
Abraham S. Fischler College of Education ETD Archive

6-1-1991

A Systematic Program To Improve Attendance At Alice Drive Middle School.

Jack P. Cook
Nova Southeastern University

Follow this and additional works at: https://nsuworks.nova.edu/fse_etda

 Part of the [Education Commons](#)

All rights reserved. This publication is intended for use solely by faculty, students, and staff of Nova Southeastern University. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, now known or later developed, including but not limited to photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the author or the publisher.

NSUWorks Citation

Jack P. Cook. 1991. *A Systematic Program To Improve Attendance At Alice Drive Middle School.*. Doctoral dissertation. Nova Southeastern University. Retrieved from NSUWorks, Center for the Advancement of Education. (186)
https://nsuworks.nova.edu/fse_etda/186.

This Dissertation - NSU Access Only is brought to you by NSUWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Abraham S. Fischler College of Education ETD Archive by an authorized administrator of NSUWorks. For more information, please contact nsuworks@nova.edu.

A SYSTEMATIC PROGRAM FOR IMPROVING ATTENDANCE AT
ALICE DRIVE MIDDLE SCHOOL

by

Jack P. Cook

A Major Applied Research Project Report presented in
partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Education

Nova University

IARP Report
Revision #2
Myrtle Beach II Cluster
Original Submission, 6-18-91
Current Submission, 6-28-91
Implementation Date, 3-19-90

Assistant Principal
Sumter High School and
District Project Director
for Improving Middle
School Attendance
(O) 803/481-4480
(H) 803/469-9972

Committee: Advisor, K. Bush; Reader, A. Miles; Nova Rep.,
C. Faires

Final Report Approval Confirmation:

Advisor: Dr. Kenneth Bush

Signature: *Kenneth Bush*

Date: *July 1, 1991*

Reader: Dr. Amanda Miles

Signature: *Amanda Miles*

Date: *July 19, 1991*

Nova Rep.: Dr. Charles Faires

Signature: *Charles Faires*

Date: *July 22, 1991*

ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: Jack P. Cook
DATE: June 1991

CLUSTER: Myrtle Beach II
PRACTICUM: MARP

TITLE: A systematic Program for Improving Attendance at
Alice Drive Middle School

ABSTRACT: From 1986 to 1989 Alice Drive Middle School was one of the lowest among nine schools in Sumter School District 17 in average daily attendance. The problem was documented each year in a report issued by the District Attendance Supervisor to the members of the school board and to the South Carolina State Department of Education.

State, school district, and Alice Drive Middle School policies, laws, and other related documents were examined in an effort to gain insight into the problem. Recent state level educational reform through legislation was determined to contribute to the problem rather than alleviate it.

No consensus on the causes of the absenteeism problem at Alice Drive Middle School could be reached after informal interviews with school and district administrators, parents, and teachers. A number of informal groups were identified in the research process that could bring both positive and negative influences to bear on the problem.

External factors impacting on the school were numerous. The competition between two public school districts in the county, parent apathy, district financial difficulties, evidenced by a lack of community support for tax increases to back school needs, all conspired to hinder normal school operations at Alice Drive Middle School.

Strategies for the practicum intervention included implementation of strict monitoring procedures for student attendance, early identification of students with potential for excessive absenteeism, a reward system to encourage improved attendance, establishment of an In-School Suspension program, and a Student Attendance Review Board. The entire faculty participated in an inservice program in an effort to involve the entire school community in motivating students toward regular attendance. The practicum intervention also utilized parent and community resources.

Evaluation of the intervention revealed that the average daily attendance at Alice Drive Middle School met terminal outcome objectives for the 1990-91 school year. Terminal outcomes for chronic absentees exceeded intervention objectives.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
Abstract.....	i
List of Appendices.....	iv
List of Tables.....	v
Chapter	
1. Proposal Statement and Community Background....	1
General Statement of the Problem.....	1
Description of the Immediate Problem Context....	1
Description of the Surrounding Community.....	5
Regional and National Context of the Problem...	6
2. Problem Definition and Evidence.....	9
Problem Background.....	9
Evidence of Problem Discrepancy.....	11
Justification of Problem Situation as Problematic.....	26
Probable Cause of Problem.....	27
3. Problem Situation and Context.....	33
Written Policies and Procedures and Commentaries.....	33
Norms for Behavior, Values and Traditions.....	35
Formal and Informal Influences of Individuals and Groups.....	37
External Circumstances.....	39
4. Problem Conceptualization, Practicum Outcomes, and the Solution Strategy.....	41
Bibliographic Research and Review of the Literature.....	41
Interviews with Experts.....	47
Proposal Solution Components.....	49
Practicum Outcomes.....	51
5. Implementation History.....	54
Original Action Plan.....	54
Chronology of Implementation Activities.....	56
Practicum Manager's Functions and Responsibilities.....	102
6. Evaluation Of the Results and the Process....	104
Practicum Outcomes and Process.....	104
Average Daily Attendance Increases.....	104
Side Effects.....	113
Post Intervention Information.....	114
Reflections on the Solution Strategy.....	115
Implications of Outcomes and Process.....	116

7. Decisions on Future of Intervention.....	118
Maintain, Modify, Abandon.....	118
Additional Applications.....	119
Dissemination of Information About Benefits..	119
Recommendations.....	120

References Cited.....	121
-----------------------	-----

Appendices	PAGE
Appendix A Educational Level of ADMS Parents...	124
Appendix B Attendance: Absence-Lawful/Unlawful.	125
Appendix C Student Survey.....	126
Appendix D Superintendent's Attendance Expectations.....	127
Appendix E Superintendent's Attendance Memo....	128
Appendix F Criterion Two.....	129
Appendix G Faculty Survey.....	130
Appendix H ADA For South Carolina.....	131
Appendix I Excessive Absence Report Form.....	132
Appendix J Home Visitor Report Form.....	133
Appendix K School Incentive Reward Program Report Form.....	134
Appendix L Summary of Faculty Survey on Student Attendance.....	135
Appendix M Memorandum: Homeroom Absences.....	136
Appendix N Inservice Agenda.....	137
Appendix O Inservice Evaluation... ..	138
Appendix P Memorandum: Appointment of ADMS Committee.....	139
Appendix Q Letter to Parent: Third Quarter....	140
Appendix R Perfect Attendance Letter: Third Quarter.....	141
Appendix S Minutes of Attendance Committee Meeting.....	142

Appendix T	Letter To ADMS Students.....	143
Appendix U	Memorandum: ADMS Faculty- Attendance Project.....	144
Appendix V	SARB Appointment Letter.....	145
Appendix W	Perfect Attendance Memorandum.....	146
Appendix X	Fourth Quarter Attendance- Highest ADA.....	147
Appendix Y	Attendance Project Target Group For Summer School 1990.....	148
Appendix Z	Summer School Target List Letter....	149
Appendix AA	Letter: Perfect Attendance - First Half of Summer School.....	150
Appendix BB	Letter: Excessive Absences - First Half of Summer School.....	151
Appendix CC	Letter To Parents of Rising Sixth Graders.....	152
Appendix DD	Letter To Parents of Rising Seventh and Eighth Graders Attendance Problems.....	153
Appendix EE	Memorandum: Attendance Intervention 1990-91.....	154
Appendix FF	ADMS Orientation Agenda.....	155
Appendix GG	Memorandum: First Meeting of ADMS Faculty Attendance Committee for 1990-91 School Year.....	156
Appendix HH	Suggestions on How to Effectively Work with Chronic Absentees.....	157
Appendix II	Letter: Parents of Chronic Absentees.....	158
Appendix JJ	Memorandum: ADMS Reporting Students.....	159
Appendix KK	Inservice Schedule.....	160
Appendix LL	Inservice Evaluation Summary.....	161
Appendix MM	Letter to Parents: Absentees First Quarter 1990.....	162

Appendix NN	Memorandum: Sixth Grade Repeaters...	163
Appendix OO	Open House Program.....	164
Appendix PP	Memorandum: Chronic Absentees with Improved Attendance.....	165
Appendix QO	Memorandum: Weather/Health Epidemics.....	166
Appendix RR	Letter To Parents: Perfect Attendance Second Quarter and First Semester.....	167
Appendix SS	Sixth Grade Highest ADA.....	168
Appendix TT	Seventh Grade Highest ADA.....	169
Appendix UU	Eighth Grade Highest ADA.....	170
Appendix VV	Memorandum: SARB Meeting.....	171
Appendix WW	Memorandum: Attendance Practicum at ADMS.....	172
Appendix XX	Memorandum: Faculty Attendance Committee Meeting.....	173
Appendix YY	Memorandum: Attendance Through End of Third Quarter.....	174
Appendix ZZ	Memorandum: Perfect Attendance Letters.....	175
Appendix AAA	Memorandum: Third Quarter Attendance.....	176
Appendix BBB	Letter: Perfect Attendance for Year.....	177
Appendix CCC	Letter: Chronic With Improved Attendance.....	178
Appendix DDD	Final Faculty Feedback Survey.....	179
Appendix EEE	Letter: Award Announcement.....	180

TABLES

Page

1.	A Comparison of Average Daily Attendance of the Nine Schools in Sumter District 17 for the Years 1985-1989.....	9
2.	A Comparison of ADMS ADA with Similar Size Middle Schools in South Carolina for Year 1988-89.....	10
3.	A Comparison of Faculty ADA in the Nine Schools in Sumter District 17 for the years in 1986-1989..	10
4.	A Comparison of 135 Day Attendance Report for ADMS for School Years 1986-1989.....	12
5.	A Comparison of ADA for Grades Six through Eight at ADMS for School Years 1986-1989.....	13
6.	A Comparison of Per Student Average Absences by Grade for School Years 1986-1989.....	13
7.	A Comparison of Absences by Quarter for the School Years 1986-1989.....	14
8.	A Comparison of Absences by Quarter for Grades Six Through Eight for the Years 1986-1989.....	14
9.	A Comparison of Absences by Days of the Week for Years 1986-1989.....	15
10.	A Comparison of Monday and Friday Absences for ADMS by Grade Level for the School Years 1986-89.....	16
11.	Absences for the Years 1986 Through 1989 That Occurred the Day Before and the Day After A Holiday.....	16
12.	A Comparison of Average Days Missed According to Lunch Status for the Years 1986-89.....	17
13.	Student Average Daily Absences for Students According to Method of Transportation To and From School for the Years 1986-89.....	17
14.	Average Absences Per Year for Students According to Parental Status for 1989.....	18
15.	Total Number of Pregnant Students at ADMS by Year for the Years 1986-89.....	19
16.	A Comparison of Numbers of Students Repeating One or More Grades and Average Number of Days Absent by Grade Level for the Years 1986-89.....	19
17.	Demographics of Repeaters for the 1989 School Year by Grade.....	20
18.	1989 Repeaters by Grade Level First Repeated.....	21
19.	Number of Out-of-School Suspension Days by Grade Level for School Years 1986-1989.....	22
20.	A Comparison of Chronic Absences by Grade Level for School Years 1988 through 1989.....	23
21.	A Comparison of Demographic Data on Seventh Grade Chronic Absentees at ADMS for the 1988-89 School Year.....	23

TABLES (Continued)

	Page
22. A Comparison of Sixth and Seventh Grade Mean NCEs on the CTBS for Chronic and Non-chronic Students for the 1989 Year.....	24
23. Summer School Average Daily Attendance by Grade Level for the Summers of 1988-89.....	25
24. Summary of Most Important Factors From Faculty Responses to ADMS Student Attendance Survey.....	29
25. A Comparison of ADMS Home Visits by Grade for the First Two Nine-Week Grading Periods for the 1989-90 School Year.....	31
26. Family Court Referrals for Truancy/Non-Attendance for the years 1986-89.....	32
27. A Comparison of Fourth Quarter 1989-90 ADA With Third Quarter 1989-90 ADA.....	105
28. A Comparison of Fourth Quarter 1989-90 ADA of Sixth Grade Students with Third Quarter 1989-90 ADA.....	105
29. A Comparison of Fourth Quarter 1989-90 ADA of Seventh Grade Students with Third Quarter 1989-90 ADA.....	106
30. A Comparison of Fourth Quarter 1989-90 ADA of Eighth Grade Students with Third Quarter 1989-90 ADA.....	107
31. A Comparison of ADMS ADA Based on 180 Day Attendance Report for the Years 1989-90 and 1990-91 by Grade Level.....	108
32. Summer School Average Daily Attendance by Grade Level for the Summers of 1988, 1989, and 1990....	110
33. A Comparison of Chronic Absences by Grade Level for School Years 1989 and 1990.....	112

CHAPTER I

PROPOSAL STATEMENT AND COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

General Statement of the Problem

The problem was that Alice Drive Middle School had failed to meet South Carolina State Department of Education student attendance objectives for monetary awards under the Educational Improvement Act's School Incentive Reward program for three years between 1985 and 1989.

Description of the Immediate Problem Context

Alice Drive Middle School (ADMS) was large, by South Carolina standards, with an enrollment of 1248 students in grades six through eight. ADMS was fully accredited by the State of South Carolina and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The school which had a student population of 9,950, was one of two middle schools serving Sumter District Number 17. The enrollment at ADMS was 42 percent minority. Minority enrollment was projected to increase in 1990 and 1992 due to an anticipated rezoning effort to improve racial balance throughout the school district.

ADMS had three full-time administrators. The principal was male. The school had two assistant principals, one male and one female. The instructional staff consisted of 76 full-time, fully certified teachers, which was complimented by two certified counselors, one librarian and a certified media

specialist. The support staff included 12 instructional and clerical aides, and five secretaries. The custodial staff consisted of six full-time custodians. Nine cafeteria workers prepared breakfast and lunch for the student body 180 days per year.

A faculty profile indicated that the average faculty member was 32 years old. Three had degrees beyond the masters, 21 had earned a masters degree and 27 of the remaining had begun a graduate program. All professional staff members were fully certified for their respective positions by the South Carolina State Department of Education. Eleven years of experience was the average.

An analysis of the occupations of parents or guardians of ADMS students indicated that four percent were unemployed, 31 percent worked in industry, 15 percent in retail trade occupations, and 19 percent in professional and related services. Twelve percent were employed by the military serving with the Ninth Air Force at Shaw Air Force Base. The remaining 19 percent were in agriculture and unskilled labor positions.

An analysis of parents' and guardians' educational level revealed that 14.33 percent had not completed high school, 46.0 percent had completed high school, and 39.66 percent held degrees beyond high school (Appendix A: 124).

Thirty-two percent of the county's general population was below the poverty level. Twenty-six percent of the student population at ADMS had been identified by district staff social workers as being from homes with low socio-economic backgrounds. Thirty-one percent of the student population was eligible for free or reduced lunch. The district's other middle school had similar student population statistics.

ADMS received all financial support from Sumter School District Number 17. The District received the majority of its financial resources from the State of South Carolina. Other revenue support for the district came from federal impact aid and federal grants. Sumter County Council, an elected body, was responsible for funding school financial needs once state allocations were considered. The South Carolina State legislature had, between 1985 and 1990, cut state financial support with a mandate to look for an increase in local (county) financial support for the difference. The Sumter County Council had been reluctant to increase local property taxes to fund the declining state support for district schools. The result was that the school district was forced to cut school budgets for five years between 1985 and 1990. Budget cuts had a negative impact on professional staffing at ADMS with a loss of six positions over the same five year period.

The school operated on a team approach to decision making. Each faculty member served on one or more school committees. Committees were free to make appropriate recommendations to the administration. Careful consideration was given by the Principal to all recommendations, input from the assistant principals and district-level administrators and took appropriate action. Bimonthly meetings were held with faculty and academic department heads for the purpose of disseminating information to the faculty. An open door policy by the principal and both assistant principals encouraged faculty and staff members to talk about anything of concern. All three administrators reported that information they received from staff on this informal basis was invaluable to smooth functioning of the school. Faculty and staff reported feeling at ease with talking with the administrators through the open door. Three levels, basic, regular and honors divided the instructional program. Students were placed into courses at one of the three levels based on the results of standardized test data, student performance, and teacher recommendations. Students in the basic curriculum who were significantly below grade level in mathematics and reading were required to take remedial courses in a lab setting along with their basic courses and in place of elective courses in their curriculum.

The facility was built in 1972 with additions in 1981. A new wing with 14 new classrooms and improved gym and cafeteria facilities was completed in the summer of 1986.

Approximately 40 percent of the students rode buses, 25 percent walked, and 35 percent were driven to school.

Description of Surrounding Community

Sumter County is located in South Carolina's midland region, just east of the geographic heart of the state. The city of Sumter is the county seat and the largest community in the county. Other communities are Pinewood, Mayesville, and Dalzell.

Sumter School District Number 17 is the school district that serves most of the city and a portion of the county. The district was totally surrounded by the county school district. District 17 had a school population of 11,638 of which 9,950 students attended public schools. The remaining students attended four non-public schools in the county. This district had six elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school. The district employed 519 certified teachers and had an operation budget of \$22,441,623. Student population in the district was 55 percent black and 45 percent white with the lower grades more heavily minority than the upper grades.

High property taxes caused growing community support for merger of the city and county school

districts. A number of city and county commissioners, two local state legislators and several key community leaders have voiced their support for merger. The county school district school board had ignored the merger issue while the city district board had formed a committee to study the issue for long-range planning and recommendations.

Regional and National Context of the Problem

Students who were frequently absent from school presented a serious problem for educators. Nonattendance had implications for both the student and the public school. Nationally, poor school attendance was shown to be associated with delinquency and below-average academic achievement (Shelton, 1979). Abramowitz and Rosenfeld (1988) reported that increasing attendance problems were resulting in a significant loss of government funds for many public school systems across the nation.

As school enrolment had been increasing, absenteeism rates were also increasing during the two decades between 1970 and 1990. Absenteeism may have deprived some children of a fundamental education (Miller, 1986). The 1984 U. S. Bureau of Census reported a nationwide average daily attendance rate of just over 90 percent, or an average daily absenteeism rate of 10 percent.

Myll (1988) reported that in spite of the notoriety

about the proliferation of drugs, alcohol, and vandalism in the public schools of the nation, student absenteeism and truancy were the biggest problems and by far the most costly in time consumption and expense. Myll asserted that some measure of control of young students could be maintained if they were kept in the classroom and interested in other supervised campus activities.

Stewart and Ray (1988) reported that student nonattendance was of critical importance in the national discussion of the state of public education. Their research found that chronic absenteeism stood as a major obstacle to teaching and learning in the nation's middle schools.

Hampton (1986), in a report to the Southern Region Education Board, indicated that nearly a quarter of all high school dropouts had chronic truancy problems in middle and junior high schools. Hampton's research covered schools located in the thirteen states served by the Southern Region Education Board.

The South Carolina state legislature recognized absenteeism as a major problem for the public schools of South Carolina when it included stringent attendance rules into the Educational Improvement Act of 1984. This Act had a negative impact on an already expanding attendance problem in middle schools because public schools were required to retain students who missed more than ten school days each year for any reason

other than medical. Once the students passed the tenth day of absence they began to miss frequently since they would be retained by law anyway.

The State, through the Educational Improvement Act, gave local school boards authority to grant promotion and credit to students who exceed the ten absences per year as specified under law. The Sumter School District Number 17 Board Policy on attendance issues can be found at Appendix B: 125.

Another provision of the South Carolina Educational Improvement Act of 1984 provided monetary awards for schools which met or exceeded expected performance standards in the areas of academic achievement, student attendance, and teacher attendance. Schools were compared with other schools within the state with similar characteristics specified by the South Carolina State Department of Education. For schools that met or exceeded expectations, money was granted to the school for the sole purpose of improving the school's instructional program. Expectations included student attendance as one of the three determining factors.

CHAPTER 2

PROBLEM DEFINITION AND EVIDENCE

Problem Background

Sumter School District Number 17 was one of the smallest school districts in the state of South Carolina with a geographic area of 50.6 square miles. The population within the district was estimated to be approximately 50,000. Several government subsidized housing projects were located within the district and were the source of a significant student enrollment at ADMS.

During the period 1986 through 1989, Alice Drive Middle School did not have acceptable daily attendance. Table 1 indicates the ADA of the schools in Sumter School District Number 17 for the years 1986 - 1989.

TABLE 1

A Comparison of Average Daily Attendance of the Nine Schools in Sumter District 17 for the Years 1985-1989

School	85-86	86-87	87-88	88-89
Alice Drive Elem.	97.3	97.9	97.0	97.7
Alice Drive Middle	96.5	97.2	96.9	96.5
Bates Middle	96.5	96.9	96.6	96.3
Crosswell Drive Elem.	97.0	97.0	97.2	96.7
Lemira Elementary	97.2	97.5	96.8	96.6
Millwood Elementary	97.3	97.5	97.0	97.4
Sumter High	95.4	95.3	95.7	96.2
Wilder Elementary	97.4	97.8	97.3	97.2
Willow Drive Elem.	97.4	98.0	97.5	97.4

Table 2 is a comparison of Average Daily Attendance (ADA) of similar sized schools in South Carolina for the school year 1988-89. ADMS had a lower ADA than all five

schools. The Superintendent and school board set attendance expectations for ADMS that exceeded the ADA of any of the referenced schools.

TABLE 2
A Comparison of ADMS ADA
with Similar Size Middle Schools in South
Carolina for the Year 1988-89

School	(School District)	Enrollment	ADA
Hopkins Middle	Richland No. 1	1139	97.3
Dent Middle	Richland No. 2	1120	97.6
Lexington Middle	Lexington No. 1	1201	98.2
Northwood Middle	Greenville	1122	98.6
Hillcrest Middle	Greenville	1078	96.9

TABLE 3
A Comparison of Faculty ADA in the Nine Schools in
Sumter District 17 for the Years 1986-1989

School	85-86	86-87	87-88	88-89
Alice Drive Elem.	96.3	94.9	95.7	95.2
Alice Drive Middle	96.5	96.0	95.1	95.0
Bates Middle	97.1	94.9	94.7	95.6
Crosswell Drive Elem.	95.5	97.1	95.4	96.1
Lemira Elementary	96.3	94.0	94.9	94.6
Millwood Elementary	96.0	95.8	93.5	94.8
Sumter High	96.4	95.1	95.3	95.6
Wilder Elementary	95.4	96.6	96.6	96.2
Willow Drive Elem.	97.1	95.7	96.0	96.7

At the same time student attendance was not acceptable, teacher attendance consistently ranked high among the nine schools' faculty attendance. Table 3 illustrates the faculty average daily attendance for the nine schools for the years

1986-1989.

The faculty saw a need for improvement in student attendance but there was no consensus as to how to approach the problem by the faculty and administrators.

Evidence of Problem Discrepancy

Section 59-18-10 of the South Carolina Education Improvement Act of 1984 established a School Incentive Reward Program. The legislature intended to reward schools in the state that demonstrated exceptional performance in the areas of student attendance, faculty attendance and student test score (achievement) increases. Legislators clearly desired to reward schools for excellence in past performance while providing an incentive to achieve even higher standards.

All public schools in South Carolina were grouped based on like characteristics as determined by the South Carolina State Department of Education. The State's classification of middle schools was determined by looking at three variables - the average year's of education beyond the bachelor's degree, dollars per student collected locally above the South Carolina Education Finance Act requirements, and the percent of students receiving free or reduced lunch. ADMS was classified as a Category Three school which caused the school to be compared to the middle grouping of all public middle schools in South Carolina.

The student attendance standard stated that the criteria be satisfied at the point that student attendance met or exceeded 96.0 percent. The State Department of Education

computed this figure by dividing the 135 day Average Daily Attendance (ADA) of a school by the 135 day Average Daily Membership (ADM). There was also a provision which stated that the student attendance criteria could be met by a school if the percentage improved by a factor of .5 percent over the previous school year provided the previous year's ADA was at or above 95.0 percent. Table 4 is a review of the 135 day ADA/ADM for ADMS for the years 1986 through 1989. The attendance standard for winning an incentive reward was not met for school year 1986, 1988 and 1989 or three of the past four years.

TABLE 4

A Comparison of 135 Day Attendance Report for
ADMS for School Years 1986-1989

Year	135 ADA
1986	96.2
1987	97.0
1988	96.3
1989	96.1

Table 5 is a review of student average daily attendance by grade for ADMS for the years 1986 through 1989. In the four years studied, the seventh grade had the lowest ADA each year followed by the eighth grade for all four years. It appeared that the seventh grade was a problem area. This finding was consistent with Golden's (1988) research on truancy in New York City's public schools where the seventh grade was the most problematic grade level for attendance

supervisors among middle and junior high schools.

TABLE 5

A Comparison of ADA for Grades Six Through Eight at ADMS for School Years 1986 - 1989.

Grade	1986	1987	1988	1989
Six	97.9	98.9	97.8	97.7
Seven	94.7	95.6	95.8	94.9
Eight	96.8	96.9	97.2	96.8

Table 6 represents the average per student absences by grade for the years 1986 through 1989. Without exception, the seventh grade accounted for the highest per student average absences each of the four years cited in the study.

TABLE 6

A Comparison of Per Student Average Absence by Grade for School Years 1986-1989

Grade	1986	1987	1988	1989
Six	9.71	9.67	9.86	10.01
Seven	11.43	10.32	10.30	10.11
Eight	9.63	9.02	8.93	9.53

Table 7 enumerates the number of days of student absences by academic quarter for the years 1986-1989. The pattern was for absences to increase by quarter for the first three quarters then show a decrease during the fourth academic quarter. The consistent fourth quarter decline after three quarters of steady increase could be attributed to an effort

supervisors among middle and junior high schools.

TABLE 5

A Comparison of ADA for Grades Six Through Eight at ADMS for School Years 1986 - 1989.

Grade	1986	1987	1988	1989
Six	97.9	98.9	97.8	97.7
Seven	94.7	95.6	95.8	94.9
Eight	96.8	96.9	97.2	96.8

Table 6 represents the average per student absences by grade for the years 1986 through 1989. Without exception, the seventh grade accounted for the highest per student average absences each of the four years cited in the study.

TABLE 6

A Comparison of Per Student Average Absence by Grade for School Years 1986-1989

Grade	1986	1987	1988	1989
Six	9.71	9.67	9.86	10.01
Seven	11.43	10.32	10.30	10.11
Eight	9.63	9.02	8.93	9.53

Table 7 enumerates the number of days of student absences by academic quarter for the years 1986-1989. The pattern was for absences to increase by quarter for the first three quarters then show a decrease during the fourth academic quarter. The consistent fourth quarter decline after three quarters of steady increase could be attributed to an effort

on the part of students to pass to the next grade level following marginal to poor academic performance in previous quarters.

TABLE 7

A Comparison of Absences by Quarter for the School Years 1986-1989

Quarter	1986	1987	1988	1989
First	1918	1939	1980	1907
Second	2223	2276	2310	2222
Third	2674	2540	2360	2603
Fourth	2190	1973	2210	2076

TABLE 8

A Comparison of Absences by Quarter for Grades Six Through Eight for the Years 1987-1989

Year/Quarter	Six	Seven	Eight
1987			
First	569	729	641
Second	643	942	691
Third	697	1102	741
Fourth	542	829	602
1988			
First	539	821	630
Second	596	1103	611
Third	570	1197	593
Fourth	493	1156	561
1989			
First	449	937	521
Second	573	1183	610
Third	614	1315	673
Fourth	481	1072	523

Table 8 takes data from the quarterly absences shown in

Table 7 and breaks the data down by grade level and academic quarter by years 1987-1989. The seventh grade consistently had the most number of absences which could be attributed to the fact that the seventh grade had the highest percentage of repeaters.

TABLE 9
A Comparison of Absences by Days of The Week
for Years 1986-1989.

Year	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1986	58.04	50.27	47.52	46.79	55.19
1987	54.77	46.16	44.94	49.48	50.11
1988	54.98	52.54	47.07	48.17	53.84
1989	55.01	51.72	46.18	46.72	53.74

Table 9 lists absences by the days of the week for the years 1986 - 1989. Mondays and Fridays had the greatest number of absences on a consistent basis.

Table 10 uses data from Table 9 and indicates the percentage of students absent on Mondays and Fridays by grade level for the years 1986 through 1989. In the years 1986-1987, the seventh grade was the weakest grade for Monday and Friday attendance. The eighth grade abused Monday and Friday more often than seventh graders in the years 1988-1989.

TABLE 10

A Comparison of Monday and Friday Absences for Alice Drive Middle School by Grade Level for the Years 1986-1989 Expressed in Percentage of Students Absent

Year/Grade	Monday	Friday	Class Average Days Absent.
1986			
Six	25.2	26.4	17.2
Seven	41.6	42.4	19.8
Eight	33.2	31.4	15.1
1987			
Six	29.1	26.7	18.4
Seven	39.8	36.2	20.8
Eight	31.1	37.1	16.8
1988			
Six	30.3	28.4	17.0
Seven	34.7	36.2	19.6
Eight	35.0	35.4	16.2
1989			
Six	24.6	25.4	18.3
Seven	36.3	37.1	20.9
Eight	39.1	37.5	15.7

TABLE 11

Absences for the Years 1986 Through 1989 That Occurred the Day Before and the Day After A Holiday

Year	Day Before	Day After
1986	49.41	52.92
1987	41.42	46.89
1988	52.16	50.58
1989	51.61	52.18

Table 11 shows data on absences that occurred the day before or day after a school holiday. The data indicates that, with the exception of 1988 year, students were more

likely to be absent the day after a holiday.

An analysis of average days missed by students receiving free or reduced price lunch and students who did not receive the benefit for the years 1986 to 1989 can be found in Table 12. The data suggested that the lunch status was a factor in student absences. This was probably due to the low socio-economic status of the families of students qualified for free and reduced lunch.

TABLE 12

A Comparison of Average Days Missed According to Lunch Status for the Years 1986-1989

Year	Average Absences Free Lunch	Average Absences Reduced Lunch	Average Absences Full Price
1986	9.2	8.3	4.6
1987	8.7	8.1	5.1
1988	8.8	7.9	4.7
1989	9.1	8.7	4.2

TABLE 13

Average Daily Absences for Students According to Method of Transportation To and From School for the Years 1986-89

Year	School Bus	All other forms of transportation
1986	8.7	5.2
1987	8.6	5.7
1988	8.7	5.3
1989	8.2	5.2

Approximately 600 students were transported to and from ADMS each school day on 15 buses. Table 13 provides the

average daily absences according to transportation status. For all four years considered, students arriving and departing school by school transportation (bus) missed more days than students who walked to school or arrived by other means.

ADMS had approximately 410 students who did not live in a home with both natural parents. Data was collected for the 1989 year only. The data indicates that students who reside with only one parent, are in the home of a legally appointed guardian, or reside with a natural parent and a step-parent were absent more significantly than students who resided in the home with both natural parents.

TABLE 14

Average Absences Per Year for Students According to Parental Status for 1989

Parental Status	Average Days Absent Per Year
Both Natural Parents	5.62
Mother Only	10.42
Father Only	9.76
Guardian	9.52
Natural Parent and Step Parent	8.10

The total numbers, of pregnant students at ADMS for the years 1986-1989 are reported in Table 15. The numbers were so insignificant when compared to the student body population that it was determined not to have any significant negative impact on the attendance problem. In all cases, the students were served by home-bound instructors and the days the

students missed were reduced by the number of hours served by the home-bound instructor.

TABLE 15

Total Number of Pregnant Students at Alice Drive Middle School by Year for the Years 1986-1989

Year	Number of Pregnancies	* Average Number of Days Missed
1986	1	12
1987	0	0
1988	3	10
1989	1	10

* After adjusting for days excused due to home-bound instruction.

TABLE 16

A Comparison of Numbers of Students Repeating One or More Grades and Average Number of Days Absent by Grade Level for the Years 1986-1989

Year/Grade	Total Repeaters	Average Number of Days Absent
<u>1986</u>		
Six	54	16.4
Seven	61	18
Eight	57	16.2
<u>1987</u>		
Six	57	18.1
Seven	63	17.2
Eight	64	17.4
<u>1988</u>		
Six	51	17.5
Seven	61	18.3
Eight	54	16.7
<u>1989</u>		
Six	58	16.7
Seven	64	17.7
Eight	53	17.1

Table 16 depicts the number of students who have repeated one or more grades and the average number of days absent by grade for the years 1986-1989. The data indicates that the seventh grade had the greatest number of repeaters for each of the four years studied. In addition, the seventh graders missed more days, on average, than repeaters in the other two grades at ADMS.

TABLE 17
Demographics of Repeaters for the
1989 School Year by Grade

Category	Six	Seven	Eight
Black Male	27	32	28
Black Female	14	19	14
White Male	11	6	6
White Female	6	7	5
Single Parent	47	52	40
Free Lunch	44	48	39
School Bus Riders	46	52	41
Total Students Repeating	58	64	53

Table 17 reports demographic data for repeaters for the 1989 year. The data supports the profile of a repeater at ADMS from a single parent home. The student was four times as likely to be black as white and twice as likely to be a black male as a black female. By a three to one ratio, students who ride a bus to school were more likely to repeat than those who repeat and have other means of transportation to and from school. Repeaters who were on free or reduced price lunches were three times as likely to fail as repeaters with no lunch

assistance.

A survey of ADMS students was undertaken during the 1989 year. The information they reported would be based on their status prior to the 1989-90 academic year. (Appendix C: 126) Table 18 shows the survey results for repeaters by grade level first repeated. The survey showed that 275 students repeated one grade level; 87 failed two grade levels and 44 had failed three times.

TABLE 18
1989 Repeaters by Grade Level First Repeated

Grade/Level	Number
Pre-school	17
First	37
Second	26
Third	37
Fourth	24
Fifth	29
Sixth	34
Seventh	44
Eighth	29

During the academic years of 1986-1989 ADMS students were suspended from school 1292 times for a total of 2141 school days. Table 19 shows these out-of-school suspension days by grade level and total number of days absent due to suspensions by grade levels. The seventh and eighth grade had approximately the same number of suspension days over the four year period. The data suggested that some effort needed to be made to address discipline problems which impacted on

suspension and then further impacted on attendance.

TABLE 19

Number of Out-of-School Suspension Days by Grade
Level for School Years 1986-1989

Year	Six	Seven	Eight
<u>1986</u>			
Total Suspensions	97	133	119
Days Absent	146	224	197
<u>1987</u>	87	114	97
Total Suspensions	103	219	215
Days Absent			
<u>1988</u>			
Total Suspensions	65	109	127
Days Absent	129	183	196
<u>1989</u>			
Total Suspensions	108	103	133
Days Absent	158	167	204

The District Office of Attendance and Transportation supplied data on students classified by the district as chronically absent. Chronic absentees are defined as students who have missed more than ten school days in a given school year. Table 20 portrays chronic absentees by grade level and total number of days missed for the 1988 and 1989 school years. (Records on chronic absentees were not kept prior to the 1987-88 school year).

Tables 5, 6, 8, 16, and 20 indicated that the seventh grade could be singled out from among the three grade levels at ADMS as impacting most heavily on absenteeism in the school, further analysis of the seventh grade demographic

data seemed warranted. Table 21 depicts demographic data for the seventh grade chronic absentees for the 1988 and 1989 school years. (As indicated earlier, records on chronic absentees were not kept prior to the (1987-88 school year).

TABLE 20

A Comparison of Chronic Absences by Grade Level
for School Years 1988 Through 1989

Year/Grade Level	Total Chronics	Total Absences by Chronics
<u>1988</u>		
Six	60	840
Seven	106	1710
Eight	97	1244
Total	263	3794
<u>1989</u>		
Six	53	689
Seven	97	1547
Eight	71	1063
Total	221	3299

TABLE 21

A Comparison of Demographic Data on Seventh Grade
Chronic Absentees at ADMS for the
1988 and 1989 School Years

Category	1988	1989
Black Male	71	59
Black Female	38	31
White Male	19	24
White Female	13	10
Single Parent	117	97
Free/Reduced Lunch	110	93
School Bus Rider	116	101
Total	141	124

An analysis of the data in Table 21 indicates that the

profile of a seventh grade chronic absentee at ADMS is a black male, tends to live in a single parent home, rides the school bus to and from school and is on free or reduced lunch.

Table 22 is data on achievement test results from the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) for sixth and seventh grade chronic absentees and the general student population for the 1988 and 1989 school years. The data is reported in Mean Normal Curve equivalents (NCE). (The CTBS was not given to eighth graders due to other mandated state testing programs in the eighth grade.) At both the sixth and seventh grades for both years studied, chronic absentees scored below their non-chronic peers and significantly below grade level. Such data suggested that regular school attendance is a factor in academic achievement.

TABLE 22

A Comparison of Sixth and Seventh Grade Mean NCEs on the CTBS for Chronic and Non-Chronic Students for the 1989 Year

Grade/ Year	Total Reading Battery (Chronic absentees)	Total Reading Battery (Non-chronic)	Total Math Battery (Chronic absentees)	Total Math Battery (Non-chronic)
<u>1988</u>				
Six	36.2	50.7	37.7	51.2
Seven	37.1	50.2	35.2	50.9
<u>1989</u>				
Six	34.6	50.3	37.2	51.0
Seven	35.2	50.1	36.8	50.6

Table 23 is a study of student attendance rates for the

ADMS Summer School Program for the summers of 1988 and 1989 by grade level. In spite of the fact that students attended summer school to pass courses needed to be promoted to the next grade level, summer school attendance was below the average daily attendance rates experienced during the regular school year at ADMS.

TABLE 23

Summer School Average Daily Attendance by Grade Level for the Summers of 1988 and 1989

Year/Grade	Average Daily Attendance
<u>1988</u>	
Six	91.2
Seven	90.8
Eight	94.2
<u>1989</u>	
Six	90.7
Seven	91.0
Eight	92.6

Summer School attendance rates were not a part of the Average Daily Attendance (ADA) computed by the South Carolina State Department of Education. Therefore, summer school attendance did not impact on the attendance criterion for monetary awards under the School Incentive Reward program. The summer school ADA was summarized here because the practicum intervention was implemented during the summer school program in 1990 in an effort to improve summer school attendance rates. Some of the routines involved in the practicum were worked out and further refined following

initial implementation during the third nine-week grading period of 1990.

Justification of Problematic Situation

The South Carolina legislature passed the Educational Improvement Act in July 1984. The legislators clearly spelled out their expectations for student attendance in two ways. First, students would be denied credit for promotion if they missed more than ten of the scheduled 180 school days each year (excluding documented medical excuses). Secondly, the legislature provided incentive rewards in the form of cash money to schools meeting, among other criteria, student attendance expectations.

The Sumter School District Number 17 Board of Trustees reviewed student attendance at their monthly meeting. Board members had high expectations in the area of student attendance for all nine district schools. The superintendent directed the attention of the principals to attendance expectations using bimonthly principals' meetings to verbally encourage excellence in attendance. The superintendent sent memoranda periodically to remind principals that "we can't teach them when they are absent" (Appendix D: and E: 127 : 128).

In 1987, the Principal Evaluation Program (PEP) came into existence. This tri-annual evaluation of every public school principal in South Carolina was mandated by the educational reform known as the South Carolina Educational Improvement Act of 1984. The evaluation was standardized by the South

Carolina State Department of Education and was completed by the district superintendent. Criteria Two: Student Development and Achievement - Performance Statement Number 11 charged the principal with establishing an attendance program that achieved an attendance gain. (Appendix F: 129) During the 1988-89 evaluation of the ADMS principal, the superintendent listed improvement in student attendance as a goal on the principal's PEP Performance Improvement Plan.

Probable Cause of Problem

The³ importance of a relationship between students and teachers as a key to learning was documented in the report of the National Commission on Excellence in Education by the U. S. Department of Education. Lambert et. al (1981) found that one of the main characteristics of chronically absent students was academic failure. Other characteristics were found to be parents with low educational levels, disruptive and rebellious attitudes toward authority, performance below potential, excessively stressful home life, low self-esteem and the absence of one parent.

Eaton (1979) found that persistent absentees obtained lower mean scores on personality scales on all measures of their relationships with teacher, peers, and parents than did regular attendees. The same study found that poor relationships with peers at the middle school level was a dominant variable in chronic absentees. In similar research Altmeyer's (1957) research indicated that children who live in a one-parent family as the result of the death or

desertion of one parent, or whose family experiences divorce, serious illness, unemployment, or disruptions because of a move may also become chronic absentees from school. Absence from school was seen in Eaton's research as an attempt to cope with the stress of multiple conflicts. Karweit (1973) found that absences were greater on Mondays, Fridays, and rainy days.

St. John (1970) reported that a proliferation of incompetent, inadequate, and unconcerned teachers in the profession has been identified as a source of alienation for some students. The study found that children were more likely to attend school if teachers respected and supported them and controlled the classroom. St John reported improved attendance when students were assigned to pupil-oriented teachers. How teachers performed their duties was found to encourage or discourage student attendance (Moos and Moos 1982).

Sadler (1979) found that minority and poor children were most likely to have low attendance. This research also reported that children without sufficient social skills to interact with teachers, make peer contacts, or at least protect themselves from victimization would more likely find home more rewarding than school.

A faculty survey concerning student attendance at ADMS was presented at a faculty meeting on January 23, 1990. This survey consisted of 22 statements regarding attendance (Appendix G: 130). The faculty responded on a Likert scale

from 1 to 5 (strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, strongly disagree). Thirty two faculty members responded to the survey. Attempts to secure additional survey forms met with no success. Detailed results of the faculty's responses to the Student Attendance Survey can be seen at Appendix L: 135.

Table 24 is a summary of the most important factors from the Faculty Survey regarding student attendance. Thirteen of the twenty-two items on the survey received an undecided mean score. Nine items, summarized below, received mean scores that indicated that the surveyed faculty either agreed or disagreed with the question asked.

TABLE 24

Summary of Most Important Factors From
Faculty Responses to Alice Drive Middle School
Student Attendance Survey

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean
Classroom teacher most important person in encouraging student attendance	5	13	3	9	3	2.76
Regular attendance has positive effect on student attendance	0	1	0	8	25	4.68
Attendance problems should be handled by Attendance Office	0	4	1	15	12	4.09

TABLE 24 (Continued)

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean
Other duties related to classroom are more important than monitoring student attendance	2	5	4	12	8	2.97
White students miss more days than black students	3	12	13	0	0	2.36
Sixth graders are more likely to be absent than seventh or eighth graders	2	12	13	1	0	2.46
Seventh graders are more likely to be absent than sixth or eighth graders	0	9	16	3	0	2.79
The school can affect student attendance	10	15	3	0	0	1.75
Teacher attitude can affect attendance	0	1	3	13	6	4.04

By a five to one margin, teachers agreed that teacher attitudes could affect student attendance. On the remaining items from the survey, the faculty had no clear idea about the make up of student absences.

The attendance monitoring program required by the South Carolina State Department of Education called for the school to notify the parent or legal guardian when a student missed three consecutive days or five non-consecutive days determined to be unexcused. ADMS made the mandatory

notifications using the attendance clerk/home visitor. Parent contacts for all three grade levels was the responsibility of the attendance clerk who reported to a district-level administrator and not to the principal of the school. Reports on the number of home visits were made to the district attendance supervisor who consolidated the reports of all nine schools in the district for forwarding to the State Department of Education annually. Copies of the reports, by schools in the district have not been kept. The data on the first two nine-week grading periods for 1989 were submitted. Table 25 shows the number of home visits made by the ADMS home visitor from August 21, 1989 to January 20, 1990. The number of home visits made to parents of seventh graders supported data throughout this research which indicated that the seventh grade was a weak link in the attendance profile at ADMS.

TABLE 25

A Comparison of ADMS Home Visits
by Grade for the First Two Nine-Week Grading Periods
for the 1989-90 School Year

Grade	Number of Visits	
	First Nine Weeks	Second Nine Weeks
Six	17	22
Seven	21	35
Eight	12	19

In cases where the home visitor received no cooperation from the parent, the district attendance supervisor

personally made home visits. The attendance supervisor was the administrator who notified and made cases before the Sumter County Family Court to enforce South Carolina attendance laws. Since there were never any students seventeen years of age or older at ADMS, all 1248 students fell under South Carolina Compulsory attendance law jurisdiction. The number of cases of truancy or excessive absenteeism filed before Family Court by grade level for the years 1986 to 1989 are stated in Table 26. The number of cases was greater at the eighth grade level possibly due to students who reached the age of 16 during the year and anticipated dropping-out at age 17.

TABLE 26

Family Court Referrals for Truancy/Non-attendance for the Years 1986-89

Grade	1986	1987	1988	1989
Six	2	0	0	1
Seven	2	7	3	6
Eight	3	8	11	7

During the first two nine week grading periods of the 1989-90 school year, none of the sixth graders were referred to Family Court. At the same time, two seventh graders and two eighth graders were referred.

CHAPTER 3
PROBLEM SITUATION AND CONTEXT

Written Policies and Procedures, Commentaries

Acting in the wake of the national demand for educational reform, the South Carolina State Legislature enacted the Educational Improvement Act (EIA) in July 1984. The EIA mandated numerous reforms to long standing educational policy. The EIA changed the minimum attendance requirements for promotion or credit from 160 of 180 school days to 170 of 180 class days. In addition, Section 59-65-90 required that school officials shall immediately intervene to encourage future student attendance when a student had three consecutive unlawful absences or a total of five unlawful absences. The same section directed that the school district board of trustees or a designee to promptly approve or disapprove any student absences in excess of ten days each year. The legislature made it clear to students and the public schools of the state that student attendance was a high priority.

During the first two years (1984 to 1985) of implementation of the EIA the student attendance rates improved but since have been declining steadily. State-wide ADA rates with national ranking can be found at Appendix M: 131.

The Sumter School District Number 17 Board Policy

carried the EIA mandates further by classifying absences as excused or unexcused (Appendix B: 125).

Responsibility for supervision of the board's policies on attendance was delegated to a district level administrator who carried the title of Director of Attendance and Transportation. This administrator supervised attendance clerks and home visitors in all district schools from a central office. In addition to attendance responsibilities, the administrator trained and supervised school bus drivers and maintained a fleet of state owned school buses and district owned activity buses. There were times when the dual responsibilities interfered with the proper supervision of the school attendance program.

The ADMS attendance clerk used a number of forms designed by board policy to report data on home visits (Appendix I: 132 and Appendix J: 133). Daily reporting requirements, in addition to controlling early dismissals for students at the school, made it difficult for the attendance clerk to get out as often as needed to support the home visitation policies toward chronic absentees. Once again, tight budgets prohibited hiring the necessary personnel to support the need.

South Carolina has a total of 92 public school districts. Only 17 of the 92 have fiscal autonomy. Sumter School District Number 17 was one of the 75

dependent on local government to appropriate money above that provided by the state for the needs of the school system. Budget increases were asked for each year to cover costs of needed personnel, equipment and supplies to support the instructional program at the nine district schools. The Sumter County Council, an elected body, was unwilling to support a tax increase for the requested school district needs for 1986 to 1990.

Requested financial support for improvement of the instructional program at ADMS was not available due to circumstances cited above. Therefore, money for the instructional program, had to come from another source. Financial awards from the state's School Incentive Reward Program were substantial, averaging \$55,000.00 annually to qualifying middle schools the size of ADMS. Had ADMS met the student attendance expectations for the three years it missed out of the past four, the school would have had approximately \$165,000.00 over a three year period to put toward improvement of the instructional program. This was why improved student attendance to the point of meeting state expectations was so important to ADMS.

Norms of Behavior, Values, Traditions

The extent to which teachers were willing to exercise influence on students to improve attendance was examined. Eight faculty members were randomly

selected for interviews. All responded that positive teacher attitudes can affect student attendance positively while negative attitudes on the part of the teacher could negatively impact on student attendance. Six of the eight believed that it was primarily the administration's responsibility to deal with student absenteeism. All agreed that financial resources to support instructional improvement was badly needed at ADMS. Five of the eight agreed that they probably should do more to encourage student attendance but could not articulate ways to go about the task.

A total of 21 students were interviewed. These students represented 100 percent of the students in a study hall class randomly selected from all study hall sections at ADMS. The class was picked by the Principal of the school. Approximately one hour was used talking to students about absenteeism. The consensus was that students are frequently bored with school and stay home and sleep and watch television. Many volunteered that it was easy to convince a parent that they were ill under false pretenses. Students indicated that most of their friends knew that they would miss up to ten days each year and purposely tried to use all ten days allowed each year. None of the students could recall a single teacher in middle school ever mentioning anything

about the importance of student attendance.

The two counselors at ADMS were interviewed and indicated that they had never been approached by the administration about intervention with students with attendance problems. Both welcomed the opportunity to become involved in a systematic program to increase student attendance.

The Principal and two assistant principals were interviewed. All three indicated a willingness to participate and fully supported practicum intervention strategies to improve student attendance at ADMS.

The district Director of Attendance and Transportation was interviewed. The ADMS attendance rate was determined to be acceptable to the district staff and school board and that no intervention was needed by the district attendance office staff. However, cooperation was promised as any increase would raise district-wide ADA and hence additional state revenues based on ADA rates. Increasing student attendance at ADMS for the purpose of attaining a state school Incentive Reward did not impact on the attendance supervisor or his office in anyway. Therefore, there was no real concern to the attendance supervisor and the staff of that office.

Formal and Informal Influences of Individuals and Groups

Influence of groups and individuals at ADMS in

terms of the formal structure of leadership and formal leaders was studied. ADMS was headed by a principal who was perceived by the faculty to be an instructional leader willing to involve the staff in problem solving. The principal helped the faculty in identify problems and seek solutions. The Principal conveyed to the faculty that any problem can be solved through cooperative effort.

Assisting the principal were two assistant principals. These two assistant principals were assigned to a grade level for administration of discipline. Each of the three administrators supervise specific academic departments within the school. Both assistant principals were perceived by the faculty to be open-minded and fair in their relationship with the faculty and students.

The academic department heads had no formal authority and did not supervise instruction. Department head performed liaison duties by passing information from the administration to the faculty and from the faculty to the administration. In the process of filtering information, a great deal was lost in the process. The faculty frequently reported being uninformed on matters the administration felt sure had been adequately covered in department head meetings.

The informal leaders at ADMS were perceived as.

both facilitating and hindering in solving the attendance problems at the school. Within the school there were two distinct groups of faculty, those who had been on staff and those new to the school. No one could say exactly how long one had to be on staff before becoming an old timer. Generally, the faculty felt that anyone with less than five years experience on staff was a new comer. The old timers exercised considerable influence on the faculty and seemed to be held in some esteem by the new comers.

The most powerful influence in the school, however, were the parents of the students. ADMS served the wealthy neighborhoods in the Sumter community. The percentage of parents with professional status in the community was very high. While they supported the Parent-Teacher-Student Organization (PTSO), the parents preferred to exercise influence one at a time over the phone or in person to the principal, superintendent or school board members, all of whom they probably knew on a first name basis. This group exercised enormous political power on all aspects of the school. Any effort to change ADMS had to meet the approval of these people. It was important to include representatives of this group in intervention strategies.

External Circumstances

ADMS was constantly under scrutiny by the

parents, the district office staff and school board because of the power and influence held by many of the parents. Therefore, the success of this practicum was based on consideration of the politics of the school and the district office at every step of the intervention process.

The elected county council's continuing inability to increase millage to support school needs in the district had a negative impact on efforts to improve the instructional program at ADMS. This fact, in turn, impacted positively on the practicum as the need to fund instructional improvement from other sources such as the School Incentive Reward Program increased.

The goal of this practicum was to improve student attendance at ADMS to a point that the average daily attendance rate met or exceeded the state's student attendance criterion for award of money under the School Incentive Reward Program by the end of the 1990-91 school year. With the cooperation and assistance of ADMS school students, parents, faculty, administration and district staff members the goal seemed attainable.

CHAPTER 4

PROBLEM CONCEPTUALIZATION, PRACTICUM OUTCOMES, AND THE SOLUTION STRATEGY

Bibliographic Research and Review of the Literature

A review of the literature was undertaken in an effort to identify programs and strategies to reduce student absenteeism. The literature was substantial and was equally divided among work published before 1960 and after 1980. Apparently little attention was being focused on student attendance during the 1970's. The resurgence of attention to absenteeism in the 1980's coincided with the national focus on school reform.

The obstacles to learning were not limited to those Golden (1988) found that were created through inappropriate, irrelevant curricula or uncaring, inadequate teachers. Absenteeism was identified as a major barrier to learning and was found to be a symptom of physical and mental problems that may reside in the child, the home, the school, or the community. Golden reported that in the majority of school districts, the pattern was to develop programs to combat student absenteeism at the high school level. The studies found that the problems that led to excessive absenteeism existed early in the student's school experience and that the earlier one could intervene to arrest or redirect a problem the greater were the chances for success.

This practicum intervention attempted to address

early intervention prior to entry into high school where, nationally, absenteeism and truancy were the worst and less likely to be impacted upon by intervention.

Rutter and associates' (1979) well-controlled study of characteristics in a wide range of schools showed attendance levels at their highest for schools that gave homework often; had high expectations for student achievement (regardless of students' abilities); displayed student work on classroom walls; planned curriculum by group rather than by classroom; and had higher total teaching time and fewer auxiliary activities. On the other hand, the age of the school facility, size of the school, staffing provisions, and class size had no direct effect on attendance.

Moos and Moos (1982) found that the performance of teachers encouraged or discouraged student attendance. In the research it was concluded that attendance was demonstrably higher in classes in which teachers arrived promptly, gave frequent praise for good work and behavior, interacted with the class as a whole, minimized class disruption from reprimands, used open-ended questions, minimized competition, offered support for learning, and avoided corporal punishment. Shelton (1979) found that students continuing in classes with strict, hard-grading teachers showed better attendance and deportment than students later

shifted to classes with more lax teachers. Students switching from lax, low-expectation classes to high-expectation classes had poorer attendance at first, but eventually attained better attendance than students who continued in low-expectation classes.

Good school attendance followed when going to school was more rewarding, or less punishing, than not going to school. Although this balance was in part determined by school and home characteristics, the child's ability to enjoy social and learning activities was also important. Children who lacked the cognitive abilities to manage transitions avoided school following assignment to a new program, grade or building. Other cognitive deficits, such as unrealistic goals and self-evaluations, fear of competition, and reliance on an accompanying parent for self-efficiency also contributed to school avoidance Bonikowske (1987).

Bonikowske (1987) reported finding that children without enough social skills to interact with teachers, make peer contact, or at least protect themselves from victimization would likely find home more rewarding than school. The research also found that minority and poor children were more likely to have low attendance.

Bonikowske's (1987) findings supported the need for use of school counselors in any intervention strategy to reduce student absenteeism.

Bauer (1977) found that supplying information was the cheapest, easiest form of intervention and was often all that was necessary to curb student absenteeism. Well-timed information could help prevent nonattendance.

Letting parents know that the school was concerned about their child's nonattendance or simply that their child was not at school on a given day was found to promote attendance. (Cooke and Apolloni, 1987).

Increasing direct contact with families of nonattending students was found to promote change. Bauer (1977) reported on a school district that experienced a litany of problems associated with low student attendance rates that included absences that accumulated without home contact, identified nonattenders who received no follow-up counseling, parents were not informed of excessive absences and few reported curriculum or program adjustments to encourage better attendance. This report found that the district schools adopted a tiered intervention program that involved phone calls home after three days of nonattendance, letters to parents offering assistance after five days of absence and a letter requesting a parent conference after ten days of absence, and finally, a home visit. Results indicated that elementary students returned in all cases after the first letter, but older children often required more

intervention. The program developers recommended the use of these general procedures but omitted the ten-day letter and making the home visit earlier.

Mayer, et. al. (1983) recommended an inservice approach with teachers to reduce student absenteeism. The approach that was described instructed teachers in alternatives to traditional instructional habits. The inservice presented consultants using behavioral skills to individualize classroom instruction, reduce negative classroom management techniques, increase positive classroom management techniques, and increase the specificity and frequency of reinforcement given to students.

Golden (1988) found that encouraging teachers to take an increased interest in attendance and an administrator encouraging a teacher to bring one well-liked but nonattending student back into the fold would decrease the nonattending students resistance to future efforts.

A very common consequence of repeated nonattendance in schools was to punish students. Typical punishments were in-school and out-of-school suspensions, grade reductions, and additional school hours. Hargreaves and Laughlin (1981) researched punitive responses to nonattendance and reported that most students who received punishment failed to display a meaningful reduction of either nonattendance or other inappropriate behavior. Furthermore, the report stated

that negative sanctions and penalties in public schools tended to maintain or increase malperformance among students. The research hypothesized that administration of punishment (adverse stimuli) for nonattendance may represent a link in a chain of behaviors leading to increased nonattendance (avoidance of the adverse stimuli).

Students who have been frequently punished for nonattendance appeared to have associated such punishment with their teachers, the school building, their school work, and other school-related items. These students may be highly motivated to escape the punishment and stay home from school often or even withdraw from school (Bishop, 1989).

If punishment was shown to have a negative impact on the reduction of absenteeism, perhaps a reward system would have a positive impact. The intervention designed for this practicum included positive reinforcements and rewards as an inducement to improve student attendance.

Traditionally, the treatment of student absenteeism problems has involved intervention with either the truant child, the family, or the school but not all three combined. The practicum intervention proposed that the child, family, and school were all involved in creating a context for nonattendance, thus, intervention based on a plan that addresses issues of

context and relationships will create more options and increase the possibility of a successful outcome. Any school-wide program to promote attendance must provide students and parents with a maximum opportunity for involvement in a spectrum of school decisions and activities. (Grano 1976)

Interviews with Experts

Informal interviews were conducted with South Carolina Department of Education personnel, district level administrators and ADMS administrators. The topics were student absenteeism and chronic absenteeism in public schools.

In a telephone interview with the state supervisor of attendance, a determination was made that the state office was strictly in the statistics business having responsibility with maintaining accurate data on attendance only. The supervisor had no opinions on causes of excessive absenteeism in the schools nor any solutions to propose. This individual held a data processing degree and no experience in a school setting.

The Sumter School District Number 17 attendance and Transportation Supervisor was asked to profile the chronic absentees at ADMS. A typical chronic absentee was described as coming from a single parent home, usually living with a mother, aunt or grandmother. The District Supervisor indicated the chronic absentee would be a black male in the seventh or eighth grade

and had probably failed one or more grades in elementary school. Furthermore, the District Supervisor said that increased parental contact and positive responses to student absences would increase student attendance at ADMS. Due to a limited budget and with no relief in sight, the Attendance Supervisor indicated that any new programs to reduce student absenteeism would have to originate outside of his office. Any efforts proposed by ADMS to reduce student absenteeism.

The Sumter School District Number 17 Assistant Superintendent for Fiscal Affairs was interviewed. (The District Attendance Supervisor comes under the direct supervision of the Assistant Superintendent for Fiscal Affairs.) The Assistant Superintendent concurred with the Attendance Supervisor about the non-availability of funds for increased staff in the district's school attendance offices. Increased parental support was a proposal offered by the Assistant Superintendent.

The ADMS principal and both assistant principals met with the practicum manager to discuss the practicum. None of the administrators realized that the seventh grade posed the greatest problem to student absenteeism. The administrators indicated that only the bottom line was ever examined which meant only the end of the year figures were studied. There had never been an analysis of the data on student absenteeism.

Proposal Solution Components

The ultimate focus of the practicum intervention was on raising the Average Daily Attendance rate at ADMS to a point that would qualify the school for a monetary award under the state's Incentive Reward Program for the 1990-91 school year. A series of attendance objectives was set. These objectives, if met were to qualify the school under the student attendance criteria for the award.

Specific attention was focused on absentees in the seventh grade since this grade level proved to be a problem area. The intervention addressed solutions through student incentive programs to reward attendance, teacher awareness and parent contact.

Teachers tended to view involvement with parents as limited to twice-a-year parent-teacher conferences and report card time. Many teachers felt that communication with parents was ineffective and left them with a feeling of frustration and helplessness.

A teacher inservice workshop was conducted that enabled teachers to break down communication barriers between teachers and parents. The workshop helped teachers develop skills and confidence to approach parents whenever there was an attendance problem. Teachers reported that preservice training at college assumed that parents would be totally cooperative and offer support in any way deemed necessary. This has proven not to be a valid assumption given the

variations of parents and students. Without specific skills, teachers would not be able to deal effectively with the parents.

A School Attendance Review Board (SARB) was formed at ADMS. SARB was composed of administrators, teachers, a student, parents, a counselor and a district office psychologist, and became involved with students after other efforts to solve the absentee problem failed. Since the purpose of the SARB was to explore ways to resolve individual student's attendance problems, the committee functioned as a consultant service that assisted the family and student on options that may help. Possible options included: 1) Referral to community resources such as counseling services, social security and welfare offices, drug abuse centers, etc. 2) Referral to alternative education programs within and outside the school system. 3) Reduction in school load, such as taking only morning or afternoon classes or changing from seven to four or five classes a day.

By automating letters notifying parents of student absences, parents received letters concerning absentee problems each time a student was absent after the third absence each year. After five absences, the letters asked parents to come to the school for a conference with an administrator, counselor or teacher. The parents of students with perfect attendance each nine weeks received a letter congratulating the students and

encouraging continued perfect attendance. Parents of chronic absentees were sent a letter outlining their child's attendance record from previous years and requiring them to come to school for a conference with an administrator. (The administrator could refer any particular case to the SARB.)

A special emphasis was given to the positive aspects of school attendance. The ADMS student council was asked to offer suggestions for a reward system for regular school attendance. A faculty committee had an opportunity to offer suggestions for positive rewards for regular school attendance. Hopefully, this schoolwide program to promote student attendance would increase the school's ADA.

Practicum Outcomes

(1) As a result of practicum intervention during the period from March 19, 1990 to June 1, 1990 (Fourth Quarter), the Average Daily Attendance of students at ADMS will increase from 96.5 percent to 96.7 percent.

(2) As a result of practicum intervention during the period from March 19, 1990 to June 1, 1990 (Fourth Quarter), the average daily attendance of sixth grade students at ADMS will increase from 97.7 percent to 97.9 percent.

(3) As a result of practicum intervention from March 19, 1990 to June 1, 1990 (Fourth Quarter), the average daily attendance of seventh grade students at ADMS will increase from 94.9 percent to 95.1 percent.

(4) As a result of practicum intervention from March 19, 1990 to June 1, 1990 (Fourth Quarter), the average daily attendance of eighth grade students at ADMS will increase from 96.8 percent to 97.0 percent.

(5) As a result of practicum intervention from August 20, 1990 to May 31, 1991 (Academic Year), the average daily attendance of sixth grade students at ADMS will increase by .5 percent over the 1989-1990 180 Day ADA.

(6) As a result of practicum intervention from August 20, 1990 to May 31, 1991 (Academic Year), the average daily attendance of seventh grade students at ADMS will increase by .5 percent over the 1989-1990 180 Day ADA.

(7) As a result of practicum intervention from August 20, 1990 to May 31, 1991 (Academic Year), the average daily attendance of eighth grade students at ADMS will increase by .5 percent over the 1989-1990 180 Day ADA.

(8) As a result of practicum intervention during the period August 20, 1990 to May 31, 1991 (Academic Year), the average daily attendance at ADMS will increase by .5 percent over the 1989-1990 180 Day ADA which will qualify the school for a financial award under the state's School Incentive Reward Program.

(9) As a result of practicum intervention during the period June 12, 1990 to August 3, 1990, the average

daily attendance of sixth grade students in summer school at ADMS will increase from 90.7 percent to 93.0 percent.

(10) As a result of practicum intervention during the period June 12, 1990 to August 3, 1990, the average daily attendance of seventh grade students in summer school at ADMS will increase from 91.0 percent to 93.3 percent.

(11) As a result of practicum intervention during the period June 12, 1990 to August 3, 1990, the average daily attendance of eighth grade students in summer school at ADMS will increase from 92.6 percent to 94.9 percent.

(12) As a result of practicum intervention during the period March 18, 1990 to May 31, 1991, the number of seventh grade chronic absentees identified from the 1988-1989 school year will decrease from 97 to 53.

(13)³ As a result of practicum intervention during the period March 18, 1990 to May 31, 1991, the number of eighth grade chronic absentees identified from the 1988-1989 school year will decrease from 71 to 42.

CHAPTER 5
IMPLEMENTATION HISTORY

Original Action Plan

The action plan focused on improving student attendance at ADMS. The plan had to consider factors associated with the home, the school, and the student. Experience showed that factors in one sector had a ripple effect on factors in another sector. Because of this ripple effect of these causal factors, no simple approach to improving student attendance was practical. The intervention called for a variety of motivational tasks and approaches. Student absenteeism was approached by the practicum from a philosophy that school and parents must work together to achieve meaningful, individualized contact with absent students as well as positively rewarding those students with excellent attendance and those with poor but improving attendance.

In 1984, the South Carolina legislature enacted the Educational Improvement Act (EIA) which added more stringent attendance requirements for public school students. The EIA also provided for a monetary incentive as a reward to schools that met a certain level of student attendance. ADMS failed to meet the level of student attendance in three of the four years immediately preceding this practicum.

The approach taken in the intervention targeted parent awareness, teacher awareness, and student awareness of the importance of regular school attendance. Parents were notified of the student's absences on a quarterly basis. A letter was sent to the parents of students with excessive absences each grading period which offered the parents an opportunity to discuss attendance problems with school officials. A letter of praise was sent to parents of students who attained perfect attendance for a grading period. Through inservice activities teachers were made aware of the characteristics of potential chronic absentees and were given suggestions on how to encourage regular attendance and how to better communicate with parents. A reward system was developed to encourage regular school attendance. These rewards included: certificates, food coupons, a pool party, school/business partnership prizes and a pizza party of the homeroom with the best attendance for the semester in each grade level. An attendance committee composed of teachers, counselors, and attendance clerks was established to give feedback and suggestions on the reward system and strategies for improving student attendance.

In the original plan counselors were tasked with conducting group counseling with chronic absentees. The counselors found that other requirements precluded the

scheduling of group sessions. Some group sessions were held during second semester of 1989-90 but were not continued into the summer school and 1990-91 academic year.

Originally, the plan called for articles in the ADMS student newspaper on two occasions. This newspaper was canceled by the principal due to a combination of a lack of student interest in the publication and a limited budget.

The remainder of the practicum proceeded according to the original plan with the exception of a few date changes for certain activities. None of the changes were judged to have had a negative impact on the outcome of the practicum.

Chronology of Implementation Activities

On March 20, 1990, the Practicum Manager met with the ADMS faculty to announce the beginning of the intervention. The District Attendance Supervisor and the ADMS Attendance Clerk were also present at the meeting. The Practicum Manager discussed ADMS's attendance trends for school years 1986 through 1989. The District Attendance Supervisor discussed with the faculty national trends in absenteeism and informed the faculty of the emphasis the School Board and Superintendent placed on improving attendance within the school district. The ADMS Attendance Clerk supplied each teacher a list of students who had five or more unexcused absences during first semester of 1989-90. The Practicum Manager asked that teachers study the list and identify students in their respective classes. Teachers were asked

to follow-up on identified students by making personal contact to encourage regular attendance. Plans for the April 6, 1990 faculty inservice were announced. Teachers were told that the workshop would assist the faculty in communicating with parents.

On April 3, 1990, homeroom teachers were asked to submit the names of students in their respective homerooms who had missed three to five days of school through the third quarter grading period (Appendix M: 136).

On April 5, 1990, 100 percent of the homeroom teachers responded with the names of absent students as per the memorandum.

April 6, 1990 was a district-wide inservice day where the ADMS faculty benefited from a presentation on improving teachers' skills and confidence when approaching and communicating with parents. The consultant was a professor from the University of South Carolina School Assistance Project. Also included on the schedule was a brief orientation to the attendance project and the goal of improving student attendance through teacher-student-parent communication. An agenda for the inservice is at Appendix N: 137. The workshop was well received as evidenced by the written evaluations (Appendix O: 138).

On April 9, 1990, the principal appointed nine faculty members to the ADMS Attendance Committee and notified the

Practicum Manager (Appendix P: 139).

On April 10, 1990, a letter was developed by the Practicum Manager to inform parents of the practicum intervention, solicit their support, and specified the number of days their child had missed through the end of the third quarter grading period (Appendix Q: 140). A letter was automated and put into the school's computer for personalization by parent, student, and number of days absent.

The Practicum Manager met with the Faculty Attendance Committee at 3:45 p.m. on April 12, 1990. An overview of the practicum was presented and the committee's task was outlined. This committee was charged with developing ideas to reward student attendance and further the objective of the intervention to improve student attendance at ADMS. A copy of the practicum proposal was given to each committee member for study before the second meeting.

The Practicum Manager supplied the names of chronic absentees submitted by homeroom teachers on April 5, 1990 to the school's computer specialist. Letters were generated and personalized according to the list. The computer specialist completed the letters and mailed them on April 19, 1990. A total of 247 letters were mailed.

On April 12, 1990, the attendance clerk screened all attendance records for the names of all students who had perfect attendance during the first semester and the third

quarter to the computer specialist.

The Practicum Manager prepared a letter on April 19, 1990 that was automated by the computer specialist for individualization (Appendix R: 141). Each day the computer specialist mailed letters until the list was exhausted. A total of 196 letters were mailed.

The second meeting of the Attendance Committee was held on April 19, 1990. At this meeting the Practicum Manager answered questions the members had after reading the proposal. The committee then discussed numerous and varied ideas for rewards to improve student attendance. The committee recommended that letters be sent to students who had exemplary attendance each academic quarter. Minutes of the meeting are at Appendix S: 142. The committee recommended that the letters of congratulations for perfect attendance be implemented immediately. A letter was given to each student at ADMS on April 23, 1990 by homeroom teachers (Appendix T: 143). The letter was from the Principal and Practicum Manager and introduced the students to the practicum intervention and sought to impress upon the students the necessity for school attendance. Homeroom teachers reported that the letter generated very little response and no suggestions from students were forwarded.

At the weekly faculty meeting on April 25, 1990, the Practicum Manager brought the ADMS faculty up-to-date on the

attendance project. A memorandum was passed to each faculty member (Appendix U: 144). This memorandum asked that each faculty member devote the first ten minutes of each class period on Thursday, April 26, 1990 to a discussion with their students of the importance of regular school attendance. The memorandum also solicited faculty input to the Attendance Committee on the attendance reward proposals.

Between April 24 and May 10, 1990, the ADMS secretary received a total of 37 telephone calls as a result of the letters sent regarding student absenteeism. These calls were referred to the Principal, guidance counselors, the attendance clerk and several homeroom teachers as requested by the parent or guardian. Most callers were satisfied with the telephone call but 12 made appointments to visit ADMS offices for further discussion. A follow-up letter was sent by the ADMS staff member who held the conference with the parent. The letter summarized the conference. A copy of each letter sent was placed on file in the school's attendance office for possible future reference. The parental interest the letter generated was regarded as a positive sign that some parental attention was being given to the absenteeism problem.

On April 26, 1990, the Practicum Manager met with the Principal, the student council president and the President of the PTO for the purpose of nominating members of a Student Attendance Review Board (SARB). The SARB membership

consisted of: one ADMS assistant principal; the student body president; two parents selected from the PTSO membership; one district psychologist; one ADMS guidance counselor; and one teacher. Specific names were suggested and the Practicum Manager called each nominee on April 27, 1990 to solicit their assistance with the SARB. All nominated individuals agreed to serve through June 1991 with the exception of the student body president who would be moving to high school during the 1990-91 year. A letter was sent to each SARB member announcing the first meeting for May 4, 1990 (Appendix V: 145).

The original plan called for list of students with perfect attendance to be published in the student newspaper along with a short article on the practicum intervention. This was not accomplished because the last issue of the student newspaper for the year was canceled by the Principal due to the fact that the student publications account was already over budget.

On April 27, 1990, the Practicum Manager sent a memorandum to each faculty member with an attached list of all students with perfect attendance during first semester or third quarter 1990 (Appendix W: 146).

On April 30, 1990, the Practicum Manager met with the District Attendance Supervisor to discuss students referred to Family Court for excessive absenteeism from ADMS. The

District Attendance Supervisor supplied an up-to-date list of referrals. A total of five students had been seen by a Family Court judge to date in 1989-90. A letter to the parent of each referred child was sent on April 30, 1990 offering assistance of the SARB. The Practicum Manager received one telephone call as a result of the letter. This parent was only interested in appealing the days absent to gain promotion for her son. The Practicum Manager was unable to persuade the parent to meet with the SARB for assistance. The fact that the student was from a dysfunctional home that needed community agency assistance was apparent from the conversation.

Homeroom teachers were given prizes for each student who had perfect attendance during the first semester and/or third quarter 1990. Students with semester perfect attendance received a coupon for a free Chic-Fil-A sandwich. Chic-Fil-A was a School-Business Partner with ADMS and was delighted to assist in this project. Third quarter perfect attendance was rewarded with a coupon from Aladdin's Castle which entitled the bearer to five free tokens to play arcade games at the local mall. These Aladdin's Castle coupons were solicited by the President of the PTSO. The prizes were distributed on May 2, 1990. Homeroom teachers reported enthusiasm among the recipients and interest among the students who did not receive a prize.

May 7, 1990 the Practicum Manager met with the two ADMS

counselors to discuss guidance intervention with the chronic absentees and the five truant students referred to family court. Lists of students in each category were given to the counselors. The list contained 269 students with three or more days missed to date in the year and five family court referrals. Counselors announced plans to see, individually, each of the five truant students and to do so on an ongoing basis for the remainder of the school year and to see each of these students on the first day of the 1990-91 school year. A problem in terms of time for the counselors was presented by the other 263 students. Counselors agreed that students with six or more absences (a total of 82) would be seen individually at least once before the end of the month. The remaining 181 would be seen in group counseling twice before the end of the month. Groups were formed according to study hall periods each day. Counselors reported seeing groups of from six to eleven students, and expressed a feeling that the sessions were well-received by the students.

The School Nurse met with the Practicum Manager on May 10, 1990 to review the list of student pregnancies for the current school year. The nurse reported one student pregnancy for the year. After checking with the ADMS attendance office it was determined that the pregnant student had missed only two days of school through May 10,

1990. Given the two days and only one pregnancy, it was determined that pregnant students would not impact on the practicum goals.

On May 21, 1990, the ADMS Attendance Clerk made a list of absences that occurred on bad weather days or days when large numbers of students were absent due to health epidemics. Since the lists were short and there were no instances of large numbers of absences usually associated with weather or health problems, the Practicum Manager determined that health epidemics and bad weather did not play a part in the intervention to date.

On June 1, 1990, the attendance office identified the homeroom at each grade level with the highest attendance based on ADA for the fourth quarter 1990 (Appendix X: 147).

On June 4, 1990, the Principal treated the eighth grade homeroom with the highest ADA for the fourth quarter to a pizza party during the eighth grade lunch period. The students sat together at four tables reserved for them in the cafeteria. The Principal hosted a total of 28 students. (The pizza was provided by the Practicum Manager. Soft drinks were provided by the PTSO).

On June 4, 1990, the Seventh Grade Assistant Principal treated the seventh grade homeroom with the highest ADA for the fourth quarter to a pizza party during the seventh grade lunch period. A total of 31 students were served in this group.

On June 4, 1990, the Sixth Grade Assistant Principal hosted 29 sixth grade students to a pizza party in the student cafeteria during the sixth grade lunch period.

June 5, 1990 was a teacher workday in the district. At 9:00 a.m. the Practicum Manager called the Faculty Attendance Committee together for the purpose of reviewing the intervention strategies to date. The teachers reported strong student interest in the reward system (prizes and pizza parties). The teachers also reported increases in the number of students inquiring about how many days they had missed for the year and whether they were going to receive credit toward promotion due to absences. The teachers also reported that fellow teachers were commenting positively on the renewed interest in student attendance by the administration.

At the end of a faculty meeting on June 5, 1990, the Principal asked the Practicum Manager to address the faculty on the status of the attendance project. For thirty minutes the faculty received a project review. An additional thirty minutes was devoted to answering questions about various strategies and about the future of the project for the next school year. Although there were several critics, the vast majority of the faculty spoke highly of the project. Negative input revolved around the fact that the project required too much time on the part of the individual

classroom teacher. The teachers were assured that the Attendance Committee would look at what was being asked of the individual teachers and would make every effort to curtail any unnecessary activities. Members of the Faculty Attendance Committee spoke highly of the program during the meeting and defended the intervention before the critics.

The Practicum Manager reviewed the input by the faculty as a result of the June 5, 1990 meeting and made a note to try to reduce the number of memos and requirements for reporting on the part of the classroom teachers. More of the data requested of the teachers could have been gathered through the attendance office. This change was reflected in the intervention during the 1990-91 year.

The summer school counselors submitted the names of students registered for the 1990 summer school on June 6, 1990. On June 10, 1990, the Practicum Manager checked the summer school list against the list of chronic absentees from the lists developed during fourth quarter 1990. A total of 52 students were identified to the summer school counselor to work with during summer school 1990. A copy of the memorandum to the summer school counselor can be found at Appendix Y: 148.

An automated letter (Appendix Z: 149) was prepared for mailing to the parents of students on the summer school target list. The letters were mailed on June 12, 1990.

On June 11, 1990, the Practicum Manager met with the two

ADMS counselors to receive input on the month-long guidance effort in counseling identified chronic absentees. The counselors reported good results with the students they saw individually. Students tended to blame parents for their absenteeism more often than any other excuse. Students were informed of ways they might deal with parents when the parent attempted to keep the student at home for reasons other than illness. The counselors reported less confidence in efforts with the group counseling sessions. The counselors recommended individual counseling over group counseling for the 1990-91 phase of the intervention.

The attendance clerk met with the Practicum Manager and Principal on June 12, 1990 and reported a significant increase in workload during the fourth quarter of 1990 due to the attendance intervention project. If the project was to continue into the 1990-91 school year help would be needed. Although no statistics had been calculated at that date, the attendance clerk indicated a subjective feeling that the fourth quarter 1990 attendance was improved. After the attendance clerk was dismissed, the Practicum Manager and Principal discussed the need for additional clerical help in the attendance office during the academic year 1990-91. The Principal pointed out that two teacher positions and one aide had been cut from his 1990-91 budget and that any help had to be reallocated within the proposed

staff allocation. After 15 minutes of brainstorming, the group jointly decided that the needed help should come in the form of parent volunteers. The Principal agreed to ask the PTSO President to solicit volunteers to assist in the attendance office. A proposal was made for five volunteers, each to work one morning a week for three hours. This was coordinated by the Practicum Manager with the attendance clerk and the president of the PTSO.

June 12, 1990 was the first day of ADMS summer school. The summer school principal (an ADMS Assistant Principal) and the Practicum Manager divided the eight summer school classes and each personally visited four classes. During the visits the students were told about the importance of regular school attendance and how attendance was important to learning. Students were informed about the state law governing retention if they missed more than two days of summer school. The students were briefed on the attendance intervention, counseling and parental contact procedures should they miss two or more days in summer school. Student questions were responded to by the presenters.

On June 12, 1990, the Practicum Manager telephoned the attendance clerk and requested the names of all students who had perfect attendance for the 1989-90 school year. A call was made to the Director of Guidance requesting a list of students identified as chronic absentees during fourth quarter who showed signs of improved attendance during

fourth quarter following implementation activities and counseling. The two requested lists were forwarded on June 13, 1990. A total of 146 students had perfect attendance for the year. A list of 39 students with improved attendance was submitted by the counselors. A copy of the automated letter sent to all students with perfect attendance for the school year can be found at Appendix BBB: 177. A copy of the automated letter sent to each chronic absentee who showed improvement can be found at Appendix CCC: 178.

The summer school counselor began seeing potential problem students on June 14, 1990. By August 6, 1990 the counselor reported multiple contacts with the 52 targeted students. Nine referrals to local social service agencies were reported as a result of the summer counseling efforts. The referrals were made to help alleviate problems in the home that impacted on student attendance. The counselor reported 13 personal visits by parents to the school regarding attendance during the summer. Furthermore, the counselor reported that in two previous years as the summer school counselor no parental visits were made to the school regarding student attendance.

Sixty letters were mailed to the parents of students with perfect attendance for the first half of summer school on July 10, 1990 (Appendix AA: 150). Twenty-one letters

were sent to parents of students who had missed two or more days to date in summer school (Appendix BB: 151).

As a result of the 21 letters regarding two or more absences, 13 students immediately withdrew from summer school. The reason cited by the parents was that since the child would not receive credit, they had no reason to continue attending. Given this response, it may not be deemed advisable to send this particular letter to parents in future summer schools. A letter could be revised down-playing the loss of credit following two or more absences.

Names of the 21 students with perfect attendance during the first half of summer school were read over the school intercom on the morning of July 12, 1990 during announcements. These students were congratulated by the summer school principal. All 21 students assembled in the ADMS Theater room after classes on July 12, 1990 where they were presented with passes to local movie theaters and a coupon for a soft drink at McDonalds. These prizes were solicited by a PTSO member and presented by the Practicum Manager.

On July 23, 1990, the Practicum Manager telephoned each of the three principals of the elementary schools that are feeder schools to ADMS's sixth grade. All three principals agreed to have the attendance clerks screen attendance records of all rising sixth graders for students with five

or more absences during the 1989-90 school year. Copies of attendance cards on all selected students were made and forwarded to the Practicum Manager on July 27, 1991. A total of 101 attendance cards were forwarded from the three elementary schools. These 101 students with five or more absences represented 21 percent of the rising sixth grade class at ADMS. The Practicum Manager realized that the rising sixth grade class could represent a potential attendance problem.

A total of 68 students had perfect attendance for the second half of summer school. A letter like the one used for first half perfect attendance (Appendix AA: 150) was modified to reflect second half of summer school perfect attendance and mailed to parents on August 4, 1990.

Of the 60 students with perfect attendance for the first half of summer school, 51 managed to finish summer school with no absences. A letter was sent to the parents of all 51 students congratulating the child on perfect attendance during summer school. The letter was like the one at Appendix BB: 151, modified to reflect the entire summer school period.

The names of students with perfect summer school attendance for the first half, second half and entire summer school were announced on the intercom system at the end of the school day. The original plan called for these students

to attend a pool party and cook-out. Due to rain this event was delayed until the next day from 10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Parents brought these students to the Bates Middle School pool on August 4, 1990. Hot dogs, soda, chips, and cake were provided by a local supermarket. Food was prepared and served by the summer school principal, attendance clerk, the summer school counselor and the Practicum Manager. A total of 42 students attended the pool party.

On August 7, 1990, the attendance clerk forwarded attendance data for summer school. The Practicum Manager analyzed the data and determined that all three terminal objectives related to summer school had been met. On August 9, 1990, the Practicum Manager wrote the ADMS Principal a memorandum regarding the success of the summer school attendance intervention. This memorandum also discussed additional observations gleaned as a result of attendance data analysis from the 1989-90 year.

On August 8, 1990, the parents of all students who lost credit due to excessive summer school absences were contacted by the attendance clerk. The attendance clerk personally went into the home of twelve students and reached another nine by telephone within a three day period between August 8, 1990 to August 10, 1990. No attempt was made to contact the parents of the 13 students who withdrew from summer school after mid-term following the letter they received regarding two or more absences and loss of credit.

In retrospect, failure to contact the parents of the students who withdrew was an error that should be corrected in future efforts.

The attendance clerk made appointments thirty minutes apart for the three ADMS administrators and one counselor for the contacted parents. Appointments were scheduled on August 13 through August 15, 1990. Parent(s) of all 21 students attended the conference. As a result of the conferences, six students were referred to the district's extension school for 1990-91 and four community agency referrals were made. This aspect of the intervention was judged to be a big success by the school's administration.

On August 10, 1990, the Practicum Manager composed a letter to the parents of the 101 rising sixth grade students with five or more absences in the 1989-90 school year (Appendix CC: 152). The ADMS Principal signed and mailed the letters on August 15, 1990.

In addition to contacting the parents of rising sixth graders with previous year attendance problems, the Practicum Manager identified all rising seventh and eighth graders with five or more unexcused absences for the academic year 1989-90. A letter was prepared for the parents of the identified students for the signature of the Principal (Appendix DD: 153). The letters were mailed by the computer specialist on August 17, 1990. a total of 236

letters were mailed. Nineteen telephone calls were received as a result of the letters and eleven parents made an appointment to talk with a counselor about previous year absences.

On August 11, 1990, the Practicum Manager wrote a memorandum to the ADMS Attendance Clerk, Chairman of the ADMS Faculty Attendance Committee, and both counselors to announce a meeting on August 15, 1990 to discuss the plans for the intervention to begin anew on August 20, 1990 (Appendix EE: 154).

At 8:15 a.m. on August 15, 1990, the meeting mentioned above took place at ADMS. The Practicum Manager shared with the group the summer school statistics and plans for opening school on August 20, 1990 with an emphasis on student attendance from the first contact with students. A brief outline of the yearly intervention was given to each participant. A faculty member reminded the Practicum Manager of the request to have fewer solicitations for data that could be made available from other school sources. All present reported being eager to get on with the task at hand.

The Practicum Manager was on the agenda to speak at the ADMS orientation for all rising sixth graders and transfer students new to ADMS on August 17, 1990 (Appendix FF: 155). The Practicum Manager used the time to stress the importance of attendance, the attendance link to learning and the South

Carolina laws governing absences. The parents were told that they could expect a systematic intervention plan if their son/daughter was absent frequently. The School Attendance Review Board was also mentioned in the orientation. From 8:15 to 9:30 p.m., the Practicum Manager stood in the lobby and fielded questions regarding the attendance laws and school regulations governing attendance. Both parents and students in attendance appeared to be genuinely interested in the attendance program. Many parents indicated that they had never heard of the strict attendance laws and school regulations in their previous schools. A mental note was made by the Practicum Manager to call each of the six elementary school principals in the district on August 20, 1990 to ask them to place more emphasis on absenteeism during their orientations.

On August 22, 1990, the Practicum Manager met with the Principal, two assistant principals and the Assistant Superintendent for Fiscal Affairs in the district office for the purpose of discussing the In-School Suspension (ISS) proposal. During this meeting, the Practicum Manager noted that an analysis of attendance data from the 1989-90 school year revealed that a significant number of days missed by students at ADMS was the result of out of school suspension. The ISS program would impact positively on students with discipline problems. Some segments of the student

population were noted to become frustrated with academics and resort to misbehavior. The penalty for many discipline problems was out of school suspension which in turn placed the student further behind in academics. A proposed ISS plan called for removal of disruptive students from the regular classroom setting while keeping the student in school and on task with the classroom work being given to students in the regular classroom. Each disruptive student would be isolated for a full day in an ISS room with a trained paraprofessional who would assist the student with class assignments as well as behavior modification. Students would be isolated from the general student population just like out of school suspension but not be counted absent from school. The Assistant Superintendent for Fiscal Affairs reviewed the data on the number of days absent due to out of school suspension for a three year period and indicated that monies received from the state based on ADA would easily cover the cost of a paraprofessional. This entire group agreed to try the ISS concept for the 1990-91 year. The Assistant Superintendent for Fiscal Affairs telephoned the Personnel Director and authorized the aide position for ADMS effective immediately.

The Principal interviewed candidates for the ISS position and hired a male on August 28, 1990. The ISS program began September 3, 1990 with the assignment of five students to ISS by the assistant principals. Five students

would have served a total of 11 days of out of school suspension had the ISS program not been in effect. In the first day of operation the ISS program reduced absenteeism for the year by 11 days. The Practicum Manager felt that the ISS program was a positive step in the right direction for the intervention and for ADMS students. ADMS counselors were very pleased with the ISS concept.

The Practicum Manager met with the three ADMS administrators for input on attendance matters to be presented at class orientation sessions on August 24, 1990. The administrators were asked to include attendance goals, the reward program for students with perfect attendance, the importance of regular attendance, and the consequence of retention at present grade level for students with excessive absences. Eighth grade students were oriented by the Principal on August 27, 1990. The assistant principal in charge of the seventh grade presented his orientation session on August 28, 1990, followed by the assistant principal for the sixth grade. In each instance, the entire grade was seated in the gym for the 90 minute orientation. Each grade level orientation was held separately.

On August 27, 1990, the first meeting of the 1990-91 ADMS Faculty Attendance Committee was held (Appendix GG: 156). The Practicum Manager reviewed the summer school attendance statistics. The Faculty Attendance Committee was

pleased with the results. Plans for the year were discussed. With the exception of asking for less data on attendance directly from classroom teachers, the plan was to be the same as that conducted during the fourth quarter 1990. A memorandum from the Sumter High Guidance Director to the Sumter High faculty was given to each committee member. The memorandum (Appendix HH: 157) gave ten suggestions on how faculty members could work effectively with students who were chronically absent from school. Committee members liked the suggestions and recommended that a copy of the memorandum be made available to each ADMS faculty member. The Practicum Manager reported no success in gaining support for free admission to high school sporting events for ADMS students with perfect attendance. The high school athletic director's refusal to participate was based on a requirement for revenue sharing by the State High School Athletic League. Free admission to middle school athletic events had been approved in July by the Principal and was a part of the reward system for 1990-91. Committee members took note of the fact that attendance data from the fourth quarter of 1990 indicated that absences were less than from the same period in 1989. Committee members felt that the attendance letters had a significant impact upon improved student attendance. These members of the committee also felt that parent interest increased after receipt of the letters. Parent interest was noted by

telephone calls and notes from parents thanking the teachers and the school for the perfect attendance letters and communication from parents who had students who were in need of improved attendance. Committee members said that many of the positive comments were received by faculty members through community contacts during the summer vacation. A committee member suggested that a homework pass to exempt students with perfect attendance each quarter from one homework assignment be added to the list of incentives for attendance.

The Practicum Manager was on the agenda for the September 5, 1990 faculty meeting. The entire faculty was briefed on the intervention to date. An overhead projector was used to show attendance statistics for summer school and fourth quarter 1990. The faculty was asked for continued support of the program. A copy of the memorandum from the Guidance Director at Sumter High School was given to each faculty member.

A letter was sent to all students who missed five or more days during the 1989-90 school year. A copy of the letter can be found at Appendix II: 158. This letter solicits the support of the parents for regular attendance. The computer specialist individualized the letters, filled in the number of days missed and mailed them on September 7, 1990.

A memorandum was sent to the guidance counselors on September 10, 1990 regarding resumption of counseling the chronic absentees from the 1989-90 school year. The counselors were given a time-frame of three weeks to complete the initial counseling session. Counselors were not particularly happy with the group sessions they held during fourth quarter 1990. Counselors were reminded of this fact and individual sessions were suggested. More time was allowed for this phase of the intervention than the one week originally planned for in the proposal. This was due to recognition of the importance of guidance contact with the students as well as the ineffectiveness of group procedures to address the problem.

On September 10, 1990, the Student Survey (Appendix C: 126) was sent to all sixth grade homeroom teachers. Sixth grade students completed the surveys on September 12, 1990 and returned the surveys to the school secretary by homeroom teachers on the same day. Sixth grade repeaters were identified by the Practicum Manager from a list in the Principal's office and referrals were made to the counselors (Appendix JJ: 159).

After tabulating data from the Student Survey on the 1990-91 sixth grade class, the Practicum Manager compared it to the sixth grade class of 1989-90. Results were very similar and the differences were so slight that no change was indicated in the student profile of ADMS.

Originally, the proposal called for publication of an article in the Fall issue of the student newspaper on the attendance project. As of October 2, 1990, the Principal had a faculty sponsor for the publication but the sponsor had not found a complete student staff to publish the newspaper. The Principal indicated that he was not particularly displeased with the lack of a student staff and would not push for the resumption of the paper. The Principal indicated a long history of over-budget, understaffed efforts that could usually be found on the lunchroom floor or in the halls within minutes of students receiving the newspaper. After considering the problem, the Practicum Manager concluded that the lack of a student newspaper article would not impact on the intervention as the student body was well informed about the attendance project through letters to parents and students, class orientation and by word-of-mouth among students and teachers. The attendance project already enjoyed very high visibility on the ADMS campus.

The first meeting of the ADMS SARB was held on October 4, 1990. Five referrals for consideration were received by the SARB. In each case the parent(s) of each referred student was heard regarding their child's case. Each student was questioned by SARB members in an attempt to understand individual circumstances. The SARB recommended

referral to the district's extension school for three of the five students. The Practicum Manager telephoned the extension school coordinator regarding the referrals on October 5, 1990. One of the five students was granted a half-day schedule in the afternoons to accommodate the parent's work and child care problems. This student would be required to attend summer school 1991 to finish the subjects not taken during the 1990-91 academic year and was told that this was a one year accommodation only. The last student and parent were referred to family counseling at a community agency. The Practicum Manager presented the SARB recommendations to the Principal on the morning of October 5, 1990 and gained approval for implementation.

The SARB process was judged successful by members but the first meeting took over four hours to complete. It was decided that in the future no more than two cases would be heard at a meeting. The follow-up and paperwork associated with implementing the SARB referrals was much more time consuming than had been anticipated by the Practicum Manager. The Practicum Manager met with Principal and assistant principal representative to the SARB on October 9, 1990 to discuss responsibility for implementing future SARB recommendations. The Practicum Manager suggested that once the practicum was completed in May, 1991, that the responsibility for the program would revert to the ADMS administration. At that point the continuing coordination

of the project would have to be assigned to an ADMS administrator - probably an assistant principal. Logically, the administrator representative to the SARB was assigned as coordinator for implementing future SARB recommendations. Furthermore, in the future SARB meetings were agreed to be chaired by the ADMS assistant principal with the Practicum Manager serving only as a consultant. This solution met with the approval of all present.

A district inservice program originally planned for the ADMS faculty for October 19, 1990 was canceled by the district staff development coordinator on October 13, 1990 due to non-availability of a consultant. The ADMS Principal asked the Practicum Manager to plan a day-long inservice program related to the practicum on absenteeism. Notice was short and unexpected but the inservice presented an opportunity to provide training and insight to the faculty. The ADMS faculty was divided in half using every-other-name from the teacher sign-in roster. Group I stayed at ADMS in the morning on October 19, 1990 and had a series of presenters on topics related to students at-risk, psychological profiles of the potential school dropout, and a presentation on the district's extension school alternative. Group II boarded district school buses and toured the district extension school and the county school district's School for At-Risk Youth. Both groups reversed

the morning schedule in the afternoon. A copy of the inservice schedule can be found at Appendix KK: 160. ADMS teachers evaluated the inservice and rated it excellent using the standard district evaluation instrument (Appendix LL: 161). Students at-risk and dropout prevention was not necessarily the subject of this practicum. However, many of the factors associated with school dropouts and at-risk youth are present in middle school age youth with attendance problems and are factors that need attention with ADMS students.

ADMS counselors met with the Practicum Manager on October 22, 1990 to discuss the guidance effort with chronic absentees identified from 1989-90. Counselors expressed optimism with regard to their work with these students and indicated that many of the students simply did not realize how seriously the school viewed absenteeism and that the attention given the problem had made them realize differently. Counselors reported five referrals to the SARB, 21 in school parent conferences, dozens of telephone calls and an unspecified number of referrals to community agencies. Counselors reported feeling better about the counseling effort than in May and June of 1990.

First quarter ended on October 30, 1990. The attendance clerk submitted lists of students with perfect attendance for the first quarter to the Practicum Manager on October 31, 1990. The attendance clerk submitted a list of students

with two or more absences at the end of the first quarter. The number of home visits made and the number of referrals to Family Court were also sent to the Practicum Manager on October 31, 1990. The Practicum Manager studied the lists and charted the statistics. When the data was compared to the first quarter statistics for 1988 and 1989 the intervention was determined to have had a positive impact on student attendance.

On November 2, 1990, the Practicum Manager met with Faculty Attendance Committee to discuss the first quarter statistics. The Committee was particularly pleased with the impact the new ISS program had on attendance as well as assisting teachers keep suspended students up with their classroom work. Well-deserved praise for the ISS program was received at this meeting.

Letters were prepared and mailed on November 1, 1990, by the computer specialist for students with perfect attendance during first quarter 1990. A copy of the list of students with first quarter perfect attendance was given to each ADMS teacher. Teachers were asked to post the list in the room and call attention to the list at an opportune time.

On October 13, 1990, the attendance office submitted the names of students who had three or more unexcused absences during the first quarter 1990 to the Practicum Manager. An automated, individualized letter was prepared for mailing to

parents of the chronically absent students (Appendix MM: 162). The letter was modified to indicate first quarter of 1990. The letters were mailed by the Practicum Manager on November 6, 1990.

During the regularly scheduled weekly faculty meeting on November 7, 1990, the Practicum Manager invited teachers to provide verbal feedback on the first quarter intervention efforts. Several sixth grade homeroom teachers expressed concern about the number of sixth graders absent during the first quarter and questioned whether this was a grade level problem or just isolated homerooms. After a review of the first quarter statistics, the Practicum Manager reported that the sixth grade as a whole was not out-of-line with previous years first quarter ADA nor was it significantly lower than the other two grade levels. Concerned sixth grade homeroom teachers were asked to see the Practicum Manager after the meeting for a closer look at the particular homeroom ADA compared to the other sixth grade homerooms.

The Practicum Manager reviewed data from the first quarter and considered the input from the faculty meeting and decided that no adjustments to the intervention was called for at this time. Practicum intervention would continue as planned.

An assistant principal distributed prizes for students with perfect attendance during first quarter 1990 to

homeroom teachers on November 12, 1990. Each student with perfect attendance received a coupon for a free hamburger from McDonalds and a coupon for five free games at Aladdin's Castle. Students who were being counseled about attendance problems from the 1989-90 school year and had shown progress during the first quarter as reported by the counselors, received the Aladdin's Castle coupons. All prizes were distributed on November 13, 1990.

Names of students with three or more days absent during the first quarter 1990 were presented to the counselors on November 16, 1990. Counselors began seeing these students immediately.

ADMS counselors and the Practicum Manager met on November 19, 1990 to discuss the results of counseling sessions with sixth grade students repeating one or more previous grades (Appendix NN: 163). Counselors studied each case individually prior to counseling the student. In approximately one-third of the cases the students failed previously due strictly to failure to pass academically. Approximately 20 percent repeated due to excessive absenteeism while passing the grade academically. Twenty-five percent of the repeaters failed academically and had excessive absences which prevented promotion. Counselors reported that many of the 25 percent in this category were passing up to the point that they exceeded the

maximum absences for credit and then just gave up academically once promotion was out of the question. Many of these students revealed being discipline problems for the teacher after exceeding the number of absences for promotion. The remaining quarter of the retainees passed academically but did not receive credit due to excessive absences but could have received credit if some of the unexcused absences had been documented as medically excused. These students had, in effect, been denied promotion because the families could not or would not see a physician when the child was absent from school due to illness. In most cases, these children came from economically disadvantaged homes where seeing a doctor for anything less than a life-threatening situation was out of the question.

Under South Carolina law the only excused absences were those covered by a medical or dental excuse. Economic factors indicated above were not considered by this law. The situation seemed to be unfair, but it was a law that required compliance by South Carolina schools. It was agreed that counselors stay aware of students under these circumstances as the year progressed and refer the parent and student to the Department of Social Services for county health department appointments or to the ADMS SARB where other health care options might be made available.

The Practicum Manager made a note to inform the Superintendent and School Board members of the extent of

this problem under the law at an opportune time in the future. Any change in the law would need backing and support from the school board and superintendent level.

All three administrators from ADMS met with the Practicum Manager on November 14, 1990 to discuss attendance goals and make plans for a presentation at Open House during National Education Week (November 19 through November 23, 1990). The goal the Principal wanted conveyed to the parents was the same as that of the practicum. ADMS wanted a .5 percent increase in ADA in 1990-91 over the 1989-90 ADA. Attendance intervention was to be explained once again with emphasis on parental responsibility for compliance with the law. The financial reward under the EIA Incentive Reward Program would be mentioned by the Principal.

On November 21, 1990, the Practicum Manager made a ten minute presentation to 450 parents at 8:10 p.m. on the attendance project at ADMS. The attendance goal was presented and parental support for the effort was solicited (Appendix OO: 164).

On December 4, 1990, the attendance clerk sent the Practicum Manager a list of students in each grade level on the chronic absentee list from 1989-90 but had missed no more than two days in the 1990-91 school year through December 3, 1990. Lists were given to the grade level administrator with a memorandum (Appendix PP: 165)

regarding an incentive provided for in the intervention. The Assistant Superintendent for Fiscal Affairs agreed to fund the free lunches and worked out a system with the ADMS lunchroom manager to charge the lunches. Due to the unexpected numbers of students eligible, the original period of December 10 through December 14, 1990 for the administrators to have lunch with these students had to be extended through December 20, 1990. All three administrators reported excellent response to the gesture to the students but felt that the numbers made too much of a demand on their time. This was reassessed for the future.

On December 7, 1990, the attendance clerk reported to the Practicum Manager that there had not been any days the district classified as bad weather days to date in the 1990-91 school year. Additional reports indicated that there were no health epidemics according to the school nurse to date in 1990-91 (Appendix QQ: 166).

The Practicum Manager gave the Student Bookstore manager a list of students who had perfect attendance for the 1989-90 school year. These students were told by their homeroom teachers that they could go by the bookstore anytime between December 6, 1990 and December 13, 1990 and show their student I.D. card and pick out any ADMS logo T-shirt as reward for their superior attendance. These students were asked to wear the shirts on December 14, 1990 to be recognized by students and teachers for their

attendance efforts. The bookstore manager billed the PTSO for the T-shirts (at school cost). A total of 83 percent of those eligible picked up a T-shirt. No exact figures were available on the number wearing the T-shirts on December 14, 1990. However, the administrators reported seeing many students wearing the shirts.

First semester of the 1990-91 school year ended on January 23, 1991. The Practicum Manager telephoned the ADMS attendance office on January 24, 1991 and requested a list of students with perfect attendance for the second quarter and a list with perfect attendance for the first semester. A list of chronic absentees with improved attendance records was solicited from the counselors on January 25, 1991.

A list of six Family Court referrals was submitted to the Practicum Manager by the attendance clerk along with a report which indicated that a total of 154 home visits had been made during the first semester. The Practicum Manager noted an increased number of home visits over the number made during the first semester for the 1989-90 year. Family Court referrals were less than half of the total number made during the 1988-89 (14) and 1989-90 (13) school year respectively. This was considered a positive sign for the intervention.

On January 31, 1991, the computer specialist generated the automated, personalized letters to students with perfect

attendance during second quarter and those with perfect attendance during the first semester. These letters were like the sample letters found at Appendix RR: 167, modified for the respective attendance periods.

Homeroom teachers posted the lists of students with perfect attendance (second quarter and first semester) on January 31, 1991. Winning homerooms were announced on the public address system by the Principal on February 1, 1991.

A pizza and soda party was hosted by the respective grade-level administrator between February 5 and February 7, 1991 (Appendices SS, TT, UU:168-170). Students met the administrator in the lunchroom as a homeroom group. Pizza for the party was provided by the Practicum Manager and the sodas were furnished by the PTSO. PTSO parent volunteers assisted in serving the students. The student lunchroom provided an opportunity for high visibility by the other students of the rewards for excellent attendance. Administrators congratulated the students on their good attendance and encouraged them to continue the good attendance habit.

A pass for a free admission to a local movie theater was distributed through homeroom teachers for students with perfect attendance for the first semester. These passes were solicited by the PTSO for use in the attendance improvement project. Students with perfect attendance for second quarter were given coupons for Aladdin's Castle.

Rewards were distributed to homeroom teachers on February 5, 1991 and given to students on February 6, 1991.

The SARB met on February 13, 1991 for the purpose of hearing two referrals (Appendix VV: 171). As a result of the meeting one student was referred to family counseling and one student was referred to the district extension school. In keeping with the agreement reached earlier in the school year, the ADMS assistant principal chaired the SARB meeting and completed the paperwork and telephone calls on the referrals. The Practicum Manager served as a resource person during the meeting but was never called upon for assistance. The ADMS SARB had the confidence and direction needed to function. This was viewed as a positive sign by the Practicum Manager.

A letter was sent to the parents of students who had five or more days absent during the first semester. This letter was an automated letter personalized to the attendance situation of each student. A list of student names was sent by the attendance clerk to the computer specialist. A letter, similar to the one at Appendix MM: 162, was prepared on February 8, 1991 by the computer specialist on February 8, 1991 and mailed on February 15, 1991.

On March 4, 1991, the Practicum Manager met with the Assistant Superintendent for Fiscal Affairs, the District

Director of Attendance and Transportation and the ADMS Principal at the district office. The purpose of the meeting was to critique the attendance intervention after one calendar year of implementation (Appendix WW: 172). The Practicum Manager asked for an objective appraisal by the Director of Attendance and the Assistant Superintendent as they were very knowledgeable of the intervention but had not been directly involved in it at the building level. Both individuals praised the program but cited a number of problems that should be considered in the future. The major concern involved the cost. Mailing cost were cited at \$650.00 to date and the Assistant Superintendent suggested that some of the mailings could be handled simply by giving the letters to students to carry home to parents. The Principal noted that the letters that dealt with perfect attendance and improvement of attendance over previous periods would probably reach the parent as they were positive comments about the students. However, letters dealing with negative aspects such as those outlining absences for a grading period or warning parents about excessive absences would probably never reach the parent. Beginning with the third quarter grading period, all letters that congratulated students would be sent home by the student via the homeroom teacher. This change would cut the mailing cost in half.

Despite the fact that the Assistant Superintendent

indicated that the cost associated with the T-shirts and the charged lunches was high, the practice was to be continued and supported. The Practicum Manager was asked to pursue the possibility of ADMS School-Business Partners either fund these activities or at least contribute toward the cost.

The Principal asked about continuing ISS into the 1991-92 school year. Attendance figures from ADMS were used by the Attendance Supervisor to show that the number of out-of-school suspensions days had been reduced so significantly that the program would indeed pay for itself if the current rate continued to the end of the school year. Strong support from both the Principal and faculty was cited for the ISS program. Approval was given by the Assistant Superintendent to continue the program and the Director of Attendance was asked to get in touch with the district's other middle school principal to see if an ISS program could be established at Bates Middle School beginning in 1991-92.

The Practicum Manager had entered the meeting with some apprehension but left with a feeling that the program was supported and appreciated. However, the only down-side cited was cost and the points made were sound and would probably have little impact on the outcome of the attendance improvement³ intervention.

On March 6, 1991, the Practicum Manager sent a memorandum to the members of the ADMS Faculty Attendance

Committee (Appendix XX: 173) to announce a meeting on March 11, 1991. Members of the committee were informed about the change in mailing letters that were positive in nature and the committee understood the cost factor and agreed to support the change. The members were informed that the ISS program had been approved for continuation into the 1991-92 year. The committee's response was very positive. The ISS program was cited as one of the most worthwhile changes the administration had ever implemented. Committee members said that the faculty strongly supported the ISS concept of keeping students in school and on task rather than being out of school and in the streets.

An automated letter like the one found at Appendix MM: 162, modified to the individual student and attendance period, was generated from lists prepared by the attendance office and sent to the Practicum Manager on April 2, 1991 (Appendix YY: 174). Letters were prepared by the computer specialist and held for the Practicum Manager for distribution. A memorandum was sent to homeroom teachers on April 8, 1991 (Appendix ZZ: 175) which outlined the new procedure of giving perfect attendance letters to students through homeroom³ to take to parents. Homeroom teachers were asked to distribute the letters on April 9, 1991 and to encourage students to take them to their parents.

On April 11, 1991, the Practicum Manager distributed prizes for students with perfect attendance year-to-date and

for third quarter to homeroom teachers for presentation to students on April 12, 1991. Students with year-to-date perfect attendance were given a coupon for a free Chic-Fil-A sandwich. Those students who had shown improvement in attendance were recognized by the counselors received a coupon for arcade games at Aladdin's Castle.

On April 7, 1991, the attendance office notified the Practicum Manager of the homerooms at each grade level with the highest ADA for the third quarter 1991 (Appendix AAA: 176). ADMS administrators were notified of the pizza and soda party for each winning homeroom on April 3, 1991. The principals hosted the pizza and soda parties by grade level in the lunchroom April 8 through April 10, 1991.

On May 16, 1991, the attendance clerk submitted a report that included the number of home visits made to date during the academic year. The report also cited the number of Family Court referrals and indicated that no further referrals would be made to Family Court after May 15, 1991 due to the fact that cases referred after that date would not be heard until after July 1, 1991. The report closed out the year on Family court referrals and home visits for 1990-91. On May 18, 1991, the Practicum Manager analyzed the results and made necessary notations relevant to the intervention.

Data on the fourth quarter, second semester and academic

year attendance was requested on May 28, 1991. The Practicum Manager received the final data on June 3, 1991 and immediately compiled and tabulated the figures. The data was put into tables in chapter 6.

A final Faculty Feedback Survey (Appendix DDD: 177) was distributed to ADMS teachers on May 28, 1991 in a faculty meeting. Eighty-one percent of the surveys were returned by June 3, 1991. Listed below are some of the typical responses to the survey questions:

1. Do you see any improvement in your students' attendance?

--- 78 percent of those responding answered in the affirmative

___ Two faculty members answered in the negative with comments that indicated that too much emphasis was being placed on attendance at ADMS.

2. What problems did you see with the attendance improvement program?

___ The program rewarded students for attending school which was an expected behavior. School should not reward students for expected behavior only for accomplishments above and beyond what was expected.

___ Too much effort for such an insignificant problem.

___ The program encouraged students to attend school

when they were ill.

___ Most commonly given answer was none.

3. What were the strengths of the attendance improvement program?

___ Improved student attendance

___ Rewards for improved attendance.

___ The program got the whole school involved to include parents, teachers, administrators, students, and PTA.

___ Encouraged regular school attendance.

4. Please give any suggestions you feel would improve student attendance.

___ Expand the program to the elementary schools within the district.

___ Plan a program that would communicate academic expectations to the extent attendance was stressed.

___ The most common response was none.

On May 28, 1991, the attendance clerk forwarded a list of students with perfect attendance during fourth quarter, second semester and perfect attendance for the 1990-91 school year. The Practicum Manager separated the lists into homerooms and sent a copy to the respective homerooms for posting on May 31, 1991. coupons from Aladdin's Castle, Burger King, and Put-Putt Golf were sent along with the

lists for distribution by the homeroom teachers.

On May 29, 1991, an automated letter was sent to the parents or guardians of each student with perfect attendance for the terms specified. On May 30, 1991, the counselors forwarded the names of students listed as chronic absentees during the 1989-90 school year and who had missed less than ten days during the 1990-91 school year. These students were treated to lunch by the Seventh Grade Assistant Principal on May 31, 1991 in the ADMS cafeteria. A pool party was hosted by the Practicum Manager and three ADMS administrators for all students with perfect attendance (fourth quarter, second semester and year) and the chronic absentees from 1989-90 with fewer than ten absences in 1990-91. The PTSA provided hot dogs, cake and soda. A disc jockey from the high school's Broadcast Media Club provided entertainment for the event.

On June 3, 1991, the District Attendance Supervisor computed the ADMS ADA for 1990-91. The data was provided to the Practicum Manager on June 4, 1991. On June 4, 1991, the Practicum Manager telephoned the South Carolina State Department of Education for a determination on whether the attendance gain was sufficient to clear ADMS for the State's School Incentive Reward for 1990-91. The answer received was that the attendance rate (ADA) did qualify the ADMS for the monetary award.

The District Assistant Superintendent for Student

Services was informed of the ADMS student attendance gain as confirmed by the State Department of Education. The faculty attendance rate at ADMS had already been computed by the Personnel Office and the Office of Psychological Services and Testing had analyzed the student achievement test data for 1990-91. The Assistant Superintendent was able to determine, using a state funding formula, that ADMS would qualify for a \$58,451.90 award under the State's School Incentive Reward System.

On June 6, 1991, a letter was sent to each ADMS faculty member announcing the long awaited financial reward (Appendix EEE: 180). The Principal invited faculty input beginning immediately on expenditure of the funds for instructional improvement.

On June 7, 1991, two copies of the MARP were placed in the ADMS Library for student and faculty review. The intervention formally concluded on June 7, 1991.

Taken individually, none of the component elements of this intervention represented any fundamental break with services that already existed in most middle school programs. Collectively, however, they constituted a comprehensive, successful response to the absentee problem at ADMS.

Practicum Manager's Functions and Responsibilities

The primary function of the Practicum Manager was to

create an environment that facilitated change. Once the process was begun, the Practicum Manager had the responsibility to ensure that all essential tasks were performed in an efficient manner, to see that the tasks were constantly monitored, and to see that the entire process was properly evaluated.

The success of the practicum depended largely on the efforts of students who were asked to improve their attendance habits and their parents who were asked to assist in the effort to improve student attendance at ADMS. Teachers and counselors played key roles in the intervention. District employees involved in student attendance reporting increased their support during the intervention. Since the work fell primarily on others, it was important for the Practicum Manager to create an environment conducive to change by disseminating information, altering attitudes, and maintaining a high degree of visibility throughout the practicum intervention. The Practicum Manager worked closely with the Sumter School District Number 17 Attendance and Transportation Supervisor to coordinate district support for the intervention.

Another essential task for the Practicum Manager was to monitor the progress of the practicum intervention. The Practicum Manager and ADMS administrators observed the process and determined if approved strategies were followed. Teachers and students had an opportunity to evaluate the

intervention strategies periodically throughout the practicum intervention. The effectiveness of the intervention was determined by the extent to which practicum outcomes were met and parent, student, and teacher evaluation of the intervention strategies.

A partnership of professionals working together is essential for any change to occur in education. Through the cooperative work, ADMS community reached the practicum goal. A final summary of the successes and failures of the practicum was written by the Practicum Manager based on attendance data following the intervention.

CHAPTER 6

EVALUATION OF THE RESULTS AND THE PROCESS

Practicum Outcomes and Process

The practicum intervention focused on raising the 1990-91 ADA of ADMS students .5 percent above the 1989-90 ADA for the specific purpose of qualifying the school for financial rewards by the State of South Carolina. Specific attention was given to chronic absentees at all three grade levels with some emphasis on the seventh grade since the semester grade had traditionally shown a lower ADA when compared to the other two grades. The intervention targeted parent awareness, teacher awareness, and student awareness of the importance of regular school attendance. Intervention strategies consisted of a reward and recognition system, counseling chronic absentees and their parents, and communication with parents, students and teachers. The formal evaluation contained in the following pages indicate that chronic absenteeism and the number of days absent were reduced and the ADA was improved to a point that the major goals of the practicum were met.

Average Daily Attendance Increases

A desired terminal objective for intervention strategies implemented during the period March 19, 1990 to June 1, 1990 (Fourth Quarter) was to increase the Average Daily Attendance of ADMS students from 96.5

percent to 96.7 percent.

TABLE 27

A Comparison of Fourth Quarter 1989-90 ADA with
Third Quarter 1989-90 ADA

Grades	1989-90 Third Quarter ADA	1989-90 Fourth Quarter ADA	Difference
6 - 8	95.5	96.4	- .1

Following one quarter (45 days) of implementation, the objective of increasing the ADA of ADMS student attendance by .2 percent was not met. The start of an attendance intervention after 75 percent of the school year had lapsed was perhaps inappropriate. The Faculty Attendance Committee felt that students had already developed poor attendance habits for the majority of the year and nine weeks was not sufficient to have a meaningful impact on a problem that was already well underway.

TABLE 28

A Comparison of Fourth Quarter 1989-90 ADA of
Sixth Grade Students with Third Quarter 1989-90 ADA

Grade	1989-90 Third Quarter ADA	1989-90 Fourth Quarter ADA	Difference
6	97.7	97.9	+ .2

A desired terminal objective for intervention strategies implemented during the period March 19, 1990

to June 1, 1990 (Fourth Quarter) was to increase the Average Daily Attendance of sixth grade students at ADMS from 97.7 percent to 97.9 percent.

The attendance objective for fourth quarter ADA for sixth grade students was met. The ADA for sixth graders improved from 97.7 during the third quarter to 97.9, an increase of .2. The ADMS faculty reported excellent cooperation by sixth grade students throughout the practicum.

A desired terminal objective for intervention strategies implemented during the period March 19, 1990 to June 1, 1990 (Fourth Quarter) was to increase the Average Daily Attendance of seventh grade students at ADMS from 94.9 percent to 95.1 percent.

TABLE 29

A Comparison of Fourth Quarter 1989-90 ADA of Seventh Grade Students with Third Quarter 1989-90 ADA

Grade	1989-90 Third Quarter ADA	1989-90 Fourth Quarter ADA	Difference
7	94.9	94.7	- .2

The attendance objective for the fourth quarter for seventh grade students was not met. Historically, the seventh grade posed the most problems with attendance at ADMS. The Faculty Attendance Committee noted that the negative .2 percent decline by seventh graders was an improvement over fourth quarter declines in seventh

grade ADA from previous years. For this reason the committee felt that some progress had been made with the seventh grade ADA. Again, the short time the intervention had been in place was cited as the probable cause of not reaching the desired objective.

A desired terminal objective of the practicum was to increase the Average Daily Attendance of eighth grade students at ADMS from 96.8 percent to 97.0 percent during the period March 19, 1990 to June 1, 1990 (Fourth Quarter).

TABLE 30

A Comparison of Fourth Quarter 1989-90 ADA of Eighth Grade Students with Third Quarter 1989-90 ADA

Grade	1989-90 Third Quarter ADA	1989-90 Fourth Quarter ADA	Difference
8	96.8	96.7	- .1

The desired objective for fourth quarter ADA for eighth grade students was not met. The Faculty Attendance Committee cited the short period of intervention following three previous quarters in the academic year where little or no emphasis was placed on the importance of student attendance as the reason for negative ADA data for eighth grade students.

A desired terminal objective for intervention strategies implemented during the period August 20, 1990 to May 31, 1991 was to increase the sixth grade

Average Daily Attendance by .5 percent over the 1989-90
180 Day Average Daily Attendance.

TABLE 31

A Comparison of ADMS ADA Based on the 180 Day
Attendance Report for the Years 1989-90 and
1990-91 by Grade Level

Year/Grade	180 Day Report ADA	Difference
<u>1989-90</u>		
Six	97.9	
Seven	94.7	
Eight	96.7	
Six - Eight (Entire School)	96.4	
<u>1990-91</u>		
Six	98.5	+ .6
Seven	95.3	+ .6
Eight	97.2	+ .5
Six - Eight (Entire School)	97.0	+ .6

Data in Table 31 indicates that the sixth grade completed the 1989-90 academic year with a 180 day ADA rate of 97.9 percent. The practicum objective of increasing the 1990-91 180 day ADA by .5 percent was met with an increase of .6 percent. Throughout the intervention the ADMS faculty and administration cited the sixth grade as most enthusiastic about the practicum.

A desired terminal objective for intervention strategies implemented during the period August 20, 1990 to May 31, 1991 was to increase the seventh grade Average Daily Attendance by .5 percent over the 1989-90

180 Day Average Daily Attendance.

Data in Table 31 indicates that the seventh grade completed the 1989-90 academic year with a 180 Day ADA rate of 94.7 percent. The practicum objective of increasing the 1990-91 180 Day ADA by .5 percent was exceeded with an increase of .6 percent. Given the history of the seventh grade attendance at ADMS to include the negative performance during the fourth quarter of 1989-90, this increase came as a surprise to the faculty³ and administration. Detailed analysis indicates that the In-School Suspension program and the reduced number of seventh grade chronic absentees during the 1990-91 academic year were primarily responsible for the increase in seventh grade ADA.

A desired terminal objective for intervention strategies implemented during the period August 20, 1990 to May 31, 1991 was to increase the eighth grade Average Daily Attendance by .5 percent over the 1989-90 180 Day Average Daily Attendance.

Data in Table 31 indicates that the eighth grade had a 180 Day ADA of 96.7 percent during the 1989-90 year. The practicum objective of increasing the 1990-91 ADA by .5 percent was met with a 180 Day ADA of 97.2 percent.

A desired terminal objective for intervention strategies implemented during the period August 20, 1990 to May 31, 1991 was to increase the Average Daily

Attendance rate of students at ADMS by .5 percent over the 1989-90 180 Day ADA.

Data in Table 31 indicates that the objective was met. The ADMS 180 Day ADA for grades six through eight in 1989-90 was 96.4 percent. The 1990-91 180 Day ADA increased to 97.0, a .6 percent increase. The .6 percent increase qualified ADMS for an award through the South Carolina State Department of Education's School Incentive Reward Program. The student attendance criteria required a .5 percent increase for qualification.

A terminal objective of the practicum was to increase the ADA of sixth grade students in summer school during the period June 12, 1990 to August 3, 1990 from 90.7 percent to 93.0 percent.

TABLE 32

Summer School Average Daily Attendance by Grade Level for the Summers of 1988, 1989, and 1990

Grade	1988 ADA	1989 ADA	1990 ADA *
Six	91.2	90.7	93.8
Seven	90.8	91.0	94.2
Eight	94.2	92.6	95.1

* Intervention Begins

Data in Table 32 indicates that the objective was met in that the ADA for sixth grade students in the 1990 summer school was 93.8 percent.

A terminal objective of the practicum was to

increase the ADA of seventh grade students in summer school during the period June 12, 1990 to August 3, 1990 from 91.0 percent to 93.3 percent.

Data in Table 32 indicates that the objective was met with a 1990 summer school ADA for seventh grade students of 94.2 percent.

A desired terminal objective of the practicum was to increase the ADA of eighth grade students in summer school during the period June 12, 1990 to August 3, 1990 from 92.6 percent to 94.9 percent.

The objective for eighth grade students was met. Data in Table 32 indicates that the Eighth Grade summer school ADA for 1990 was 95.1 percent.

The practicum intervention had a very positive impact on summer school student attendance rates as depicted in Table 32. Table 32 indicates that summer school ADA was higher at all three grade levels in 1990 following intervention than any year in the past three years. By implementing the intervention strategies in summer school many of the routines were perfected which led to better coordination between the Practicum Manager, the attendance office and counseling staff at ADMS.

A desired terminal objective of intervention strategies implemented during the period March 18, 1990 to May 31, 1991 was to reduce the number of seventh grade chronic absentees identified from the 1988-89

school year from 97 to 53.

TABLE 33

A Comparison of Chronic Absences by Grade Level
for School Years 1989 and 1990

Year/Grade Level	Total Chronic	Total Absences by Chronic
<u>1989</u>		
Six	53	689
Seven	97	1547
Eight	71	1063
Total	221	3299
<u>* 1990</u>		
Six	39	404
Seven	48	763
Eight	40	502
Total	127	1669

* Intervention Begins

Data in Table 33 indicates that the objective was met with a reduction in the number of seventh grade chronic absentees from 97 in 1989 to 48 in 1990. The reduction was a 49.5 percent decrease in the number of chronically absent seventh grade students and a 49.0 percent decrease in the total number of days absent by the seventh grade chronic absentees over the 1988-89 school year absences.

A desired terminal objective of intervention strategies implemented during the period March 18, 1990 to May 31, 1991 was to reduce the number of eighth grade chronic absentees identified from the 1988-89

school year from 71 to 42.

Data in Table 33 indicates that the objective was met with a reduction in the number of eighth grade chronic absentees from 71 in 1989 to 40 in 1990. The reduction was a 56.3 percent decrease in the number of chronically absent eighth graders and a 47.2 percent decrease in the total number of days absent by the eighth grade chronic absentees over the 1988-89 school year absences.

The practicum manager and the Faculty Attendance Committee felt that the success the intervention had with the identified chronic absentees (see Table 33) contributed substantially to the positive results in overall student attendance increases at ADMS during the practicum intervention. The counseling component was cited as the single most important strategy in achieving results with the identified chronic absentees.

Side Effects

The practicum resulted in an unanticipated side effect from the interest the PTSA demonstrated throughout the intervention. The intervention gave the organization a school objective to participate in other than annual fund raising projects. The school and PTSA will benefit from the team-work relationship developed over the past 16 months. By active participation in the intervention, the PTSA developed a sense of pride

and ownership in the practicum. The PTSA has asked for permission to present the practicum and the ADMS PTSA's role in the intervention to the State PTSO convention in the Fall of 1991.

The practicum was expected to be replicated in the school district's second middle school beginning with the 1991-92 school year. An unanticipated outcome was the interest shown by the county school district's three middle school principals. Sumter School District Number 2's Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Personnel Services has asked for a copy of the MARP for review. The Practicum Manager has volunteered to assist and consult with the county middle schools electing to replicate the intervention.

Post Intervention Information

As a result of the successes of the intervention, the faculty and administration at ADMS decided to continue and expand the attendance strategies. The intervention raised the question of how realistic is it to raise student attendance above 97 percent? Perhaps the ADA can not rise much above 97 percent but with the proper attention it could stay at or very near 97 percent.

The Practicum Manager noted that the intervention progressed basically as planned with only minor modifications. There were several reasons for the success of the intervention. The Practicum Manager

cited the Faculty Attendance Committee as a strength. The counselors, faculty members and administrators all contributed significantly to the successful outcome of the practicum. Without the cooperation and sense of ownership the students felt for the project, the final outcomes could never have been achieved. The students embraced the spirit of the attendance project and in the process developed a keener sense of pride in themselves and their school.

Reflections on the Solution Strategy

All previous attempts to improve student attendance at ADMS were marked by fragmented, compartmentalized efforts. One of the major reasons the intervention succeeded was the intensity of the attendance program services. The intervention responded to the students' entire life. The intervention focused concern for the social and emotional needs of students with personal counseling and caring adults.

Through counseling, individual teacher concern, and the SARB, what was happening to the chronic absentee outside of school, in the home and community was considered a probable cause of student absenteeism. Professional literature indicated that factors impacting on a child's life outside school impacted on classroom success as much as intelligence, talent, and perseverance. This point was made clear during the intervention with chronic absentees at ADMS.

The intervention was most effective with chronic absentees because the intervention had a component of understanding the world the students entered when they left school each day. This effort required far greater integration and coordination of community social services, welfare and educational subsystems than had ever been attempted before at ADMS.

Implications of Outcomes and Processes

As mentioned earlier, the attendance function with the school district was centralized and put under the supervision of the Director of Attendance and Transportation. Much of the data needed to compile a study of attendance at a given school was not available and had to be researched student-by-student. The value of the data for analysis was not apparent to the Director of Attendance nor the ADMS Principal until this practicum was written. The Assistant Superintendent for Student Services has directed that, beginning in July, 1991, data on chronic absentees, health epidemics, and other items yet to be identified will be maintained at each school in the district. The Director of Attendance will use the Practicum Manager's MARP to work with district principals to determine the full extent of the revised reporting for the future.

Not all of the terminal objectives were met. Three of the four objectives implemented during the fourth quarter of the 1989-90 school year were not met. All

of the objectives related to summer school, chronic absentees, and year-long attendance goals were met. Failure to meet the three objectives was attributed to the fact that the intervention began in mid-March at the beginning of the fourth quarter of the year. With 75 percent of the year behind them, the students had already established poor attendance patterns that were difficult to impact on in just 45 days. The Practicum Manager strongly suggests that such an intervention on attendance should coincide with the start of a school year or, at a minimum at the beginning of the second semester.

CHAPTER 7

DECISIONS ON FUTURE OF INTERVENTION

Maintain, Modify, Abandon

Many parents feel that the responsibility for keeping students in school belongs solely to teachers and school administrators. Many teachers believe that student attendance is a problem for school administrators. The practicum strategies recognized the need to involve both parents and teachers with student attendance problem solving. Parental involvement was accomplished through written and personal contact with parents of students with attendance problems. Teachers received inservice training in communication techniques which developed an enhanced ability for teacher-student and teacher-parent communication.

The intervention was developed by using the talents of the school staff and existing district resources. Therefore, the cost of the intervention was negligible and could be easily replicated by other schools.

The success of the practicum dictates that the intervention continue. The district plan calls for implementation of the intervention at the second middle school during the 1991-92 school year. As the district becomes more automated, accounting for student absences will be enhanced and early identification of students

with potential attendance problems will become easier. Tracking of chronic absentees will be simpler with computer technology. Computer technology will improve data gathering and responsiveness to individual student attendance problems.

Additional Applications

School administrators frequently neglect students who attend school regularly in order to find the time to devote to students who are chronically absent. In many cases, the time and effort were wasted because of a genuine lack of understanding about at-risk students. Administrators are also hampered in their efforts to assist students with attendance problems by a lack of readily available data on absent students. Computer technology should be explored as a means of identification and tracking of students with attendance problems. Earlier identification could lead to a proactive response which would eventually eliminate the need for a reactive response to absenteeism as described in this intervention.

Dissemination of Information About Benefits

The attendance intervention described in this MARP has been shared with the principal of the district's second middle school. The program will be replicated beginning in the Fall of 1991 in the school. The intervention will continue at ADMS and will be enhanced as the faculty and administration deems appropriate.

The attendance program will be presented as a workshop by the ADMS PTSA at the Fall 1991 state-wide PTSO conference in Columbia, South Carolina. The Practicum Manager expects to receive requests for permission to adopt the program and for more detailed information as a result of the PTSO conference.

The county school district has asked to adopt the program in three county middle schools for 1991-92. The Practicum Manager will serve as a consultant to the schools throughout the adoption of the intervention.

Recommendations

Regular school attendance is a must if students are to receive the maximum educational benefit from available through the school. The continuing societal problems associated with the breakdown of the family unit coupled with the ever increasing number of students with at-risk tendencies serve to alert educators that absenteeism from school will be a continuing educational problem. Administrators must consider aggressive attendance programs to encourage student attendance if the problem is to be corrected.

Schools that adopt the major components of this practicum should experience improved student attendance. Chronic absenteeism should decrease as well. As student absenteeism decreases, time-on-task will increase. Increased time-on-task should result in increased learning and improved academic achievement.

REFERENCES

- Altmeyer, J. R. "The School Social Worker and Problems of School Attendance." Social Work, 2. (October 1957) 65-69.
- Bauer, R. R., et.al "The Development of an Early Intervention System for the Reduction of Excused Absences in Elementary and Secondary Schools." Resources in Education, 12. (1977) 73.
- Bishop, Harold L. "Put Teeth, Not Fangs, In School Attendance Policies". The American School Board Journal, 176. (1989) 38.
- Bonikowske, Dennis. Truancy: A Prelude to Dropping Out. National Educational Service: Bloomington, Ind. (1987).
- Committee for Economic Development, Investing in Our Children: Business and the Public School (New York: CED, 1985) p. 20.
- Cooke, T. P. and Apolloni, T. "Parent Involvement in the Schools: Ten Postulates of Justification." Education, 96. (1979) 168-169.
- Copeland, R. et.al. "Effects of a School Principal Praising Parents for School Attendance." Educational Technology, (1972) 57-59.
- Duke, D., and Meckel, A. M. "Student Attendance Problems and School Organization." Urban Education, 15. (1980).
- Duckworth, Ken. "Coping with Student Absenteeism." The Practitioner. NASSP Vol. XIV No. 4 (May 1988) 1-11.
- Eaton, J. J. "A Study of Factors Associated with Early Identification of Persistent Absenteeism." Educational Review, 31. (November, 1979).
- Elliott, P. G. "Where Are the Students and Teachers? Student and Teacher Absenteeism in Secondary Schools." View Points in Teaching and Learning, 55. (Spring 1979) 19 and 23-24.
- Fiordaliso, R., et.al. "Effects of Feedback on Absenteeism in the Junior High School." Journal of Educational Research, 70. (1977).
- Golden, Harrison J. The Link Between Early Truancy and Dropping Out: A Study of Attendance Patterns in New York City Public Schools. New York: New York City Comptroller, 1988.

- Grano, V. "An Investigation of the Effectiveness of Personal Attention by Leading Teachers Upon Student Attendance and Academic Achievement." Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation. Fordham University, (1976).
- Hargreaves, N. E., and Laughlin, T. F. "Reducing Absences and Tardiness in a Junior Secondary Special Education Classroom: The Scope Program." British Columbia Journal of Special Education, 1. (1981) 23-32.
- Helm, Carroll M., Burkett, Charles W. "Effects of Computer - Assisted Telecommunications on School Attendance." Journal of Educational Research, 82. (198) 362-365).
- Hodgkinson, Harold. "Facing the Future: Demographics and Statistics to Manage Today's School for Tomorrows Children." The School Administrator, No. 8 Vol:45 (September 1988) 26-31.
- Hoeft, D. "Truancy - the Game Nobody Wins." Illinois School Board Journal, 46. (1978) 17-19.
- Ibrahim, M. "Patterns of Absence and Pupil Achievement." Unpublished Mater's Dissertation. Cornell University, (1981).
- Karweit, N. L. Rainy Days and Mondays" An Analysis of Factors Related to Absence from School. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1973.
- Lambert, R., Novack, J. and Dougherty, Staying In: A Dropout Prevention Handbook, K-12. Madison, Wis: Wisconsin Vocational Studies Center, University of Wisconsin. (1981).
- Mayer, G. R., et. al. "Preventing School Vandalism and Improving Discipline: A Three-Year Study." Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis. 16. (1983) 355-369.
- Manning, M. Lee. "Toward an Effective Student, Parent, Middle School Partnership." Middle School Journal, 15. (1984) 26.
- McDonald, M. "A Comparison of the Effect of Using Computer Calls and Personal Calls for Improving Pupil Attendance in Public Schools." Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation. University of Tennessee, 1986.
- Moos, R. H., Moos, B. S. "Classroom Social Climate and Student Absences and Grades." Journal of Educational Psychology, 70. (1982) 263-269.
- Myll, Nancy Conover. The Dropout Prevention Handbook. West Nyack, NY. Parker Publishing Co. 1988.

- Pepe, Thomas. "Academic Penalties for Attendance Reasons." A Legal Memorandum, NASSP (March 1985): 1-6.
- Rutter, M., et. al. Fifteen Thousand Hours: Secondary Schools and Their Effects on Children. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press. 1979.
- Safer, Daniel J. "Nonpromotion Correlates and Outcomes at Different Grade Levels." Journal of Learning Disabilities. 8, (October 1986): 500-503.
- Safer, Daniel J. "The Stress of Secondary School for Vulnerable Students." Journal of Youth and Adolescence. 5, (October 1986): 405-407.
- Sadler, I. N. "Social Support Resources, Stress, and Maladjustment of Poor Children." American Journal of Community Psychology, 7 (1979) 425-440.
- Sheets, D., and Dunkleberger, G. "A Determination of the Principal's Effect in School Initiated Home Contacts Concerning Attendance of Elementary School Students." Journal of Educational Research, 72. (1979) 31-312.
- Shelton, J. "A Comparison of Attending and Non-attending Junior High School Students." School Social Work Journal, 2. (1979) 103-109.
- South Carolina Code of Laws. "Compulsory Attendance." Columbia, South Carolina (1974).
- South Carolina Department of Education. The Educational Improvement Act of 1984. Columbia, South Carolina: (The School Assistance Project, College of Education, University of South Carolina, February 1985.)
- St. John, N. "Thirty-six Teachers: Their Characteristics and Outcomes for Black and White Pupils." ERIC Document Reproduction Service, ED) 048101, 1970.
- Van Scriven, James. "Use Rewards to Boost Student Attendance (and Public Goodwill)." Executive Educator. 6, (1986) 22-23.
- U. S. Department of Education. A Nation at Risk. A Report of the National Commission of Excellence in Education.

APPENDICES

I. Information Regarding Parents and Guardians of Students Attending This School

1. Describe the educational levels of the parents or the guardians of students attending this school. (Estimate percent of parents by general educational levels: less than high school, high school, college, etc.)

The following is a summary of the educational levels of the parents and guardians of students who attend ACMS (expressed in percentages)

	<u>Fathers</u>	<u>Mothers</u>	<u>Guardians</u>
Less than high school	13	11	19
High school	43	50	45
Beyond high school	44	39	36

ATTENDANCE
ABSENCE - LAWFUL/UNLAWFUL

ATTENDANCE

State law requires attendance in public or private schools of all children who will be five years of age on or before November 1 of any given year until the child reaches the age of 17. (A waiver for one year may be obtained by a parent who does not wish for a five year old child to attend kindergarten - see JBA-R.)

ABSENCE - LAWFUL/UNLAWFUL

When a student's absence is determined by the principal or his/her designee to be lawful, the absence shall be marked as excused and the student will be given permission to "make up" work missed including tests, reports, homework, etc. The amount of time allowed for make up will be determined by the teacher for the particular class.

If a student's absence is determined by the principal or his/her designee to be unlawful, the absence shall be marked as unexcused and there is no obligation on the part of the school personnel for make up though the student is encouraged to obtain assignments and perform to the best of his/her ability.

A. Lawful Absences

1. Students who are ill and whose attendance in school would endanger their health or the health of others may be temporarily excused from attendance.
2. Students in whose immediate family there is a serious illness or death.
3. Students may be excused from attendance in school for recognized religious holidays of their faith.
4. Should there be a truly emergency situation beyond the control of the parent or student, such as a fire in the home, the student or parent may appeal to the principal that the absence be marked as lawful.

B. Unlawful Absences

1. Students who are willfully absent from school without the knowledge of their parents.
2. Students who are absent from school without acceptable cause with the knowledge of their parents.

3. The principal or his/her designee will make any decision relative to the marking of an absence to be lawful or unlawful. It is recognized that there may be some extenuating circumstances, such as doctor or dental appointments that cannot otherwise be scheduled. These generally will be marked as unexcused, but no penalty will be assessed other than such absences are counted among the total absences allowed for the year. Should repeated appointments of this nature result in absences greater than allowed to gain credit, an appeal may be made through the principal to the superintendent for an exception to the general rule.

C. Absences As A Result of Participation In A School Activity Out of District

It is recognized that many students participate in school sponsored organizations or activities which may lead to absences for school related purposes such as competitions, senior trip, band trips, athletic events, ROTC field trips, conventions, etc. There is also the reality of a need/desire to visit an institution of higher education to consider future enrollment.

While such absences may be for worthwhile causes, they nevertheless result in missed instruction, etc. The school will not allow more than five such absences in this category to be taken during an academic year in addition to any other allowable absences in determining the days of instruction necessary to obtain credit. Each principal will have authority to approve allowable absences in this category.

D. Absences As A Result of Non-Enrollment

Some students are late in enrolling in the fall and others may miss one or more days in transferring from one school to another. This can be significant if the transferring student enrolls from another country and a week or more of absence occurs.

The days of non-enrollment will count as days missed for instruction purposes. Should the number of absences due to non-enrollment plus other absences after enrollment total more than allowable days to receive credit, an appeal may be made as is outlined in B-3 above.

E. Intervention

1. After three consecutive unlawful absences or a total of five unlawful absences school officials shall

ATTENDANCE
ABSENCE - LAWFUL/UNLAWFUL

1. Intervention

After three consecutive unlawful absences or a total of five unlawful absences, school officials shall identify the reasons for the student's continued absence and develop a plan in conjunction with the student and parent or guardian to improve future attendance. As a minimum, the following will be accomplished:

- a. A home visit will be made by the Home Visitor to make an inquiry as to the situation and a report made with a copy given to the parent/guardian. The parent/guardian will be requested to sign the report. (See JBD-E-1)
- b. If continued unlawful absence occurs, a conference will be requested by the principal and/or attendance supervisor.
- c. If the above does not result in improvement, referral will be made to the Family Court for appropriate action.

2. Monthly Reports to the Board (See JBD-E-2)

Form JBD-E-2 is to be completed by the 5th of the month reporting on the situation as of the last day of the month preceding. August and September will be reported on October 5th. May and June will be reported on June 10th. Columns 1, 2, and 3 are to be completed for any students who miss 10 days or more by the end of September. This copy will just show name, homeroom designation and grade, and will be preserved without further marking. A work copy will be made from this form and days written in for the first month. On the 5th of November the original list will be pulled and a horizontal line will be drawn below the last name and any new names added. A work copy will then be prepared, absences reported for the new names, updated absences recorded for old names and at the bottom another horizontal line drawn. Thus, schools should be able to avoid some writing/typing as any student once appearing with 10 or more absences will automatically be on the list which will likely grow progressively longer from month to month.

Since the master list with only columns 1, 2, and 3 complete will have no other date recorded, it can be copied monthly and updated.

identify the reasons for the child's continued absence and develop a plan in conjunction with student and parent or guardian to improve future attendance. A written record must be maintained of all activities, absences, plans, etc. initiated by the school after parent/guardian involvement.

F. Absence in Excess of Ten Days

Individual student absence in excess of ten days must be recorded on JBD-E-2.

G. High School Credit

1. In each class where high school credit may be awarded, a student must attend a minimum number of days each instructional period before receiving consideration for credit. Below is an attendance schedule required for the various instructional periods:

<u>Instruction Period</u>	<u>Credit</u>	<u>Minimum Days Attendance Required</u>
Semesterly (90 days)	1/2	85
Yearly (180 days)	1	170

2. Any student who attends a class fewer than 85/170 days in the instructional period shall not be eligible to receive credit in the class.
3. The Board grants to the superintendent or his designee authority to approve excessive absences if the number of unlawful days is not in excess of ten during a year.

Legal Reference: Code of Laws of South Carolina 59-65-90 of 1976 Code as amended plus 59-1-440-1984 and State Board of Education Regulations approved August 1, 1984.

Adopted March 1976

Revised August 1984

School District No. 17, Sumter, S.C.

(Page 3 of 3 Pages)

These reports will be submitted monthly to the Supervisor of Attendance and Transportation who will review and initial them. The Supervisor will forward copies from all schools to the superintendent who will assemble and present to the Board.

Schools are required to make a negative report monthly until such time as there is at least one student who has been absent 10 days or more. This procedure is designed to fulfill the requirements of the EIA and accompanying regulations.

Issued August 1984

School District No. 17, Sumter, S.C.

ALICE DRIVE MIDDLE SCHOOL

STUDENT SURVEY

Alice Drive Middle School students are being asked to complete the following survey to assist in serving students better in the future. This survey asks a number of questions that relate to developing a plan to improve school attendance by students. Please answer each question honestly. The information you provide is for research purposes only and all information will remain in strict confidence by the researcher.

PLEASE CIRCLE ONLY ONE ANSWER PER QUESTION

1. Your present grade level according to homeroom assignment.

A. 6th B. 7th C. 8th
2. Your race: A. WHITE B. BLACK C. OTHER
3. SEX: A. FEMALE B. MALE
4. I live in a home with:

A. My natural mother and natural father

B. My natural mother only

C. My natural father only

D. One natural parent and a step-parent

E. A guardian
5. Since I began first grade, I have repeated one or more grades: A. YES B. NO

If your answer to question number 5 is YES, please answer questions 6 and 7.
6. How many grades have you repeated?

A. ONE B. TWO C. THREE D. FOUR OR MORE
7. What grade level did you repeat the first time? (Write your answer in the following blank space. (Example: First, Fourth, Seventh, Eighth, etc.)

8. YOUR NAME: _____

(LAST), (FIRST) (MIDDLE)

PLEASE COMPLETE THE RESEARCH SURVEY FORM AND RETURN IT TO YOUR HOMEROOM TEACHER TODAY.

Thank you.

MEMORANDUM

To: Principals

From: Lawrence G. Derthick, Jr., Superintendent *LD*

Date: May 25, 1988

Re: Attendance

Monthly, the Board of Trustees reviews student attendance. I am sharing with you the report for April, 1988 reflecting activity from August through April. Also, you will find attached individual records as compiled by attendance workers.

I feel certain you will be impressed with the information accumulated. Obviously, the information collected is important but even more important is the use that is made.

I would appreciate your sharing this information with counselors, homeroom teachers, and others as you see fit. Obviously, we are not going to do much additional for the balance of this year; however, attendance is a situation that all should continuously address in order to have maximum impact.

Classroom teachers give support when they indicate to students an emphasis on attendance and by being prepared to present well-planned lessons each day. Homeroom teachers are in a position to give day to day guidance and counseling and certainly guidance counselors should be involved to provide additional encouragement.

As principals, you do not receive this regularly; however, it can be made available by asking your attendance worker to give you a copy simultaneously with providing to Mr. Atkins.

Typically, elementary schools have better attendance than middle school and high school, as children enter early adolescence at about the sixth grade, bringing with them teen-age problems, a feeling of independence, and some tendency to "skip" school. At the elementary level, most attendance problems can be traced to dilatory parents. Obviously, at any level, there can be sickness, death, and extraordinary circumstances that make it difficult for a child to attend school regularly.

I am certain that you are proud of the job of attendance workers and will give them support and encouragement as you do all staff members. Obviously, attendance is important...we can't teach them when they are absent.

cc: Members of the Cabinet
Dr. Bill Painter
Mr. Don Barber
Mr. Lamar Atkins
Attendance Workers

Attachment

M E M O R A N D U M

To: All Principals

From: Lawrence G. Derthick, Jr., Superintendent *LGD*

Re: Attendance

Date: November 11, 1987

Mr. Atkins recently has given each of you information summarizing attendance for the past four years. One can view in several ways. Taking Mr. Atkins' data, I note:

First 45 Days

<u>Year</u>	<u>Average Absence per day</u>	<u>% Absent</u>
1984-85	190.71	1.7
1985-86	234.28	2.25
1986-87	234.04	2.28
1987-88	249.67	2.36

It is obvious that our best record for the last four years was immediately after the passage of EIA. It would appear that as time has passed, there may be less emphasis placed on attendance.

This is understandable, but if we don't continue our efforts, there will be less incentive for teachers, students and parents. I urge each of you to look at your 90 day report from last year and see if you can show improvement.

cc: Lamar Atkins
Members of the Cabinet

Performance Statement

11. The principal establishes an attendance program that will achieve an attendance gain or will maintain a level of average daily attendance.

State Requirement

Meets expected level of attendance established by the district.

Possible Data Sources

- a. Attendance reports
- b. Alternative data sources may be used for a first year principal, or the administrative head of a vocational education, or a special education unit.

Effective Practices

The effective practice identified with an asterisk are required for minimum satisfactory performance.

The Principal

- *1. Establishes an attendance program which meets expected level of attendance established by the district.
2. Establishes an attendance program which exceeds expected level of attendance established by the district.

ALICE DRIVE MIDDLE SCHOOL
40 Miller Road
Sumter, South Carolina 29150

TO: Alice Drive Middle School Faculty
FROM: Ellison Lawson, Principal and Phil Cook, Researcher
DATE: January 1990
SUBJECT: Faculty Survey Regarding Student Attendance

PLEASE RESPOND TO THE STATEMENTS BELOW USING A LIKERT SCALE OF 1 TO 5 AS LISTED. WE NEED YOUR INPUT FOR A STUDY WE ARE DOING ON STUDENT ATTENDANCE AT ALICE DRIVE MIDDLE SCHOOL. PLEASE RESPOND TO THE SURVEY HONESTLY. YOUR NAME WILL NOT BE ON THE FORM IN ANY WAY. PLEASE RETURN THE SURVEY TO MR. LAWSON'S BOX BY JANUARY 29, 1990.

LIKERT SCALE

- 1 - Strongly Disagree
- 2 - Disagree
- 3 - Undecided
- 4 - Agree
- 5 - Strongly Agree

- ___ 1. The classroom teacher is the most important individual in encouraging student attendance.
- ___ 2. Regular attendance has a positive effect on student achievement.
- ___ 3. Attendance problems should be handled by the attendance office.
- ___ 4. Parents do not realize the importance of regular attendance.
- ___ 5. Other duties related to classroom instruction are more important than monitoring student attendance.
- ___ 6. Attendance is not a problem at Alice Drive Middle School.
- ___ 7. The administration works effectively with attendance problems.
- ___ 8. Parent and student apathy cause most attendance problems.
- ___ 9. Low economic status is an important factor in student attendance since students from economically poor homes tend to miss more school days.
- ___ 10. Efforts made by school personnel to encourage regular attendance should be increased.
- ___ 11. Boys miss more days than girls.
- ___ 12. Students who have failed a previous grade are more likely to miss more days than those who are on grade level.

Average Daily Attendance as a Percent
of Average Daily Membership
For South Carolina

<u>Year</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>National Rank</u>
1984-85	97.42	1
1985-86	97.10	1
1986-87	96.04	4
1987-88	95.74	6
1988-89	94.48	9

Source: "Rankings of the States" 1984-1989, National Education Association.

Note: For years 1984-85 and 1985-86, the rate was based on the submitted 45-day ADM and ADA as available; and for the years 1986-87 through 1988-89, the rate was based on the submitted 135-day ADM and ADA.

INDIVIDUAL ABSENCE IN EXCESS OF TEN DAYS

School _____

Student	Home Room Designation	Grade	Cumulative - Academic Year			Parent Informed/ Conference Held	Court Action Being Taken
			Lawful	Unlawful	Not Yet Determined		

Name: _____ Date: _____

Parent or Guardian: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ Grade: _____

No. Days Absent: _____

Number of home visits made: _____

Number of phone calls made: _____

Comments by school: _____

Home Visit Report: _____ Date _____

_____ Ill

_____ Religious Holiday

_____ Death in Family

Other _____

_____ Missed Bus

Issued August 1984

School District 17, Sumter, S.C.

```

*****
SCHOOL INCENTIVE REWARD PROGRAM
1986-87 AND 1987-88 DATA
*****

```

DISTRICT: SUMNER 17
 SCHOOL: ALICE DRIVE MIDDLE

SIDS CODE: 4317021
 GROUPING CATEGORY: 3

THE SCHOOL INCENTIVE REWARD PROGRAM CRITERIA INCLUDE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT GAIN, STUDENT ATTENDANCE, AND TEACHER ATTENDANCE.

CRITERION 1: STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT GAIN

THE SCHOOL GAIN INDEX STANDARD MUST BE MET IN ORDER FOR A SCHOOL TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR A MONETARY REWARD. THE SCHOOL GAIN INDEX RANGES FROM ABOUT +7 TO -7, BUT MOST SCHOOLS HAVE SCHOOL GAIN INDICES OF APPROXIMATELY 0. THE SCHOOL GAIN INDEX (SGI) STANDARD FOR GROUP 3 SCHOOLS IS 0.5. THE SGI FOR ALICE DRIVE MIDDLE WAS 2.5 AND, THEREFORE, CRITERION 1 WAS MET.

CRITERION 2: STUDENT ATTENDANCE

IN ORDER FOR A SCHOOL TO MEET THIS CRITERION, THE ATTENDANCE RATE MUST BE AT LEAST 96.0 %, OR THE GAIN MUST BE .5 % PROVIDED THAT THE 1987 RATE WAS AT LEAST 95.0 %. THE 1988 STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATE AT THIS SCHOOL WAS 96.9 % WHILE THE 1987 RATE WAS 97.2 %. THE GAIN WAS -0.3 %. THEREFORE, CRITERION 2 WAS NOT MET.

CRITERION 3: TEACHER ATTENDANCE

IN ORDER FOR A SCHOOL TO MEET THIS CRITERION, THE ATTENDANCE RATE MUST BE AT LEAST 96.0 %, OR THE GAIN MUST BE .5 %, PROVIDED THAT THE 1987 RATE WAS AT LEAST 95.0 %. THE 1988 TEACHER ATTENDANCE RATE AT THIS SCHOOL WAS 97.3 % WHILE THE 1987 RATE WAS 97.8 %. THE GAIN WAS -0.5 %. THEREFORE, CRITERION 3 WAS MET.

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE GUIDELINES OF THE SCHOOL INCENTIVE REWARD PROGRAM, THE PERFORMANCE OF THIS SCHOOL PLACES IT IN THE NON-REWARD CATEGORY.

**Faculty Responses to Alice Drive Middle School
Student Attendance Survey**

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean
Classroom teacher most important person in encouraging student attendance	5	13	3	9	3	2.76
Regular attendance has positive effect on student attendance	0	1	0	8	25	4.68
Attendance problems should be handled by Attendance Office	0	4	1	15	12	4.09
Parents do not realize importance of regular school attendance	0	14	7	8	5	3.12
Other duties related to classroom are more important than monitoring student attendance	2	5	4	12	8	2.97
Attendance is not a problem at Alice Drive Middle School	0	7	9	14	3	3.39
The administration works effectively with attendance problems	0	1	10	17	5	3.18
Parent and student apathy cause most attendance problems	1	2	9	11	10	3.82
Low economic status is an important factor in students from poor homes miss more days	2	6	12	11	3	3.09
Efforts made by school personnel to encourage regular attendance should be increased	1	1	4	24	3	3.82
Boys miss more days than girls	0	5	16	9	3	3.30
Students who have failed a previous grade are more likely to miss more days than those on grade level	0	2	14	15	3	3.56

TABLE 24 (Continued)

Faculty Responses to Alice Drive Middle School
Student Attendance Survey

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean
White students miss more days than black students	3	12	13	0	0	2.36
Sixth graders are more likely to be absent than seventh or eighth graders	2	12	13	1	0	2.46
Seventh graders are more likely to be absent than sixth or eighth graders	0	9	16	3	0	2.79
Eighth graders are more likely to be absent than sixth or seventh graders	1	4	14	7	2	3.18
A Reward Program should be developed at ADM to encourage student attendance	3	9	1	13	1	3.19
Students who ride a bus miss more days than those who arrive by automobile	1	3	16	6	1	3.11
As a classroom teacher, I feel that I should do more to encourage attendance	0	9	6	13	0	3.14
It is the administration's responsibility to deal with attendance problems	0	6	5	13	4	3.54
The school can not affect student attendance	10	15	3	0	0	1.75
Teacher attitude can affect attendance	0	1	3	13	6	4.04

MEMO

TO: ADMS Homeroom Teachers

FROM: J. Phillip Cook, Attendance Project Director

DATE: April 3, 1990

SUBJECT: Homeroom Absences

Please list below the names of students in your homeroom who have missed three to five days of school from the beginning of school (August 21, 1989) to the end of the third quarter (March 23, 1990).

Please submit this list to me by 8:15 a.m. on April 5, 1990. You may put the list in Mr. Lawson's mail box in the Faculty Lounge.

Thank you.

_____ Homeroom Teacher Name

_____ Grade Level

NAME OF STUDENT _____

NUMBER OF DAYS ABSENT _____

Alice Drive Middle School
Inservice, April 6, 1990
Agenda

- 8:00 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. Coffee and Danish (Courtesy of PTSO)
- 8:35 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. Overview of the Workshop and Goal of the Attendance Project Mr. Cook
- 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. Improving Communication Between Teachers and Students Dr. Ringeman
- 10:00 a.m. - 10:20 a.m. Break
- 10:20 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Improving Communication Between Teachers and Parents Dr. Ringeman
- 12:00 a.m. - 1:15 p.m. Lunch (on your own)
- 1:15 p.m. - 2:15 p.m. Common characteristics of chronic absentees and the teachers' role in preventing student absenteeism Ms. Hutchinson
- 2:15 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. Break
- 2:30 p.m. - 3:15 p.m. Divide teachers into groups of six for discussion and feedback - Mr. Cook
- 3:15 p.m. - 3:45 p.m. Group spokespersons report feedback and questions to Dr. Ringeman, Ms. Hutchinson and Mr. Cook
- 3:45 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. Workshop Evaluation
- 4:00 p.m. - Dismissal

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Summer School District 17
 Sumter, South Carolina

INSERVICE EVALUATION

Excellent

Poor

	1	2	3	4	5
I found this inservice beneficial.	38	10	3	0	
This inservice provided relevant information.	32	12	7	0	
The instructor was well prepared.	44	7	0	0	
The necessary materials and supplies were available.	51	0	0	0	
Time was used appropriately.	36	15	0	0	
The purpose of the inservice was relevant to my needs.	34	10	7	0	
The activities were consistent with the purpose.	41	9	0	0	

I found this inservice beneficial.

This inservice provided relevant information.

The instructor was well prepared.

The necessary materials and supplies were available.

Time was used appropriately.

The purpose of the inservice was relevant to my needs.

The activities were consistent with the purpose.

Comments: Sample Comments: Very effective program, we benefited from this one,
parents need this workshop too, new ideas to address an old problem,
we need more of these type inservices, could we have more of this next
year, the instructors were excellent, what will followup be?

Component No. 206, IMPROVING COMMUNICATION SKILLS
 Component Name

Date April 6, 1990

DISTRIBUTION:

White - Director of Staff Development

Yellow - Coordinator/Instructor or Consultant

ALICE DRIVE MIDDLE SCHOOL
Miller Road
Sumter, South Carolina

MEMORANDUM

To: Phil Cook, ADMS Attendance Project Director

FROM: Ellison Lawson, Jr. , Principal

DATE: April 9, 1990

SUBJECT: Appointment of ADMS Attendance Committee

Pursuant to your request of March 20, 1990, I have appointed the faculty members listed below to a school attendance committee. I have appointed three teachers from each grade level at ADMS. I have attempted to balance the committee balanced with representation based on race, sex and interest as we discussed.

It is my understanding that you will chair the committee and will call on me as needed.

Alice Drive Middle School Faculty Attendance Committee

Mr. Mark Tissanair	(6th Grade Representative)
Ms. Laura Baker	(6th grade Representative)
Ms. Betty Hall	(6th Grade Representative)
Mr. Robert McDonald	(7th Grade Representative)
Ms. Betty Elmore	(7th Grade Representative)
Mr. Richard Avins	(7th Grade Representative)
Mr. Eddie Taylor	(8th Grade Representative)
Ms. Miriam Scott	(8th Grade Representative)
Ms. Deborah Long	(8th Grade Representative)

I have asked that these faculty members meet with you for an initial organizational meeting on Wednesday, April 12, 1990. I will introduce you to them at that time. You may meet in my conference room as needed throughout the practicum. Please schedule it with Mrs. Washington.

c: EL:iw

Alice Drive Middle School
Miller Road
Suster, South Carolina 29150

Parent Name
Address
City *State* *Zip*

SUBJECT: *Student Name* *First* *Last*

Dear: *Parent's Name*

Regular attendance in school is the cornerstone for the success of any student. Many studies have been conducted that point out the fact that achievement in school is related to attendance. In light of this fact, I would like to commend *First* for having perfect attendance during the third nine weeks of school. This accomplishment shows that education is valuable to you and your son/daughter and that you have made the effort to ensure that the education your child receives is the best possible.

I encourage *First* to have regular attendance and to continue to strive for perfect attendance. As a result of these efforts, I'm sure you will find that *First* will have a successful year in school and develop good habits that will benefit him/her in later years.

Again, congratulations on *First* attaining perfect attendance and keep up the good work.

Sincerely yours,

Ellison Lawson, Jr.
Principal

Alice Drive Middle School
Miller Road
Sumter, South Carolina 29150

Parent Name
Address
City *State* *Zip*

SUBJECT: *Student Name* *First* *Last*

Dear: *Parent's Name*

Regular attendance in school is the cornerstone for the success of any student. Many studies have been conducted that point out the fact that achievement in school is related to attendance. In light of this fact, I would like to commend *First* for having perfect attendance during the third nine weeks of school. This accomplishment shows that education is valuable to you and your son/daughter and that you have made the effort to ensure that the education your child receives is the best possible.

I encourage *First* to have regular attendance and to continue to strive for perfect attendance. As a result of these efforts, I'm sure you will find that *First* will have a successful year in school and develop good habits that will benefit him/her in later years.

Again, congratulations on *First* attaining perfect attendance and keep up the good work.

Sincerely yours,

Ellison Lawson, Jr.
Principal

Allice Drive Middle School
Miller Road,
Burton, South Carolina 29534

To: Attendance
From: I. Phillip Tapp
Date: April 23, 1990
Subject: Minutes of April 19, 1990 Attendance Committee Meeting

Thank you for attending to the Attendance Committee meeting. We discussed the number of ideas for a reward system to increase student attendance. Included below are some of the ideas mentioned:

1. Letters of appreciation from Principal
2. ...
3. ... for attendance
4. ... for attendance

13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
69
70
71
72
73
74
75
76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
87
88
89
90
91
92
93
94
95
96
97
98
99
100
101
102
103
104
105
106
107
108
109
110
111
112
113
114
115
116
117
118
119
120
121
122
123
124
125
126
127
128
129
130
131
132
133
134
135
136
137
138
139
140
141
142
143
144
145
146
147
148
149
150
151
152
153
154
155
156
157
158
159
160
161
162
163
164
165
166
167
168
169
170
171
172
173
174
175
176
177
178
179
180
181
182
183
184
185
186
187
188
189
190
191
192
193
194
195
196
197
198
199
200
201
202
203
204
205
206
207
208
209
210
211
212
213
214
215
216
217
218
219
220
221
222
223
224
225
226
227
228
229
230
231
232
233
234
235
236
237
238
239
240
241
242
243
244
245
246
247
248
249
250
251
252
253
254
255
256
257
258
259
260
261
262
263
264
265
266
267
268
269
270
271
272
273
274
275
276
277
278
279
280
281
282
283
284
285
286
287
288
289
290
291
292
293
294
295
296
297
298
299
300
301
302
303
304
305
306
307
308
309
310
311
312
313
314
315
316
317
318
319
320
321
322
323
324
325
326
327
328
329
330
331
332
333
334
335
336
337
338
339
340
341
342
343
344
345
346
347
348
349
350
351
352
353
354
355
356
357
358
359
360
361
362
363
364
365
366
367
368
369
370
371
372
373
374
375
376
377
378
379
380
381
382
383
384
385
386
387
388
389
390
391
392
393
394
395
396
397
398
399
400
401
402
403
404
405
406
407
408
409
410
411
412
413
414
415
416
417
418
419
420
421
422
423
424
425
426
427
428
429
430
431
432
433
434
435
436
437
438
439
440
441
442
443
444
445
446
447
448
449
450
451
452
453
454
455
456
457
458
459
460
461
462
463
464
465
466
467
468
469
470
471
472
473
474
475
476
477
478
479
480
481
482
483
484
485
486
487
488
489
490
491
492
493
494
495
496
497
498
499
500
501
502
503
504
505
506
507
508
509
510
511
512
513
514
515
516
517
518
519
520
521
522
523
524
525
526
527
528
529
530
531
532
533
534
535
536
537
538
539
540
541
542
543
544
545
546
547
548
549
550
551
552
553
554
555
556
557
558
559
560
561
562
563
564
565
566
567
568
569
570
571
572
573
574
575
576
577
578
579
580
581
582
583
584
585
586
587
588
589
590
591
592
593
594
595
596
597
598
599
600
601
602
603
604
605
606
607
608
609
610
611
612
613
614
615
616
617
618
619
620
621
622
623
624
625
626
627
628
629
630
631
632
633
634
635
636
637
638
639
640
641
642
643
644
645
646
647
648
649
650
651
652
653
654
655
656
657
658
659
660
661
662
663
664
665
666
667
668
669
670
671
672
673
674
675
676
677
678
679
680
681
682
683
684
685
686
687
688
689
690
691
692
693
694
695
696
697
698
699
700
701
702
703
704
705
706
707
708
709
710
711
712
713
714
715
716
717
718
719
720
721
722
723
724
725
726
727
728
729
730
731
732
733
734
735
736
737
738
739
740
741
742
743
744
745
746
747
748
749
750
751
752
753
754
755
756
757
758
759
760
761
762
763
764
765
766
767
768
769
770
771
772
773
774
775
776
777
778
779
780
781
782
783
784
785
786
787
788
789
790
791
792
793
794
795
796
797
798
799
800
801
802
803
804
805
806
807
808
809
810
811
812
813
814
815
816
817
818
819
820
821
822
823
824
825
826
827
828
829
830
831
832
833
834
835
836
837
838
839
840
841
842
843
844
845
846
847
848
849
850
851
852
853
854
855
856
857
858
859
860
861
862
863
864
865
866
867
868
869
870
871
872
873
874
875
876
877
878
879
880
881
882
883
884
885
886
887
888
889
890
891
892
893
894
895
896
897
898
899
900
901
902
903
904
905
906
907
908
909
910
911
912
913
914
915
916
917
918
919
920
921
922
923
924
925
926
927
928
929
930
931
932
933
934
935
936
937
938
939
940
941
942
943
944
945
946
947
948
949
950
951
952
953
954
955
956
957
958
959
960
961
962
963
964
965
966
967
968
969
970
971
972
973
974
975
976
977
978
979
980
981
982
983
984
985
986
987
988
989
990
991
992
993
994
995
996
997
998
999
1000

To: Attendance
From: S. Revillo, Jr.
Date: April 20, 1958
Subject: Report of April 15, 1958 Attendance Committee Meeting

Thank you for attending the Attendance Committee meeting. We discussed a number of ideas for a reward system to encourage student attendance. The following are the ideas mentioned:

- 1. A certificate of appreciation from the principal to the student.
- 2. A letter of commendation from the principal to the student's parents.
- 3. A reward of some kind for the student.
- 4. A reward of some kind for the student's parents.

Sumter School District No. 17

Sumter, South Carolina 29150
 Alice Drive Middle School

Dear Alice Drive Middle School Students:

Regular attendance in school is the cornerstone for the success of any student. Many research studies have been conducted that point out the fact that academic achievement in school is related to attendance. Whenever a student is absent valuable instructional time is lost. If you do not attend regularly you could be in danger of being retained at your current grade level for next year even though you pass all of your subjects with good grades. Under South Carolina law, any student who fails to attend school at least 170 of the 180 school days may not be promoted to the next grade level. As you can see, the legislature feels very strongly about regular school attendance by students, so much so that students who do not comply with the law will be held back in school. I thought that it was important for you to know the law regarding student attendance.

I have given my permission for Mr. Cook, one of the high school principals, to conduct an eighteen month project to help ADMS increase student attendance. You will be hearing more and more about this attendance project as it begins to become fully operational. During the project we will be working with individual students, teachers and parents in an effort to increase our average daily attendance at ADMS. During this time I would appreciate your full cooperation.

Please be absent only for personal illness or real emergencies. If you have a problem with regular school attendance, please talk with any teacher or guidance counselor. Remember that all of the adults at ADMS care about you and want to help you in any way we can.

If you have any suggestions about how we could improve student attendance, please let your teachers know and we will be glad to study your proposed solutions. You may hold the key to a successful attendance program at ADMS.

Sincerely,

Ellison Lawson, Jr.
 Principal

JPC:jj

SUMTER HIGH SCHOOL

Main Campus
 7880 McCray's Mill Road
 (803) 481-4488

Annex
 Wood Avenue
 (803) 778-8451

MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Alice Drive Middle School
 Miller Road
 (803) 778-8821

Bates Middle School
 Safety Square
 (803) 778-8711

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Alice Drive Elementary School
 Alice Drive
 (803) 778-8887

Crescent Drive Elementary School
 Crescent Drive
 (803) 778-8870

Lewis Elementary School
 Purson Street
 (803) 778-8858

Mitwood Elementary School
 Pinewood Road
 (803) 778-8848

Wilder Elementary School
 Floral Drive
 (803) 778 8723

Wilson Drive Elementary School
 Wilson Drive
 (803) 778 8788

Alice Drive Middle School
Miller Road
Sumter, South Carolina 29150

To: Alice Drive Middle School Faculty
From: J. Phillip Cook, Attendance Project Director
Date: April 25, 1990
Subject: ADMS Attendance Project

We have discussed the fact that the ADMS student attendance has been a concern and has negatively impacted upon the school when the state declared ADMS ineligible for incentive reward money in three of the past four years. The project we have begun is designed to improve student attendance and stress the importance of regular school attendance. You play a major role in our efforts to improve student attendance. Please talk with your students about coming to school each day. When students are absent have them make-up all work missed and let them know that you and the other students missed them. When students realize how important your class is, they may stop missing school for minor reasons.

Please take the first ten minutes of each class period on Thursday, April 26, 1990 to discuss the importance of regular attendance. Stress the negative impact on academics absenteeism has and let the students know that they are genuinely missed when they are absent. Discuss absenteeism with your students and refer any who express a particular problem to the guidance counselor for help.

As we discussed in the April 6, 1990 inservice, your influence is critical to the success of this project.

Attached you will find a copy of the minutes of the last attendance committee meeting. Please review them and contact any one of the committee members for suggestions.

Sumter School District No. 17

Sumter, South Carolina 29190

Alice Drive Middle School

SUMTER HIGH SCHOOL

Main Campus
2800 McCray's Hill Road
80031 481-4488

Annex
Wood Avenue
80031 775-8431

MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Alice Drive Middle School
Miller Road
80031 775-8871

Oliver Middle School
Baker Street
80031 775-8711

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Alice Drive Elementary School
Alice Drive
80031 775-8857

Crosscut Drive Elementary School
Crosscut Drive
80031 775-8879

Lemora Elementary School
Fulton Street
80031 775-8998

Millwood Elementary School
Pinewood Road
80031 775-8848

Wilder Elementary School
Flora Drive
80031 775-5723

Willow Drive Elementary School
Willow Drive
80031 775-5786

Dear _____ :

Thank you for agreeing to serve on the Alice Drive Middle School Student Attendance Review Board (SARB).

As I mentioned to you on the telephone yesterday, the purpose of the SARB is to explore ways to resolve individual student attendance problems after all other school efforts have failed. The SARB will function as a consultant service to assist the student and the student's family on options that may help. Possible options might include: referral to a community agencies such as family counseling, social security and welfare offices, drug abuse centers, alcohol abuse clinics, etc.; referral to alternative educational programs within and outside the school system; reduction in school load such as taking only morning or afternoon classes or changing from seven to four or five classes each day. The possibilities are limited only by our collective creativity as a group.

Our first meeting will be held in the Alice Drive Middle School Library at 3:35 p.m. on May 4, 1990.

I have listed below the names of the SARB Committee members for your information.

Thank you for your support for such a worthwhile endeavor.

ADMS SARB COMMITTEE

Mr. J. Phillip Cook, Attendance Project Director (Ex-Officio)
Ms. Joann Deaton, ADMS Assistant Principal
Ms. Virginia Brown, ADMS Counselor
Mr. Eddie Taylor, ADMS 8th Grade Science Teacher
Mr. Wallie Richardson, President ADMS Student Body
Ms. Eva Leventis, Parent, PTSS Representative
Ms. Wanda Jacobs, Parent, PTSS Representative

Sincerely,

J. Phillip Cook
Attendance Project Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: ADMS Faculty

FROM: J. Phillip Cook, Attendance Project Director

DATE: April 27, 1990

SUBJECT: Perfect Attendance

Attached you will find a list of ADMS students with perfect attendance during First Semester and/or Third Quarter 1990. Please study the lists and as you come into contact with these students over the next few days offer them some praise for their effort toward regular attendance. We want to positively reinforce these students' efforts and encourage them to continue this excellent attendance habit.

INCL: Perfect Attendance Lists

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mr. Cook
FROM: ADMS ATTENDANCE OFFICE
DATE: June 1, 1990
SUBJECT: FOURTH QUARTER ATTENDANCE

As per your telephone call of this morning, I am submitting the homerooms at each grade level with the highest ADA during fourth quarter 1990.

Should you have any questions please call me.

GRADE	HOMEROOM TEACHER	ADA FOURTH QUARTER
6th	Mr. China	96.247
7th	Mr. Anglin	95.781
8th	Mrs. Belew	97.125

C: Mr. Lawson

MEMORANDUM

TO: MS. BROWN

FROM: J. PHILLIP COOK, ATTENDANCE PROJECT DIRECTOR

DATE: June 11, 1990

SUBJECT: ATTENDANCE PROJECT TARGET GROUP FOR SUMMER
SCHOOL 1990

Attached you will find a list of 52 students identified from the list you submitted to me last Friday and identified as in need of intervention counseling during summer school. Some you will know from your work with them during fourth quarter. Others Ms. Sandy worked with and a few are new to the process and will need orienting to what the intervention is all about. The new students are primarily those who amassed excessive absences within the last two weeks of the school year.

Please begin your counseling intervention as soon as feasible after summer school classes begin.

Thank you.

JPC:jj

c: Mr. Ellison Lawson, Jr.
Attendance Office

Alice Drive Middle School
Miller Road
Sumter, South Carolina 29150

June 11, 1990

Parent Name *First* *Last*
Address
City *State* *Zip*

Dear: *Parent Name* *First* *Last*

Regular school attendance is the cornerstone to the success of a middle school student. Whenever a student is absent valuable instructional time is lost. Students who are frequently absent usually do not do well in school and could be in danger of losing credit. Under South Carolina law, any student who misses more than two days of the 28 days scheduled for summer school will not receive credit for summer school unless the absences are medically excused.

First missed *number* days during the 1989-90 school year. *First* is in summer school because *First* either failed for the year or missed so many days that promotion was denied due to excessive absences. In either case, it is important for *First* to attend summer school regularly.

During the summer Ms. Brown, the summer school counselor, will be working with *First* on the importance of regular school attendance. We ask that you too express to *First* the importance of good school attendance. The key to a happy and prosperous life is a good education and we know you want the best for *First*.

If there are any problems that might keep *First* from school, please let us know so we can work together to find solutions. Our goal is to educate every student so that they can be happy, successful, and reach their potential. We feel sure that by working together our goals can be accomplished.

Should you have any questions about school attendance, please call the school's attendance office at 775-0821.

Sincerely,

Ellison Lawson, Jr.
Principal

Alice Drive Middle School
Miller Road
Sumter, South Carolina 29150

July 10, 1990

PARENT NAME *FIRST* *LAST*
ADDRESS
CITY *STATE* *ZIP*

SUBJECT: *STUDENT NAME* *FIRST* *LAST*

PARENT'S NAME *FIRST* *LAST*

Regular attendance in school is the cornerstone for the success of any student. Many studies have been conducted that point out the fact that achievement in school is related to attendance. In light of this fact, I would like to commend *FIRST* for having perfect attendance during the first half of summer school. This accomplishment shows that education is valuable to you and *FIRST* and that you have made the effort to ensure that the education *FIRST*'s receives is the best possible.

I encourage your *FIRST* to have regular attendance and to continue to strive for perfect attendance. As a result of these efforts, I am sure you will find that *FIRST* will have a successful school experience and develop good habits that will benefit *FIRST* in later years.

Again, congratulations on *FIRST* attaining perfect attendance and keep up the good work.

Sincerely yours,

Ellison Lawson, Jr.
Principal

Alice Drive Middle School
Miller Road
Sumter, South Carolina 29150

July 10, 1990

Parent Name *First* *Last*
Address
City *State* *Zip*

Dear *Parent Name* *First* *Last*

First has missed *number* days during the first half of summer school. *First* may be in danger of losing promotion credit due to excessive absences. You should see that *First* misses no more days for the remainder of summer school and you should immediately contact Ms. Brown, the summer school counselor, to ascertain whether or not any options are available for *First* regarding credit for summer school.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call or drop by the school to talk with me.

Sincerely,

Ellison Lawson, Jr.
Principal

c: Ms. Brown
Mr. Cook

Alice Drive Middle School
Miller Road
Sumter, South Carolina 29150

August 14, 1990

PARENT NAME *FIRST* *LAST*
ADDRESS
CITY *STATE* *ZIP*

Dear *PARENT NAME* *FIRST* *LAST*

FIRST *LAST* will be a sixth grader at Alice Drive Middle School for the 1990-91 school year. A review of the attendance record from the fifth grade indicates that *FIRST* had excessive absences last year by middle school standards. The Education Improvement Act is very strict on attendance. Any student who misses more than 10 unexcused days for the year will not be eligible for promotion to the next grade regardless of the grades earned. An excused absence is any absence for which a medical excuse is provided, a death in the immediate family or a recognized religious holiday. All other absences are unexcused. As you can see, the law is very strict and many students are denied promotion every year because of excessive absence.

We believe that school is important and that regular attendance is essential for academic progress and success. As parents it is your responsibility to ensure that *FIRST* attend school every day so *FIRST* will receive the maximum benefit of the educational program offered.

Our goal at Alice Drive Middle School is to do whatever is necessary to work with parents to ensure that every student has the chance to succeed in school. If we can help you with any problems *FIRST* might have, please call us at 775-0821 for an appointment before school starts so that we can discuss strategies that could improve *FIRST*'s attendance for the 1990-91 school year.

Again, please understand that regular attendance is the key to success. If we work together, *FIRST* will have a successful year at Alice Drive Middle School.

Sincerely,

Ellison Lawson, Jr.
Principal

c: Attendance Office
Guidance

Alice Drive Middle School
Miller Road
Sumter, South Carolina 29150

August 16, 1990

PARENT NAME *FIRST* *LAST*
ADDRESS
CITY *STATE* *ZIP*

Subject: *STUDENT NAME* *FIRST* *LAST*

Regular school attendance is the cornerstone to the success of a student in middle school. Whenever a student is absent valuable instructional time is lost. Students who are absent frequently usually do not do well in school and could be in danger of losing credit for the school year. Under South Carolina law, any student who fails to attend school at least 170 days of the 180 scheduled days of school may not receive credit for promotion unless the absences are excused. As you can see, the legislature feels that regular attendance is important, so important that they deny promotion if students do not comply with this law.

FIRST missed *NUMBER* days during the 1989-90 school year. We feel that parents play an important role in the attendance of their child. We ask that you express to *FIRST* the importance of good school attendance. The key to a happy and prosperous life is a good education and we know that you want the best for *FIRST*.

If there are any problems that might keep *FIRST* from school, please let us know so that we can work together to find solutions. If you would like to discuss *FIRST* attendance problem with an administrator or counselor before school starts on August 20, 1991, please call for an appointment. Our goal is to educate every student so that they can be happy, successful, and reach their potential. We are sure that by working together our goals will be accomplished.

Feel free to call the school at 775-0821 if we can be of assistance to you in this matter.

Sincerely,

Ellison Lawson, Jr.
Principal

C: Attendance Office

MEMORANDUM

TO: Guidance Counselors, Attendance Clerk, and Chairman of
Faculty Attendance Committee

FROM: J. Phillip Cook

DATE: August 11, 1990

SUBJECT: ATTENDANCE INTERVENTION 1990-91

Please plan to meet with me at 8:45 a.m. on Wednesday, August 15, 1990 in Mr. Lawson's conference room at ADMS. We need to discuss the big push for achieving excellence in student attendance at ADMS during the 1990-91 year. The fourth quarter 1989-90 and summer school efforts were just warm-ups for the 1990-91 program. It is our 1990-91 effort that will determine whether or not we are "in-the-money" or not through the incentive reward program.

You have all been outstanding in your support of the intervention. I look forward to working with each of you again this year.

Thank you.

JPC:cc

c: Mr. Ellison Lawson, Jr.

Sumter School District No. 17

Sumter, South Carolina 29150

AGENDA ALICE DRIVE MIDDLE SCHOOL ORIENTATION PROGRAM AUGUST 17, 1990

SUMTER HIGH SCHOOL

Main Campus
2962 McCray's Mill Road
(803) 481-4400

Annex
Wood Avenue
(803) 776-6421

THEATER ROOM

MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Alice Drive Middle School
Alice Drive
(803) 776-6821

Berry Middle School
Berry Street
(803) 776-6711

7:00 - 7:05 p.m.

INVOCATION - Ronny Singletary (Student)

7:05 - 7:15 p.m.

WELCOME - Ellison Lawson (Principal)

7:15 - 7:45 p.m.

SCHEDULES & GUIDANCE ORIENTATION

- Ms. Sandy (Counselor)

7:45 - 7:48 p.m.

INTRODUCTION OF TEACHER OF THE YEAR

- Ms. Deaton (Assistant Principal)

7:48 - 8:00 p.m.

FACULTY EXPECTATIONS OF ADMS STUDENTS

- Ms. Mahaffey (Teacher of the Year)

8:00 - 8:10 p.m.

ATTENDANCE INTERVENTION PROJECT

- Mr. Cook (Attendance Project Director)

8:10 - 8:45 p.m.

SCHOOL TOUR - Student Government & Teachers

8:45 - 9:15 p.m.

REFRESHMENTS - LOBBY

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Alice Drive Elementary School
Alice Drive
(803) 776-6827

Crosscut Drive Elementary School
Crosscut Drive
(803) 776-6879

Lemna Elementary School
Furter Street
(803) 776-6898

Wilwood Elementary School
Pinewood Road
(803) 776-6848

Wilder Elementary School
Field Drive
(803) 776-6723

Wilson Drive Elementary School
Wilson Drive
(803) 776-6796

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the ADMS Faculty Attendance Committee

FROM: J. Phillip Cook, Attendance Project Director

DATE: August 22, 1990

SUBJECT: FIRST MEETING FOR 1990-91 YEAR

The first meeting of the new school year of the ADMS Faculty Attendance Committee will be held at 3:35 p.m. in Mr. Lawson's Conference Room on Monday, August 27, 1990.

We will review summer school attendance statistics, hear a proposal by the high school counselors on what classroom teachers can do to encourage attendance, go over plans for the year and hear any new business you wish to propose.

Over the summer we lost the services of Miriam Scott. Miriam took a home economics position at the high school. Mr. Lawson has asked Ms. Betty Ann Sharpe to replace Ms. Scott as a seventh grade representative on the attendance committee. As you see and talk to Ms. Sharpe, be sure to catch her up on what we are doing as a committee so she will be able to step right in and become a productive member of the committee right away.

I look forward to working with you again this year on this very important project.

Thank you.

c: Mr. Ellison Lawson, Jr.

MEMORANDUM

To: Sumter High School Faculty
From: Director of Guidance
Date: November 14, 1989
Subj: Suggestions on How to Effectively Work with Chronic Absentees

Listed below are a few suggestions that might be helpful in working with chronic absentees:

1. Take the time to learn as much as you can about every student you teach. Try to determine family status and background but do not appear to be nosy.
2. Be positive when dealing with students.
3. When a student is absent and returns, let the student know you missed them and are happy to see them back.
4. All work missed should be make-up but let the student know you are willing to help.
5. Help students find success by frequent monitoring and a reward system for achievement.
6. Give personal attention to every student and let them know you want to teach them.
7. Stress the positive aspect of regular school attendance and not the punitive aspect of non-attendance.
8. Seek help from the counselors when students have unique problems and needs.
9. Call the parents of students who are frequently absent and ask for their support.
10. Do not give up on a student. Actively seek ways to help the student be successful in school.

Alice Drive Middle School
Miller Road
Sumter, South Carolina 29150

PARENT NAME *FIRST* *LAST*
ADDRESS
CITY *STATE* *ZIP*

Subject: *STUDENT NAME* *FIRST* *LAST*

Regular school attendance is the cornerstone to the success of a student in middle school. Whenever a student is absent valuable instructional time is lost. Students who are absent frequently usually do not do well in school and could be in danger of losing credit for the school year. Under South Carolina law, any student who fails to attend school at least 170 days of the 180 scheduled days of school may not receive credit for promotion unless the absences are excused. As you can see, the legislature feels that regular attendance is important, so important that they deny promotion if students do not comply with this law.

FIRST missed *NUMBER* days during the 1989-90 school year. We feel that parents play an important role in the attendance of their child. We ask that you express to *FIRST* the importance of good school attendance. The key to a happy and prosperous life is a good education and we know that you want the best for *FIRST*.

If there are any problems that might keep *FIRST* from school, please let us know so that we can work together to find solutions. If you would like to discuss *FIRST* attendance problem with an administrator or counselor before school starts on August 20, 1991, please call for an appointment. Our goal is to educate every student so that they can be happy, successful, and reach their potential. We are sure that by working together our goals will be accomplished.

Feel free to call the school at 775-0821 if we can be of assistance to you in this matter.

Sincerely,

Ellison Lawson, Jr.
Principal

C: Attendance Office

MEMORANDUM

TO: Guidance Counselors (ADMS)

FROM: J. Phillip Cook, Attendance Project Director

DATE: September 13, 1990

SUBJECT: ADMS REPEATING STUDENTS

Attached you will find a list of students repeating sixth, seventh and eighth grades at ADMS. The names that have an asterisk beside them are those repeating because of excessive absences during the previous year and not because of course failure. Those names with with two asterisks beside them are students who both failed courses and had excessive absences. All of these names appear on the list of students with five or more absences you received earlier this week but I thought you might want to have this information available to you as you conduct your counseling sessions with these students.

Please let me know if I can be of assistance.

JPC:jj

Enclosures As Stated

Schedule
Alice Drive Middle School
Inservice

October 19, 1990

- 7:45 - 8:15 a.m. Coffee and Registration
- 8:15 - 8:30 a.m. Group I (refer to Group Number on your name tag) to Theater room
Group II to board buses in parking lot

Group I Schedule (A.M.) - Theater Room-ADMS

- 8:30 - 10:00 a.m. At-Risk Youth - Mr. Doug Witherspoon (District 17 Social Worker)
- 10:00 - 10:15 a.m. Break
- 10:15 - 11:15 a.m. Psychological Profiles of Potential School Dropouts - Mr. Dave Evans (District 17 Psychologist)
- 11:15 - 12:00 noon The District 17 Extension School - Mr. K. D. Singleton (Extension School Principal)
- 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. Lunch (on your own)

Group II Schedule (A.M.)

- 8:30 - 8:50 a.m. Travel to District 17 Extension School
- 8:50 - 9:45 a.m. Overview of Extension School and tour facilities - Mr. Johnny Martin (Extension School Assistant Principal)
- 9:45 - 10:00 a.m. Break
- 10:00 - 10:25 a.m. Board buses and travel to District 2 School for At-Risk Youth
- 10:25 - 11:25 a.m. Overview of School for At-Risk Youth and tour of facilities - Mr. Fursan Vaughn (Assistant Principal)
- 11:25 - 12:00 noon Board buses and travel back to ADMS
- 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. Lunch (on your own)

Group I Schedule (P.M.)

- 1:00 - 1:15 p.m. Group I board buses in parking lot
- 1:15 - 1:35 p.m. Travel to District 17 Extension School
- 1:35 - 2:25 p.m. Overview of Extension School and tour facilities - Mr. Johnny Martin (Extension School Assistant Principal)
- 2:25 - 2:40 p.m. Break
- 2:40 - 3:05 p.m. Board buses and travel to District 2 School for At-Risk Youth
- 3:05 - 4:00 p.m. Overview of School for At-Risk Youth and tour of facilities - Mr. Furman Vaughn (Assistant Principal)
- 4:00 - 4:00 p.m. Complete Inservice Evaluation Form
- 4:00 - 4:35 p.m. Board buses and travel back to ADMS
- 4:35 p.m. Dismissal

Group II Schedule (P.M.)

- 1:00 - 1:15 p.m. Report to ADMS Theater Room
- 1:15 - 2:45 p.m. At-Risk Youth - Mr. Doug Witherspoon (District 17 social worker)
- 2:45 - 3:00 p.m. Break
- 3:00 - 3:30 p.m. Psychological Profiles of Potential School Dropouts - Mr. Dave Evans (District 17 Psychologist)
- 3:30 - 4:15 p.m. The District 17 Extension School - Mr. K.D. Singleton (Extension School Principal)
- 4:15 - 4:30 p.m. Complete Inservice Evaluation Form
- 4:30 p.m. Dismissal

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Sumter School District 17
Sumter, South Carolina

INSERVICE EVALUATION

I found this inservice beneficial.

This inservice provided relevant information.

The instructor was well prepared.

The necessary materials and supplies were available.

Time was used appropriately.

The purpose of the inservice was relevant to my needs.

The activities were consistent with the purpose.

	Excellent			Poor	
	1	2	3	4	5
I found this inservice beneficial.	39	1	5	0	
This inservice provided relevant information.	36	12	0	0	
The instructor was well prepared.	45	1	0	0	
The necessary materials and supplies were available.	39	9	0	0	
Time was used appropriately.	41	7	0	0	
The purpose of the inservice was relevant to my needs.	37	10	0	0	
The activities were consistent with the purpose.	42	5	0	0	

Comments: Tours were impressive, I never knew we had these resources available to our students in
the district, I have many AT-RISK youth in my classes at did not even know it - this know-
ledge will help me identify them and be able to help. Thanks - we needed that one, Doug
Witherspoon needs to talk with our studentbody as soon as possible, we need more on this.

Component No. 703, PSYCHOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF INSTRUCTION
Component Name

Date October 19, 1990

DISTRIBUTION:

- White - Director of Staff Development
- Yellow - Coordinator/Instructor or Consultant

Alice Drive Middle School
Miller Road
Sumter, South Carolina 29154

PARENT
ADDRESS
CITY *STATE* *ZIP*

Subject: *FIRST* *MI* *LAST*

Regular school attendance is the cornerstone to the success of a student in middle school. Whenever a student is absent valuable instructional time is lost. Students who are absent frequently usually do not do well in school and might be in danger of losing credit for the school year. Under South Carolina law, any student who fails to attend school at least 170 days of a school year may not receive credit unless the absences are excused. As you can see, the legislature feels that regular attendance is important, so important that they deny promotion if students do not comply with this law.

FIRST missed *NUMBER* days during the first three quarters of this year. We feel that parents play an important role in the attendance of their child. We ask that you express to *FIRST* the importance of good school attendance. The key to a happy and prosperous life is a good education and we know that you want the best for *FIRST*.

If there are any problems that might keep *FIRST* from school, please let us know so that we can work together to find solutions. Our goal is to educate every student so that they can be happy, successful, and reach their potential. We are sure that by working together our goals will be accomplished.

Should you have any questions about school attendance, please call the school's attendance clerk at 775-0821.

Sincerely,

Ellison Lawson
Principal

MEMORANDUM

TO: ADMS Counselors

FROM: J. Phillip Cook, Attendance Project Director

DATE: November 6, 1990

SUBJECT: Sixth Grade Repeaters

The meeting originally scheduled for November 15, 1990 to discuss sixth grade students who had repeated at least one previous grade prior to 1990-91 has been re-scheduled for November 19, 1990 as per your request.

We will meet at 3:45 p.m. in Ms. Sandy's office at ADMS.

Thank you.

JPC:jj

c: Mr. Ellison Lawson, Jr.

Alice Drive Middle School
American Education Week Open House
November 21, 1990

Program

Invocation		
Welcome	Mr. Ellison Lawson, Jr.	Principal
Introduction of Teacher-of-the-Year	Mrs. Joann Deaton	Assistant Principal
Brief Remarks	Mrs. Reba Mahaffey	Teacher-of-the-Year
Entertainment	ADMS Strings Group	Mr. Emmett Anglin Strings Director
	ADMS Chorus	Ms. Laura Baker Chorus Director
Attendance Goals	Mr. Phillip Cook	Attendance Project Director
EIA Incentive Reward Program	Mr. Ellison Lawson, Jr.	Principal
Guidance Function and Explanation of School Tour	Mrs. Virginia Brown	Counselor
Closing Comments	Mr. Ellison Lawson, Jr.	Principal

The purpose of the tour during open house is to become acquainted with your child's schedule and teachers. The teachers will talk with you about the class curriculum and in general about class activities. If you desire a conference with your child's teacher(s), please see or call a counselor for an appointment. Given the time constraints it is not possible for teachers to talk about individual student progress and problems this evening. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mr. Lawson, Ms. Deaton, and Mr. Shirah
FROM: J. Phillip Cook, Attendance Project Director
DATE: December 5, 1990
SUBJECT: CHRONIC ABSENTEES WITH IMPROVED ATTENDANCE

Attached you will find a list of students who were labeled as chronic absentees³ at the end of the 1989-90 school year. The Attendance Office has reported that these students have missed no more than two days this year through December 3, 1990. The intervention plan calls for these students to have lunch with their respective grade-level administrator during the week of December 10-14, 1990. However, due to the unexpected numbers you may need to consider beginning the lunch program immediately and running it through December 14th.

Please call for these students during their fourth period lunch time (their location by teacher and room number is printed beside each name on the lists). Please find a table or group of tables where you can sit with these students. The purpose is to recognize their progress and encourage continued good attendance habits.

I had initially indicated that the grade-level administrator would pick-up the tab for these lunches but have since worked it out with the lunchroom manager, the district dietician and Mr. Klein to charge these lunches to Mr. Klein at the district. Just tell Mrs. Skinner how many lunches you are charging each day to the Attendance Project. She will bill Mr. Klein using a paperwork transfer of funds.

I would be interested to know how the program worked and what the students had to say once you complete this phase.

Thank you for your cooperation and support.

JPC:jj

c: Mr. Klein, Assistant Superintendent for Fiscal Affairs
Ms. Peggy Skinner, Lunchroom Manager

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mr. Cook, Attendance Project Director

FROM: Attendance Clerk

DATE: December 17, 1990

SUBJECT: BAD WEATHER/HEALTH EPIDEMICS 1990-91

As per your telephone call of December 13, 1990, I have reviewed the district data and conferred with Mr. Atkins, District No. 17 Attendance Supervisor, on the matter of bad weather days. We show no days lost to bad weather nor any days that were severe enough to impact significantly on student attendance.

I also spoke to Ms. Nancy Collins, ADMS School Nurse, and Mrs. Sarah Littles, ADMS Health Room Aide, regarding health epidemics. Neither could find a pattern of absences of ADMS students that suggested a school-wide health problem that would impact on student attendance.

I am pleased to forward this information to you.

c: Mr. Lawson
Mrs. Collins

Alice Drive Middle School
Miller Road
Sumter, South Carolina 29150

Parent Name
Address
City *State* *Zip*

SUBJECT: *Student Name* *First* *Last*

Dear: *Parent's Name*

Regular attendance in school is the cornerstone for the success of any student. Many studies have been conducted that point out the fact that achievement in school is related to attendance. In light of this fact, I would like to commend *First* for having perfect attendance during the third nine weeks of school. This accomplishment shows that education is valuable to you and your son/daughter and that you have made the effort to ensure that the education your child receives is the best possible.

I encourage *First* to have regular attendance and to continue to strive for perfect attendance. As a result of these efforts, I'm sure you will find that *First* will have a successful year in school and develop good habits that will benefit him/her in later years.

Again, congratulations on *First* attaining perfect attendance and keep up the good work.

Sincerely yours,

Ellison Lawson, Jr.
Principal

Alice Drive Middle School
Miller Road
Sumter, South Carolina 29150

To: Sixth Grade Homeroom Teachers

From: J. Phillip Cook, Attendance Project Director

Date:

Subject: Pizza Party for Homeroom with Highest ADA -
First Semester 1990-91

All sixth grade homerooms are listed below in order of their average daily attendance (ADA) for first semester 1990-91. The homeroom with the highest ADA this semester was Ms. Anderson's. Congratulations to Ms. Anderson and her students for a great semester of attendance.

<u>Homeroom</u>	<u>Semester ADA</u>
1. Dale Anderson	96.8512
2. Richard Avins	96.5313
3. Laura Baker	96.4127
4. Ruth Bryant	96.3120
5. Jeanette Dunlap	96.1018
6. Betty Hall	96.0936
7. Phillip Jackson	95.9531
8. Austin China	95.7930
9. Louise Marlowe	95.6581
10. Thelma McBride	95.6430
11. Warren Norris	95.5139
12. Irene Richardson	95.3291
13. Mary Sarvis	95.1270
14. Louise Segars	95.0997
15. Cornelia Snow	95.0081
16. Deborah Weston	94.9631
17. Bertha Willis	94.9547

c: Mrs. Deaton 6th Grade Principal

Alice Drive Middle School
Miller Road
Sumter, South Carolina 29150

To: Seventh Grade Homeroom Teachers
From: J. Phillip Cook, Attendance Project Director
Date:
Subject: Pizza Party for Homeroom with Highest ADA -
First Semester 1990-91

All seventh grade homerooms are listed below in order of their average daily attendance (ADA) for first semester 1990-91. The homeroom with the highest ADA this semester was Ms. Belew's. Congratulations to Ms. Belew and her students for a great semester of attendance.

<u>Homeroom</u>	<u>Semester ADA</u>
1. Margaret Belew	96.6231
2. Mary Reed	96.2431
3. Betty Ann Sharpe	96.2332
4. Mark Tesenair	96.1084
5. Richard Avins	96.0443
6. Robert McDonald	96.0153
7. Betty Sumter	96.0055
8. Shelby Carter	95.9903
9. Suzanne Dwight	95.6565
10. Barbara Worden	95.4512
11. Barbara Adams	95.2947
12. Alexander Friday	94.6636
13. Linda Matthews	94.2378
14. Deborah Sims	93.6125
15. Betty Elmore	93.0242

c: Mr. Shirar - 7th Grade Principal

Alice Drive Middle School
Miller Road
Sumter, South Carolina 29150

To: Eighth Grade Homeroom Teachers
From: J. Phillip Cook, Attendance Project Director
Date:
Subject: Pizza Party for Homeroom with Highest ADA -
First Semester 1990-91

All eighth grade homerooms are listed below in order of their average daily attendance (ADA) for first semester 1990-91. The homeroom with the highest ADA this semester was Mr. Anglin's. Congratulations to Mr. Anglin and her students for a great semester of attendance.

<u>Homeroom</u>	<u>Semester ADA</u>
1. Emmett Anglin	97.3280
2. Jacqueline Hepler	97.0138
3. Deborah Long	96.8310
4. Kathleen Wilson	96.7591
5. Eddie Taylor	96.7463
6. Terry Crawford	96.5431
7. Reba Mahaffey	96.4390
8. Barbara Zichterman	96.3331
9. Angie Watson	96.2719
10. Lugenia Owens	96.2218
11. George Cherry	96.0189
12. Ann Alderman	96.0012
13. Paul Hilburn	95.8731
14. Julia Williams	95.7609
15. Burnice Keels	95.5321

c: Mr. Lawson 8th Grade Principal

MEMORANDUM

TO: ADMS SARB MEMBERS

FROM: J. Phillip Cook, Attendance Project Director

DATE: February 8, 1991

SUBJECT: SARB Meeting

The counselors have referred two cases for SARB action. Please plan to meet in Mr. Lawson's conference room at 3:45 p.m. on Wednesday, February 13, 1991. We should be finished with these cases by 5:00 p.m.

Thank you.

c: Mr. Ellison Lawson, Jr.
Guidance

JPC:gsr

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mr. Klein, Assistant Superintendent for Fiscal Affairs
Mr. Lamar Atkins, Director of Attendance and Transportation

FROM: J. Phillip Cook, Attendance Project Director

DATE: February 26, 1991

SUBJECT: Attendance Practicum at ADMS

Please plan to meet at 1:30 p.m. on March 6, 1991 for the purpose of discussing the attendance intervention that is now one year into implementation at ADMS. I have reserved the Board Conference Room for the meeting.

Mr. Lawson has requested to be present to discuss the practicum and to discuss the future of the In-School-Suspension program at ADMS. Call me if this does not meet with your approval.

Please collect your thoughts on the intervention and be prepared to discuss both positives and negatives as you see them. I need an honest appraisal by people who are familiar with the intervention but have no personal stake in it. The two of you have been involved on the periphery throughout the practicum and have provided financial, administrative and moral support. Everyone at ADMS is so involved and have a vested interest in the outcome until I wonder if the accolades are a true picture of the program.

Thank you.

JPC:cc

MEMORANDUM**TO:** ADMS FACULTY ATTENDANCE COMMITTEE**FROM:** J. Phillip Cook, Attendance Project Director**DATE:** March 6, 1991**SUBJECT:** Committee Meeting

I met with Mr. Klein and Mr. Atkins on March 4, 1991 regarding the attendance practicum at ADMS. As a result of that meeting I have a change in one of our procedures to discuss with you.

Please plan to meet at 3:45 p.m. in Mr. Lawson's conference room on Monday, **March 11, 1991**. I anticipate that the meeting will take no more than 15-20 minutes of your time.

Thank you.

JPC:bm

c: Mr. Ellison Lawson, Jr.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mr. Cook

FROM: Attendance Office

DATE: April 2, 1991

SUBJECT: Attendance Through End of Third Quarter

As per your telephone call of March 29, 1991, I am forwarding lists of students who had perfect attendance for the third quarter of 1991 and for students with perfect attendance for the year through the end of the third quarter.

Mrs. Virginia Brown asked me to forward her list of students that guidance has seen and who have shown improvement in their attendance.

c: Mr. Lawson
Mrs. Brown

MEMORANDUM

TO: ADMS Homeroom Teachers

FROM: J. Phillip Cook, Attendance Project Director

DATE: April 8, 1991

SUBJECT: Perfect Attendance Letters

Attached you will find letters for students in your homeroom, if any, with perfect attendance for the third quarter and for those with perfect attendance all year. Please distribute these to the students during homeroom on April 9, 1991. Please encourage the students to take the letters to their parents. Unless you encourage them to take the letters home many will just wind up in a school trash can or on the floor in the hall.

The procedure to send letters through the students rather than mail them to the parents is a cost cutting factor. Your help will be appreciated.

You will find a list of students (school-wide) with perfect attendance for the two periods indicated above. Please post these lists in your room and congratulate these students as you come into contact with them during the day.

Thank you.

JPC:jj

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mr. Cook
FROM: ADMS ATTENDANCE Office
DATE: April 1, 1991
SUBJECT: Third Quarter Attendance

As per your telephone call of this morning, I am forwarding the homerooms at each grade level with the highest ADA during Fourth Quarter 1991.

Please call me if you have any questions.

GRADE	HOMEROOM TEACHER	ADA FOURTH QTR.
6th	Mr. Phillip Jackson	96.251
7th	Mrs. R. Reed	96.013
8th	Mrs. J. Hepler	96.853

c: Mr. Lawson

Alice Drive Middle School
Miller Road
Sumter, South Carolina 29150

June 14, 1990

PARENT NAME
ADDRESS
CITY *STATE* *ZIP*

SUBJECT: *STUDENT NAME* *FIRST* *LAST*

DEAR: *PARENT'S NAME*

Regular attendance in school is the cornerstone for the success of any student. Many studies have been conducted that point out the fact that achievement in school is related to attendance. In light of this fact, I would like to commend *FIRST* for having perfect attendance during the 1989-90 school year. This accomplishment shows that education is valuable to you and *FIRST* and that you have made the effort to ensure that *FIRST* receives the best possible educational experience.

I encourage *FIRST* to have regular attendance and to continue to strive for perfect attendance. As a result of these efforts, I'm sure you will find that *FIRST* will have a successful year in school and develop good habits that will benefit *FIRST* in later years.

Again, congratulations on *FIRST* attaining perfect attendance and keep up the good work.

Sincerely yours,

Ellison Lawson, Jr.
Principal

Alice Drive Middle School
Miller Road
Sumter, South Carolina 29150

Parent Name
Address
City *State* *Zip*

Re: *Student Name* *First* *Last*

Dear *Parent Name*:

The District Attendance Supervisor gave me *First*'s name as a student who might benefit from a project I am conducting on improving student attendance at Alice Drive Middle School. I understand that *First* has been truant or chronically absent from school which resulted in an appearance in Family Court.

Perhaps we could help through a newly formed committee at Alice Drive Middle School. The Student Attendance Review Board (SARB) has been created to assist *First* and you.

The SARB members will look at each case and make some recommendations that are tailored to *First*'s particular circumstances. The SARB can make school-wide or community referrals for both you and *First* that may help improve attendance.

If you would like to discuss what the SARB can do to help you and *First* call me at 481-4480 ext. 247. If you are interested, we can call a meeting within five to seven days.

Please let me know if the SARB can be of assistance to you.

Sincerely,

J. Phillip Cook
Attendance Project Director (ADMS)

Sumter School District No. 17

Sumter, South Carolina 29150

June 6, 1991

Dear Alice Drive Middle School Faculty and Staff:

I have just received some excellent news that I want to share with you. This news could not wait until you return in August.

We have finally reached the student attendance ADA requirement for a financial award under the South Carolina School Incentive Reward Program. According to our district office calculations, Alice Drive Middle School should receive approximately \$59,452.00 for use as we determine on instructional improvement.

Your cooperation and involvement with the attendance improvement practicum administered by Mr. Cook is the reason for the turn around in the student attendance rate. You should be proud of your part in this achievement.

I will be at school all summer and invite you to submit your "wish list" of instructional supplies and equipment to me. I will involve the department heads and the School Improvement Council in any final decisions regarding expenditure of the funds but wanted your input and ideas on instructional needs.

Once again, thank you for your help with this project. It just goes to show that by working together we can solve any problem facing Alice Drive Middle School. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Ellison Lawson, Jr.
Principal

PLANTS HIGH SCHOOL

West Campus
2828 McCarty's Mill Road
(803) 771-4488

Annex
Wood Avenue
(803) 778-8431

MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Alice Drive Middle School
1800 Road
(803) 778-8821

Gene Middle School
Lafayette Street
(803) 778-0711

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Alice Drive Elementary School
Alice Drive
(803) 778-0887

Crosscut Drive Elementary School
Crosscut Drive
(803) 778-0670

Lower Elementary School
Fulton Street
(803) 778-0948

Madison Elementary School
Pinewood Road
(803) 778-0648

Water Elementary School
Pearl Drive
(803) 778-8723

Water Drive Elementary School
Water Drive
(803) 778-8788

PRACTICUM MANAGER'S LEADERSHIP AGENDA

The practicum manager capitalized on his educational leadership experiences to influence the practicum intervention. These leadership qualities were the sum total of the practicum manager's experiences in leadership which included formal education, on-the-job experience, training, and experience through the school of hard knocks.

Management control was a leadership strength of the practicum manager. It was essential to the practicum to compare actual events to plans and make the necessary adjustments where actual performance deviated from original plans. Management control was necessary because the goals of individual faculty members, parents, district administrators, and students were not always identical to those of the school's administration. Such was the case with the goals of this practicum intervention. It was necessary to coordinate the efforts of all concerned for the intervention's success.

Creativity as a leadership dimension was another leadership strength of the practicum manager. The practicum intervention required the application of the practicum manager's mental ability and curiosity to the

point of developing an intervention that addressed the problem of improving student attendance at Alice Drive Middle School. The practicum intervention required a new, innovative means of solving a situation that had not been addressed previously in any organized, systematic way.

Persistence was a leadership strength of the practicum manager and was essential for the practicum's success. The ability to take a position and maintain it throughout the course of the intervention was essential. The practicum involved change that was not necessarily welcomed by some of the participants. The practicum manager had to "hang tough" through persuasion and questioning in defense of the practicum.

The practicum manager believed that the leadership dimension of planning and organization was a strength he possessed and was useful in developing the practicum intervention. Organizing is sequencing the components of a plan in a logical fashion. This was also an essential element of the practicum intervention given the expected results. Planning in the form of formulating an idea in sufficient detail to produce a desirable end result was evident throughout the intervention.

The leadership strengths cited above are

characteristic of the promoter/controller style of educational leadership. The writer used the Behavioral Characteristic Rating Form for a self-evaluation and then asked seven faculty members and two administrators to do the same. The rating form consisted of 26 sets of contrasting behaviors to be rated on a scale of one to four. Either extreme of the scale demonstrated which behavior was the most dominant. The self evaluation by the writer clearly fell in the promoter style along with five of the faculty members both administrators. One faculty member rated the writer slightly into the controller leadership style. The dominant aspects of this leadership style are creativity and an orientation to seek results. These two characteristics were precisely what was needed to successfully implement this practicum. It would appear then that the leadership style of the practicum manager was a perfect match for the leadership needs of the practicum.

BEHAVIORAL CHARACTERISTICS

RATING FORM

Name of person being rated: Phil Cook

Directions: Circle one of the numbers to indicate how you see the person you are rating. For example:

Dominant 1 2 3 4 Easy-going
The rater here decided that the person he was rating was more easy-going than dominant, but not easy-going enough to rate a 4.

- | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------------------|
| 1. Appears confident | <u>1</u> | 2 | 3 | 4 | Reserved |
| 2. Passive | 1 | 2 | 3 | <u>4</u> | Aggressive |
| 3. Responsive | 1 | <u>2</u> | 3 | 4 | Self-controlled |
| 4. Easy-going | 1 | 2 | <u>3</u> | 4 | Dominant |
| 5. Takes charge | <u>1</u> | 2 | 3 | 4 | Goes along |
| 6. Formal | 1 | 2 | <u>3</u> | 4 | Informal |
| 7. Disciplined | 1 | <u>2</u> | 3 | 4 | Spontaneous |
| 8. Communicates readily | <u>1</u> | 2 | 3 | 4 | Hesitant communicator |
| 9. Accepting | 1 | 2 | <u>3</u> | 4 | Challenging |
| 10. Appears unorganized | 1 | 2 | <u>3</u> | 4 | Appears organized |
| 11. Initiates social contact | <u>1</u> | 2 | 3 | 4 | Lets others initiate |
| 12. Asks questions | 1 | 2 | <u>3</u> | 4 | Makes statements |
| 13. Overbearing | 1 | <u>2</u> | 3 | 4 | Shy |
| 14. Reserved | 1 | 2 | 3 | <u>4</u> | Fun loving |
| 15. Appears active | 1 | <u>2</u> | 3 | 4 | Appears thoughtful |
| 16. Relaxed | 1 | 2 | 3 | <u>4</u> | Assertive |
| 17. Withholds feeling | 1 | 2 | <u>3</u> | 4 | Expresses feeling |
| 18. Relationship oriented | 1 | 2 | <u>3</u> | 4 | Task oriented |
| 19. Pushy | 1 | <u>2</u> | 3 | 4 | Gentle |
| 20. Discriminating | 1 | <u>2</u> | 3 | 4 | Impulsive |
| 21. Extrovert | <u>1</u> | 2 | 3 | 4 | Introvert |
| 22. Warm | 1 | <u>2</u> | 3 | 4 | Cool |
| 23. Subtle | 1 | 2 | 3 | <u>4</u> | Direct |
| 24. Distant | 1 | <u>2</u> | 3 | 4 | Close |
| 25. States information | 1 | <u>2</u> | 3 | 4 | Saves information |
| 26. Quiet | 1 | 2 | <u>3</u> | 4 | Talkative |

BEHAVIORAL CHARACTERISTICS

RATING FORM

Name of person being rated: Jack (Phil) Cook

Directions: Circle one of the numbers to indicate how you see the person you are rating. For example:

Dominant 1 2 ③ 4 Easy-going
The rater here decided that the person he was rating was more easy-going than dominant, but not easy-going enough to rate a 4.

1. Appears confident	①	2	3	4	Reserved
2. Passive	1	2	③	4	Aggressive
3. Responsive	①	2	3	4	Self-controlled
4. Easy-going	1	2	③	4	Dominant
5. Takes charge	①	2	3	4	Goes along
6. Formal	1	②	3	4	Informal
7. Disciplined	1	②	3	4	Spontaneous
8. Communicates readily	①	2	3	4	Hesitant communicator
9. Accepting	1	2	3	④	Challenging
10. Appears unorganized	1	2	3	④	Appears organized
11. Initiates social contact	1	②	3	4	Lets others initiate
12. Asks questions	1	2	③	4	Makes statements
13. Overbearing	1	②	3	4	Shy
14. Reserved	1	2	③	4	Fun loving
15. Appears active	①	2	3	4	Appears thoughtful
16. Relaxed	1	2	3	④	Assertive
17. Withholds feeling	1	2	③	4	Expresses feeling
18. Relationship oriented	1	2	③	4	Task oriented
19. Pushy	1	②	3	4	Gentle
20. Discriminating	1	2	③	4	Impulsive
21. Extrovert	①	2	3	4	Introvert
22. Warm	1	②	3	4	Cool
23. Subtle	1	2	③	4	Direct
24. Distant	1	2	③	4	Close
25. States information	①	2	3	4	Saves information
26. Quiet	1	2	③	4	Talkative

BEHAVIORAL CHARACTERISTICS

RATING FORM

Name of person being rated: _____

Phil Cook

Directions: Circle one of the numbers to indicate how you see the person you are rating. For example:

Dominant 1 2 3 4 Easy-going

The rater here decided that the person he was rating was more easy-going than dominant, but not easy-going enough to rate a 4.

- | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------------------|
| 1. Appears confident | <u>1</u> | 2 | 3 | 4 | Reserved |
| 2. Passive | 1 | 2 | 3 | <u>4</u> | Aggressive |
| 3. Responsive | <u>1</u> | 2 | 3 | 4 | Self-controlled |
| 4. Easy-going | 1 | 2 | 3 | <u>4</u> | Dominant |
| 6. Takes charge | <u>1</u> | 2 | 3 | 4 | Goes along |
| 6. Formal | 1 | 2 | <u>3</u> | 4 | Informal |
| 7. Disciplined | <u>1</u> | 2 | 3 | 4 | Spontaneous |
| 8. Communicates readily | <u>1</u> | 2 | 3 | 4 | Hesitant communicator |
| 9. Accepting | <u>1</u> | 2 | 3 | 4 | Challenging |
| 10. Appears unorganized | 1 | 2 | 3 | <u>4</u> | Appears organized |
| 11. Initiates social contact | <u>1</u> | 2 | 3 | 4 | Lets others initiate |
| 12. Asks questions | <u>1</u> | 2 | 3 | 4 | Makes statements |
| 13. Overbearing | <u>1</u> | 2 | 3 | 4 | Shy |
| 14. Reserved | 1 | 2 | 3 | <u>4</u> | Fun loving |
| 15. Appears active | 1 | <u>2</u> | 3 | 4 | Appears thoughtful |
| 16. Relaxed | 1 | 2 | 3 | <u>4</u> | Assertive |
| 17. Withholds feeling | 1 | 2 | 3 | <u>4</u> | Expresses feeling |
| 18. Relationship oriented | 1 | 2 | 3 | <u>4</u> | Task oriented |
| 19. Pushy | <u>1</u> | 2 | 3 | 4 | Gentle |
| 20. Discriminating | 1 | <u>2</u> | 3 | 4 | Impulsive |
| 21. Extrovert | <u>1</u> | 2 | 3 | 4 | Introvert |
| 22. Warm | 1 | <u>2</u> | 3 | 4 | Cool |
| 23. Subtle | 1 | 2 | 3 | <u>4</u> | Direct |
| 24. Distant | 1 | 2 | <u>3</u> | 4 | Close |
| 25. States information | <u>1</u> | 2 | 3 | 4 | Saves information |
| 26. Quiet | 1 | 2 | 3 | <u>4</u> | Talkative |

BEHAVIORAL CHARACTERISTICS

RATING FORM

Name of person being rated: Phil Cook

Directions: Circle one of the numbers to indicate how you see the person you are rating. For example:

Dominant 1 2 **3** 4 Easy-going

The rater here decided that the person he was rating was more easy-going than dominant, but not easy-going enough to rate a 4.

1. Appears confident	1	2	3	4	
2. Passive	1	2	3	4	Reserved
3. Responsive	1	2	3	4	Aggressive
4. Easy-going	1	2	3	4	Self-controlled
5. Takes charge	1	2	3	4	Dominant
6. Formal	1	2	3	4	Goes along
7. Disciplined	1	2	3	4	Informal
8. Communicates readily	1	2	3	4	Spontaneous
9. Accepting	1	2	3	4	Hesitant communicator
10. Appears unorganized	1	2	3	4	Challenging
11. Initiates social contact	1	2	3	4	Appears organized
12. Asks questions	1	2	3	4	Lets others initiate
13. Overbearing	1	2	3	4	Makes statements
14. Reserved	1	2	3	4	Shy
15. Appears active	1	2	3	4	Fun loving
16. Relaxed	1	2	3	4	Appears thoughtful
17. Withholds feeling	1	2	3	4	Assertive
18. Relationship oriented	1	2	3	4	Expresses feeling
19. Pushy	1	2	3	4	Task oriented
20. Discriminating	1	2	3	4	Gentle
21. Extrovert	1	2	3	4	Impulsive
22. Warm	1	2	3	4	Introvert
23. Subtle	1	2	3	4	Cool
24. Distant	1	2	3	4	Direct
25. States information	1	2	3	4	Close
26. Quiet	1	2	3	4	Saves information
					Talkative

BEHAVIORAL CHARACTERISTICS

RATING FORM

Name of person being rated. Phil Cook

Directions: Circle one of the numbers to indicate how you see the person you are rating. For example:

Dominant 1 2 3 4 Easy-going
 The rater here decided that the person he was rating was more easy-going than dominant, but not easy-going enough to rate a 4.

1. Appears confident	1	2	3	4	
	<u>1</u>				Reserved
2. Passive	1	2	3	<u>4</u>	Aggressive
3. Responsive	1	<u>2</u>	3	4	Self-controlled
4. Easy-going	1	2	3	<u>4</u>	Dominant
5. Takes charge	<u>1</u>	2	3	4	Goes along
6. Formal	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	Informal
7. Disciplined	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	Spontaneous
8. Communicates readily	<u>1</u>	2	3	4	Hesitant communicator
9. Accepting	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	Challenging
10. Appears unorganized	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	Appears organized
11. Initiates social contact	<u>1</u>	2	3	4	Lets others initiate
12. Asks questions	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	Makes statements
13. Overbearing	1	<u>2</u>	3	4	Shy
14. Reserved	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	Fun loving
15. Appears active	1	<u>2</u>	3	4	Appears thoughtful
16. Relaxed	1	2	3	<u>4</u>	Assertive
17. Withholds feeling	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	Expresses feeling
18. Relationship oriented	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	Task oriented
19. Pushy	1	<u>2</u>	3	4	Gentle
20. Discriminating	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	Impulsive
21. Extrovert	<u>1</u>	2	3	4	Introvert
22. Warm	<u>1</u>	2	3	4	Cool
23. Subtle	1	2	3	<u>4</u>	Direct
24. Distant	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	Close
25. States information	<u>1</u>	2	3	4	Saves information
26. Quiet	1	2	3	<u>4</u>	Talkative

BEHAVIORAL CHARACTERISTICS

RATING FORM

Name of person being rated: _____

Phil Cook

Directions: Circle one of the numbers to indicate how you see the person you are rating. For example:

Dominant 1 2 **(3)** 4 Easy-going

The rater here decided that the person he was rating was more easy-going than dominant, but not easy-going enough to rate a 4.

1. Appears confident	(1)	2	3	4	
2. Passive	1	2	(3)	4	Reserved
3. Responsive	1	(2)	3	4	Aggressive
4. Easy-going	1	2	(3)	4	Self-controlled
5. Takes charge	(1)	2	3	4	Dominant
6. Formal	1	(2)	3	4	Goes along
7. Disciplined	1	(2)	3	4	Informal
8. Communicates readily	(1)	2	3	4	Spontaneous
9. Accepting	1	2	3	(4)	Hesitant communicator
10. Appears unorganized	1	2	(3)	4	Challenging
11. Initiates social contact	(1)	2	3	4	Appears organized
12. Asks questions	(1)	2	3	4	Lets others initiate
13. Overbearing	1	(2)	3	4	Makes statements
14. Reserved	1	2	(3)	4	Shy
15. Appears active	1	(2)	3	4	Fun loving
16. Relaxed	1	2	3	(4)	Appears thoughtful
17. Withholds feeling	1	2	3	4	Assertive
18. Relationship oriented	1	2	3	4	Expresses feeling
19. Pushy	1	(2)	3	4	Task oriented
20. Discriminating	1	2	(3)	4	Gentle
21. Extrovert	(1)	2	3	4	Impulsive
22. Warm	1	(2)	3	4	Introvert
23. Subtle	1	2	3	(4)	Cool
24. Distant	1	(2)	3	4	Direct
25. States information	1	(2)	3	4	Close
26. Quiet	1	2	3	(4)	Saves information
					Talkative

BEHAVIORAL CHARACTERISTICS

RATING FORM

Name of person being rated: Phil Cook

Directions: Circle one of the numbers to indicate how you see the person you are rating. For example:

Dominant 1 2 **3** 4 Easy-going
 The rater here decided that the person he was rating was more easy-going than dominant, but not easy-going enough to rate a 4.

1. Appears confident	1	2	3	4	Reserved
2. Passive	1	2	3	4	Aggressive
3. Responsive	1	2	3	4	Self-controlled
4. Easy-going	1	2	3	4	Dominant
5. Takes charge	1	2	3	4	Goes along
6. Formal	1	2	3	4	Informal
7. Disciplined	1	2	3	4	Spontaneous
8. Communicates readily	1	2	3	4	Hesitant communicator
9. Accepting	1	2	3	4	Challenging
10. Appears unorganized	1	2	3	4	Appears organized
11. Initiates social contact	1	2	3	4	Lets others initiate
12. Asks questions	1	2	3	4	Makes statements
13. Overbearing	1	2	3	4	Shy
14. Reserved	1	2	3	4	Fun loving
15. Appears active	1	2	3	4	Appears thoughtful
16. Relaxed	1	2	3	4	Assertive
17. Withholds feeling	1	2	3	4	Expresses feeling
18. Relationship oriented	1	2	3	4	Task oriented
19. Pushy	1	2	3	4	Gentle
20. Discriminating	1	2	3	4	Impulsive
21. Extrovert	1	2	3	4	Introvert
22. Warm	1	2	3	4	Cool
23. Subtle	1	2	3	4	Direct
24. Distant	1	2	3	4	Close
25. States information	1	2	3	4	Saves information
26. Quiet	1	2	3	4	Talkative

BEHAVIORAL CHARACTERISTICS

RATING FORM

Name of person being rated: _____

Phil Cook

Directions: Circle one of the numbers to indicate how you see the person you are rating. For example:

Dominant 1 2 **3** 4 Easy-going
The rater here decided that the person he was rating was more easy-going than dominant, but not easy-going enough to rate a 4.

- | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------------------|
| 1. Appears confident | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Reserved |
| 2. Passive | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Aggressive |
| 3. Responsive | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Self-controlled |
| 4. Easy-going | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Dominant |
| 5. Takes charge | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Goes along |
| 6. Formal | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Informal |
| 7. Disciplined | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Spontaneous |
| 8. Communicates readily | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Hesitant communicator |
| 9. Accepting | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Challenging |
| 10. Appears unorganized | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Appears organized |
| 11. Initiates social contact | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Lets others initiate |
| 12. Asks questions | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Makes statements |
| 13. Overbearing | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Shy |
| 14. Reserved | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Fun loving |
| 15. Appears active | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Appears thoughtful |
| 16. Relaxed | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Assertive |
| 17. Withholds feeling | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Expresses feeling |
| 18. Relationship oriented | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Task oriented |
| 19. Pushy | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Gentle |
| 20. Discriminating | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Impulsive |
| 21. Extrovert | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Introvert |
| 22. Warm | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Cool |
| 23. Subtle | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Direct |
| 24. Distant | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Close |
| 25. States information | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Saves information |
| 26. Quiet | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Talkative |

BEHAVIORAL CHARACTERISTICS

RATING FORM

Name of person being rated: P. Galt

Directions: Circle one of the numbers to indicate how you see the person you are rating. For example:

Dominant 1 2 **3** 4 Easy-going

The rater here decided that the person he was rating was more easy-going than dominant, but not easy-going enough to rate a 4.

1. Appears confident	1	2	3	4	Reserved
2. Passive	1	2	3	4	Aggressive
3. Responsive	1	2	3	4	Self-controlled
4. Easy-going	1	2	3	4	Dominant
5. Takes charge	1	2	3	4	Goes along
6. Formal	1	2	3	4	Informal
7. Disciplined	1	2	3	4	Spontaneous
8. Communicates readily	1	2	3	4	Resistant communicator
9. Accepting	1	2	3	4	Challenging
10. Appears unorganized	1	2	3	4	Appears organized
11. Initiates social contact	1	2	3	4	Lets others initiate
12. Asks questions	1	2	3	4	Makes statements
13. Overbearing	1	2	3	4	Shy
14. Reserved	1	2	3	4	Fun loving
15. Appears active	1	2	3	4	Appears thoughtful
16. Relaxed	1	2	3	4	Assertive
17. Withholds feeling	1	2	3	4	Expresses feeling
18. Relationship oriented	1	2	3	4	Task oriented
19. Pushy	1	2	3	4	Gentle
20. Discriminating	1	2	3	4	Impulsive
21. Extrovert	1	2	3	4	Introvert
22. Warm	1	2	3	4	Cool
23. Subtle	1	2	3	4	Direct
24. Distant	1	2	3	4	Close
25. States information	1	2	3	4	Saves information
26. Quiet	1	2	3	4	Talkative

BEHAVIORAL CHARACTERISTICS

RATING FORM

Name of person being rated: _____

Dave Cook

Directions: Circle one of the numbers to indicate how you see the person you are rating. For example:

Dominant 1 2 3 4 Easy-going

The rater here decided that the person he was rating was more easy-going than dominant, but not easy-going enough to rate a 4.

1. Appears confident	1	<u>2</u>	3	4	Reserved
2. Passive	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	Aggressive
3. Responsive	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	Self-controlled
4. Easy-going	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	Dominant
5. Takes charge	<u>1</u>	2	3	4	Goes along
6. Formal	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	Informal
7. Disciplined	1	<u>2</u>	3	4	Spontaneous
8. Communicates readily	<u>1</u>	2	3	4	Hesitant communicator
9. Accepting	<u>1</u>	2	3	4	Challenging
10. Appears unorganized	1	2	3	<u>4</u>	Appears organized
11. Initiates social contact	1	<u>2</u>	3	4	Lets others initiate
12. Asks questions	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	Makes statements
13. Overbearing	1	<u>2</u>	3	4	Shy
14. Reserved	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	Fun loving
15. Appears active	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	Appears thoughtful
16. Relaxed	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	Assertive
17. Withholds feeling	1	2	3	<u>4</u>	Expresses feeling
18. Relationship oriented	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	Task oriented
19. Pushy	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	Gentle
20. Discriminating	1	<u>2</u>	3	4	Impulsive
21. Extrovert	1	<u>2</u>	3	4	Introvert
22. Warm	1	<u>2</u>	3	4	Cool
23. Subtle	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	Direct
24. Distant	1	2	3	<u>4</u>	Close
25. States information	<u>1</u>	2	3	4	Saves information
26. Quiet	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	Talkative

more task oriented
Assertiveness

more people oriented
Non-Assertiveness

Leadership Graph

