

## **Inequities in Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program Placements by the Economic Status of Texas Grade 6, 7, and 8 Boys: A Multiyear, Statewide Investigation**

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### **Abstract**

*Examined in this study was the extent to which Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placements differed by the economic status (i.e., Poor, Not Poor) of Texas Grades 6, 7, and 8 White, Hispanic, and Black boys for the 2012-2013 through the 2015-2016 school years. Inferential statistical procedures, used on Texas statewide data, yielded statistically significant differences in all 4 school years and for all 3 grade levels examined. White, Hispanic, and Black Boys who were Poor were assigned to a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement at statistically significantly higher rates than White, Hispanic, and Black boys who were Not Poor. Implications, suggestions, and recommendations for policy and practice are provided.*

**Keywords:** Poor, Not Poor, Economic Status, Texas, boys, Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement, White, Hispanic, Black

Inequities in Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program Placements by the Economic Status of Texas Grade 6, 7, and 8 Boys: A Multiyear, Statewide Investigation

India Prime Minister Narendra Modi (2015) stated education is the best and the least expensive way to fight poverty. However, continuously documented in the research literature are educational inequities that contribute to achievement gaps for marginalized students. Harlow (2003) contended that poverty is a contributing factor to increased exclusionary rates, dropout rates, student academic disconnections, and student incarceration rates. More recently, Butler, Lewis, Moore, and Scott (2012) contended that poverty is one of the greatest predictors of student suspensions. Accordingly, exclusionary discipline practices and zero-tolerance policies continue to affect young men and boys of color disproportionately (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). As revealed in national data, middle schools and high schools do not use suspensions as a measure of last resort (Losen & Martinez, 2013).

Curtiss and Slate (2015) contended that the overuse of exclusionary discipline practices have negatively influenced education opportunities for all students despite their ethnicity/race, gender, or economic status. Jordan and Anil (2009), in a 2-year investigation, established that middle school students who were from economically disadvantaged backgrounds (i.e., qualified for the federal free or reduced price lunch program) were represented proportionately less than students who were not economically disadvantaged in the category where no referrals were generated. Conversely, students who were from economically disadvantaged backgrounds were five times more represented in the categories where one or more discipline referrals were generated compared to their peers who were not economically disadvantaged. More important than excessive absences, Jordan and Anil (2009) asserted that being poor, and especially being Black and poor, is the most significant indicator of discipline referrals. Moreover, Balfanz (2013) correlated suspension with dropping out, stating that one suspension in the ninth grade doubles the chance of a student dropping out from 16% (not suspended) to 32% (suspended once). These statistics are three times higher than the previously reported national data from the U.S. Department of Education that showed an 11% dropout rate of students in poverty compared to only 5% and 2% for middle and high-income students respectively (Kaufman, Naomi, & Chapman, 2004).

Ultimately, students who drop out and do not return to graduate from high school are four times more likely than college graduates to be unemployed; far more probable to end up incarcerated or on welfare; and they typically die at a much younger age (Jordan & Anil, 2009).

In a 2-year statewide analysis, Tiger and Slate (2017) documented that exclusionary discipline practices had been used excessively and resulted in inequities for Texas elementary students based on their economic status. Out of the 15,000 Grade 4 boys who had been assigned an in-school suspension in the 2013-2014 school year, Tiger and Slate (2017) established that in-school suspensions were more than twice as likely assigned to Grade 4 boys who were extremely poor than Grade 4 boys who were not poor. In the 2014-2015 school year, Tiger and Slate (2017) documented that the in-school suspension rate of Grade 4 boys who were economically disadvantaged were almost twice that of Grade 4 boys who were not economically disadvantaged. Additionally, the in-school suspension rate of Grade 4 boys who were moderately poor was almost twice the rate of Grade 4 boys who were not poor.

Of the 7,000 out-of-school suspensions assigned to Grade 4 boys in the 2013-2014 school year, Tiger and Slate (2017) determined that out-of-school suspension assignments were three times more likely to be given to Grade 4 boys who were extremely poor compared to Grade 4 boys who were not poor. Out-of-school suspensions were almost twice likely to be assigned to Grade 4 boys who were moderately poor compared to their peers who were not poor. Regarding the 2014-2015 school year, Tiger and Slate (2017) established that Grade 4 boys who were economically disadvantaged had an out-of-school suspension rate that was more than twice as high as for Grade 4 boys who were not economically disadvantaged. Additionally, the out-of-school suspension rate of Grade 4 boys who were moderately poor was almost twice as high as the rate of Grade 4 boys who were not poor.

Furthermore, Tiger and Slate (2017) documented that out of the 20,000 in-school suspensions assigned to Grade 5 boys in the 2013-2014 school year, in-school suspensions were more than twice as likely assigned to Grade 5 boys who were extremely poor compared to Grade 5 boys who were not poor. In-school suspensions were almost twice as likely to be assigned to Grade 5 boys who were moderately poor than to Grade 5 boys who were not poor. In the 2014-2015 school year, Tiger and Slate (2017) established that of the 15,000 in-school suspensions assigned to boys, the rate of in-school suspension assigned to Grade 5 boys who were extremely poor was almost two times more than the rate assigned to Grade 5 boys who were not poor. The in-school suspension rate for Grade 5 boys who were moderately poor was almost twice as high as the in-school suspension rate Grade 5 boys who were not poor.

Of the 10,000 out-of-school suspensions assigned to Grade 5 boys in the 2013-2014 school year, Tiger and Slate (2017) established that the chance of being assigned an out-of-school suspension was more than three times likely for Grade 5 boys who were extremely poor compared to Grade 5 boys who were not poor. Out-of-school suspensions were assigned to Grade 5 boys who were moderately poor almost twice likely than were assigned to Grade 5 boys who were not poor. Tiger and Slate (2017) also determined that out of the 9,000 out-of-school suspensions assigned to Grade 5 boys in the 2014-2015 school year, Grade 5 boys who were extremely poor had an out-of-school suspension rate that was almost two times as high as that of Grade 5 boys who were not poor. The out-of-school suspension rate for Grade 5 boys was almost twice as high as the out-of-school suspension rate for Grade 5 boys who were not poor.

In a previous study, Khan and Slate (2016) analyzed 1-year statewide data to determine the degree to which the economic status of Grade 6 Black, Hispanic, and White students influenced the assignment of an in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, and Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement for the 2011-2012 school year. They documented a statistically significant difference in that 33.5% of Grade 6 Black students who were economically disadvantaged were assigned an in-school suspension compared to 19.93% of Grade 6 Black students who were not economically disadvantaged, that were assigned an in-school suspension. Of in-school suspensions assigned to Hispanic students, 20.2% of Hispanic students who were in poverty were assigned an in-school suspension compared to 12.0% of Hispanic students who were not in poverty, that were assigned an in-school suspension. Similarly, for Grade 6 White students, 23.1% of Grade 6 White students who were economically disadvantaged were assigned an in-school suspensions compared to 8.9% of Grade 6 White students who were not in poverty, that were assigned an in-school suspension.

Regarding out-of-school suspensions, Khan and Slate (2016) established a statistically significant difference was present, in that 21.3% of Grade 6 Black students assigned out-of school suspension were poor compared to 9.7% of Grade 6 Black students who were not poor, that were assigned an out-of-school suspension. Also, 9.0% of Grade 6 Hispanic students who were in poverty were assigned an out-of-school suspension compared to 4.1% of Grade 6 Hispanic students who were not in poverty, but were assigned an out-of-school suspension. Equally, 6.4% of Grade 6 White students who were economically disadvantaged were assigned an out-of-school suspension compared to 1.9% of Grade 6 Hispanic students who were not in poverty, that were assigned an out-of-school suspension.

Concerning Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement, Khan and Slate (2016) indicated that 4.0% of Grade 6 Black students who were poor were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program compared to 1.6% of Grade 6 Black students who were not in poverty, but were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program. Similarly, for Grade 6 Hispanic students, 2.2% of Grade 6 Hispanic students who were economically disadvantaged were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program compared to 0.8% of Grade 6 Hispanic students who were not in poverty, that were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program. As for Grade 6 White students, 2.1% of Grade 6 White students who were economically disadvantaged were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program compared to 0.4% of Grade 6 White students who were not in poverty, that were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program.

In a more recent study conducted in the state of interest for this article, Texas, Eckford and Slate (2016) determined that in the 2010-2011 school year, Grade 7 boys who were economically disadvantaged were assigned to a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program at twice the placement rate of Grade 7 boys who were not economically disadvantaged. In the same study, Texas Grade 8 boys who were economically disadvantaged were assigned a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program at two times the placement rate of Grade 8 boys who were not economically disadvantaged (Eckford & Slate, 2016). Of importance regarding the Eckford and Slate (2016) investigation was that their sample consisted of 100% of the Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program assignments in Texas for one school year. Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program is the highest form of consequence students can receive as it exposes them to an alternative learning environment unconventional to the traditional public school.

Texas school enrollment for the 2015-2016 school year consisted of almost 5.5 million students. Of the 2,491 students in Texas public schools who were assigned to a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program, 1,775 of the students assigned were economically disadvantaged, whereas only 740 of the students assigned were not economically disadvantaged. Furthermore, of the 3,824 students who were expelled from their school district, 2,723 of the students expelled were economically disadvantaged, whereas only 1,159 of the students expelled were not economically disadvantaged (Texas Education Agency, 2015).

Along with documented ethnic/racial inequities in the assignment of discipline consequences, other researchers (e.g., Skiba et al., 2011) established that economic status has become an important predictor in the assignment of school suspension as a behavior consequence. Skiba et al. (2011) also added that in addition to ethnicity/race, being poor has been a characteristic strongly associated with inequitable school discipline practices for over 30 years. Most notable are the high suspension rates of students of poverty (Evans, Lester, & Anfara, 2010; Jones, Slate, & Martinez-Garcia, 2014, 2015; Sullivan, Klingbeil, & Van Norman, 2013). Skiba et al. (2011) further documented poverty as one of a few possible causation mechanisms to explain discrepancies in discipline referrals and suspension rates for Black, White, and Hispanic students. Coleman and Slate (2016) also agreed with Skiba et al. (2011) that poverty has become a deciding factor in school discipline assignments as a consequence for unacceptable behavior. Brault, Janosz, and Archambault (2014) further added that students who were economically disadvantaged were targeted disproportionately for behavior problems in comparison to other student groups. Evidence exists that students of poverty are much more likely to be suspended and expelled from school, drop out of school, and have less access to highly qualified teaching staff and rigorous curriculum than are students who are not in poverty (U.S. Department of Education, 2014, 2015). Specific to grade-level, Evans et al. (2010) reported that a disproportionate number of urban middle school students who were economically disadvantaged were more likely to receive stricter disciplinary consequences than suburban middle school students.

Sullivan (2013) later added that students in poverty had a greater chance of receiving discipline referrals that lead to a visit to the office than their middle-class peers. In a recent analysis of discipline consequences assigned to Texas Grade 6 students, Coleman and Slate (2016) established that the rate of discipline consequences assigned to students in poverty was two times the discipline consequence rate for their peers who were not in poverty. Skiba et al. (2011) documented that Black students overexposed to the pressures of poverty were more likely to be under socialized with respect to school norms and rules. As a result, they were more likely to experience racial/ ethnic disproportionate discipline assignments.

Skiba et al. (2011) noted that students of color, having been subjected to various stressors related to poverty, may acquire and display behaviors different from school expectations that put them at risk for increased disciplinary contact. Khan and Slate (2016) speculated that students in poverty may lack the social or cultural capital (i.e., experience or knowledge) needed for them to act in accordance with school rules. Due to environmental circumstances associated with poverty, Gardner, Lopez, and Council (2014) contended that children from poor families may behave differently because they lack the school-related skills compared to their more affluent peers. Moreover, poverty is not specific to ethnicity/race. As indicated by Lopez and Slate (2016), more than four times the percentage of Grade 7 White students in poverty received an assignment to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement than did their counterparts who were not poor. Additionally, Lopez and Slate (2016) established that more than 3 times the percentage of Grade 8 students who were economically disadvantaged received a discipline placement to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement than did their counterparts who were not poor. As a result, Lopez and Slate (2016) concluded that the economic status of students in school was directly related to the rate of discipline consequences they receive.

According to Fenning and Rose (2007), students who do not appear to be compatible in school as a result of ethnicity/race, academic challenges, or economic status, are unjustly targeted for removal. Similarly conveyed by previous researchers (e.g., Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2000), groups of students who are poor or who have academic problems are essentially removed for harmless infractions indicated in the school discipline policy. That is, these students are assigned disciplinary consequences that remove them from the classroom setting for behaviors that do not call for mandatory consequences on the part of the school administrator.

### ***Statement of the Problem***

Consistent with McLoyd (1998), Skiba et al. (2011) noted the connection between ethnicity/race and economic status in American society, increasing the chance that any findings of ethnic/racial injustice in school discipline can be accounted for by inequalities associated with economic status. Indicated by previous researchers (e.g., Frazier, Bishop, & Henretta, 1992), individual characteristics (e.g., gender and socioeconomic status) and community characteristics (e.g., poverty, urbanization, and income inequality), increase the probability that minority youth will be exposed to the juvenile justice system.

A preponderance of researchers (e.g., Eitle & Eitle, 2004; Mendez & Knoff, 2003; Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2000) asserted the effects of school consequences are inequitably distributed on racial/ethnic minority youth and lower-income youth, increasing the probability for each group to be excluded from their learning environment compared to White or middle-class youth. Inequities have clearly been documented in the assignment of in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, and Disciplinary Alternative Education Program as a function of both ethnicity/race and economic status. The intersection of the two characteristics has not been as well analyzed, as well as the fact that Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placements are an under-investigated issue. If the inequities already documented for in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, and Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs also hold true for Juvenile Justice Alternative Education programs, then serious concerns should be present because of the seriousness of Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placements.

### ***Purpose of the Study***

The purpose of this study was to examine the extent to which inequities were present in the assignment of Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placements by the economic status (i.e., Not Poor, Poor) of Texas Grade 6, Grade 7, and Grade 8 boys. As such, the primary focus of this multiyear analysis was on the degree to which student level of poverty was related to Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placements.

By analyzing Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placements for Grade 6, 7, and 8 boys by their economic status, a comparison of results across grade level and across multiple school years was conducted. Archival data that were requested and obtained from the Texas Education Agency Public Education Information Management System were analyzed separately for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years in Texas public schools. Accordingly, results obtained in this multiyear study were examined to determine the extent to which trends might be present in the differential assignment of Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placements by student economic status.

### ***Significance of the Study***

In this study, the extent to which inequities were present in the assignment of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement by the economic status of Texas Grade 6, 7, and 8 boys were examined for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and the 2015-2016 school years. For Grade 6, 7, and 8 White, Hispanic, and Black boys, the degree to which differences might be present in their Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program assignment as a function of their economic status was ascertained. Given the emphasis placed on academic instruction, unfair exclusionary practices of students from their learning environment generate concerns of civil rights violations. Therefore, results of this investigation may yield evidence of inequities in discipline consequences by the economic status for White, Hispanic, and Black boys. The degree to which economic status may influence the placement of boys in Grade 6, 7, and 8 in a Juvenile Justice Alternative Educational Program in each of the grade levels, over four consecutive school years, may provide useful information to assist educational leaders and policy makers in establishing equitable discipline policies.

### ***Research Questions***

The following research questions were addressed in this investigation: (a) What is the difference in Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement by the economic status (i.e., Not Poor, Poor) of Grade 6 boys?; (b) What is the difference in Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement by the economic status of Grade 7 boys?; (c) What is the difference in Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement by the economic status of Grade 8 boys?; and (d) To what extent are trends present in the assignment of Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program receipt by the economic status of Grade 6, 7, and 8 boys? Each of these research questions were conducted separately for White, Hispanic, and Black boys. The first three questions were repeated for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and the 2015-2016 school years whereas the fourth research question involved all four years of data.

### ***Method***

#### **Research Design**

In this multiyear investigation, previously obtained statewide archival data from the Texas Education Agency Public Education Information Management System were analyzed. These data were obtained from a previously submitted and fulfilled Public Information Request form by the Texas Education Agency. As such, already existing data were examined to answer the previously mentioned research questions. Because the data that were analyzed have already occurred, a non-experimental, ex post facto research design was present (Creswell, 2009; Johnson & Christensen, 2012). In such a research design, neither the independent variable nor the dependent variables are capable of being manipulated, nor can extraneous variables be controlled. Accordingly, cause-and-effect relationships cannot be established.

In this study, the independent variable was comprised of two groups: (a) boys who did not meet the requirements for the free/reduced lunch program (i.e., Not Poor); (b) boys who met the requirements for the free/reduced lunch program (i.e., Poor). The dependent variable was whether or not each boy received a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement. These independent and dependent variables were analyzed separately for White, Hispanic, and Black boys, as well as separately for each grade level.

#### **Participants**

Participants were Grade 6, 7, and 8 boys in Texas middle schools in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years. This sample was comprised of boys who were assigned a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement, as well as boys who did not receive this consequence.

The ethnicity/race of three groups of boys was obtained: White, Hispanic, and Black, because these three ethnic/racial groups constitute the majority of the student population in Texas. Specific information analyzed was the economic status of boys in middle school during the four years being analyzed. Data on middle school campuses that are private schools or that are charter schools were not analyzed in this investigation as they are not considered a traditional public school.

### **Instrumentation and Procedures**

As discussed in the research design section of this article, the data that were analyzed in this article were previously obtained through a submitted and fulfilled Public Information Request form by the Texas Education Agency Public Education Information Management System. These data that were used in this study to answer the research questions had not yet been analyzed. These data were obtained on Grade 6, Grade 7, and Grade 8 boys in a Texas public school in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years respectively. Specifically relevant to this article was whether or not boys had been assigned a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement for each school year, as a function of their economic status, and for three ethnic/racial groups (i.e., White, Hispanic, and Black). Archival data were imported into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software and then labeled and reduced to include only variables related to this study.

Regarding the federal free- and reduced-lunch program, Burney and Beilke (2008) reported that students from families with an income of 130% or less of the federal poverty line are eligible for the federal free lunch program, whereas students from families with an income of 131% to 185% of the federal poverty line are eligible for the federal reduced price lunch program. Students from families who did not meet the federal income poverty requirements were not eligible for either the federal reduced price lunch or the free lunch program. Due to the very small sample size of boys in reduced price lunch program, only two groups (i.e., Poor, Not Poor) were used in this study. Students from families who were eligible for either the federal free-lunch program or the federal reduced-lunch program were referred to as Poor, whereas students from families who were not eligible for the federal free- and reduced-lunch program were referred to as Not Poor. Reliability and validity are not applicable in this investigation as student economic status is reported by their respective campus to the Texas Education Agency Public Education Information Management System. Therefore, any errors resulting from the self-reported data are assumed to be minimal.

The definition for Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program was used as defined by the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (2012), assigned to a student as a result of violating Texas Education Code Chapter 37 listed offenses which include: (a) mandatory expulsion from their home school for serious infractions of the Student Code of Conduct, (b) discretionary expulsions for serious infractions that occur off-campus as well as other infractions of the Student Code of Conduct, or (c) are court ordered due to Title V offenses or probation conditions.

### **Results**

Examined herein was the extent to which student economic status was related to the assignment of Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program for Grade 6, 7, and 8 boys. Data were analyzed for Texas middle school students who had been assigned to a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years. Because frequency data were present for both categorical variables: economic status (i.e., Poor and Not Poor) and Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program assignment (i.e., received this consequence or did not receive this consequence), Pearson chi-square procedures were calculated. This statistical procedure was viewed as the optimal statistical procedure (Field, 2009; Slate & Rojas-LeBouef, 2011) to use when nominal data are present. The available sample size per cell was more than five; therefore, the assumptions underlying a Pearson chi-square were met for each research question (Field, 2013). Results will now be provided, beginning with Grade 6 boys in the 2012-2013 school year and end with the 2015-2016 school year and with Grade 8 students.

#### ***Research Question One Results for Grade 6 White Boys***

In the first research question, the focus was on whether differences were present in the assignment of Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program by the economic status of Grade 6 boys in Texas public schools for the 2012-2013 through the 2015-2016 school years.

The first analyses were conducted for White boys. With respect to the 2012-2013 school year, a statistically significant difference was present in the assignment of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement,  $\chi^2(1) = 10.22$ ,  $p < .001$ , to Grade 6 White boys by their economic status. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's V, was below small, .01 (Cohen, 1988). As revealed in Table 1, Grade 6 White boys who were Poor were assigned to a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program almost twice as often as Grade 6 White boys who were Not Poor.

**Table 1** Frequencies and Percentages of Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program Placements by the Economic Status of Grade 6 White Boys in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 School Years

School Year and Economic Status	Received a JJAEP Assignment <i>n</i> and %age of Total	Did Not Receive a JJAEP Assignment <i>n</i> and %age of Total
2012-2013		
Poor	( <i>n</i> = 17) 0.1%	( <i>n</i> = 19,654) 99.9%
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 12) 0.0%	( <i>n</i> = 43,497) 100%
2013-2014		
Poor	( <i>n</i> = 15) 0.1%	( <i>n</i> = 19,149) 99.9%
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 7) 0.0%	( <i>n</i> = 42,824) 100%
2014-2015		
Poor	( <i>n</i> = 14) 0.1%	( <i>n</i> = 18,159) 99.9%
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 5) 0.0%	( <i>n</i> = 43,348) 100%
2015-2016		
Poor	( <i>n</i> = 12) 0.1%	( <i>n</i> = 18,086) 99.9%
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 6) 0.0%	( <i>n</i> = 43,174) 100%

Regarding the 2013-2014 school year, a statistically significant difference was yielded in the assignment of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement,  $\chi^2(1) = 14.31$ ,  $p < .001$ , to Grade 6 White boys by their economic status. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's V, was below small, .02 (Cohen, 1988). Grade 6 White boys who were Poor were assigned to a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement more than two times as often as Grade 6 White boys who were Not Poor.

Concerning the 2014-2015 school year, the Pearson chi square procedure revealed a statistically significant difference in the assignment of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement,  $\chi^2(1) = 17.80$ ,  $p < .001$  to Grade 6 White boys by their economic status. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's V, was below small, .02 (Cohen, 1988). Grade 6 White boys who were Poor were assigned to a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement almost three times more than Grade 6 White boys who were Not Poor.

With respect to the 2015-2016 school year, a statistically significant difference was revealed in the assignment of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement,  $\chi^2(1) = 11.93$ ,  $p < .001$ . The effect size for this finding, Cramer's V, was below small, .01 (Cohen, 1988). Grade 6 White boys who were Poor were assigned to a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement two times more often than Grade 6 White boys who were Not Poor.

### **Research Question One Results for Grade 6 Black Boys**

With respect to the 2012-2013 school year, a statistically significant difference was not present in the assignment of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement,  $\chi^2(1) = 0.24$ ,  $p = .63$ , to Grade 6 Black boys by their economic status. Although not statistically significant, readers should note that the numbers of Grade 6 Black boys who were Poor and who were assigned a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement were almost four times more than for Grade 6 Black boys who were Not Poor. Descriptive statistics for this school year are revealed in Table 2.

**Table 2** Frequencies and Percentages of Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program Placements by the Economic Status of Grade 6 Black Boys in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 School Years

School Year and Economic Status	Received a JJAEP Assignment <i>n</i> and %age of Total	Did Not Receive a JJAEP Assignment <i>n</i> and %age of Total
2012-2013		
Poor	( <i>n</i> = 38) 0.2%	( <i>n</i> = 19,373) 99.8%
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 15) 0.2%	( <i>n</i> = 6,590) 99.8%
2013-2014		
Poor	( <i>n</i> = 17) 0.1%	( <i>n</i> = 18,998) 99.9%
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 4) 0.1%	( <i>n</i> = 6,668) 99.9%
2014-2015		
Poor	( <i>n</i> = 11) 0.1%	( <i>n</i> = 18,232) 99.9%
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 5) 0.1%	( <i>n</i> = 7,085) 99.9%
2015-2016		
Poor	( <i>n</i> = 17) 0.1%	( <i>n</i> = 18,347) 99.9%
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 9) 0.1%	( <i>n</i> = 7,065) 99.9%

Regarding the 2013-2014 school year, a statistically significant difference was not yielded in the assignment of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement,  $\chi^2(1) = 0.52$ ,  $p = .47$ , to Grade 6 boys by their economic status. Although not statistically significant, readers should note that the numbers of Grade 6 Black boys who were Poor and who were assigned a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement were almost three times more than for Grade 6 Black boys who were Not Poor.

Concerning the 2014-2015 school year, a statistically significant difference was not revealed in the assignment of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement,  $\chi^2(1) = 0.08$ ,  $p = .77$ , to Grade Black 6 boys by their economic status. Though not statistically significant, the numbers of Grade 6 Black boys who were Poor and who were assigned a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement were almost three times more than for Grade 6 Black boys who were Not Poor.

With regard to the 2015-2016 school year, a statistically significant difference was not yielded in the assignment of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement,  $\chi^2(1) = 0.60$ ,  $p = .44$ , to Grade 6 Black boys by their economic status. Similar to the results for the previous three school years, the numbers of Grade 6 Black boys who were Poor and who were assigned a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement were almost four times more than for Grade 6 Black boys who were Not Poor.

### **Research Question One Results for Grade 6 Hispanic Boys**

Regarding the 2012-2013 school year, a statistically significant difference was not present in the assignment of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement,  $\chi^2(1) = 0.34$ ,  $p = .56$ , to Grade 6 Hispanic boys by their economic status. Although not statistically significant, readers should note that the numbers of Grade 6 Hispanic boys who were Poor and who were assigned a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement were almost four times more than for Grade 6 Hispanic boys who were Not Poor. Descriptive statistics for this school year are presented in Table 3.



**Table 3** Frequencies and Percentages of Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program Placements by the Economic Status of Grade 6 Hispanic Boys in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 School Years

School Year and Economic Status	Received a JJAEP Assignment <i>n</i> and %age of Total	Did Not Receive a JJAEP Assignment <i>n</i> and %age of Total
2012-2013		
Poor	( <i>n</i> = 57) 0.1%	( <i>n</i> = 67,976) 99.9%
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 15) 0.1%	( <i>n</i> = 21,185) 99.9%
2013-2014		
Poor	( <i>n</i> = 44) 0.1%	( <i>n</i> = 67,474) 99.9%
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 15) 0.1%	( <i>n</i> = 21,137) 99.9%
2014-2015		
Poor	( <i>n</i> = 36) 0.1%	( <i>n</i> = 68,495) 99.9%
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 13) 0.1%	( <i>n</i> = 23,779) 99.9%
2015-2016		
Poor	( <i>n</i> = 54) 0.1%	( <i>n</i> = 70,241) 99.9%
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 14) 0.1%	( <i>n</i> = 24,066) 99.9%

With respect to the 2013-2014 school year, a statistically significant difference was not yielded in the assignment of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement,  $\chi^2(1) = 0.08$ ,  $p = .78$ , to Grade 6 Hispanic boys by their economic status. Although not statistically significant, the numbers of Grade 6 Hispanic boys who were Poor and who were assigned a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement were almost three times more than for Grade 6 Hispanic boys who were Not Poor.

With regard to the 2014-2015 school year, a statistically significant difference was not revealed in the assignment of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement,  $\chi^2(1) = 0.02$ ,  $p = .90$ , to Grade 6 Hispanic boys by their economic status. Though not statistically significant, the numbers of Grade 6 Hispanic boys who were Poor and who were assigned a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement were almost three times more than for Grade 6 Hispanic boys who were Not Poor.

Concerning the 2015-2016 school year, a statistically significant difference was not yielded in the assignment of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement,  $\chi^2(1) = 0.87$ ,  $p = .35$ , to Grade 6 Hispanic boys by their economic status. Although not statistically significant, the numbers of Grade 6 Hispanic boys who were Poor and who were assigned a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement were almost four times more than for Grade 6 Hispanic boys who were Not Poor.

### ***Research Question One Results for Grade 7 White Boys***

With respect to the 2012-2013 school year, a statistically significant difference was present in the assignment of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement,  $\chi^2(1) = 15.80$ ,  $p < .001$ , to Grade 7 White boys by their economic status. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's *V*, was below small, .02 (Cohen, 1988). As revealed in Table 4, Grade 7 White boys who were Poor were assigned to a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement almost twice as often as Grade 7 White boys who were Not Poor.

**Table 4** Frequencies and Percentages of Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program Placements by the Economic Status of Grade 7 White Boys in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 School Years

School Year and Economic Status	Received a JJAEP Assignment <i>n</i> and %age of Total	Did Not Receive a JJAEP Assignment <i>n</i> and %age of Total
2012-2013		
Poor	( <i>n</i> = 26) 0.1%	( <i>n</i> = 19,115) 99.9%
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 20) 0.0%	( <i>n</i> = 45,185) 100%
2013-2014		
Poor	( <i>n</i> = 25) 0.1%	( <i>n</i> = 19,011) 99.9%
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 11) 0.1%	( <i>n</i> = 44,545) 100%
2014-2015		
Poor	( <i>n</i> = 33) 0.2%	( <i>n</i> = 17,879) 99.8%
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 23) 0.1%	( <i>n</i> = 44,351) 99.9%
2015-2016		
Poor	( <i>n</i> = 16) 0.1%	( <i>n</i> = 17,792) 99.9%
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 7) 0.0%	( <i>n</i> = 43,830) 100%

Regarding the 2013-2014 school year, a statistically significant difference was yielded in the assignment of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement,  $\chi^2(1) = 26.81$ ,  $p < .001$ , to Grade 7 White boys by their economic status. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's *V*, was below small, .02 (Cohen, 1988). Grade 7 White boys who were Poor were assigned to a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program more than twice as often as Grade 7 White boys who were Not Poor.

Concerning the 2014-2015 school year, a statistically significant difference was revealed in the assignment of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement,  $\chi^2(1) = 24.90$ ,  $p < .001$ , to Grade 7 White boys by their economic status. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's *V*, was below small, .02 (Cohen, 1988). Grade 7 White boys who were Poor were assigned to a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program almost two times more than Grade 7 White boys who were Not Poor.

With regard to the 2015-2016 school year, a statistically significant difference was yielded in the assignment of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement,  $\chi^2(1) = 18.53$ ,  $p < .001$ , to Grade 7 Whiteboys by their economic status. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's *V*, was below small, .02 (Cohen, 1988). Grade 7 White boys who were Poor were assigned to a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement twice as often as Grade 7 White boys who were Not Poor.

### ***Research Question One Results for Grade 7 Black Boys***

With respect to the 2012-2013 school year, a statistically significant difference was not present in the assignment of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement,  $\chi^2(1) = 0.80$ ,  $p = .37$ , to Grade 7 Black boys by their economic status. Though not statistically significant, readers should note that the numbers of Grade 7 Black boys who were Poor and who were assigned a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement were twice as much as for Grade 7 Black boys who were Not Poor. Descriptive statistics for this school year are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5** Frequencies and Percentages of Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program Placements by the Economic Status of Grade 7 Black Boys in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 School Years

School Year and Economic Status	Received a JJAEP Assignment <i>n</i> and %age of Total	Did Not Receive a JJAEP Assignment <i>n</i> and %age of Total
2012-2013		
Poor	( <i>n</i> = 61) 0.3%	( <i>n</i> = 18,999) 99.7%
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 28) 0.4%	( <i>n</i> = 7,113) 99.6%
2013-2014		
Poor	( <i>n</i> = 69) 0.4%	( <i>n</i> = 19,359) 99.6%
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 19) 0.3%	( <i>n</i> = 6,941) 99.7%
2014-2015		
Poor	( <i>n</i> = 60) 0.3%	( <i>n</i> = 18,229) 99.7%
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 12) 0.2%	( <i>n</i> = 7,544) 99.8%
2015-2016		
Poor	( <i>n</i> = 35) 0.2%	( <i>n</i> = 18,058) 99.8%
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 22) 0.3%	( <i>n</i> = 7,438) 99.7%

Regarding the 2013-2014 school year, a statistically significant difference was not yielded in the assignment of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program,  $\chi^2(1) = 1.04$ ,  $p = .31$ , to Grade 7 Black boys by their economic status. Although not statistically significant, the numbers of Grade 7 Black boys who were Poor and who were assigned a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement were almost four times more than for Grade 7 Black boys who were Not Poor.

Concerning the 2014-2015 school year, a statistically significant difference was revealed in the assignment of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement,  $\chi^2(1) = 5.51$ ,  $p = .02$ , to Grade 7 Black boys by their economic status. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's *V*, was below small, .02 (Cohen, 1988). Grade 7 Black boys who were Poor were assigned to a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement five times more often than Grade 7 Black boys who were Not Poor.

With regard to the 2015-2016 school year, a statistically significant difference was not yielded in the assignment of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement,  $\chi^2(1) = 2.44$ ,  $p = .12$ , to Grade 7 Black boys by their economic status. Though not statistically significant, the numbers of Grade 7 Black boys who were Poor and who were assigned a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement were almost twice more than for Grade 7 Black boys who were Not Poor.

### ***Research Question One Results for Grade 7 Hispanic Boys***

Regarding the 2012-2013 school year, a statistically significant difference was not present in the assignment of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement,  $\chi^2(1) = 3.10$ ,  $p = .08$ , to Grade 7 Hispanic boys by their economic status. Though not statistically significant, the numbers of Grade 7 Hispanic boys who were Poor and who were assigned a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement were almost five times more than Grade 7 Hispanic boys who were Not Poor. Table 6 contains the descriptive statistics for this school year.

**Table 6** Frequencies and Percentages of Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program Placements by the Economic Status of Grade 7 Hispanic Boys in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 School Years

School Year and Economic Status	Received a JJAEP Assignment <i>n</i> and %age of Total	Did Not Receive a JJAEP Assignment <i>n</i> and %age of Total
2012-2013		
Poor	( <i>n</i> = 120) 0.2%	( <i>n</i> = 65,082) 99.8%
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 28) 0.1%	( <i>n</i> = 21,932) 99.9%
2013-2014		
Poor	( <i>n</i> = 150) 0.2%	( <i>n</i> = 68,506) 99.8%
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 33) 0.1%	( <i>n</i> = 22,491) 99.9%
2014-2015		
Poor	( <i>n</i> = 107) 0.2%	( <i>n</i> = 67,026) 99.8%
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 34) 0.1%	( <i>n</i> = 24,643) 99.9%
2015-2016		
Poor	( <i>n</i> = 106) 0.2%	( <i>n</i> = 68,672) 99.9%
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 15) 0.1%	( <i>n</i> = 24,763) 99.9%

With respect to the 2013-2014 school year, a statistically significant difference was present in the assignment of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement,  $\chi^2(1) = 4.39$ ,  $p = .04$ , to Grade 7 Hispanic boys by their economic status. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's V, was below small, .01 (Cohen, 1988). Grade 7 Hispanic boys who were Poor were assigned to a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement almost five times more than Grade 7 Hispanic boys who were Not Poor.

Concerning the 2014-2015 school year, a statistically significant difference was not revealed in the assignment of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement,  $\chi^2(1) = 0.55$ ,  $p = .46$ , to Grade 7 Hispanic boys by their economic status. Although not statistically significant, the numbers of Grade 7 Hispanic boys who were Poor and who were assigned a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement were three times more than for Grade 7 Black boys who were Not Poor.

For the 2015-2016 school year, a statistically significant difference was yielded in the assignment of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement,  $\chi^2(1) = 16.35$ ,  $p < .001$ , to Grade 7 Hispanic boys by their economic status. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's V, was below small, .01 (Cohen, 1988). Grade 7 Hispanic boys who were Poor were assigned to a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement seven times more than Grade 7 Hispanic boys who were Not Poor.

### **Research Question One Results for Grade 8 White Boys**

With respect to the 2012-2013 school year, a statistically significant difference was revealed in the assignment of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement,  $\chi^2(1) = 20.26$ ,  $p < .001$ , to Grade 8 White boys by their economic status. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's V, was below small, .02 (Cohen, 1988). Grade 8 White boys who were Poor were assigned to a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement almost two times more than Grade 8 White boys who were Not Poor. Revealed in Table 7 are the descriptive statistics for this school year.

**Table 7** Frequencies and Percentages of Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program Placements by the Economic Status of Grade 8 White Boys in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 School Years

School Year and Economic Status	Received a JJAEP Assignment <i>n</i> and %age of Total	Did Not Receive a JJAEP Assignment <i>n</i> and %age of Total
2012-2013		
Poor	( <i>n</i> = 43) 0.2%	( <i>n</i> = 18,342) 99.8%
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 41) 0.1%	( <i>n</i> = 45,115) 99.9%
2013-2014		
Poor	( <i>n</i> = 57) 0.3%	( <i>n</i> = 18,020) 99.7%
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 60) 0.1%	( <i>n</i> = 46,040) 99.9%
2014-2015		
Poor	( <i>n</i> = 44) 0.2%	( <i>n</i> = 17,642) 99.8%
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 38) 0.1%	( <i>n</i> = 45,748) 99.9%
2015-2016		
Poor	( <i>n</i> = 20) 0.1%	( <i>n</i> = 17,398) 99.9%
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 25) 0.1%	( <i>n</i> = 44,788) 99.9%

Regarding 2013-2014, a statistically significant difference was present in the assignment of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program,  $\chi^2(1) = 24.47, p < .001$ , to Grade 8 White boys. The effect size, Cramer's V, was below small, .02 (Cohen, 1988). Grade 8 White boys who were Not Poor were assigned to a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement almost two times more than Grade 8 White boys who were Poor.

Concerning 2014-2015, a statistically significant difference was yielded in the assignment of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement,  $\chi^2(1) = 27.18, p < .001$ , to Grade 8 White boys. The effect size, Cramer's V, was below small, .02 (Cohen, 1988). Grade 8 White boys who were Poor were assigned to a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement almost two times more than Grade 8 White boys who were Not Poor.

For the 2015-2016 school year, a statistically significant difference was revealed in the assignment of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement,  $\chi^2(1) = 6.05, p < .001$ , to Grade 8 White boys by their economic status. The effect size for this finding, Cramer's V, was below small, .01 (Cohen, 1988). Grade 8 White boys who were Poor were assigned to a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement almost two times more than Grade 8 White boys who were Not Poor.

### ***Research Question One Results for Grade 8 Black Boys***

With respect to the 2012-2013 school year, a statistically significant difference was not present in the assignment of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement,  $\chi^2(1) = 0.10, p = .75$ , to Grade 8 Black boys by their economic status. Though not statistically significant, the numbers of Grade 8 Black boys who were Poor and who were assigned a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement were two times more than Grade 8 Black boys who were Not Poor. Descriptive statistics are revealed in Table 8.

**Table 8** Frequencies and Percentages of Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program Placements by the Economic Status of Grade 8 Black Boys in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 School Years

School Year and Economic Status	Received a JJAEP Assignment <i>n</i> and %age of Total	Did Not Receive a JJAEP Assignment <i>n</i> and %age of Total
2012-2013		
Poor	( <i>n</i> = 67) 0.4%	( <i>n</i> = 18,009) 99.6%
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 30) 0.4%	( <i>n</i> = 7,517) 99.6%
2013-2014		
Poor	( <i>n</i> = 66) 0.3%	( <i>n</i> = 18,923) 99.7%
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 26) 0.3%	( <i>n</i> = 7,464) 99.7%
2014-2015		
Poor	( <i>n</i> = 55) 0.3%	( <i>n</i> = 18,307) 99.7%
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 31) 0.4%	( <i>n</i> = 7,803) 99.6%
2015-2016		
Poor	( <i>n</i> = 73) 0.4%	( <i>n</i> = 17,773) 99.6%
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 33) 0.4%	( <i>n</i> = 7,866) 99.6%

Regarding the 2013-2014 school year, a statistically significant difference was not yielded in the assignment of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement,  $\chi^2(1) = 0.00$ ,  $p = .10$ , to Grade 8 Black boys by their economic status. Although not statistically significant, the numbers of Grade 8 Black boys who were Poor and who were assigned a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement were almost three times more than for Grade 8 Black boys who were Not Poor. Concerning the 2014-2015 school year, a statistically significant difference was not revealed in the assignment of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement,  $\chi^2(1) = 1.55$ ,  $p = .21$ , to Grade 8 Black boys by their economic status. Though not statistically significant, the numbers of Grade 8 Black boys who were Poor and who were assigned a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement were almost two times more than for Grade 8 Black boys who were Not Poor.. For the 2015-2016 school year, a statistically significant difference was not present in the assignment of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program,  $\chi^2(1) = 0.01$ ,  $p = .92$ , to Grade 8 Black boys by their economic status. Although not statistically significant, the numbers of Grade 8 Black boys who were Poor and who were assigned a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement were almost three times more than for Grade 8 Black boys who were Not Poor.

### ***Research Question One Results for Grade 8 Hispanic Boys***

With respect to the 2012-2013 school year, a statistically significant difference was not yielded in the assignment of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement,  $\chi^2(1) = 0.88$ ,  $p = .35$ , to Grade 8 Hispanic boys by their economic status. Though not statistically significant, readers should note that the numbers of Grade 8 Hispanic boys who were Poor and who were assigned a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement were three times more than for Grade 8 Hispanic boys who were Not Poor. Table 9 contains the descriptive statistics for this school year.

**Table 9** Frequencies and Percentages of Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program Placements by the Economic Status of Grade 8 Hispanic Boys in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 School Years

School Year and Economic Status	Received a JJAEP Assignment <i>n</i> and %age of Total	Did Not Receive a JJAEP Assignment <i>n</i> and %age of Total
2012-2013		
Poor	( <i>n</i> = 167) 0.3%	( <i>n</i> = 62,908) 99.7%
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 51) 0.2%	( <i>n</i> = 22,318) 99.8%
2013-2014		
Poor	( <i>n</i> = 161) 0.2%	( <i>n</i> = 66,103) 99.8%
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 54) 0.2%	( <i>n</i> = 23,329) 99.8%
2014-2015		
Poor	( <i>n</i> = 178) 0.3%	( <i>n</i> = 66,466) 99.7%
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 65) 0.2%	( <i>n</i> = 26,029) 99.8%
2015-2016		
Poor	( <i>n</i> = 184) 0.3%	( <i>n</i> = 66,377) 99.7%
Not Poor	( <i>n</i> = 79) 0.3%	( <i>n</i> = 25,739) 99.7%

Regarding the 2013-2014 school year, a statistically significant difference was not revealed in the assignment of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program,  $\chi^2(1) = 0.10$ ,  $p = .75$ , to Grade 8 Hispanic boys by their economic status. Although not statistically significant, the numbers of Grade 8 Hispanic boys who were Poor and who were assigned a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement were almost three times more than for Grade 8 Hispanic boys who were Not Poor.

Concerning the 2014-2015 school year, a statistically significant difference was not present in the assignment of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program,  $\chi^2(1) = 0.23$ ,  $p = .63$ , to Grade 8 Hispanic boys by their economic status. Although not statistically significant, the numbers of Grade 8 Hispanic boys who were Poor and who were assigned a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement were almost three times more than for Grade 8 Hispanic boys who were Not Poor.

For the 2015-2016 school year, a statistically significant difference was not yielded in the assignment of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program,  $\chi^2(1) = 0.57$ ,  $p = .45$ , to Grade 8 Hispanic boys by their economic status. Though not statistically significant, the numbers of Grade 8 Hispanic boys who were Poor and who were assigned a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement were almost three times more than for Grade 8 Hispanic boys who were Not Poor.

### ***Trends by Economic Status***

Across the four years of data and the three grade levels, the economic status of White boys was statistically significantly related to whether or not they were assigned to a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement. In all analyses involving White boys, White boys who were Poor received statistically significantly higher rates of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement than White boys who were Not Poor. In contrast, only one statistical analysis was statistically significant for Black and two statistical analyses for Hispanic boys. In that one analysis, Black boys received statistically significantly higher rates of a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement than Black boys who were Not Poor. Readers should note, however, that in all of the analyses involving Black and Hispanic boys, the Poor group always had higher rates of boys who were assigned to a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement than the Not Poor group.

### ***Discussion***

In this investigation, the degree to which differences were present in the assignment to a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement as a function of the economic status of Grade 6, 7, and 8 White, Black, and Hispanic boys during the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years was addressed. Inferential statistical procedures were used to answer the research questions previously discussed. Following these analyses, the degree to which trends were present was determined. Results will now be summarized.

Across each of the grade levels, in every school year, White boys who were Poor were assigned statistically significantly higher rates of Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement than White boys who were Not Poor. Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement rates for White boys who were Poor were two to five times higher than for White boys who were Not Poor. These results are congruent with Lopez and Slate (2016) who established the presence of statistically significant relationships between student economic status and higher rates of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement. Readers are directed to Table 10 for a summary of the results of the statistical analyses of Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement rates by the economic status of White boys across the four school years.

**Table 10** Summary of Results of the Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program Placement Analyses by the Economic Status of Grade 6-8 White Boys in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 School Years

Grade Level, and School Year	Cramer's V	Effect Size Range	Highest Rate
Grade 6			
2012-2013	.01	Below Small	Poor
2013-2014	.02	Below Small	Poor
2014-2015	.02	Below Small	Poor
2015-2016	.01	Below Small	Poor
Grade 7			
2012-2013	.02	Below Small	Poor
2013-2014	.02	Below Small	Poor
2014-2015	.02	Below Small	Poor
2015-2016	.02	Below Small	Poor
Grade 8			
2012-2013	.02	Below Small	Poor
2013-2014	.02	Below Small	Poor
2014-2015	.02	Below Small	Poor
2015-2016	.01	Below Small	Poor

With respect to Black boys, only one analysis, (i.e., Grade 7 Black boys in the 2014-2015 school year), resulted in a statistically significant difference. Even so, in all grade levels and in all four school years, the numbers of Black boys who were Poor and who were assigned to a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement were ranged from two to five times higher than for Black boys who were Not Poor. Readers are directed to Table 11 for a summary of the results of the statistical analyses for Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placements by the economic status of Black boys across the four school years.



**Table 11** Summary of Results of the Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program Placement Analyses by the Economic Status of Grade 6-8 Black Boys in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 School Years

Grade Level, and School Year	Cramer's V	Effect Size Range	Highest Rate
Grade 6			
2012-2013	.00	Below Small	Poor
2013-2014	.00	Below Small	Poor
2014-2015	.00	Below Small	Poor
2015-2016	.00	Below Small	Poor
Grade 7			
2012-2013	.01	Below Small	Poor
2013-2014	.01	Below Small	Poor
2014-2015	.02	Below Small	Poor
2015-2016	.00	Below Small	Poor
Grade 8			
2012-2013	.00	Below Small	Poor
2013-2014	.00	Below Small	Poor
2014-2015	.00	Below Small	Poor
2015-2016	.00	Below Small	Poor

Concerning Hispanic boys, only two analyses yielded a statistically significant result (i.e., Grade 7 Hispanic boys in the 2013-2014 and 2015-2016 school years). Though the other analyses did not result in statistically significant differences, readers should note that in all cases the numbers of Hispanic boys who were Poor and who were assigned to a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement were two to seven times higher than for Hispanic boys who were Not Poor. Table 12 contains a summary of the results of the statistical analyses for Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement rates by the economic status of Hispanic boys across the four school years.

**Table 12** Summary of Results of the Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program Placement Analyses by the Economic Status of Grade 6-8 Hispanic Boys in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 School Years

Grade Level, and School Year	Cramer's V	Effect Size Range	Highest Rate
Grade 6			
2012-2013	.00	Below Small	Poor
2013-2014	.00	Below Small	Poor
2014-2015	.00	Below Small	Poor
2015-2016	.00	Below Small	Poor
Grade 7			
2012-2013	.00	Below Small	Poor
2013-2014	.01	Below Small	Poor
2014-2015	.00	Below Small	Poor
2015-2016	.01	Below Small	Poor
Grade 8			
2012-2013	.00	Below Small	Poor
2013-2014	.00	Below Small	Poor
2014-2015	.00	Below Small	Poor
2015-2016	.00	Below Small	Poor

### ***Connection with Existing Literature***

In this multiyear, statewide investigation, results were congruent with a preponderance of researchers (e.g., Coleman & Slate, 2016; Jordan & Anil, 2009; Lopez & Slate, 2016; Skiba et al, 2011) who established that poverty is a statistically significant indicator of school discipline referrals. Also commensurate with other researchers (e.g., Barnes & Slate, 2016; Eckford & Slate, 2016; Khan & Slate, 2016; Lopez & Slate, 2016) were statistically significant differences in the percentage of Grades 6, 7, and 8 boys who were in poverty and who were assigned exclusionary consequences. In all four school years and at all three grade levels in this statewide investigation, boys who were Poor were assigned to a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement two to seven times more often than boys who were Not Poor.

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

In this study, essential findings were provided regarding economic status and its relationship to Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement. Based upon these results, several implications for policy and for practice can be made. First, school district leaders and campus administrators are encouraged to examine their current discipline policies and procedures to determine the extent to which the economic status of their boys is related to their assignment to a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement. Such analyses, should inequities be determined to be present, could be used to generate revisions in school discipline procedures that allow for students to correct their behavior rather than continuing to exclude them from their learning environment. Readers should note that no empirical evidence exist that indicate harsh exclusionary discipline practices improve student behavior.

Second, in addition to reviewing discipline policies and procedures, educational leaders should invest in educating and training teachers and staff members on how to address the social and cultural capital inequities of students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Student behaviors that are perceived to be socially acceptable may not be behaviors acceptable in a school setting. Cultural awareness and cultural sensitivity training would equip educators to understand not only the backgrounds from which their students come from, but it would also enable them to be more sensitive to the social norms acceptable in the communities in which their students live. As a result, fewer occurrences of exclusionary discipline practices should be reflected in future school discipline data. A third implication for practice would be for school leaders to incorporate programs that equip students with social skills and conflict resolution skills that become useful in helping students to navigate school and beyond. Khan and Slate (2016) contended that students from low socioeconomic backgrounds may lack social and cultural capital. As a result, their behaviors are perceived to be exacerbated by staff who are not culturally aware of or sensitive to what is considered to be socially common in their culture. Educating students about behaviors that are socially acceptable can not only help decrease exclusionary school discipline practices, but the training from these programs have lasting benefits for student who are in poverty far beyond the school walls.

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

In this empirical investigation, the relationship between student poverty and Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placements for boys in Grades 6, 7, and 8 was examined. Given the importance of the findings in this investigation, several recommendations for future research can be made. First, researchers are encouraged to extend this study into other states. The extent to which the findings of this study would be generalizable to middle school boys in poverty in other states is not known. A second recommendation is for researchers to extend this study to White, Black, and Hispanic girls. Such an analysis would determine whether similar results delineated herein on boys would be generalizable to girls. A third recommendation would be for researchers to extend this study to other student groups (e.g., students who receive special education services, English Language Learners, and students who are determined to be at-risk). To what extent are these groups of students inequitably assigned to a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement? A fourth recommendation would be for future researchers to extend this study to boys at the high school level. This analysis would be helpful in determining whether the inequities documented herein are also occurring at the high school level. Finally, researchers are encouraged to extent this investigation to other discipline consequences such as in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension. The degree to which inequities exist in the assignment of other discipline consequences merits additional research studies.

## Conclusion

The purpose of this investigation was to determine the degree to which Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placements was assigned inequitably to Texas Grades 6, 7, and 8 White, Hispanic, and Black boys on the basis of their economic status. Texas statewide data on all Grade 6, 7, and 8 boys for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years were obtained from the Texas Education Agency Public Education Information Management System. Inferential statistical procedures yielded the presence of statistically significant differences in the assignment of Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placements as a function of their economic status. White, Hispanic, and Black boys who were Poor were disproportionately assigned to a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement compared to their peers who were Not Poor. As such, clear inequities in the assignment of this disciplinary consequence were established.

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