

## Exclusionary Discipline Consequences and Reading Performance of Grades 3 Through 8 Students in Special Education: A Statewide, Multiyear Analysis

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**Abstract:** In this investigation, the academic performance of students in special education who received between 1 to 30 days, between 31-60, and more than 60 days in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement and had STAAR Reading Level I: Unsatisfactory, STAAR Reading Level II: Satisfactory, STAAR Reading Level II: Phase-In Satisfactory, and STAAR Reading Level III: Advanced standard during the 2012-2013 through 2015-2016 school years were determined. In each of these four school years, the percentage of students in special education who received Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement and had Unsatisfactory Standard performance on the STAAR Reading exam consistently increased for all grades except for Grade 4. The percentage of students who had Phase-In Satisfactory Standard performance on the STAAR Reading exam consistently decreased for all grades except for Grade 4. The percentages of students who had Satisfactory and Advanced Standard performance remained consistent across the four school years, never varying more than 7%. Recommendations for research and implications are discussed along with suggestions for policy and practice.

**Keywords:** Special Education, Discipline Alternative Education Program Placement, Reading Achievement, Grade 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8, School Years 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016.

### 1. Introduction

Students who receive special education services constitute 12% of the student enrollment in public schools in the United States [1]. Of the students who were enrolled in special education during the 2011-2012 school year, they accounted for 25% of all the students who were enrolled in public schools and who were arrested and referred to law enforcement. Also documented by [1] was that students who were enrolled in special

education represented 75% of the students who were physically restrained and 58% of the students who were placed in seclusion. Students who were enrolled in special education were twice as likely to receive an out-of-school suspension than their peers who were not enrolled in special education.

[2] provided data regarding the suspension of students who were enrolled in special education during the 2011-2012 school

year. More than 5% of elementary students in the United States who were enrolled in special education were suspended, more than double the overall suspension rate. More than 18% of secondary students who were enrolled in special education were suspended, compared to 10% of secondary school students. Students with emotional disorders were suspended at a high rate in the 2011-2012 school year. One-third of students with emotional disorders were suspended at least once during the school year. These numbers are concerning because as [2] reported, one suspension can make students enrolled in special education three times more likely to become involved in the juvenile justice system and twice as likely to drop out of school than their peers who are not in special education.

Exclusionary discipline consequences can have severe and long-term implications for students with disabilities. Students enrolled in special education may demonstrate inappropriate classroom behaviors, that make learning more difficult for them than for their typically developing peers. The frustration caused by inadequate academic skills can result in exclusionary discipline assignments. Exclusion from instruction and lack of exposure to typically developing peers will influence the academic achievement and functional skills of students enrolled in special education.

With respect to the state of interest for this article, Texas, [3] analyzed the effect of exclusionary discipline assignments on the academic achievement of students with disabilities. In their investigation, they examined the reading test scores of Grade 9 students with disabilities in Texas. Specifically, they compared scores on the Texas state-mandated assessments for students with disabilities who had been assigned an exclusionary discipline assignment with the test scores of their counterparts with disabilities who had not been assigned exclusionary discipline assignments in the

2008-2009 school year. In their analyses, they established the presence of statistically significant differences in the reading test scores between students with disabilities who were assigned to an in-school suspension, to an out-of-school suspension, or to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement and their counterparts in special education who had not been assigned such a consequence. [3] analyzed the effect of each disciplinary consequence separately on reading achievement. Students with disabilities who received an in-school suspension had an average reading score that was 37 points lower than their counterparts who were not assigned to an in-school suspension. Students with disabilities who were assigned to an out-of-school suspension had an average reading score that was almost 61 points lower than their counterparts with disabilities who were not assigned to an out-of-school suspension. Students with disabilities who were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement had an average reading score that was 71 points lower than their counterparts with disabilities who were not assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement. In their investigation, [3] documented that students with disabilities who were assigned exclusionary discipline consequences had statistically significantly lower average reading test scores than their peers who were not assigned exclusionary discipline assignments.

In a similar study, [4] analyzed the relationship of exclusionary discipline assignments on reading performance by student disability category. In their investigation, they compared reading test scores on the Texas state-mandated assessment for students who had a Learning Disability, Other Health Impairment, or Emotional Disturbance. They specifically compared the reading performance of these three groups of students in special education as a function of whether or not they had been

assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence. In regard to the influence of exclusionary discipline assignments on reading achievement, students who had a Learning Disability and who were assigned to an in-school suspension had an average reading score that was almost 39 points lower than their counterparts with a Learning Disability who were not assigned to an in-school suspension. Students who were Emotionally Disturbed and who were assigned to an in-school suspension had an average reading score that was almost 23 points lower than their counterparts with an Emotional Disturbance who were not assigned to an in-school suspension. Students who were Other Health Impaired and who were assigned to an in-school suspension had an average reading score that was almost 38 points lower than their counterparts who were Other Health Impaired and who were not assigned to an in-school suspension.

With respect to out-of-school suspension and reading achievement, students with a Learning Disability who were assigned to an out-of-school suspension had an average reading score that was 65 points lower than their counterparts with a Learning Disability who were not assigned to an out-of-school suspension. Students who were Emotionally Disturbed and who were assigned to an out-of-school suspension had an average reading score that was almost 49 points lower than their counterparts who were Emotionally Disturbed and who were not assigned to an out-of-school suspension. Students who were Other Health Impaired and who were assigned to an out-of-school suspension had an average reading score that was almost 58 points lower than their counterparts who were Other Health Impaired and who were not assigned to an out-of-school suspension.

Finally, concerning assignment to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement and reading achievement, students who had a Learning Disability and who

received this consequence had an average reading score that was 74 points lower than their counterparts with a Learning Disability and who were not assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement. Students who were Emotionally Disturbed and who were assigned Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement had an average reading score almost 49 points lower than their counterparts who had an Emotional Disturbance who were not assigned Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement. Students who were other Health Impaired and who were assigned Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement had an average reading score 78 points lower than their counterparts who were other Health Impaired and who were not assigned Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement.

In their Texas statewide analysis, [4] established that students regardless of their specific disability who received an exclusionary discipline consequences had statistically significantly lower reading scores than their peers who were not assigned an exclusionary discipline consequence. As such, they determined the presence of a clear relationship between exclusionary discipline consequence assignment and reading test performance of students in special education. Of note for this article is that [4] did not examine the duration of exclusionary assignments and the influence of extended periods of exclusion from the classroom on the academic achievement of students with disabilities.

In an examination of discipline consequence assignment and reading achievement for students in special education, [5] analyzed data on Grade 9 White, Black, and Hispanic students with a Learning Disability in the 2008-2009 school year. In their investigation, [5] examined the reading test scores for these three groups of Grade 9 students with a Learning Disability based on

whether or not they had been assigned to either an in-school suspension or to an out-of-school suspension. In their statistical analyses, White, Black, and Hispanic students who were assigned to an in-school suspension had statistically significantly lower reading test scores than their counterparts who had not been assigned to an in-school suspension. White students with a Learning Disability who were assigned to an in-school suspension had an average reading test score that was 40 points lower than White students with a Learning Disability who were not assigned to an in-school suspension. Hispanic students who were assigned to an in-school suspension had an average reading test score that was almost 36 points lower than Hispanic students with a Learning Disability who were not assigned to an in-school suspension. Black students with a Learning Disability who were assigned to an in-school suspension had an average reading test score that was 22 points lower than Black students with a Learning Disability who were not assigned to an in-school suspension.

When examining the effects of out-of-school suspension, [5] documented that White, Hispanic, and Black students with a Learning Disability and who were assigned to an out-of-school suspension had lower achievement scores in reading when compared to their counterparts with a Learning Disability who were not assigned to an out-of-school suspension. Specifically, White students with a Learning Disability who were assigned to an out-of-school suspension had an average reading score that was 64 points lower than White students with a Learning Disability and who were not assigned to out-of-school suspension. Hispanic students who were assigned to an out-of-school suspension had an average reading test score that was almost 63 points lower than Hispanic students with a Learning Disability who were not assigned to an out-of-school suspension. Black students with a Learning Disability who were assigned to an out-of-school suspension had an average

reading test score that was 51 points lower than Black students with a Learning Disability who were not assigned to an out-of-school suspension. [5] established that in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension were clearly related to the reading achievement of Grade 9 students with Learning Disability.

In an article directly related to the research questions in this study, [6] examined the influence of suspension on reading achievement. [6] analyzed data on reading for over three school years and by the number of suspensions received by students. The number of suspensions were grouped by 1 to 10 days, 11-20 days, and 21 or more days of suspension over three years. Students who had not been suspended gained 198 points. In comparison, students who had been suspended in 1 of the 3 years gained 176 points, students who had been suspended in 2 of the 3 years gained 168 points, and students who had been suspended in all three years gained only 159 points in their reading test scores. Of note in the [6] investigation was that Grade 6 students who had been suspended 21 or more school days had almost the same reading ability as Grade 4 students who had never been suspended. Based on the results on his investigation, [6] concluded that student suspension was negatively related to student reading. As student suspensions increased, reading achievement decreased. Accordingly, [6] clearly established the presence of a relationship between reading achievement and suspension.

Students who are enrolled in special education are less likely to acquire academic and functional skills at the same rate as their peers who are not disabled. Students who were enrolled in special education are more likely to receive exclusionary discipline assignments than their peers without disabilities. Students who are enrolled in special education typically struggle both academically and functionally. Exclusion from the classroom will only decrease their

exposure to typically developing peers and make academic tasks even more difficult. [3] provided evidence that exclusionary discipline assignments are clearly related to the reading academic achievement of students enrolled in special education. Updated and extended research is needed to investigate the effect of exclusionary discipline assignments on the reading achievement of students enrolled in special education.

In this article, student reading achievement was student reading test scores on the current Texas state-mandated assessment. The [7] defined The State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) is a state readiness program that was implemented by Texas Education Agency in the 2011-2012 school year. This assessment was designed to measure the extent to which students have learned and are able to apply knowledge and skills defined by the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills. For this investigation, the level of academic performance is categorized by four levels that describe student performance. On the STAAR exam, Level I Unsatisfactory Academic Performance refers to the label given to students who are inadequately prepared and who are unlikely to succeed in the next grade level. Level II Satisfactory Academic Performance refers to the label given to students who are prepared for the next grade level. Level II: Phase-In Satisfactory Performance refers to the label given to students who are prepared for the next grade level, by Phase-In standards. The Phase-In Standard is 1.0 standard deviations below the Level II Recommended Performance standard reported to be established in the 2021-2022 school year [8]. STAAR Level III Advanced Academic Performance refers to the label given to students who are well-prepared for the next grade level and who have a high likelihood of success with little intervention [8, chapter 4, p. 26].

The purpose of this study was to determine the academic performance of students in special education who received between 1 to 30 days in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement on their STAAR Reading Level I: Unsatisfactory, STAAR Reading Level II: Satisfactory, STAAR Reading Level II: Phase-In Satisfactory, and STAAR Reading Level III: Advanced standard. A second purpose of this study was to determine the STAAR Reading Level I: Unsatisfactory, STAAR Reading Level II: Satisfactory, STAAR Reading Level II: Phase-In Satisfactory, and STAAR Reading Level III: Advanced performance of students in special education who received between 31 and 60 days in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement. The final purpose of this study was to ascertain the performance of students in special education who received more than 60 days in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement on their STAAR Reading Level I: Unsatisfactory, STAAR Reading Level II: Satisfactory, STAAR Reading Level II: Phase-In Satisfactory, and STAAR Reading Level III: Advanced Standard. The reading achievement of students enrolled in special education was analyzed separately for Grades 3 through 8 and analyzed separately for the 2012-2013 through 2015-2016 school years.

Research providing current information in regard to the influence of exclusionary discipline practices on the reading achievement of students enrolled in special education is sparse. Very few empirical research investigations are in the extant literature in which exclusionary discipline assignments and their relationships to the reading achievement of students in special education are addressed. Current evidence on the influence of exclusionary discipline assignments on the reading performance of students enrolled in special education is needed, particularly for the State of Texas. In the current study, the relationship of exclusionary discipline assignments and the

reading performance of students who were enrolled in special education was examined. The relationship of exclusionary discipline assignments and reading achievement over time was addressed. Trends established concerning discipline assignments and reading achievement from the 2012-2013 through 2015-2016 school years was determined.

The following research questions were addressed in this study: (a) What is the percentage of students in special education who had STAAR Reading Level I: Unsatisfactory Standard performance and received between 1 to 30 days in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement?; (b) What is the percentage of students in special education who had STAAR Reading Level I: Unsatisfactory Standard performance and received between 31 to 60 days in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement?; (c) What is the percentage of students in special education who had STAAR Reading Level I: Unsatisfactory Standard performance and received more than 60 days in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement?; (d) What is the percentage of students in special education who had STAAR Reading Level II: Satisfactory Standard performance and received between 1 to 30 days in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement?; (e) What is the percentage of students in special education who had STAAR Reading Level II: Satisfactory Standard performance and received between 31 to 60 days in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement?; (f) What is the percentage of students in special education who had STAAR Reading Level II: Satisfactory Standard performance and received more than 60 days in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement?; (g) What is the percentage of students in special education who had STAAR Reading Level II: Phase-In Satisfactory Standard performance and received between 1 to 30 days in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program

placement?; (h) What is the percentage of students in special education who had STAAR Reading Level II: Phase-In Satisfactory Standard performance and received between 31 to 60 days in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement?; and (i) What is the percentage of students in special education who had STAAR Reading Level II: Phase-In Satisfactory Standard performance and received more than 60 days in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement?; (j) What is the percentage of students in special education who had STAAR Reading Level III: Advanced Standard performance and received between 1 to 30 days in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement?; (k) What is the percentage of students in special education who had STAAR Reading Level III: Advanced Standard performance and received between 31 to 60 days in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement?; and (l) What is the percentage of students in special education who had STAAR Reading Level III: Advanced Standard performance and received more than 60 days in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement? These research questions were repeated for students in Grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 and for the 2012-2013 through 2015-2016 school years.

## 2. Method

### 2.1 Research Design

In this investigation, a descriptive approach [9] were used to answer the previously discussed research questions. In that approach, the relationship of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement on the reading achievement scores of students enrolled in special education during the 2012-2013 through 2015-2016 school years were calculated. When using a descriptive approach, large amounts of data can be analyzed. The outcomes of these analyses are descriptive information in which the available data are

summarized. Limitations are clearly present in a descriptive research design [9]. The data that were analyzed can only be described and cannot be used to establish any relationships or any cause-and-effect relationships [9]. Although the information provided in a descriptive research design can be easily interpreted, generalizations are limited.

## 2.2 Participants

Participants in this study were Texas students between Grade 3 and Grade 8 who were enrolled in special education and who attended any Texas public school or a school who reported disciplinary information to the Texas Education Agency during the 2012-2013 through the 2015-2016 school years.

## 2.3 Instrumentation and Procedures

For this investigation, the data that were analyzed were accessed from the Texas Education Agency discipline reports, Annual State Summary, which can be located on the Texas Education Agency website. The data provided through the URL, [https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/adhocrpt/Disciplinary\\_Data\\_Products/Download\\_State\\_Summaries.html](https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/adhocrpt/Disciplinary_Data_Products/Download_State_Summaries.html) are available to the public. Disciplinary data were provided from the Annual State Summary for the 2012-2013 through 2015-2016 school years.

In this study, the reading achievement scores of students enrolled in special education and the receipt of a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement was analyzed and compared. The [10] defined special education in Texas to be a student between the ages of 3 and 21 who has met the criteria established for one or more of the 13 eligibility categories defined by the state of Texas. The student must have a disability and as a result of that disability, the student must demonstrate a need for specialized services

and supports in order to benefit from education [10].

The discipline consequence assignment of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement was analyzed separately for students in Grades 3 through 8. Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement is the third method of disciplinary action. Students are removed from the regular classroom and placed in an alternative classroom setting for an extended period of time, not to exceed 45 school days. Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement may be located on or off campus, but students are educated away from the regular classroom [11].

The STAAR is a state-mandated assessment in which student ability to apply knowledge and skills defined by the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills in Grades 3 through 12 is measured [7, p. 10]. On the STAAR exam, Level I Unsatisfactory Academic Performance label is given to students who are not adequately prepared and who are not likely to be prepared for the next grade level. These students would likely require extensive academic interventions. Level II Satisfactory Academic Performance is the label given to students who are prepared for the next grade level and who may require very little or no academic intervention. Level II: Phase-In Satisfactory Performance refers to the label given to students who are prepared for the next grade level, by Phase-In standards. The Phase-In Standard is 1.0 standard deviations below the Level II Recommended Performance standard reported to be established in the 2021-2022 school year [8]. Level III Advanced Performance is the label given to students who are well-prepared for the next grade level and who have a high likelihood of success with little or no academic intervention [8, Chapter 4, p. 26].

### 3. Results

To address the research questions regarding Grade 3 through 8 students enrolled in special education who had STAAR Reading Level I: Unsatisfactory Standard performance and received between 1 to 30 days, between 31-60 days, and more than 60 days in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement in the 2012-2013 through the 2015-2016 school years, descriptive statistics

were calculated from the Excel files that were downloaded from the Texas Education Agency website. As revealed in Tables 1 and 2, the percentage of students in special education who were assigned 1 to 30 days in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement and who had Reading Level I: Unsatisfactory Performance on STAAR increased from the 2012-2013 school year to the 2015-2016 school year for all grade levels investigated except for Grade 4.

**Table 1. Percentage of Students in Special Education Assigned Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placement in the 2012-2013 School Year Through the 2015-2016 School Year who Had Reading Level I: Unsatisfactory Performance on the STAAR Reading Exam**

School Year	1-30 Day Placement in DAEP	31-60 Day Placement in DAEP	More than 60 Days Placement in DAEP
Grade 3			
2012-2013	48%	50%	38%
2013-2014	57%	53%	69%
2014-2015	49%	59%	57%
2015-2016	60%	72%	N/A
Grade 4			
2012-2013	63%	60%	71%
2013-2014	58%	57%	55%
2014-2015	64%	81%	65%
2015-2016	58%	69%	65%
Grade 5			
2012-2013	56%	65%	65%
2013-2014	59%	66%	71%
2014-2015	50%	62%	65%
2015-2016	65%	69%	74%

**Table 2. Percentage of Students in Special Education Assigned Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placement in the 2012-2013 School Year Through the 2015-2016 School Year who Had Reading Level I: Unsatisfactory Performance on the STAAR Reading Exam**

School Year	1-30 Day Placement in DAEP	31-60 Day Placement in DAEP	More than 60 Days Placement in DAEP
Grade 6			
2012-2013	61%	65%	71%
2013-2014	56%	67%	67%
2014-2015	57%	69%	71%
2015-2016	65%	69%	74%

Continued



**Table 2. Continued**

Grade 7			
2012-2013	53%	58%	63%
2013-2014	60%	67%	72%
2014-2015	58%	63%	67%
2015-2016	61%	70%	71%
Grade 8			
2012-2013	41%	48%	51%
2013-2014	44%	50%	54%
2014-2015	51%	56%	58%
2015-2016	44%	50%	60%

With respect to Grade 3 students, as delineated in Table 1, 49% and 60% of them who had received 1-30 days had an Unsatisfactory Standard performance in the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years, respectively. For students who had received between 31-60 days, 50%, 53%, 59%, and 72% of them had an Unsatisfactory Standard performance in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years, respectively. Of the Grade 3 students who received more than 60 days, 38% and 69% of them had an Unsatisfactory Standard performance in the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years, respectively. The percentage of Grade 3 students who had Level I Unsatisfactory performance ranged from 48% to 60% for students who were assigned 1-30 days; from 20% to 72% for students who were assigned 31-60 days; and from 38% to 69% for students who were assigned for more than 60 days.

Concerning Grade 4 students, as revealed in Table 1, 58%, 64%, and 58% of them who received between 1-30 days had an Unsatisfactory Standard performance in the 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years, respectively. Regarding Grade 4 students who received between 31-60 days, 60%, 81%, and 69% of them had an Unsatisfactory Standard performance in the 2012-2013, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years, respectively. Of the Grade 4 students who received more than 60 days, 71% and

55%, respectively, of them who received more than 60 days had an Unsatisfactory Standard performance in 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years. The percentage of Grade 4 students who had a Level I Unsatisfactory performance ranged from 58% to 63% for students who were assigned 1-30 days; from 57% to 81% for students who were assigned 31-60 days; and from 55% to 71% for students who were assigned for more than 60 days.

In regard to Grade 5 students, as represented in Table 1, 59%, 50%, and 65% of them who had between 1-30 days had an Unsatisfactory Standard performance in the 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2015 school years, respectively. Of the Grade 5 students who received between 31-60 days, 65% and 56% of them had an Unsatisfactory Standard performance in the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years, respectively. Concerning Grade 5 students who had received more than 60 days, 65%, 71%, 65%, and 74% had an Unsatisfactory Standard performance in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years, respectively. The percentage of Grade 5 students who had a Level I Unsatisfactory performance ranged from 56% to 65% for students who were assigned 1-30 days; from 62% to 69% for students who were assigned 31-60 days; and from 65% to 74% for students who were assigned for more than 60 days.

Concerning Grade 6 students, as delineated in Table 2, 61%, 56%, 57%, and 65% of them who had received between 1-30 days had an Unsatisfactory Standard performance in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years, respectively. For the 2013-2014 school year, 67% of Grade 6 students who received between 31-60 days had an Unsatisfactory Standard performance. Of the students who had received more than 60 days, 71%, 67%, 71%, and 74% of them had an Unsatisfactory Standard performance in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years, respectively. The percentage of Grade 6 students who had a Level I Unsatisfactory performance ranged from 56% to 65% for students who were assigned 1-30 days; from 65% to 69% for students who were assigned 31-60 days; and from 67% to 74% for students who were assigned to more than 60 days.

With respect to Grade 7 students who were enrolled in special education, as delineated in Table 2, 53%, 60%, 58%, and 61% of them who had between 1-30 days had an Unsatisfactory Standard performance in the four school years, respectively. For Grade 7 students who received more than 60 days, 63%, 72%, 67%, and 71% of them had an Unsatisfactory Standard performance in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years, respectively. The percentage of Grade 7 students who had a Level I Unsatisfactory performance ranged from 53% to 61% for students who were assigned 1-30 days; from 58% to 67% for students who were assigned 31-60 days; and from 63% to 72% for students who were assigned to more than 60 days.

Concerning Grade 8 students who received between 1-30 days, as revealed in Table 2, 41%, 44%, 51%, and 44% of them had an Unsatisfactory Standard performance in the four school years, respectively. Of the Grade 8 students who received more than 60 days, 51%, 54%, 58%, and 60% of them had an

Unsatisfactory Standard performance in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years, respectively. The percentage of Grade 8 students who had a Level I Unsatisfactory performance ranged from 41% to 51% for students who were assigned 1-30 days; from 48% to 56% for students who were assigned 31-60 days; and from 51% to 60% for students who were assigned to more than 60 days.

A trend was clearly established with respect to the number of students enrolled in special education who had Reading Level I: Unsatisfactory Standard performance on STAAR and who were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement. Students. The percentage of students in Grades 3, 5, 6, 7, and 8 who received 1-30 days, between 31-60 days, and more than 60 days in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement who had Unsatisfactory Standard Performance on the STAAR Reading exam increased from the 2012-2013 to the 2015-2016 school year.

To address the research questions regarding Grade 3 through 8 students enrolled in special education who had a STAAR Reading Level II: Satisfactory Standard performance and received between 1 to 30 days, between 31-60 days, and more than 60 days in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement in the 2012-2013 through the 2015-2016 school years, descriptive statistics were calculated from the Excel files that were downloaded from the Texas Education Agency website. As revealed in Tables 3 and 4, data concerning student performance during the 2015-2016 school year were only provided for Grade 7.

In regard to Grade 3 students who were enrolled in special education and had a Satisfactory Standard performance on the STAAR Reading exam in the 2012-2013 school year, as presented in Table 3, 16% of students who received between 1-30 days had a Satisfactory Standard performance.

**Table 3. Percentage of Students in Special Education Assigned Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placement in the 2012-2013 School Year Through the 2015-2016 School Year who Had Reading Level II: Satisfactory Performance on the STAAR Reading Exam**

School Year	1-30 Day Placement in DAEP	31-60 Day Placement in DAEP	More than 60 Days Placement in DAEP
<b>Grade 3</b>			
2012-2013	16%	20%	N/A
2013-2014	18%	13%	N/A
2014-2015	14%	N/A	N/A
2015-2016	No Data Available	No Data Available	No Data Available
<b>Grade 4</b>			
2012-2013	12%	15%	0%
2013-2014	10%	N/A	N/A
2014-2015	12%	N/A	N/A
2015-2016	No Data Available	No Data Available	No Data Available
<b>Grade 5</b>			
2012-2013	12%	5%	N/A
2013-2014	14%	12%	N/A
2014-2015	14%	9%	N/A
2015-2016	No Data Available	No Data Available	No Data Available

**Table 4. Percentage of students in Special Education Assigned Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placement in the 2012-2013 School Year Through the 2015-2016 School Year who Had Reading Level II: Satisfactory Performance on the STAAR Reading Exam**

School Year	1-30 Day Placement in DAEP	31-60 Day Placement in DAEP	More than 60 Days Placement in DAEP
<b>Grade 6</b>			
2012-2013	11%	10%	8%
2013-2014	11%	7%	10%
2014-2015	12%	8%	6%
2015-2016	No Data Available	No Data Available	No Data Available
<b>Grade 7</b>			
2012-2013	12%	11%	7%
2013-2014	10%	8%	6%
2014-2015	10%	9%	9%
2015-2016	14%	10%	9%
<b>Grade 8</b>			
2012-2013	18%	15%	14%
2013-2014	18%	14%	14%
2014-2015	14%	11%	10%
2015-2016	No Data Available	No Data Available	No Data Available

Regarding Grade 3 students who received between 1-30 days, 18% and 14% of them had a Satisfactory Standard performance

in the 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 school years, respectively. No data were available for the 2015-2016 school year. Concerning Grade 3

students who received between 31-60 days, 20% and 13% of them had a Satisfactory Standard performance in the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years, respectively. The percentage of Grade 3 students who had a Level II Satisfactory performance ranged from 14% to 16% for students who were assigned 1-30 days placement from 2012-2013 through 2014-2015 school year. The percentage of Grade 3 students who received 31-60 days and had a Satisfactory Standard performance decreased from 20% in the 2012-2013 school year to 13% in the 2013-2014 school year.

With respect to Grade 4 students who were enrolled in special education and had a Satisfactory Standard performance on the STAAR Reading exam, as delineated in Table 3, 12% of students who received between 1-30 days in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement had a Satisfactory Standard performance in the 2012-2013 school year. For the 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 school years, 10% and 12%, respectively, of students who received between 1-30 days had a Satisfactory Standard performance. Concerning Grade 4 students who received between 31-60 days, 15% of them had a Satisfactory Standard performance in the 2012-2013 school year. The performance of students who received more than 60 days from the 2012-2013 through the 2015-2016 school years was not available.

Concerning Grade 5 students who were enrolled in special education and who had a Satisfactory Standard performance in the 2012-2013 school year, as presented in Table 3, Grade 5 students who received between 1-30 days had 14% who had a Satisfactory Standard performance in the 2013-2014 school year and in the 2014-2015 school year. Data were not available for the 2015-2016 school year. The percentage of Grade 5 students who had a Level II Satisfactory performance ranged from 12% to 14% for students who were assigned 1-30 days from 2012-2013 through 2014-2015 school year.

For Grade 5 students who received between 31-60 days, 5% of them had a Satisfactory Standard performance. Grade 5 students who received between 31-60 days demonstrated higher performance with 12% and 9%, respectively, of them having a Satisfactory Standard performance in the 2012-2013 and 2014-2015 school years. The percentage of Grade 5 students who received 31-60 days and who had a Satisfactory Standard performance ranged from 5% in 2012-2013 to 12% in the 2013-2014 school year. The performance of students who received more than 60 days from the 2012-2013 through the 2015-2016 school years was not available.

In regard to Grade 6 students who were enrolled in special education and had a Satisfactory Standard performance in the 2012-2013 school year, as reflected in Table 4, 8% of students who received between more than 60 days had a Satisfactory Standard performance. Regarding Grade 6 students who received between 1-30 days, 11%, 11%, and 12% of them had a Satisfactory Standard performance in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, and 2014-2015 school years, respectively. Data were not available for the 2015-2016 school year. For the 2013-2014 school year, 7% of Grade 6 students who received between 31-60 days had a Satisfactory Standard performance. During the 2014-2015 school year, 6% of Grade 6 students who received more than 60 days had a Satisfactory Standard performance. The percentage of Grade 6 students who had a Level II Satisfactory performance ranged from 11% to 12% for students who were assigned 1-30 days. The percentage of Grade 6 students who received 31-60 days who had a Satisfactory Standard performance ranged from 10% to 8%. The percentage of Grade 6 students who had a Level II Satisfactory performance ranged from 6% to 8% for students who were assigned more than 60 days from 2012-2013 through 2014-2015 school year.

For Grade 7 students who were enrolled in special education and had a Satisfactory Standard performance in the 2012-2013 school year, as delineated in Table 4, 12%, 10%, 10%, and 14% of them who received between 1-30 days had a Satisfactory Standard performance in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years, respectively. Of the Grade 7 students who received more than 60 days, 7%, 6%, 9%, and 9% of them had a Satisfactory Standard performance in the four school years, respectively. The percentage of Grade 7 students who had a Level I Satisfactory performance ranged from 10% to 14% for students who were assigned 1-30 days; from 8% to 11% for students who were assigned 31-60 days; and from 6% to 9% for students who were assigned to more than 60 days.

With respect to Grade 8 students who were enrolled in special education and had a Satisfactory Standard performance in the 2012-2013 school year, as represented in Table 4, 18%, 18%, and 14% of them who received between 1-30 days had a Satisfactory Standard performance in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, and 2014-2015 school years, respectively. Data were not available for the 2015-2016 school year. Concerning Grade 8 students who received more than 60 days, 14%, 14%, and 10% of them had a Satisfactory Standard performance in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, and 2014-2015 school years,

respectively. Data were not available for the 2015-2016 school year. The percentage of Grade 8 students who had Level II Satisfactory performance ranged from 14% to 18% for students who were assigned 1-30 days; from 11% to 15% for students who were assigned between 31-60 days; and from 10% to 14% for students who were assigned more than 60 days. The percentage of students in special education who were assigned 1 to 30 days and who had a STAAR Reading Level II: Satisfactory Performance increased for Grades 5 and 6. Student percentages decreased in Grades 3 and 8.

To address the research questions regarding Grade 3 through 8 students enrolled in special education who had a STAAR Reading Level II: Phase-In Satisfactory Standard performance and received between 1 to 30 days, between 31-60 days, and more than 60 days in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement in the 2012-2013 through the 2015-2016 school years, descriptive statistics were calculated from the Excel files that were downloaded from the Texas Education Agency website. As revealed in Tables 5 and 6, the percentage of students in special education who were assigned 1 to 30 days and had a Reading Level II: Phase-In Satisfactory Performance on STAAR decreased from the 2012-2013 school year to the 2015-2016 school year for all grade levels investigated except for Grade 4 and 8.

**Table 5. Percentage of Students in Special Education Assigned Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placement in the 2012-2013 School Year Through the 2015-2016 School Year who Had Reading Level II: Phase-In Satisfactory Performance on the STAAR Reading Exam**

School Year	1-30 Day Placement in DAEP	31-60 Day Placement in DAEP	More than 60 Days Placement in DAEP
Grade 3			
2012-2013	52%	50%	62%
2013-2014	43%	47%	41%
2014-2015	51%	41%	43%
2015-2016	40%	28%	N/A

Continued

**Table 5. Continued**

Grade 4			
2012-2013	37%	40%	29%
2013-2014	42%	43%	45%
2014-2015	36%	19%	35%
2015-2016	41%	39%	43%
Grade 5			
2012-2013	44%	35%	35%
2013-2014	41%	34%	29%
2014-2015	50%	38%	35%
2015-2016	42%	31%	35%

**Table 6. Percentage of Students in Special Education Assigned Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placement in the 2012-2013 School Year Through the 2015-2016 School Year who Had Reading Level II: Phase-In Satisfactory Performance on the STAAR Reading Exam**

School Year	1-30 Day Placement in DAEP	31-60 Day Placement in DAEP	More than 60 Days Placement in DAEP
Grade 6			
2012-2013	39%	35%	29%
2013-2014	44%	33%	33%
2014-2015	43%	31%	29%
2015-2016	35%	31%	26%
Grade 7			
2012-2013	47%	42%	37%
2013-2014	40%	33%	28%
2014-2015	42%	37%	33%
2015-2016	39%	30%	29%
Grade 8			
2012-2013	59%	52%	49%
2013-2014	56%	50%	46%
2014-2015	49%	44%	42%
2015-2016	56%	50%	40%

In regard to Grade 3 students who were enrolled in special education, as revealed in Table 5, 51% and 40% of them who received 1-30 days had a Phase-In Satisfactory Standard performance in the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years, respectively. For Grade 3 students who received between 31-60 days, 50%, 47%, 41%, and 28% of them had a Phase-In Satisfactory Standard performance in the four school years, respectively. 2012-2013 school years. Concerning Grade 3 students

who received more than 60 days, 62% and 41% of them had a Phase-In Satisfactory Standard performance in the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years, respectively. The percentage of Grade 3 students who had a Level II: Phase-In Satisfactory performance ranged from 40% to 52% for students who were assigned 1-30 days; from 28% to 47% for students who were assigned 31-60 days; and from 41% to 62% for students who were assigned to more than 60 days.

With respect to Grade 4 students who were enrolled in special education and who had a Level II: Phase-In Satisfactory Standard performance, as revealed in Table 5, 42% and 36% of them who received between 1-30 days had a Phase-In Satisfactory Standard performance in the 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 school years, respectively. Concerning Grade 4 students who received between 31-60 days, 40%, 19%, and 39% of them had a Phase-In Satisfactory Standard performance in the 2012-2013, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years, respectively. For students who received more than 60 days, 29%, 45%, and 43% of them had a Phase-In Satisfactory Standard performance in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, and 2015-2016 school years, respectively. The percentage of Grade 4 students who had a Level II: Phase-In Satisfactory performance ranged from 36% to 42% for students who were assigned 1-30 days; from 19% to 43% for students who were assigned 31-60 days; and from 29% to 43% for students who were assigned to more than 60 days.

In regard to Grade 5 students who were enrolled in special education, as presented in Table 5, 44%, 41%, 50%, and 42% of them who had between 1-30 days had a Phase-In Satisfactory Standard performance in the four school years, respectively. For Grade 5 students who received between 31-60 days, 35% and 31% of them had a Phase-In Satisfactory Standard in the 2012-2013 and 2015-2016 school years, respectively. Concerning Grade 5 students who received more than 60 days, 35%, 29%, and 35% of them had a Phase-In Satisfactory Standard performance in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, and 2014-2015 school years, respectively. The percentage of Grade 5 students who had a Level II: Phase-In Satisfactory performance ranged from 41% to 50% for students who were assigned 1-30 days; from 31% to 38% for students who were assigned 31-60 days; and from 29% to 35% for students who were assigned to more than 60 days.

For Grade 6 students who were enrolled in special education and had a Level II: Phase-In Satisfactory Standard performance in the 2012-2013 school year, as delineated in Table 6, 29% of students who received between 31-60 and more than 60 days had a Phase-In Satisfactory Standard performance. Concerning Grade 6 students who received between 1-30 days, 39%, 44%, 43%, and 35% of them had a Phase-In Satisfactory Standard performance in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school year, respectively.

For the 2013-2014 school year, 33% of Grade 5 students who received between 31-60 and more than 60 days had a Phase-In Satisfactory Standard performance. Concerning Grade 6 students who received more than 60 days, 29% and 26% of them had a Phase-In Satisfactory Standard performance in the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years, respectively. In the last school year examined, 26% of Grade 6 students who received more than 60 days during the 2015-2016 school year had a Phase-In Satisfactory Standard performance. The percentage of Grade 6 students who had a Level II: Phase-In Satisfactory performance ranged from 35% to 44% for students who were assigned 1-30 days; from 31% to 35% for students who were assigned 31-60 days; and from 26% to 33% for students who were assigned to more than 60 days.

In regard to Grade 7 students who were enrolled in special education and had a Level II: Phase-In Satisfactory Standard performance on the STAAR Reading exam in the 2012-2013 school year, as revealed in Table 6, 37% of students who received between 31-60 and more than 60 days had a Phase-In Satisfactory Standard performance. Of the Grade 7 students who received between 1-30 days, 47%, 40%, 42%, and 39% of them had a Phase-In Satisfactory Standard performance in the four school years, respectively.

For the 2013-2014 school year, 28% of Grade 7 students who received between 31-60 days and more than 60 days had a Phase-In Satisfactory Standard performance. Concerning Grade 7 students who received more than 60 days, 33% and 29% of them had a Phase-In Satisfactory Standard performance in the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years, respectively. In the last school year examined, 29% of Grade 7 students who received more than 60 days during the 2015-2016 school year had a Phase-In Satisfactory Standard performance. The percentage of Grade 7 students ranged from 39% to 47% for students who were assigned 1-30 days; from 30% to 42% for students who were assigned 31-60 days; and from 29% to 37% for students who were assigned to more than 60 days.

In regard to Grade 8 students who were enrolled in special education and had a Level II: Phase-In Satisfactory Standard performance in the 2012-2013 school year, as delineated in Table 6, 59%, 56%, 49%, and 56% of them who received between 1-30 days had a Phase-In Satisfactory Standard performance in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years, respectively. For Grade 8 students who received between 31-60 days, 49% and 46% of them had a Phase-In Satisfactory Standard performance in the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years, respectively. Regarding Grade 8 students who received more than 60 days, 49%, 46%, 42%,

and 40% of them had a Phase-In Satisfactory Standard performance in the four school years, respectively. The percentage of Grade 8 students who had a Level II: Phase-In Satisfactory performance ranged from 49% to 59% for students who were assigned 1-30 days; from 44% to 52% for students who were assigned 31-60 days; and from 40% to 49% for students who were assigned to more than 60 days.

The percentage of students in special education who were assigned 1 to 30 days who had a Reading Level II: Phase-In Satisfactory Performance decreased from the 2012-2013 school year to the 2015-2016 school year for all grade levels except for Grade 4. The percentage of students in special education who were assigned 1 to 30 days varied from a 2 percentage point decrease for students in Grade 5 to a 12 percentage point decrease for students in Grade 3.

With respect to the research questions on Grade 3 through 8 students enrolled in special education who had a STAAR Reading Level III: Advanced Performance and received between 1 to 30 days, between 31-60 days, and more than 60 days during the 2012-2013 through the 2015-2016 school years, descriptive statistics were calculated from the Excel files that were downloaded from the Texas Education Agency website. As revealed in Tables 7 and 8, data for students who had Advanced Standard performance were limited.

**Table 7. Percentage of Students in Special Education Assigned Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placement in the 2012-2013 School Year Through the 2015-2016 School Year who Had Reading Level III: Advanced Performance on the STAAR Reading Exam**

School Year	1-30 Day Placement in DAEP	31-60 Day Placement in DAEP	More than 60 Days Placement in DAEP
Grade 3			
2012-2013	5%	N/A	N/A
2013-2014	5%	0%	0%
2014-2015	4%	N/A	N/A
2015-2016	6%	N/A	0%

Continued



**Table 7. Continued**

Grade 4			
2012-2013	4%	7%	0%
2013-2014	5%	N/A	N/A
2014-2015	5%	0%	N/A
2015-2016	5%	N/A	N/A
Grade 5			
2012-2013	4%	N/A	N/A
2013-2014	4%	N/A	0%
2014-2015	5%	N/A	N/A
2015-2016	6%	3%	N/A

**Table 8. Percentage of Students in Special Education Assigned Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Placement in the 2012-2013 School Year Through the 2015-2016 School Year who Had Reading Level III: Advanced Performance on the STAAR Reading Exam**

School Year	1-30 Day Placement in DAEP	31-60 Day Placement in DAEP	More than 60 Days Placement in DAEP
Grade 6			
2012-2013	4%	2%	N/A
2013-2014	2%	1%	2%
2014-2015	3%	2%	N/A
2015-2016	3%	2%	2%
Grade 7			
2012-2013	3%	2%	2%
2013-2014	3%	2%	2%
2014-2015	4%	2%	3%
2015-2016	4%	3%	3%
Grade 8			
2012-2013	5%	4%	5%
2013-2014	5%	3%	3%
2014-2015	4%	4%	3%
2015-2016	4%	3%	2%

In regard to Grade 3 students who were enrolled in special education and had a Level III: Advanced Standard performance o, as represented in Table 3.7, 5%, 5%, 4%, and 6% of students who received between 1-30 days had an Advanced Satisfactory Standard performance in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years, respectively. The percentage of Grade 3 students ranged from 5% to 6% for students who were assigned 1-30 days. Concerning Grade 4 students who were enrolled in special

education and had a Level III: Advanced Standard performance, as reflected in Table 3.7, 4%, 7%, 5%, and 5% of students who received between 1-30 days had an Advanced Satisfactory Standard performance in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years, respectively. The percentage of Grade 4 students ranged from 4% to 5% for students who were assigned 1-30 days.

For Grade 5 students who were enrolled in special education and had Level III:

Advanced Standard performance, as delineated in Table 7, 4%, 4%, 5%, and 3% of students who received between 1-30 days had an Advanced Standard performance in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years, respectively. The percentage of Grade 5 students ranged from 4% to 6% for students who were assigned 1-30 days.

With respect to Grade 6 students who were enrolled in special education and, as revealed in Table 3.8, 4% and 3% of them who received between 1-30 days had had a Level III: Advanced Standard performance in the 2012-2013 and 2014-2015 school years, respectively. Concerning Grade 6 students who received between 31-60 days, 2%, 1%, 2%, and 3% of them had an Advanced Standard performance in the four school years, respectively. For Grade 6 students who received more than 60 days, only 2% of them had an Advanced Standard performance in the last school year. The percentage of Grade 6 students ranged from 2% to 4% for students who were assigned 1-30 days; from 1% to 2% for students who were assigned 31-60 days; and 2% for students who were assigned to more than 60 days.

In regard to Grade 7 students who were enrolled in special education, as delineated in Table 8, 3%, 3%, 4%, and 4% of them who received between 1-30 days had a Level III: Advanced Standard performance in the four school years, respectively. Concerning Grade 7 students who received between 31-60 days, 2%, 2%, 2%, and 3% of them had a Level III: Advanced Standard performance in the four school years, respectively. For Grade 7 students who received more than 60 days, 2%, 2%, and 3% of them had a Level III: Advanced Standard performance in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, and 2015-2016 school years, respectively. The percentage of Grade 7 students ranged from 3% to 4% for students who were assigned 1-30 days; from 2% to 3% for students who were assigned 31-60 days;

and from 2% to 3% for students who were assigned to more than 60 days.

For Grade 8 students who were enrolled in special education, as revealed in Table 8, 5%, 5%, 5%, and 4% of them who received between 1-30 days had a Level III: Advanced Standard performance in the four school years, respectively. Regarding Grade 8 students who received between 31-60 days, 4%, 3%, 4%, and 4% of them had a Level III: Advanced Standard performance in the four school years, respectively. Concerning Grade 8 students who received more than 60 days, 4%, 5%, 3%, and 3% of them had a Level III: Advanced Standard performance in the four school years, respectively. The percentage of Grade 8 students ranged from 4% to 5% for students who were assigned 1-30 days; from 3% to 4% for students who were assigned 31-60 days; and from 2% to 5% for students who were assigned to more than 60 days.

The percentage of students in special education who were assigned 1 to 30 days who had a Reading Level III: Advanced Performance on STAAR increased from the 2012-2013 school year to the 2015-2016 school year for Grades 3, 4, 5, and 7. A decrease in the percentage of students in Grades 6 and 8 was observed. The percentage of students who received between 1-30 days, between 31-60 days, and more than 60 days who had a Reading Level III: Advanced Performance on STAAR increased from the 2012-2013 school year to the 2015-2016, however, the percentages varied by less than 2% across all grade levels.

#### 4. Discussion

In this investigation, the percentage of students who were enrolled in special education and who were assigned Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement between 1-30 days, between 31-60, and more than 60 days and had a STAAR Reading Level I: Unsatisfactory, STAAR Reading Level II:

Satisfactory, STAAR Reading Level II: Phase-In Satisfactory, and STAAR Reading Level III: Advanced Standard. Student placement during the 2012-2013 through 2015-2016 school years were addressed. Four school years of statewide archival data were had and analyzed from the Texas Education Agency so that a description could be provided of the relationship of reading performance to the duration of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement over time. In this study, the percentage of students who were in special education, received Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement, and had a passing standard on the STAAR Reading exam has decreased over time. Following the analysis of all four school years of data, trends were identified in the assignment of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement and student reading achievement for students who were enrolled in special education. The longer the duration of placement, the lower the student performance in reading. Students who were placed in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement between 1-30 days had a highest level of reading performance than their peers who received 31-60 or more than 60 days in almost every grade level across the four years examined.

#### ***4.1 Connections to Existing Literature***

In this 4-year statewide investigation, results were congruent with previous researchers [e.g., 3, 4, 6, 5] regarding the influence of exclusionary discipline consequences on student reading achievement. In this empirical statewide investigation, the assignment of a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement and student reading achievement for students who were enrolled in special education were analyzed. Previous researchers [e.g., 3, 4, 6, 5] have documented that the assignment of exclusionary discipline consequences negatively influences the reading achievement

of students in special education. In this investigation, the highest percentage of students enrolled in special education had Reading Level I: Unsatisfactory Performance on STAAR across all four school years and all 8 grade levels examined when compared to Reading Level II: Satisfactory Performance, Reading Level II: Phase-In Satisfactory Performance, and Reading Level III: Advanced Performance. Less consistency was discovered when examining the variations between the student percentage increase or decrease over the four school years investigated.

When examining the percentage of students in special education who were assigned between 1-30 days, between 31-60 days, and more than 60 days in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement and who had Reading Level I: Unsatisfactory Performance, their percentages increased from the 2012-2013 school year to the 2015-2016 school year for students in Grades 3 through 8, except for Grade 4 students who received between 1-30 days and for Grade 4 students who received more than 60 days in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement. As such, the percentage of students in special education who received a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement and who were unlikely to succeed in the next grade level increased from the 2012-2013 school year to the 2015-2016 school year for students in Grades 3, 5, 6, 7, and 8.

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

Based upon the results of the multi-year, Texas statewide investigation, several implications for policy and for practice can be made. First, state level educational leaders could be encouraged to examine and implement performance standards that are consistent and easily interpreted by parents and educators. These educational leaders should consider the influence of standardized assessments on students in special education,

their teachers, and families. Educational leaders and school administrators should also be aware that exclusionary discipline assignments have a negative effect on student academic performance. Moreover, the degree to which exclusionary discipline assignments result in students not repeating the non-preferred behavior is not known. That is, do students who are assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence continue to exhibit the non-preferred behavior? A clear need exists for educational leaders to evaluate the efficacy of their current discipline programs. Results of such evaluative efforts could be used to improve existing discipline programs or to generate discipline programs that are effective. Finally, educational leaders should also consider examining the allocation of staff. Staffing and budget constraints are difficulties every school district in Texas likely face. School leaders should consider allocating more staff to assist students in special education within the general education setting. Students in special education comprise a small percentage of the overall students, but have the substantial needs.

### **4.3 Recommendations for Future Research**

Based upon the results of this multiyear, statewide investigation, several recommendations for research are possible. First, because data on boys and girls were combined in this article, researchers are encouraged to analyze the research questions that were answered in this article, separately for boys and for girls. Whether results determined for all students hold true for boys and for girls separately is not known. Second, given the relationship of economic status to student academic performance in general, the extent to which the economic status of students in special education is related to both their assignment to exclusionary discipline consequences and to their reading achievement needs to be addressed.

A third recommendation would be to extend this study to students in other grade levels. Data on students in grades other than Grades 3 through 8 warrant analysis. The degree to which findings based on students in Grades 3 through 8 might generalize to students in other grade levels is not known. A fourth recommendation would be to extend this study in which the emphasis was placed solely on reading to other academic subject areas, such as mathematics. Whether the findings delineated in this article based on reading would be generalizable to mathematics is unknown. A final recommendation would be to analyze data on students in special education in other states. Readers should keep in mind that the data analyzed in this article were only on students in special education in the State of Texas.

## **5. Conclusion**

In this study, the percentage of students who were in special education who received between 1-30 days, between 31-60 days, and more than 60 days of a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement and who had Level I: Unsatisfactory Performance on the STAAR Reading exam increased over time across almost all grade levels investigated. Regarding the STAAR Reading Level II: Satisfactory performance and Level III: Advanced Performance, trends could not be established due to missing data. The percentage of students did not vary more than 7 percentage points on the STAAR Reading Level II: Satisfactory performance and did not vary more than 1 percentage point on the STAAR Reading Level III: Advanced Performance. Concerning the percentage of student who were in special education who received between 1-30 days, between 31-60 days, and more than 60 days of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement and had a Level II: Phase-In Satisfactory performance on the STAAR Reading test, a trend was present. The percentage of students

in Grades 3, 5, 6, 7, and 8 who had a Level II: Phase-In Satisfactory performance on the STAAR Reading exam decreased from the 2012-2013 school year to the 2015-2016 school year. As such, the percentage of students who were in special education and received a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement and had a passing standard on the STAAR Reading assessment has decreased over time.

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