

INEQUITIES IN DISCIPLINARY ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM  
PLACEMENTS BY ETHNICITY/RACE AND ECONOMIC STATUS FOR TEXAS  
MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS: A MULTIYEAR, STATEWIDE INVESTIGATION

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Doctor of Education

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by

Edward L. Lopez

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this dissertation to my loving family, my wife Sonja Lopez, and our children, Jacob, Grayson and Zoe, who have been my foundation of love and support. I thank them for allowing me the opportunity to obtain my dream. I also would like to thank my loving parents, George Lopez and Josefa Lopez, for instilling a strong work ethic and persistence in me to accomplish this honor. To my mother-in-laws Karla and Helen Alexander, I thank them both for their loving support, and prayers in helping in a multitude of ways as my wife and I worked through each year. Lastly, a special thank you to my Father-in-Law Prentice Alexander, who is beaming with pride from heaven. His encouraging fatherly advice and supportive nature not only made this doctoral dream a possibility, but a reality.

## ABSTRACT

Lopez, Edward L., *Inequities in disciplinary alternative education program placements by ethnicity/race and economic status for Texas middle school students: A multiyear, statewide investigation*. Doctor of Education (Educational Leadership), August 2017, Sam Houston State University, Huntsville, Texas.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this journal-ready dissertation was to determine the extent to which differences were present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement by student demographic characteristics for Grade 6, 7, and 8 students in Texas schools. In the first investigation, the degree to which Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements differed by ethnicity/race (i.e., Black, Hispanic, White, and Asian) for Grade 6, 7, and 8 boys were examined. In the second investigation, the degree to which Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements differed by ethnicity/race (i.e., Black, Hispanic, White, and Asian) for Grade 6, 7, and 8 girls were addressed. Finally, in the third study, the extent to which Disciplinary Alternative Education Program assignments differed by student economic status (i.e., Not Economically Disadvantaged, Moderately Poor, and Extremely Poor) for Grade 6, 7, and 8 students were determined. In each of these three articles, four years of Texas statewide data were analyzed. As such, this multiyear analysis permitted a determination of trends in the differential assignment of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements for Grade 6, 7, and 8 Texas students.

### **Method**

A causal comparative research design was employed in this quantitative investigation in which four years of Texas statewide data were analyzed. All of the

independent variables and the dependent variables had already occurred, thus precluding the possibility of controlling for any extraneous variables.

### **Findings**

Results were remarkably consistent across all four school years and across all three grade levels. In each of the school years, Black boys and Black girls were assigned statistically significantly higher rates of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements than their Hispanic, White, or Asian peers. Hispanic boys and Hispanic girls also received statistically significantly higher rates of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements than their White and Asian peers. Regardless of ethnicity/race, students who were Extremely Poor had statistically significantly higher rates of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements than their peers who were Not Poor or who were Moderately Poor. The results of these studies were congruent with the existing literature regarding the presence of inequities in the assignment of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements.

**KEY WORDS:** Economic Disadvantage, Not Poor, Moderately Poor, Extremely Poor, Student Ethnicity/Race, Black, Hispanic, White, Asian, White, Grade 6, 7, and 8

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## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Student disciplinary procedures and interventions are intended to create a safe educational environment for all students. For students whose behavior results in a disruption of the educational setting, removal is an unfortunate necessity. Described by the Texas Education Agency (2010a) in the Texas Education Code are several different ways of administering discipline for student misbehavior. In Texas, the initial discipline consequence for student misbehavior is an in-school discipline. For students who continue to misbehave, the second discipline consequence assigned is an out-of-school discipline. Pathways for students with persistent misbehavior or serious infractions necessitate even more strict consequences. Some students commit serious student infractions that require a level of consequences that result in an off-campus alternative educational setting. In Texas, this off-campus alternative education setting is referred to as a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program.

The recommendation for Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement is determined by district/campus procedures and policies that comply with the Texas Education Code and are approved by the school board and implemented by the campus administrators for each campus. Disciplinary placements range from in-school suspensions to more disruptive consequences requiring off-campus or alternative exclusionary placements. A Disciplinary Alternative Education Program is established in conformance with the Texas Education Code (TEC), §37.008, and this section is defined as an educational and self-discipline alternative instructional program, adopted by local policy, for students in elementary through high school grades who are removed from their

regular classes for mandatory or discretionary disciplinary reasons and placed in a Discipline Alternative Education Program (Texas Education Agency 2010a).

Furthermore, the Texas Education Code defines mandatory placements in Chapter 37, Section 37.001-37.022: (a) felonies; (b) assaults or terrorist threat; (c) using, providing, or possessing drugs; (d) using, providing, or possessing alcohol, glue, or aerosol chemicals; (e) public lewdness or indecent exposure (Booker & Mitchell, 2011). Although the Discipline Alternative Education Program can be located on or off-campus, each school district is required to maintain the student's current 4-year graduation plan and curriculum.

### **Discipline Consequence Inequities by Ethnicity/Race for Boys**

School discipline practices in the United States have generated serious concerns in the past decade (United States Department of Education, 2014, 2016). These concerns are serious in nature due to the presence of racial/ethnic inequities in the way discipline consequences were assigned to students (Office for Civil Rights, 2014). As noted by former-U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan “Nationwide, as many as 95 percent of out-of-school suspensions are for nonviolent misbehavior—like being disruptive, acting disrespectfully, tardiness, profanity, and dress code” (Office for Civil Rights, 2014, p. 2). Further documented by the Office for Civil Rights (2014) is that “the number of secondary school students suspended or expelled to have increased by roughly 40% in the last four decades” (p. 2). Serious concerns exist about inequities in discipline consequence, concerns that increase each year based on the widespread overuse of discipline consequences.



Of the 49 million students enrolled in public schools in the United States in the 2011-2012 school year, 3.5 million students received an in-school suspension, 3.45 million students received an out-of-school suspension, and 130,000 students were expelled from school (Office for Civil Rights, 2014, p. 1). This many students who were removed from the regular classroom setting as a result of being assigned a discipline consequence is cause for concern. In fact, within the last decade, the phrase, School-to-Prison pipeline, has been created to describe the relationship between school disciplinary consequences and later human costs. The School-to-Prison pipeline has been defined by the American Civil Liberties Union (2016) as the policies and practices that push the nation's school children, especially at-risk children, out of classrooms and into the juvenile and criminal justice systems (p. 1). Amurao (2016) reported that the United States spent \$70 billion annually on incarceration, probation, and parole. These monies reflect a 127% increase for incarcerations between 1987-2007, in comparison to only a 21% increase in funding for higher education during the same 20-year period.

With respect to Texas the manner in which public school systems discipline students is defined and implemented by a larger governing entity within the public school system. That is, in Texas, school district personnel are provided with set procedures for controlling student misbehavior in the classroom. These procedures have been established through the Texas Education Code, which consists of provisions to provide a safe educational environment for the entire student body. In the State of Texas, the three major discipline consequences that are assigned to students are in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, and Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement. Sustaining established systems of order and boundaries that help teachers maintain an

acceptable and safe environment for all children to learn, however, must not come to the detriment of minority students and disproportional disciplinary placements.

For students with persistent and serious misbehaviors, opportunities to an education are compromised. In 1995, the 74th Texas Legislative session passed an educational reform requiring schools to offer students who were expelled from school an Alternate Education Program to continue their education. The establishment of Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program and in-district Alternative Education Program placements met the state's policy to educate these students. For students facing expulsion, parameters for consequences were set into place by Chapter 37.007 of the Texas Education Agency (2010a).

Even though students are removed from the general campus setting, Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs serve as alternatives to suspensions or expulsions for students who are highly disruptive to the education of other students (Cortez & Cortez, 2009; Levin, 2006). Alternative Education Programs are mandated to maintain the curriculum of students' basic core scheduled coursework during their temporary placement term for the behavior infraction. Offenses defined in Chapter 37 of the Texas Education Code are considered mandatory Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements and discretionary Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements are violations of a school district's code of conduct.

With respect to the empirical evidence regarding inequities in disciplinary consequence assignment by student ethnicity/race, several researchers (e.g., Henkel, Slate, & Martinez-Garcia, 2016; Hilberth & Slate, 2014; Jones, Slate, & Martinez-Garcia 2014) have conducted studies in Texas in which they have provided extensive evidence

of the presence of inequities. Hilberth and Slate (2014) analyzed data from the 2008-2009 school year on disproportionalities in discipline consequence assignment to Black and White students. The Texas statewide data they analyzed included 172,551 Grade 6 White and Black students, 175,671 Grade 7 White and Black students, and 175,730 Grade 8 White and Black students. With respect to in-school suspension, Hilberth and Slate (2014) documented that 32% of the in-school suspensions were assigned to Grade 6 Black students, although only 14.1% of their Grade 6 students were Black. In contrast, they determined that 14.1% of the in-school suspensions were assigned to White students, although White students constituted 34.7% of Grade 6 students. Results were similar for their Grade 7 students in that 35.6% of the in-school suspensions were assigned to Black students and only 16.2% of the in-school suspensions were assigned to White students, despite Black and White students comprising 14.2% and 35.2%, respectively, of the Grade 7 student enrollment. Grade 8 student results were commensurate with both Grade 6 and 7 findings.

Of importance to this article are Hilberth and Slate's (2014) results for Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement. Of these consequences that were assigned, 4.1% of Grade 6 Black students were assigned to a Discipline Alternative Education Program placement, compared to 1.1% of White students; 5.8% of Grade 7 Black students were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement, compared to 1.8% of White students; and 7.0% of Grade 8 Black students were assigned to a Discipline Alternative Education Program placement, compared to 2.6% of Grade 8 White students. In their investigation, Hilberth and Slate (2014) used a commonly used definition of disproportionality (Harry & Anderson, 1995). That is, they

compared the percentage of Black and of White students who received a discipline consequence with their proportion of the student enrollment. Using that definition of disproportionality, they established that Grade 6 Black students were assigned Discipline Alternative Education Program consequences almost 4 times the rate of their Grade 6 White peers. Grade 7 Black students were 3.7 times more likely to be assigned a Discipline Alternative Education Program placement than were their Grade 7 White peers. Finally, they determined that Grade 8 Black students were assigned to a Discipline Alternative Education Program placement almost 3 times the rate of their Grade 8 White peers. As such, Hilberth and Slate (2014) concluded that Black students attending Texas public schools in Grades 6, 7, and 8 were 2 to 5 times more likely to receive a suspension and expulsion than were their grade level White peers.

In a related investigation, Henkel et al. (2016) examined the degree to which scores on the state-mandated assessment, the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) Reading and Mathematics tests, differed as a function of in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension for Hispanic, Black, and White Texas middle school students. In their investigation, they analyzed data for two school years (i.e., 2008-2009 and 2010-2011) separately for boys and for girls in Grades 6, 7, and 8. Henkel et al. (2016) established the presence of statistically significantly lower TAKS Reading and Mathematics test scores for Grade 6, 7, and 8 Hispanic, Black, and White boys and girls who received either an in-school suspension or an out-of-school suspension. Of importance to this article are the numbers of students by ethnicity/race who received these two discipline consequences. The numbers of students they reported who had received these two discipline consequences differed by ethnicity/race.

With respect to the assignment of out-of-school suspensions for the 2008-2009 school year, Grade 6 White boys received 3,386 assignments; Hispanic boys received 10,675 assignments; and Black boys received 6,212 assignments. Concerning Grade 7 results, White boys received 4,259 assignments; Hispanic boys received 12,558 assignments; and Black boys received 6,888 assignments. Grade 8 White boys received 4,606 consequences; Hispanic boys received 13,959 consequences; and Black boys received 6,880 consequences.

For these groups of boys, the numbers of Black and of Hispanic students who were assigned to an out-of-school suspension were disproportionate to their percent of the student enrollment in these grade levels. That is, the percentage of the student enrollment in Texas middle schools who are Black was approximately 14% (Hilberth & Slate, 2014) and the percentage of the student enrollment who are White was approximately 35% (Hilberth & Slate, 2014). For all of the three grade levels in the Henkel et al. (2016) investigation, however, Black students received an out-of-school suspension that was two to three times greater than the out-of-suspension rates for White students.

For an extensive review of the literature regarding discipline inequities by ethnicity/race, readers are directed to Jones et al. (2014). In their literature review, Jones et al. (2014) summarized empirical research investigations on inequities in the assignment of discipline consequences as well as the relationship of discipline consequence assignment with achievement gaps in reading and in mathematics. Jones et al. (2014) contended that inequalities among middle school students by ethnicity/race exist which, in turn, increases the achievement gap perpetuating an ever-growing cultural, social, and academic dilemma.

### **Discipline Consequence Inequities by Ethnicity/Race for Girls**

The United States Department of Education for Civil Rights (2014) reported “troubling national findings of unfair and excessive school discipline policies regarding an increase of secondary school Black student suspensions and expulsions by a rate of 40% from 1-13 in 1972-1973 to 1 in 9 in 2009-2010” (p. 1). Despite inequities that have been clearly documented for Black and Hispanic students, a dearth of information is available regarding discipline disproportionalities for girls. What limited information that is available on girls and discipline inequities has only recently been published.

In recent reports, the African American Policy Forum (AAPF) and Columbia Law School Center for Intersectionality and Social Policy Studies (2015) released a study, *Black Girls Matter: Pushed Out, Overpoliced, and Underprotected*, specifically related to New York and Boston schools, in which they confirmed the presence of statistically significant differences in disciplinary actions for Black girls at a rate much higher than for Black boys and for White girls (Crenshaw, Ocen, & Nanda, 2015). Black girls in the New York public school system during the 2011-2012 school year were disciplined 10 times more often than White girls. Black girls received 9,076 incidents of in-and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, or police referrals compared to only 884 White girls who received such consequences (Klein, 2015, p. 2). In addition, Black girls in Boston schools received 11 times more disciplinary actions than White girls in the 2011-2012 school year. Klein (2015) contended that the rates of expulsion were “strikingly disproportionate” between Black and White girls (p. 2). Crenshaw, Ocen, and Nanda (2015) contended that although boys were suspended more often in terms of raw numbers, “the rate of racial disparity in girl suspensions...is higher for girls than boys”

(Klein, 2015, p. 2). Crenshaw et al. (2015), in an analysis of national statistics, established that Black girls far exceeded the number of disciplinary consequences in relation to White and Hispanic girls.

Multiple researchers (e.g., Hilberth & Slate, 2014; Skiba, Arredondo, & Williams, 2014; Skiba & Peterson, 2000; Fitzgerald, 2007) have provided evidence of inequities in disciplinary placement of middle school girls by ethnicity/race. In 2009-2010 data collected by The Office of Civil Rights (2014), Black girls were substantially more likely to be suspended out-of-school, 11%, than were Hispanic girls, 4%, White girls, 3%, and Asian/Pacific Islander girls, 1%. Losen and Skiba (2010) established after sampling more than 9,000 middle schools that Black females (18%) were four times more likely to be suspended than were White girls (4%). The NAACP Legal Defense & Education Fund Inc. and the National Women's Law Center (2014) collaborated on a report titled *Unlocking Opportunity for African American Girls: A Call to Action for Educational Equity*. The importance of their report for this investigation comes from their findings in which they documented continued inequities in the rate of suspension of Black girls in middle schools as the fastest growing rate among their peers regardless of gender or ethnicity/race.

Of note for this article are the works of several researchers (Hilberth & Slate, 2014, Jones, Slate, & Hilberth, 2012; Slate, Gray, & Jones, 2016) who conducted empirical studies in the state of interest for this study, Texas. In their investigations, they provided empirical evidence that disciplinary consequences were inequitably assigned by student ethnicity/race. Hilberth and Slate (2014) analyzed data on Texas middle school Black students and three discipline consequences (i.e., in-school-suspension, out-of-

school suspension, and Discipline Alternative Education Program placements). Hilberth and Slate (2014) compared these discipline consequence assignments received by Black students to these same consequences received by White students. Of the 521,952 Grade 6, 7, and 8 Black and White students whose data were analyzed by Hilberth and Slate (2014), statistically significant differences were present between Black and White students in their receipt of all three discipline consequences.

Of particular relevance to this article were the inequities that Hilberth and Slate (2014) documented with respect to the assignment of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements to Black and White students. In their investigation, they established that 4.1% of Black students received a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement, compared to 1.1% of White students who were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement. Grade 6 White students comprised of 34.7% of the population in the study, yet received only 1.1% of the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements in comparison to Black students who constituted 4.1% of the student enrollment but received this consequence 19.4% (Hilberth & Slate, 2014). Examining these results separately by grade level reveals that 5.9% of Grade 7 Black students received this consequence, compared to 1.8% of Grade 7 White students; and 7% of Grade 8 Black students received this consequence, compared to 2.6% of Grade 8 White students.

With respect to girls of color, discretionary suspension and expulsion placements are assigned in an inequitable manner (Henkel, Slate, & Martinez-Garcia, 2016; Skiba, Arredondo, & Williams, 2014; Slate et al., 2016; Wallace et al., 2008). The Office of Civil Rights (2014) has expressed while



Black middle school student boys receive more than two-thirds of suspensions, it is their peer Black student girls with the higher rates of 12% than other girls and most boys including American Indian and Native-Alaskan girls at 7% with higher suspensions than that of White boys at 6% or girls at 2%. (p. 1)

Wallace et al. (2008) documented that White girls were more than five times less likely to have received a suspension or expulsion than their Black girl peers. In a recent study, Crenshaw et al. (2015) established that the number of suspensions received by Black girls far exceeded the number of suspensions received by White girls, despite the fact that White girls comprise a larger percentage of the student population than do Black girls.

In a recent major investigation, Slate et al. (2016) analyzed the number of disciplinary consequences assigned to Black, Hispanic, and White girls in Texas public schools. In their study, they examined in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, and of importance for this article, Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements, for girls in Grades 4 through 11. Slate et al. (2016) obtained Texas statewide data on all discipline consequences that were assigned to Grade 4 through Grade 11 girls in the 2013-2014 school year. In their analyses, they demonstrated the presence of statistically significant differences in the assignment of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements for all grade levels between Black, Hispanic, and White girls.

In one of the earliest grade levels they addressed, Grade 5, Hispanic girls received all five instances of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement that were assigned in that school year. Both Hispanic and Black girls in Grade 6 were assigned

several instances of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement. Regarding Grade 7, 0.5% of Black girls and 0.6% of Hispanic girls were assigned instances of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement. For Grades 4, 5, 6, and 7, a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement was not assigned to any White girls in this school year. With respect to Grade 8, 0.8% of Black girls and 0.4% of Hispanic girls were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement. In Grade 9, 0.9% of Black girls, 0.9% of Hispanic girls, and 0.3% of White girls received a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement.

The inequity in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement was the greatest for Grade 10 girls. The percentage of Black girls who were assigned a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement was 0.6%, compared to 0.1% for Hispanic girls and 0.0% for White girls. Although these percentages are small, readers should note that Black girls received much higher rates of this consequence than White girls at all grade levels. In Grades 5, 8, and 10, Black girls were assigned higher rates of this consequence than were Hispanic girls. Both Black and Hispanic girls had similar rates of this consequence in Grades 7 and 9. Of the 525 Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements that were assigned to girls in this particular school year, a stair-step process was evident in that the number of these consequences that were assigned to girls increased from Grade 6 through Grade 8. Also of importance with respect to inequities in discipline consequence assignment is the fact that not a single Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement was received by a White girl from Grade 4 to Grade 7 of this study.

### **Discipline Consequence Inequities by Economic Status**

The formulation of laws such as the Federal Gun Free School Act of 1994 in which zero-tolerance policies were created resulted in the overuse and misuse of exclusionary discipline practices to address student misbehavior. Curtiss and Slate (2015) recently contended that exclusionary discipline practices have been overused and misused and, as a result have resulted in inequities for all students regardless of their ethnicity/race, gender, or economic status. Noted by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (2000), in a report to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights on the economic and racial disciplinary inequities of students, was that “A higher incidence of ethnic and racial minority students being affected by zero tolerance should not be the seen as disparate treatment or discrimination, but in terms of an issue of socioeconomic status” (p. 3). In agreement with that report were Butler, Lewis, Moore, and Scott (2012) who asserted one of the greatest predictors of student school suspensions is that of low economic status.

In a recent study on inequities in disciplinary consequence assignment in the state of interest for this investigation, Texas, Barnes and Slate (2016) analyzed discipline consequence data on Grade 5 and Grade 6 Texas elementary school students by their economic status in the 2013-2014 school year. They documented the presence of statistically significant differences in discipline consequence assignments by student economic status. Of the 13,469 disciplinary consequences that occurred in Grade 5 in their study, only 1,143 discipline consequences were given to students who were not economically disadvantaged. This statistic means that 12,326 discipline consequences in Grade 5 were assigned to students who were in poverty; more than 10 times the

consequences that were assigned to Grade 5 students who were not in poverty. With respect to the 78,570 disciplinary placements given to Grade 6 students, approximately 7,000 disciplinary placements were assigned to students not in poverty, while more than 71,000 disciplinary assignments were assigned to students in poverty (Texas Education Agency, 2014a, 2014b). Barnes and Slate (2016) clearly established the presence of disproportionalities in discipline consequence assignment for students in poverty.

In a related investigation, also conducted on students in Texas public schools, Lopez and Slate (2016) specifically examined the degree to which Grade 7 and Grade 8 students were differentially assigned a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement as a function of their economic status in the 2010-2011 school year. Lopez and Slate (2016) established the presence of statistically significant differences in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement for both Grade 7 and Grade 8 students on the basis on their economic status. Grade 7 students who were in poverty received this consequence 1,121 times whereas Grade 7 students who were not economically disadvantaged received this consequence 692 times. In addition, Grade 8 students were placed in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program three times more often than Grade 8 students who were not economically disadvantaged (Texas Education Agency, 2014a, 2014b). Clearly established in the Lopez and Slate (2016) study was that student economic status was related to the presence of inequities in the assignment of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement for Grade 7 and 8 students.

Not addressed in the Barnes and Slate (2016) and in the Lopez and Slate (2016) studies was the relationship of economic status within ethnic/racial groups. Khan and Slate (2016), however, did analyze the degree to which economic status within three

ethnic/racial groups (i.e., Black, Hispanic, and White) was related to the assignment of three major discipline consequences (i.e., in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, and Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement). Khan and Slate (2016) analyzed discipline data on 341,411 Texas public middle school students for the 2011-2012 school year. In their study, they examined data from the Texas Education Agency Public Education Information Management System on 46,560 Black students, 179,638 Hispanic students, and 115,213 White students.

Although Khan and Slate (2016) analyzed data on in-school suspension and on out-of-school suspension, the interest in this article is on their Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement results. In their study, Black students who were economically disadvantaged received a total of 1,373 such consequences, compared to 205 Black students who were not in poverty and who received this consequence. As such, Black students in poverty received more than four times the rate of this consequence than did Black students who were not economically disadvantaged. Hispanic students in poverty were assigned a total of 3,192 Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements, compared to 309 Hispanic students who were not in poverty. These statistics were reflective that Hispanic students in poverty were assigned this consequence almost three times more than Hispanic students who were not poor. Similar results were present for White students in that White students who were economically disadvantaged received this consequence almost five times more than did White students who were not poor.

Khan and Slate (2016) established the presence of strong disproportionalities in the assignment of discipline consequences to Black, Hispanic, and White students on the

basis of their economic status. Regardless of student race/ethnicity, students in poverty received the majority of the discipline consequences that were assigned. The research results previously discussed are congruent with other researchers such as Gregory et al. (2010) who determined that students from low-income families or who were enrolled in high poverty schools were statistically significantly more likely to receive disciplinary consequences and Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements than their peers who were not economically disadvantaged. Poverty status is a contributing factor to increased suspension rates, to dropout rates, and to academic disengagement and incarceration (Harlow, 2003). Chapman et al. (2011) reported students from low income families had a five times greater possibility of dropping out than students from higher income families.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Student discipline as it pertains to ethnic/racial inequities have been extensively documented by researchers (e.g., Carrell & Hoekstra, 2010; Hilberth, 2010; Hilberth & Slate, 2014; Jones, 2013; Skiba & Peterson, 2000; Wallace, Goodkind, Wallace, & Bachman, 2008). Gottfredson (1989) contended that the reasons for the increases in suspension and expulsions in middle schools were related directly to unclear and inconsistent school rules and their implementation. Along with possible discrepancies of student discipline are issues of inequity based on student ethnicity/race and increasing academic achievement gaps after placement. Gregory, Skiba, and Noguera (2010) reported that lower achievement levels, misbehavior patterns, and poverty could not sufficiently explain the educational gap. Decreasing the academic gap in achievement is a growing problem for all students and thus an important factor for students placed in

alternative education settings due to disciplinary issues. Inequities in the assignment of discipline consequences to middle school grade level girls have also been documented, although not as thoroughly as that for boys. In a recent empirical investigation for Grade 4 through Grade 11 girls, Slate, Gray, and Jones (2016) documented the presence of inequities in the assignment of in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, and disciplinary alternative education program placement for Black and Hispanic girls, in comparison to White girls.

Carter et al. (2014) contended that broad disciplinary discretion based on race and gender bias creates disproportionality. Losen and Martinez (2013) emphasized the disciplinary bias on Black girls results in higher rates of exclusionary discipline practices. With the growing diversity in public education, concerns of disproportionality or discipline for girls is continuing to increase. Several scholars (Blake, Butler, Lewis, & Darenbourg, 2011) contend inequities and disproportionalities of disciplinary placement of Black girl on racial and gender-biases discrimination to the disciplinary practices of the school supervisors. It is warranted that exclusionary placements and discretionary placement practices for middle school girls be addressed to avoid the continued pattern of discriminatory negative impacts upon the students' educational stability.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this journal-ready dissertation was to determine the extent to which differences were present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement by student demographic characteristics for Grade 6, 7, and 8 students in Texas schools. In the first investigation, the degree to which Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements differed by ethnicity/race (i.e., Black, Hispanic, White, and Asian) for Grade

6, 7, and 8 boys were examined. In the second investigation, the degree to which Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements differed by ethnicity/race (i.e., Black, Hispanic, White, and Asian) for Grade 6, 7, and 8 girls were addressed. Finally, in the third study, the extent to which Disciplinary Alternative Education Program assignments differed by student economic status (i.e., Not Economically Disadvantaged, Moderately Poor, and Extremely Poor) for Grade 6, 7, and 8 students were determined. In each of these three articles, four years of Texas statewide data were analyzed. As such, this multiyear analysis permitted a determination of trends in the differential assignment of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements for Grade 6, 7, and 8 Texas students.

### **Significance of the Study**

Inequities in the assignment of discipline consequences have been documented by many researchers (e.g., Hilberth, 2010; Hilberth & Slate, 2014; Levin, 2012; Skiba et al., 2002; Skiba & Peterson, 2000) in relation to ethnicity/race, gender, and economic status. The majority of these empirical investigations has been conducted on students at the high school level. Few researchers (e.g., Henkel, Slate, & Martinez-Garcia, 2016; Hilberth & Slate, 2014; Jones, Slate, & Martinez-Garcia, 2014) have analyzed data on discipline consequence assignment for girls and even fewer researchers (e.g., Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2002) have examined data on discipline consequence assignment by student economic status. In this journal-ready dissertation, the discipline consequence assignment of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement was addressed separately for boys and for girls and separately by grade level. With analyses also being conducted by student economic status, educational leaders are provided with information



regarding several variables that may be related to differential assignment of a discipline consequence that removes students from the classroom setting. As such, findings from this journal-ready dissertation may assist educational leaders and policymakers in evaluating current discipline methods used in Texas schools.

### **Definition of Terms**

The following terms, used in this study, were defined to assist the reader in understanding the context of this investigation.

#### **Academic Excellence Indicator System**

The Academic Excellence Indicator System is described as follows by the Texas Education Agency (2014c):

The Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) pulls together a wide range of information on the performance of students in each school and district in Texas every year. This information is put into the annual Academic Excellence Indicator System reports, which are released each fall. (para. 1)

#### **Asian**

The Texas Education Agency (2013) defined Asian as “students having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent” (p. 2).

#### **Black**

The Texas Education Agency (2013) defined Black as “students having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa” (p. 2).

### **Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placement**

The Texas Education Agency defined a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program as established in conformance with the Texas Education Code (TEC), §37.008, and this section as an educational and self-discipline alternative instructional program, adopted by local policy, for students in elementary through high school grades who are removed from their regular classes for mandatory or discretionary disciplinary reasons and placed in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (Texas Education Agency, 2010a). Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement is further defined as a discretionary in-district alternative education setting assigned to students who commit non-criminal offenses or persistent misbehaviors (Hilberth & Slate, 2014).

### **Disproportionality**

Discretion is given to each state to define what constitutes significant disproportionality. Each state is obligated to collect and examine data to determine whether significant disproportionality exists based on race or ethnicity in their state or local education agencies with respect to the following: (a) special services identification for students with disabilities or partial impairments, (b) placement of student in particular educational settings and (c) the incidence, duration, and type of disciplinary actions including suspensions and expulsions (Texas Education Agency, 2016a).

### **Economically Disadvantaged**

The Texas Education Agency (2013) defined economically disadvantaged as “students in Texas who are eligible for the federal free- and reduced-lunch program”. Eligibility for the federal free- and reduced-lunch program is determined by family income. Students from families with an income of 130% or less of the federal poverty

line are eligible for free-lunch, whereas students from families with an income of 131% to 185% of the federal poverty line are eligible for reduced-price meals. (Burney & Beilke, 2008). For the purpose of this study, students who were eligible for the reduced lunch program were referred to as moderately poor and students who were eligible for the free lunch program were referred to as extremely poor.

### **Ethnicity**

The Texas Education Agency (2014a) defined ethnicity as students in Texas being classified of or not of Hispanic or Latin descent.

### **Hispanic**

In this study, the term Hispanic is used to describe students who are of Hispanic origin (Texas Education Agency, 2014a). A person of Hispanic ethnicity is an individual of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American descent, other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race (Texas Education Agency, Appendix F, 2009, p. 9).

### **Inequity**

In this investigation, the term, inequity, was used in a manner similar to that of disparate impact. As noted in legal doctrine under the Fair Housing Act, disparate impact states that policy may be considered discriminatory if it has a disproportionate “adverse impact” against any group based on race, national origin, color, religion, sex, familial status, or disability when there is no legitimate, non-discriminatory business need for the policy (National Fairing Housing, 2015 p.1). Specifically in reference to this journal-ready dissertation, inequities were determined to exist when a statistically significant difference is present among ethnic/racial groups in their receipt of a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement.

**In-school Suspension**

The Texas Education Agency (2010) described in-school suspension as the first method of disciplinary consequence for students. An in-school suspension consequence is the removal of a student from the regular classroom as a disciplinary consequence by placing the student into a separate classroom.

**Out-of-school Suspension**

The Texas Education Agency (2010a) described out-of-school suspension as the second method of disciplinary consequence, following in-school suspension. An out-of-school suspension consequence is the removal of a student from the regular classroom as a disciplinary consequence that does not allow the student to attend school for a day and to not exceed three days in a row.

**Public Education Information Management System**

The Public Education Information Management System encompasses all data requested and received by Texas Education Agency about public education, including student demographic and academic performance, personnel, financial, and organizational information (Texas Education Agency, 2014a).

**Race**

The Texas Education Agency (2014a) defined race as students in Texas being classified as American Indian, Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander, or White.

**Texas Education Agency**

The Texas Education Agency (2016a) is the state agency responsible for overseeing primary and secondary public education in state of Texas. The mission of the

agency is to provide leadership, guidance and resources to help schools meet the educational needs of all students and prepare them for success in the global economy.

### **Texas Education Code**

Established by the Texas Legislature, the Texas Education Code is a set of state statutes governing public education in Texas. Unless specifically excluded by the code, it is applicable to all educational institutions supported solely or in part by Texas tax funds (Texas Education Agency, 2016a).

### **Texas Academic Performance Report**

The Texas Academic Performance Reports have replaced Academic Excellence Indicator System Reports for the Texas Education Agency in the 2013-2014 school year and are described as follows:

The Texas Academic Performance Reports (TAPR) pull together a wide range of information on the performance of students in each school and district in Texas every year. Performance is shown disaggregated by student groups, including ethnicity and low income status. The reports also provide extensive information on school and district staff, programs, and student demographics. (Texas Education Agency, 2014a, para. 1)

### **White**

The Texas Education Agency (2014a) defined White as “students having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa” (p. 2).

### **Literature Review Search Procedures**

For the purpose of this journal-ready dissertation, the literature regarding Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement by gender, by ethnicity/race, and

by economic status were examined. Phrases that were used in the search for relevant literature were: middle school, student, discipline, economic status, ethnicity/race, White, Hispanic, Black, gender, and Discipline Alternative Education Program. All searches were conducted through following databases: EBSCO Host, Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC), *Journal of Educational Leadership* academic journals, and the American Psychological Association (Psych NET) database that contained scholarly peer reviewed articles.

### **Delimitations**

The three studies in this journal-ready dissertation were delimited to traditionally configured public middle schools in Texas, specifically middle schools comprised of Grades 6 through 8. Data on students who were enrolled in either charter or in private schools were not used in this journal-ready dissertation. Data were analyzed on only Grade 6, 7, and 8 White, Hispanic, and Black students in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years. All the data used were obtained previously from the Texas Education Agency Public Education Information Management System for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and the 2015-2016 school years. A Public Information Request form was submitted to the Texas Education Agency for the four latest school years of data. The discipline consequence of interest in this journal-ready dissertation is Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement.

### **Limitations**

In this journal-ready dissertation, the relationship of student ethnicity/race, economic status, and gender with Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement of middle school students was addressed. As such, several important limitations are

present. Data analyses were limited to only Grade 6, 7, and 8 White, Hispanic, and Black students in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years who were enrolled in traditionally configured middle schools. Data were not analyzed for students who were enrolled in charter schools or in private schools. Only quantitative data were analyzed in the three empirical studies in this journal-ready dissertation. Accordingly, the degree to which results are generalizable beyond the students whose data were analyzed herein is not known. Due to the use of archival data, the research design constitutes a causal-comparative study in which a cause-effect relationship cannot be established.

### **Assumptions**

The major assumption in this journal-ready dissertation that was made was that the data provided to the Texas Education Agency through the Public Education Information Management System were accurately reported. That is, any errors that are present with respect to the reporting of student ethnicity/race, gender, economic status, and Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement have the potential to affect results. This assumption of data accuracy is based on the auditing that the Texas Education Agency conducts of the data reported by each school campus and each school district.

### **Procedures**

Following approval of the journal-ready dissertation proposal by the dissertation committee, an application was submitted to Sam Houston State University's Institutional Review Board. Once approval was received from the Institutional Review Board at Sam Houston State University, archival data for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and

2015-2016 school years on Grade 6, 7, and Grade 8 students that were previously attained were analyzed.

### **Organization of the Study**

In this journal-ready dissertation, three empirical manuscripts were generated. In the first journal-ready dissertation article, research questions related to Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements for Grade 6, 7, and 8 White, Hispanic, and Black boys for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and the 2015-2016 school years were addressed. In the second proposed article, the degree to which inequities were present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements for Grade 6, 7, and 8 White, Hispanic, and Black girls for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years were determined. Finally, for the third article, the extent to which inequities were present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements by economic status for Grade 6, 7, and 8 White, Hispanic, and Black students was investigated.

Five chapters compose this journal-ready dissertation. Chapter I includes the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of this study, significance of the study, theoretical framework, definitions of terms, assumptions, delimitations, and limitations of the three proposed research investigations. In Chapter II, readers are provided with the framework for the first journal-ready dissertation investigation into Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements for boys by their ethnicity/race. In Chapter III, the second journal-ready dissertation investigation into Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements for girls by their ethnicity/race was discussed. In Chapter IV, the third journal-ready research investigation into Disciplinary Alternative



Education Program placements by student economic status for White, Hispanic, and Black middle school students is presented. Finally, in Chapter V is a discussion of research results of the three statewide investigations, implications for policy and practice, and recommendations for future research.

**CHAPTER II**

INEQUITIES IN DISCIPLINARY ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM  
PLACEMENTS BY ETHNICITY/RACE FOR TEXAS GRADE 6, 7, AND 8 BOYS:  
A MULTIYEAR, STATEWIDE INVESTIGATION

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This dissertation follows the style and format of *Research in the Schools (RITS)*.

### **Abstract**

In this investigation, the extent to which Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement assignments differed as a function of ethnicity/race (i.e., Black, Hispanic, White, Asian) for Grade 6, 7, and 8 boys was determined. Archival data were obtained from the Texas Education Agency Public Education Information Management System on all middle school students for the 2011-2012, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years. Inferential statistical procedures yielded statistically significant differences for all four school years with below small effect sizes. For each year, in each grade level, a stair-step effect was present. Grade 6 through Grade 8 Black boys received a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement statistically significantly more often than their peers at all three grade levels. Similarly, Grade 6 through Grade 8 Hispanic boys received statistically significantly more instances of a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement than did White and Asian boys. Recommendations for research and implications are discussed along with suggestions for policy and practice.

**Keywords:** Disciplinary Inequities, Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placements, Ethnicity-Race, Black, Hispanic, White, Asian, Grade 6, 7, and 8 boys

INEQUITIES IN DISCIPLINARY ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM  
PLACEMENTS BY ETHNICITY/RACE FOR TEXAS GRADE 6, 7, AND 8 BOYS:  
A MULTIYEAR, STATEWIDE INVESTIGATION

School discipline practices in the United States have generated serious concerns in the past decade (United States Department of Education, 2014, 2016). These concerns are serious in nature due to the presence of racial/ethnic inequities in the manner in which discipline consequences were assigned to students (Office for Civil Rights, 2014). As noted by former-U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan “Nationwide, as many as 95 percent of out-of-school suspensions are for nonviolent misbehavior—like being disruptive, acting disrespectfully, tardiness, profanity, and dress code” (Office for Civil Rights, 2014, p. 2). Also documented by the Office for Civil Rights (2014) is that “the number of secondary school students suspended or expelled to have increased by roughly 40% in the last four decades” (p. 2). Serious concerns exist about inequities in discipline consequence, concerns that increase each year based on the widespread overuse of discipline consequences.

Of the 49 million students enrolled in public schools in the United States in the 2011-2012 school year, 3.5 million students received an in-school suspension, 3.45 million students received an out-of-school suspension, and 130,000 students were expelled from school (Office for Civil Rights, 2014, p. 1). This many students who were removed from the regular classroom setting as a result of being assigned a discipline consequence is cause for concern. In fact, within the last decade, the phrase, School-to-Prison pipeline, has been created to describe the relationship between school disciplinary consequences and later human costs. The School-to-Prison pipeline has been defined by

the American Civil Liberties Union (2016) as the policies and practices that push the nation's school children, especially at-risk children, out of classrooms and into the juvenile and criminal justice systems (p. 1). Amurao (2016) reported that the United States spent \$70 billion annually on incarceration, probation, and parole. These monies reflect a 127% increase for incarcerations between 1987-2007, in comparison to only a 21% increase in funding for higher education during the same 20-year period.

With respect to the state of Texas, the manner in which Texas public school systems discipline students is defined and implemented by a larger governing entity within the public school system. School district personnel are provided with set procedures for controlling student misbehavior in the classroom. These procedures have been established through the Texas Education Code (2010a), which consists of provisions to provide a safe educational environment for the entire student body. In the State of Texas, the three major discipline consequences that are assigned to students are in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, and Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement. Sustaining established systems of order and boundaries that help teachers maintain an acceptable and safe environment for all children to learn, however, must not come to the detriment of minority students and disproportional disciplinary placements.

For students with persistent and serious misbehaviors, opportunities to an education are compromised. In 1995, the 74th Texas Legislative session passed an educational reform requiring schools to offer students who were expelled from school an Alternate Education Program to continue their education. The establishment of Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program and in-district Alternative Education Program placements met the state's policy to educate these students. For students facing

expulsion, parameters for consequences were set into place by Chapter 37.007 of the Texas Education Agency (2010a).

Even though students are removed from the general campus setting, Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs serve as alternatives to suspensions or expulsions for students who are highly disruptive to the education of other students (Cortez & Cortez, 2009; Levin, 2006). Alternative Education Programs are mandated to maintain the curriculum of students' basic core scheduled coursework during their temporary placement term for the behavior infraction. Offenses defined in Chapter 37 of the Texas Education Code are considered mandatory Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements and discretionary Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements are violations of a school district's code of conduct.

With respect to the empirical evidence regarding inequities in disciplinary consequence assignment by student ethnicity/race, several researchers (e.g., Henkel, Slate, & Martinez-Garcia, 2016; Hilberth & Slate, 2014; Jones, Slate, & Martinez-Garcia 2014) have conducted studies in Texas in which they have provided extensive evidence of the presence of inequities. Hilberth and Slate (2014) analyzed data from the 2008-2009 school year on disproportionalities in discipline consequence assignment to Black and White students. The Texas statewide data they analyzed included 172,551 Grade 6 White and Black students, 175,671 Grade 7 White and Black students, and 175,730 Grade 8 White and Black students. With respect to in-school suspension, Hilberth and Slate (2014) documented that 32% of the in-school suspensions were assigned to Grade 6 Black students, although only 14.1% of their Grade 6 students were Black. In contrast, they determined that 14.1% of the in-school suspensions were assigned to White students,

although White students constituted 34.7% of Grade 6 students. Results were similar for their Grade 7 students in that 35.6% of the in-school suspensions were assigned to Black students and only 16.2% of the in-school suspensions were assigned to White students, despite Black and White students comprising 14.2% and 35.2%, respectively, of the Grade 7 student enrollment. Grade 8 student results were commensurate with both Grade 6 and 7 findings.

Of particular importance to this article are Hilberth and Slate's (2014) results for Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement. Of these consequences that were assigned, 4.1% of Grade 6 Black students were assigned to a Discipline Alternative Education Program placement, compared to 1.1% of White students; 5.8% of Grade 7 Black students were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement, compared to 1.8% of White students; and 7.0% of Grade 8 Black students were assigned to a Discipline Alternative Education Program placement, compared to 2.6% of Grade 8 White students. In their investigation, Hilberth and Slate (2014) used a commonly used definition of disproportionality (Harry & Anderson, 1995). That is, they compared the percentage of Black and of White students who received a discipline consequence with their proportion of the student enrollment. Using that definition of disproportionality, they established that Grade 6 Black students were assigned Discipline Alternative Education Program consequences almost 4 times the rate of their Grade 6 White peers. Grade 7 Black students were 3.7 times more likely to be assigned a Discipline Alternative Education Program placement than were their Grade 7 White peers. Finally, they determined that Grade 8 Black students were assigned to a Discipline Alternative Education Program placement almost 3 times the rate of their Grade 8 White

peers. As such, Hilberth and Slate (2014) concluded that Black students attending Texas public schools in Grades 6, 7, and 8 were 2 to 5 times more likely to receive a suspension and expulsion than were their grade level White peers.

In a related investigation, Henkel et al. (2016) examined the degree to which scores on the state-mandated assessment, the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) Reading and Mathematics tests, differed as a function of in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension for Hispanic, Black, and White Texas middle school students. In their investigation, they analyzed data for two school years (i.e., 2008-2009 and 2010-2011) separately for boys and for girls in Grades 6, 7, and 8. Henkel et al. (2016) established the presence of statistically significantly lower TAKS Reading and Mathematics test scores for Grade 6, 7, and 8 Hispanic, Black, and White boys and girls who received either an in-school suspension or an out-of-school suspension. Of importance to this article are the numbers of students by ethnicity/race who received these two discipline consequences. The numbers of students they reported who had received these two discipline consequences differed by ethnicity/race.

With respect to the assignment of out-of-school suspensions for the 2008-2009 school year, Grade 6 White boys received 3,386 assignments; Hispanic boys received 10,675 assignments; and Black boys received 6,212 assignments. Concerning Grade 7 results, White boys received 4,259 assignments; Hispanic boys received 12,558 assignments; and Black boys received 6,888 assignments. Grade 8 White boys received 4,606 consequences; Hispanic boys received 13,959 consequences; and Black boys received 6,880 consequences.



For these groups of boys, the numbers of Black and of Hispanic students who were assigned to an out-of-school suspension were disproportionate to their percent of the student enrollment in these grade levels. That is, the percentage of the student enrollment in Texas middle schools who are Black was approximately 14% (Hilberth & Slate, 2014) and the percentage of the student enrollment who are White was approximately 35% (Hilberth & Slate, 2014). For all three of the grade levels in the Henkel et al. (2016) investigation, however, Black students received an out-of-school suspension that was two to three times greater than the out-of-suspension rates for White students.

For an extensive review of the literature regarding discipline inequities by ethnicity/race, readers are directed to Jones et al. (2014). In their literature review, Jones et al. (2014) summarized empirical research investigations on inequities in the assignment of discipline consequences as well as the relationship of discipline consequence assignment with achievement gaps in reading and in mathematics. Jones et al. (2014) contended that inequalities among middle school students by ethnicity/race exist which, in turn, increases the achievement gap perpetuating an ever-growing cultural, social, and academic dilemmas.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Inequities in student discipline have been extensively documented (e.g., Henkel et al., 2016; Hilberth & Slate, 2014; Jones et al., 2014; Skiba, Horner, Chung, Rausch, May, & Tobin, 2011). Gottfredson (1989) contended that the reasons for the increases in suspension and expulsions in middle schools were related directly to unclear and inconsistent school rules and their implementation. Along with possible discrepancies of student discipline are issues of inequity based on student ethnicity/race and increasing

academic achievement gaps after placement. Gregory, Skiba, and Noguera (2010) reported that lower achievement levels, misbehavior patterns, and poverty could not sufficiently explain the educational gap. Decreasing the academic gap in achievement is a growing problem for all students and thus an important factor for students placed in alternative education settings due to disciplinary issues.

### **Significance of the Study**

In this study, the degree to which differences were present in the receipt of a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement for boys by their ethnicity/race was examined for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and the 2015-2016 school years. Specifically addressed were whether inequities were present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement for Grade 6, 7, and 8 Black, Hispanic, White, and Asian boys. Given the importance of instructional time for academic success, if students are removed from the instructional setting in an inequitable manner, then concerns arise regarding their civil rights. As such, the outcomes of this study may provide empirical data regarding the degree to which inequities are present in the assignment of this specific disciplinary consequence for Black, Hispanic, White, and Asian boys. Ideally, this research information may aid stakeholders, policymakers, and educational agencies in reforming discipline programs for boys by their ethnicity/race. Understanding the current disciplinary system and the degree to which inequities might be present are essential if educational leaders are to restructure discipline procedures.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to ascertain the extent to which inequities were present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements for Texas Grade 6,

Grade 7, and Grade 8 boys based on their ethnicity/race (i.e., Black, Hispanic, White, and Asian). By examining Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements for Grade 6, Grade 7, and Grade 8 Black, Hispanic, White, and Asian boys, a comparison across grade levels was possible. Four school years of archival data from the Texas Education Agency Public Education Information Management System were analyzed to determine the degree to which Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements were differentially assigned to Grade 6, 7, and 8 boys by their ethnicity/race.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were addressed in this empirical investigation:

(a) What is the difference in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements as a function of ethnicity/race (i.e., Black, Hispanic, White, and Asian) for Grade 6 boys?; (b) What is the difference in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements as a function of ethnicity/race for Grade 7 boys?; (c) What is the difference in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements as a function of ethnicity/race for Grade 8 boys?; and (d) What trends are present in the assignment of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements for Grade 6, 7, and 8 boys by their ethnicity/race?? The first three questions were examined for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and the 2015-2016 school years whereas the fourth research question involved all four years of data.

## **Method**

### **Research Design**

For this study, a causal comparative research design was employed. In a causal comparative method, “the relationship between one or more categorical independent

variables and one or more quantitative dependent variables” (Johnson & Christensen, 2012, p. 44) is examined. In this investigation, statewide archival data that were previously obtained from the Texas Education Agency were analyzed. As such, the independent and dependent variables had already occurred and could not be manipulated. For these reasons, the research design used herein was a causal comparative research design (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). The data included Grade 6, Grade 7, and Grade 8 boys by their ethnicity/race and whether or not they had received a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement. Thus, the independent variable of ethnicity/race for boys consisted of four groups: Black, Hispanic, White, and Asian. For each school year (i.e., 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, 2015-2016), the dependent variable was receipt or non-receipt of a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement.

### **Participants**

Students for whom data were analyzed were Grade 6, Grade 7, and Grade 8 boys who were enrolled in Texas public middle schools in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and the 2015-2016 school years. Archival data were requested and obtained from the Texas Education Agency Public Education Information Management System for the last four school years. For the purposes of this study, the following definition is used as defined by Maughan (1999): Disciplinary Alternative Education Placement is a discretionary in-district alternative education setting assigned to students who commit non-criminal offenses or persistent misbehaviors,

## **Instrumentation and Procedures**

Through submission of a Public Information Request form to the Texas Education Agency, data on Grade 6, 7, and 8 boys by their ethnicity/race were requested. The Texas Education Agency Public Information Management System, in fulfilling this request, provided data for all Texas Grade 6, Grade 7, and Grade 8 boys by their ethnicity/race (i.e., Black, Hispanic, White, and Asian), their gender, their grade level, and whether the student had received a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement. The last four school years of data were requested: 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016. Once the Texas Education Agency provided these data, they were converted into Statistical Package for the Social Sciences data files. Then data were analyzed separately for Grade 6, Grade 7, and Grade 8 boys by their ethnicity/race status.

## **Results**

To address the research questions regarding Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements for boys by their ethnicity/race, Pearson chi-square procedures were calculated. This statistical procedure was the ideal analysis to calculate because frequency data were present for student ethnicity/race and for Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement assignments for all four school years. A large sample size was available, providing a sample size that was more than five responses per cell. Therefore, the assumptions for using a Pearson chi-square procedure were met for each research question (Field, 2013). Results will now be provided, beginning with the 2012-2013 school year and with Grade 6 boys and ending with the 2015-2016 school year and with Grade 8 boys.

### Results for Grade 6 Boys

In the 2012-2013 school year for Grade 6 boys, a statistically significant difference was present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(3) = 1117.10$ ,  $p < .001$ , by student ethnicity/race. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's V, was below small, .07 (Cohen, 1988). Revealed in the results was the presence of a stair-step effect (Carpenter, Ramirez, & Severn, 2006) in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements. Grade 6 Black boys were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement more than 10 and a one half more times than Grade 6 Asian boys, three and a third times more often than Grade 6 White boys, and one and two thirds more often than Grade 6 Hispanic boys. Grade 6 Hispanic boys were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program almost two times more often than Grade 6 White boys and six times more often than Grade 6 Asian boys. Grade 6 White boys were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement more than three times more often than Grade 6 Asian boys. Frequencies and percentages of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements for Grade 6 boys by their ethnicity/race in the 2012-2013 school year are presented in Table 2.1.

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 Insert Table 2.1 about here  
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With respect to the 2013-2014 school year, a statistically significant difference was present in the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(3) = 955.67$ ,  $p < .001$ , of Grade 6 boys by their ethnicity/race. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's V, was below small, .07 (Cohen, 1988) and was reflective of a stair-step effect

(Carpenter et al., 2006) in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements. Grade 6 Black boys were assigned a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement more than 15 and one half times more often than Grade 6 Asian boys, more than three times more often than White boys, and more than one and one half times more often than Grade 6 Hispanic boys. Grade 6 Hispanic boys were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement nine times more often than Grade 6 Asian boys and almost two times as often as Grade 6 White boys. Grade 6 White boys were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement five times more often than Grade 6 Asian boys. Delineated in Table 2.1 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

Concerning the 2014-2015 school year, a statistically significant difference was present in the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(3) = 1054.64, p < .001$ , of Grade 6 boys by their ethnicity/race. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's  $V$ , was below small, .07 (Cohen, 1988) and was reflective of a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006). As revealed in Table 2.2, Grade 6 Black boys were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement 11 and one half more times more often than Grade 6 Asian boys, more than three and one half more often than Grade 6 White boys, and almost two times more often than Grade 6 Hispanic boys. Grade 6 Hispanic boys were assigned a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement six and a quarter times more often than Grade 6 Asian boys and almost two times as often than Grade 6 White boys. Grade 6 White boys were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement more than three and a quarter times more often

than Grade 6 Asian boys. Delineated in Table 2.2 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

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 Insert Table 2.2 about here  
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Regarding the 2015-2016 school year, a statistically significant difference was present in the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(3) = 1135.30$ ,  $p < .001$ , of Grade 6 boys by their ethnicity/race. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's  $V$ , was below small, .07 (Cohen, 1988) and was indicative of a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006). Grade 6 Black boys were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement 47 times more often than Grade 6 Asian boys, more than three and a third times more often than Grade 6 White boys, and more than two times more often than Grade 6 Hispanic boys. Grade 6 Hispanic boys were assigned a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement 23 times more often than Grade 6 Asian boys and more than one and one half times as often as Grade 6 White boys. Grade 6 White boys were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement 14 times more often than Grade 6 Asian boys. Table 2.2 contains the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

### **Results for Grade 7 Boys**

In the 2012-2013 school year for Grade 7 boys, a statistically significant difference was present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(3) = 1400.66$ ,  $p < .001$ , by student ethnicity/race. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's  $V$ , was below small, .08 (Cohen, 1988). Revealed in the results was the presence of a stair-



step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006). Grade 7 Black boys were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement more than 12 times as often as Grade 7 Asian boys, almost three times more often than Grade 7 White boys, and more than one and one half times more often than Grade 7 Hispanic boys. Grade 7 Hispanic boys were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program eight times more often than Grade 7 Asian boys and almost two times more often than Grade 7 White boys. Grade 7 White boys were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement four times as often as Grade 7 Asian boys. Frequencies and percentages of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements for Grade 7 boys by their ethnicity/race in the 2012-2013 school year are presented in Table 2.3.

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With respect to the 2013-2014 school year, a statistically significant difference was present in the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(3) = 1459.06, p < .001$ , of Grade 7 boys by their ethnicity/race. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's V, was below small, .08 (Cohen, 1988) and was reflective of a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006). Grade 7 Black boys were assigned a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement almost 12 times more often than Grade 7 Asian boys, more than three times more often than Grade 7 White boys, and more than one and one half times more often than Grade 7 Hispanic boys. Grade 7 Hispanic boys were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement more than seven times as often as Grade 7 Asian boys and almost two times as often as Grade 7

White boys. Grade 7 White boys were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement almost four times as often as Grade 7 Asian boys. Delineated in Table 2.3 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

Concerning the 2014-2015 school year, a statistically significant difference was present in the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(3) = 1239.55$ ,  $p < .001$ , of Grade 7 boys by their ethnicity/race. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's  $V$ , was below small, .08 (Cohen, 1988) and was reflective of a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006). As revealed in Table 2.4, Grade 7 Black boys were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement more than 21 and one half times more often than Grade 7 Asian boys, almost three times more often than Grade 7 White boys, and one and one half times more often than Grade 7 Hispanic boys. Grade 7 Hispanic boys were assigned a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement 13 times more often than Grade 7 Asian boys and almost two times as often than Grade 7 White boys. Grade 7 White boys were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement more than seven and one half times as often as Grade 7 Asian boys.

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 Insert Table 2.4 about here  
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Regarding the 2015-2016 school year, a statistically significant difference was present in the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(3) = 1314.57$ ,  $p < .001$ , of Grade 7 boys by their ethnicity/race. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's  $V$ , was below small, .08 (Cohen, 1988) and was indicative of a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006). Grade 7 Black boys were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative

Education Program placement 15 and three fourth times more often than Grade 7 Asian boys, three times more often than Grade 7 White boys, and more than one and one half times more often than Grade 7 Hispanic boys. Grade 7 Hispanic boys were assigned a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement nine and a quarter times more often than Grade 7 Asian boys and more than one and two third times as often as Grade 7 White boys. Grade 7 White boys were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement five and a quarter times more often than Grade 7 Asian boys. Table 2.4 contains the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

### **Results for Grade 8 Boys**

In the 2012-2013 school year for Grade 8 boys, a statistically significant difference was present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(3) = 1382.68, p < .001$ , by student ethnicity/race. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's V, was below small, .08 (Cohen, 1988). Revealed in the results was the presence of a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006). Grade 8 Black boys were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement almost 10 times more often than Grade 8 Asian boys, almost two and one half times more often than Grade 8 White boys, and more than one and one half times more often than Grade 8 Hispanic boys. Grade 8 Hispanic boys were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program more than six and one half times more often than Grade 8 Asian boys and more than one and one half times more often than Grade 8 White boys. Grade 8 White boys were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement four times as often as Grade 8 Asian boys. Frequencies and percentages of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program

placements for Grade 8 boys by their ethnicity/race in the 2012-2013 school year are presented in Table 2.5.

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 Insert Table 2.5 about here  
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With respect to the 2013-2014 school year, a statistically significant difference was present in the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(3) = 1330.79, p < .001$ , of Grade 8 boys by their ethnicity/race. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's V, was below small, .08 (Cohen, 1988) and was reflective of a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006). Grade 8 Black boys were assigned a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement more than 11 and one half times more often than Grade 8 Asian boys, almost two and one half times more often than Grade 8 White boys, and almost one and one half times more often than Grade 8 Hispanic boys. Grade 8 Hispanic boys were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement eight times as often as Grade 8 Asian boys and more than one and one half times as often as Grade 8 White boys. Grade 8 White boys were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement more than four and one half times as often as Grade 8 Asian boys (see Table 2.5).

Concerning the 2014-2015 school year, a statistically significant difference was present in the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(3) = 1403.57, p < .001$ , of Grade 8 boys by their ethnicity/race. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's V, was below small, .08 (Cohen, 1988) and was reflective of a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006). As revealed in Table 2.6, Grade 8 Black boys were assigned to a

Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement almost 16 times more often than Grade 8 Asian boys, more than two and one half more often than Grade 8 White boys, and almost one and one half times more often than Grade 8 Hispanic boys. Grade 8 Hispanic boys were assigned a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement more than 10 and one half times more often than Grade 8 Asian boys and more than one and two third times more often than Grade 8 White boys. Grade 8 White boys were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement more than six times as often as Grade 8 Asian boys.

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 Insert Table 2.6 about here  
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Regarding the 2015-2016 school year, a statistically significant difference was present in the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(3) = 1239.38$ ,  $p < .001$ , of Grade 8 boys by their ethnicity/race. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's  $V$ , was below small, .08 (Cohen, 1988) and was indicative of a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006). Grade 8 Black boys were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement 19 times more often than Grade 8 Asian boys, almost two and one half times more often than Grade 8 White boys, and more than one and one half times more often than Grade 8 Hispanic boys. Grade 8 Hispanic boys were assigned a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement 12 times more often than Grade 8 Asian boys and more than one and one half times as often as Grade 8 White boys. Grade 8 White boys were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement seven and three fourth times more often than Grade 8 Asian boys (see Table 2.6).

Regarding the degree to which trends were present in the assignment of this disciplinary consequence to Grade 6, 7, and 8 boys, in all four school years, statistically significant results were present. Strong trends were clearly evident across the four school years and across the three school levels. Across the 2012-2013 through the 2015-2016 school years, Black boys were assigned the highest rates of this consequence; statistically significantly more often than were Hispanic, White, or Asian students. Though small effect sizes, consistently around from .07 to .08 (Cohen, 1988), were present, a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006) was clearly evident. Black boys in all three grade levels received the highest rates of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements in all four school years. Hispanic boys in all three grade levels received the second highest rates of this consequence in all four school years, followed by White boys and then by Asian boys. A summary of the effect sizes of the analyses of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement by ethnicity/race for Grade 6, 7, and 8 boys in the 2012-2013 through the 2015-2016 school year are presented in Table 2.7.

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Insert Table 2.7 about here  
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### **Discussion**

In this investigation, the extent to which differences were present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements for Texas Grade 6, Grade 7, and Grade 8 boys based on their ethnicity/race was addressed. Four school years of statewide archival data were obtained and analyzed from the Texas Education Agency Public Education Information Management System to determine the degree to which Disciplinary

Alternative Education Program placements were disproportionately assigned to Grade 6, 7, and 8 boys by their ethnicity/race.

### **Connections with Existing Literature**

In this 4-year Texas statewide investigation, results were congruent with the results of previous researchers (e.g., Barnes & Slate, 2016; Khan & Slate, 2016; Lopez & Slate, 2016; Skiba et al., 2011; Texas Education Agency, 2014a) regarding the presence of inequities in the assignment of discipline consequences. In this empirical statewide investigation across four school years of data, Black boys in Grades 6, 7, 8 were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement one and one half to 21 times more often than their Hispanic, White, or Asian peers. Moreover, Hispanic boys in all three grade levels in all four school years received the second highest rates of this particular disciplinary consequence, followed by White boys and then by Asian boys. Accordingly, results were clearly evident of a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006), with respect to consistent disproportionalities in the assignment of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements.

In previous investigations by Barnes and Slate (2016), Henkel et al. (2016), and Khan and Slate (2016), the emphasis was placed on in-school suspension and on out-of-school suspensions. As such, results of this this empirical investigation into a much more severe discipline consequence extend the extant literature. Findings from these studies regarding the presence of clear inequities are congruent with results of this investigation into the assignment of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements.

### **Implications for Policy and for Practice**

Based upon the results of this multiyear, Texas statewide investigation, several implications for policy and for practice can be made. First, educational leaders and school administrators are encouraged to examine in depth the degree to which inequities might be present in the assignment of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements to their students on the basis of student ethnicity/race. Are disproportionalities present in their school districts regarding the assignment of this particular consequence, similar in nature to the results delineated in this study? By implementing routine audits of disciplinary consequences, educational leaders and school administrators would become knowledgeable about the presence of any inequities that might exist. Based upon that information, they could then either improve their existing discipline programs or implement new ones, should disproportionalities be present. A second implication is for educational leaders and school administrators to extend their audits to other discipline consequences such as in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension. Should inequities be present in those two discipline consequences, then existing discipline methods would need to be modified or new discipline methods be generated.

A third implication is to examine the behavioral history of students who are assigned disciplinary consequences. Do these students misbehave repeatedly over a multiyear period such that they receive several in-school suspensions, followed by several out-of-school suspensions, and then by a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement? If this situation exists, this process would suggest a failure in the discipline methods that were used. A final recommendation is for policymakers in Texas



to require a statewide analysis of discipline consequences to determine the degree to which inequities in their assignment are present. Such inequities could be construed as being violations of students' civil rights to have an appropriate and free education.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

Several suggestions for future research can be made based upon the results of this multiyear, statewide investigation. First, researchers are encouraged to examine the degree to which inequities might be present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements as a function of student economic status. To what degree are the results delineated herein by student ethnicity/race similar by student economic status? Do inequities exist in the assignment of discipline consequences between students who are economically disadvantaged and students who are not poor? Another recommendation for future research is to analyze discipline consequences separately for boys and girls, rather than analyzing data for all students. The extent to which inequities in discipline consequence assignment might differ for boys and for girls is not known. A fourth recommendation would be for researchers to extend this investigation to students in other grade levels. Analyzing data at the elementary school level could provide useful information regarding the frequency with which this consequence is administered to young children. Extending this investigation to students at the high school level could also provide valuable information to education leaders and policymakers.

Given the importance of this investigation, researchers are encouraged to extend this study into other states because only Texas discipline data were analyzed herein. The degree to which the findings delineated herein are generalizable to students in other states is not known. In this investigation, only the discipline consequence of Disciplinary

Alternative Education Program placement was analyzed. Researchers are encouraged to examine other discipline consequences such as in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, and Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placements. More empirical information is needed regarding the presence or absence of inequities in the assignment of these discipline consequences to students based on their economic status, ethnicity/race, or gender. A final recommendation for future research is to examine the reasons why students are assigned discipline consequences. Are students assigned different consequences for the same misbehavior due to their economic status, ethnicity/race, or gender?

### **Conclusion**

The purpose of this study was to ascertain the extent to which inequities were present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements for Texas Grade 6, Grade 7, and Grade 8 boys based on their ethnicity/race (i.e., Black, Hispanic, White, and Asian). Four school years of archival data from the Texas Education Agency Public Education Information Management System were analyzed. In each of the school years, Black boys were assigned statistically significantly higher rates of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements than their peers who were either Hispanic, White, or Asian. Furthermore, Hispanic boys also received statistically significantly higher rates of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements than their White and Asian peers. As such, a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006) was clearly present in the assignment of this consequence by student ethnicity/race. Findings of this 4-year Texas statewide investigation were congruent with the results of previous researchers (e.g., Barnes & Slate, 2016; Khan & Slate, 2016; Lopez & Slate,

2016; Skiba et al., 2011; Texas Education Agency, 2014) regarding the presence of inequities in the assignment of discipline consequences.

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Table 2.1

*Frequencies and Percentages of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placements  
by Ethnicity/Race for Grade 6 Boys in the 2012-2013 and the 2013-2014 School Years*

School Year and Ethnicity/Race	Received a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total	Did Not Receive a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total
2012-2013		
Black	( <i>n</i> = 1,452) 5.3%	( <i>n</i> = 25,939) 94.7%
Hispanic	( <i>n</i> = 3,171) 3.0%	( <i>n</i> = 103,134) 97.0%
White	( <i>n</i> = 1,025) 1.6%	( <i>n</i> = 62,586) 98.4%
Asian	( <i>n</i> = 38) 0.5%	( <i>n</i> = 7,173) 99.5%
2013-2014		
Black	( <i>n</i> = 1,276) 4.7%	( <i>n</i> = 25,819) 95.3%
Hispanic	( <i>n</i> = 2,811) 2.7%	( <i>n</i> = 102,680) 97.3%
White	( <i>n</i> = 953) 1.5%	( <i>n</i> = 61,566) 98.5%
Asian	( <i>n</i> = 20) 0.3%	( <i>n</i> = 7,573) 99.7%



Table 2.2

*Frequencies and Percentages of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placements by Ethnicity/Race for Grade 6 Boys in the 2014-2015 and the 2015-2016 School Years*

School Year and Ethnicity/Race	Received a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total	Did Not Receive a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total
2014-2015		
Black	( <i>n</i> = 1,258) 4.6%	( <i>n</i> = 25,938) 95.4%
Hispanic	( <i>n</i> = 2,653) 2.5%	( <i>n</i> = 105,366) 97.5%
White	( <i>n</i> = 828) 1.3%	( <i>n</i> = 61,403) 98.7%
Asian	( <i>n</i> = 30) 0.4%	( <i>n</i> = 8,183) 98.7%
2015-2016		
Black	( <i>n</i> = 1,288) 4.7%	( <i>n</i> = 26,249) 95.3%
Hispanic	( <i>n</i> = 2,504) 2.3%	( <i>n</i> = 107,778) 97.7%
White	( <i>n</i> = 856) 1.4%	( <i>n</i> = 61,263) 98.6%
Asian	( <i>n</i> = 13) 0.1%	( <i>n</i> = 8,703) 99.9%

Table 2.3

*Frequencies and Percentages of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placements  
by Ethnicity/Race for Grade 7 Boys in the 2012-2013 and the 2013-2014 School Years*

School Year and Ethnicity/Race	Received a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total	Did Not Receive a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total
2012-2013		
Black	( <i>n</i> = 2,000) 7.3%	( <i>n</i> = 25,498) 92.7%
Hispanic	( <i>n</i> = 4,946) 4.8%	( <i>n</i> = 98,548) 95.2%
White	( <i>n</i> = 1,627) 2.5%	( <i>n</i> = 63,198) 97.5%
Asian	( <i>n</i> = 42) 0.6%	( <i>n</i> = 6,949) 99.4%
2013-2014		
Black	( <i>n</i> = 1,987) 7.1%	( <i>n</i> = 25,829) 92.9%
Hispanic	( <i>n</i> = 4,783) 4.4%	( <i>n</i> = 103,740) 95.6%
White	( <i>n</i> = 1,499) 2.3%	( <i>n</i> = 62,576) 97.7%
Asian	( <i>n</i> = 44) 0.6%	( <i>n</i> = 7,628) 99.4%

Table 2.4

*Frequencies and Percentages of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placements  
by Ethnicity/Race for Grade 7 Boys in the 2014-2015 and the 2015-2016 School Years*

School Year and Ethnicity/Race	Received a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total	Did Not Receive a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total
2014-2015		
Black	( <i>n</i> = 1,792) 6.5%	( <i>n</i> = 25,876) 93.5%
Hispanic	( <i>n</i> = 4,226) 3.9%	( <i>n</i> = 103,555) 96.1%
White	( <i>n</i> = 1,446) 2.3%	( <i>n</i> = 61,592) 97.7%
Asian	( <i>n</i> = 26) 0.3%	( <i>n</i> = 7,977) 99.7%
2015-2016		
Black	( <i>n</i> = 1,745) 6.3%	( <i>n</i> = 25,915) 93.7%
Hispanic	( <i>n</i> = 4,026) 3.7%	( <i>n</i> = 105,797) 96.3%
White	( <i>n</i> = 1,287) 2.1%	( <i>n</i> = 61,251) 97.9%
Asian	( <i>n</i> = 34) 0.4%	( <i>n</i> = 8,538) 99.6%

Table 2.5

*Frequencies and Percentages of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placements by Ethnicity/Race for Grade 8 Boys in the 2012-2013 and the 2013-2014 School Years*

School Year and Ethnicity/Race	Received a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total	Did Not Receive a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total
2012-2013		
Black	( <i>n</i> = 2,398) 8.9%	( <i>n</i> = 24,584) 91.1%
Hispanic	( <i>n</i> = 5,963) 5.9%	( <i>n</i> = 95,090) 94.1%
White	( <i>n</i> = 2,282) 3.6%	( <i>n</i> = 61,731) 96.4%
Asian	( <i>n</i> = 58) 0.9%	( <i>n</i> = 6,566) 99.1%
2013-2014		
Black	( <i>n</i> = 2,257) 8.1%	( <i>n</i> = 25,513) 91.9%
Hispanic	( <i>n</i> = 5,978) 5.6%	( <i>n</i> = 100,029) 94.4%
White	( <i>n</i> = 2,127) 3.3%	( <i>n</i> = 62,599) 96.7%
Asian	( <i>n</i> = 55) 0.7%	( <i>n</i> = 7,373) 99.3%

Table 2.6

*Frequencies and Percentages of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placements by Ethnicity/Race for Grade 8 Boys in the 2014-2015 and the 2015-2016 School Years*

School Year and Ethnicity/Race	Received a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total	Did Not Receive a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total
2014-2015		
Black	( <i>n</i> = 2,216) 7.9%	( <i>n</i> = 25,756) 92.1%
Hispanic	( <i>n</i> = 5,748) 5.3%	( <i>n</i> = 103,523) 94.7%
White	( <i>n</i> = 1,967) 3.1%	( <i>n</i> = 62,293) 96.9%
Asian	( <i>n</i> = 42) 0.5%	( <i>n</i> = 7,970) 99.5%
2015-2016		
Black	( <i>n</i> = 2,111) 7.6%	( <i>n</i> = 25,663) 92.4%
Hispanic	( <i>n</i> = 5,240) 4.8%	( <i>n</i> = 104,431) 95.2%
White	( <i>n</i> = 1,970) 3.1%	( <i>n</i> = 61,134) 96.9%
Asian	( <i>n</i> = 37) 0.4%	( <i>n</i> = 8,206) 99.6%

Table 2.7

*Summary of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placements for Grade 6-8 Boys  
in the 2012-2013 Through the 2015-2016 School Years*

Grade Level and School Year	Cramer's V	Effect Size Range	Highest DAEP Rate
Grade 6			
2012-2013	.07	Below Small	Black
2013-2014	.07	Below Small	Black
2014-2015	.07	Below Small	Black
2015-2016	.07	Below Small	Black
Grade 7			
2012-2013	.08	Below Small	Black
2013-2014	.08	Below Small	Black
2014-2015	.08	Below Small	Black
2015-2016	.08	Below Small	Black
Grade 8			
2012-2013	.08	Below Small	Black
2013-2014	.08	Below Small	Black
2014-2015	.08	Below Small	Black
2015-2016	.08	Below Small	Black

**CHAPTER III**

INEQUITIES IN DISCIPLINARY ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM  
PLACEMENTS BY ETHNICITY/RACE FOR TEXAS GRADE 6, 7, AND 8 GIRLS:  
A MULTIYEAR, STATEWIDE INVESTIGATION

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This dissertation follows the style and format of *Research in the Schools (RITS)*.

### **Abstract**

In this investigation, the extent to which Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement assignments differed as a function of ethnicity/race (i.e., Black, Hispanic, White, and Asian) for Grade 6, 7, and 8 girls was addressed. Archival data, obtained from the Texas Education Agency Public Education Information Management System, were analyzed for all middle school girls for the 2011-2012, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years. Inferential statistical procedures yielded statistically significant differences for all school years with below small effect sizes. For each year, in each grade level, a stair-step effect was present. Grade 6 through Grade 8 Black girls were assigned a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements resulted in statistically significantly higher rates than Hispanic, White, and Asian girls in all 4 school years. Similarly, Grade 6 through Grade 8 Hispanic girls were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement statistically significantly more often than White and Asian girls in all 4 school years. Recommendations for research and implications are discussed along with suggestions for policy and practice.

**Keywords:** Inequities, Disciplinary Alternative Education Program, Ethnicity/Race, Black, Hispanic, White, Asian, Grade 6, 7, and 8 Girls



INEQUITIES IN DISCIPLINARY ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM  
PLACEMENTS BY ETHNICITY/RACE FOR TEXAS GRADE 6, 7, AND 8 GIRLS:  
A MULTIYEAR, STATEWIDE INVESTIGATION

The United States Department of Education for Civil Rights (2014) reported “troubling national findings of unfair and excessive school discipline policies regarding an increase of secondary school Black student suspensions and expulsions by a rate of 40% from 1-13 in 1972-1973 to 1 in 9 in 2009-2010” (p. 1). Despite inequities that have been clearly documented for Black and Hispanic students, a dearth of information is available regarding discipline disproportionalities for girls. What limited information that is available on girls and discipline inequities has only recently been published.

In recent reports, the African American Policy Forum (AAPF) and Columbia Law School Center for Intersectionality and Social Policy Studies (2015) released a study, *Black Girls Matter: Pushed Out, Overpoliced, and Underprotected*, specifically related to New York and Boston schools, in which they confirmed the presence of statistically significant differences in disciplinary actions for Black girls at a rate much higher than for Black boys and for White girls. Black girls in the New York public school system during the 2011-2012 school year were disciplined 10 times more often than White girls. Black girls received 9,076 incidents of in-and out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, or police referrals compared to only 884 White girls who received such consequences (Klein, 2015, p. 2). In addition, Black girls in Boston schools received 11 times more disciplinary actions than White girls in the 2011-2012 school year. Klein contended that the rates of expulsion were “strikingly disproportionate” between Black and White girls (p. 2). Crenshaw, Ocen, and Nanda (2015) contended that although boys were suspended

more often in terms of raw numbers, “the rate of racial disparity in girl suspensions...is higher for girls than boys” (Klein, 2015, p. 2). Crenshaw et al. (2015), in an analysis of national statistics, established that Black girls far exceeded the number of disciplinary consequences in relation to White and Hispanic girls.

Multiple researchers (e.g., Hilberth & Slate, 2014; Skiba, Arredondo, & Williams, 2014; Skiba & Peterson, 2000; Fitzgerald, 2007) have provided evidence of inequities in disciplinary placement of middle school girls by ethnicity/race. In 2009-2010 data collected by The Office of Civil Rights (2014), Black girls were substantially more likely to be suspended out-of-school, 11%, than were Hispanic girls, 4%, White girls, 3%, and Asian/Pacific Islander girls, 1%. Losen and Skiba (2010) established after sampling more than 9,000 middle schools that Black females (18%) were four times more likely to be suspended than were White girls (4%). The NAACP Legal Defense & Education Fund Inc. and the National Women’s Law Center (2014) collaborated on a report titled *Unlocking Opportunity for African American Girls: A Call to Action for Educational Equity*. The importance of their report for this investigation comes from their findings in which they documented continued inequities in the rate of suspension of Black girls in middle schools as the fastest growing rate among their peers regardless of gender or ethnicity/race. At a South Carolina high school during the 2015-2016 school year, a White police officer body slammed a Black high school girl from her desk in the classroom (Stelloh & Connor, 2015).

Of note for this article are the works of several researchers (Hilberth & Slate, 2014, Jones, Slate, & Hilberth, 2012; Slate, Gray, & Jones, 2016) who conducted empirical studies in Texas. In their investigations, they provided empirical evidence that

disciplinary consequences were inequitably assigned by student ethnicity/race. Hilberth and Slate (2014) analyzed data on Texas middle school Black students and three discipline consequences (i.e., in-school-suspension, out-of-school suspension, and Discipline Alternative Education Program placements). Hilberth and Slate compared these discipline consequence assignments received by Black students to these same consequences received by White students. Of the 521,952 Grade 6, 7, and 8 Black and White students whose data were analyzed by Hilberth and Slate, statistically significant differences were present between Black and White students in their receipt of all three discipline consequences.

Of particular relevance to this article were the inequities that Hilberth and Slate (2014) documented with respect to the assignment of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements to Black and White students. In their investigation, they established that 4.1% of Black students received a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement, compared to 1.1% of White students who were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement. Grade 6 White students comprised of 34.7% of the population in the study, yet received only 1.1% of the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements in comparison to Black students who constituted 4.1% of the student enrollment but received this consequence 19.4% (Hilberth & Slate, 2014). Examining these results separately by grade level reveals that 5.9% of Grade 7 Black students received this consequence, compared to 1.8% of Grade 7 White students; and 7% of Grade 8 Black students received this consequence, compared to 2.6% of Grade 8 White students. Wallace et al. (2008) documented that White girls were more than five times less likely to have received a suspension or expulsion than their Black girl peers.

In a recent study, Crenshaw et al. (2015) established that the number of suspensions received by Black girls far exceeded the number of suspensions received by White girls, despite the fact that the student population is comprised of a larger percentage of White girls than Black girls.

In a recent major investigation, Slate et al. (2016) analyzed the number of disciplinary consequences assigned to Black, Hispanic, and White girls in Texas public schools. In their study, they examined in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, and of importance for this article, Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements, for girls in Grades 4 through 11. Slate et al. (2014) obtained Texas statewide data on all discipline consequences that were assigned to Grade 4 through Grade 11 girls in the 2013-2014 school year. In their analyses, they demonstrated the presence of statistically significant differences in the assignment of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements for all grade levels between Black, Hispanic, and White girls.

In one of the earliest grade levels addressed by Slate et al. (2014), Grade 5, Hispanic girls received all five instances of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement that were assigned in that school year. Both Hispanic and Black girls in Grade 6 were assigned several instances of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement. Regarding Grade 7, 0.5% of Black girls and 0.6% of Hispanic girls were assigned instances of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement. For Grades 4, 5, 6, and 7, a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement was not assigned to any White girls in this school year. With respect to Grade 8, 0.8% of Black girls and 0.4% of Hispanic girls were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program

placement. In Grade 9, 0.9% of Black girls, 0.9% of Hispanic girls, and 0.3% of White girls received a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement.

The inequity in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement was the greatest for Grade 10 girls. The percentage of Black girls who were assigned a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement was 0.6%, compared to 0.1% for Hispanic girls and 0.0% for White girls. Although these percentages are small, readers should note that Black girls received more frequent assignment of this consequence than White girls at all grade levels. In Grades 5, 8, and 10, Black girls were assigned higher rates of this consequence than were Hispanic girls. Both Black and Hispanic girls had similar rates of this consequence in Grades 7 and 9. Of the 525 Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements that were assigned to girls in this school year, a significant increase was evident in that the number of these consequences that were assigned to girls increased from Grade 6 through Grade 8. Also of importance with respect to inequities in discipline consequence assignment is the fact that not a single Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement was received by a White girl student from Grade 4 to Grade 7 of this study.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Inequities in the assignment of discipline consequences to middle school grade level girls have been documented, although not as thoroughly documented as that for boys. In a recent investigation on Grade 4 through Grade 11 girls, Slate et al. (2016) established the presence of inequities in the assignment of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement between Black and White girls and between Hispanic and White girls. The Slate et al. (2016) results were congruent with the results of Carter et al.

(2014) and Losen and Martinez (2013). With the growing ethnic/racial diversity in public education, disproportionalities in the administration of discipline consequences for girls create concerns regarding the civil rights of girls, with respect to receiving an education.

### **Significance of the Study**

In this study, the degree to which differences were present in the receipt of a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement for girls by their ethnicity/race was examined for the latest four school years. For Grade 6, 7, and 8 Black, Hispanic, White, and Asian girls, the extent to which inequities might be present in their Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement assignment was determined. Given the importance of instructional time for academic success, if students are removed from the instructional setting in an inequitable manner, then concerns arise regarding their civil rights. As such, this study may provide empirical data regarding inequities in the assignment of this specific disciplinary consequence for Black, Hispanic, White, and Asian girls. The extent to which ethnicity/race is related to the assignment of girls in a Disciplinary Alternative Educational Program placement within three grade levels over the latest four school years may provide important information to educational leaders and to policymakers. Slate et al. (2016) contended the need for critical discussions and plans of action by educators to address the growing implicit biases of disciplinary actions toward Black girls.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to ascertain the extent to which inequities were present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements for Texas Grade 6,

Grade 7, and Grade 8 girls based on their ethnicity/race. By examining Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements for Grade 6, Grade 7, and Grade 8 Black, Hispanic, White, and Asian girls, a comparison across grade levels was possible. Four school years of archival data from the Texas Education Agency Public Education Information Management System were analyzed to determine the degree to which Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements was differentially assigned to Grade 6, 7, and 8 girls by their ethnicity/race.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were addressed in this empirical investigation:

(a) What is the difference in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements as a function of ethnicity/race (i.e., Black, Hispanic, White, and Asian) for Grade 6 girls?; (b) What is the difference in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements as a function of ethnicity/race for Grade 7 girls?; (c) What is the difference in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements as a function of ethnicity/race for Grade 8 girls?; and (d) What trends are present in the assignment of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements for Grade 6, 7, and 8 girls by their ethnicity/race? The first three questions were examined for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and the 2015-2016 school years whereas the fourth research question involved all four years of data.

## **Method**

### **Research Design**

For this study, a causal comparative research design was employed. In this investigation, statewide archival data that were previously obtained from the Texas

Education Agency Public Education Information Management System was analyzed. As such, the independent and dependent variables had already occurred. For these reasons, the research design used herein was a causal comparative research design (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). The data included Grade 6, Grade 7, and Grade 8 girls by their ethnicity/race and whether they had received a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement. Thus, the independent variable of ethnicity/race for girls consisted of four groups: Black, Hispanic, White, and Asian. For each school year (i.e., 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016), the dependent variable was receipt or non-receipt of a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement.

### **Participants**

Students for whom data were analyzed were Grade 6, Grade 7, and Grade 8 girls who were enrolled in Texas public middle schools in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and the 2015-2016 school years. Archival data were requested and obtained from the Texas Education Agency Public Education Information Management System for the last four school years. For the purposes of this study, the following definition is used as defined by Maughan (1999): Disciplinary Alternative Education Placement is a discretionary in-district alternative education setting assigned to students who commit non-criminal offenses or persistent misbehaviors,

### **Instrumentation and Procedures**

Through submission of a Public Information Request form to the Texas Education Agency, data on Grade 6, 7, and 8 girls by their ethnicity/race were requested. The Texas Education Agency Public Information Management System, in fulfilling this request, provided data for all Texas Grade 6, Grade 7, and Grade 8 girls by their ethnicity/race



(i.e., Black, Hispanic, White, and Asian). Specifically provided by the Texas Education Agency were: (a) student ethnicity/race; (b) student gender; (c) student grade level; and (d) whether or not the student had received a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement. The last four school years of data were requested: 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016. Once the Texas Education Agency provided these data in Excel files, they were converted into Statistical Package for the Social Sciences data files. Then data were analyzed separately for Grade 6, Grade 7, and Grade 8 girls by their ethnicity/race status.

## **Results**

To address the research questions regarding Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements by student ethnicity/race, Pearson chi-square procedures were calculated. This statistical procedure was the ideal analysis to calculate because frequency data were present for both student gender and for Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement assignments for all four school years. A large sample size was available, providing a sample size that was more than five responses per cell. Therefore, the assumptions for using a Pearson chi-square procedure were met for each research question (Field, 2009). Results will now be provided, beginning with the 2012-2013 school year and with Grade 6 girls and ending with the 2015-2016 school year and with Grade 8 girls.

### **Results for Grade 6 Girls**

In the 2012-2013 school year for Grade 6 girls, a statistically significant difference was present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(3) = 610.01, p < .001$ , by student ethnicity/race. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's V,

was below small, .06 (Cohen, 1988). Revealed in the results was the presence of a stair-step effect (Carpenter, Ramirez, & Severn, 2006) in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements. Grade 6 Black girls were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement 11 times more often than Grade 6 Asian girls and five and one half times more often than White girls. Grade 6 Hispanic girls were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program five and one half more times than Grade 6 Asian girls and more than two and one half times more often than White girls. Grade 6 Black girls were twice as likely assigned a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement than Grade 6 Hispanic girls. Grade 6 White girls were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement twice as often as Grade 6 Asian girls. Frequencies and percentages of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements for Grade 6 girls by their ethnicity/race in the 2012-2013 school year are presented in Table 3.1.

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Insert Table 3.1 about here  
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With respect to the 2013-2014 school year, a statistically significant difference was present in the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(3) = 643.46, p < .001$ , of Grade 6 girls by their ethnicity/race. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's  $V$ , was below small, .06 (Cohen, 1988). Revealed in the results was the presence of a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006) in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements. Grade 6 Black girls were assigned a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement 20 times more likely than Grade 6 Asian girls,

more than six and one half times more often than White girls, and more than two times more often than Grade 6 Hispanic girls. Grade 6 Hispanic girls were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement 10 times more often than Grade 6 Asian girls and more than three times as often as White girls. Grade 6 White girls were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement three times more often than Grade 6 Asian girls. Delineated in Table 3.1 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

Concerning the 2014-2015 school year, a statistically significant difference was present in the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(3) = 704.38, p < .001$ , of Grade 6 girls by their ethnicity/race. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's  $V$ , was below small, .06 (Cohen, 1988). Revealed in the results was the presence of a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006). As presented in Table 3.2, Grade 6 Black girls were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement 21 times more often than Grade 6 Asian girls, seven times more often than were Grade 6 White girls, and two and one third times more often than Grade 6 Hispanic girls. Grade 6 Hispanic girls were assigned a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program nine times more likely than Grade 6 Asian girls and three times more often than Grade 6 White girls. Grade 6 White girls were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement three as often as Grade 6 Asian girls.

Regarding the 2015-2016 school year, a statistically significant difference was present in the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(3) = 467.61, p < .001$ , of Grade 6 girls by their ethnicity/race. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's  $V$ , was below small, .05 (Cohen, 1988). Revealed in the results was the presence of a

stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006). Grade 6 Black girls were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement 17 times more likely than Grade 6 Asian girls, more than five and one half times more often than were Grade 6 White girls, and more than one and one half times more often than Grade 6 Hispanic girls. Grade 6 Hispanic girls were assigned a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement 10 times more than Grade 6 Asian girls and almost three and one half times as often as Grade 6 White girls. Grade 6 White girls were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement three times as often as Grade 6 Asian girls. Table 3.2 contains the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

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 Insert Table 3.2 about here  
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### **Results for Grade 7 Girls**

In the 2012-2013 school year for Grade 7 girls, a statistically significant difference was present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(3) = 919.31, p < .001$ , by their ethnicity/race. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's V, was below small, .07 (Cohen, 1988). Revealed in the results was the presence of a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006). Grade 7 Black girls were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement 19 times more often than Grade 7 Asian girls, more than four times more often than White girls, and more than one and one half times more often than Grade 7 Hispanic girls. Grade 7 Hispanic girls were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program 11 times more often than Grade 7 Asian girls and almost two and one half times more often than White girls. Grade 7 White girls were

assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement four and one half times more often than Grade 6 Asian girls. Frequencies and percentages of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements for Grade 7 girls by their ethnicity/race in the 2012-2013 school year are presented in Table 3.3.

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 Insert Table 3.3 about here  
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With respect to the 2013-2014 school year, a statistically significant difference was present in the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(3) = 848.11$ ,  $p < .001$ , of Grade 7 girls by their ethnicity/race. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's  $V$ , was below small, .07 (Cohen, 1988). Revealed in the results was the presence of a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006). Grade 7 Black girls were assigned a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement 17 and one half more times than Grade 7 Asian girls, almost four times more often than White girls, and more than one and one half times more often than Grade 7 Hispanic girls. Grade 7 Hispanic girls were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement 10 and one half times more times than Grade 7 Asian girls and almost two and one half more times as often as Grade 7 White girls. Grade 7 White girls were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement four and one half times more often than Grade 7 Asian girls. Delineated in Table 3.3 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

Concerning the 2014-2015 school year, a statistically significant difference was present in the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(3) = 794.65$ ,  $p < .001$ , of Grade 7 girls by their ethnicity/race. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's

V, was below small, .06 (Cohen, 1988) and was reflective of a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006). As revealed in Table 3.4, Grade 7 Black girls were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement 31 times more often than Grade 7 Asian girls, almost four times more often than were Grade 7 White girls, and more than one and one half times more often than Grade 7 Hispanic girls. Grade 7 Hispanic girls were assigned a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement 19 times more often than Grade 7 Asian girls and almost three times as often than Grade 7 White girls. Grade 7 White girls were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement eight times as often as Grade 7 Asian girls.

Regarding the 2015-2016 school year, a statistically significant difference was present in the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(3) = 827.81, p < .001$ , of Grade 7 girls by their ethnicity/race. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's V, was below small, .07 (Cohen, 1988) and indicative of a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006). Grade 7 Black girls were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement 33 times more often than Grade 7 Asian girls, more than four times more often than were Grade 7 White girls, and more than one and one half times more often than Grade 7 Hispanic girls. Grade 7 Hispanic girls were assigned a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement 19 times more often than Grade 7 Asian girls and almost three times as often as Grade 7 White girls. Grade 7 White girls were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement eight times as often as Grade 7 Asian girls. Table 3.4 contains the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

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Insert Table 3.4 about here  
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### **Results for Grade 8 Girls**

In the 2012-2013 school year for Grade 8 girls, a statistically significant difference was present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(3) = 882.01$ ,  $p < .001$ , by student ethnicity/race. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's V, was below small, .07 (Cohen, 1988). Revealed in the results was the presence of a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006). Grade 8 Black girls were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement 22 times more often than Grade 8 Asian girls, three times more often than Grade 8 White girls, and two and two thirds more often than Grade 8 Hispanic girls. Grade 8 Hispanic girls were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program 12 and one half times more often than Grade 8 Asian girls and almost two times more often than White girls. Grade 8 White girls were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement seven times as often as Grade 8 Asian girls. Frequencies and percentages of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements for Grade 8 girls by their ethnicity/race in the 2012-2013 school year are presented in Table 3.5.

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Insert Table 3.5 about here  
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With respect to the 2013-2014 school year, a statistically significant difference was present in the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(3) =$

699.15,  $p < .001$ , of Grade 8 girls by their ethnicity/race. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's  $V$ , was below small, .06 (Cohen, 1988) and reflective of a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006). Grade 8 Black girls were assigned a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement 13 times more often than Grade 8 Asian girls, almost three times more often than White girls, and more than one and one half times more often than Grade 8 Hispanic girls. Grade 8 Hispanic girls were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement eight and one third times more often than Grade 8 Asian girls and almost two times as often as White girls. Grade 8 White girls were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement more than four and one half times more often than Grade 8 Asian girls. Delineated in Table 3.5 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

Concerning the 2014-2015 school year, a statistically significant difference was present in the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(3) = 693.25$ ,  $p < .001$ , of Grade 8 girls by their ethnicity/race. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's  $V$ , was below small, .06 (Cohen, 1988) and reflective of a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006). As revealed in Table 3.6, Grade 8 Black girls were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement 18 and one half times more often than Grade 8 Asian girls, more than two and one half times more often than were Grade 8 White girls, and more than one and one half times more often than Grade 8 Hispanic girls. Grade 8 Hispanic girls were assigned a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement 12 times more often than Grade 8 Asian girls and almost two times as often than Grade 8 White girls. Grade 8 White girls were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement six and one half times more often than Grade 8 Asian girls.



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Insert Table 3.6 about here  
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Regarding the 2015-2016 school year, a statistically significant difference was present in the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(3) = 863.36, p < .001$ , of Grade 8 girls by their ethnicity/race. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's  $V$ , was below small, .07 (Cohen, 1988) and indicative of a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006). Grade 8 Black girls were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement 20 times more often than Grade 8 Asian girls, three and a third times more often than were Grade 8 White girls, and almost two times more often than Grade 8 Hispanic girls. Grade 8 Hispanic girls were assigned a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement 11 times more often than Grade 8 Asian girls and almost twice as often as Grade 8 White girls. Grade 8 White girls were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement six times as often as Grade 8 Asian girls. Table 3.6 contains the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

With respect to the research question regarding whether trends were present in the assignment of this consequence to Grade 6, 7, and 8 girls, in all four school years, statistically significant results were present. Across the 2012-2013 through the 2015-2016 school years, Black girls in all three grade levels were assigned the highest rate of this particular consequence than were their Hispanic, White, or Asian peers. Hispanic girls in all three grade levels were assigned the second highest rate of this particular consequence, followed by White girls, and then by Asian girls. The effect size for these findings, Cramer's  $V$ s, ranged from .07 to .08 (Cohen, 1988) and were reflective of a stair-

step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006) in the assignment of this particular consequence. A summary of this consequence for all three grade levels and for all four school years is presented in Table 3.7.

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Insert Table 3.7 about here  
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### **Discussion**

In this investigation, the extent to which differences were present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements for Texas Grade 6, Grade 7, and Grade 8 girls based on their ethnicity/race was examined. Four school years of statewide archival data were obtained and analyzed from the Texas Education Agency Public Education Information Management System to determine the degree to which Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements were disproportionately assigned to Grade 6, 7, and 8 Black, Hispanic, White, and Asian girls.

### **Connections with Existing Literature**

In this 4-year Texas statewide investigation, results were remarkably commensurate the results of previous researchers (e.g., Hilberth & Slate, 2014; Skiba, Arredondo, & Williams, 2014; Skiba & Peterson, 2000; Fitzgerald, 2007) regarding the presence of inequities in the assignment of discipline consequences of middle school girls by ethnicity/race. Losen and Skiba (2010) established that Black girls (18%) were four times more likely to be suspended than were White girls (4%). In this investigation across all four school years of data, Black girls in all three grade levels were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement one and one half to 21 times more

often than Hispanic, White, or Asian girls. Results of this empirical multiyear investigation were also congruent with a recent investigation on Grade 4 through Grade 11 girls conducted in Texas. Slate et al. (2016) established the presence of inequities in the assignment of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement between Black and White girls and between Hispanic and White girls. Clearly established in this investigation was a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006) with respect to was clearly evident among the four ethnicity/races for each grade level and school year for the disproportionalities in the assignment of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements.

### **Implications for Policy and for Practice**

Several implications for policy and for practice can be made from the results of this multiyear, empirical statewide investigation. First, educational leaders and school administrators need to analyze Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement data in their school campuses and school districts. Are disproportionalities present in their school districts regarding the assignment of this particular consequence on the basis of student economic status, ethnicity/race, or gender? By auditing the assignment of this consequence, educational leaders and school administrators could use the information they learn to either improve their existing discipline programs or to generate new ones. A second implication is that education leaders and school administrators need to have disciplinary codes of conduct structured to eliminate disproportionate discipline methods as well as minimizing the presence of any subjectivity of in assignment this discipline consequence. Another implication would be to analyze the history of students who are assigned this consequence. Do these students misbehave repeatedly over a multiyear

period such that they receive several in-school suspensions, followed by several out-of-school suspensions, and then by a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement? If so, this process would suggest a failure in the discipline methods that were used. A final recommendation is for policymakers in Texas to require a statewide analysis of discipline consequences to determine the degree to which inequities in their assignment are present. Such inequities could be construed as being violations of students' civil rights to have an appropriate and free education.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

Based upon the results of this multiyear, statewide investigation, several suggestions for future research can be made. First, researchers are encouraged to examine the degree to which inequities might be present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements for girls as a function of their student economic status. Such studies could be conducted analyzing both groups together for boys and for girls, rather than analyzing data on the two groups of students separately. The extent to which inequities in discipline consequence assignment might differ for boys and for girls is not known. A third recommendation would be for researchers to extend this investigation to students in other grade levels. Analyzing data at the elementary school level could provide useful information regarding the frequency with which this consequence is administered to young children. Extending this investigation to students at the high school level could also provide valuable information to education leaders and policymakers.

Because this investigation was based entirely on Texas data, researchers are encouraged to extend this study into other states. The degree to which the findings

delineated herein are generalizable to students in other states is not known. In this investigation, only the discipline consequence of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement was analyzed. Researchers are encouraged to examine other discipline consequences such as in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, and Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placements. More empirical information is needed regarding the presence or absence of inequities in the assignment of these discipline consequences to students based on their economic status, ethnicity/race, or gender. A final recommendation for future research is to examine the reasons why students are assigned discipline consequences. Are students assigned different consequences for the same misbehavior due to their economic status, their ethnicity/race, or gender?

### **Conclusion**

The purpose of this research was to determine the extent to which inequities were present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements to Texas Grade 6, 7, and 8 Black, Hispanic, White, and Asian girls. Four school years of archival data from the Texas Education Agency Public Education Information Management System were analyzed. In each of the school years and at each of the three grade levels, Black girls were assigned statistically significantly higher rates of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements than their Hispanic, White, or Asian peers. Hispanic girls received the second highest rates of this consequence, followed by White girls and then by Asian girls. As such, a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006) was clearly present in the assignment of this consequence. Findings of this 4-year Texas statewide investigation were congruent with the results of previous researchers (e.g., Barnes & Slate, 2016; Khan

& Slate, 2016; Lopez & Slate, 2016; Skiba et al., 2011; Texas Education Agency, 2014) regarding the presence of inequities in the assignment of discipline consequences.

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Table 3.1

*Frequencies and Percentages of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placements  
by Ethnicity/Race for Grade 6 Girls in the 2012-2013 and the 2013-2014 School Years*

School Year and Ethnicity/Race	Received a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total	Did Not Receive a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total
2012-2013		
Black	( <i>n</i> = 558) 2.2%	( <i>n</i> = 25,126) 97.8%
Hispanic	( <i>n</i> = 1,102) 1.1%	( <i>n</i> = 99,970) 98.9%
White	( <i>n</i> = 257) 0.4%	( <i>n</i> = 59,493) 99.6%
Asian	( <i>n</i> = 12) 0.2%	( <i>n</i> = 6,877) 99.8%
2013-2014		
Black	( <i>n</i> = 515) 2.0%	( <i>n</i> = 24,862) 98.0%
Hispanic	( <i>n</i> = 1,024) 1.0%	( <i>n</i> = 99,061) 99.0%
White	( <i>n</i> = 198) 0.3%	( <i>n</i> = 58,354) 99.7%
Asian	( <i>n</i> = 2) 0.0%	( <i>n</i> = 7,338) 100.0%

Table 3.2

*Frequencies and Percentages of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placements by Ethnicity/Race for Grade 6 Girls in the 2014-2015 and the 2015-2016 School Years*

School Year and Ethnicity/Race	Received a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total	Did Not Receive a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total
2014-2015		
Black	( <i>n</i> = 532) 2.1%	( <i>n</i> = 25,213) 97.9%
Hispanic	( <i>n</i> = 949) 0.9%	( <i>n</i> = 102,016) 99.1%
White	( <i>n</i> = 189) 0.3%	( <i>n</i> = 58,345) 99.7%
Asian	( <i>n</i> = 4) 0.1%	( <i>n</i> = 7,879) 99.9%
2015-2016		
Black	( <i>n</i> = 437) 1.7%	( <i>n</i> = 25,897) 98.3%
Hispanic	( <i>n</i> = 1,046) 1.0%	( <i>n</i> = 104,566) 99.0%
White	( <i>n</i> = 194) 0.3%	( <i>n</i> = 57,865) 99.7%
Asian	( <i>n</i> = 9) 0.1%	( <i>n</i> = 8,365) 99.9%

Table 3.3

*Frequencies and Percentages of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placements by Ethnicity/Race for Grade 7 Girls in the 2012-2013 and the 2013-2014 School Years*

School Year and Ethnicity/Race	Received a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total	Did Not Receive a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total
2012-2013		
Black	( <i>n</i> = 972) 3.8%	( <i>n</i> = 24,815) 96.2%
Hispanic	( <i>n</i> = 2,149) 2.2%	( <i>n</i> = 97,469) 97.8%
White	( <i>n</i> = 565) 0.9%	( <i>n</i> = 60,034) 99.1%
Asian	( <i>n</i> = 14) 0.2%	( <i>n</i> = 6,818) 99.8%
2013-2014		
Black	( <i>n</i> = 914) 3.5%	( <i>n</i> = 25,186) 96.5%
Hispanic	( <i>n</i> = 2,117) 2.1%	( <i>n</i> = 101,703) 97.9%
White	( <i>n</i> = 529) 0.9%	( <i>n</i> = 59,604) 99.1%
Asian	( <i>n</i> = 16) 0.2%	( <i>n</i> = 7,316) 99.8%

Table 3.4

*Frequencies and Percentages of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placements by Ethnicity/Race for Grade 7 Girls in the 2014-2015 and the 2015-2016 School Years*

School Year and Ethnicity/Race	Received a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total	Did Not Receive a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total
2014-2015		
Black	( <i>n</i> = 800) 3.1%	( <i>n</i> = 25,022) 96.9%
Hispanic	( <i>n</i> = 1,906) 1.9%	( <i>n</i> = 100,648) 98.1%
White	( <i>n</i> = 445) 0.8%	( <i>n</i> = 58,733) 99.2%
Asian	( <i>n</i> = 2) 0.0%	( <i>n</i> = 7,651) 100.0%
2015-2016		
Black	( <i>n</i> = 854) 3.3%	( <i>n</i> = 25,140) 96.7%
Hispanic	( <i>n</i> = 1,966) 1.9%	( <i>n</i> = 102,872) 98.1%
White	( <i>n</i> = 469) 0.8%	( <i>n</i> = 58,264) 99.2%
Asian	( <i>n</i> = 12) 0.1%	( <i>n</i> = 8,182) 99.9%

Table 3.5

*Frequencies and Percentages of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placements by Ethnicity/Race for Grade 8 Girls in the 2012-2013 and the 2013-2014 School Years*

School Year and Ethnicity/Race	Received a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total	Did Not Receive a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total
2012-2013		
Black	( <i>n</i> = 1,129) 4.4%	( <i>n</i> = 24,539) 95.6%
Hispanic	( <i>n</i> = 2,403) 2.5%	( <i>n</i> = 93,302) 97.5%
White	( <i>n</i> = 825) 1.4%	( <i>n</i> = 60,180) 98.6%
Asian	( <i>n</i> = 14) 0.2%	( <i>n</i> = 6,346) 99.8%
2013-2014		
Black	( <i>n</i> = 1,021) 3.9%	( <i>n</i> = 25,101) 96.1%
Hispanic	( <i>n</i> = 2,540) 2.5%	( <i>n</i> = 98,307) 97.5%
White	( <i>n</i> = 840) 1.4%	( <i>n</i> = 60,271) 98.6%
Asian	( <i>n</i> = 18) 0.3%	( <i>n</i> = 7,163) 99.7%

Table 3.6

*Frequencies and Percentages of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placements by Ethnicity/Race for Grade 8 Girls in the 2014-2015 and the 2015-2016 School Years*

School Year and Ethnicity/Race	Received a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total	Did Not Receive a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total
2014-2015		
Black	( <i>n</i> = 976) 3.7%	( <i>n</i> = 25,438) 96.3%
Hispanic	( <i>n</i> = 2,510) 2.4%	( <i>n</i> = 102,204) 97.6%
White	( <i>n</i> = 772) 1.3%	( <i>n</i> = 59,934) 98.7%
Asian	( <i>n</i> = 15) 0.2%	( <i>n</i> = 7,607) 99.8%
2015-2016		
Black	( <i>n</i> = 1,037) 4.0%	( <i>n</i> = 25,006) 96.0%
Hispanic	( <i>n</i> = 2,344) 2.2%	( <i>n</i> = 101,882) 97.8%
White	( <i>n</i> = 688) 1.2%	( <i>n</i> = 58,592) 98.8%
Asian	( <i>n</i> = 17) 0.2%	( <i>n</i> = 7,928) 99.8%



Table 3.7

*Summary of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placements for Grade 6-8 Girls  
in the 2012-2013 Through the 2015-2016 School Years*

Grade Level and School Year	Cramer's V	Effect Size Range	Highest DAEP Rate
Grade 6			
2012-2013	.06	Below Small	Black
2013-2014	.06	Below Small	Black
2014-2015	.06	Below Small	Black
2015-2016	.05	Below Small	Black
Grade 7			
2012-2013	.07	Below Small	Black
2013-2014	.07	Below Small	Black
2014-2015	.06	Below Small	Black
2015-2016	.07	Below Small	Black
Grade 8			
2012-2013	.07	Below Small	Black
2013-2014	.06	Below Small	Black
2014-2015	.06	Below Small	Black
2015-2016	.07	Below Small	Black

**CHAPTER IV**

INEQUITIES IN DISCIPLINARY ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM  
PLACEMENTS BY ECONOMIC STATUS FOR TEXAS GRADE 6, 7, AND 8  
STUDENTS: A MULTIYEAR, STATEWIDE INVESTIGATION

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This dissertation follows the style and format of *Research in the Schools (RITS)*.

### **Abstract**

In this investigation, the extent to which inequities in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements were present by economic status (i.e., Not Poor, Moderately Poor, or Extremely Poor) for Grade 6, 7, and 8 White, Hispanic, and Black students was ascertained. Archival statewide data were analyzed from a Public Information Request form that was fulfilled from the Texas Education Agency Public Education Information Management System on all middle school students for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years. Inferential statistical analyses revealed statistically significant differences in all four school years. A stair-step effect was present for each year and at each grade level. Grade 6, 7, and 8 White, Hispanic, and Black students who were Extremely Poor received statistically significantly higher rates of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements than their peers who were Moderately Poor and their peers who were Not Poor. Grade 6, 7, and 8 White, Hispanic, and Black students who were Moderately Poor had statistically significantly higher rates of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements than their peers who were Not Poor. Recommendations for research are provided, as well as implications for policy and practice.

**Keywords:** Not Poor, Moderately Poor, Extremely Poor, Disciplinary Alternative Education Program, Grade 6, 7, and 8 students, Economic Status

INEQUITIES IN DISCIPLINARY ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM  
PLACEMENTS BY ECONOMIC STATUS FOR TEXAS GRADE 6, 7, AND 8  
STUDENTS: A MULTIYEAR, STATEWIDE INVESTIGATION

The formulation of laws such as the Federal Gun Free School Act of 1994 in which zero-tolerance policies were created resulted in the overuse and misuse of exclusionary discipline practices to address student misbehavior. Curtiss and Slate (2015) recently contended that exclusionary discipline practices have been overused and misused and, as a result have resulted in inequities for all students regardless of their ethnicity/race, gender, or economic status. Noted by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (2000), in a report to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights on the economic and racial disciplinary inequities of students, was that “A higher incidence of ethnic and racial minority students being affected by zero tolerance should not be the seen as disparate treatment or discrimination, but in terms of an issue of socioeconomic status” (p. 3). In agreement with that report were Butler, Lewis, Moore, and Scott (2012) who asserted one of the greatest predictors of student school suspensions is that of low economic status.

In a recent study on inequities in disciplinary consequence assignment in the state of Texas, Barnes and Slate (2016) analyzed discipline consequence data on Grade 5 and Grade 6 Texas elementary school students by their economic status in the 2013-2014 school year. They documented the presence of statistically significant differences in discipline consequence assignments by student economic status. Of the 13,469 disciplinary consequences that occurred in Grade 5 in their study, only 1,143 discipline consequences were given to students who were not economically disadvantaged. This

statistic means that 12,326 discipline consequences in Grade 5 were assigned to students who were in poverty; more than 10 times the consequences that were assigned to Grade 5 students who were not in poverty. With respect to the 78,570 disciplinary placements given to Grade 6 students, approximately 7,000 disciplinary placements were assigned to students not in poverty, while more than 71,000 disciplinary assignments were assigned to students in poverty (Texas Education Agency, 2014a, 2014b).

In a related investigation, also conducted on students in Texas public schools, Lopez and Slate (2016) specifically examined the degree to which Grade 7 and Grade 8 students were differentially assigned a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement as a function of their economic status. Lopez and Slate established the presence of statistically significant differences in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement for both Grade 7 and Grade 8 students on the basis on their economic status. Grade 7 students who were in poverty received this consequence 1,121 times whereas Grade 7 students who were not economically disadvantaged received this consequence 692 times. In addition, Grade 8 students were placed in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program three times more often than Grade 8 students who were not economically disadvantaged (Texas Education Agency, 2014a, 2014b).

Not addressed in the Barnes and Slate (2016) and in the Lopez and Slate (2016) studies was the relationship of economic status within ethnic/racial groups. Khan and Slate (2016), however, did analyze the degree to which economic status within three ethnic/racial groups (i.e., Black, Hispanic, and White) was related to the assignment of three major discipline consequences (i.e., in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, and Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement). Although Khan and Slate

(2016) analyzed data on in-school suspension and on out-of-school suspension, the interest in this article is on their Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement results. In their study, Black students who were economically disadvantaged received a total of 1,373 such consequences, compared to 205 Black students who were not in poverty and who received this consequence. As such, Black students in poverty received more than four times the rate of this consequence than did Black students who were not economically disadvantaged. Hispanic students in poverty were assigned a total of 3,192 Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements, compared to 309 Hispanic students who were not in poverty. These statistics were reflective that Hispanic students in poverty were assigned this consequence almost three times more than Hispanic students who were not poor. Similar results were present for White students in that White students who were economically disadvantaged received this consequence almost five times more than did White students who were not poor.

Research results previously discussed are congruent with other researchers such as Gregory et al. (2010) who determined that students from low-income families or who were enrolled in high poverty schools were statistically significantly more likely to receive disciplinary consequences and Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements than their peers who were not economically disadvantaged. Poverty status is a contributing factor to increased suspension rates, to dropout rates, and to academic disengagement and incarceration (Harlow, 2003). Chapman et al. (2011) reported students from low income families had a five times greater possibility of dropping out than students from higher income families.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Inequities in discipline consequence assignment have been established on the basis of student ethnicity/race, both for boys and for girls (e.g., Carrell & Hoekstra, 2010; Hilberth, 2010; Hilberth & Slate, 2014; Jones, 2013; Skiba & Peterson, 2000; Wallace, Goodkind, Wallace, & Bachman, 2008). In recent years, evidence has been provided that inequities in discipline consequence assignment also exist on the basis of student poverty (Barnes & Slate, 2016; Khan & Slate, 2016; Lopez & Slate, 2016). Inequities in discipline consequence assignment by student economic status, however, have not been as well documented as has inequities by student ethnicity/race. Moreover, the investigations that have been conducted were for a single school year, in each of the Barnes and Slate (2016), Khan and Slate (2016), and Lopez and Slate (2016) studies. As such, the extent to which their findings are generalizable over time is not known. The importance of knowing the degree to which the inequities that have been documented by student economic status are generalizable cannot be understated. Should consistencies be present in these violations of their civil rights to an appropriate education, then changes need to be made in discipline programs in schools.

### **Significance of the Study**

In this study, the degree to which differences were present in the receipt of a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement by economic status by Grade 6, 7, and 8 were examined for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and the 2015-2016 school years. For Grade 6, 7, and 8 White, Hispanic, and Black students, the extent to which inequities were present in their Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement assignment as a function of their economic status was determined. Given the

importance of instructional time for academic success, if students are removed from the instructional setting in an inequitable manner, then concerns arise regarding their civil rights. As such, this study may provide empirical data regarding inequities in the assignment of this discipline consequence by economic status for White, Hispanic, and Black students. The extent to which economic status has influenced the placement of students in Grade 6, 7, and 8 in a Disciplinary Alternative Educational Program placement within the three grade levels over the latest four school years may bring to light disproportionalities that may provide useful information to aid educational leaders.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to ascertain the extent to which inequities were present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements by economic status for Texas Grade 6, Grade 7, and Grade 8 students. By examining Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements for Grade 6, Grade 7, and Grade 8 White, Hispanic, and Black students, a comparison across grade levels was possible. Four school years of archival data from the Texas Education Agency Public Education Information Management System were analyzed to determine the degree to which Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements were differentially assigned to Grade 6, 7, and 8 White, Hispanic, and Black students by their economic status.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were addressed in this empirical investigation:

(a) What is the difference in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements as a function of economic status for Grade 6 students?; (b) What is the difference in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements as a function of economic status



for Grade 7 students?; (c) What is the difference in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements as a function of economic status for Grade 8 students?; and (d) What trends are present in the assignment of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements for Grade 6, 7, and 8 students by their economic status? The first three questions were examined for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and the 2015-2016 school years, separately for White, Hispanic, and Black students, whereas the fourth research question involved all four school years of data.

## **Method**

### **Research Design**

For this study, a causal comparative research design was employed. In this investigation, statewide archival data that were previously obtained from the Texas Education Agency Public Education Information Management System were analyzed. As such, the independent and dependent variables had already occurred and could not be manipulated. For these reasons, the research design used herein was a causal comparative research design (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). The data included Grade 6, Grade 7, and Grade 8 students by their economic status and whether they had received a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement. The independent variable of economic status for students consisted of three groups: (a) Students who did not qualify for the free/reduced lunch program (i.e., the Not Poor group); (b) students who qualified for the reduced lunch program (i.e., the Moderately Poor group); and (c) students who qualified for the free lunch program (i.e., the Extremely Poor group). For each school year (i.e., 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, 2015-2016), the dependent variable was receipt or non-receipt of a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement.

## **Participants and Instrumentation**

Students for whom data were analyzed were Grade 6, 7, and 8 students who were enrolled in Texas public middle schools in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years. Archival data were requested and obtained from the Texas Education Agency Public Education Information Management System for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years. The Texas Education Agency deems students as being eligible for the federal free-and reduced-lunch based on family income of 130% or less of the federal poverty line, and as being eligible for the reduced-lunch program based on family incomes of 131% to 185% of the federal poverty line (Burney & Beilke, 2008). Students who were eligible for the free lunch program were referred to as Extremely Poor. Students who were eligible for the reduced lunch program were referred to as Moderately Poor. Students who did not qualify for either program were referred to as Not Poor in this investigation. For the purposes of this study, the following definition is used as defined by Maughan (1999): Disciplinary Alternative Education Placement is a discretionary in-district alternative education setting assigned to students who commit non-criminal offenses or persistent misbehaviors,

Through submission of a Public Information Request form to the Texas Education Agency, data on Grade 6, 7, and 8 students by their economic status were requested. Data were provided for all Texas Grade 6, 7, and 8 students by their economic status (i.e., Not Poor, Moderately Poor, and Extremely Poor). Specifically provided by the Texas Education Agency were: (a) student economic status; (b) student grade level; and (c) whether the student had received a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement. Four school years of data were requested and obtained: 2012-2013, 2013-

2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016. Once the Texas Education Agency provided these data, they were converted into Statistical Package for the Social Sciences data files. Then data were analyzed separately for Grade 6, Grade 7, and Grade 8 White, Hispanic, and Black students by their economic status.

## **Results**

To address the research questions regarding Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements by degree of economic disadvantage, Pearson chi-square procedures were calculated. This statistical procedure was the ideal analysis to calculate because frequency data were present for both economic status and for Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement assignments for all 4 school years. A large sample size was available, providing a sample size that was more than five responses per cell. Therefore, the assumptions for using a Pearson chi-square procedure were met for each research question (Field, 2013). Results will now be provided, beginning with the 2012-2013 school year and with Grade 6 students and ending with the 2015-2016 school year and with Grade 8 students.

### **Results for Grade 6 White Students**

In the 2012-2013 school year for Grade 6 White students, a statistically significant difference was present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(2) = 839.89, p < .001$ , by economic status. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's V, was below small, .08 (Cohen, 1988). Revealed in the results was the presence of a stair-step effect (Carpenter, Ramirez, & Severn, 2006) in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements. Grade 6 White students who were Extremely Poor were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement almost

five times more often than White students who were Not Poor. Grade 6 White students who were Moderately Poor were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program more than two times more often than White students who were Not Poor. Grade 6 White students who were Extremely Poor were more than twice as likely assigned a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement than Grade 6 White students who were Moderately Poor. Frequencies and percentages of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements by economic status for Grade 6 White students in the 2012-2013 school year are presented in Table 4.1.

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With respect to the 2013-2014 school year, a statistically significant difference was present in the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(2) = 724.31, p < .001$ , by student economic status. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's  $V$ , was below small, .08 (Cohen, 1988). Revealed in the results was the presence of a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006). Grade 6 White students who were Extremely Poor were placed more than four times more often in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program than White students who were Not Poor. Grade 6 White students who were Moderately Poor were placed in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program twice as often as White students who were Not Poor. Grade 6 White students who were Extremely Poor were more than twice as likely assigned a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement than students who were Moderately Poor. Delineated in Table 4.1 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

Concerning 2014-2015, a statistically significant difference was present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(2) = 622.28, p < .001$ , by Grade 6 White student economic status. The effect size, Cramer's V, was below small, .07 (Cohen, 1988). Revealed was the presence of a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006). As presented in Table 4.1, Grade 6 White students who were Extremely Poor were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement five times more often than were Grade 6 White students who were Not Poor. Grade 6 White students who were Moderately Poor were assigned a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement more than twice as often than Grade 6 White students who were not Poor. White students in Grade 6 who were Extremely Poor were twice as likely assigned a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement than were Grade 6 students who were Moderately Poor.

Regarding 2015-2016, a statistically significant difference was present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(2) = 830.39, p < .001$ , by Grade 6 White student economic status. A below small effect size, Cramer's V of .08, was present (Cohen, 1988). Revealed was the presence of a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006). As presented in Table 4.1, Grade 6 White students who were Extremely Poor were assigned more than five times more often to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement than were Grade 6 White students who were Not Poor. Grade 6 White students who were Moderately Poor were assigned a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program twice as often than White students who were not Poor. Finally, Grade 6 White students who were Extremely Poor were almost three times more likely to

be assigned a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement than were Grade 6 White students who were Moderately Poor.

### **Results for Grade 7 White Students**

Regarding 2012-2013 for Grade 7 White students, a statistically significant difference was present in the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(2) = 1144.11, p < .001$ , by economic status. The effect size, Cramer's V, was small, .10 (Cohen, 1988). Revealed was the presence of a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006). Grade 7 White students who were Extremely Poor were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement almost four times more often than were Grade 7 White students who were Not Poor. Grade 7 White students who were Moderately Poor received twice as many Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements than Grade 7 White students who were Not Poor. Grade 7 White students who were Extremely Poor were assigned a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placement almost twice as often as their White peers who were Moderately Poor. Delineated in Table 4.2 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

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Concerning Grade 7 White students in 2013-2014, a statistically significant difference was present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(2) = 1282.46, p < .001$ , by student economic status. The effect size, Cramer's V, was small, .10 (Cohen, 1988). Present was a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006). Grade 7 White students who were Extremely Poor were assigned a Disciplinary Alternative

Education Program placement more than four times more often than were White students who were Not Poor. Grade 7 White students who were Moderately Poor were placed in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement more than two times more often than Grade 7 White students who were Not Poor. Grade 7 White students who were Extremely Poor were assigned this consequence almost two times more often than Grade 7 White students who were Moderately Poor. Table 4.2 contains the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

With respect to 2014-2015, a statistically significant difference was present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(2) = 1030.98, p < .001$ , by Grade 7 White student economic status. The effect size, Cramer's V, was below small, .09 (Cohen, 1988). Revealed was a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006). Grade 7 White students who were Extremely Poor were assigned this consequence two and one half times more often than were Grade 7 White students who were Not Poor. Grade 7 White students who were Moderately Poor were assigned a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement one and a quarter times more often than White students who were Not Poor. Grade 7 White students who were Extremely Poor received a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement two times as often as Grade 7 White students who were Moderately Poor. Descriptive statistics for this analysis are revealed in Table 4.2.

Regarding 2015-2016, a statistically significant difference was present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(2) = 1007.83, p < .001$ , by Grade 7 White student economic status. The effect size, Cramer's V, was below small, .09 (Cohen, 1988). Revealed was the presence of a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al.,

2006). Grade 7 White students who were Extremely Poor received this consequence more than four times more often than Grade 7 White students who were Not Poor. Grade 7 White students who were Moderately Poor were assigned this consequence two times more often than Grade 7 White students who were Not Poor. Grade 7 White students who were Extremely Poor were assigned this consequence two times more often than Grade 7 White students who were Moderately Poor. Revealed in Table 4.2 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

### **Results for Grade 8 White Students**

In 2012-2013 for Grade 8 White students, a statistically significant difference was present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(2) = 1303.46, p < .001$ , by economic status. The effect size, Cramer's V, was small, .10 (Cohen, 1988). Revealed was the presence of a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006). Grade 8 White students who were Extremely Poor were assigned this consequence more than three and one half times more often than Grade 8 White students who were Not Poor. Grade 8 White students who were Moderately Poor were assigned this consequence more than two times more often than Grade 8 White students who were Not Poor. Grade 8 White students who were Extremely Poor were assigned this consequence more than one and one half times more often than Grade 8 White students who were Moderately Poor. Delineated in Table 4.3 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

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With respect to 2013-2014, a statistically significant difference was present,  $\chi^2(2) = 1499.62, p < .001$ , by student economic status. The effect size, Cramer's V, was small, .11 (Cohen, 1988). Revealed was the presence of a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006). Grade 8 White students who were Extremely Poor were assigned this consequence more than three and one half times more often than Grade 8 White students who were Not Poor. Grade 8 White students who were Moderately Poor were assigned this consequence almost two times more often than Grade 8 White students who were Not Poor. Grade 8 White students who were Extremely Poor were assigned this consequence almost two times more often than Grade 8 White students who were Moderately Poor. Table 4.3 contains the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

Concerning 2014-2015, a statistically significant difference was present,  $\chi^2(2) = 1407.59, p < .001$ , by Grade 8 White student economic status. The effect size, Cramer's V, was small, .11 (Cohen, 1988). Revealed was a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006). Grade 8 White students who were Extremely Poor were assigned this consequence more than three and one half times more often than Grade 8 White students who were Not Poor. Grade 8 White students who were Moderately Poor were assigned this consequence one and one half times more often than Grade 8 White students who were Not Poor. Grade 8 White students who were Extremely Poor received this consequence more than one and one half times more often than Grade 8 White students who were Moderately Poor. Descriptive statistics are revealed in Table 4.3.

Regarding 2015-2016, a statistically significant difference was present,  $\chi^2(2) = 1234.08, p < .001$ , by Grade 8 White student economic status. The effect size, Cramer's V, was small, .10 (Cohen, 1988). Revealed was a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006)

by student economic status. Grade 8 White students who were Extremely Poor received this consequence almost two times more often than Grade 8 White students who were Not Poor. Grade 8 White students who were Moderately Poor were assigned this consequence twice as often as Grade 8 White students who were Not Poor. Grade 8 White students who were Extremely Poor and Grade 8 White students who were Moderately Poor had similar percentages of students who were assigned this consequence. Table 4.3 contains the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

### **Results for Grade 6 Hispanic Students**

In 2012-2013 for Grade 6 Hispanic students, a statistically significant difference was present in the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(2) = 371.97, p < .001$ , by economic status. The effect size, Cramer's V, was below small, .05 (Cohen, 1988). Grade 6 Hispanic students who were Extremely Poor were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement more than two times more often than were Grade 6 Hispanic students who were Not Poor. Grade 6 Hispanic students who were Extremely Poor were assigned a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement more than two times more often than were Grade 6 Hispanic students who were Moderately Poor. In this school year, similar percentages of Grade 6 Hispanic students who were in the Not Poor and Moderately Poor groups were assigned to this disciplinary consequence. Descriptive statistics for this analysis are presented in Table 4.4.

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With respect to 2013-2014, a statistically significant difference was present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(2) = 724.31, p < .001$ , by student economic status. The effect size, Cramer's V, was below small, .08 (Cohen, 1988). Grade 6 Hispanic students who were Extremely Poor were assigned a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement more than two times more often than were Hispanic students who were Not Poor. Grade 6 Hispanic students who were Extremely Poor were assigned a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement more than two times more often than Hispanic students who were Moderately Poor. Similar to the previous results, similar percentages of Grade 6 Hispanic students who were in the Not Poor and Moderately Poor groups were assigned to this disciplinary consequence. Delineated in Table 4.4 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

Concerning 2014-2015, a statistically significant difference was present in the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(2) = 622.28, p < .001$ , by Grade 6 Hispanic student economic status. The effect size, Cramer's V, was below small, .07 (Cohen, 1988). Revealed was the presence of a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006). As revealed in Table 4.4, Grade 6 Hispanic students who were Extremely Poor were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement more than two times more often than were Grade 6 Hispanic students who were Not Poor. Grade 6 Hispanic students who were Moderately Poor were assigned a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement almost one and a quarter times more than Hispanic students who were Not Poor. Grade 6 Hispanic students who were Extremely Poor were assigned a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement almost two times more often than Grade 6 Hispanic students who were Moderately Poor.

Regarding 2015-2016, a statistically significant difference was present in the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(2) = 622.28, p < .001$ , by Grade 6 Hispanic student economic status. The effect size, Cramer's V, was below small, .07 (Cohen, 1988). Grade 6 Hispanic students who were Extremely Poor were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement two times more often than were Grade 6 Hispanic students who were Not Poor and two times more often to Grade 6 Hispanic students who were Moderately Poor. Similar to the first two school year results, similar percentages of Grade 6 Hispanic students who were in the Not Poor and Moderately Poor groups were assigned to this disciplinary consequence. Delineated in Table 4.4 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

#### **Results for Grade 7 Hispanic Students**

Regarding 2012-2013 for Grade 7 Hispanic students, a statistically significant difference was present in the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(2) = 496.99, p < .001$ , by economic status. The effect size, Cramer's V, was below small, .05 (Cohen, 1988). Grade 7 Hispanic students who were Extremely Poor were assigned this consequence almost two times more often than were Grade 7 Hispanic students who were Not Poor and more than two times more often than Grade 7 Hispanic students who were Moderately Poor. Similar percentages of Grade 7 Hispanic students who were in the Not Poor and Moderately Poor groups were assigned this consequence. Table 4.5 contains the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

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Concerning Grade 7 Hispanic students in 2013-2014, a statistically significant difference was present in the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(2) = 501.94, p < .001$ , by economic status. The effect size, Cramer's V, was below small, .05 (Cohen, 1988). Grade 7 Hispanic students who were Extremely Poor were assigned this consequence two times more often than were Hispanic students who were Not Poor and more than two times more often than Grade 7 Hispanic students who were Moderately Poor. Similar percentages of Grade 7 Hispanic students who were in the Not Poor and Moderately Poor groups were assigned this consequence. Revealed in Table 4.5 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

With respect to 2014-2015, a statistically significant difference was present in the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(2) = 468.47, p < .001$ , by Grade 7 Hispanic student economic status. The effect size, Cramer's V, was below small, .05 (Cohen, 1988). Grade 7 Hispanic students who were Extremely Poor were assigned this consequence almost two times more often than were Grade 7 Hispanic students who were Not Poor and more than two and one half times more often than Grade 7 Hispanic students who were Extremely Poor. Similar percentages of Grade 7 Hispanic students who were in the Not Poor and Moderately Poor groups were assigned this consequence. Descriptive statistics for this analysis are delineated in Table 4.5.

Regarding 2015-2016, a statistically significant difference was present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(2) = 473.37, p < .001$ , by Grade 7 Hispanic economic status. The effect size, Cramer's V, was below small, .05 (Cohen, 1988). Grade 7 Hispanic students who were Extremely Poor received this consequence two times more often than Grade 7 Hispanic students who were Not Poor

and more than two and one half times more often than Grade 7 Hispanic students who were Moderately Poor. Similar percentages of Grade 7 Hispanic students who were in the Not Poor and Moderately Poor groups were assigned this consequence. Revealed in Table 4.5 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

### **Results for Grade 8 Hispanic Students**

In 2012-2013 for Grade 8 Hispanic students, a statistically significant difference was present in the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements,  $\chi^2(2) = 397.82, p < .001$ , by economic status, with a below small Cramer's V, .05 (Cohen, 1988). Grade 8 Hispanic students who were Extremely Poor were assigned this consequence more than one and half times more often than Grade 8 Hispanic students who were Not Poor and almost two times more often than Grade 8 Hispanic students who were Moderately Poor. Similar percentages of Grade 8 Hispanic students who were in the Not Poor and Moderately Poor groups were assigned this consequence. Delineated in Table 4.6 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

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With respect to 2013-2014, a statistically significant difference was present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement,  $\chi^2(2) = 417.04, p < .001$ , by student economic status, with a below small effect size, Cramer's V of .05. Grade 8 Hispanic students who were Extremely Poor were assigned this consequence more than one and one half times more often than Grade 8 Hispanic students who were Not Poor and more than two times more often than Grade 8 Hispanic students who were

Moderately Poor. In this school year, Grade 8 Hispanic students who were Moderately Poor were assigned this consequence almost one quarter more often than were Grade 8 Hispanic students who were Not Poor. Table 4.6 contains the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

Concerning 2014-2015, a statistically significant difference was present,  $\chi^2(2) = 468.47, p < .001$ , by Grade 8 Hispanic student economic status, with a below small effect size, Cramer's V of .05. Grade 8 Hispanic students who were Extremely Poor were assigned this consequence more than one and one half times than Grade 8 Hispanic students who were Not Poor and more than two times more often than Grade 8 Hispanic students who were Moderately Poor. Similar to the previous school year, Grade 8 Hispanic students who were Moderately Poor were assigned this consequence more than a quarter times more often than Grade 8 Hispanic students who were Not Poor.

Descriptive statistics for this analysis are revealed in Table 4.6.

Regarding 2015-2016, a statistically significant difference was present,  $\chi^2(2) = 474.947, p < .001$ , by Grade 8 Hispanic student economic status, with a below small effect size, Cramer's V of .05. Grade 8 Hispanic students who were Extremely Poor received this consequence more than one and one half times more often than Grade 8 Hispanic students who were Not Poor and more than two times more often than Grade 8 Hispanic students who were Moderately Poor. Similar to the previous two school years, Grade 8 Hispanic students who were Moderately Poor were assigned this consequence more than a quarter times more often than Grade 8 Hispanic students who were Not Poor. Table 4.6 contains the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

### Results for Grade 6 Black Students

In 2012-2013 for Grade 6 Black students, a statistically significant difference was present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement,  $\chi^2(2) = 222.10$ ,  $p < .001$ , by economic status, with a below small effect size, Cramer's V of .07 (Cohen, 1988). Grade 6 Black students who were Extremely Poor were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement more than almost two and one half times more often than were Grade 6 Black students who were Not Poor and more than two and one half times more often than Grade 6 Black students who were Moderately Poor. Similar percentages of Grade 6 Black students in the Not Poor and the Moderately Poor groups were assigned this consequence. Descriptive statistics for this school year are presented in Table 4.7.

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With respect to 2013-2014, a statistically significant difference was present,  $\chi^2(2) = 724.31$ ,  $p < .001$ , by student economic status, with a below small effect size, Cramer's V of .08 (Cohen, 1988). Revealed was the presence of a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006) in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements by student economic status. Grade 6 Black students who were Extremely Poor were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement more than two and one half times more often than were Black students who were Not Poor and almost two times more often than were Grade 6 Black students who were Moderately Poor. Grade 6 Black students who were Moderately Poor were assigned this consequence almost a quarter



times more often than were Grade 6 Black students who were Moderately Poor.

Delineated in Table 4.7 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

Concerning 2014-2015, a statistically significant difference was present,  $\chi^2(2) = 622.28, p < .001$ , by Grade 6 Black student economic status, with a below small effect size, Cramer's V of .07 (Cohen, 1988). Grade 6 Black students who were Extremely Poor were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement more than two and one half times more often than were Grade 6 Black students who were Not Poor and more than two times more often than Grade 6 Black students who were Moderately Poor. Similar percentages of Grade 6 Black students who were in the Not Poor and Moderately Poor groups were assigned this consequence in this school year. Table 4.7 contains the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

Regarding 2015-2016, a statistically significant difference was present,  $\chi^2(2) = 622.28, p < .001$ , by Grade 6 Black student economic status, with a below small effect size, Cramer's V of .07 (Cohen, 1988). As revealed in Table 4.7, Grade 6 Black students who were Extremely Poor were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement more than two times more often than were Grade 6 Black students who were Not Poor and more than two times more often than Grade 6 Black students who were Moderately Poor. Congruent with the previous school year results, similar percentages of Grade 6 Black students who were in the Not Poor and Moderately Poor groups were assigned this consequence in this school year.

### **Results for Grade 7 Black Students**

Regarding 2012-2013 for Grade 7 Black students, a statistically significant difference was present,  $\chi^2(2) = 243.83, p < .001$ , by economic status, with a below small

effect size, Cramer's V of .07 (Cohen, 1988). Grade 7 Black students who were Extremely Poor were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement almost two times more often than were Grade 7 Black students who were Not Poor and more than two times more often than Grade 7 Black students who were Moderately Poor. Similar percentages of Grade 7 Black students who were in the Not Poor and Moderately Poor groups were assigned this consequence in this school year. Revealed in Table 4.8 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

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Concerning Grade 7 Black students in 2013-2014, a statistically significant difference was present,  $\chi^2(2) = 279.10, p < .001$ , by student economic status, with a below small effect size, Cramer's V of .07 (Cohen, 1988). Grade 7 Black students who were Extremely Poor were assigned this consequence more than two times more often than Grade 7 Black students who were Not Poor and more than two times more often than Grade 7 Black students who were Moderately Poor. Similar percentages of Grade 7 Black students who were in the Not Poor and Moderately Poor groups were assigned this consequence. Table 4.8 contains the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

With respect to 2014-2015, a statistically significant difference was present,  $\chi^2(2) = 200.90, p < .001$ , by Grade 7 Black student economic status, with a below small effect size, Cramer's V of .06 (Cohen, 1988). Revealed was a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006) in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements by student economic status. Grade 7 Black students who were Extremely Poor were assigned this consequence

almost two times more often than were Grade 7 Black students who were Not Poor and more than one and one half times more often than Grade 7 Black students who were Moderately Poor. Commensurate with the previous school year, similar percentages of Grade 7 Black students who were in the Not Poor and Moderately Poor groups were assigned this consequence in this school year. Descriptive statistics for this analysis are revealed in Table 4.8.

Regarding 2015-2016, a statistically significant difference was present,  $\chi^2(2) = 237.09, p < .001$ , by Grade 7 Black student economic status, with a below small effect size, Cramer's V of .07 (Cohen, 1988). Grade 7 Black students who were Extremely Poor were assigned this consequence more than two times more often than were Grade 7 Black students who were Not Poor and more than two times more often than Grade 7 Black students who were Moderately Poor. Congruent with the previous two school years, similar percentages of Grade 7 Black students who were in the Not Poor and Moderately Poor groups were assigned this consequence in this school year. Revealed in Table 4.8 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

### **Results for Grade 8 Black Students**

In 2012-2013 for Grade 8 Black students, a statistically significant difference was present,  $\chi^2(2) = 265.74, p < .001$ , by economic status, with a below small effect size, Cramer's V of .07 (Cohen, 1988). Grade 8 Black students who were Extremely Poor were assigned this consequence more than one and one half times more often than Grade 8 Black students who were Not Poor and more than two times more often than Grade 8 Black students who were Moderately Poor. Grade 8 Black students who were Moderately Poor were assigned this consequence almost one quarter times more often

than were Grade 8 Black students who were Not Poor. Delineated in Table 4.9 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

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Insert Table 4.9 about here  
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With respect to Grade 8 Black students in 2013-2014, a statistically significant difference was present,  $\chi^2(2) = 247.71, p < .001$ , by student economic status, with a below small effect size, Cramer's V of .07 (Cohen, 1988). Grade 8 Black students who were Extremely Poor were assigned this consequence more than one and one half times more often than Grade 8 Black students who were Not Poor and more than two times more often than Grade 8 Black students who were Moderately Poor. Grade 8 Black students who were Moderately Poor were assigned this consequence almost a quarter times more often than were Grade 8 Black students who were Not Poor. Table 4.9 contains the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

Concerning 2014-2015, a statistically significant difference was present,  $\chi^2(2) = 307.56, p < .001$ , by Grade 8 Black student economic status, with a below small effect size, Cramer's V of .08 (Cohen, 1988). Grade 8 Black students who were Extremely Poor were assigned this consequence more than two times more often than were Grade 8 Black students who were Not Poor and more than two times more often than Grade 8 Black students who were Moderately Poor. Similar percentages of Grade 8 Black students who were in the Not Poor and Moderately Poor groups were assigned this consequence in this school year. Descriptive statistics for this analysis are in Table 4.9.

Regarding 2015-2016, a statistically significant difference was present,  $\chi^2(2) = 235.46, p < .001$ , by Grade 8 Black student economic status, with a below small effect size, Cramer's V of .07 (Cohen, 1988). Grade 8 Black students who were Extremely Poor were assigned this consequence more than one and one half times more often than Grade 8 Black students who were Not Poor and more than two times more often than Grade 8 Black students who were Moderately Poor. Congruent with the previous school year, similar percentages of Grade 8 Black students who were in the Not Poor and Moderately Poor groups were assigned this consequence in this school year. Table 4.9 contains the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

Concerning the research question involving the presence of trends, in all four school years, in all three grade levels, and for each ethnic/racial group, students, regardless of their ethnicity/race, who were Extremely Poor were assigned higher rates of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements than their peers who were either Moderately Poor or Not Poor. Students who were Moderately Poor had statistically significantly higher rates of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements than their peers who were Not Poor. These results were consistent across grade levels, across ethnic/racial groups, and across the four years of data.

### **Discussion**

In this study, the degree to which differences were present in the receipt of a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement by economic status by Grade 6, 7, and 8 students were examined for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and the 2015-2016 school years. For Grade 6, 7, and 8 White, Hispanic, and Black students, inequities were clearly established in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements by

student economic status. Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement rates for Grade 6-8 White students who were Extremely Poor ranged from 2.0% to 5.3%. For White students who were Moderately Poor, Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement rates ranged from 0.8% to 3.2%, and for White students who were Not Poor, the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement rates ranged from 0.4% to 1.5% within the 4-year study. The presence of a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006) was clearly present in the assignment of this consequence by student degree of poverty. Readers are directed to Table 4.10 for a summary of effect sizes for Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement rates by economic status for Grade 6-8 White students across the four school years.

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Insert Table 4.10 about here  
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Hispanic students in Grades 6-8 who were Extremely Poor were assigned Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement rates from 1.6% to 4.8% in these four school years. For Hispanic students who were Moderately Poor, Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement rates ranged from 0.8% to 2.5% and from 0.8% to 2.9% for Hispanic students who were Not Poor. Table 4.11 contains a summary of effect sizes for Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement rates by economic status for Grade 6, 7, and 8 Hispanic students across the four school years.

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Insert Table 4.11 about here  
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Black students who were Extremely Poor had the highest rates of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements. Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement rates for Black students who were Extremely Poor ranged from 3.8% to 8.0% in these four school years. For Black students who were Moderately Poor, Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements ranged from 1.8% to 3.8% within the four school years. For Black students who were Not Poor, Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement rates ranged from 1.6% to 4.4% in these four school years. The presence of a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006) in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements by student economic status was clearly established for Grade 6 Black students. Table 4.12 contains a summary of effect sizes for Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements by economic status for Grade 6-8 Black students across the four school years.

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Insert Table 4.12 about here  
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### **Connections with Existing Literature**

In this multiyear statewide analysis, results were commensurate with the results of previous researchers (e.g., Barnes & Slate, 2016; Khan & Slate, 2016; Lopez & Slate, 2016; Skiba et al., 2011; Texas Education Agency, 2014a) regarding the presence of inequities in the assignment of discipline consequences. Khan and Slate (2016) established the presence of strong disproportionalities in the assignment of discipline consequences to Black, Hispanic, and White students on the basis of their economic status. Results delineated here were in strong agreement with Khan and Slate (2016). In

a previous investigation, Gregory et al. (2010) determined that students from low-income families or who were enrolled in high poverty schools were statistically significantly more likely to receive disciplinary consequences and Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements than their peers who were not economically disadvantaged. Similar consistencies were also revealed in a related investigation by Lopez and Slate (2016) in which they established the presences of statistically significant higher rates of assignments to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement for both Grade 7 and Grade 8 students who were economically disadvantaged in comparison to their grade level peers who were not economically disadvantaged. In this 4-year statewide investigation, Black students who were Extremely Poor had the highest rates of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement; rates that ranged from 3.8% to 8.0% across the three grade levels. Strongly evident in this investigation was the presence of a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006) in the assignment of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements by student economic status.

### **Implications for Policy and for Practice**

Several implications for policy and for practice can be made from the results of this multiyear, empirical statewide investigation. First, educational leaders and school administrators should analyze their school campus and their school district discipline data to ascertain the degree to which disproportionalities might be present. Specifically examined should be the consequences of in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements, expulsions, and Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placements. In the audits that are conducted, educational leaders are encouraged to examine the degree to which disproportionalities might be



present in their school assignment of disciplinary consequences on the basis of student economic status, ethnicity/race, or gender. Through the program evaluation information that is obtained, the information could be used to improve existing discipline programs or to development new discipline programs. A second implication is that education leaders and school administrators need to have disciplinary codes of conduct structured to eliminate disproportionate discipline methods as well as minimizing the presence of any subjectivity of in assignment this discipline consequence. Another implication would be to analyze the history of students who are assigned discipline consequences. Do these students misbehave repeatedly over a multiyear period such that they receive several in-school suspensions, followed by several out-of-school suspensions, and then by a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement or a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement? If so, this process would suggest a failure in the discipline methods that were used. A final recommendation is for policymakers in Texas to require a statewide analysis of discipline consequences to determine the degree to which inequities might be present. Such inequities could be construed as being violations of students' civil rights to have an appropriate and free education.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

Based upon the results of this multiyear, statewide investigation, several suggestions for future research can be made. First, researchers are encouraged to examine the degree to which inequities might be present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements as a function of student ethnicity/race. Such studies could be conducted separately for boys and for girls, rather than analyzing both groups of students together. The extent to which inequities might be different for boys and for girls

is not known. A third recommendation would be for researchers to extend this investigation to students in other grade levels. Analyzing data at the elementary school level could provide useful information regarding the frequency with which this consequence is administered to young children. Extending this investigation to students at the high school level could also provide valuable information to education leaders and policymakers.

Because this investigation was based entirely on Texas data, researchers are encouraged to extend this study into other states. The degree to which the findings delineated herein are generalizable to students in other states is not known. In this investigation, only the discipline consequence of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement was analyzed. Researchers are encouraged to examine other discipline consequences such as in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, and Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placements. More empirical information is needed regarding the presence or absence of inequities in the assignment of these discipline consequences to students based on their economic status, ethnicity/race, or gender. A final recommendation for future research is to examine the reasons why students are assigned discipline consequences. Are students assigned different consequences for the same misbehavior due to their economic status, their ethnicity/race, or gender?

### **Conclusion**

The purpose of this research was to determine the extent to which inequities were present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements by the economic status of Texas Grade 6, 7, and 8 White, Hispanic, and Black students. Four school years of

archival data from the Texas Education Agency Public Education Information Management System were analyzed. In each of the school years, White, Hispanic, and Black students who were Extremely Poor were assigned statistically significantly higher rates of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements than their peers who were either Moderately Poor or who were Not Poor. As such, a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006) was clearly present in the assignment of this consequence by student degree of poverty. Findings of this 4-year Texas statewide investigation were congruent with the results of previous researchers (e.g., Barnes & Slate, 2016; Khan & Slate, 2016; Lopez & Slate, 2016; Skiba et al., 2011; Texas Education Agency, 2014a) regarding the presence of inequities in the assignment of discipline consequences.

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Table 4.1

*Frequencies and Percentages of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placements by Economic Status for Grade 6 White Students in the 2012-2013 Through the 2015-2016 School Years*

School Year and Economic Status	Received a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total	Did Not Receive a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total
2012-2013		
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 414) 0.5%	( <i>n</i> = 84,268) 99.5%
Moderately Poor	( <i>n</i> = 93) 1.3%	( <i>n</i> = 7,061) 98.7%
Extremely Poor	( <i>n</i> = 744) 2.4%	( <i>n</i> = 29,967) 97.6%
2013-2014		
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 393) 0.5%	( <i>n</i> = 82,850) 99.5%
Moderately Poor	( <i>n</i> = 67) 1.0%	( <i>n</i> = 6,691) 99.0%
Extremely Poor	( <i>n</i> = 668) 2.2%	( <i>n</i> = 29,464) 97.8%
2014-2015		
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 362) 0.4%	( <i>n</i> = 84,188) 99.6%
Moderately Poor	( <i>n</i> = 66) 1.0%	( <i>n</i> = 6,394) 99.0%
Extremely Poor	( <i>n</i> = 561) 2.0%	( <i>n</i> = 27,851) 98.0%
2015-2016		
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 328) 0.4%	( <i>n</i> = 83,460) 99.6%
Moderately Poor	( <i>n</i> = 48) 0.8%	( <i>n</i> = 5,812) 99.2%
Extremely Poor	( <i>n</i> = 636) 2.2%	( <i>n</i> = 28,282) 97.8%

Table 4.2

*Frequencies and Percentages of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placements by Economic Status for Grade 7 White Students in the 2012-2013 Through the 2015-2016 School Years*

School Year and Economic Status	Received a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total	Did Not Receive a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total
2012-2013		
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 846) 1.0%	( <i>n</i> = 87,052) 99.0%
Moderately Poor	( <i>n</i> = 142) 2.0%	( <i>n</i> = 6,939) 98.0%
Extremely Poor	( <i>n</i> = 1,157) 3.9%	( <i>n</i> = 28,371) 96.1%
2013-2014		
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 713) 0.8%	( <i>n</i> = 86,019) 99.2%
Moderately Poor	( <i>n</i> = 122) 1.9%	( <i>n</i> = 6,308) 98.1%
Extremely Poor	( <i>n</i> = 995) 3.5%	( <i>n</i> = 27,148) 96.5%
2014-2015		
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 726) 0.8%	( <i>n</i> = 85,506) 99.2%
Moderately Poor	( <i>n</i> = 66) 1.0%	( <i>n</i> = 6,394) 99.0%
Extremely Poor	( <i>n</i> = 561) 2.0%	( <i>n</i> = 27,851) 98.0%
2015-2016		
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 651) 0.8%	( <i>n</i> = 84,782) 99.2%
Moderately Poor	( <i>n</i> = 97) 1.6%	( <i>n</i> = 5,938) 98.4%
Extremely Poor	( <i>n</i> = 938) 3.3%	( <i>n</i> = 27,220) 96.7%



Table 4.3

*Frequencies and Percentages of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placements by Economic Status for Grade 8 White Students in the 2012-2013 Through the 2015-2016 School Years*

School Year and Economic Status	Received a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total	Did Not Receive a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total
2012-2013		
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 1,326) 1.5%	( <i>n</i> = 87,431) 98.5%
Moderately Poor	( <i>n</i> = 217) 3.2%	( <i>n</i> = 6,563) 96.8%
Extremely Poor	( <i>n</i> = 1,507) 5.3%	( <i>n</i> = 27,086) 94.7%
2013-2014		
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 1,221) 1.4%	( <i>n</i> = 88,785) 98.6%
Moderately Poor	( <i>n</i> = 179) 2.7%	( <i>n</i> = 6,465) 97.3%
Extremely Poor	( <i>n</i> = 1,502) 5.3%	( <i>n</i> = 26,642) 94.7%
2014-2015		
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 1,142) 1.3%	( <i>n</i> = 84,378) 98.7%
Moderately Poor	( <i>n</i> = 139) 2.2%	( <i>n</i> = 6,215) 97.8%
Extremely Poor	( <i>n</i> = 1,391) 5.0%	( <i>n</i> = 26,258) 95.0%
2015-2016		
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 1,102) 1.3%	( <i>n</i> = 86,126) 98.7%
Moderately Poor	( <i>n</i> = 155) 2.6%	( <i>n</i> = 5,771) 97.4%
Extremely Poor	( <i>n</i> = 636) 2.2%	( <i>n</i> = 28,282) 97.8%

Table 4.4

*Frequencies and Percentages of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placements by Economic Status for Grade 6 Hispanic Students in the 2012-2013 Through the 2015-2016 School Years*

School Year and Economic Status	Received a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total	Did Not Receive a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total
2012-2013		
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 451) 1.1%	( <i>n</i> = 40,901) 98.9%
Moderately Poor	( <i>n</i> = 144) 0.9%	( <i>n</i> = 15,394) 99.1%
Extremely Poor	( <i>n</i> = 2,822) 2.4%	( <i>n</i> = 114,230) 97.6%
2013-2014		
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 399) 1.0%	( <i>n</i> = 41,314) 99.0%
Moderately Poor	( <i>n</i> = 143) 0.9%	( <i>n</i> = 15,561) 99.1%
Extremely Poor	( <i>n</i> = 2,499) 2.2%	( <i>n</i> = 112,952) 97.8%
2014-2015		
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 424) 0.9%	( <i>n</i> = 46,078) 99.1%
Moderately Poor	( <i>n</i> = 157) 1.1%	( <i>n</i> = 14,769) 98.9%
Extremely Poor	( <i>n</i> = 2,407) 2.0%	( <i>n</i> = 116,455) 98.0%
2015-2016		
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 393) 0.8%	( <i>n</i> = 47,198) 99.2%
Moderately Poor	( <i>n</i> = 113) 0.8%	( <i>n</i> = 13,878) 99.2%
Extremely Poor	( <i>n</i> = 2,914) 1.6%	( <i>n</i> = 181,862) 98.4%

Table 4.5

*Frequencies and Percentages of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placements by Economic Status for Grade 7 Hispanic Students in the 2012-2013 Through the 2015-2016 School Years*

School Year and Economic Status	Received a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total	Did Not Receive a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total
2012-2013		
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 908) 2.1%	( <i>n</i> = 42,678) 97.9%
Moderately Poor	( <i>n</i> = 277) 1.8%	( <i>n</i> = 14,852) 98.2%
Extremely Poor	( <i>n</i> = 4,555) 4.1%	( <i>n</i> = 107,657) 95.9%
2013-2014		
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 823) 1.9%	( <i>n</i> = 43,618) 98.1%
Moderately Poor	( <i>n</i> = 293) 1.8%	( <i>n</i> = 15,795) 98.2%
Extremely Poor	( <i>n</i> = 4,460) 3.8%	( <i>n</i> = 113,025) 96.2%
2014-2015		
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 906) 1.9%	( <i>n</i> = 47,571) 98.1%
Moderately Poor	( <i>n</i> = 211) 1.4%	( <i>n</i> = 14,604) 98.6%
Extremely Poor	( <i>n</i> = 3,999) 3.5%	( <i>n</i> = 111,872) 96.5%
2015-2016		
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 796) 1.6%	( <i>n</i> = 48,267) 98.4%
Moderately Poor	( <i>n</i> = 174) 1.2%	( <i>n</i> = 13,852) 98.8%
Extremely Poor	( <i>n</i> = 3,899) 3.2%	( <i>n</i> = 116,171) 96.8%

Table 4.6

*Frequencies and Percentages of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placements by Economic Status for Grade 8 Hispanic Students in the 2012-2013 Through the 2015-2016 School Years*

School Year and Economic Status	Received a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total	Did Not Receive a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total
2012-2013		
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 1,275) 2.9%	( <i>n</i> = 43,088) 97.1%
Moderately Poor	( <i>n</i> = 14,462) 2.5%	( <i>n</i> = 14,462) 97.5%
Extremely Poor	( <i>n</i> = 5,138) 4.8%	( <i>n</i> = 102,016) 95.2%
2013-2014		
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 1,356) 2.9%	( <i>n</i> = 45,022) 97.1%
Moderately Poor	( <i>n</i> = 345) 2.2%	( <i>n</i> = 15,159) 97.8%
Extremely Poor	( <i>n</i> = 5,322) 4.7%	( <i>n</i> = 107,423) 95.3%
2014-2015		
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 1,361) 2.7%	( <i>n</i> = 49,883) 97.3%
Moderately Poor	( <i>n</i> = 320) 2.1%	( <i>n</i> = 14,727) 97.9%
Extremely Poor	( <i>n</i> = 5,230) 4.5%	( <i>n</i> = 110,099) 95.5%
2015-2016		
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 1,184) 2.3%	( <i>n</i> = 49,731) 97.7%
Moderately Poor	( <i>n</i> = 265) 1.9%	( <i>n</i> = 13,659) 98.1%
Extremely Poor	( <i>n</i> = 4,835) 4.2%	( <i>n</i> = 110,742) 95.8%

Table 4.7

*Frequencies and Percentages of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placements by Economic Status for Grade 6 Black Students in the 2012-2013 Through the 2015-2016 School Years*

School Year and Economic Status	Received a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total	Did Not Receive a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total
2012-2013		
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 249) 1.9%	( <i>n</i> = 12,677) 98.1%
Moderately Poor	( <i>n</i> = 76) 2.0%	( <i>n</i> = 3,767) 98.0%
Extremely Poor	( <i>n</i> = 1,546) 4.6%	( <i>n</i> = 32,038) 95.4%
2013-2014		
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 214) 1.7%	( <i>n</i> = 12,713) 98.3%
Moderately Poor	( <i>n</i> = 85) 2.2%	( <i>n</i> = 3,742) 97.8%
Extremely Poor	( <i>n</i> = 1,358) 4.1%	( <i>n</i> = 31,664) 95.9%
2014-2015		
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 224) 1.6%	( <i>n</i> = 13,688) 98.4%
Moderately Poor	( <i>n</i> = 68) 1.9%	( <i>n</i> = 3,556) 98.1%
Extremely Poor	( <i>n</i> = 1,352) 4.3%	( <i>n</i> = 30,330) 95.7%
2015-2016		
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 232) 1.7%	( <i>n</i> = 13,691) 98.3%
Moderately Poor	( <i>n</i> = 63) 1.8%	( <i>n</i> = 3,434) 98.2%
Extremely Poor	( <i>n</i> = 1,238) 3.8%	( <i>n</i> = 31,043) 96.2%

Table 4.8

*Frequencies and Percentages of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placements by Economic Status for Grade 7 Black Students in the 2012-2013 Through the 2015-2016 School Years*

School Year and Economic Status	Received a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total	Did Not Receive a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total
2012-2013		
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 470) 3.4%	( <i>n</i> = 13,392) 96.6%
Moderately Poor	( <i>n</i> = 120) 3.1%	( <i>n</i> = 3,789) 96.9%
Extremely Poor	( <i>n</i> = 2,182) 6.6%	( <i>n</i> = 30,787) 93.4%
2013-2014		
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 413) 3.0%	( <i>n</i> = 13,303) 97.0%
Moderately Poor	( <i>n</i> = 115) 2.9%	( <i>n</i> = 3,815) 97.1%
Extremely Poor	( <i>n</i> = 2,160) 6.5%	( <i>n</i> = 31,258) 93.5%
2014-2015		
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 424) 2.9%	( <i>n</i> = 14,131) 97.1%
Moderately Poor	( <i>n</i> = 111) 3.1%	( <i>n</i> = 3,477) 96.9%
Extremely Poor	( <i>n</i> = 1,828) 5.7%	( <i>n</i> = 29,981) 94.3%
2015-2016		
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 400) 2.7%	( <i>n</i> = 14,320) 97.3%
Moderately Poor	( <i>n</i> = 102) 2.8%	( <i>n</i> = 3,477) 97.2%
Extremely Poor	( <i>n</i> = 1,799) 5.8%	( <i>n</i> = 29,437) 94.2%

Table 4.9

*Frequencies and Percentages of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placements by Economic Status for Grade 8 Black Students in the 2012-2013 Through the 2015-2016 School Years*

School Year and Economic Status	Received a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total	Did Not Receive a DAEP Placement <i>n</i> and %age of Total
2012-2013		
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 643) 4.4%	( <i>n</i> = 14,057) 95.6%
Moderately Poor	( <i>n</i> = 141) 3.8%	( <i>n</i> = 3,597) 96.2%
Extremely Poor	( <i>n</i> = 2,528) 8.0%	( <i>n</i> = 29,095) 92.0%
2013-2014		
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 573) 3.9%	( <i>n</i> = 14,023) 96.1%
Moderately Poor	( <i>n</i> = 139) 3.5%	( <i>n</i> = 3,843) 96.5%
Extremely Poor	( <i>n</i> = 2,377) 7.3%	( <i>n</i> = 30,343) 92.7%
2014-2015		
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 541) 3.5%	( <i>n</i> = 14,881) 96.5%
Moderately Poor	( <i>n</i> = 131) 3.5%	( <i>n</i> = 3,642) 96.5%
Extremely Poor	( <i>n</i> = 2,295) 7.3%	( <i>n</i> = 29,294) 92.7%
2015-2016		
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 568) 3.7%	( <i>n</i> = 14,723) 96.3%
Moderately Poor	( <i>n</i> = 120) 3.4%	( <i>n</i> = 3,378) 96.6%
Extremely Poor	( <i>n</i> = 2,158) 6.9%	( <i>n</i> = 28,894) 93.1%

Table 4.10

*Summary of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placement Results by  
Economic Status for Grade 6-8 White Students in the 2012-2013 Through the 2015-2016  
School Years*

Grade Level and School Year	Cramer's V	Effect Size Range	Highest DAEP Rate
<b>Grade 6</b>			
2012-2013	.09	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2013-2014	.08	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2014-2015	.07	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2015-2016	.08	Below Small	Extremely Poor
<b>Grade 7</b>			
2012-2013	.10	Small	Extremely Poor
2013-2014	.10	Small	Extremely Poor
2014-2015	.09	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2015-2016	.09	Below Small	Extremely Poor
<b>Grade 8</b>			
2012-2013	.10	Small	Extremely Poor
2013-2014	.11	Small	Extremely Poor
2014-2015	.11	Small	Extremely Poor
2015-2016	.10	Small	Extremely Poor



Table 4.11

*Summary of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placement Results by Economic Status for Grade 6-8 Hispanic Students in the 2012-2013 Through the 2015-2016 School Years*

Grade Level and School Year	Cramer's V	Effect Size Range	Highest DAEP Rate
Grade 6			
2012-2013	.05	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2013-2014	.04	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2014-2015	.04	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2015-2016	.04	Below Small	Extremely Poor
Grade 7			
2012-2013	.05	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2013-2014	.05	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2014-2015	.05	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2015-2016	.05	Below Small	Extremely Poor
Grade 8			
2012-2013	.05	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2013-2014	.05	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2014-2015	.05	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2015-2016	.05	Below Small	Extremely Poor

Table 4.12

*Summary of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placement Results by  
Economic Status for Grade 6-8 Black Students in the 2012-2013 Through the 2015-2016  
School Years*

Grade Level and School Year	Cramer's V	Effect Size Range	Highest DAEP Rate
Grade 6			
2012-2013	.07	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2013-2014	.06	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2014-2015	.07	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2015-2016	.06	Below Small	Extremely Poor
Grade 7			
2012-2013	.07	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2013-2014	.07	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2014-2015	.06	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2015-2016	.07	Below Small	Extremely Poor
Grade 8			
2012-2013	.07	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2013-2014	.07	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2014-2015	.08	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2015-2016	.07	Below Small	Extremely Poor

## **CHAPTER V**

### **DISCUSSION**

The purpose of this journal-ready dissertation was to determine the extent to which differences were present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement by student demographic characteristics for Grade 6, 7, and 8 students in Texas schools. In the first investigation, the degree to which Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements differed by ethnicity/race (i.e., Black, Hispanic, White, and Asian) for Grade 6, 7, and 8 boys were examined. In the second investigation, the degree to which Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements differed by ethnicity/race (i.e., Black, Hispanic, White, and Asian) for Grade 6, 7, and 8 girls were ascertained. Finally, in the third study, the extent to which Disciplinary Alternative Education Program assignments differed by student economic status (i.e., Not Poor, Moderately Poor, and Extremely Poor) for Grade 6, 7, and 8 students were examined. In each of these three articles, four years of Texas statewide data were analyzed. As such, this analysis of data permitted a determination of trends in the differential assignment of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements for Grade 6, 7, and 8 Texas students. In this chapter, results are discussed and a summary of each of the three articles is provided. Implications for policy and practice are also discussed. Finally, recommendations for future research are given.

#### **Summary of Results for Study One**

In the first investigation, the extent to which inequities were present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements for Texas Grade 6, Grade 7, and Grade 8 boys based on their ethnicity/race (i.e., Black, Hispanic, White, and Asian). By

examining Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements for Grade 6, Grade 7, and Grade 8 Black, Hispanic, White, and Asian boys, a comparison across grade levels was possible. Four school years of archival data from the Texas Education Agency Public Education Information Management System were analyzed to determine the degree to which Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements were differentially assigned to Grade 6, 7, and 8 boys by their ethnicity/race.

In all four school years, statistically significant results were present. Across each of the three grade levels, Black boys received the highest rate of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements, ranging from 4.6% to 5.3% in Grade 6, from 6.3% to 7.3% in Grade 7, and from 7.6% to 8.9% in Grade 8. Disciplinary Alternative Education Program assignments for Hispanic boys ranged from 2.3% to 3.0% in Grade 6, from 3.7% to 4.8% in Grade 7, and from 4.8% to 5.9% in Grade 8. Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement rates for White boys ranged from 1.3% to 1.6% in Grade 6, from 2.1% to 2.5% in Grade 7, and from 3.1% to 3.6% in Grade 8. For Asian boys, Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement rates ranged from 0.1% to 0.5% in Grade 6, from 0.3% to 0.6% in Grade 7, and from 0.4% to 0.9% in Grade 8. Readers are directed to Table 5.1 for a summary of effect sizes for Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement rates for Grade 6, 7, and 8 boys by their ethnicity/race across four school years.

Table 5.1

*Summary of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placements for Grade 6-8 Boys in the 2012-2013 Through the 2015-2016 School Years*

Grade Level and School Year	Cramer's V	Effect Size Range	Highest DAEP Rate
Grade 6			
2012-2013	.07	Below Small	Black
2013-2014	.07	Below Small	Black
2014-2015	.07	Below Small	Black
2015-2016	.07	Below Small	Black
Grade 7			
2012-2013	.08	Below Small	Black
2013-2014	.08	Below Small	Black
2014-2015	.08	Below Small	Black
2015-2016	.08	Below Small	Black
Grade 8			
2012-2013	.08	Below Small	Black
2013-2014	.08	Below Small	Black
2014-2015	.08	Below Small	Black
2015-2016	.08	Below Small	Black

### **Summary of Results for Study Two**

Analyzed in this second investigation was to ascertain the extent to which inequities were present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements for

Texas Grade 6, Grade 7, and Grade 8 girls based on their ethnicity/race. By examining Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements for Grade 6, 7, and 8 Black, Hispanic, White, and Asian girls, a comparison across grade levels was possible. Four school years of archival data from the Texas Education Agency Public Education Information Management System were analyzed to determine the degree to which Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements was differentially assigned to Grade 6, 7, and 8 girls by their ethnicity/race.

In all four school years, statistically significant results were present. Across each of the three grade levels, Black girls received the highest rate of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements, ranging from 1.7% to 2.2% in Grade 6, from 3.1% to 3.8% in Grade 7, and from 3.7% to 4.4% in Grade 8. Disciplinary Alternative Education Program assignments for Hispanic girls ranged from 0.9% to 1.1% in Grade 6, from 1.9% to 2.2% in Grade 7, and from 2.2% to 2.5% in Grade 8. Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement rates for White girls ranged from 0.3% to 0.4% in Grade 6, from 0.8% to 0.9% in Grade 7, and from 1.2% to 1.4% in Grade 8. For Asian girls, Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement rates ranged from 0.0% to 0.2% in Grade 6, from 0.0% to 0.2% in Grade 7, and from 0.2% to 0.3% in Grade 8. Table 5.2 contains a summary of effect sizes for Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement rates for Grade 6, 7, and 8 girls by their ethnicity/race across four school years.

Table 5.2

*Summary of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placements for Grade 6-8 Girls in the 2012-2013 Through the 2015-2016 School Years*

Grade Level and School Year	Cramer's V	Effect Size Range	Highest DAEP Rate
Grade 6			
2012-2013	.06	Below Small	Black
2013-2014	.06	Below Small	Black
2014-2015	.06	Below Small	Black
2015-2016	.05	Below Small	Black
Grade 7			
2012-2013	.07	Below Small	Black
2013-2014	.07	Below Small	Black
2014-2015	.06	Below Small	Black
2015-2016	.07	Below Small	Black
Grade 8			
2012-2013	.07	Below Small	Black
2013-2014	.06	Below Small	Black
2014-2015	.06	Below Small	Black
2015-2016	.07	Below Small	Black

### **Summary of Results for Study Three**

Examined in this 4-year statewide study was the extent to which inequities were present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements by the economic status

of Texas Grade 6, Grade 7, and Grade 8 students. By examining Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements for Grade 6, Grade 7, and Grade 8 White, Hispanic, and Black students, a comparison across grade levels was possible. Through analyzing four school years of archival data from the Texas Education Agency Public Education Information Management System to determine the degree to which Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements were differentially assigned to Grade 6, 7, and 8 White, Hispanic, and Black students by their economic status was determined.

In all four school years, statistically significant results were present. Across each of the three grade levels, White students who were Extremely Poor received the highest rate of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements, ranging from 2.0% to 2.4% in Grade 6, from 2.0% to 3.9% in Grade 7, and from 2.2% to 5.3% in Grade 8. Disciplinary Alternative Education Program assignments for White students who were Moderately Poor ranged from 0.8% to 1.3% in Grade 6, from 1.0% to 2.0% in Grade 7, and from 2.2% to 3.2% in Grade 8. Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement rates for White students who were Not Poor ranged from 0.4% to 0.5% in Grade 6, from 0.8% to 1.0% in Grade 7, and from 1.3% to 1.5% in Grade 8. Table 5.3 contains a summary of effect sizes for Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement rates for White students by their economic status for Grade 6, 7, and 8 across four school years.



Table 5.3

*Summary of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placement Results by Economic Status for Grade 6-8 White Students in the 2012-2013 Through the 2015-2016 School Years*

Grade Level and School Year	Cramer's V	Effect Size Range	Highest DAEP Rate
<b>Grade 6</b>			
2012-2013	.09	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2013-2014	.08	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2014-2015	.07	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2015-2016	.08	Below Small	Extremely Poor
<b>Grade 7</b>			
2012-2013	.10	Small	Extremely Poor
2013-2014	.10	Small	Extremely Poor
2014-2015	.09	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2015-2016	.09	Below Small	Extremely Poor
<b>Grade 8</b>			
2012-2013	.10	Small	Extremely Poor
2013-2014	.11	Small	Extremely Poor
2014-2015	.11	Small	Extremely Poor
2015-2016	.10	Small	Extremely Poor

Across each of the three grade levels, Hispanic students who were Extremely Poor received the highest rate of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements, ranging from 1.6% to 2.4% in Grade 6, from 3.2% to 4.1% in Grade 7, and from 4.2% to 4.8% in Grade 8. Disciplinary Alternative Education Program assignments for Hispanic students who were Moderately Poor ranged from 0.8% to 1.1% in Grade 6, from 1.2% to 1.8% in Grade 7, and from 1.9% to 2.5% in Grade 8. Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement rates for Hispanic students who were Not Poor ranged from 0.8% to 1.1% in Grade 6, from 1.6% to 2.1% in Grade 7, and from 2.3% to 2.9% in Grade 8. Table 5.4 contains a summary of effect sizes for Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement rates for Hispanic students by their economic status for Grade 6, 7, and 8 across four school years.

Table 5.4

*Summary of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placement Results by Economic Status for Grade 6-8 Hispanic Students in the 2012-2013 Through the 2015-2016 School Years*

Grade Level and School Year	Cramer's V	Effect Size Range	Highest DAEP Rate
<b>Grade 6</b>			
2012-2013	.05	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2013-2014	.04	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2014-2015	.04	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2015-2016	.04	Below Small	Extremely Poor
<b>Grade 7</b>			
2012-2013	.05	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2013-2014	.05	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2014-2015	.05	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2015-2016	.05	Below Small	Extremely Poor
<b>Grade 8</b>			
2012-2013	.05	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2013-2014	.05	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2014-2015	.05	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2015-2016	.05	Below Small	Extremely Poor

Across each of the three grade levels, Black students who were Extremely Poor received the highest rate of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements, ranging from 3.8% to 4.6% in Grade 6, from 5.7% to 6.6% in Grade 7, and from 6.9% to

8.0% in Grade 8. Disciplinary Alternative Education Program assignments for Black students who were Moderately Poor ranged from 1.8% to 2.2% in Grade 6, from 2.8% to 3.1% in Grade 7, and from 3.4% to 3.8% in Grade 8. Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement rates for Black students who were Not Poor ranged from 1.6% to 1.9% in Grade 6, from 2.7% to 3.4% in Grade 7, and from 3.5% to 4.4% in Grade 8. Delineated in Table 5.5 is a summary of effect sizes for Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement rates for Black students by their economic status for Grade 6, 7, and 8 across four school years.

Table 5.5

*Summary of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placement Results by  
Economic Status for Grade 6-8 Black Students in the 2012-2013 Through the 2015-2016  
School Years*

Grade Level and School Year	Cramer's V	Effect Size Range	Highest DAEP Rate
Grade 6			
2012-2013	.07	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2013-2014	.06	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2014-2015	.07	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2015-2016	.06	Below Small	Extremely Poor
Grade 7			
2012-2013	.07	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2013-2014	.07	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2014-2015	.06	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2015-2016	.07	Below Small	Extremely Poor
Grade 8			
2012-2013	.07	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2013-2014	.07	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2014-2015	.08	Below Small	Extremely Poor
2015-2016	.07	Below Small	Extremely Poor

### **Connections with Existing Literature**

Well documented in the extant literature (e.g., Barnes & Slate, 2016; Khan & Slate, 2016; Lopez & Slate, 2016; Skiba et al., 2011; Texas Education Agency, 2014a) are clear inequities in the assignment of discipline consequences. Evident in this 4-year investigation was the presence of a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006) in the assignment of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements to students in Grades 6, 7, and 8 on the basis of their ethnicity/race and economic status. Results of this research were congruent with recent researchers (e.g., Hilberth & Slate, 2014) which provided extensive evidence of disproportionalities in discipline consequences assigned to Black and White students. Henkel et al. (2016) documented that, among the three grade levels examined in their investigation, Black and Hispanic boys received disproportionately higher percentage rates of out-of-school suspensions than their White peers. Similar results were established herein, with Black boys and Hispanic boys in Grades 6, 7, 8 being assigned a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement statistically significantly more often than their White and Asian peers.

The results obtained here were congruent for both boys and for girls. Black boys and Black girls were assigned the highest rate of placements with Hispanic boys and Hispanic girls being assigned the second highest rate of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements. White boys and White girls received the third highest rates, followed by Asian boys and Asian girls. As such, a stair-step effect (Carpenter et al., 2006) was clearly established in the assignment of this consequence. The findings were congruent with the results of previous researchers (e.g., Hilberth & Slate, 2014;

Skiba et al., 2011; Skiba & Peterson, 2000; Fitzgerald, 2007) regarding the presence of inequities in the assignment of discipline consequences.

Results of this investigation were remarkably consistent with a related investigation by Lopez and Slate (2106) who established the presence of statistically significant higher rates of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements for both Grade7 and Grade 8 students who were economically disadvantaged in comparison to their grade level peers who were not economically disadvantaged. Similar to the results of previous researchers, Khan and Slate (2016) established the presence of strong disproportionalities in the assignment of discipline consequences to Black, Hispanic, and White students on the basis of their economic status.

### **Implications for Policy and Practice**

Based upon the results of three articles discussed in this journal-ready dissertation, several implications for policy and for practice can be made. First, school district leaders and campus administrators are urged to analyze their school campus and their school district student codes of conduct and discipline practices to ascertain the degree to which disproportionalities might be present. Educators are encouraged to examine school discipline programs to determine inequitable disciplinary administrative practices to students assigned to in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements, expulsions, and Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placements. In addition, from the results obtained from the disciplinary audits that are conducted, educational leaders are urged to examine the degree to which disproportionalities might be present in their school assignment of disciplinary consequences on the basis of student economic status, ethnicity/race, or

gender? In analyzing the audit data, such findings can be used to bring about necessary changes to current programs and the implementation of new programs.

Educational leaders and school administrators are also encouraged to review and revise the district and campuses disciplinary codes of conduct to eliminate disproportionate discipline methods as well as maintaining consistency among assignments given for discipline reasons. School leaders and district personnel are encouraged to improve upon the cultural diversity and professional development for all administrators, teachers, and staff members. Based on the results from this investigation, another implication for practice is to implement proactive efforts to reduce the Black and Hispanic School-to-Prison pipeline, through periodic analysis of disciplinary placements. Another implication would be to examine the history and rationale of students who are assigned this consequence by student ethnicity/race and student economic status. If trends exist for students who continually misbehave each year such that they receive several in-school suspensions, followed by several out-of-school suspensions, and then by a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement would this practice suggest a failure in the discipline methods that were used? A final recommendation is for policymakers in Texas to require a statewide analysis of discipline procedures and administrative practices to determine the degree to which inequities exist in their assignments by gender, ethnicity/race, and economic status. If so, such inequities could be construed as being violations of students' civil rights to have an appropriate and free education.



### **Recommendations for Future Research**

Based upon the results of three journal articles previously discussed, the following recommendations for future research are made. First, researchers are encouraged to examine the degree to which inequities might be present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements as a function of student demographics such as at-risk status, and English Language Learner status. Such studies could be conducted separately for boys and for girls, rather than analyzing both groups of students together. The extent to which inequities might be different for boys and for girls is not known. Furthermore, researchers are encouraged to extend this investigation to students in other grade levels. Analyzing data at grade levels other than the ones analyzed herein could provide information regarding the frequency with which this consequence is administered to students throughout their educational career. Extending this investigation to students at the high school level could also provide valuable information to education leaders, policymakers and post-secondary institutions.

Due to the fact that this journal-ready dissertation was based entirely on Texas data, researchers are encouraged to extend this study into other states. The degree to which the findings delineated herein are generalizable to students in other states is not known. In this journal-ready dissertation, only the discipline consequence of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement was analyzed. Researchers are encouraged to examine other discipline consequences such as in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, and Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placements. In addition, more empirical information is needed regarding the presence or absence of inequities in the assignment of these discipline consequences to students based on their

economic status, ethnicity/race, or gender. A final recommendation for future research is to examine the reasons why students are assigned discipline consequences. Are students assigned different consequences for the same misbehavior due to their economic status, their ethnicity/race, or gender? Based on the results of this study, research should be conducted into the underlying factors of ineffective disciplinary procedures and programs to curtail the negative impact disciplinary placements have on the educational system.

### **Conclusion**

The purpose of this journal-ready dissertation was to determine the extent to which differences could be present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement by student demographic characteristics for Grade 6, 7, and 8 students in Texas schools. In the first investigation, the degree to which Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements differed by ethnicity/race (i.e., White, Hispanic, Black, and Asian) for Grade 6, 7, and 8 boys was analyzed. In the second investigation, the degree to which Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements differed by ethnicity/race for Grade 6, 7, and 8 girls were ascertained. Finally, in the third study, the extent to which Disciplinary Alternative Education Program assignments differed by student economic status (i.e., not economically disadvantaged, moderately poor, and extremely poor) for Grade 6, 7, and 8 students was addressed. In each of these three articles, four years of Texas statewide data were analyzed. As such, this analysis of data permitted a determination of trends in the differential assignment of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements for Grade 6, 7, and 8 Texas students. Results were consistent across the three grade levels and across the four school years of data that were analyzed. Clearly established in this journal-ready dissertation was the presence of

inequities in the assignment of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements by student ethnicity/race and by their economic status. As such, violations were present of these students' civil rights to a free and appropriate education.

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## APPENDIX



<p><b>Institutional Review Board</b>  <b>Office of Research and Sponsored Programs</b>  <b>903 Bowers Blvd, Huntsville, TX 77341-2448</b>  <b>Phone: 936.294.4875</b>  <b>Fax: 936.294.3622</b>  <a href="mailto:irb@shsu.edu">irb@shsu.edu</a>  <a href="http://www.shsu.edu/~rgs_www/irb/">www.shsu.edu/~rgs_www/irb/</a></p>
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DATE: February 17, 2017

TO: Edward Lopez [Faculty Sponsor: Dr. John Slate]

FROM: Sam Houston State University (SHSU) IRB

PROJECT TITLE: *Inequities in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements by ethnicity/race and economic status for Texas middle school students: A multiyear, statewide investigation [T/D]*

PROTOCOL #: 2016-12-33424

SUBMISSION TYPE: INITIAL REVIEW

ACTION: DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT STATUS

DECISION DATE: February 17, 2017

REVIEW CATEGORY: Category 4—research involving existing, publicly available data usually has little, if any, associated risk, particularly if subject identifiers are removed from the data or specimens.

Thank you for your submission of Initial Review materials for this project. The Sam Houston State University (SHSU) IRB has determined this project is EXEMPT FROM IRB REVIEW according to federal regulations.

We will retain a copy of this correspondence within our records.

**\* What should investigators do when considering changes to an exempt study that could make it nonexempt?**

It is the PI's responsibility to consult with the IRB whenever questions arise about whether planned changes to an exempt study might make that study nonexempt human subjects research. In this case, please make available sufficient information to the IRB so it can make a correct determination.

If you have any questions, please contact the IRB Office at 936-294-4875 or [irb@shsu.edu](mailto:irb@shsu.edu). Please include your project title and protocol number in all correspondence with this committee.

Sincerely,

Donna Desforges  
 IRB Chair, PHSC

This letter has been electronically signed in accordance with all applicable regulations, and a copy is retained within Sam Houston State University IRB's records

## VITA

### EDWARD L. LOPEZ

#### EDUCATIONAL HISTORY

Doctorate of Education – Educational Leadership (August 2017)

*Sam Houston State University, Huntsville, TX*

Dissertation: Inequities in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placements by Ethnicity/Race, and Economic Status for Texas Middle School Students: A Multiyear, Statewide Investigation

Master of Education Administration, December, 2002

*Sam Houston State University, Huntsville, TX*

Bachelor of Science, Education/History/Special Education Endorsement, December 1998

*Sam Houston State University, Huntsville, TX*

#### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

2007-Present	Assistant Principal/ Summer School Principal, Montgomery Independent School District, Montgomery, TX
2005-2007	Assistant Principal/Summer School Principal, Conroe Independent School District, Conroe, TX
2004-2005	Assistant Principal- Middle School Campus, Willis Independent School District, Willis, TX
2002-2004	Assistant Principal, Intermediate Campus, Conroe Independent School District, Conroe, TX
2000-2002	Special Education Department Chair/Resource Math Teacher, Conroe Independent School District, Conroe, TX
1999-2000	Resource Math/Resource Language Arts Teacher/Adult ESL Teacher-Night Classes-Region IV, Conroe Independent School District, Conroe, TX

#### PROFESSIONAL LICENSES:

Texas Superintendent Certification

Texas Principal Certification

Texas Assistant Principal Certification

Texas Teaching Certification (History 1-8)

Texas Generic Special Populations Certificate (K-12)

#### SCHOLARLY RESEARCH ACTIVITY:

Lopez, E., & Slate, J. R. (2016). Differences in disciplinary alternative educational placement as a function of economic status for White students. *Journal of Global Research in Education and Social Sciences*, 6(2), 75-79.

**PRESENTATIONS:**

Lopez, E., & Slate, J. R. (2016, January). *Differences in disciplinary alternative educational placement as a function of economic status for White students*. Poster Presentation presented at the Hawaii International Conference on Education, Waikiki Beach, HI.