

CHAPTER 10

IMPLEMENTING QUALITY ASSURANCE INTO ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION DISCIPLINARY SCHOOLS

10.1 Introduction

The Juvenile Justice Educational Enhancement Program (JJEPP) quality assurance (QA) process has been successful in identifying best practices and correcting deficiencies in educational services among juvenile justice programs. Due to this accomplishment, the Volusia County School District has requested that JJEPP develop a similar QA system to review alternative education schools within their district.

There are three objectives to this pilot project. First, the project is designed to provide empirical evidence to validate the “promising practices” discussed in the alternative education literature (see JJEPP’s 2002 Annual Report). Second, the project will provide a QA system for alternative education schools that, once validated, could be replicated in other school districts throughout the state of Florida and the country. Third, the project will assess the effectiveness of alternative schools in achieving the goals of successfully returning students to their home public schools, decreasing the school district’s dropout rate, and altering the negative life courses of these at-risk youths.

This chapter is comprised of eight subsequent sections. Section 10.2 provides a brief description of the project history. Section 10.3 outlines the promising practices that led to the alternative disciplinary education QA standards. Section 10.4 provides an overview of the Volusia County School District and the two schools involved in the project. Section 10.5 presents the alternative school QA standards. Section 10.6 explains the data and methods that are being used in the research component of the project. Section 10.7 contains student findings, and Section 10.8 presents program level findings. Section 10.9 provides summary discussion of the project’s progress to date.

10.2 Project History

During July 2001, Volusia County School District approached JJEPP with a request to modify the juvenile justice education QA process in order for it to be implemented in the district’s alternative education schools. The parties chose Volusia County’s alternative disciplinary schools to begin the pilot project for two reasons. First, combined, these two schools have the highest student population of any alternative education schools and programs in the county. Second, the student population served at these schools is similar to that of the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) schools. Therefore, with minimal changes, JJEPP’s educational standards for DJJ schools are suitable for Volusia County’s alternative disciplinary schools.

In October 2001, JJEPP staff visited the two alternative disciplinary schools in Volusia County - Euclid Avenue Learning Center (Euclid) and Riverview Learning Center (Riverview). The purpose of the visits was to obtain an understanding of how the schools operated, the schools' missions, and the goals they sought to achieve for their students. In February 2002, a proposal for a pilot project was presented to the Volusia County Instructional Council, which is comprised of the school district superintendent's senior staff, and the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) Chief of the Bureau of Instructional Support and Community Services, Shan Goff. In May 2002, approval to proceed was given, and a pilot project was designed. During fall 2002, JJEPP staff made four additional visits to Euclid and Riverview, during which they met the school's administrators, support staff, and faculty.

During January 2003, JJEPP gave a presentation of the preliminary QA standards to both schools' faculty and staff, who were encouraged to offer their feedback. Also in January 2003, JJEPP gave another presentation to the Volusia County Instructional Council, which outlined the specifics of the pilot project. Shortly thereafter, the council approved the project. In March 2003, JJEPP staff visited three alternative education schools in Broward County to obtain comparison information about other alternative education schools. In May 2003, a baseline QA review was conducted at Euclid and at Riverview, during which information was gathered to refine the preliminary QA standards and accumulate preliminary baseline data. The revised standards were used in January 2004 when the JJEPP staff performed another review of Euclid and Riverview.

The current QA standards are based not only on the information gathered from the two alternative disciplinary schools in Volusia County, but also on knowledge about alternative education in existing literature. This literature is reviewed in the following section.

10.3 Promising Practices

The alternative education QA standards are the cornerstone of this pilot project. These standards are predicated on JJEPP's juvenile justice day treatment QA standards and concepts from the alternative education literature. As noted in the 2002 JJEPP Annual Report, the literature on promising practices for alternative education is disjointed and often based on descriptive studies. Nevertheless, several consistent promising practices can be assembled from existing literature. The Southwest Educational Developmental Laboratory has divided these promising practices into three categories: school organization, school culture/behavioral components, and curriculum/instruction. The following is a brief description of the practices in each category (Lange & Sletten, 2002; Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, 1995; National Research Council, 2002).

Promising practices in the school organization category include:

- 1) **Small school size** aids in the creation of a sense of community between the faculty and staff of the school and the students and their parents.

- 2) **Small class size.** There are no more than 10 students to one teacher; this allows for individualized attention.
- 3) **Physical separation of the alternative school from the traditional school** reduces stigmatization.
- 4) **Autonomy.** Students are allowed to make decisions about their own individual curriculum and make judgments about the school in general, which fosters a sense of freedom and responsibility.
- 5) **Teacher control** over decisions involving curriculum, instruction, and student behavior.
- 6) **Qualified faculty** who have experience working with the alternative school's population and are certified in the subject area in which they are teaching.
- 7) **Involvement of groups outside the school, such as social services, community agencies, and parental involvement** can assist the students in achieving educational success at both the alternative school and during the transition back to their home school.

Promising practices in the school culture and behavioral components category include:

- 1) **An informal environment in the school** fosters a caring and relaxed atmosphere in which relationships between teachers and students can grow, which is one of the best predictors of success.
- 2) **A sense of community**, fostered by the school organization component, allows the teachers and the students to feel invested in the school.
- 3) **Physical and psychological safety**, which is promoted via positive school norms, such as clear and consistent rules, disciplinary practices, and boundaries.
- 4) **Counseling services** available for all students, allowing them to address personal and social problems.
- 5) **Students are encouraged to forge supportive relationships** by participating in school activities and decision-making, youth-based empowerment strategies, and opportunities to develop meaningful relationships with adults to help them develop a sense of belonging.

Promising practices in the curriculum and instruction category include:

- 1) **Innovation in instruction** by means of flexibility in teaching strategies. This includes peer tutoring, team teaching, and cooperative learning, in order to customize the program to the student's individual needs.
- 2) **A balanced curriculum**, which is achieved by addressing social, vocational, emotional, and academic needs.
- 3) **Opportunities** for the students to enhance their social, physical, academic, and vocational skills are provided.
- 4) **An individualized academic lessons approach**, which ensures that students work at their own pace and are encouraged to make decisions concerning their curriculum.

These promising practices do not ensure the efficacy of an alternative school; however, schools that have been recognized as successful alternative schools have employed these practices in an attempt to prevent students from dropping out, engaging in additional delinquent acts, and falling further behind in their academic performance. These promising practices were combined with input from the schools participating in this project to create the alternative education QA standards. The following section provides a description of these schools and their policies and procedures.

10.4 Volusia County Alternative Schools

Placement Procedures

The Volusia County School District has two methods for placement in its alternative disciplinary schools - voluntary participation or assigned participation. *Voluntary participation* means that the student is not assigned to the school without parent or guardian permission. Voluntary participation in a Volusia County alternative disciplinary school is rare. *Assigned* participation, which is more common, means that the student being placed at the alternative disciplinary school by the school district. There are three avenues for *assignment* to an alternative disciplinary school in Volusia County. The first is as an alternative to district expulsion. The second is via the county school district's behavior referral system. In this case, if a student acquires an excessive number of disciplinary referrals for unacceptable behavior, he or she may be assigned to an alternative disciplinary school. The third is superintendent placement. With this option, the school board may assign to an alternative school any student whom it believes can benefit from the structure and approach of the school. The school district also uses the alternative disciplinary schools as a "time out" location, where students can be sent for a very short period of time as warranted by situational demands.

School Policies

According to the Alternative Education Program Information Handbook for 2002-2003, produced by Volusia County, students who are placed in alternative education schools receive an initial eligibility conference and orientation. The placement specialist conducts the orientation, which is held at Euclid or Riverview. During this conference, students are informed of the school's expectation for their academic and behavioral performance. During the first day of school, the student has an initial meeting with the guidance counselor. At this meeting the guidance counselor determines each student's academic level via the Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT) and reports the results to the student's teachers. An assessment of the student's social services needs is performed by the school social worker within three weeks of the student's enrollment in the alternative disciplinary school.

Students must complete 65 successful days before being allowed to return to their public/zone school. This number was changed from 45 to 65 successful days within the last few years. While at the alternative disciplinary school, students are placed in an

academic program that includes a social skills instructional component and a behavior management program. The goals set forth in both of the programs determine the characterization of a successful day for each student. The student's progress is monitored by the Student Success Team, which also initiates appropriate intervention strategies for the student as needed. This team also determines the student's eligibility to return to his or her public/zone school.

Once the Student Success Team deems the student eligible to return to the home school, based on the student's completion of 65 successful days, the guidance counselor contacts the public/zone school and the school social worker two weeks prior to the student's release. Information about the student is shared with the public/zone school using appropriate protocol. The school social worker conducts an eight-week follow-up visit once the student has returned to the public/zone school to determine if the student's return has been successful. At this time, if the student's return is not successful, a return to the alternative disciplinary school is evaluated.

School Descriptions

Volusia County's two alternative disciplinary schools - Euclid Avenue Learning Center and Riverview Learning Center - serve high school and middle school students within the same facility. Euclid is located in Deland, which is near Daytona, while Riverview is located in Daytona Beach. Euclid serves a more rural student population, while Riverview's student population tends to come from the Daytona Beach area. Each school's enrollment ranges from 70 to 140 students, depending upon the time of year and the semester. On any given day, approximately 70% to 90% of the students are in attendance at each school. The age range of students in both schools is 11 to 18 years old. The male-to-female student ratio is 2:1 at Euclid and 3:1 at Riverview. The student teacher ratio is 12:1 at Euclid and 10:1 at Riverview. At the time that baseline information was collected, each school employed approximately 13 teachers, one guidance counselor, a part-time school psychologist, and a part-time reading specialist. In addition, each school shared a social worker with other public schools within the area. Euclid's facility is primarily comprised of trailers. There is one main building, which houses the school's front office, cafeteria, in-school suspension room, and two middle school classrooms. All of the high school classes, the administrative offices, and behavior specialist offices are housed in trailers. Riverview's facility is tantamount to a traditional school building. The facility that houses Riverview is well maintained and has been remodeled within the last two years.

10.5 Quality Assurance Standards

Faculty and staff from both schools were encouraged to provide feedback and comments on the preliminary QA standards. This procedure allowed individuals with firsthand knowledge of the schools, how they operate, and what aspects of the school are important, to collaborate with the JJEEP staff in the creation of the alternative education QA standards.

The purpose of the JJEEP Educational Quality Assurance (QA) Standards for Alternative Disciplinary Schools is to provide program evaluation as a means of accountability for alternative schools. The QA review process represents an important tool for assisting school districts in determining whether students enrolled in alternative schools receive quality and comprehensive educational services that increase their potential for future success.

The current alternative education QA standards are based on JJEEP's juvenile justice education standards for day treatment programs, which were modified to fit the goals of alternative schools and promising practices literature. The most notable modification is the inclusion of the program behavioral supports standard. This standard was added to the alternative education QA standards because in juvenile justice schools, DJJ is responsible for reviewing behavior, treatment, and school safety; therefore, the JJEEP juvenile justice education QA standards for day treatment do not include school behavioral supports. Within the alternative disciplinary school framework, the review of student behavior, treatment, and school safety falls solely on the school itself; consequently, the JJEEP alternative disciplinary schools QA standards include a program behavioral supports standard. The alternative education QA standards are comprised of four separate components: transition, service delivery, program behavioral supports, and administration. The program behavioral support standard replaced the inapplicable contract management standard used in JJEEP's day treatment standards.

The transition standard addresses entry, on-site, and exit transition activities. Included in this standard's indicators are proper enrollment, assessment, student planning and progress, guidance, and exit transition. The goal of transition activities in an alternative disciplinary school is to ensure that students are placed in appropriate educational programs that prepare them for a successful reentry into their public/zone school.

The service delivery standard deals with the issues of curriculum, instructional delivery, attendance, literacy, and educational support services. Service delivery measures ensure that students are provided with educational opportunities that will best prepare them for a successful reentry into school and the maintenance of behavior modifications.

The program behavioral support standard addresses the necessary program and support components that constitute a structured and safe environment where students' successful adolescent development can be nurtured. Included in this standard are social skills building, physical and psychological safety, and meaningful relationships within

and outside of the school. The purpose of the standard is to provide students an atmosphere where they can develop emotionally and behaviorally.

The administration standard is designed to ensure collaboration and communication among all parties involved in the alternative disciplinary schools. Administrative activities ensure that students are provided with the instructional personnel, services, and materials necessary to successfully accomplish their goals.

These QA standards were used to evaluate the alternative schools in Volusia County during this pilot project. They are only one part of the research methods employed in this project. The research methods and data are discussed in the following section.

10.6 Data and Research Methods

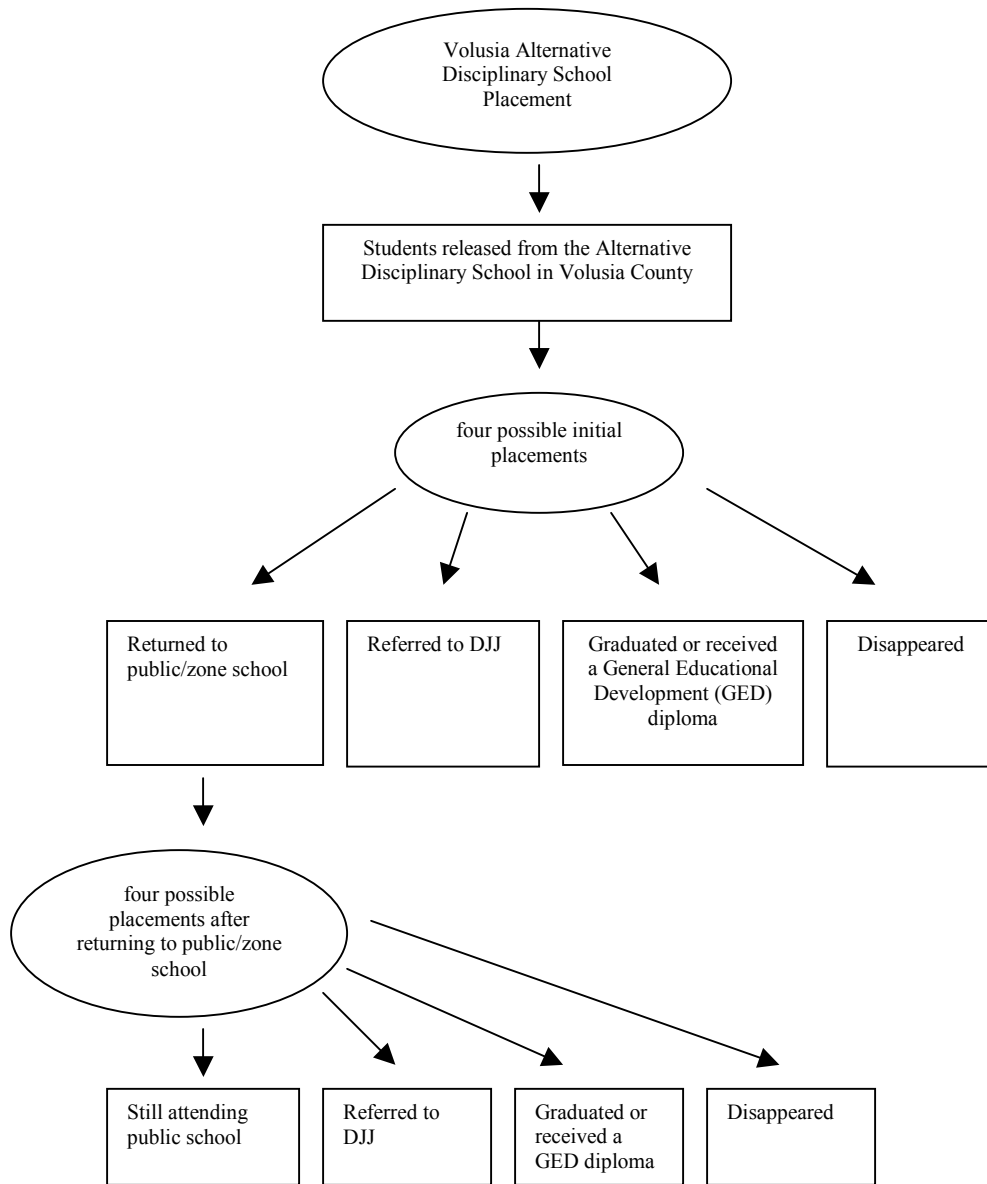
Two of the three goals of this project are to assess the effectiveness of alternative schools in achieving their goal of returning students to their home public schools and to provide empirical evidence to validate the “promising practices” discussed in the alternative education literature. Student level data are being used to complete these objectives.

Student Level Data

Students who attended either Euclid or Riverview have been selected from each academic year’s cleaned demographic format, creating a pool for each year. For a comprehensive description of the cleaning process, please see appendix E. The students from each pool are then identified in the subsequent academic year’s data. The goal is to create a chronological placement history that spans more than one year, which will allow for longitudinal student outcome evaluation, which may be directly tied to program performance. Attrition is to be expected as a result of the inability to find every student in years other than the enrollment year due to circumstances such as the student moving out of state, dropping out of school, death, or data reporting errors.

The students were tracked in order to ascertain their outcomes after their release from the alternative disciplinary school. Figure 10.6-1 illustrates a series of trajectories upon which students could embark following release from Euclid or Riverview.

Figure 10.6-1: Flow Chart of Possible Trajectories of Different Outcomes After Completion of Alternative Disciplinary School



These trajectories are based on the student’s placement history within one academic year after the student’s release from the alternative disciplinary school. The first placement was defined as the initial location upon release. Students have four possible trajectories following release from the alternative education school: returning to public school, referral to DJJ, graduating or receiving a GED diploma, or disappearing. The second placement analysis consisted of where the student progressed to after returning to their public/zone school. If the student returned to his or her public/zone school, a second follow-up analysis was performed, which consisted of four possible outcomes: still attending public school, graduated or received a GED diploma, referred to DJJ, or disappeared. The time frame for the follow-up analysis was one academic year from the student’s release; therefore, if the student’s first placement was returning to their

public/zone school and if at the end of the follow-up academic year they were still there attending classes, that would be their second placement; if the student returned to public school and was then referred to DJJ, their second placement would be a referral to DJJ.

Each of these trajectories was computed based on a careful examination of the chronologically sorted attendance records that could be located for each student for a given cohort. Referral to DJJ or return to public school following release from the alternative disciplinary school was determined by ascertaining, based on the school number, whether the next school in the student's attendance history was either a DJJ school or a public school. Students with a withdrawal code indicating that they earned a diploma were classified as having graduated or earned a GED diploma. Any student who could not be located following release from the alternative disciplinary school was classified as having disappeared. This same procedure was performed on those students whose initial placement after release from the alternative disciplinary school was return to public school.

The third goal of this project is to provide a QA system for alternative education schools. These standards are the basis for the program level data that is being collected.

Program Level Data

The implementation of the official QA review process began in January 2004; however, in May 2003, an initial QA review was performed to acquire baseline information about the schools. Two reviews will be done for each consecutive academic year, once in the fall and another in the spring. This schedule will allow the reviewers to assess the schools' strengths and weaknesses in addition to providing feedback on how the schools might overcome any observed deficiencies in the fall. In the spring, the reviewers will be able to assess the schools' progress. In addition to the program-level data that will be gathered during the QA review process, student-level data also will be collected, specifically, any information that is not contained on the state's management information system (MIS). Pre- and post-assessment test scores currently fall into this category. These data will allow the tracking of the individual outcomes of the students, thereby providing another method of assessing the efficacy of the schools.

JJEEP's research methods for reviewing alternative disciplinary schools consist of interviews, observations, and document reviews. The following are the current guidelines for reviews:

- Four reviewers conduct each review. The Euclid and Riverview reviews are done during the same visit to Volusia County, with each school's review taking approximately two and one half days.
- The principal, assistant principal, all of the teachers, on-site guidance/advising staff, reading specialist, school psychologist, each school's social workers, the exceptional student education (ESE) consultants, and the school registrar are interviewed. Other personnel interviewed include data-entry clerks, school resource officer(s), and

classroom paraprofessionals. Interviews include topics such as training, responsibilities, communication (both within the school among the administration, faculty, and staff, as well as among the school, the district, and other public schools), educational procedures, services offered at the school, and delivery of those services.

- Ten active student files and five closed student files are reviewed. Files are selected at random. The 10 active files represent four ESE and six non-ESE students. Reviewed items in the student files are past records, course assignments, academic and social skills assessments, individual academic plans (IAPs) or individual educational plans (IEPs), grade reports, state and district testing scores, progress and guidance reports, and exit plans.
- All classrooms are observed at least once. During these classroom observations, adherence to the school's schedule, interactions among students and faculty, instructional strategies, and behavior management are monitored. Included in the classroom observations is a review of curriculum documents (e.g., course descriptions, performance standards, and lesson plans). In addition, inservice training records, teacher certifications, professional development plans or annual teacher evaluations, and school board policy on use of noncertificated teaching personnel are reviewed.
- Faculty meeting minutes and agendas and any written communication between the district and the school are reviewed. A written educational mission and vision statement, along with a school plan, also are reviewed. Community involvement documentation, including volunteer logs, agreements with local businesses, communication with students' parents, and listings of special community events, is evaluated.
- Between 15 and 25 students are interviewed. Some are interviewed individually; others are interviewed in groups. Students are selected at random and are asked about their learning environment, their grades, and their career, educational, and social goals.

The approach used in reviewing the alternative disciplinary schools does not vary dramatically from the approach JJEPP uses when evaluating DJJ schools. The main difference is based on the variation between the two types of QA standards dictating that the alternative disciplinary schools' reviews collect data and monitor services linked to the program behavior and support standard, which is not included in JJEPP's juvenile justice education QA standards or review methods.

10.7 Individual Student Level Findings

The individual student level findings capture the type of student that Euclid and Riverview serve and provide baseline information on student outcomes prior to the implementation of the QA process.

Table 10.7-1 displays the gender and racial breakdown for those students released from Euclid and Riverview for both academic years.

Table 10.7-1: Gender and Racial Distributions for Students Withdrawn From Euclid and Riverview in 1999-2000 and 2000-2001

	<i>Euclid</i>				<i>Riverview</i>				
	<i>1999-2000</i>		<i>2000-2001</i>		<i>1999-2000</i>		<i>2000-2001</i>		
	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	
Gender	Males	64	76	90	75	96	75	94	75
	Females	20	24	30	25	32	25	31	25
	Total	84	100	120	100	128	100	125	100
Race	White	48	57	78	65	77	60	85	68
	Black	19	23	22	18	50	39	37	30
	Hispanic	14	17	17	14%	0	0	1	1
	Asian	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
	Native American	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Multiracial	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	2
	Total	84	100	120	100	128	100	125	101

Note. Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding error.

Males make up the majority of the student population, approximately 75%, for both schools across the two years. Females consistently comprise approximately 25% of both schools' student population. White students are the majority race for both schools and both years, ranging from 57% to 68%. Black is the second most prevalent race in both schools across both academic years. Riverview consistently has a higher Black population, ranging from 30% to 39%, than Euclid, with 18% to 23%. Hispanic students are more prevalent at Euclid than at Riverview. Euclid's Hispanic population ranges from 14% to 17%, while Riverview's tops out at one percent. Asian, Native American, and multiracial students make up from 1% to 2% of the student population in both schools. One possible explanation for this racial distribution is that Riverview serves students primarily from the city of Daytona Beach, while Euclid's students come from a more rural environment. The racial distribution is similar within the schools that refer students to either Euclid or Riverview. The school's location dictates the student population that each school will serve.

Table 10.7-2 shows the distribution of grade enrollment for those students released from Euclid and Riverview during 1999-2000 and 2000-2001.

Table 10.7-2: Grade Distribution for Students Released from Euclid and Riverview in 1999-2000 and 2000-2001

Grade	Euclid				Riverview			
	1999-2000		2000-2001		1999-2000		2000-2001	
	N	Percentage	N	Percentage	N	Percentage	N	Percentage
6	2	2	8	7	3	2	17	14
7	7	8	28	23	14	11	21	17
8	19	23	43	36	16	13	28	22
9	31	37	12	10	46	36	20	16
10	10	12	11	9	23	18	23	18
11	10	12	9	8	15	12	4	3
12	4	5	8	7	10	8	7	6
Adult, Non High School Graduate	1	1	1	1	1	1	5	4
Total	84	100	120	101	128	101	125	100

Note. Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding.

No single grade presents itself as the most prevalent in both schools or across both years. For Euclid and Riverview, the lower grades, 6 and 7, and the higher grades, 11 and 12, appear to be less populated than the middle grades, 8, 9, and 10. This could simply be attributed to older students dropping out of school more often. Another explanation could be that younger students not being behaviorally disruptive in the traditional school at the same rate as older students or that teachers at the public/zone school are more tolerant of younger students' behavior issues. Grades 7 and 8 comprise from 10% to 30% of the student population. During 2000-2001, 6th and 7th graders encompassed a higher percentage of the student population, approximately 30%, than the previous year, roughly 10% in both schools. Grades 8, 9, and 10 students make up anywhere from 55% to 72% of the student population. In 2000-2001, these grades' enrollment comprised a lower percentage of the student population, approximately 55% compared to 72%. Grades 11 and 12 routinely make up less than 20% of the student population.

Table 10.7-3 presents the number and percentage of students who received ESE services at Euclid and Riverview during both academic years.

Table 10.7-3: Primary ESE Services Distribution for Students Withdrawn from Euclid and Riverview in 1999-2000 and 2000-2001

		<i>Euclid</i>				<i>Riverview</i>			
		<i>1999-2000</i>		<i>2000-2001</i>		<i>1999-2000</i>		<i>2000-2001</i>	
		<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
ESE	SLD ¹	12	14	24	20	6	5	21	17
	EH/SED ²	15	18	17	14	24	19	18	14
	Other ³	0	0	8	7	7	6	6	5
	No ESE	57	68	71	59	91	71	80	64
Total		84	100	120	100	128	101*	125	100

Note. Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding error.

Between 29% and 41% of the students at both schools over both years received ESE services. This is considerably higher than the public school state average of students with disabilities of 15% and could be attributed to the hypothesis that students who receive ESE services are more apt to be referred to alternative education schools. Both schools had a lower percentage of ESE students in the 1999-2000 academic year than the subsequent year. The three most prevalent types of disabilities that required services among the student population were specific learning disability (SLD), emotionally handicapped (EH), and severely emotionally disturbed (SED). EH was combined with SED due to the fact that the latter is essentially a more acute form of the former. SLD students tend to make up 15% to 20% of the student population, with the exception of the 1999-2000 academic year at Riverview when they only comprised five percent of the student population. EH/SED students encompass approximately the same percentage as SLD. Other disabilities cover from five percent to 10% of the student population.

Table 10.7-4 describes the number and percentage of students who received lunch assistance. This table also delineates the number of students who did not apply for lunch assistance in addition to those who applied but did not qualify. Lunch status is used as a proxy for socio-economic status.

Table 10.7-4: Lunch Status Distribution for Students Withdrawn from Euclid and Riverview in 1999-2000 and 2000-2001

		<i>Euclid</i>				<i>Riverview</i>			
		<i>1999-2000</i>		<i>2000-2001</i>		<i>1999-2000</i>		<i>2000-2001</i>	
		<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Lunch	Did Not Apply	37	44	46	38	55	43	49	39
	Applied But Did Not Qualify	2	2	1	1	4	3	4	3
	Free	39	46	56	47	60	47	54	43
	Reduced	6	7	17	14	9	7	18	14
Total		84	99	120	100	128	100	125	99

Note. Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding error.

¹ SLD indicates specific leaning disability.

² EH signifies emotionally handicapped and SED denotes severely emotionally disturbed.

³ The Other category is comprised of the following categories: educable mentally handicapped, speech impaired, language impaired, gifted, hospital/homebound, and other health impaired

Lunch status, or whether a student qualifies to receive free or reduced price lunch, is used as a rough estimation of the socio-economic status (SES) of the student's home environment. One potential problem with using lunch status in this manner is that to have a student's lunch status accurately assess the student's SES, the student has to have applied for free/reduced price lunch assistance. The possibility exists that some of the students in the group that did not do apply for assistance may actually qualify, but did not wish to receive it for various reasons. Therefore, any assertions based on the utilization of this variable should be interpreted with extreme caution. Given that, around 40% of the students in both schools during both academic years did not apply for free or reduced price lunch. Of the approximately 60% who did apply for assistance, between one percent and three percent did not qualify. Nearly 50% of the students were eligible for free lunches, while between seven percent and 14% qualified for reduced price lunch possibility indicating that half of the students in both schools come from a low SES.

The findings in the previous tables depict the characteristics of the student populations at Euclid and Riverview during the 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 school years. These schools' student populations display many of the characteristics that place them at risk for involvement with the juvenile justice system: minority, low SES, with disabilities. In addition, all of these students have exhibited behavior management issues severe enough to dictate that they be placed at an alternative disciplinary school, where many of these students thrive in the structured environment. Despite these impediments, many of these students learn from their alternative education experience and upon return are able to succeed in a traditional school environment, as the following results will demonstrate.

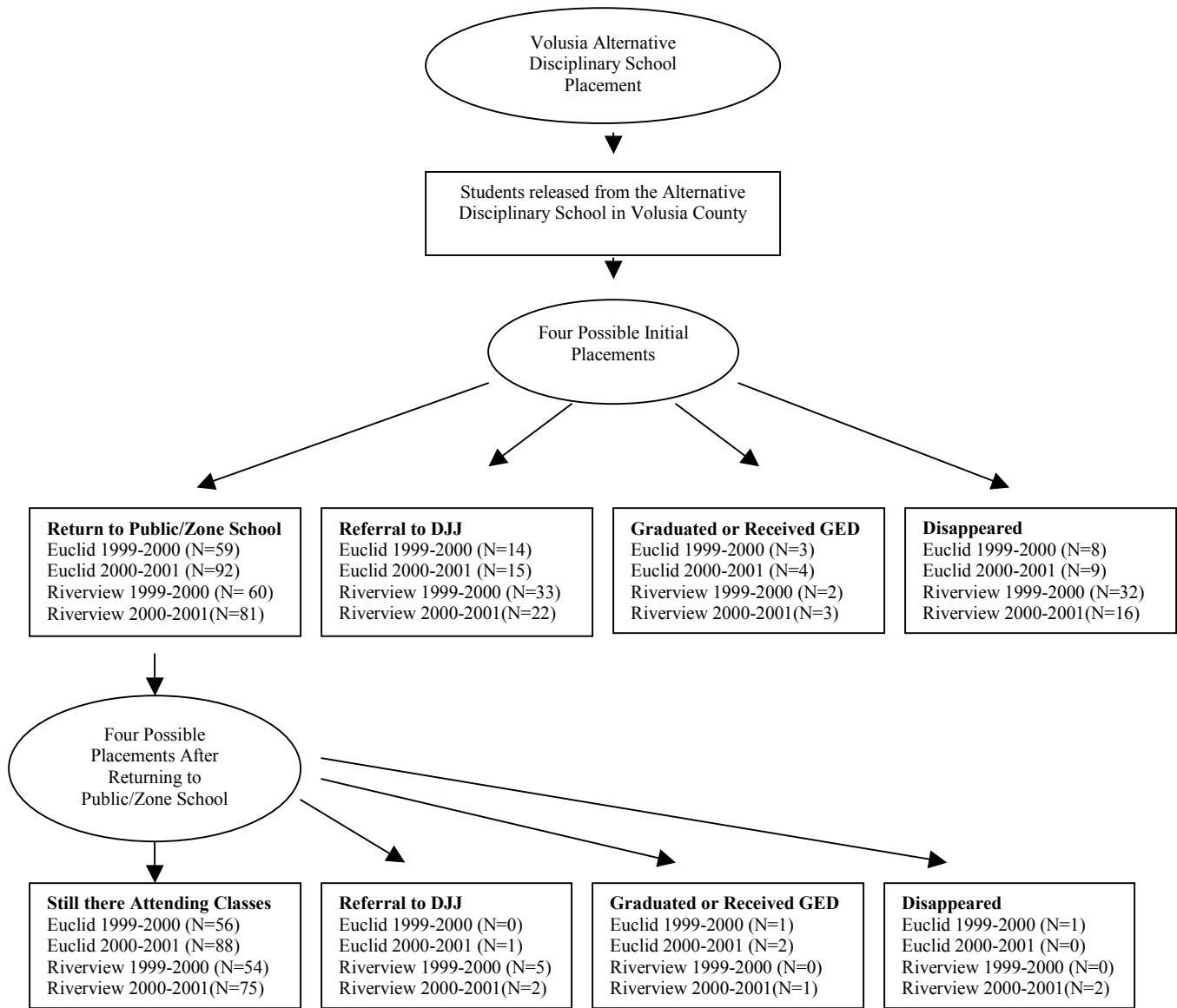
When looking at the students from both schools, a majority of the students return to public school after being released from the alternative disciplinary school. Specifically, 56% of the students who were withdrawn from either Euclid or Riverview in the 1999-2000 academic year returned to public school, and this number increased in 2000-2001 to 71%. Out of those students who returned to public school, 52% in 1999-2000 and 67% in 2000-2001 were still attending classes at the end of the analysis. A very small number, five students from the 1999-2000 cohort and three from the 2000-2001 cohort, were referred to a DJJ placement after returning to public school. In 1999-2000, four of those students were eventually committed to a DJJ facility, and all of the students in 2000-2001 were committed to a DJJ facility. One student in 1999-2000 and three students in 2000-2001 graduated within the time frame of the analysis after returning to public school. A meaningful increase can be seen in the number of students who returned to public school from 1999-2000 to 2000-2001, as well as the number of students who were remaining in public school. This increase can be attributed to many hypotheses: the caliber of the students referred to the alternative schools in 1999-2000 was lower than that of the 2000-2001 students; the schools simply performed better in 2000-2001; or, one of the years' results is simply an anomaly, but because only two years' were used in this analysis, it cannot be determined which year.

This increase in the number of students who returned to public school logically leads to the decrease of the number of students who were referred to a DJJ placement after being withdrawn from the alternative disciplinary school from 1999-2000 to 2000-2001. In

1999-2000, 22% of the students were referred to a DJJ placement, while 15% were referred in 2000-2001. In 1999-2000, 57% of those students who were referred to DJJ were ultimately committed to a DJJ facility, while 100% were committed in 2000-2001. During the 1999-2000 school year three percent of the students graduated immediately after or while attending the alternative disciplinary school, and four percent did so in 2000-2001. This rate appears low, however, the fact that only twelfth graders are eligible for graduation must be taken into consideration. Due to the difficulty of tracking students from year to year, 19% of the students in the 1999-2000 cohort and 10% in the 2000-2001 cohort disappeared from the analysis. This attrition can be explained by a variety of reasons; either the students moved out of state, dropped out of school, died, or, due to data entry error, simply were not found in the following year's data.

Figure 10.7-1 shows the outcome results separated by school for years 1999-2000 and 2000-2001. This breakdown by school allows comparisons between the two schools to be made, although it should be cautioned again that these results are based only on two years of data.

Figure 10.7-1: Flow Chart of Trajectories of Different Outcomes After Completion of Alternative Disciplinary School in 1999-2000 and 2000-20001



As shown in figure 10.7-1, Euclid consistently had more students return to public school after being released. Euclid had 70% in 1999-2000 and 77% in 2000-2001, compared to Riverview’s 47% in 1999-2000 and 65% in 2000-2001. Consistent with the above findings, Riverview had more students referred to DJJ over both years. In 1999-2000 Riverview had 26% and 18% in 2000-2001, judged against Euclid’s 17% in 1999-2000 and 13% in 2000-2001. The following graduation rates are based, not on the entire student population as are the rest of the rates, but solely on students who were eligible for graduation, specifically students in the 12th grade or adult education. Euclid had 75% of its eligible students graduate in 1999-2000 and 50% in 2000-2001, and Riverview had 20% in 1999-2000 and 43% in 2000-2001. Riverview also had more students disappear

from the analysis. In 1999-2000 25% of Riverview’s students disappeared and 13% did so in 2000-2001, which is more than Euclid’s 10% in 1999-2000 and 8% in 2000-2001.

Table 10.7-5 shows the number and percentage of students for each outcome broken down by race and gender. The table also is broken down by school and academic year.

Table 10.7-5: Race and Gender Distribution by School and Outcomes for Students Withdrawn from Euclid and Riverview in 1999-2000 and 2000-2001

Euclid													
<i>Race</i>													
<i>Sex</i>													
		<i>White</i>		<i>Black</i>		<i>Hispanic</i>		<i>Other</i>		<i>Male</i>		<i>Female</i>	
		<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
1999-2000	Return to Public School	34	71	11	58	11	79	3	100	41	64	18	90%
	DJJ Referral	8	17	3	16	3	21%	0	0	12	19	2	10
	Graduation ⁴	1	2 (25)	2	11 (50)	0	0 (0)	0	0 (0)	3	5 (75)	0	0 (0)
	Disappear	5	10	3	16	0	0	0	0	8	13	2	10
	Total	48	100	19	100	14	100	3	100	64	100	20	100
2000-2001	Return to Public School	61	78	17	77	12	71	2	67	70	78	22	73
	DJJ Placement	11	14	2	9	2	12	0	0	12	13	3	10
	Graduation	0	0 (0)	1	5 (13)	2	12 (25)	1	33 (13)	0	0 (0)	4	16 (50)
	Disappear	6	8	2	9	1	6	0	0	8	9	1	3
	Total	78	100	22	100	17	101	3	100	90	100	30	99
Riverview													
<i>Race</i>													
<i>Sex</i>													
		<i>White</i>		<i>Black</i>		<i>Hispanic</i>		<i>Other</i>		<i>Male</i>		<i>Female</i>	
		<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
1999-2000	Return to Public School	38	49	21	42	0	0	1	100	48	50	12	38
	DJJ Referral	16	21	17	34	0	0	0	0	25	26	8	25
	Graduation	2	3 (20)	1	2 (10)	0	0	0	0	2	2 (20)	1	3 (10)
	Disappear	21	27	11	22	0	0	0	0	21	22	11	34
	Total	77	100	50	100	0	0	1	100	96	100	32	100
2000-2001	Return to Public School	57	67	21	57	1	100	2	100	61	65	20	65
	DJJ Placement	11	13	11	30	0	0	0	0	20	21	2	6
	Graduation	6	7 (100)	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	4 (31)	2	6 (46)
	Disappear	11	13	5	14	0	0	0	0	9	10	7	23
	Total	85	100	37	101	1	100	2	100	94	100	31	100

Note. Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding.

White students from both schools consistently returned to public school more often than students of other races. At Euclid in 1999-2000, however, Hispanic students returned to public school more often than White students (79% compared to 71%), but that was not true in 2000-2001. The percentage of White students returning to public school was higher at Euclid (71% in 1999-2000 and 78% in 2000-2001), than at Riverview (49% in

⁴The percentages shown in parenthesis are those rates based solely on students who were eligible for graduation, specifically 12th grade students and adult education students.

1999-2000 and 67% in 2000-2001). The percentage of Black students returning to public school was higher at Euclid (58% in 1999-2000 and 77% in 2000-2001), than at Riverview (42% in 1999-2000 and 57% in 2000-2001). The number of Hispanic students at Riverview who returned to public school was very small for both years, only one in 2000-2001. (These results could possibly imply that White students benefit from this type of alternative disciplinary education more than other races, which results in their higher rate of return to school.)

At Euclid in 1999-2000, the percentage of students referred to DJJ does not show a significant change across the races. Hispanic students were referred to DJJ most often (21%) although both White and Black students were referred with almost the same frequency (17% and 16% respectively). Blacks were referred least often to DJJ in both 1999-2000 and 2000-2001, although the percentage of Black students referred to DJJ dropped to 9% in 2000-2001. In this same year, White and Hispanic students' percentages dropped as well (14% and 12% respectively). Hispanic students displayed a significant drop from the 1999-2000 year to the 2000-2001 year. Black students at Riverview were most often referred to DJJ in both years (34% in 1999-2000 and 30% in 2000-2001), which could be a reflection of the predilection of the criminal justice system. This is an increase from the rate at which Black students at Euclid were referred to DJJ. This again could be due to the geographic location of both schools and the relevant availability of delinquent behaviors and activities. White students were referred to DJJ at almost the same rate at Riverview as they were at Euclid. In 1999-2000 at Riverview, 21% of White students were referred and in 2000-2001 13% were referred, compared to Euclid's 17% and 13%. Due to the variability of the findings, more data are necessary before definitive conclusions can be made in regard to race and DJJ referral.

Black students at Euclid graduated more often than White students in 1999-2000 and 2000-2001. Fifty percent of eligible Black students graduated in 1999-2000, compared to eligible White and Hispanic students in 1999-2000 and 2000-2001. No Hispanic students graduated at Euclid in 1999-2000, but 25% of eligible Hispanic students did so in 2000-2001, which was a higher percentage than White students. At Riverview in 1999-2000, eligible White and Black students graduated at the approximately the same rate (20% and 10%) but in 2000-2001 only White students were eligible and graduated at a rate of 100%. Both schools show a larger percentage of students disappearing in the 1999-2000 academic year when compared it to the 2000-2001 academic year. These findings seem counter intuitive when viewed next to the results for those students who disappeared. Black students at Euclid disappeared most often across both years (16% and 9% respectively), when compared to White students (10% and eight percent). Hispanic students at Euclid disappeared least often with none disappearing in 1999-2000 and only 6% in 2000-2001. White students at Riverview disappeared more often in 1999-2000 with 27% compared to Black students' 22%. This switches in 2000-2001 with Black students disappearing more often (14%) when compared to White students (13%). Again, given the variability of the data and the fact that only two years are examined, it is difficult to draw definitive conclusions.

When looking at the effects of an individual's gender on outcome, females tend to fare better than males. Females returned to public school more often across both years at Euclid (90% and 88% compared to the males 64% and 78%). Males were referred to DJJ more often (19%) in 1999-2000 and (13%) in 2000-2001, compared to females (10% and 12%). Males eligible to graduate did so more often in 1999-2000 (75%), but eligible females did so at a higher rate in 2000-2001 (50%). Across both years males were more likely to disappear (13% and nine percent respectively), when compared to females (10% and four percent). At Riverview, males were more likely to return to school in 1999-2000 (50%), as compared to females (38%), but in 2000-2001 their rates were equal (65%). In 1999-2000, males and females were referred to DJJ at almost the same rate (26% and 25% respectively), but in 2000-2001 males were referred more often (21%) compared to females (six percent). Interestingly, females at Riverview were more likely to disappear in both years (23%) in 1999-2000 and (23%) in 2000-2001 compared to males (22% and 10%). Males having a higher propensity toward juvenile delinquency and behavioral management problems could explain these findings. The picture that is depicted by the impact of race and gender on an individual's outcome can be expanded to account for the effects of grade.

Table 10.7-6 shows the number and percentage of students enrolled in each grade broken down by outcome trajectory. The table is separated by school and academic year.

Table 10.7-6: Grade Distribution By School and Outcomes for Students Withdrawn from Euclid and Riverview in 1999-2000 and 2000-2001

		Euclid														Adult Education	
		6		7		8		9		10		11		12		N	%
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1999-2000	Return to Public School	2	100	5	71	17	89	21	68	6	60	6	60	1	25	1	100
	DJJ Referral	0	0	1	14	1	5	8	26	1	10	3	30	0	0	0	0
	Graduation	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA	3	75	0	0
	Disappear	0	0	1	14	1	5	2	6	3	30	1	10	0	0	0	0
	Total	2	100	7	100	19	100	31	100	10	100	10	100	4	100	1	100
2000-2001	Return to Public School	8	100	25	89	34	79	7	58	9	82	7	78	2	25	0	0
	DJJ Placement	0	0	2	7	7	16	2	17	1	9	2	22	0	0	1	100
	Graduation	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA	4	50	0	0
	Disappear	0	0	1	4	2	5	3	25	1	9	0	0	2	25	0	0
	Total	8	100	28	100	43	100	12	100	11	100	9	100	8	100	1	100
		Riverview														Adult Education	
		6		7		8		9		10		11		12		N	%
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1999-2000	Return to Public School	3	100	7	50	13	81	19	41	7	30	10	67	1	10	0	0
	DJJ Referral	0	0	5	36	3	19	11	24	8	35	4	27	2	20	0	0
	Graduation	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA	2	20	1	100
	Disappear	0	0	2	14	0	0	16	35	8	35	1	7	5	50	0	0
	Total	3	100	14	100	16	100	46	100	23	100	15	100	10	100	1	100
2000-2001	Return to Public School	16	94	18	86	20	71	7	35	15	65	1	25	2	29	2	40
	DJJ Placement	0	0	2	10	7	25	5	25	5	22	1	25	2	29	0	0
	Graduation	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA	3	43	3	60
	Disappear	1	6	1	5	1	4	8	40	3	13	2	50	0	0	0	0
	Total	17	100	21	101	28	100	20	100	23	100	4	100	7	101	5	100

Note. Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding error.

At Euclid in 1999-2000, eighth graders returned to public school more often than students from any other grade (89%), except sixth graders, whose N equaled only two and both of whom returned to public school. Seventh graders returned to public school at a rate of 71%, making them the second most likely to return, while ninth graders returned at a rate of 68%, and both tenth and eleventh graders did so at 60%. Twelfth graders returned to public school at the lowest rate (25%). This rate may be explained by the fact that twelfth graders are qualified for graduation and 75% of them graduated, which gives credence to the conclusion that twelfth students chose to graduate rather than return to their public/zone school. Eleventh grade students were referred to DJJ more often than students in any other grade (30%). Ninth grade students were the next highest (26%), with seventh grade students next (14%).

Tenth grade students were most likely to disappear (30%), with seventh grade students being the second most likely to disappear (14%). Other grades' disappearance rates were equal to or less than 10%. In 2000-2001, seventh grade students were most likely to return to public school (89%). Tenth, eighth, and eleventh grade students were clustered together and returned to school 78% to 82% of the time. Twelfth grade students again returned to public school at a rate of 25%, but are the only students eligible for graduation and did so at a rate of 50%. Eleventh grade students were most likely to get referred to DJJ (22%). Eighth and ninth grade students were the second most likely to be referred (16% and 17% respectively). Ninth and twelfth grade students disappeared at the same rate of 25%, which was also the highest. Again, the rest of the grades disappeared at a rate less than or equal to 10%. For Euclid, it appears that students in seventh, eighth, and eleventh grades have the highest consistent rate of returning to public school while ironically, eleventh grade students are also referred to DJJ on a consistent basis. Ninth and tenth grade students disappear most often, while the majority of twelfth grade students graduated. These results seem to be similar to those found at Riverview.

Eighth grade students at Riverview, like those at Euclid, returned to public school most often in 1999-2000 (81%). Eleventh grade students returned to public school the second most often at 67%. Seventh, ninth, and eleventh grade students did so at rates of 50%, 41%, and 30% respectively. The number of sixth graders was again low, and 100% of them returned to public school. Twelfth grade students, as with Euclid, returned to public school least often (10%). Seventh grade students were most likely to be referred to DJJ (36%), with tenth grade students following close behind (35%). Eleventh grade students were referred at a rate of 27%, while ninth, twelfth, and eighth were referred 19% to 24% of the time. Twelfth grade students were the only ones entitled to graduate and did so at a rate of 20%, and they also disappeared more than other grade students (50%). Both ninth and tenth grade students disappeared at a rate of 35%. Seventh and eleventh grade students disappeared at rates of 14% and seven percent respectively. No students disappeared from sixth or eighth grade.

In 2000-2001, sixth and seventh grade students returned to school 94% and 86% of the time, while eighth and tenth grade students did so at rates of 71% and 65%. The remaining grades returned to public school at rates less than 35%. Twelfth grade students

were most likely to be referred to DJJ (29%), and they graduated 43% of the time. These findings are not consistent with the previously offered findings at Euclid and the subsequent hypothesis about twelfth grade students. At Euclid, twelfth grade students tended to graduate more than the other three outcomes, while at Riverview the graduation rate is not significantly different from the rates of the other outcomes. Therefore, the conclusion that 12th grade students are more apt to graduate than return to public school does not appear to be true for Riverview. This could again be due to the school's location within an urban environment and the influence of these surroundings on its students. Eighth, ninth, and 11th grade students were referred to DJJ 25% of the time, while tenth grade students were referred at a rate of 22%. Only 10% of seventh grade students were referred to DJJ. Eleventh grade students disappeared most often (50%), while 40% of ninth grade students disappeared. Tenth grade students disappeared 13% of the time, with the remaining grades disappearing at rates less than 10%. These results show that students in the lower grades have a higher return to school rate, while students in the higher grades tend to graduate or disappear most often. These findings could reflect the amount of parental control that is exacted over the student. Younger students are more apt to be controlled by their parents via curfews and rules. These findings could also be attributed to the number of school contradicting opportunities available to older students. Older students tend to be exposed to more counterculture experiences than younger students.

Table 10.7-7 provides the ESE breakdown of the students in each outcome trajectory for both Euclid and Riverview in the 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 academic years.

Table 10.7-7: ESE Distribution by School and Outcomes for Students Released from Euclid and Riverview in 1999-2000 and 2000-2001

		Euclid							
		<i>EH/SED</i>		<i>SLD</i>		<i>OTHER</i>		<i>NO ESE</i>	
		<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%e</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
1999-2000	Return to Public School	10	67	8	67	0	0	41	72
	DJJ Referral	4	27	3	25	0	0	7	12
	Graduation ⁵	0	0 (0)	1	8 (25)	0	0 (0)	2	4 (50)
	Disappear	1	7	0	0	0	0	7	12
	Total	15	100*	12	100	0	0	57	100
2000-2001	Return to Public School	16	94	21	88	6	75	49	69
	DJJ Referral	1	6%	3	13	1	13	10	14
	Graduation	0	0 (0)	0	0 (0)	0	0 (0)	4	6 (50)
	Disappear	0	0	0	0	1	13	8	11
	Total	17	100	24	101*	8	101	71	100
		Riverview							
		<i>EH/SED</i>		<i>SLD</i>		<i>OTHER</i>		<i>NO ESE</i>	
		<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
1999-2000	Return to Public School	11	46	4	67%	6	86	39	43
	DJJ Referral	8	33	0	0	1	14%	24	26
	Graduation	0	0 (0)	0	0 (0)	0	0 (0)	3	3 (27)
	Disappear	5	21	2	33	0	0	25	27
	Total	24	100	6	100	7	100	91	100
2000-2001	Return to Public School	12	67	13	62	5	83	51	64
	DJJ Referral	4	22	6	29	0	0	12	15
	Graduation	0	0 (0)	1	5 (8)	0	0 (0)	5	6 (38%)
	Disappear	2	11	1	5	1	17	12	15
	Total	18	100	21	101	6	100	80	100

Note. Percentage may not equal 100% due to rounding.

The next step in the analysis was to take ESE services into account. At Euclid in 1999-2000, EH/SED students and SLD students returned to school at the same rate of 67%. Non-ESE students returned to school at an approximate equivalent rate of 72%. EH/SED and SLD students were referred to DJJ at rates of 27% and 25%, which is more than twice as high as non-ESE students (12%). This could imply that the underlying issues of the student's disability also affect their behavior in such a way as to put them at risk for involvement with the juvenile justice system. When looking at students eligible for graduation, non-ESE students graduated 50% of the time and SLD students did so at a rate of 25%. Non-ESE students also disappeared at a higher rate than all other students (12%).

In 2000-2001, 94% of EH/SED students and 88% of SLD students returned to public school, while only 69% of non-ESE students did so. EH/SED students were referred to DJJ least often at six percent with the remaining students being referred approximately

⁵ The percentages shown in parenthesis are those rates based solely on students who were eligible for graduation, specifically twelfth grade students and adult education students.

15% of the time. Non-ESE students were most likely to disappear (11%), compared to EH/SED and SLD students. These results show that in 00-01, ESE students fared significantly better.

In 1999-2000, students at Riverview with disabilities other than EH/SED and SLD returned to public school most often (86%). EH/SED students were referred to DJJ most often (33%), whereas non-ESE students were referred 26% of the time. EH/SED, SLD, and non-ESE students disappeared at approximately the same rate (21%, 33% and 27% respectively). In 2000-2001, again, students with disabilities other than EH/SED and SLD returned to public school most often (83%). EH/SED students returned to public school more often than SLD and non-ESE students (67% compared to 62% and 64%). SLD students were most likely to be referred to DJJ (29%), while EH/SED students were referred at a rate of 22%. Non-ESE students were referred least (15%). Of those students eligible to graduate, 38% were non-ESE students and eight percent were SLD students. Students with other disabilities disappeared most often (17%), but non-ESE students did so with equal frequency (15%). SLD students disappeared least often at five percent. Students without disabilities do not appear to be performing at a higher rate than those students with disabilities in regards to their outcomes, but again, the variability of these results does not lend itself to dramatic conclusions.

Table 10.7-8 describes the lunch status of the students who were released from Euclid and Riverview in 1999-2000 and 2000-2001. The students are broken down by outcome.

Table 10.7-8: Lunch Status Distribution by School and Outcomes for Students Released from Euclid and Riverview in 1999-2000 and 2000-2001

Euclid									
		<i>Did Not Apply</i>		<i>Applied Did Not Qualify</i>		<i>Free</i>		<i>Reduced</i>	
		<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
1999-2000	Return to Public School	23	62	2	100	29	74	5	83
	DJJ Referral	6	16	0	0	7	18	1	17
	Graduation ⁶	3	8 (75)	0	0 (0)	0	0 (0)	0	0 (0)
	Disappear	5	14	0	0	3	8	0	0
Total		37	100	2	100	39	100	6	100
2000-2001	Return to Public School	35	76	1	100	41	73	15	88
	DJJ Referral	5	11	0	0	10	18	0	0
	Graduation	1	2 (13)	0	0 (0)	3	5 (38)	0	0 (0)
	Disappear	5	11	0	0	2	4	2	12
Total		46	100	1	100	56	100	17	100
Riverview									
		<i>Did Not Apply</i>		<i>Applied Did Not qualify</i>		<i>Free</i>		<i>Reduced</i>	
		<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
1999-2000	Return to Public School	21	38	3	75	31	52	5	56
	DJJ Referral	12	22	1	25	19	32	1	11
	Graduation	2	4 (18)	0	0 (0)	1	2 (9)	0	0 (0)
	Disappear	20	36	0	0	9	15	3	33
Total		55	100	4	100	60	100	9	100
2000-2001	Return to Public School	25	51	4	100	37	69	15	83
	DJJ Referral	9	18	0	0	12	22	1	6
	Graduation	5	10 (38)	0	0 (0)	1	2 (8)	0	0 (0)
	Disappear	10	20	0	0	4	7	2	11
Total		49	99	4	100	54	100	18	100

Note. Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding error.

The last layer that was added to the analysis was the consideration of lunch status. At Euclid in 1999-2000, 74% of students who received free lunch and 83% of students who received reduced price lunch returned to public school. This is greater than the 62% of students who did not apply for lunch assistance. The rates were approximately the same for students who did not apply for aid and those students who received free or reduced price lunch in regards to DJJ referrals. Students who did not apply for assistance were referred to DJJ 16% of the time, while those who received free or reduced price lunch were referred at 18% and 17%, respectively. Those students who did not apply for assistance and were eligible for graduation graduated at a higher rate than any other type of student (75%)—no other types were eligible in 1999-2000. Those students who did not apply disappeared more often (14%) than those students who received free lunch (eight percent).

⁶ The percentages shown in parenthesis are those rates based solely on students who were eligible for graduation, specifically twelfth grade students and adult education students.

In 2000-2001, students who did not apply for lunch aid returned to public school more often than students who received free lunch (76% compared to 73%), but not more than students who received reduced price lunch (88%). Again, students who received free lunch were referred to DJJ more often (18%) than those students who did not apply (11%). When looking at students who were eligible for graduation, students who received free lunch graduated more often than students who did not apply for assistance (38% compared to 13%). Again, students who did not apply for lunch assistance disappeared often (11%), but reduced price lunch students disappeared most often at a rate of 12%. At Euclid students who receive lunch assistance are at a higher risk of being referred to DJJ. A hypothesis for these findings is the impact of a lower SES not only is detrimental to a student's academic performance, but also contributes to delinquent behavior. Those students who did not apply for assistance are most apt to disappear. This result is more difficult to interpret or explain because of the difficulty of using lunch status to infer SES. The deficiency lies with the students who did not apply for assistance, because no assumption about their SES can be made. Therefore, to provide an explanation as to why they are the type of student who is most apt to disappear is impossible.

The results seen with Riverview students paralleled those above in regards that students who received free or reduced price lunch returned to public school more often than students who did not apply for assistance in 1999-2000 (56% and 52% compared to 38%). Students who received reduced price lunch were referred to DJJ least often (11%). Students who received free lunch were again referred to DJJ at a higher rate (32%), than those students who did receive assistance (22%). Graduation eligible students who did not apply for assistance graduated more than graduation eligible students who received free lunch (18% compared to nine percent). Students who did not apply for lunch assistance disappeared most often (36%), but students who received reduced price lunch disappeared almost as often (33%). Fifteen percent of students who received free lunch disappeared.

In 2000-2001, again, students who received assistance, either free or reduced price lunch, returned to public school at a higher rate than those students who did not apply for assistance (69% and 83% compared to 51%). Those who received free lunch were referred to DJJ more often (22%), than those who did not apply for assistance (18%), and students who received reduced price lunch were referred to DJJ the least (6%). Again, those graduation eligible students who did not apply for lunch assistance graduated more often than graduation eligible students who received free lunch (38% compared to eight percent). Students who did not apply for assistance also disappeared most often (20%), when compared to students who received free (seven percent) or reduced price lunch (11%). The findings are consistent across both schools. Again, caution should be used when interpreting these results because using lunch status as a proxy for SES has flaws.

The final picture that is shown is the following: White female students who are in the seventh or eight grades and receive lunch assistance are most likely to return to public school. Black males in the eleventh grade and receive no lunch assistance are most likely

to be referred to DJJ; Black males in the ninth and tenth grades who did not receive lunch assistance disappear most often.

10.8 Program Level Findings

Throughout the individual-level findings, Euclid appears to be producing more positive student outcomes. (This could be attributed to the school's location and, therefore, the population it serves, or it could be that, during the time these data reflect, Euclid provided better service to its students.) The individual-level data were taken from the 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 academic years, while the following program-level data were collected in 2003 and 2004. It must be cautioned that both programs underwent changes during the time between 2001 and 2003; most importantly, the number of successful days needed to complete the program was raised from 45 to 65. Additionally, it was both schools' practice to take successful days away from students when they did not complete a successful day. This programmatic change was implemented between 2001 and 2003. In addition, no outside influences were controlled for when analyzing the student-level data. The findings based on the program-level data conflict with the individual-level conclusions above, and no conclusions should be drawn from this contradiction.

Table 10.8-1 shows the scores that both schools received during the two reviews that have been performed. There are two types of indicators, each with a separate scoring system. Performance indicators are scored from 0 to 9, with 0 indicating nonperformance and 9 indicating superior performance. Compliance indicators have scores ranging from 0 to 6 with a score of 0 signifying noncompliance and 6 signifying full compliance. For a complete description of the performance rating system, see Chapter 3.

Table 10.8-1: Quality Assurance Score Assigned to Euclid and Riverview Alternative Education Disciplinary Schools in May 2003 and January 2004

	<i>Euclid</i>			<i>Riverview</i>		
	<i>May 2003</i>	<i>January 2004</i>	<i>Difference</i>	<i>May 2003</i>	<i>January 2004</i>	<i>Difference</i>
Enrollment	4	6	+2	4	6	+2
Assessment	2	2	0	3	2	-1
Student Planning	3	2	-1	3	6	+3
Student Progress	3	2	-1	3	6	+3
Guidance Services	5	4	-1	5	6	+1
Exit Transition	3	2	-1	3	5	+2
Transition	3.3	3	-0.3	3.5	5.2	+1.7
Academic	6	4	-2	6	4	-2
Literacy and Reading	NA	5	NA	NA	5	NA
Instructional Delivery	4	4	0	5	4	-1
Support Services	6	6	0	6	6	0
Attendance	4	4	0	4	5	+1
Service Delivery	5	4.6	0.4	5.25	4.8	-.45
Social Skill Curriculum	3	4	+1	3	3	0
Physical and Psychological Safety	4	5	+1	4	4	0
Program Structure and Behavior Expectations	4	4	0	4	4	0
Meaningful Emotional and Psychological Relationships	3	3	0	3	3	0
Family, School, and Community Linkages	2	2	0	2	2	0
Program Behavioral Support	3.2	3.6	+0.4	3.2	3.2	0
Communication	5	4	-1	5	5	0
Instructional Personnel Qualifications	5	5	0	6	6	0
Professional Development	4	4	0	5	4	-1
School Improvement	6	7	+1	5	7	+2
Funding and Support	4	4	0	5	4	-1
Administration	4.8	4.8	0	5.2	5.2	0
Overall	4	4	0	4.3	4.6	+0.3

When comparing both schools, Riverview has consistently received higher QA scores than Euclid. Additionally, Riverview showed more of an improvement between the two reviews than did Euclid, which showed no overall improvement. Each school displayed variability on each standard. Euclid showed improvement only on the program behavioral support standard and deterioration on both the transition and service delivery standards. Riverview showed significant progress on the transition standard, but a weakening on the service delivery standard.

Both Euclid and Riverview showed a change in the scores that they received for the indicators in the transition standard. Both schools showed improvement on the enrollment indicator because the quality of the orientations that the students received prior to enrollment had improved. Both schools exhibited a decrease on the assessment

indicator. Both schools used the WRAT as an entry and exit test assessment, but the WRAT does not include language arts and, therefore, is not a comprehensive assessment. In addition, neither school administers a social skills assessment nor do the sending schools perform their required behavioral assessments. Euclid showed a decrease on the remaining indicators, while Riverview showed an increase on the residual indicators in the standard. Academic improvement plans (AIPs) and individual educational plans (IEPs) were being developed in an appropriate manner and within the required time frame, utilized to guide instruction, and reviewed regularly with students at Riverview but not at Euclid. Riverview's guidance staff develops exit/transition plans for all students, but this procedure is not in place at Euclid.

Both schools showed an overall decrease on the service delivery standard. Both schools exhibited a decrease on the academic indicator primarily because neither school has a middle school model (i.e., thematic programming, team teaching), and curricular activities are not based on the student's assessed educational needs. Euclid remained consistent on the rest of the indicators in the standard. Not all of the teachers at Riverview participated in inservice training during the second review, resulting in a decrease on the instructional delivery indicator. The attendance policies and appropriate documentation at the school have improved, resulting in an increase on the attendance indicator.

Out of both schools, only Euclid showed change on the program behavioral support standard. Euclid increased on the social skills curriculum indicator and the physical and psychological safety indicator. The social skills training that the ESE students improved, resulted in the increase on the social skills curriculum indicator. During the May 2003 review, it was noted that the enforcement of disciplinary infractions was inconsistent among the faculty and staff; this had been rectified by the January 2004 review, producing an increase on the physical and psychological safety indicator.

Neither school showed an overall change on the administration standard; however, both schools showed an increase on the school improvement indicator. During the May 2003 review Euclid had received a higher score on the indicator due to the fact that their school improvement plan included a timeline and persons responsible for implementing the school improvement goals, which was not found within the school improvement plan at Riverview. Both schools received the same score for the indicator during the January 2004 review; therefore, Riverview showed a larger increase than did Euclid. Euclid showed a change on one other indicator, communication. One week prior to the January 2004 review, the school's assistant principal retired, and the new assistant principal had only been at the school for one week; consequently, the decline in the communication indicator was expected, and should only be seen as a temporary deterioration. Riverview showed a decrease on two indicators, professional development and funding and support. The teacher professional development plans and inservice training were not found to be directly related to school goals, student outcomes, or the content area that the instructor was teaching. No improvement was seen on the lack of computers and Internet access for the middle school program and a media resource center, resulting in the decline on the funding and support indicator.

Based on the May 2004 QA review, both schools exhibited the following strengths:

- Both schools contained computer lab technology with educational software for the high school students.
- A majority of the staff at both schools exhibited positive interest and motivation in their jobs and a respectful and personable behavior toward students.
- A reading plan that conforms to the *Just Read, Florida!* initiative had been created and had begun to be implemented.

Both schools also displayed the following weaknesses:

- In spite of the fact that students were sent to these alternative disciplinary schools as a result of behavioral issues, the students' school and behavioral histories were not reviewed with the student during their orientation to the schools or at any time during their attendance at the schools. This type of review would allow for the identification of attendance, academic, and/or behavioral issues and goals.
- Academic improvement plans (AIPs) were not utilized, and individualized goals and instructional objectives for non-ESE students were not developed for all students.
- The high school curriculum included limited direct instruction and off-line activities for students. This was seen more so at Euclid than Riverview.
- The schools' primary goals are stated as successfully returning students to their home schools and modifying the students' behavior that contributed to their initial placement in the schools. Both schools' policies and practices did not contain specific protocols for assisting students with a successful transition back to their home schools. Special education students received some support prior to exiting the alternative schools, but non-special education students often received little more than a phone call to the home school.
- Reports from staff and students indicated that often students were not well received back at their home schools after being labeled troublemakers.
- Community involvement and mentoring was almost non-existent in the schools.
- A strict 300-minute school day due to the extended time needed for busing also resulted in very little social skills instruction. There was a lack of consistency with providing the existing social skills training.
- Middle school students did not have access to technology in their classrooms.

There were areas of difference between the two schools.

- The limited direct instruction and off-line activities for students in the high school appeared more problematic at Euclid than Riverview.
- Euclid had not administered entry assessment tests for the two weeks prior to the review because of FCAT administration.
- Communication between faculty, administration, and staff appeared to be fragmented at Euclid.

- Euclid had two teachers with temporary certification, while all of the teachers at Riverview had professional certification. Euclid also employed one long-term substitute teacher with no documentation of certification.
- Euclid had new educational materials on site that had not been disseminated to the classrooms.

The second QA review performed in January 2004 revealed substantial improvements at both schools. The improvements at Euclid did not show up in the January QA scores; in fact, the changes may have either had a detrimental effect on the QA scores due to their proximity to the review or had not come to fruition at the time of the review. In regards to QA scores, Euclid was essentially unchanged overall, but Riverview displayed an overall improvement. These changes are as follows:

- Riverview had outlined and begun to implement an exit protocol for all students.
- At Riverview, AIPs were being developed with specific and individualized long-term goals and short-term instructional objectives for academics and social/behavioral skills and to guide instruction.
- Euclid underwent administrative changes; the former assistant principal retired at the beginning of January; therefore, the current assistant principal had only been in place for approximately one week prior to the review.
- The principal of both sites indicated that a new facility has been secured for Euclid, and the school will move to their new building at the beginning of the 2004-2005 academic year.

10.9 Summary Discussion

At the request of the Volusia County School District, JJEEP has developed a QA system to review the district's two alternative education schools. Literature pertaining to promising practices in alternative schools was used to create the QA standards for the alternative disciplinary schools. JJEEP patterned the QA standards around those currently in place for juvenile justice education day treatment. Modifications were made to the day treatment standards to account for the differences between the two types of schools, specifically the addition of the program behavioral support standard. Other adjustments were made based on the comments of the faculty and staff at Volusia County's two alternative disciplinary schools, namely Euclid and Riverview.

Student level data and demographic information were collected and analyzed in attempts to depict student characteristics and outcomes. Demographic information was assessed. Students who attended either Euclid or Riverview tend to be predominantly White males. The students have an equal rate of requiring ESE services and receiving lunch assistance. Students from Euclid return to public school at a higher rate than students from Riverview. As stated earlier, White female students who are in the seventh or eighth grades and receive lunch assistance are most likely to return to public school. Black males in the eleventh grade and receive no lunch assistance are most likely to be referred to DJJ; Black males in the ninth and tenth grades who did not receive lunch assistance

were not found in subsequent years' data most often. Again, because only two years of data were used in this analysis, conclusions as to individual students outcome trends should not be made. Rather, lessons from these analyses will be used to refine and guide JJEEP's subsequent efforts to implement QA entry and exit assessment of these two alternative education disciplinary schools.

QA reviews began on both programs in May 2003. A second review was performed in January 2004 revealing significant changes in both schools. Riverview showed overall improvement between the two reviews, while Euclid did not. QA scores from both reviews indicate that Riverview is doing slightly better than Euclid, although student outcome data reveal the contrary. This contradiction could be attributed to the fact that the student level data were collected during a different time frame than the program level data; therefore, no conclusion should be drawn.

This project has just begun and is in the initial stages of its implementation; therefore, caution should be used when making any interpretations based on these exploratory preliminary data and findings. The alternative education QA system appears to be effective at this stage of the project, but further research is necessary. Future research will entail continuing the QA process and ascertaining its effects on students' outcomes