.

Include focus groups as part of the research method. This is a qualitative research method that uses guided group discussions to generate a rich understanding of participants' experiences and beliefs (Morgan, 1998).

Change the survey instrument to include everything that impacts the training: instructor, content, environment, and participation. Each of these areas can have a big impact on whether or not learning takes place. The temperature

of the meeting room, equipment that works, and adequate breaks are important factors when participants are evaluating the workshop. Participation and cooperation in the learning process for each individual and their co-participants can also play a major part in the effectiveness of the training delivered (Pike, nd).

### AESP Recommendations

The language of Chapter 37 specifies the circumstances and conditions that authorize or require a principal or other appropriate administrator to remove a student from a classroom, campus, or alternative education program. AESP's training was focused on DAEP and JJAEP personnel. Perhaps the wrong school personnel population was targeted. Once a child is improperly expelled, Chapter 37 has already been violated. Perhaps the target population for this training should be the regular education personnel especially those staff who teach in special education, resource, and programs for at-risk students. It is important to provide training on disciplinary options to persons at all levels of administration. Placement decisions are made at various levels because the local school board or its designee may make expulsions. In 1999, the Juvenile Probation Commission released a report on Safe Schools Programs. The report noted that the six Centers that had not participated in workshops had irregularities in their Safe Schools data that indicated that they might benefit from training (Alwin, 1999).

Develop a Website to show legislative updates on education law as they relate to Chapter 37 and allow a forum for teachers to share their successes or failures as they relate to Chapter 37 implementation. Participants reported the

need for updates as a workshop weakness. Multimedia technology can engage learners through small group discussions, role-playing, brainstorming, and simulations--all online (Eastmond, 1998). Interactive sessions allow for consistency of messages and facilitate the exchange of different perspectives.

Limit the number and standardize the workshop topics offered. The content and format of the workshop must remain stable in order to provide a valid evaluation. Since state law mandates Chapter 37, it should be taught at every initial workshop. Subsequent workshops can be tailored to meet regional needs as those needs relate to compliance with Chapter 37.

Limit the use of lectures and handouts in the training sessions. For training to be maximally effective, the trainee should participate actively in the learning process. Research studies indicate that learning does not take place simply because information is presented to the trainee (Mayo & DuBois, 1987). Give workshop participants scenarios of discipline problems. Have some scenarios acted out through role-play. After viewing the skit, place participants into groups to discuss how Chapter 37 should be used. Review answers to make sure they are in compliance with Chapter 37. If the objectives of training are to promote long-term retention of information or to allow learners to apply information in new settings, discussion is preferable to lecture (McKeachie et al. 1986).

Do not hold any initial training sessions between the months of April and June. Most schools end in May and the information learned at the training session will be forgotten due to the participant's inability to use the strategies

over the summer months. Follow-up training sessions can be offered year round.

Set workshop participant expectations. A system for evaluating the workshop must be put in place before the workshop begins. A key to planning a successful workshop is that you must specify what you expect participants to be able to do as a result of the instruction (Ayers, 1989).

According to the Outcome Measures in the AESP Project Narrative, an estimated 960 participants will be contacted six months after training to determine utility of the training (see Appendix J). As part of this follow-up evaluation, participants will be asked to give their opinion concerning collaboration activities, operation of the local alternative education programs, and value of the training. An outcome measure partially based on quantity shows how many people have been introduced to the training, but has little impact on the program's effectiveness. More conclusive evidence of program effectiveness could be provided by determining what participants know before training, setting participant expectations, and analyzing job performance after training has been conducted.

### Summary

At the time this survey was conducted, AESP was in its third year of operation. This summative evaluation was to provide the program director and other interested parties with information about whether the program's objectives and workshop attendee's needs were met. The findings from this study support previous research and current literature concerning professional development.

This bounded, multi-site, case study was conducted to answer the following central research question, *“How effective do attendees of the Alternative Education Support Project find its workshops to be as a strategy for implementing the Discipline, Law, and Order principles of Chapter 37, Texas Education Code?”* The central research question was answered using four subordinate research questions. As a professional development tool, AESP provided a strong foundation in the fundamentals of Chapter 37.

Unavoidably, one would look upon the results of this survey as a report card, and certainly it will be gratifying to learn that a high percentage of workshop attendees perceive AESP to have done a good job. But more importantly, a good, thorough survey will tell you where AESP missed the mark, and it is here that the survey has its greatest value to the long-range effectiveness of the AESP program.

AESP missed the mark in several areas. There was no consistency of training topics offered throughout the workshops. Of the five sites evaluated, Chapter 37 was discussed at Richardson, Galveston, and San Antonio. Training on Chapter 37 was the focal point of AESP and failure to offer this topic at every workshop prevented AESP from reaching one of its objectives.

Failure to follow-up on training topics in a timely manner or failure to follow-up at all reduced the likelihood that the skills learned would transfer to the work place.

The end-of-workshop and daily session survey items had a change in wording. On the end-of-workshop survey, participant responses changed from



yes/no to naming actual topics. This discrepancy caused data to fall into two categories. The daily session survey changed from receiving an overall session evaluation to receiving an evaluation for each topic offered at the workshop.

AESP received high ratings for providing relevant information for gang prevention and intervention. This information was not only timely, but could be used in the work place. Training on PEIMS reporting provided the participants with the knowledge needed to properly record absences for those students affected by expulsion or suspension. Training on special education issues was used in ARDs, to discipline special education students, and to prepare the student handbook.

## **Appendix A**

### **Texas Education Code Chapter 37 Discipline, Law, and Order Subchapter A. Alternative Settings for Behavior Management**

#### **Sec. 37.001. Student Code of Conduct**

(a) The board of trustees of an independent school district shall, with the advice of its district-level committee established under Section 11.251, adopt a student code of conduct for the district. The student code of conduct must be posted and prominently displayed at each school campus. In addition to establishing standards for student conduct, the student code of conduct must:

1) specify the circumstances, in accordance with this subchapter, under which a student may be removed from a classroom, campus, or alternative education program; and

2) specify conditions that authorize or require a principal or other appropriate administrator to transfer a student to an alternative education program; and

3) outline conditions under which a student may be suspended as provided by Section 37.005 or expelled as provided by Section 37.007.

(b) A teacher with knowledge that a student has violated the student code of conduct shall file with the school principal or other appropriate administrator a written report, not to exceed one page, documenting the violation. The principal or other appropriate administrator shall, not later than 24 hours after receipt of a report from a teacher, send a copy of the report to the student's parents or guardians.

(c) Once the student code of conduct is promulgated any change or amendment must be approved by the board of trustees.

#### **Sec. 37.002. Removal by Teacher**

(a) A teacher may send a student to the principal's office to maintain effective discipline in the classroom. The principal shall respond by employing appropriate discipline management techniques consistent with the student code of conduct adopted under Section 37.001.

(b) A teacher may remove from class a student

1) who has been documented by the teacher to repeatedly interfere with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in the class or with the ability of the student's classmates to learn; or

2) whose behavior the teacher determines is so unruly, disruptive, or abusive that it seriously interferes with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in the class or with the ability of the student's classmates to learn.

(c) If a teacher removes a student from class under Subsection (b), the principal may place the student into another appropriate classroom, into in-school suspension, or into an alternative education program as provided by Section 37.008. The principal may not return the student to that teacher's class without

the teacher's consent unless the committee established under Section 37.003 determines that such placement is the best or only alternative available. The terms of the removal may prohibit the student from attending or participating in school-sponsored or school-related activity.

(d) A teacher shall remove from class and send to the principal for placement in an alternative education program or for expulsion, as appropriate, a student who engages in conduct described under Section 37.006 or 37.007. The student may not be returned to that teacher's class without the teacher's consent unless the committee established under Section 37.003 determines that such placement is the best or only alternative available.

### **37.003. Placement Review Committee**

(a) Each school shall establish a three-member committee to determine placement of a student when a teacher refuses the return of a student to the teacher's class and make recommendations to the district regarding readmission of expelled students. Members shall be appointed as follows:

1) the campus faculty shall choose two teachers to serve as members and one teacher to serve as an alternate member; and

2) the principal shall choose one member from the professional staff of a campus.

(b) The teacher refusing to readmit the student may not serve on the committee.

### **37.004. Placement of Students With Disabilities**

(a) The placement of a student with a disability who receives special education services may be made only by a duly constituted admission, review, and dismissal committee.

(b) Any disciplinary action regarding a student with disabilities that would constitute a change in placement under federal law may only occur after the student's admission, review, and dismissal committee conducts a manifestation determination review under 20 U.S.C. Section 1415(k)(4) and its subsequent amendments. Any disciplinary action regarding the student shall be determined in accordance with federal law and regulations, including laws or regulations requiring the provision of:

1) functional behavioral assessments;

2) positive behavioral interventions, strategies, and supports; and

3) behavioral intervention plans.

(c) A student with a disability who receives special education services may not be placed in alternative education programs for solely for educational purposes.

(d) A teacher in a disciplinary alternative education program under Section 37.008 who has a special education assignment must hold an appropriate certificate or permit for that assignment.

(e) Notwithstanding any other provision of this subchapter, in a county with a juvenile justice alternative education program established under Section 37.011, the expulsion under a provision of Section 37.007 described by this subsection of a student with a disability who receives special education services must occur in accordance with this subsection and Subsection (f). The school district from

which the student was expelled shall, in accordance with applicable federal law, provide the administrator of the juvenile justice alternative education program or the administrator's designee with reasonable notice of the meeting of the student's admission, review, and dismissal committee to discuss the student's expulsion. A representative of the juvenile justice alternative education program may participate in the meeting to the extent that the meeting relates to the student's placement in the program. This subsection applies only to an expulsion under:

- (1) Section 37.07 (b), (c), or (f); or
  - (2) Section 37.0107 (d) as a result of conduct that contains the elements of any offense listed in Section 37.0107 (b)(3) against any employee or volunteer in retaliation for or as a result of the person's employment or association with a school district.
- (f) If, after placement of a student in a juvenile justice alternative education program under Subsection (e), the administrator of the program or the administrator's designee has concerns that the student's education or behavioral needs cannot be met in the program, the administrator, or designee shall immediately provide written notice of those concerns to the school district from which the student was expelled. The student's admission, review, and dismissal committee shall meet to reconsider the placement of the student in the program. The district shall, in accordance with applicable federal law, provide the administrator or designee with reasonable notice of the meeting, and a representative of the program may participate in the meeting to the extent that the meeting relates to the student's continued placement in the program.
- (g) Subsections (e) and (f) and this subsection expire September 1, 2003.

### **37.005. Suspension**

- (a) The principal or other appropriate administrator may suspend a student who engages in conduct for which the student may be placed in an alternative education program under this subchapter.
- (b) A suspension under this section may not exceed three school days.

### **37.006. Removal for Certain Conduct**

- (a) Except as provided by Section 37.007 (a) (3) or (b), a student shall be removed from class and placed in an alternative education program as provided by Section 37.008 if the student:
  - 1) engages in conduct involving a public school that contains the elements of the offense of false alarm or report under Section 42.06, Penal Code, or terrorist ice threat under Section 22/07, Penal Code; or
  - 2) commits the following on or within 30 feet of school property, as measured from any point on the school's real property boundary line, or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off of school property:
    - A) engages in conduct punishable as a felony;
    - B) engages in conduct that contains the elements of the offense of assault under Section 22/01(a)(1), Penal Code;

C) sells, gives or delivers to another person or possesses or uses or is under the influence of:

(i) marihuana or a controlled substances, as defined by Chapter 481, Health and Safety Code, or by 21 U.S.C. Section 801 et seq.; or

(ii) a dangerous drug, as defined by Chapter 483, Health and Safety Code;

D) sells, gives, or delivers to another person an alcoholic beverage, as defined by Section 1.04, Alcoholic Beverage Code, commits a serious act or offense while under the influence of alcohol, or possesses, uses, or is under the influence of an alcoholic beverage;

E) engages in conduct that contains the elements of an offense relating to abusable glue or aerosol paint under Sections 485.031 through 483.035, Health and Safety Code, or relating to volatile chemicals under Chapter 484, Health and Safety Code; or

F) engages in conduct that contains the elements of the offense of public lewdness under Section 21.07, Penal Code, or indecent exposure under Section 21.08, Penal Code.

(b) Except as provided by Section 37.07(d), a student shall be removed from class and placed in an alternative education program under Section 37.008 if the student engages in conduct that contains the elements of the offense of retaliation under Section 36.06, Penal Code, against any school employee.

(c) In addition to Subsection (a), a student shall be removed from class and placed in an alternative education program under Section 37.0108 based on conduct occurring off campus and while the student is not in attendance at a school-sponsored or school-related activity if:

1) the student receives deferred prosecution under Section 53.03, Family Code, for conduct defined as a felony offense in Title 5, Penal Code;

2) a court or jury finds that the student has engaged in delinquent conduct under Section 54.03, Family Code, for conduct defined as a felony offense in Title 5, Penal Code; or

3) the superintendent or the superintendent's designee has a reasonable belief that the student has engaged in a conduct defined as a felony offense in Title 5, Penal Code.

(d) In addition to Subsection (a), a student may be removed from class and placed in an alternative education program under Section 37.008 based on conduct occurring off campus and while the student is not in attendance at a school-sponsored or school-related activity if:

1) the superintendent or the superintendent's designee has a reasonable belief that the student has engaged in conduct defined as a felony offense other than those defined in Title 5, Penal Code; and

2) the continued presence of the student in the regular classroom threatens the safety of other students or teachers or will be detrimental to the educational process.

(e) In determining whether there is a reasonable belief that a student has engaged in conduct defined as a felony offense by the Penal Code, the superintendent or the superintendent's designee may consider all available

information, including the information furnished under Article 15.27, Code of Criminal Procedure.

(f) Subject to Section 37.007(e), a student who is younger than 10 years of age shall be removed from class and placed in an alternative education program under Section 37.008 if the student engages in conduct described in Section 37.007. An elementary school student may not be placed in an alternative education program with any other student who is not an elementary student.

(g) The terms of a placement under this section must prohibit the student from attending or participating in a school-sponsored or school-related activity.

(h) On receipt of notice under Article 15.27(g), Code of Criminal Procedure, the superintendent or the superintendent's designee shall review the student's placement in the alternative education program. The student may not be returned to the regular classroom pending the review. The superintendent or the superintendent's designee shall schedule a review of the student's placement with the student's parent or guardian not later than the third class day after the superintendent or superintendent's designee receives notice from the office or official designated by the court. After reviewing the notice and receiving information from the student's parent or guardian, the superintendent or the superintendent's designee may continue the student's placement in the alternative education program if there is reason to believe that the presence of the student in the regular classroom threatens the safety of other students or teachers.

(i) The student or the student's parent or guardian may appeal the superintendent's decision under Subsection (h) to the board of trustees. The student may not be returned to the regular classroom pending the appeal. The board shall, at the next scheduled meeting, review the notice provided under Article 15.27(g), Code of Criminal Procedure, and receive information from the student, the student's parent or guardian, and the superintendent or superintendent's designee and confirm or reverse the decision under Subsection (h). The board shall make a record of the proceedings. If the board confirms the decision of the superintendent or superintendent's designee, the board shall inform the student and the student's parent or guardian of the right to appeal to the commissioner under Subsection (j).

(j) Notwithstanding Section 7.057(e), the decision of the board of trustees under Subsection (i) may be appealed to the commissioner as provided by Sections 7.057(b), (c), (d), and (f). The student may not be returned to the regular classroom pending the appeal.

(k) Subsections (h), (i), and (j) do not apply to placements made in accordance with Subsection (a).

(l) Notwithstanding any other provision of this code, a student who is younger than six years of age may not be removed from class and placed in an alternative education program.

### **Sec. 37.0061. Funding for Alternative Education Services in Juvenile Residential Facilities**

A school district that provides education services to pre-adjudicated and post-adjudicated students who are confined by court order in a juvenile residential facility operated by a juvenile board is entitled to count such students in the district's average daily attendance for purposes of receipt of state funds under the Foundation School Program. If the district has a wealth per student greater than the guaranteed wealth level but less than the equalized wealth level, the district in which the student is enrolled on the date a court orders the student to be confined to a juvenile residential facility shall transfer to the district providing education services an amount equal to the difference between the average Foundation School Program costs per student of the district providing education services and the sum of the state aid and the money from the available school fund received by the district that is attributable to the student for the portion of the school year for which the district provides education services to the student.

### **Sec. 37.007. Expulsion for Serious Offenses**

(a) A student shall be expelled from a school if the student, on school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off of school property:

(1) uses, exhibits, or possess:

(A) a firearm as defined by Section 46.01(3), Penal Code;

(B) an illegal knife as defined by Section 46.01(6), Penal Code, or by local policy;

(C) a club as defined by Section 46.01(1), Penal Code; or

(D) a weapon listed as a prohibited weapon under Section 46.05, Penal Code;

(2) engages in conduct that contains the elements of the offense of:

(A) aggravated assault under Section 22.02, Penal Code, sexual assault under Section 22.011, Penal Code, or aggravated sexual assault under Section 22.021, Penal Code;

(B) arson under Section 28.02, Penal Code;

(C) murder under Section 19.02, Penal Code, capital murder under Section 19.03, Penal Code, or criminal attempt, under Section 15.01, Penal Code, to commit murder or capital murder;

(D) indecency with a child under Section 21.11, Penal Code; or

(E) aggravated kidnapping under Section 20.04, Penal Code; or

(3) engages in conduct specified by Section 37.006(a)(2)(C) or (D), if the conduct is punishable as a felony.

(b) A student may be expelled if the student:

1) engages in conduct involving a public school that contains the elements of the offense of false alarm or report under Section 42.06, Penal Code, or terrorist ice threat under Section 22.07, Penal Code; or

2) while on school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off of school property:

(A) sells, gives, or delivers to another person or possesses, uses, or is under the influence of any amount of:

- (i) marihuana or a controlled substance, as defined by Chapter 481, Health and Safety Code, or by 21 U.S.C. Section 801 et seq.;
  - (ii) a dangerous drug, as defined by Chapter 483, Health and Safety Code;
- or

(iii) an alcoholic beverage, as defined by Section 1.04, Alcoholic Beverage Code;

(B) engages in conduct that contains the elements of an offense relating to abusable glue or aerosol paint under Sections 485.031 through 485.035, Health and Safety Code, or relating to volatile chemicals under Chapter 484, Health and Safety Code.

(C) engages in conduct that contains the elements of an offense under Section 22.01(a)(1), Penal Code, against a school district employee or volunteer as defined by Section 22.053.

(c) A student may be expelled if the student, while placed in a an alternative education program for disciplinary reasons, continues to engage in serious or persistent misbehavior that violates the district's student code of conduct.

(d) A student shall be expelled if the student engages in conduct that contains the elements of any offense listed in Subsection (a) and may be expelled if the student engages in conduct that contains the element of any offense listed in Subsection (b)(2)(C) against any employee or volunteer in retaliation for or as a result of the person's employment or association with a school district, without regard to whether the conduct occurs on or off of school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off of school property.

(e) In accordance with federal law, a local educational agency, including a school district, home-rule school district, or open-enrollment charter school, shall expel a student who brings a firearm, as defined by 18 U.S.C. Section 9221, to school. The student must be expelled from the student's regular campus for a period of at least one year, except that:

- 1) the superintendent or other chief administrative officer of the school district or of the other local educational agency, as defined by 20 U.S.C. Section 2891, may modify the length of the expulsion in the case of an individual student;

- 2) the district or other local educational agency shall provide educational services to an expelled student in an alternative education program as provided by Section 37.008 if the student is younger than 10 years of age on the date of expulsion; and

- 3) the district or other local educational agency may provide educational services to an expelled student who is older than 10 years of age in an alternative education program as provided in Section 37.008.

(f) A student who engages in conduct that contains the elements of the offense of criminal mischief under Section 38.03, Penal Code, may be expelled at the district's discretion if the conduct is punishable as a felony under that section.



The student shall be referred to the authorized officer of the juvenile court regardless of whether the student is expelled.

(g) A school district shall inform each teacher of the conduct of a student who has engaged in any violation listed in this section. A teacher shall keep the information received in this subsection confidential. The State Board for Educator Certification may revoke or suspend the certification of a teacher who intentionally violates this subsection.

(h) Subject to Subsection (e), notwithstanding any other provision of this section, a student who is younger than 10 years of age may not be expelled for engaging in conduct described by this section.

### **Sec. 37.008. Alternative Education Programs**

(a) Each school district shall provide an alternative education program that:

- 1) is provided in a setting other than a student's regular classroom;
- 2) is located on or off of a regular school campus;
- 3) provides for the students who are assigned to the alternative education program to be separated from students who are not assigned to the program;
- 4) focuses on English language arts, mathematics, science, history, and self-discipline;
- 5) provides for students' educational and behavioral needs; and
- 6) provides supervision and counseling.

(b) An alternative education program may provide for a student's transfer to:

- 1) a different campus
- 2) a school-community guidance center; or
- 3) a community-based alternative school.

(c) An off-campus alternative education program is not subject to a requirement imposed by this title, other than a limitation on liability, a reporting requirement, or a requirement imposed by this chapter or by Chapter 39.

(d) A school district may provide an alternative education program jointly with one or more other districts.

(e) Each school district shall cooperate with government agencies and community organizations that provide services in the district to students placed in an alternative education program.

(f) A student removed to an alternative education program is counted in computing the average daily attendance of students in the district for the student's time in actual attendance in the program.

(g) A school district shall allocate to an alternative education program the same expenditure per student attending the alternative education program, including federal, state, and local funds, that would be allocated to the student's school if the student were attending the student's regularly assigned education program, including a special education program.

(h) A school district may not place a student, other than a student suspended as provided under Section 37.005 or expelled as provided under Section 37.007, in an unsupervised setting as a result of conduct for which a student may be placed in an alternative education program.

(i) On request of a school district, a regional education service center may provide to the district information on developing an alternative education program that takes into consideration the district's size, wealth, and existing facilities in determining the program best suited to the district.

(j) If a student placed in an alternative education program enrolls in another school district before the expiration of the period of placement, the board of trustees of the district requiring the placement shall provide to the district in which the student enrolls, at the same time other records of the student are provided, a copy of the placement order. The district in which the student enrolls may continue the alternative education program placement under the terms of the order or may allow the student to attend regular classes without completing the period of placement.

(k) A program of educational and support services may be provided to a student and the student's parents when the offense involves drugs or alcohol as specified under Section 37.006 or 37.007. An alternative education program that provides chemical dependency treatment services must be licensed under Chapter 464, Health and Safety Code.

(l) A school district is not required to provide in the district's alternative education program a course necessary to fill a student's high school graduation requirements other than a course specified by Subsection (a).

(m) The commissioner shall adopt rules necessary to evaluate annually the performance of each district's alternative education program established under this subchapter. The evaluation required by this section shall be based on indicators defined by the commissioner, but must include student performance on assessment instruments required under Section 39.023(a) and (c).

### **Sec. 37.009. Conference; Hearing; Review**

(a) Not later than the third class day after the day on which a student is removed from class by the teacher under Section 37.002(b) or (d) or by the school principal or other appropriate administrator under Section 37.006, the principal or other appropriate administrator shall schedule a conference among the principal or other appropriate administrator, a parent or guardian of the student, the teacher removing the student from class, if any, and the student. At the conference, the student is entitled to written or oral notice of the reasons for the removal, an explanation of the basis for the removal, and an opportunity to respond to the reasons for the removal. The student may not be returned to the regular classroom pending the conference. Following the conference, and whether or not each requested person is in attendance after valid attempts to require the person's attendance, the principal shall order the placement of the student as provided by Section 37.002 or 37.006 as applicable, for a period consistent with the student code of conduct.

(b) If a student's placement in an alternative education program is to extend beyond the end of the next grading period, a student's parent or guardian is entitled to notice of and an opportunity to participate in a proceeding before the board of trustees of the school district or the board's designee, as provided by

policy of the board of trustees of the district. Any decision of the board or the board's designee under this subsection is final and may not be appealed.

(c) Before it may place a student in an alternative education program for a period that extends beyond the end of the school year, the board or the board's designee must determine that:

1) the student's presence in the regular classroom program or at the student's regular campus presents a danger of physical harm to the student or to another individual; or

2) the student has engaged in serious or persistent misbehavior that violates the district's student code of conduct.

(d) The board or the board's designee shall set a term for a student's placement in an alternative education program under Section 37.002 or 37.006.

(e) A student placed in an alternative education program under Section 37.02 or 37.006 shall be provided a review of the student's status, including a review of the student's academic status, by the board's designee, at intervals not to exceed 120 days. In the case of a high school student, the board's designee, with the student's parent or guardian, shall review the student's progress towards meeting high school graduation requirements and shall establish a specific graduation plan for the student. The district is not required under this subsection to provide in the district's alternative education program a course not specified under Section 37.008(a). At the review, the student or the student's parent or guardian must be given the opportunity to present arguments for the student's return to the regular classroom or campus. The student may not be returned to the classroom of the teacher who removed the student without that teacher's consent. The teacher may not be coerced to consent.

(f) Before a student may be expelled under Section 37.007, the board or the board's designee must provide the student a hearing at which the student is afforded appropriated due process as required by the federal constitution and which the student's parent or guardian is invited, in writing, to attend. At the hearing, the student is entitled to be represented by the student's parent or guardian or another adult who can provide guidance to the student and who is not an employee of the school district. If the school district makes a good-faith effort to inform the student and the student's parent or guardian of the time and place of the hearing, the district may hold the hearing regardless of whether the student, the student's parent or guardian, or another adult representing the student attends. If the decision to expel a student is made by the board's designee, the decision may be appealed to the board. The decision of the board may be appealed by trial de novo to a district court of the county in which the school district's central administrative office is located.

(g) The board or the board's designee shall deliver to the student and the student's parent or guardian a copy of the order placing the student in an alternative education program under Section 37.002 or 37.006 or expelling the student under Section 37.007.

(h) After a school district notifies the parents or guardians of a student that the student has been expelled, the parent or guardian shall provide adequate supervision of the student during the period of expulsion.

**Sec. 37.010. Court Involvement**

(a) Not later than the second business day after the date a hearing is held under Section 37.009, the board of trustees of a school district or the board's designee shall deliver a copy of the order placing as student in an alternative education program under Section 37.006 or expelling a student under Section 37.007 and any information required under Section 52.04, Family Code, to the authorized officer of the juvenile court in the county in which the student resides. In a county that operates a program under Section 37.011, an expelled student shall to the extent provided by law or by the memorandum of understanding immediately attend the educational program from the date of expulsion; provided, however, that in a county with a population greater than 125,000 every expelled student who is not detained or receiving treatment under an order of the juvenile court must be enrolled in an educational program.

(b) If a student is expelled under Section 37.007(c), the board or its designee shall refer the student to the authorized officer of the juvenile court for appropriate proceedings under Title 3, Family Code.

(c) Unless the juvenile board for the county in which the district's central administrative office is located has entered into a memorandum of understanding with the district's board of trustees concerning the juvenile probation department's role in supervising and providing other support services for students in alternative education programs, a court may not order a student expelled under Section 37.007 to attend a regular classroom, a regular campus, or a school district alternative education program as a condition of probation.

(d) Unless the juvenile board for the county in which the district's central administrative office is located has entered into a memorandum of understanding as described by Subsection (c), if a court orders a student to attend an alternative education program as a condition of probation once during a school year and the student is referred to juvenile court again during that school year, the juvenile court may not order the student to attend an alternative education program in a district without the district's consent until the student has successfully completed any sentencing requirements the court imposes.

(e) Any placement in an alternative education program by a court under this section must prohibit the student from attending or participating in school-sponsored or school-related activities.

(f) If a student is expelled under Section 37.007, on the recommendation of the committee established under Section 37.003 or on its own initiative, a district may readmit the student while the student is completing any court disposition requirements the court imposes. After the student has successfully completed any court disposition requirements the court imposes, including conditions of a deferred prosecution ordered by the court, or such conditions required by the prosecutor or probation department, if the student meets the requirements for admission into the public schools established by this title, a district may not refuse to admit the student, but the district may place the student in the alternative education program. Notwithstanding Section 37.002(d), the student may not be returned to the classroom of the teacher under whose supervision the

offense occurred without the teacher's consent. The teacher may not be coerced to consent.

(g) If an expelled student enrolls in another school district, the board of trustees of the district that expelled the student shall provide to the district in which the student enrolls, at the same time other records of the student are provided, a copy of the expulsion order and the referral to the authorized officer of the juvenile court. The district in which the student enrolls may continue the expulsion under the terms of the order, may place the student in an alternative education program for the period specified by the expulsion order, or may allow the student to attend regular classes without completing the period of expulsion.

(h) A person is not liable in civil damages for a referral to juvenile court as required by this section.

### **Sec. 37.011. Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program**

(a) The juvenile board of a county with a population greater than 125,000 shall develop a juvenile justice alternative education program, subject to the approval of the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission. The juvenile board of a county with a population of 125,000 or less may develop a juvenile justice alternative education program. A juvenile justice alternative education program in a county with a population of 125,000 or less:

1) is not required to be approved by the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission; and

2) is not subject to Subsection (c), (d), (f), or (g).

(b) If a student is expelled from school under Section 37.007(a), (d), or (e) the juvenile court shall:

1) if the student is placed on probation under Section 54.04, Family Code, order the student to attend the juvenile justice alternative education program in the county in which the student resides from the date of disposition as a condition of probation, unless the child is placed in a post-adjudication treatment facility;

2) if the student is placed on deferred prosecution under Section 53.03, Family Code, by the court, prosecutor, or probation department, require the student to immediately attend the juvenile justice alternative education program in the county in which the student resides for a period not to exceed six months as a condition of the deferred prosecution; and

3) in determining the conditions of the deferred prosecution or court-ordered probation, consider the length of the school district's expulsion order for the student.

(c) A juvenile justice alternative education program shall adopt a student code of conduct in accordance with Section 37.001.

(d) A juvenile justice alternative education program must focus on English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and self-discipline. Each school district shall consider course credit earned by a student while in a juvenile justice alternative education program as credit earned in a district school. Each program shall administer assessment instruments under Subchapter B, Chapter 39, and shall offer a high school equivalency program. The juvenile board or the board's designee, with the parent or guardian of each student, shall regularly

review the student's academic progress. In the case of a high school student, the board or the board's designee, with the student's parent or guardian, shall review the student's progress towards meeting high school graduation requirements and shall establish a specific graduation plan for the student. The

program is not required to provide a course necessary to fulfill a student's high school graduation requirements other than a course specified by this subsection.

(e) A juvenile justice alternative education program may be provided in a facility owned by a school district. A school district may provide personnel and services for a juvenile justice alternative education program under a contract with the juvenile board.

(f) A juvenile justice alternative education program must operate at least seven hours per day and 180 days per year, except that a program may apply to the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission for a waiver of the 180-day requirement. The commission may not grant a waiver to a program under this subsection for a number of days that exceeds the highest number of instructional days waived by the commissioner during the same school year for a school district served by the program.

(g) A juvenile justice alternative education program shall be subject to a written operating policy developed by the local juvenile justice board and submitted to the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission for review and comment. A juvenile justice alternative education program is not subject to a requirement imposed by this title, other than a reporting requirement or a requirement imposed by this chapter or by Chapter 39.

(h) Academically, the mission of juvenile justice alternative education programs shall be to enable students to perform at grade level. For purposes of accountability under Chapter 39, a student enrolled in a juvenile justice alternative education program is reported as if the student were enrolled at the student's assigned campus in the student's regularly assigned education program, including a special education program. Annually, the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission, with the agreement of the commissioner, shall develop and implement a system of accountability consistent with Chapter 39, where appropriate, to assure that students make progress toward grade level while attending a juvenile justice alternative education program. The Texas Juvenile Probation Commission shall adopt rules for the distribution of funds appropriated under this section to juvenile boards in counties required to establish juvenile justice alternative education programs. Except as determined by the commissioner, a student served by a juvenile justice alternative education program on the basis of an expulsion under Section 37.007(a), (d), or (e) is not eligible for Foundation School Program funding under Chapter 42 or 32 if the juvenile justice alternative education program received funding from the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission under this subchapter.

(i) A student transferred to a juvenile justice alternative education program must participate in the program for a full period ordered by the juvenile court unless the student's school district agrees to accept the student before the date ordered by the juvenile court. The juvenile court may not order a period of transfer under this section that exceeds the term of any probation ordered by the juvenile court.

*Text of subsection (j) effective until September 1, 1997*

(j) A juvenile board in a county with a population greater than 125,000 shall establish a juvenile justice alternative education program not later than September 1, 1996. A student who engages in conduct described by Section 37.007 before the date on which a juvenile justice alternative education program for the county in which the student resides begins operation shall be expelled for a period not to exceed one year. This subsection expires September 1, 1997.

(k) Each school district in a county with a population greater than 125,000 and the county juvenile board shall annually enter into a joint memorandum of understanding that:

- 1) outlines the responsibilities of the juvenile board concerning the establishment and operation of a juvenile justice alternative education program under this section;

- 2) defines the amount and conditions of payments from the school district to the juvenile board for students of the school district served in the juvenile justice alternative education program whose placement was not made on the basis of expulsion under Section 37.007(a), (d) or (e);

- 3) identifies those categories of conduct that the school district has defined in its student code of conduct as constituting serious or persistent misbehavior for which a student may be placed in a the juvenile justice alternative education program;

- 4) identifies and requires a timely placement and specifies a term of placement for expelled students for whom the school district has received a notice under Section 52.041(d), Family Code;

- 5) establishes services for the transitioning of expelled students to the school district prior to the completion of the student's placement in the juvenile justice alternative education program;

- 6) establishes a plan that provides transportation services for students placed in the juvenile justice alternative education program;

- 7) establishes the circumstances and conditions under which a juvenile may be allowed to remain in the juvenile justice alternative education program setting once the juvenile is no longer under juvenile court jurisdiction; and

- 8) establishes a plan to address special education services required by law.

(l) The school district shall be responsible for providing an immediate educational program to students who engage in behavior resulting in expulsion under Section 37.007(b), (c), and (f) but who are not eligible for admission into the juvenile justice alternative education program in accordance with the memorandum of understanding required under this section. The school district may provide the program or the school district may contract with a county juvenile board, a private provider, or one or more other school districts to provide the program. The memorandum of understanding shall address the circumstances under which such students who continue to engage in serious or persistent misbehavior shall be admitted into the juvenile justice alternative education program.

(m) Each school district in a county with a population greater than 125,000 and the county juvenile board shall adopt a joint memorandum of understanding as required by this section not later than September 1 of each school year.

(n) If a student who is ordered to attend a juvenile justice alternative education program moves from one county to another, the juvenile court may request the juvenile justice alternative education program in the county to which the student moves to provide educational services to the student in accordance with the local memorandum of understanding between the school district and juvenile board in the receiving county.

(o) In relation to the development and operation of a juvenile justice alternative education program, a juvenile board and a county and a commissioners court are immune from liability to the same extent as a school district, and the juvenile board's or county's employees and volunteers are immune from liability to the same extent as a school district's employees and volunteers.

(p) If a district elects to contact with the juvenile board for placement in the juvenile justice alternative education program of students expelled under Section 37.007(b), (c), and (f) and the juvenile board and district are unable to reach an agreement in the memorandum of understanding, either party may request that the issues of dispute be referred to a binding arbitration process that uses a qualified alternative dispute resolution arbitrator in which each party will pay its pro rata share of the arbitration costs. Each party must submit its final proposal to the arbitrator. If the parties cannot agree on an arbitrator, the juvenile board shall select an arbitrator, the school districts shall select an arbitrator, and those two arbitrators shall select an arbitrator who will decide the issues in dispute. An arbitration decision issued under this subsection is enforceable in a court in the county in which the juvenile justice alternative education program is located. Any decision by an arbitrator concerning the amount of the funding for a student who is expelled and attending a juvenile justice alternative education program must provide an amount sufficient based on operation of the juvenile justice alternative education program in accordance with this chapter. In determining the amount to be paid by a school district for an expelled student enrolled in a juvenile justice alternative education program, the arbitrator shall consider the relevant factors, including evidence of:

- 1) the actual average total per student expenditure in the district's alternative education setting;

- 2) the expected per student cost in the juvenile justice alternative education program as described and agreed on in the memorandum of understanding and in compliance with this chapter; and

- 3) the costs necessary to achieve the accountability goals under this chapter.

(q) In accordance with rules adopted by the board of trustees for the Teacher Retirement System of Texas, a certified educator employed by a juvenile board in a juvenile justice alternative education program shall be eligible for membership and participation in the system to the same extent that an employee of public school district is eligible. The juvenile board shall make any contribution that otherwise would be the responsibility of the school district if the person were



employed by the school district, and the state shall make any contribution to the same extent as if the person were employed by a school district.

**Sec. 37.012. Funding of Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Programs**

(a) Subject to Section 37.011(n), the school district in which a student is enrolled on the date the student is expelled on a basis other than Section 37.007(a), (d), or (e) shall if the student is served by the juvenile justice alternative education program, provide funding to the juvenile board for the portion of the school year for which the juvenile justice alternative education program provides educational services in an amount determined by the memorandum of understanding under Section 37.001(k)(2).

(b) Funds received under this section must be expended on juvenile justice alternative education programs.

(c) The Office of State Federal Relations shall assist a local juvenile probation department in identifying additional state or federal funds to assist local juvenile probation departments conducting educational or job training programs within juvenile justice alternative education programs.

**Sec. 37.013. Coordination Between School Districts and Juvenile Boards**

The board of trustees of the school district or the board's designee shall at the call of the president of the board of trustees regularly meet with the juvenile board for the county in which the district's central administrative office is located or the juvenile board's designee concerning supervision and rehabilitative services appropriate for expelled students and students assigned to alternative education programs. Matters for discussion shall include service by probation officers at the alternative education program site, recruitment of volunteers to serve as mentors and provide tutoring services, and coordination with other social service agencies.

**Sec. 37.014. Court-Related Children-Liaison Officers**

Each school district shall appoint at least one educator to act as liaison officer for court-related children who are enrolled in the district. The liaison officer shall provide counseling and services for each court-related child and the child's parents to establish or reestablish normal attendance and progress of the child in the school.

**Sec. 37.015. Reports to Local Law Enforcement; Liability**

(a) The principal of a public or private primary or secondary school, or a person designated by the principal under Subsection (d), shall notify any school district police department and the police department of the municipality in which the school is located or, if the school is not in a municipality, the sheriff of the county in which the school is located if the principal has reasonable grounds to believe that any of the following activities occur in school, on school property, or at a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off school property, whether or not the activity is investigated by school security officers:

- 1) conduct that may constitute an offense listed under Section 8(c), Article 42.18, Code of Criminal Procedure;
  - 2) deadly conduct under Section 22.05, Penal Code;
  - 3) a terrorist threat under Section 22.07, Penal Code;
  - 4) the use, sale, or possession of a controlled substance, drug paraphernalia, or marihuana under Chapter 481, Health and Safety Code;
  - 5) the possession of any of the weapons or devices listed under Sections 46.01(1)-(14) or Section 46.01(16), Penal Code; or
  - 6) conduct that may constitute a criminal offense under Section 71.02, Penal Code.
- (b) A person who makes a notification under this section shall include the name and address of each student the person believes may have participated in the activity.
- (c) A notification is not required under Subsection (a) if the person reasonably believes that the activity does not constitute a criminal offense.
- (d) The principal of a public or private primary or secondary school may designate a school employee who is under the supervision of the principal to make the reports required by this section.
- (e) The person who makes the notification required under Subsection (a) shall also notify each instructional or support employee of the school who has regular contact with a student whose conduct is the subject of the notice.
- (f) A person is not liable in civil damages for reporting in good faith as required by this section.

#### **Sec. 37.016. Report of Drug Offenses; Liability**

A teacher, school administrator, or school employee is not liable in civil damages for reporting to a school administrator or governmental authority, in the exercise of professional judgment within the scope of the teacher's, administrator's, or employee's duties, a student whom the teacher suspects of using, passing, or selling, on school property:

- 1) marihuana or a controlled substance, as defined by Chapter 481, Health and Safety Code;
- 2) a dangerous drug, as defined by Chapter 483, Health and Safety Code;
- 3) an abusable glue or aerosol paint, as defined by Chapter 485, Health and Safety Code, or a volatile chemical, as listed in Chapter 484, Health and Safety Code, if the substance is used or sold for the purpose of inhaling its fumes or vapors; or
- 4) an alcoholic beverage, as defined by Section 1.04, Alcoholic Beverage Code.

#### **Sec. 37.017. Destruction of Certain Records**

Information received by a school district under Article 15.27, Code of Criminal Procedure, may not be attached to the permanent academic file of the student who is the subject of the report. The school district shall destroy the information at the end of the school year in which the report was filed.

**Sec. 37.018. Information for Educators**

Each school district shall provide each teacher and administrator with a copy of this subchapter and with a copy of the local policy relating to this subchapter.

**Sec. 37.019. Emergency Placement or Expulsion**

(a) This subchapter does not prevent the principal or the principal's designee from ordering the immediate placement of a student in the alternative program if the principal or the principal's designee reasonably believes the student's behavior is so unruly, disruptive, or abusive that it seriously interferes with a teacher's ability to communicate effectively with the students in a class, with the ability of the student's classmates to learn, or with the operation of school or a school-sponsored activity.

(b) This subchapter does not prevent the principal or the principal's designee from ordering the immediate expulsion of a student if the principal or the principal's designee reasonably believes that action is necessary to protect persons or property from imminent harm.

(c) At the time of an emergency placement or expulsion, the student shall be given oral notice of the reason for the action. Within a reasonable time after the emergency placement or expulsion, the student shall be accorded the appropriate due process as required under Section 37.009. If the student subject to the emergency placement or expulsion is a student with disabilities who receives special education services, the term of the student's emergency placement or expulsion is subject to the requirements of 20 U.S.C. Section 1415(j) and (k).

(d) A principal or principal's designee is not liable in civil damages for an emergency placement under this section.

**Sec. 37.020. Reports Relating To Expulsion and Alternative Education Program Placements**

In the manner required by the commissioner, each school district shall annually report to the commissioner:

1) for each placement in an alternative education program established under Section 37.008:

A) information identifying the student, including the student's race, sex, and date of birth, that will enable the agency to compare placement data with information collected through other reports;

B) information indicating whether the placement was based on:

(i) conduct violating the student code of conduct adopted under Section 37.001;

(ii) conduct for which a student may be removed from class under Section 37.002(b);

(iii) conduct for which placement in an alternative education program is required by Section 37.006; or

(iv) conduct occurring while a student was enrolled in another district and for which placement in an alternative education program is permitted by Section 37.008(j); and

- (C) the number of days the student was assigned to the program and the number of days the student attended the program; and
- (2) for each expulsion under Section 37.007:
  - (A) information identifying the student, including the student's race, sex, and date of birth, that will enable the agency to compare placement data with information collected through other reports;
  - (B) information indicating whether the expulsion was based on:
    - (i) conduct for which expulsion is required under Section 37.007, including information specifically indicating whether the student was expelled on the basis of Section 37.007(e);
    - (ii) conduct, other than conduct described by Subparagraph (iii), for which expulsion is permitted under Section 37.007; or
    - (iii) serious or persistent misbehavior occurring while the student was placed in an alternative education program;
  - (C) the number of days the student was expelled;
  - (D) information indicating whether:
    - (i) the student was placed in a juvenile justice alternative education program under Section 37.011;
    - (ii) the student was placed in an alternative education program; or
    - (iii) the student was not placed in a juvenile justice or other alternative education program.

**Appendix B**

## Workshop Agendas

Alternative Educational Workshop  
Galveston Independent School District  
GACE - SAILS  
1503 43<sup>rd</sup> Street  
Galveston, Texas 77551  
February 25, 2000

8:00	Registration
8:30	Introduction and Program Overview Dr. Gunter
9:00	Chapter 37, Discipline, Law and Order (Texas Education Code) Implementation Issues (Group Activity)
10:15	Break
10:30	Promoting Student Self Responsibility, The Boystown Model Dr. Gunter
12:00	Lunch
1:00	Anger Management: Ms. Lea Renick Communities in Schools
2:50	Break
3:00	Round Table (Juvenile Probation and Transition Issues)
3:30	Closing, Evaluation, Certificates and Adjourn

Bexar County Learning Center  
&  
Southwest Texas State University

February 26, 2001

8:30 am	Registration
9:00 am	Welcome Program Overview and Administration Dr. Gunter & Mr. Nash (SWT)  Gang Awareness and Intervention Det. Rocky Dyer (San Antonio Police Department)
10:15 am	Special Education in Alternative Settings Dr. Janelle Coffey
11:30 am	Adjournment

Alternative Education Workshop  
 Sunset High School  
 Education Center Complex  
 El Paso Independent School District  
 6531 Boeing  
 El Paso, Texas 79925  
 And  
 Southwest Texas State University

Discipline, Law and Order Workshop  
 April 11, 2001

- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| 8:00 a.m.  | Registration  |
| 8:30 a.m.  | Welcome<br>Program Overview and Administration<br>Dr. Charles Gunter, SWT<br>Gerald Nash, SWT   |
| 8:45 a.m.  | PEIMS 425 Record<br>Leslie Smith<br>Program Specialist, Texas Education Agency  |
| 10:30 a.m. | Break   |
| 10:45 a.m. | Gangs 101<br>Robert Martinez<br>Tami Schroeder<br>Office of the Attorney General (Juvenile Crime Division)<br>Officer Mary Lou Carillo<br>El Paso Police Department                                 |
| 12:30 p.m. | Lunch on your own   |
| 2:00 p.m.  | Concurrent Sessions:<br>a. JJAEP (overview)<br>Penny Grochow, Assistant Chief<br>Nueces County Juvenile Court<br>Open item – Local JJAEP representative<br><br>b. Boystown Model<br>Dr. Gunter, SWT |
| 4:00 p.m.  | Evaluation, Certificates, and Adjournment   |

Alternative Education Workshop  
August 24-25, 2000  
Education Service Center, Region 10  
400 East Spring Valley Road, Richardson, TX 75083-1300  
Sponsors: ESC, Region 10 & Southwest Texas State University

**Day One (August 24)**

- |       |  |
|-------|--|
| 8:00  | Registration   |
| 8:30  | Welcome, Introduction, and Program Overview<br>Dr. Charles A. Gunter, SWT  |
| 9:00  | Texas Education Code, Chapter 37 Discipline, Law, and Order<br>Major Provisions & Implementation Issues<br>Dr. Charles A. Gunter, SWT                          |
| 11:00 | Juvenile Probation Issues and the JJAEP<br>Ron Stretcher, DCJD<br>Ted Shoebe, DCJD   |
| 12:15 | Lunch on your own  |
| 1:45  | Concurrent Sessions:<br>a. School Safety Issues and Action Planning<br>Jim Ross, ESC, Region VII<br>b. Conflict Resolution<br>Lenora Peterson, ESC, Region XIV |
| 3:30  | Closing Comments & Evaluation  |
| 4:00  | Adjourn  |



**Day Two (August 25)**

- 8:00 Registration and Informal Discussion
- 9:00 Gangs 101  
What We All Need to Know  
Tami Schroeder and Pam Miller  
Juvenile Crime Intervention Division of the Office of the Attorney General
- 11:15 Concurrent Sessions  
a. Special Education Issues & Alternative Education  
Ivan Vance, ESC, Region 10  
b. The Mesquite Academy  
A Multi-Purpose Program serving the Mesquite ISD  
Keith Adams, Principal
- 12:30 Lunch on your own
- 1:45 Student Centered Activities  
Portable Team Building, Low Ropes and Relationship Programs  
Rewired, Inc., Austin, TX
- 3:30 Evaluation & Awarding of Certificates
- 4:00 Adjourn

Southwest Texas State University and Region 20 Education  
Service Center Present:  
Alternative Education Program:  
Discipline, Law and Order Institute

June 5-6, 2001 Region 20 ESC, 1314 Hines Avenue, San Antonio, TX 78208

### AGENDA

#### DAY ONE

<b>TIME</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM</b>	<b>SPEAKERS</b>
8:00 a.m.	Registration	
8:30 a.m.	Welcome-Program Overview and Administration	Dr. Charles Gunter, SWT Mr. Gerald Nash, SWT
9:00 a.m.	Awareness & Survival School Violence	Dan Tiller, Training Spec. Institute of Criminal Justice Studies, SWT
10:30 a.m.	Break	
10:45 a.m.	Chapter 37	Ms. Mary Throop Policy Consultant/Analyst TASB
12:00	Lunch on your own	
<b>Concurrent Sessions</b>		
1:30 p.m.	Gang Awareness	Det. Rocky Dyer San Antonio Police Dept.
	Bullying	Sherry Peyton, SWT TX School Safety
3:30 p.m.	Closing Remarks/Evaluations	

## **AGENDA**

### **DAY TWO**

<b>TIME</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM</b>	<b>SPEAKERS</b>
8:30 a.m.	Welcome	Dr. Charles Gunter, SWT Mr. Gerald Nash, SWT
9:00 a.m.	PEIMS 425 Record	Mr. Leslie Smith Prog. Specialist, TEA Safe Schools Division
<b>Concurrent Sessions</b>		
10:45 a.m.	Team Building: Interactive Learning	Diane Dick REWired Inc.
	Anger Management/ Conflict Resolution	Mr. Glean Smith Dispute Resolution Center
12:00 p.m.	Lunch on your own	
1:30 p.m.	Special Education and Alternative Educ.	Ms. Penny Eubanks and Ms. Reasa Sims Kaufman ISD
3:00 p.m.	Adjournment, Evaluations, and Certificates	
3:30 p.m.	Closing Remarks	

## Appendix C

### Alternative Educational Support Project (Follow-up Survey)

AESP Workshop Location \_\_\_\_\_ Training Dates \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: Please check any that apply

☐ AEP/JJAEP Teacher      ☐ Teacher      ☐ Juvenile Probation  
☐ AEP/JJAEP Administrator    ☐ Administrator      ☐ Special Education  
☐ Other

Please tell us what you think about the Alternative Education workshop that you attended during the past year. Your views are important to us and will be used to help us improve and update our program.

1) Please check topics from the Alternative Educational Support (AESP) workshop that have been helpful to you or your school in the successful operation of the AEP/JJAEP and related programs. If you did not attend a session that addressed these issues, mark with a zero.

☐ Texas Education Code, Chapter 37, Discipline Law and Order  
☐ Positive Approaches to Difficult Interactions  
☐ Meeting the Needs of Special Education Students  
☐ Approaches for Controlling Anger  
☐ Juvenile Probation Issues  
☐ Models of Effective Alternative Education Programs  
☐ Mining the Internet: A Resource for Curriculum Building  
☐ Gangs: America's Ticking Time Bomb  
☐ School Safety Issues  
☐ Crisis Prevention and Intervention  
☐ The Well Managed Classroom: The Boystown Model for Social Skills Instruction

2) Do you feel more confident in your role relevant to the transition or management of AEP or JJAEP students, as a result of participation in the AESP training?

3) Have you used any of the training materials for reference? \_\_\_\_\_ Has the training information or materials been helpful to others in your school or district? \_\_\_\_\_

4) Are there topics that you think should be added or deleted from the workshop?

5) Do you recommend any new speakers for the workshop program? Please give name, address, phone number, and area of expertise.

6) Do you believe AESP should (check all that apply)

☐ Include follow-up training  
☐ Increase number of presentations and numbers of days for training  
☐ Expand number of annual statewide workshops

7) Do you have any other general comments? (Please use the reverse side if necessary)

PLEASE return this completed questionnaire in the accompanying envelope or fax to (512) 245-8151 by (date given). Thanks for your cooperation!

## **Appendix D**

### **Letter for Pilot Questionnaire**

Date

Dear Alternative Educational Workshop Participant:

My name is Joan McCoo and I am conducting a qualitative research study to assess the effectiveness of the Alternative Educational Support Project at Southwest Texas State University. The results of this study will be used to provide information to other service providers to better serve your needs.

I am particularly interested in obtaining your response because your experience in attending the workshop will contribute to the data already gathered. You are participating in a field test of the questionnaire and I welcome any comments or suggestions on its format or questions.

It will be appreciated if you will please complete and return the enclosed questionnaire by September 10, 2001. A self-addressed, stamped envelope has been provided for easy return. I welcome any comments that you may have concerning any aspect of the training sessions not covered in the questionnaire. Your responses will be held in strictest confidence.

I will be pleased to send you a summary of the questionnaire results if you desire. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Joan McCoo

Enclosure

## Appendix E

### Human Subjects Consent Form

#### An Evaluation of the Alternative Educational Support Project At Southwest Texas State University

You are invited to participate in a study to evaluate the Alternative Educational Support Project. I am a graduate student at Southwest Texas State University at San Marcos, Adult and Developmental Education Department. This study serves as a thesis to complete the requirements toward earning a Master's degree. I hope to learn that the training and technical assistance provided during the workshops produced a positive impact in the alternative education environment. You were selected as possible participant in this study because of your attendance at the workshops during June 2000 and June 2001 and you agreed to participate in a follow-up survey as noted on the workshop evaluation. You will be one of 120 subjects chosen to participate in this study.

If you decide to participate, I will gather data through the use of mail-in questionnaires and telephone or electronic mail interviews. Data has already been gathered through the use of the workshop evaluation you completed at the end of the training session.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission.

You are under no obligation to participate in the study. Your completing and returning the questionnaire will be taken as evidence of your willingness to participate and your consent to have the information used for the purposes of the study.

If you have any questions please ask me. If you have any additional questions later, Dr. Emily Miller Payne at 512/245-2303 will be happy to answer them.

You will be offered a copy of this form to keep.

---

Signature of Participant

---

Date

---

Signature of Investigator

---

Date

## Appendix F

### DAILY SESSION EVALUATION

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

SESSION TITLES	The presentation was informative	The presentation was well organized	The printed materials were beneficial	Overall Session Evaluation
TITLE	1 2 3 4 5 Not at all very much	1 2 3 4 5 Not at all very much	1 2 3 4 5 Not at all very much	1 2 3 4 5
TITLE	1 2 3 4 5 Not at all very much	1 2 3 4 5 Not at all very much	1 2 3 4 5 Not at all very much	1 2 3 4 5
TITLE	1 2 3 4 5 Not at all very much	1 2 3 4 5 Not at all very much	1 2 3 4 5 Not at all very much	1 2 3 4 5
TITLE	1 2 3 4 5 Not at all very much	1 2 3 4 5 Not at all very much	1 2 3 4 5 Not at all very much	1 2 3 4 5
TITLE	1 2 3 4 5 Not at all very much	1 2 3 4 5 Not at all very much	1 2 3 4 5 Not at all very much	1 2 3 4 5

What I liked most about the sessions/presentations:

Suggestions for improving the sessions:

## Appendix G

### Alternative Educational Support Project Workshop Evaluation

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_

To determine whether the workshop met your needs and our objectives, we are asking you to give us your opinion on its design, presentation, and value. Please circle the number which best expresses your reaction to each of the following items.

		Rating Scale				
		<u>Excellent</u>			<u>Poor</u>	
1. The organization of the workshop was:	5	4	3	2	1	
Comments						
2. The workshop management was:	5	4	3	2	1	
Comments						
3. The knowledge of the presenters was:	5	4	3	2	1	
Comments						
4. The ideas and activities presented were:	5	4	3	2	1	
Comments						
5. The printed materials were:	5	4	3	2	1	
Comments						
6. Overall, I consider this workshop:	5	4	3	2	1	
Comments						
		<u>Very Beneficial</u>			<u>No Benefit</u>	
7. My attendance at this workshop should prove	5	4	3	2 1		
Comments						
8. Would like further training in an area discussed today?						
9. Suggestions for future Alternative Education workshops.						
10. Southwest Texas State University should continue to sponsor Alternative Education workshops.						
			Agree	Disagree		
11. Comments (Optional):						



## Appendix H

### Cover Letter and Questionnaire

Date

Dear Alternative Education workshop participant:

My name is Joan McCoo and I am a graduate student at Southwest Texas State University. I am conducting a qualitative research study to assess the effectiveness of the Alternative Educational Support Project at Southwest Texas State University. The results of this study will be used to provide information to other providers to better serve your needs.

I am particularly interested in obtaining your response because your experience in attending the workshop will contribute to the data already gathered. The attached questionnaire has been field tested by a sample of workshop attendees.

It will be appreciated if you will please complete and return the questionnaire by (date given). A self-addressed, stamped envelope has been provided for easy return. I welcome any comments that you may have concerning any aspect of the training sessions not covered in the questionnaire. Your responses will be held in strictest confidence.

I will be pleased to send you a summary of the questionnaire results if you desire. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Joan McCoo

Enclosure

### Alternative Educational Support Project Questionnaire

Years of service in alternative education \_\_\_\_\_ Gender \_\_\_\_\_  
 Years of service in education \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_  
 Number of workshops attended \_\_\_\_\_ Race/Ethnicity \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Please check current position**

Principal \_\_\_\_\_ Assistant Principal \_\_\_\_\_  
 Law Enforcement Officer \_\_\_\_\_ School Counselor \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Juvenile Probation Officer \_\_\_\_\_ Other School Staff \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other (list ) \_\_\_\_\_

**Please respond to the following statements.**

1. What AESP workshop information was new relevant to teaching in the alternative education setting?

2. What could be used in your work setting?

3. How did you use the information in your work setting?

4. What were some significant outcomes?

Comment:

Are there any other comments or concerns you would like to mention?

If you are interested in participating in a follow-up telephone or e-mail study, please submit your telephone number or e-mail address in this space.

## **Appendix I**

### **Telephone/E-mail Survey**

**Please respond to the following statements.**

1. How has attending the workshop impacted your performance on the job?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Describe an incident where you were able to apply information learned at the workshop and what was the outcome?

## **Appendix J**

### **Alternative Educational Support Project (AESP) Project Summary**

There is currently no statewide training program other than AESP to promote information sharing and collaboration by Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs (DAEP's) and Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Programs (JJAEP's) with local community initiatives to reduce serious, violent and chronic juvenile crime. By providing training and technical assistance for DAEPs and JJAEPs throughout Texas, AESP will increase understanding and implementation of the requirements of Chapter 37 Discipline, Law and Order (Texas Education Code), increase awareness of available youth services and promote information sharing and collaboration.

AESP services are provided with the assistance of local youth service providers and are designed to meet local needs. AESP will continue to provide quality training and technical assistance at selected sites during the coming year. Local school districts, Education Service Centers, juvenile probation departments, local law enforcement and social service agencies will be contacted directly and encouraged to participate in local training sessions. This crosscutting approach enhances the local community's ability to establish and maintain safe schools and effective disciplinary alternative education programs. Project Spotlight Communities: Austin, Corpus Christi, Dallas, El Paso, Fort Worth, Houston, and San Antonio will receive priority in support and services.

AESP services are in support of full implementation and successful operation of discipline-related DAEPs and JJAEPs whether on campus or off. Training is offered in eight-hour blocks as either one-day or two-day training sessions at sites throughout the state. Services provided through AESP address the key implementation and operational problems relevant to school discipline, law and order, DAEP's and JJAEP's programs. Through training and technical assistance, AESP will increase the knowledge base regarding disciplinary alternative education, relevant legal issues, and other requirements. It is projected that AESP will provide an estimated 7,680 contact hours of training for a total of 960 school and community youth service providers.

Alternative Educational Support Project (AESP)  
Project Narrative

### **Section 1: Problem Statement and Data**

The Alternative Education Support Project is currently the only statewide training available for staff working in Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs (DAEPs) and Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Programs (JJAEPs). Moreover, the State Auditor has reported (2000) that staff training is needed and should be expanded.

The Texas Juvenile Probation Commission reported in 1998 that in Texas there was one juvenile violent crime referral every 90 minutes a homicide referral every 4 days, a sexual assault every 5½ hours, an aggravated assault or attempted homicide every 2½ hours, a burglary referral every 66 minutes and a drug referral every 47 minutes. In calendar year 1999, local juvenile probation departments in Texas served 82,096 juveniles who committed 130,780 offenses.

Reports issued by the Texas Attorney General indicted that delinquent youth gangs are located in communities and cities throughout the state and that as many as one out of every ten youth in Texas is a gang member. Juvenile crime problems and other negative behaviors have a direct and dramatic effect on Texas schools, many of which have become environments threatened by increasing criminal and violent activity. The Texas Association of School Administrators reports that assaults on campus and the occurrence of students carrying guns or other weapons to school are too common. In addition, the

Texas Federation of Teachers reports that the majority of teachers believe there is a significant problem with student misbehavior at their schools.

## **Section 2: Goal Statement**

AESP is proposed to provide and expand training and technical assistance for DAEPs, JJAEPs, and schools throughout Texas. AESP will increase understanding of the requirements of Texas Education Code, Chapter 37, Discipline, Law and Order (which requires keeping youth in school), increase awareness of youth services and promote information sharing and collaboration among DAEPs, JJAPs, schools and community agencies. AESP services are provided with the assistance of local service providers and are designed to meet local needs.

## **Section 3: Target Group**

Participation in AESP is drawn statewide and is open to school administrators, teachers, counselors, juvenile judges and probation officers, law enforcement officers, mental health workers; social workers, school and juvenile board members, parents, and other youth service providers and advocates. Project Spotlight Communities: Austin, Corpus Christi, Dallas, El Paso, Fort Worth, Houston, and San Antonio will receive priority in support and services. These cities represent the seven largest urban areas in the state and experience significant juvenile crime and related problems.

## **Section 4: Project Activities**

AESP will continue and expand training and technical assistance at selected sites during the coming year. Local school districts, Education Service

Centers, juvenile probation departments, and social service agencies will be contacted directly and encouraged to participate in local training sessions. This crosscutting approach enhances the local community's ability to establish and maintain effective disciplinary alternative education programs. Workshop program scheduling is based upon the expressed needs interest, and request of local education programs and youth service agencies.

AESP continues to collaborate with the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission, Texas Education Agency, The Texas Association for Alternative Education and various local agencies and school districts throughout the state. Additionally, AESP contacts all 20 Education Service Centers and juvenile probation departments in the catchment areas for the purpose of collaboration. Without exception, each entity has expressed strong support for AESP and indicated the need to expand services. In preparing this proposal, persons contacted included: Billy Jacobs, Senior Director Chapter 37/Safe Schools for the Texas Education Agency, Linda Brooke, Director of Education Services for the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission, board members of the Texas Association for Alternative Education, juvenile justice professionals, social service agency staff, and school personnel. These people have assisted in implementation of this project and have provided input regarding training. In addition, as of the date of this application, more than 1,200 need assessments from across the state have been conducted and analyzed.

AESP services are in support of full implementation and successful operation of discipline-related DAEPs and JJAEPs whether on campus or off.



Training is offered in eight-hour blocks as either one-day or two-day training sessions at sites throughout the state. Choices are available during training, so that participants' specific needs and interests can be met. Tracks will be designed to address basic training and specialized training depending on the needs of the local community. The basic training will focus on discipline, law and order mandates, student transition, program management, and coordination.

Available training topics include the following: Student Transition Models, Student Assessment, Chapter 37 Implementation Issues, Overview of Best Practices, Prevalence of Drug/Alcohol Abuse Among Adolescents, Special Education Issues, Gang Intervention and Prevention Issues, Developing Pro-Social Youth Behavior, Adolescent Self-Esteem Building, Multicultural Respect & Understanding, Student Team Building, Conflict Resolution & Anger Control, Community Networking, Techniques of Mentoring and Tutoring, Pertinent Legal and Law Enforcement Issues, Contemporary Youth Issues and Problems, and Classroom Management, Discipline and Control.

### **Section 5: Project Objectives**

Services provided through AESP address the key implementation and operational problems relevant to DAEPs, JJAEPs, and schools. Through training and technical assistance, AESP will increase the knowledge base regarding the removal and disposition of violent, dangerous, and disruptive students, disciplinary alternative education, relevant legal issues, and other requirements. The program also facilitates collaboration and provides ongoing support through technical assistance.

**Output Measures**

It is projected that an expanded AESP will provide an estimated 7,680 contact hours of training for a total of 960 participants. AESP will:

- Conduct two-day regional training institutes in eight of the twenty Education Service Centers for an estimated 30 persons per site, totaling 16 days of training and resulting in 3,840 contact hours.
- Conduct one-day training institutes in local school districts or community agencies for an estimated 30 persons per session, totaling 16 days of training and resulting in 3,840 contact hours;
- Provide on-site technical assistance in support of successful DAEPs and JJAEPs.

**Outcome Measures**

An estimated 960 participants will be contacted six months after training to determine utility of the training. As part of this follow-up evaluation, participants will be asked to give their opinion concerning collaboration activities, operation of the local alternative education programs, and value of the training.

- An estimated 90% of respondents are projected to indicate that they feel more confident in their roles relevant to school safety, DAEPs and JJAEPs as a result of having received this training;
- An estimated 75% of respondents are projected to indicate that training materials have been useful to them and/or others in their school or agency.

In addition to staff monitoring of effectiveness, local advisory groups review all program activities to determine effectiveness and any need for program modification as well as the AESP Advisory Group.

#### Current Statistics

Training is currently being conducted in eight 2-day workshops, which typically constitute 16 eight-hour training days. Daily attendance averaged 44 persons and resulted in 5,632 contact hours during the 1999-2000 funding year.

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