



**SUPPORTING YOUR FREEDOM TO TEACH<sup>SM</sup>**

# **Report on the 2006 ATPE Discipline Survey**

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The ATPE Discipline Survey was conducted online from September 11-17, 2006. ATPE members were invited to respond to the survey through a members-only Web site. There were 2,801 total responses to the survey. On average, 2,299 people responded to each survey question. More than 800 of the members who responded offered to provide additional information upon request.<sup>1</sup>

This is a not a scientific survey, but an informal poll of ATPE members.

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<sup>1</sup> May we contact you for more information?  
N=2,495; 839 yes; 1,656 no

## SURVEY RESULTS

Classroom teachers made up 86% of the respondents. The other 14% reported such job titles as administrators, paraprofessionals, university professors, librarians, counselors, coaches and consultants.

Most respondents identified their campuses as being rated Academically Acceptable (44.43%) or Recognized (43.27%).

CAMPUS RATING	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Exemplary	132	4.94
Recognized	1,157	43.27
Academically Acceptable	1,188	44.43
Academically Unacceptable	118	4.41
Not Rated	79	2.95

ATPE last conducted a survey on student discipline in 1996. In the ten-year time frame since that survey, ATPE members have frequently cited student discipline as a major problem for educators. The 2006 survey asked respondents whether it has become easier to maintain discipline in the classroom over the past ten years. The vast majority of survey respondents (87.39%) feel that it has *not* become easier to maintain discipline in the classroom.

OVER THE LAST 10 YEARS, HAS IT BECOME EASIER TO MAINTAIN DISCIPLINE IN THE CLASSROOM?	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Yes	345	12.61%
No	2,392	87.39%
TOTAL RESPONDENTS	2,737	100.00%

About 92% of respondents say they generally feel safe in the classroom, and roughly the same percentage say their students generally feel safe in the classroom.

DO YOU GENERALLY FEEL SAFE IN YOUR CLASSROOM?	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Yes	2,535	91.91%
No	223	8.09%
TOTAL RESPONDENTS	2,758	100.00%

More than 94% say that their school district requires that students and their parents sign and return a copy of the student code of conduct every year. A little more than half of the respondents claim that personnel on their campuses are trained on discipline procedures based on the student code of conduct every year. More than 48% say they are not trained every year. We believe this shows a need for additional training of existing school employees at the school district or campus level.

<b>DOES YOUR DISTRICT REQUIRE STUDENTS AND THEIR PARENTS TO SIGN AND RETURN A COPY OF THE STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT EVERY YEAR?</b>	<b>NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	2,584	94.20%
No	159	5.80%
<b>TOTAL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>2,743</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

<b>ARE STAFF MEMBERS ON YOUR CAMPUS TRAINED ON DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES BASED ON THE STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT EVERY YEAR?</b>	<b>NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	1,410	51.48%
No	1,329	48.52%
<b>TOTAL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>2,739</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

About 57% of respondents believe the student code of conduct is applied fairly to all students in their district.

<b>DO YOU FEEL THAT THE STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT IS APPLIED FAIRLY TO ALL STUDENTS IN YOUR DISTRICT?</b>	<b>NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	1,522	56.85%
No	1,155	43.15%
<b>TOTAL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>2,677</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

The majority of respondents (78%) feel that teachers on their campus have the authority to send students to the principal's office for disciplinary problems. However, only 57% believe their administrators take appropriate disciplinary action in those instances. There is evidence that teachers and administrators often disagree on the appropriate disciplinary response warranted in any given situation.

<b>DO YOU FEEL THAT TEACHERS ON YOUR CAMPUS HAVE THE AUTHORITY TO SEND A STUDENT TO THE PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE FOR UNRULY, DISRUPTIVE OR ABUSIVE CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR THAT INTERFERES WITH THE TEACHER'S ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY OR WITH THE OTHER STUDENTS' ABILITY TO LEARN?</b>	<b>NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	2,151	78.05%

No	605	21.95%
TOTAL RESPONDENTS	2,756	100.00%

<b>DO YOU FEEL THAT YOUR ADMINISTRATORS TOOK APPROPRIATE DISCIPLINARY ACTION IN RESPONSE TO YOUR REFERRALS?</b>	<b>NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	1,461	56.89%
No	1,107	43.11%
TOTAL RESPONDENTS	2,568	100.00%

Based on 2,602 responses, the average number of students each teacher referred to the principal's office for disciplinary reasons during the 2005-06 school year was 9.7.

A majority of the respondents (83%) feel that administrators generally support their disciplinary decisions, but fewer respondents (only 69%) say that parents support their authority to discipline students in the classroom. More than 61% of respondents say they have had their authority to discipline a student overruled as a result of intervention by the student's parent.

<b>ARE YOUR ADMINISTRATORS GENERALLY SUPPORTIVE OF THE DISCIPLINARY DECISIONS YOU MAKE INVOLVING YOUR STUDENTS?</b>	<b>NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	2,224	83.23%
No	448	16.77%
TOTAL RESPONDENTS	2,672	100.00%

<b>DO THE PARENTS OF MOST OF YOUR STUDENTS SUPPORT YOUR AUTHORITY TO DISCIPLINE THEIR CHILDREN IN THE CLASSROOM?</b>	<b>NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	1,845	68.82%
No	836	31.18%
TOTAL RESPONDENTS	2,681	100.00%

<b>HAVE YOU EVER HAD YOUR AUTHORITY TO DISCIPLINE A STUDENT OVERRULED AS A RESULT OF INTERVENTION BY THE STUDENT'S PARENT</b>	<b>NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	1,640	61.15%
No	1,042	38.85%
TOTAL RESPONDENTS	2,682	100.00%

About 45% say that the practice of removing students from the classroom for disciplinary problems is discouraged on their campuses. In comments, respondents identified the following as typical reasons why the practice of removal is discouraged:

- Administrators feel that teachers should handle disciplinary problems within the classroom (21.32%)
- Administrators worry that students removed from the classroom do not receive adequate instruction (16.72%)
- Teachers do not have the support of their administrators (16.64%)
- Administrators fear that removal will have a negative impact on test scores, accountability ratings, funding or the overall reputation of the school (11.89%)
- The school does not have adequate resources to deal with students who are removed from a classroom (10.54%)
- There is too much paperwork or administrative burden involved in the removal process (9.67%)
- Administrators are afraid of parents' reactions (6.18%)
- Respondents are not sure why the practice is discouraged (3.88%)
- Administrators are reluctant to remove special education students (2.54%)
- Administrators feel that students are too young to be removed from class (0.55%)
- Administrators selectively apply disciplinary policies based on a student's race (0.08%)

<b>IS THE PRACTICE OF REMOVING UNRULY STUDENTS FROM CLASS DISCOURAGED ON YOUR CAMPUS?</b>	<b>NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	1,198	44.45%
No	1,497	55.55%
<b>TOTAL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>2,695</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

The survey results reveal that it is uncommon for teachers to try to permanently remove students from their classrooms for disciplinary reasons. During the 2005-06 school year, more than 70% of respondents said they had not tried to permanently remove a student. Nearly 16% tried to have one student permanently removed during the last school year.

<b>HOW MANY STUDENTS DID YOU TRY TO PERMANENTLY REMOVE FROM YOUR CLASSROOM FOR DISCIPLINARY REASONS DURING THE 2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR?</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES</b>
0 students	70.74%
1 student	15.93%
2 students	6.70%
3 students	3.27%
4 students	1.25%
5 students	1.21%
6 students	0.43%
7-9 students	0.00%

10 students	0.16%
More than 10 students	0.31%

Of those students for whom permanent removal was attempted, on average 65.92% were eventually returned to the respondent's classroom. On average, 49.47% of the removed students were returned to the respondent's classroom despite objection. This indicates a strong sentiment among teachers that they do not have a voice in the decision of whether a student will be returned to the classroom following a disciplinary removal.

### **BULLYING:**

The 79<sup>th</sup> Legislature adopted House Bill 283 by Rep. Ruben Hope, which requires school districts to prohibit students from bullying, harassment and making "hit lists." School districts must ensure that such prohibitions are enforced and must provide staff with appropriate methods for managing student discipline. Districts must adopt a discipline management program to prevent and educate students about bullying and sexual harassment.

ATPE asked respondents several questions about "bullying," defined as written or verbal expression or conduct that could physically harm a student, damage a student's property, or place a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student or the student's property; or threats or actions that create an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment for the student.

An overwhelming 93% of the respondents believe that bullying is a problem for students today. Nearly 90% report that their district's student code of conduct expressly prohibits bullying.

<b>DO YOU FEEL THAT BULLYING IS A PROBLEM FOR STUDENTS TODAY?</b>	<b>NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	2536	93.58%
No	174	6.42%
<b>TOTAL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>2710</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

<b>DOES YOUR DISTRICT'S STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT EXPRESSLY PROHIBIT BULLYING?</b>	<b>NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	2406	89.64%
No	278	10.36%
<b>TOTAL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>2684</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

House Bill 283 also requires school boards to offer transfers to victims of bullying, if requested by the parent. About 23% of the ATPE survey respondents have had a student

transferred to another classroom because the student claimed to be the victim of bullying. Only 8.38% of the respondents have ever had a student transferred to another classroom or campus because of alleged sexual assault by another student.

<b>HAVE YOU HAD A STUDENT TRANSFERRED FROM YOUR CLASSROOM TO ANOTHER CLASSROOM OR CAMPUS BECAUSE HE/SHE CLAIMED TO BE THE VICTIM OF BULLYING?</b>	<b>NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	623	23.24%
No	2058	76.76%
<b>TOTAL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>2681</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

<b>HAVE YOU HAD A STUDENT TRANSFERRED FROM YOUR CLASSROOM TO ANOTHER CLASSROOM OR CAMPUS BECAUSE HE/SHE CLAIMED TO BE THE VICTIM OF A SEXUAL ASSAULT BY ANOTHER STUDENT?</b>	<b>NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	225	8.38%
No	2461	91.62%
<b>TOTAL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>2686</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Specific comments received in the survey about bullying include the following:

- Limited classes and teachers make it difficult to transfer students who are the victim of bullying.
- "We have had 6th grade students who wouldn't go to the bathroom because they were afraid."
- Victims of bullying are generally afraid to admit that they are victims.
- Much bullying goes unnoticed by teachers and occurs outside the classroom.
- A common teacher response to complaints of bullying is "I didn't see it, so I can't do anything about it."
- "Teachers are also subject to bullying by students and their families."
- "Students and parents are under the misconception that simply calling a student a name equates to bullying. Students therefore have developed little or no skills dealing with adverse situations."
- One student was threatened daily with rape and bodily harm.
- Victimized students are afraid to report bullying because they fear retribution outside the classroom.
- Campus and district handbooks define bullying but do not specifically address the issue, do not explain the consequences of bullying and do not explain how to report a bully.

- Administrators are supportive of their staff, but “the law ties their hands” and “seems to favor misbehavior.” Parents are not supportive enough.
- Bullying by girls has gotten even worse than bullying by boys
- “Bullying is no worse than it was 20 years ago. It is almost impossible to prevent.”
- Bullies are often transferred into my classroom without my knowledge or consent
- “My child in middle school has been a victim for several years, and I do not have the support of the school.”
- “Bullying has been going on since the dawn of time. I do not condone it, but it is a fact of life.”
- “We should be trying harder to teach our lesson rather than worry about self esteem. That is the parents’ job.”
- “Kids need to stand up for themselves.”
- Anti-bullying videos and programs have been effective at curbing the problem. It is helpful to teach students that even teasing of friends is a form of bullying. “The more educated the students are about bullying, the less it occurs.”
- The term “bully” is overused. Parents allege bullying whenever something bad happens to their child.
- Most bullying is verbal, and homosexual students are frequently targeted.
- “I think bullying should be classified as a terroristic threat.”
- “Although codes of conduct prohibit bullying, it is a condition that is not fully addressed. Society tends to look the other way and not get educated to the underlying factors that create a bully and/or the emotional ramifications for the victim.”
- Bullying, threats of violence and sexual harassment are huge problems in school districts where I have taught. Even teachers are sexually harassed.
- “A student of mine brought a knife and several kids told me he held it to their throats on the bus and in the school bathroom. The student was sent to the principal, but she sent him back to the classroom after he said he did not do it. My team leader and I insisted more action be taken. The principal never asked the victims any questions. The student with the knife was sent home for the rest of the day, but was allowed to return the next day.”
- Bullying is the biggest problem cited by parents.
- Administrators often say something derogatory about the victim. A student’s fears may not be taken seriously because of who he is or because of his family history.
- “Bullying is hard to define because what really bothers one kid might just be ‘horseplay’ to another.”
- Zero tolerance actually supports bullying, because the victim and the bully are punished equally. This causes victims to condone behavior that might otherwise be stopped before it escalates.
- Bullying, violence, abuse and even stalking between couples have increased.
- Teachers are not usually consulted on disciplinary actions to be taken in response to bullying.
- “I had a student who was caught dealing drugs and spilled the beans on other drug dealers on campus. He was taken to DAEP on another campus with a bodyguard because of all the death threats. He has now left the district.”



- If the rest of the class refuses to befriend the bully, then the behavior will stop. This is very effective for younger students.
- “Bullying is, in part, an outcome of our current cultural trend toward violence as solutions to problems.”
- Teachers could use more training on how to deal with bullying in the classroom.

In spite of the legislative changes enacted in 2005, the ATPE survey responses suggest that more enforcement, education and training are necessary to address the problems of bullying and sexual harassment in schools. There appears to be no widely accepted standard definition of conduct that constitutes bullying. Bullying is perceived as a serious problem for many students, and instances of bullying are often unreported due to fear of retribution. Some educators feel that it is unfair to transfer the victim of bullying instead of the accused bully to another classroom. Teachers want more input in the disciplinary process. Anger management and counseling services are recommended, along with more training for teachers.

**DAEPs:**

Although every school district is required to have a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP), nearly 15% of the educators who responded to the ATPE survey were not familiar with the program at all. Comments received through the survey substantiate that many teachers are not familiar with their district’s DAEP program or do not believe that such a program exists.

<b>ARE YOU FAMILIR WITH YOUR DISTRICT’S DAEP?</b>	<b>NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	2310	85.08%
No	405	14.92%
<b>TOTAL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>2715</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Only 45% of the respondents describe their district’s DAEP program as successful. About 55% of the respondents feel that a student’s placement in a DAEP has some impact on his behavior and/or learning when he is returned to the regular classroom.

<b>DO YOU FEEL YOUR DISTRICT’S DAEP PROGRAM IS SUCCESSFUL?</b>	<b>NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	1133	45.14%
No	1377	54.86%
<b>TOTAL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>2510</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

<b>DOES A STUDENT’S PLACEMENT IN A DAEP HAVE AN IMPACT ON HIS BEHAVIOR AND/OR LEARNING WHEN</b>	<b>NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
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<b>HE IS RETURNED TO THE REGULAR CLASSROOM?</b>		
Yes	1340	55.26%
No	1085	44.74%
<b>TOTAL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>2425</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

About 57% believe that there is sufficient academic accountability for students placed in DAEPs. The same percentage of respondents thinks that demographic subgroups, such as special education students or racial minorities, are referred to DAEPs more often than the general student population.

<b>DO YOU FEEL THAT SCHOOLS ARE HELD SUFFICIENTLY ACCOUNTABLE FOR THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS WHO HAVE BEEN PLACED IN A DAEP?</b>	<b>NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	1406	56.72%
No	1073	43.28%
<b>TOTAL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>2479</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

<b>DO YOU SEE A GREATER NUMBER OF ANY SPECIFIC DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS REFERRED TO DAEPs ON YOUR CAMPUS, e.g., SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS, RACIAL MINORITIES, ETC.?</b>	<b>NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	1070	42.73%
No	1434	57.27%
<b>TOTAL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>2504</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Only 19% believe that DAEP placements are linked to student performance on the TAKS test. Asked if DAEP students receive adequate academic instruction for the length of their placement, 53% said yes.

<b>DO YOU BELIEVE THAT DAEP PLACEMENTS ARE RELATED TO STUDENT PERFORMANCE OR PRESSURE TO PERFORM WELL ON THE TAKS?</b>	<b>NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	466	18.68%
No	2028	81.32%
<b>TOTAL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>2494</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

<b>IN YOUR DISTRICT, DO STUDENTS IN DAEP RECEIVE ADEQUATE ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION FOR THE</b>	<b>NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
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<b>LENGTH OF THEIR PLACEMENT?</b>		
Yes	1289	53.00%
No	1143	47.00%
<b>TOTAL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>2432</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

ATPE received the following comments on how the DAEP process should be improved to provide an academic setting that keeps a student on grade level:

- Academic standards are lowered and grades are inflated in DAEPs. Instruction is not aligned to the TEKS. Some students are sent to the DAEP just so that their grade point averages will improve. When the student returns to the regular classroom, he is behind. "Accountability is lost in the system."
- Many respondents favor longer placements – students should stay in the DAEP for remainder of the school year.
- A few respondents favor shorter placements.
- Vocational education is needed for students who have no desire or intent to attend college.
- Provide one-on-one mentoring and tutoring for DAEP students.
- DAEP classrooms should not mix students from different grade levels.
- DAEPs need more rigorous instruction and supervision. Too many students view the DAEP as an easier and less stressful classroom environment. It is "fun" for them, or they sleep through it. Students actually look forward to being reassigned to the DAEP.
- More computers and access to lab facilities are needed to help students stay on grade level, particularly in math and science.
- DAEPs need certified teachers in every subject.
- Smaller class sizes are need in DAEPs and overall.
- Provide social skills intervention for special education students to prevent them from being sent to DAEPs so often for minor behavioral issues.
- We need more parental involvement and "holding parents accountable for their children's behavior."
- A single educator should supervisor the DAEP, instead of a constant flow of multiple teachers.
- Follow the lesson plan and require students to do homework, quizzes, etc. prepared by the original classroom teacher, rather than the DAEP teacher. Send student's actual work back to the original teacher, not just grade reports. Consider video conferencing with the regular classroom.
- More communication and interaction is necessary between the regular classroom teacher and the DAEP teacher.
- Train and inform teachers about the district's DAEP program.
- Consider incentive pay for master teachers to work in the DAEP.
- DAEP curriculum should include counseling, anger management and character education.
- The DAEP schedule should match that of the regular classroom. Too often the DAEP offers a shorter instructional day, and students like this.

- Students assigned to the DAEP should not be returned to the classroom immediately prior to the administration of the TAKS test. Too many DAEP students fail the TAKS and end up dropping out of school.
- DAEPs should take place at an alternative campus.
- DAEP students would benefit from a structured time before the school day to meet with his regular classroom teacher for one-on-one tutoring.
- Address drug problems within the DAEPs.
- Employ DAEP teachers with criminal justice backgrounds.
- Require DAEP teachers to follow the Individual Education Plan for special education students.
- Students returning to the regular classroom from a DAEP are viewed as “heroes” by their peers – more classroom disruption occurs as a result.
- “Invite lawmakers to spend a week working in a DAEP, having them pose as substitute teachers rather than as legislators, and let them get a true taste of what is really going on before they are allowed to start streamlining.”

### **ZERO TOLERANCE:**

About half of the respondents reported that their districts have zero tolerance policies. Most (65%) believe that zero tolerance is an effective deterrent.

<b>DOES YOUR SCHOOL DISTRICT EMPLOY ZERO TOLERANCE PRACTICES FOR STUDENT DISCIPLINE?</b>	<b>NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	1354	51.27%
No	1287	48.73%
<b>TOTAL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>2641</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

<b>DO YOU FEEL THAT ZERO TOLERANCE PRACTICES FOR STUDENT DISCIPLINE ARE EFFECTIVE DETERRENTS?</b>	<b>NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	1707	65.28%
No	908	34.72%
<b>TOTAL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>2615</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Related to zero tolerance policies in schools, the 79<sup>th</sup> Legislature adopted House Bill 603 by Rep. Rob Eissler. It directs school boards, in adopting a student code of conduct, to specify whether consideration is given to certain factors in a decision to order a student’s suspension, removal to a DAEP, or expulsion.

The ATPE discipline survey asked about these particular factors, which are self-defense; intent or lack of intent at the time the student engaged in the conduct; a student’s

disciplinary history; or a disability that substantially impairs the student's capacity to appreciate the wrongfulness of the student's conduct.

A little more than half of the respondents reported that their district will consider self-defense as a factor. The same percentage answered that the student's intent or lack of intent could be considered. Most reported that the district will consider a student's disciplinary history (74%) or disability (79%).

<b>DOES YOUR STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT ALLOW FOR CONSIDERATION OF SELF DEFENSE AS A FACTOR IN THE DECISION TO ORDER A STUDENT'S SUSPENSION, EXPULSION OR REMOVAL TO A DAEP?</b>	<b>NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	1249	53.19%
No	1099	46.81%
<b>TOTAL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>2348</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

<b>DOES YOUR STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT ALLOW FOR CONSIDERATION OF A STUDENT'S INTENT OR LACK OF INTENT TO ENGAGE IN THE PROHIBITED CONDUCT AS A FACTOR IN THE DECISION TO ORDER A STUDENT'S SUSPENSION, EXPULSION OR REMOVAL TO A DAEP?</b>	<b>NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	1242	53.84%
No	1065	46.16%
<b>TOTAL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>2307</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

<b>DOES YOUR STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT ALLOW FOR CONSIDERATION OF A STUDENT'S DISCIPLINARY HISTORY AS A FACTOR IN THE DECISION TO ORDER A STUDENT'S SUSPENSION, EXPULSION OR REMOVAL TO A DAEP?</b>	<b>NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	1739	74%
No	611	26%
<b>TOTAL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>2350</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

<b>DOES YOUR STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT ALLOW FOR</b>	<b>NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
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<b>CONSIDERATION OF A STUDENT'S DISABILITY AS A FACTOR IN THE DECISION TO ORDER A STUDENT'S SUSPENSION, EXPULSION OR REMOVAL TO A DAEP?</b>		
Yes	1858	79.27%
No	486	20.73%
<b>TOTAL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>2344</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

In comments added to the survey responses, several educators expressed support for zero tolerance policies in schools. Very few respondents specifically mentioned the mitigating factors that are delineated in HB 603. It does not appear that the legislative changes enacted through HB 603 have had any dramatic impact on educators' opinions toward student discipline.

#### **AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS:**

Only 34% of respondents state that their district has an after-school prevention program, and most (70%) believe the programs are ineffective. Respondents reported the use of the following types of after-school prevention programs in their school districts:

- Detention halls held before or after school or during lunchtime
- Saturday school and evening school
- Counseling and anger management programs
- Big Brothers/Big Sisters
- Student mentoring programs
- Character Counts program
- Kids Unite after school program
- Extended day studies
- Peer mediation
- Zavala Zone
- Friday Night Lights
- Friday Night Reflection
- Bible study
- Green Team recycling program
- Self-manager's program
- STAR program (counseling/boot camp)
- Various community service programs, including working at high school football games
- After-school grounds maintenance/cleanup/gardening programs
- Homework Club
- 21<sup>st</sup> Century Grant program
- Boys' Town

- Boys' and Girls' Clubs
- BELT (Behavior Extended Learning Time)
- YMCA
- Support groups for gang members
- After-school karate program for at-risk students

<b>DOES YOUR DISTRICT OFFER ANY KIND OF AFTER-SCHOOL DISCIPLINARY PREVENTION PROGRAM?</b>	<b>NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	820	34.02%
No	1590	65.98%
<b>TOTAL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>2410</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

<b>DO YOU FEEL THE PROGRAM IS EFFECTIVE?</b>	<b>NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	364	30.26%
No	839	69.74%
<b>TOTAL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>1203</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Comments received through the survey about after-school disciplinary programs included the following:

- The same students are being assigned to detention hall over and over again.
- Detention programs are too lenient.
- Students do not take detention seriously.
- After-school programs are ineffective because of the difficulty arranging transportation for the students.
- Parents need to be held responsible and be "more inconvenienced" before students will care about detention.
- Lunchtime detention is more effective than after school programs.
- Saturday detention is effective because students do not want to give up their weekend time.
- Students think it is "cool" or "funny" for them to get in trouble.
- After hours detention punishes teachers more than students.

### **ASSAULT:**

Very few respondents (5%) have had to remove a student from their classroom in the past two school years for assault. In cases where a student was removed for assaulting a teacher, only 36% said they were notified that the student had been placed in a DAEP or expelled.

<b>HAVE YOU HAD A STUDENT REMOVED FROM YOUR CLASS FOR ASSAULTING YOU DURING EITHER THE 2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR OR THE 2006-07 SCHOOL YEAR?</b>	<b>NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	144	5.44%
No	2501	94.56%
<b>TOTAL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>2645</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

<b>IF ONE OF YOUR STUDENTS WAS REMOVED FROM CLASS FOR ASSAULTING A TEACHER, WERE YOU NOTIFIED THAT THE STUDENT HAD BEEN PLACED IN A DAEP OR EXPELLED?</b>	<b>NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	518	35.97%
No	922	64.03%
<b>TOTAL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>1440</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

In enacting House Bill 603, the 79<sup>th</sup> Legislature recommended that teachers be allowed to refuse the readmission into their classrooms of students who have committed assault. Of the respondents who had a student removed from their classrooms for assault, only 25.18% were asked whether or not they would consent to the return of the student to their classrooms. 74.82% of respondents said they were not asked for their consent.

Of the respondents who had a student removed from their classrooms for assault, 44.44% did not indicate the outcome. Only 16.67% said the student was permanently removed from their classroom, while 38.89% said the student was returned to their classroom.

The ATPE survey results suggest that HB 603 has not been enforced sufficiently. Many teachers are unaware that they have the right to refuse to accept a student back into class after an assault. Teachers need to be better educated as to their rights in the classroom.

Few respondents (6.5%) suffered physical injuries during the past school year as a result of a student's conduct. Most (99%) did not miss any workdays as a result. Among those who missed work due to a physical injury caused by a student, the average number of workdays missed was 2.76. Only seven of the respondents said they requested assault leave for their injuries. Of those seven respondents, 42.86% were granted assault leave, and 57.14% were not granted assault leave. The average duration of assault leave actually taken was 6.5 days.

<b>DID YOU SUFFER ANY PHYSICAL INJURIES DURING THE 2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR AS A RESULT OF A STUDENT'S RECKLESS OR</b>	<b>NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
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<b>INTENTIONAL CONDUCT?</b>		
Yes	155	6.46%
No	2244	93.54%
<b>TOTAL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>2399</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

<b>DID YOU MISS ANY WORKDAYS DUE TO A PHYSICAL INJURY CAUSED BY A STUDENT DURING THE 2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR?</b>	<b>NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	27	1.10%
No	2418	98.90%
<b>TOTAL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>2445</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

<b>DID YOU REQUEST ASSAULT LEAVE TO RECOVER FROM YOUR INJURIES?</b>	<b>NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	7	0.55%
No	1258	99.45
<b>TOTAL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>1265</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

About 27% said they have had to use physical force or restraint to prevent a student from harming himself or others during the past school year.

<b>DURING THE 2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR, DID YOU HAVE TO USE APPROPRIATE PHYSICAL FORCE OR PHYSICAL RESTRAINT TO PREVENT A STUDENT FROM HARMING HIMSELF/HERSELF OR OTHERS?</b>	<b>NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	680	26.47%
No	1889	73.53%
<b>TOTAL RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>2569</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

### **TEACHER PREPARATION:**

More than 87% of the respondents feel that new teachers are not adequately prepared to address discipline in the classroom.

<b>ARE NEW TEACHERS ADEQUATELY PREPARED TO ADDRESS DISCIPLINARY PROBLEMS IN THE CLASSROOM?</b>	<b>NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>

Yes	329	12.69%
No	2263	87.31%
TOTAL RESPONDENTS	2592	100.00%

Comments received from the respondents about teacher preparation and discipline included the following:

- New teachers need more training on classroom management and crisis intervention techniques, especially in alternative certification programs.
- Administrators should offer training instead of simply non-renewing a teacher's contract as a result of student discipline problems.
- Require teachers to take law courses.
- Provide more protection for substitute teachers.
- Teachers need more support from administrators in order to improve their confidence in handling disciplinary problems.
- Utilize teacher mentoring programs.
- College courses should include real-world scenarios and strategies, not just theories.
- Districts should train all employees to handle disciplinary problems – not just the teachers.
- Experience is the best teacher.
- Provide teachers with information on best practices.
- Train teachers on how to handle students with drug addictions.
- Require parents and legislators to observe classrooms for one week.
- New teachers need more training and preparation overall.
- We need older and more mature teachers – they should be more than two or three years older than their high school students.
- Train and help teachers communicate with their students' parents.
- There is insufficient support from administrators.
- Teachers should not be discouraged from referring students to the principal's office.
- New teachers too often are assigned to the most difficult classes, while experienced teachers are rewarded with better-disciplined students.
- Administrators should notify teachers in advance about students with violent or disciplinary histories.
- New teachers should observe successful veteran teachers.
- Discuss acceptable disciplinary practices during teacher orientation.
- Offer new teachers college credit for disciplinary training.
- There is too much emphasis on TAKS training and not enough focus on discipline and classroom management.
- Better discipline will improve teacher retention.
- More teamwork is needed.

## **GENERAL COMMENTS:**

Finally, respondents were asked for general suggestions on ways to improve DAEPs, the student code of conduct, discipline in the classroom or school safety. The following are some of the remarks ATPE received from educators who took the survey:

- Smaller class sizes are needed to improve student discipline.
- There is a need for more parental involvement and holding parents accountable for their children's behavior.
- Apply discipline policies fairly and consistently.
- "Recognize that not all kids will go to college."
- Create more flexible education environments, non-traditional school hours.
- "Utilize data mining in the creation of the master schedule, focusing on discipline triggers."
- Quotas and tracking the number of DAEP referrals act as disincentives for administrators to enforce discipline policies appropriately.
- More qualified teachers are needed in DAEPs.
- Administrators should offer more support to teachers in disciplinary matters.
- Corporal punishment is recommended.
- Anger management classes are needed for teachers and students.
- Schools need enhanced security: closed campuses, closer supervision, security cameras, metal detectors, campus police, panic buttons in classrooms, and required identification badges.
- Recommendations for mandatory school uniforms and/or strictly enforced dress codes; prohibitions on backpacks to eliminate weapons.
- Separate DAEP programs for each grade level and campus.
- Bullying awareness and education are necessary.
- Early intervention and counseling should be provided for at-risk students.
- Students with behavioral problems should be expelled.
- Administrators and lawmakers should spend time observing classrooms.
- Utilize military boot-camp programs for discipline.
- Require students to participate in community service programs.
- Decrease the paperwork required to remove a student from a classroom for disciplinary reasons.
- More discipline-related training is needed for teachers and administrators.
- Offer students the services of counselors and school psychologists.
- Utilize a review committee for all DAEP placements.
- Require expulsion and criminal penalties for students involved in assaults.
- Regulate and monitor student medication.
- There should be less emphasis on TAKS and more emphasis on discipline.
- Incorporate manners/etiquette/social skills into curriculum
- Charge students assigned to DAEPs for the expense of hiring additional teachers.
- Students with disciplinary problems should face the suspension of their drivers' licenses.

- Students with disciplinary problems should be prohibited from participating in athletics and extracurricular activities.
- Take students on field trips to prisons/juvenile detention centers. Use prisoners to educate students about the consequences of bad behavior.
- Use older teachers to train new teachers.
- Minimize administrators' fear of retaliatory lawsuits by parents by making it more difficult for them to sue.
- Zero tolerance policies are effective.

## **CONCLUSIONS:**

The ATPE survey reveals that student discipline is a major concern for educators and that much work remains to be done in the legislative and policy arenas.

ATPE's 2006-07 Legislative Program includes statements of ATPE's positions that are directly related to student discipline issues. Written and approved by members, it is the cornerstone of our organization's legislative priorities and actions. Some highlights of ATPE's discipline-related positions are as follows:

### **Safe schools**

ATPE supports measures to ensure all educational settings are safe environments where students, school employees and volunteers can be productive.

ATPE recommends that school districts/the state:

- Make personnel standards and curriculum for all alternative education programs commensurate with regular K-12 public education requirements.
- Immediately remove any student who physically assaults a school employee or volunteer to an alternate placement as determined by district policy.
- Collaborate with agencies that provide student assistance and referral programs to deter or recover students from gang involvement and/or substance abuse.
- Re-examine the coding system used to report incidents at schools to ensure that codes accurately reflect the severity of incidents.

### **Certification and assignment**

ATPE supports a state certification process that ensures educators are appropriately trained and certified.

ATPE recommends that the state:

- Require all Texas teacher preparation programs, including alternative certification programs, to have a standardized level of preparation for future teachers. This preparation should include student teaching under the supervision of a certified teacher for a period of time consistent with the student teaching requirements of traditional certification programs.
- Require pedagogical training including classroom and discipline management, child and adolescent psychology, and methods courses.

- Require and fund research-based mentoring programs for beginning educators. Mentor educators should be compensated and given adequate training and the necessary resources to be successful.
- Require administrators to have at least five years of classroom teaching experience.

### **Windham School District and Texas Youth Commission**

ATPE supports the goals established for the Windham School District and the Texas Youth Commission. Educators employed by those entities should have standards, rights and benefits commensurate with other public school district educators.

### **Professional development**

ATPE supports quality professional development programs for all school district personnel.

ATPE recommends that school districts/the state:

- Offer comprehensive staff development in the areas of special education, school law, technology, gifted/talented education and crisis management.

### **Leave policies**

ATPE supports state standards that establish fair and equitable leave policies.

ATPE recommends that the state:

- Grant full employment benefits to employees who are physically injured by students until such time as the employees return to work or, if necessary, throughout their retirement.

### **Regulatory exemptions**

ATPE opposes any program or initiative that would allow public school districts to exempt themselves from provisions of the Education Code upon reaching exemplary status.

### **Parental, business and community involvement**

ATPE supports programs that encourage parental, business and community involvement in the education of all students, with special efforts made to include non-English-speaking parents and/or other minority parents.

### **Legislators in public schools**

ATPE encourages all Texas legislators, especially those serving on the Public Education Committee, to spend time each year substitute teaching in school districts of varying sizes and socioeconomic backgrounds throughout the state in order to gain firsthand knowledge of the inner workings of the Texas public school system.

ATPE looks forward to working with the 80<sup>th</sup> Legislature to clarify and improve Chapter 37 of the Education Code.