

NO TREATMENT DAY SCHOOL

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Abstract: At the No Treatment Day School, less than 15% of students used the dormitory during the school week. Located in the heart of a reservation and serving local students, the K-12 school enrolled over 1,000 students. The site received Therapeutic Residential Model funding for the 2001-2002 school year. Initial evaluation of this site found an array of daunting problems throughout the school structure and functioning. There were some successes, including implementation of the Morningside reading program in the elementary school and some response from the community to the comprehensive evaluation report which provided an overview of the situation to policy-makers and community members. However, instability in the system and a mid-year change in leadership complicated the process of implementation. By the end of the first year, it was clear that the feasibility of the original proposal was questionable and that an overhaul of the school's system and culture was necessary before a Therapeutic Residential Model could be implemented or significant change could come about. Therapeutic Residential Model funding was terminated at the end of the school year. As there was no substantial implementation of a Therapeutic Residential Model program, data gathered were utilized as representing a naturally occurring control or minimal treatment site.

No Treatment Day School

The school is located on the outskirts of the community and serves a far-flung rural area. At the beginning of the year of funding, 1,163 students were enrolled in grades K -12. One hundred forty-two students were housed in two dormitories from Sunday through Thursday night. The remaining students were day students. An on-staff grant writer had created and submitted the Therapeutic Residential Model (TRM) grant proposal. Inspired by the grant writer's observations of the program at L1, the original model proposed by this site was focused on residential students. The site proposed to expand dormitory services from five to seven nights per week and to create an intensive therapeutic environment that would serve the needs of the students in the dormitory. The site requested funds for repairs and remodeling of the dormitories, and additional funding for two counselors, one social worker, one elementary teacher/tutor liaison, one secondary teacher/tutor liaison, one traditional culture student facilitator, two counselor technicians, eight home living assistants, and four substitute staff. The site was also designated for future construction of a 200-bed therapeutic dormitory that was intended to evolve out of the TRM program.

In the Proposal submitted to OIEP, all departments in the school made pledges to support this effort. The administration pledged to "actively seek to form an alliance with parents, guardians and community members to promote student learning and self-worth," to "emphasize staff development and planning," and to "involve school department heads in more active control," including holding them responsible for certifying the time and attendance of personnel under their supervision." The transportation department pledged its services for activities. The academic department promised to improve networking with the dormitories. School-wide, the site committed to establishing monthly staff development for the dorm, high school, and elementary staff, as well as a tutoring/mentoring program. The food service department agreed to provide a seven-day food preparation schedule. The facilities/maintenance department made a commitment to promptly respond to work orders. Residential and home living staff agreed to participate in the process of change. The recreation department offered "scores of outdoor activities such as: Whitewater rafting in Oregon, skiing in the Black Hills, and fishing, camping, hiking in the Badlands," and to involve the community in meeting the spiritual and cultural needs of the students.

The legislation mandated funding of TRM programs at three types of sites: a boarding school, a peripheral dormitory, and a day school with a residential component. The proposal at this site was funded to fulfill requirements of the third category. While the proposal was modeled after elements of the L1 program, when it came time to implement, the school administration decided that a seven-day dormitory program was not feasible. The focus shifted to providing activities for the five-night residential program and addressing the systemic barriers to success in the overall school system. In response, the funding agency requested the school to submit a revised project proposal, but such a proposal was never developed.

There was initial backing for the TRM proposal from the administrator of the school system, who attended pre-funding planning meetings and strongly supported the initiative. A TRM team was hired early in the school year (SY) 2001-2002 to spearhead implementation of the initiative. The initial site evaluation identified a number of systemic problems that needed to be addressed, and the TRM team had strong support of the administrator in developing strategies to address these problems. The initiative stalled when controversies led to the replacement of the administrator. The administrator brought in as a replacement did not support the TRM project. During the year, TRM team members gradually left the program, citing frustration with the lack of support for their efforts. At the end of year, approximately one-third of the allocated TRM

funds had been expended to support cultural and other evening activities in the dormitories, the introduction of the Morningside academic program in the elementary school, and attempts to establish a computerized student tracking system. But little else had been done to implement a TRM strategy. Nonetheless, data from anonymous school surveys were gathered in spring 2001, fall 2001, and spring 2002. These survey data were used to characterize the dynamics and components of this system as an example of issues faced by the reservation day schools that many boarding school students come from. For purposes of analysis, the site was designated as a No Treatment Day School (NTDS) site. Funding for the site was terminated after SY 2001-2002.

Student Characteristics

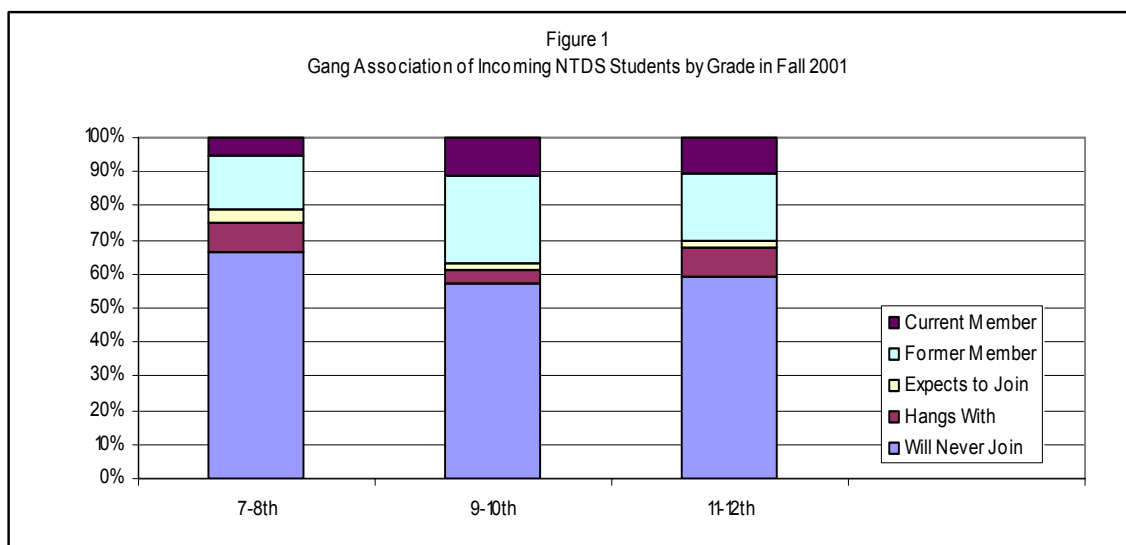
Data on incoming student characteristics are based on surveys conducted in fall 2001, at the beginning of TRM funding. A problem with attendance at this site resulted in a response rate far below that of the other sites in the study. The fall response rates at this site were 65% for grades 4-6, 51% for grades 7 and 8, 52% for grades 9 and 10, and 74% for grades 11 and 12. The enrollment and the percentages of students in attendance at the time of the survey reflect entry and attrition patterns at this site. Elementary school students were from the local area, but students graduating from more distant elementary schools entered at the middle school and high school levels. By grades 11 and 12, one-half of the population entering grade 9 had dropped out of school, but the remaining students had better daily attendance. Therefore, when interpreting the survey data, readers must recognize that they come only from the students remaining in school as opposed to the potential student population.

Life Stressors. Table 1 shows responses of NTDS students on the Prevention Planning Survey section of the American Drug and Alcohol Survey (ADAS), administered anonymously in fall 2001. It is clear that a number of incoming students had experienced school failure and been exposed to violence as either perpetrators or victims.

Table 1
History of Incoming Students, Fall 2001
– Anonymous ADAS Self Reports

Item	7 th -8 th grade	9 th -10 th grade	11 th -12 th grade
History of Antisocial Activity			
- Have been arrested	21%	40%	50%
- Have robbed someone	16%	13%	17%
- Have beaten up somebody	68%	66%	58%
- Have hurt someone using club/ chain/knife/gun	17%	14%	17%
School Failure			
- Have flunked a grade	37%	46%	54%
- Have been expelled from school	12%	17%	17%
Victimization			
- Have been beaten up by peer	15%	15%	19%
- Have been beaten up by someone not of same age	17%	18%	29%
- Been hurt with a club/knife/gun	14%	17%	16%
- Been robbed	26%	18%	20%

Gang Involvement. Students were asked in fall surveys about their gang involvement. Figure 1 shows the percentage of students in fall 2001 choosing each option to describe their level of involvement. Over one-half of the students in each grade group were determined to never join a gang.



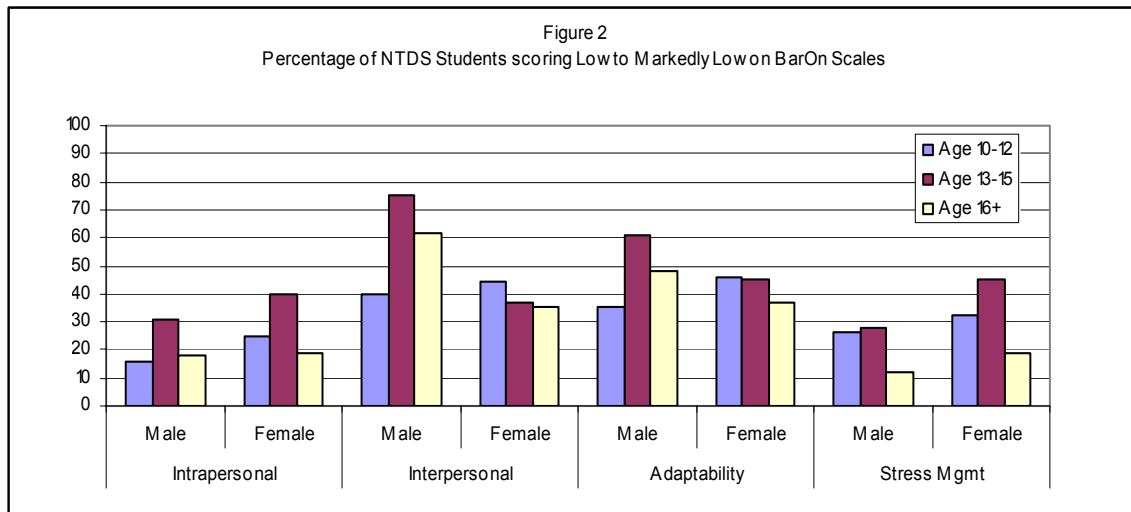
Alienation. Baseline measures of alienation, using the short form of the Jessor Alienation Scale (Jessor, Donovan, & Costa Frances, 1992), were taken at two time points prior to funding, the first in the spring of 2001 at the end of a school year, and the second in fall 2001 at the beginning of the first year of funding. For the older age group, those members of the preceding cohort still present at the end of SY 2000-2001 generally appeared to have higher alienation levels than the age group at the beginning of the next year (Table 2).

Table 2
Percentage of students agreeing with Jessor Items
Prior to TRM Funding

Items from the Jessor Alienation Scale	Ages 9-12		Ages 13+	
	Spring 01	Fall 01	Spring 01	Fall 01
Hardly anything I'm doing in my life means very much to me.	59%	49%	40%	35%
I sometimes feel unsure about who I really am.	39%	42%	42%	33%
It's not up to me to help out when people I know are having problems	50%	44%	38%	34%
It's hard to know how to act most of the time since you can't tell what other people expect.	67%	60%	59%	47%

The BarOn Emotional Quotient Inventory focuses on a number of areas necessary for successful functioning in the world, including intrapersonal skills (having to do with inner

knowledge and inner balance), interpersonal skills, ability to manage stress, and adaptability (reflecting confidence in ability to deal with situations that arise around oneself). Responses on the BarOn at the beginning of the first TRM school year (fall 2001), shown in Figure 2, indicated many incoming students scored low enough on the subscales that intervention was needed. Areas of greatest need were interpersonal skills and adaptability. The middle age group, the one most likely to experience attrition, had the highest number of students in need.



Substance Abuse. In fall 2001, many incoming students reported having tried various substances (see Table 3). There was a steep increase in substance use reported between elementary school and middle school. Inhalant use peaked in the middle school cohort.

Table 3
Percentage of L2 Students Reporting Past Substance Use, Fall 2001

	4 th -6 th	7 th -8 th	9 th -10 th	11 th -12 th
Alcohol	9%	56%	73%	90%
Marijuana	18%	65%	78%	86%
Cigarettes	20%	65%	74%	87%
Inhalants	7%	19%	12%	7%

Site Resources

Facility

Facilities ranged from good to poor condition. The girls' dorm, constructed in the 1930s, was a pleasant homelike situation with plenty of space for the 78 girls who lived there during the week. High ceilings, wide hallways, and adequate air circulation and windows contributed to a feeling of spaciousness. Rooms were not crowded; younger children slept in large rooms with up to seven roommates and high school girls occupied smaller rooms with a single roommate. Bathrooms were ventilated and cleaned daily. There was no evidence of mold or grime. However, the dorm showed its age with peeling paint and linoleum, disintegrating plaster, no

sprinkler system, some cracked or boarded-up windows, and inadequate lighting in the lounge area. During one site visit, no hot water was available one evening; a drinking fountain was out of order; bathroom hardware, such as toilet tissue holders and latches, needed repair; and the heating system produced temperature extremes in different rooms. The boys' dorm was in better condition. It had been recently painted and had received some repairs. All buildings on campus had a large number of flies as a result of missing or torn screens.

The grounds were littered with trash, a result, perhaps, of the lack of trash receptacles on campus. Concrete sidewalks and asphalt areas were disintegrating, and lawn areas were generally bare or consisted of weeds. Landscaping was non-existent. Parking lot lights were not on at night, and the campus itself was poorly lit. There were few trees. Growths of uncontrolled brush and weeds undermined both brick walls and concrete pathways.

The school buildings were clean and in good condition. They were attractively painted in traditional colors. The elementary and middle school students were served in a two-story structure that did not have an elevator for handicapped students and presented some hazards, such as open, unscreened windows, to active children. The high school was an attractive building in very good condition. However, it was reported that a shortage of funds in the construction phase resulted in an HVAC system that did not properly control the temperature, leaving students sweltering in classrooms designed without windows. The high school gym was in good condition, as was the library, which also served a computer room.

Some of these maintenance problems were addressed during the first year of TRM funding, and minor renovations were made to increase security in the dormitories. Trash containers appeared on campus, screens were replaced on cafeteria windows, and lights in the parking lot were put back into service. School drinking fountains had been fixed, neglected maintenance on out-of-order air-handlers in the high school had been rectified to address climate control problems, fencing was placed around some of the school grounds, and significant other maintenance was performed.

Staff

Results of staff surveys indicated that staff morale was poor. "Low staff morale" was cited as a major problem (rating of 4, *a major problem*, on a scale of 0 to 4) by 52% of respondents in October 2001 and 50% in May 2002. "Staff dissention" was considered a major problem by 40% of respondents in October and 30% in May. There was little support for administration policies. Fifty-three percent of the respondents characterized "Administration policies" as a major problem in October and 41% still had that same perception in May, under the second administrator. Comments on the questionnaires indicated a high level of staff frustration. Reasons given for this situation included the following:

- Lack of Discipline: Staff wanting to enforce no-tolerance policies felt frustrated when the administration did not back them up.
- Patronage in Staffing: Staff felt that a patronage system rather than a meritocracy governed staff hiring and accountability. Most referred to friendships and family status and ties. Lack of qualified candidates willing to live in this remote community made hiring for certain positions difficult.
- Disruption of Status Quo: The accountability and technology required by school reform and TRM had disrupted the status quo. The transition to use of technology had not been easy, and had created frustration. The site shifted over from a hard copy system to an e-mail

system before all departments were connected to e-mail, resulting in some departments not receiving adequate notification of pertinent meetings and activities. The new student tracking system depended on a remote server that was plagued by firewall and software problems.

- **Teamwork:** Staff were not working together as a team. The size of the school required coordination of efforts to accomplish goals. Staff wanting to achieve goals found themselves frustrated by what they considered incompetence and lack of cooperation in other staff crucial to the process.
- **Communication:** Staff felt they were not consulted about changes and solutions, decisions were top down, and decisions about students or staff were often made behind closed doors.
- **Lack of respect:** Staff and administrators exhibited frustration in dealing with each other, frequently acting with a lack of respect and in an adversarial manner.
- **Lack of planning:** Staff were frustrated with frequent interruptions in the scheduled school day. For example, the high school class schedules were frequently reversed. The PA system could be heard announcing last-minute updates to the schedule, abruptly changing the order in which students went to their classes. Staff were unsettled by this "chaos" and concerned about its impact on the students.
- **Accountability:** Staff projected a "can't do" rather than a "can do" attitude. Many staff were not doing their jobs and then blaming others for not allowing them or interfering with their ability to do their jobs.

Family and Community Support

The school is deeply embedded in the community. While this provides a significant cultural, spiritual, and emotional resource, staff were concerned that community pressure placed on the school often created problems, rather than helping them to achieve their goals. Factions in the community created an unstable political situation that impacted the school. Table 4 shows that many staff believed that conditions outside the school created a major problem for them.

Table 4
Staff Survey Items related to Community Environment, October 2001

Item	% of staff rating this 4 (a major problem)
School Board policies	46.5%
Low parental expectations of their children	45.1%
Lack of support from the home	47.7%
Family problems in the student's home	37.8%
Outside political pressures	48.0%

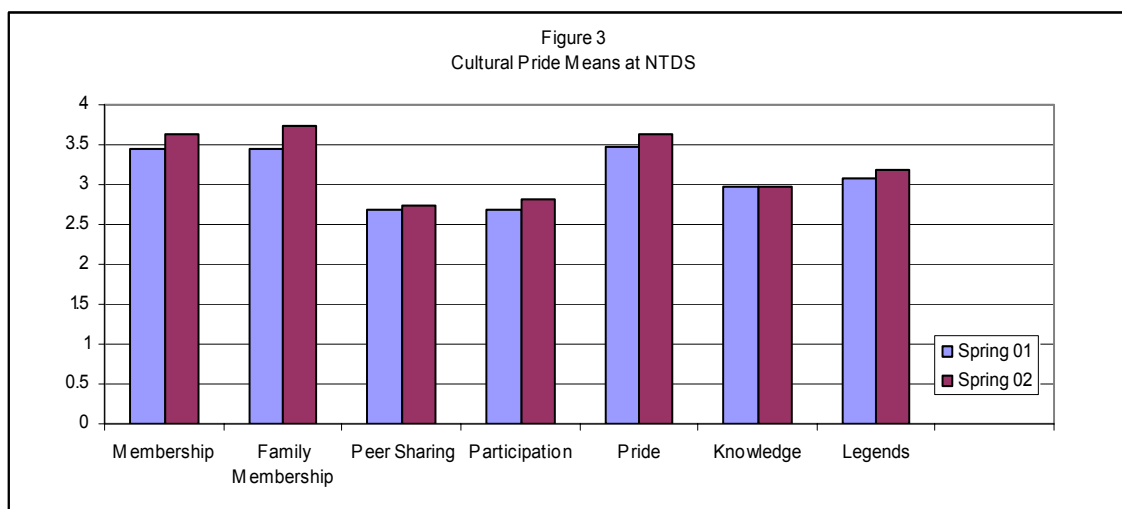
Many staff believed that parents failed to support school efforts to improve attendance, and viewed parents and the community as obstructing their efforts to reduce substance use and enforce discipline. Staff and administration reported threats to their persons and property, and indicated that political pressure was exerted on them to favor students with political or family connections. Similar pressure was reported to influence how staff were hired and held accountable. The administration bore the brunt of community pressure, caught between staff and community members.

Program and Service Components

Cultural Programming

The school is fortunate to have cultural traditional leaders on its staff. The school recognizes and has pride in its history and culture. Traditional and cultural activities are also present in the surrounding community. Students had a relatively high degree of cultural pride as measured on the cultural pride scale shown in Figure 3. According to the proposal, this area was to be augmented. Additional services were to include "firsthand involvement in a traditional drum group, traditional singing and dancing, honoring and naming ceremonies, appropriate rites of passage ceremonies, and purification and healing ceremonies." However, resources in this area were not increased. At the beginning of the project, one of the cultural traditional leaders already on the school staff was transferred to the TRM payroll and assigned to do evening classes for dormitory students, reducing to three the number of cultural traditional leaders left to serve the remainder of the students. The cultural leader detailed to TRM was frequently required to take over schoolroom duties of absent cultural leaders, often on very short notice.

Comparison of spring 2001 and spring 2002 surveys showed, cultural pride among the students had increased. However, this day school is so embedded in the community it is not possible to distinguish between the impact of school programs and the impact of community activities and perceptions.



Items:

Membership:	"I like being a member of my tribe."
Family membership:	"I like that my family is part of my tribe."
Peer sharing:	"I talk to my friends about things having to do with my tribe's culture (religion, customs, values, food, language, arts, pow wow and other celebrations)."
Participation:	"I participate in tribal and other Indian celebrations."
Pride:	"I am proud to be a member of my tribe."
Knowledge:	"I know about my tribe's culture and history."
Legends:	"I like telling and listening to tribal legends and stories about my ancestors."

Socialization/Life Skills

Every school environment has a number of reactive disciplinary policies, as well as proactive or preventive elements that encourage pro-social behavior and maintain order.

Standards of Conduct. This school had a handbook that outlined standards of conduct. From observations and the frustration expressed by many staff, it was clear that standards were not being consistently enforced for either staff or students. Results of the staff survey in May 2002 showed that 68.7% of the staff characterized "Discipline is inconsistent, not all students are treated equally" as a major problem, with a mean rating of 3.44 on a scale of 0 to 4. Students' May 2002 answers to survey questions regarding enforcement of different violations (see Table 5) profile areas of high and low enforcement.

Table 5
Enforcement of Standards

	Grades 7-8	Grades 9-10	Grades 11-12
Percentage of students believing students get in "a lot" of trouble for being disruptive in class.	27%	15%	16%
Percentage of students believing students get in "a lot" of trouble for bullying another student.	30%	24%	30%
Percentage of students believing students get in "a lot" of trouble for hitting another student.	56%	51%	52%
Percentage of students believing students get in "a lot" of trouble for smoking.	65%	46%	44%
Percentage of students believing students get in "a lot" of trouble for drinking alcohol.	75%	63%	63%
Percentage of students believing students get in "a lot" of trouble for using other drugs.	76%	63%	69%
Percentage of students believing it is "very or mostly true" that school rules are fairly enforced.	58%	39%	48%
Percentage of student believing it is "very true" or "mostly true" that classroom and hallways are kept under control.	68%	45%	51%
Percentage of students saying it is "very true" or "mostly true" that "kids being disruptive keep me from learning."	60%	44%	62%
Percentage of students saying it is "very true" or "mostly true" that "kids threatening other kids make it hard to learn."	62%	39%	53%

Again, there is a caveat: The respondents were the "good" students who were in school on the day of the survey.

In May 2002, 58.7% of staff reported that lack of discipline for students was a major problem, and 63.9% reported that lack of consistency for students was a major problem. Staff reported feeling helpless and hopeless. They reported that parents threatened lawsuits, physical assaults, and damage to their property when they tried to enforce standards of conduct. Much of the staff criticism of the administration focused on administrators whom they viewed as bowing to pressure from politically well-placed parents, and interfering with discipline. According to reports, the school board did not support the no-tolerance policy expressed in the handbook. Observations by the evaluator supported the staff observations. Students were seen defacing school property and smoking cigarettes without interference from staff witnessing their actions.

Counseling. According to the proposal, six counselors were on staff to provide substance abuse services and other guidance counseling to students. In reality, many of their hours were spent on classroom teaching assignments.

Substance Use. The evaluator saw no evidence of an alcohol and substance abuse prevention program. At the end of the year of funding, it was noted that a substance abuse counselor position that was occupied the preceding year had been vacant since November of the TRM school year. Such a program was clearly needed. Statistics showed a continuing epidemic of substance use at NTDS. In spring 2002, 44.7% of staff characterized "Drug and alcohol problems of students" as a major problem. Students anonymously filled out the American Drug and Alcohol Survey (ADAS) questionnaire at three time points. When it is taken into account that nearly one-half of the students were not surveyed because of truancy, and those absent are more likely to use substances, the data in Figures 4-6 indicate the situation is serious.

Alcohol use among elementary students is low, but it takes off in the seventh and eighth grade group, where over of 30% of students attending at the end of the year reported consuming alcohol in the past 30 days. The students' use of alcohol increases 10% by grades 9 and 10 and then leaps to over 60% among juniors and seniors. Again, these are the "good" students who were in the school the day of the survey.

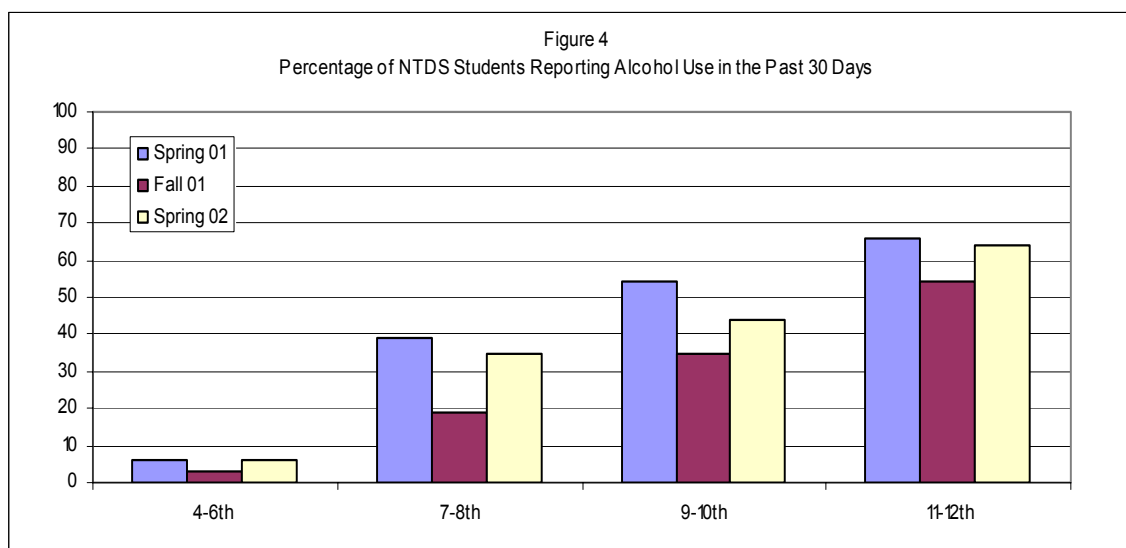
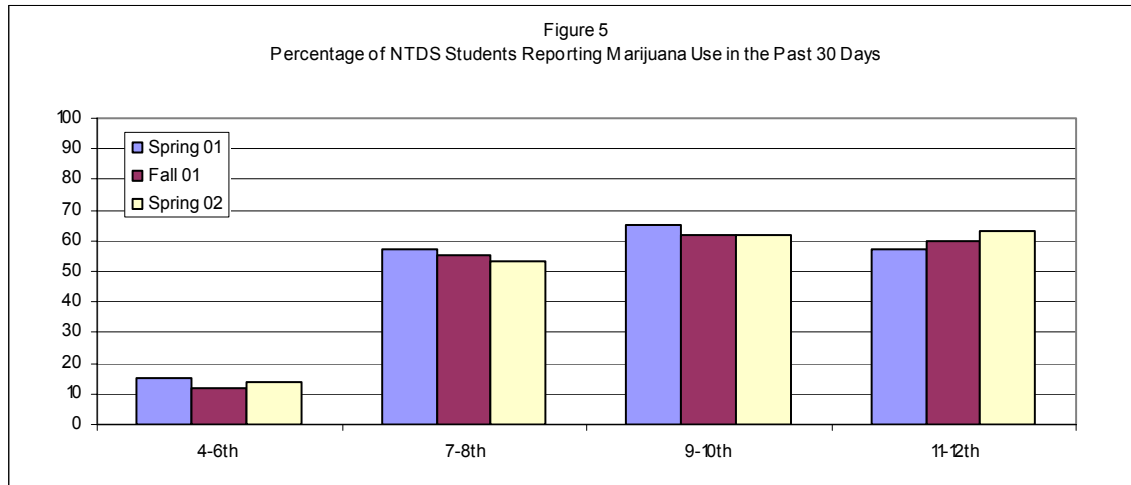
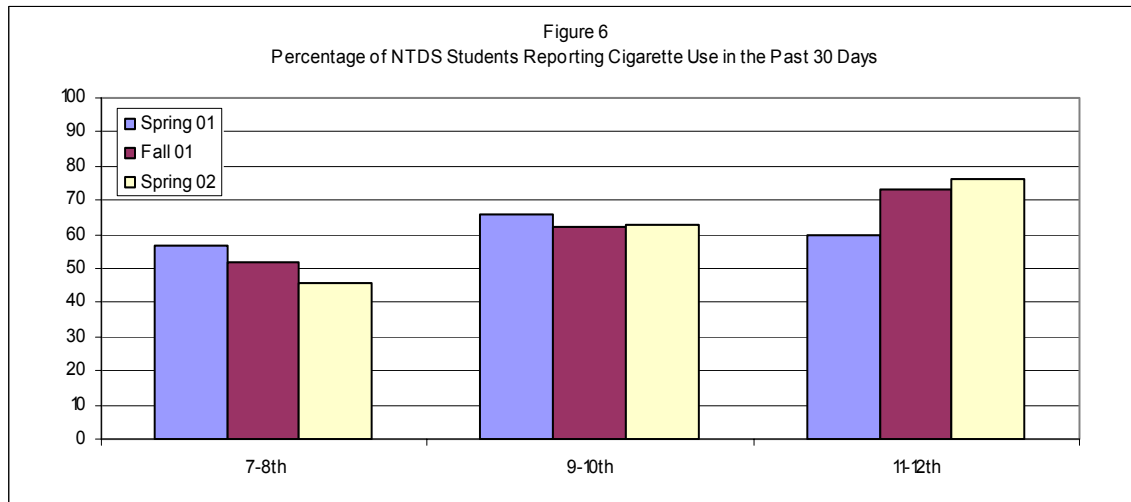


Figure 5 shows that marijuana use is minimal in elementary students, but jumps to over 50% upon entrance into middle school.



Approximately 60% of students attending middle and high school have smoked cigarettes in the past 30 days (Figure 6).



Role modeling may contribute to this problem: Many of the staff also struggled with substance use. In the spring 2002 survey, 31.8% of staff ranked "Drug and alcohol problems of staff" as a major problem. The observer noted that staff openly smoked cigarettes on campus in front of students. Students modeled this behavior, smoking cigarettes in the presence of staff on campus. A number of staff felt that they received little help from law enforcement; some alleged that members of the local police force sold drugs to students. Unlike the other TRM sites, security and resource officers were not allowed to do drug tests on students who were under reasonable suspicion of using substances.

Parental Liaisons. TRM parent liaisons were hired as proposed. However, they did little work with parents and did not perform home visits. The liaisons were relegated to largely clerical duties in the high school administrative and TRM offices, attempting to gather attendance and grade information from uncooperative teachers and placing phone calls to notify parents of their children's absence from school. TRM staff found themselves being used to replace office staff unwilling, unavailable, or unable to carry out their functions.

Residential Program. The dormitory provided a haven for a number of students. Open Sunday night through Thursday night, the dormitory provided housing for students who were either dropped off on Sunday evening, or came in on school buses on Monday mornings. Students returned home on Friday after school. Residential staff acted in the role of concerned relatives, and provided a caring and generally laid-back atmosphere for students under their care. The majority of the elementary students in the dormitories came from homes in the immediate vicinity that lacked the resources to cope with them, or from local families in difficult circumstances. At the high school level, many residential students come from outlying district communities, too distant to make daily return home feasible. During the winter when transportation was difficult, use of the dormitory peaked. Randomly selected bed check data of the two dorms found 79 students in February, 62 in March, 52 in April, and 39 in May. On the evaluator's spring visit, 47 girls were still on dormitory rolls; however, only 25 were counted at an all-dorm activity. Similarly, of the 25 boys listed as being in the boys' dorm, only 15 were found at the activity. Many older boys appeared to be using the dormitory as a handy optional hotel complete with meals. It was reported that the dorm population had been significantly reduced when a number of parents were notified that TANF and other benefits they were receiving for their children were being cut because their children stayed in the dormitory.

Many staff indicated that "Lack of after-school and weekend activities" was a serious problem for the students. In October 2001, 50.5% of staff responding to the staff survey characterized this lack of activities as a major problem. The proposal was to address this situation. Activities proposed for residential students included "hiking, camping, cooking, learning to play chess, soccer games, rope climbing, running a mile on the track, horseback riding, learning to sing Traditional [] songs, and working hard to learn difficult material in academic areas... All activities will be specifically designed to provide students with positive experiences guided by supportive and caring staff who provide positive reinforcement."

Because the dormitory did not expand to add weekend services, few of the activities proposed actually occurred. In addition to proposing increased staffing to provide coverage, the proposal had included an increase in dormitory resources by providing two counselors, one social worker, and additional TRM counseling techs (CTs) to provide a life skills component to students residing in the dorm. The counselors were to "participate with students in activities and provide active guidance and counseling services." The social worker was to determine special needs, network with appropriate services to meet those needs, and work with families in this process. As TRM was implemented, however, no additional counselors were provided to the dormitories. Two positions – home living specialist and Intensive Residential Guidance counselor – which existed at the time of the proposal, and which were fundamental to providing a therapeutic environment in the dormitories, were actually deleted. The social worker who had been hired by TRM at the beginning of the project resigned his post prior to the end of the year, citing a lack of training, resources, and cooperation.

Staff hired under the TRM program had little direct involvement with the dormitories. The administration used the TRM monies to fund other activities and services. The working hours of seven TRM staff were shifted during the course of the year to match school hours rather than

dormitory hours. At mid-year, TRM staff were withdrawn from the girls' dorm and placed in an office above the boys dormitory that was separate from both the school and the dorm. While a small number of elementary level boys attended study hall and cultural sessions, very few of the residential girls had regular contact with TRM staff. This left dormitory home living staff, whose numbers had not been expanded, to provide most of the life skills activities and to arrange for recreational activities. Dorm staff indicated there was little assistance from the recreation department in providing activities. On the positive side of the ledger, exercise equipment for the dormitory was installed, and memberships in the local Boys and Girls Club were provided by TRM money. One of the four school nights spent in the dorm was used for outside trips. Going to the movies was popular, but the evaluator noticed that elementary school students taken to movies returned after 10 p.m. – a late hour for a school night. Due to limited amenities in the local community, many activities involved lengthy and expensive transportation.

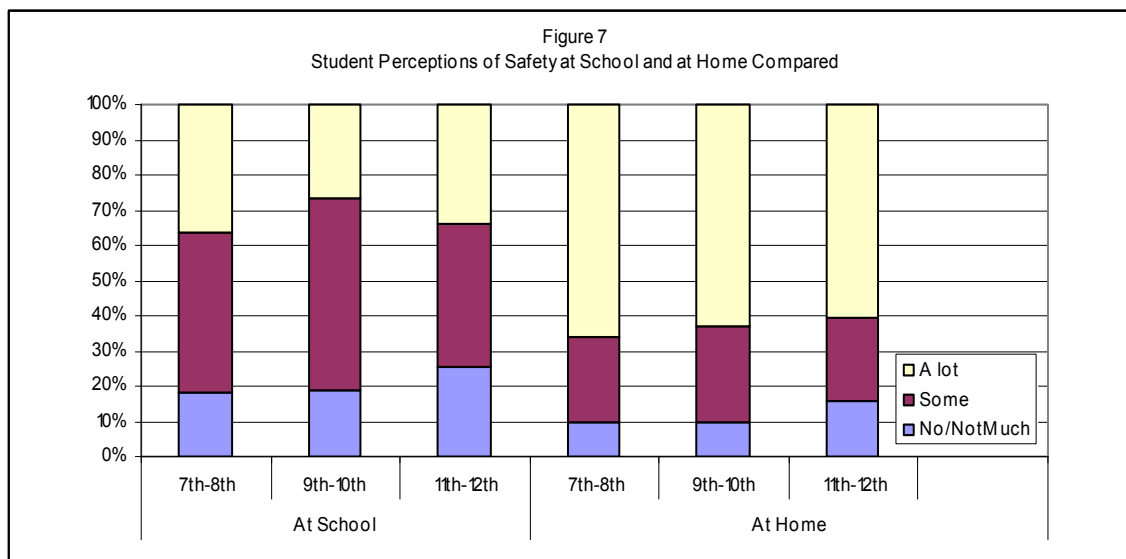
Community Service. This component was to emphasize connections to the elderly, handicapped, and children with medical needs to foster interaction among school, home, community, and the tribe. However, the only community service activity executed was picking up litter.

Home-style Living. This element was to provide practice in homemaking skills such as shopping for food, preparing home-style meals, and setting the table. However, while the dormitories were homelike, and dormitory staff did an excellent job of providing a homelike atmosphere, these sessions did not take place frequently. With the provision of TRM funding, dormitories were more likely to send out for pizza when food service was not available than to use their kitchens for preparing meals.

Interpersonal Relations. Like students at other sites, NTDS students scored disproportionately low on interpersonal relations – a skill needed to succeed in life. This issue was exacerbated in the high school setting where students from many different communities on the reservation were brought together. According to reports from staff:

- Bus drivers expressed concern about safety of students on their routes. According to the drivers, their lengthy routes had them picking up as many as 60 students from multiple communities. Traditional rivalries between some of these communities resulted in fights between students from different factions. As bus drivers were generally unaccompanied, they were unable to both drive and provide monitoring.
- Difficulties with constructive communication and intercommunity rivalries seemed to manifest themselves in frequent acts of violence. Staff reported as many as five fights per day on campus. Staff reports were at odds with official school report card data, which listed only 41 incidents of violence in SY 1999-2000, 25 incidents in SY 2000-2001, and 62 in SY 2001-2002. This discrepancy suggests that a high threshold for designation of an incident as violence may exist at this site.

Figure 7 shows the responses of students when asked whether they felt safe “at school” and asked how safe they felt “where I live.” The majority of students appeared to feel safer at home than at school.



Academic Programming

This site had a number of programs to improve the students' academic achievement. Students were tested using the Stanford Achievement Test #9. Prior to the advent of TRM, the STAR Math and STAR Reading programs provided students with assessment and feedback on areas needing improvement. The Dakota Academic Comprehensive System was also in place. The TRM program added the Morningside reading program that custom-designed a process to address students' reading weaknesses and trained teachers and tutors to administer it. A study hall was required for students with grades of C and below, and was provided for other students on a voluntary basis. An ROTC program was active on campus. Seniors were offered ACT preparation courses. A youth opportunities program provided training and partial employment to students.

This site's academic area was in particular need of improvement. Table 6 compared mean scores of the top 36 college-bound students from NTDS with state and national norms on the ACT for 1999-2000.

Table 6
Comparison of Average ACT Scores
for 1999-2000 for NTDS

	English	Math	Reading	Science	Composite
National	20.5	20.7	21.4	21.0	21.0
State	20.7	21.2	21.8	21.8	21.5
NTDS	13.3	15.2	15.4	15.1	14.8

Morningside Program. The most significant success of the TRM program was the Morningside reading program. Elementary teachers enthusiastically adopted the program, and expressed appreciation for the training received from the program instructors. Teachers reported that children's reading improved, which boosted teacher morale and teamwork. Parents reported

that their children had become enthusiastic readers. According to the Morningside assessments, reading readiness deficits were apparent at the kindergarten level, and there were fewer competent students at each successive grade level. Morningside found that not one student in grades 4-8 could read fluently at even one grade level below their actual grade placement. They reported that teachers had depressed expectations of students, tending to perceive that students of only average skill were very advanced.

Residential Programs. The original TRM program proposed an intensive dormitory-based tutoring program using two certified teachers. Evaluation found the focus on studies in the dormitory had been only sporadic. A retired teacher ran the TRM study hall in the boys' dorm, which was open to all residential and non-residential students after school. The number of students averaged about 10 (approximately 1% of the student body) on the afternoons this study hall took place. Only two or three of the elementary girls sporadically attended this study hall. Examination of girls' dorm records of the two preceding months indicated that in-dormitory study hall sessions occurred only infrequently (1 hour a week or less) for older girls.

The dorms lacked adequate computers for student use; computers observed were old and were being used only for dorm management and video games.

Tutoring and Study Halls. TRM staff struggled to coordinate a program providing after-school tutoring and study halls to the general school population. Prior to the TRM program, the staff for grades K-8 kept those students in need of additional help in their rooms after school. The high school, however, was unable to develop a functional system for ensuring that students with low or failing grades actually participated in the mandatory study hall. The TRM program initially proposed to move all students in need of help into the cafeteria, where there was space to do a study hall. There were significant difficulties with getting students into this new location and attending to them. Reportedly, bus drivers also resisted transporting a second, late busload of students. According to reports from K-8 teachers, this disrupted a system that had been working for their students.

An incentive awards program for students with all As and Bs and no absences was put in place by TRM. The success of this awards program was hampered by the difficulty of getting accurate and timely information about grades and attendance. It was viewed as a reward for successful students rather than an encouragement for failing students. The program's lack of success in encouraging achievement can be seen in the fact that fewer, rather than more, students qualified to receive these awards over time. Among elementary students, the number of awardees dropped during the year from 38 to 16. In the high school, the number declined during the year from 33 to 7 students. Only about one-half of the parents and students showed up for award ceremonies.

Career Guidance. Over 60 students were involved in a gifted and talented program and a youth opportunities program. However, as can be seen in Table 6, even the best and the brightest students at NTDS were at a significant academic disadvantage when they entered college. Given the significant deficits in interpersonal skills and lack of confidence in their ability to deal with new situations, a high rate of failure in post-secondary education can be predicted. The computerized tracking system proposed for the TRM program was designed to quantify the extent to which adequate career guidance was taking place; however, it was not implemented.

Mental Health Services

Staff were concerned about students' emotional needs. In May 2002, 39.8% of staff rated "Emotional problems of students" as a major problem. "Family problems in the student's home" were seen by 45.2% of staff as a major barrier. "Shortage of therapeutic services for students with problems" was rated by 48.7% of staff as being a major problem. Forty-eight percent of the staff considered "Low student expectations of themselves" to be a major problem.

At the time of its TRM proposal, the site had six counselors providing either substance abuse or guidance counseling, and the school proposed to use TRM funding to hire an additional six counseling techs and two social workers. Counselors handled referrals from other staff and referred students in need of more extensive help to the very limited Indian Health Services resources located in the community. However, it was determined that in practice, little attention was paid to the students' mental health issues. Counselors on the school payroll, who were certified and could be available for counseling students, were required to carry class teaching loads of 20 hours or more hours a week.

Individual screening and assessment had been in place for dormitory students since 1996, using services provided by the University of Colorado. An additional source of services was put in place for residential students only toward the end of the year of funding, through a very limited TRM contract with a consortium of traditional healers. All but one staff member at this organization lacked certification, which was a barrier to getting this contract in place.

Staff Affirmation of Students. Most of the staff appeared to have a laissez-faire attitude toward student problems. Some administrators and teachers expressed the opinion that students who didn't want to attend school should not be forced to do so, as their presence interfered with the school's ability to serve students who wanted to attend. Rather than aggressively addressing them, staff appeared to have confidence that students will grow out of problems. Dorm and school staff were generally seen treating students as if they were younger siblings or nephews and nieces. Although some teachers were frustrated and treated recalcitrant students rudely, the majority of staff appeared to have a friendly, jovial relationship with the students. The positive side to this equation is that students were receiving a great deal of affirmation from the staff. The negative side is a reluctance to enforce discipline or to interfere in family affairs for fear of parents who were vocal in support of their children's rights. However, the bottom-line analysis is that many students do not have the structure, the consistency, and the assistance they need, as can be seen from the BarOn data. Many students scored particularly low in self-confidence regarding their ability to adapt to new situations and challenges, and in interpersonal skills. Some staff who made mental health referrals were concerned that "nothing happened." A number of staff expressed the opinion that the community associated a stigma with seeking assistance for mental health issues. Other staff expressed hesitation to intervene in family situations due to fear of personal ramifications.

Physical Health Components

Physical needs of the students were being met. Food service in the cafeteria provided adequate nutrition at three meals a day on Monday through Thursday, and breakfast and lunch on Fridays. The school had athletic fields and both an elementary school and a high school gym. Very few of the students observed appeared to be overweight. While there were two gyms on campus and a weight room, many of the machines in the weight room needed repair. Students

appeared active, and many participated in sports. There was some evidence, however, that access to facilities for non-athletes was limited. Several staff commented on the lack of sports activities for non-athletes. In the evening, the observer noted that outdoor lighting was too poor for use of outdoor courts. Residential staff reported coordination problems with the recreational staff; the evaluator noted that arrangements made by dorm staff one night to use the gym fell through when no one appeared to open the doors. However, the athletes, some with enough talent for college athletic scholarships, may have been negatively impacted by the school's emphasis on sports. The school athletic schedule frequently took them out of class. Due to the remote location of the site, student athletes went on road trips which could take four to five days, causing them to miss a significant amount of class time. Staff also reported incidents where academic ineligibility had been circumvented by doctoring of transcripts.

Outcome Data

Outcome data tracked a number of indicators. Retention rate was considered the major indicator of a successful program for residential situations, and attendance the major indicator for day schools. In addition, data were examined to evaluate such key indicators of developmental success as school bonding, peer and social bonding, adaptability and stress management, meaning and identity, and academic achievement.

Attendance

Attendance was a major problem at this site. While official school report card attendance figures appeared fairly positive (average daily attendance for SY 1999-2000 was 80%; for SY 2000-2001, 83%; and for SY 2001-2002, K-8 was 87% and 9-12 was 66%), TRM found the system for attendance records in disarray. On many days, staff claimed, over 50% of the high school student body was absent. The seriousness of this problem could only be estimated due to lack of data. By the end of the year of funding, an electronic tracking system was in place to track attendance, and data received from teachers had been entered. However, a data check at the spring site visit found that of the 25 high school teachers, only 11 had reported class attendance for the previous day, and many reportedly had not been turning in reports for most of the year. As the absenteeism record only included classes reported, the calculations of attendance which assumed the student was present unless reported absent appeared to be seriously underreporting the extent of the problem. Table 7 presents data on high school attendance based on absences recorded in the system for the first months of school. It should be noted that, because many absences appear to have been unreported, the true number of absences may be more than double that reported.

Table 7
System Reported Absences for NTDS High School for 8/21/01 to 10/26/01

	Number of students (percentage) who had missed 18-36 classes	Number of students (percentage) who had missed more than 36 classes
Freshmen (n=202)	56 (28%)	89 (44%)
Sophomores (n=130)	24 (16%)	57 (44%)
Juniors (n=83)	30 (36%)	32 (37%)
Seniors (n=65)	22 (34%)	20 (31%)

As another indicator of significant attendance problems, only about one-half of the students were in school when the survey data shown in Table 8 were collected. Nearly one-half of the currently enrolled students were not present on the days that student surveys were administered, despite the advertised incentive of getting a popular T-shirt for filling out the survey.

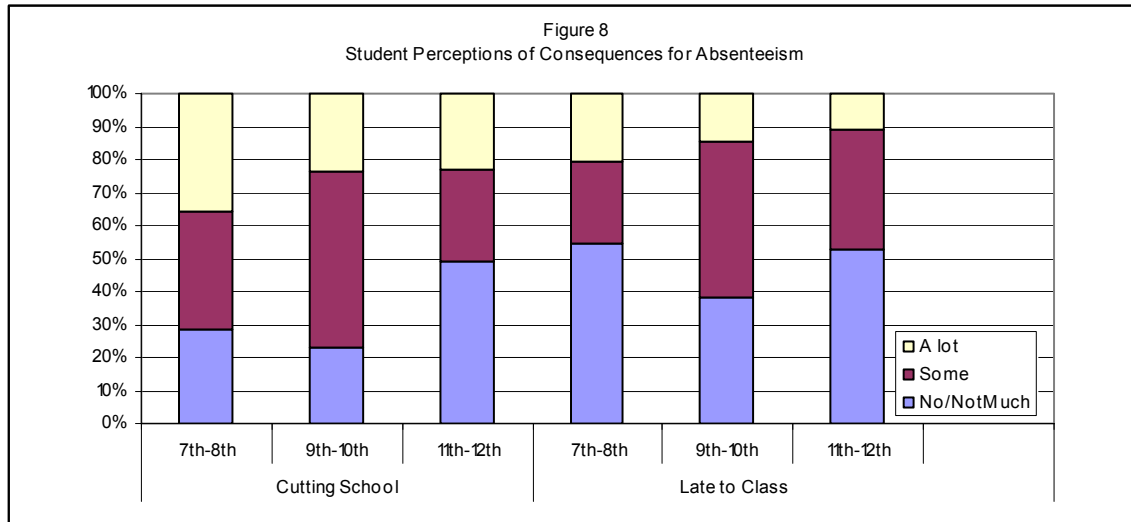
Table 8
Attendance at Survey Time Points

	Grades 4-6	Grades 7-8	Grades 9-10	Grades 11-12
Percentage of enrolled students present for spring 2001 survey	76%	74%	41%	54%
Percentage of enrolled students present for fall 2001 survey	65%	51%	52%	74%
Percentage of enrolled students present for spring 2002 survey	63%	46%	48%	68%

A procedure was in place for handling absenteeism. According to this procedure, parents of any students not present were to be called that same morning. After an absence of three days, a formal notice was to be mailed to parents. If the child remained absent from school, a home visit was to be made. This procedure was followed in the elementary school, and attendance there was concomitantly high. There was, however, evidence that the high school was not giving parents adequate notification. The truant officer spent his day in a classroom babysitting students who were found outside their classrooms during class periods. Many truants were not apprehended, and were seen loitering on campus and in the nearby town center during school hours. Box 1 shows multiple breakdowns occurring in the mechanism for dealing with truancy, and the reasons staff gave for the breakdown.

Box 1 Accountability Problems	
Procedures designed to result in good attendance.	“Can’t do” reasons for not following procedures:
Lack of attendance is to be reported to the administration office the morning of absence.	The Firewall was messing up the computer system, we can't enter or retrieve data. Teachers were not turning in the information.
Call is to be made to parents when student is identified as absent	The computer system was not working properly. Administration staff was not here or too busy to call parents.
Written report is to be sent to parents after three days.	High school office staff were not sending out notices in a timely fashion. Administrative Staff were absent from work for extended periods of time and nobody else picked up the ball.
If there is no response to written or oral communications, a home visit is to be done.	Home visits were not done, because the school vehicles were not available.
A tribal resolution requires enforcement of requirement that parents send children to school.	Can't be enforced, for fear of trouble with the parents. We can't enforce it, the administration won't back us up. Nobody was assigned to do it.

Figure 8 shows student responses to “How much trouble would a student at your school get into for” either “cutting school” or “being late to class.” It should be emphasized that the respondents are the “good” students who were in school that day.

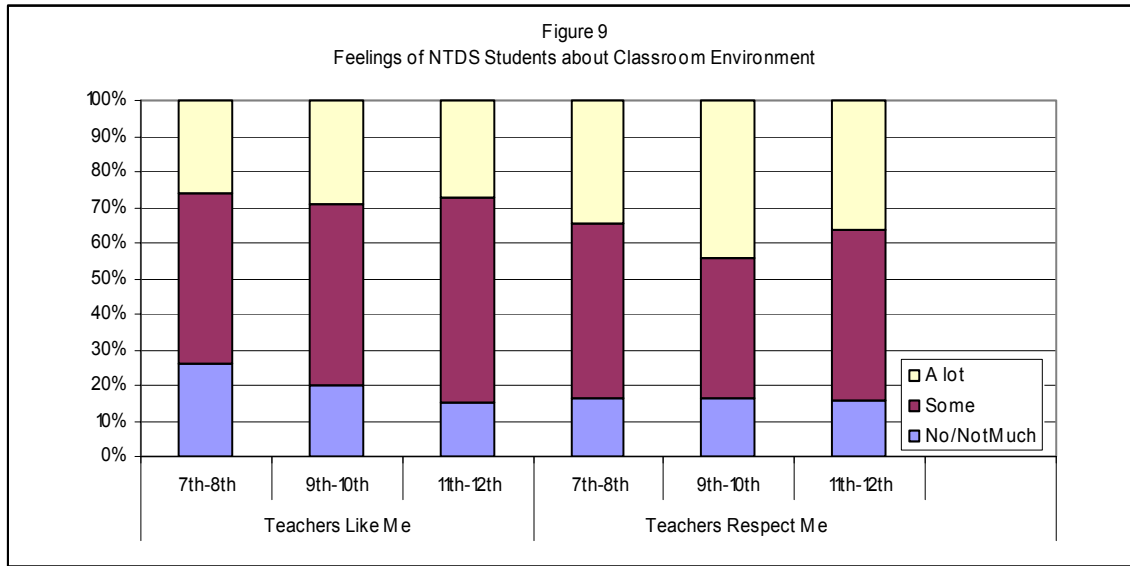


Absenteeism among staff was an additional issue. According to reports from fellow staff and students, some teachers and other staff members were frequently absent from their posts. They reported that staff absenteeism was so prevalent that there were not enough substitute teachers. As a result, multiple classes of students were herded into the library or gym to sit out their class time. An unannounced tour of high school classrooms by the evaluator during a spring site visit showed that of 25 teachers scheduled to be in their classrooms during that period, 5 (20%) were absent for the day and 6 were reportedly on site but not present in the vicinity of the classroom. Thirteen teachers who were actually in or in the vicinity of their classrooms had a relaxed format; 6 were showing videos and 7 appeared to be chatting casually with some students while other students interacted with each other or hung out in the hall. In only one classroom did the evaluator find a teacher at the blackboard and students sitting in rows of desks paying attention.

The community responded to early site visit reports regarding absenteeism problems at the school. Community pressure resulted in action by the local police force, which mounted a dragnet operation to pick up truants. According to reports, the high school was unable to handle the large number of students delivered by the police force. An administrative decision to deliver the students to a juvenile detention center was unpopular with the community.

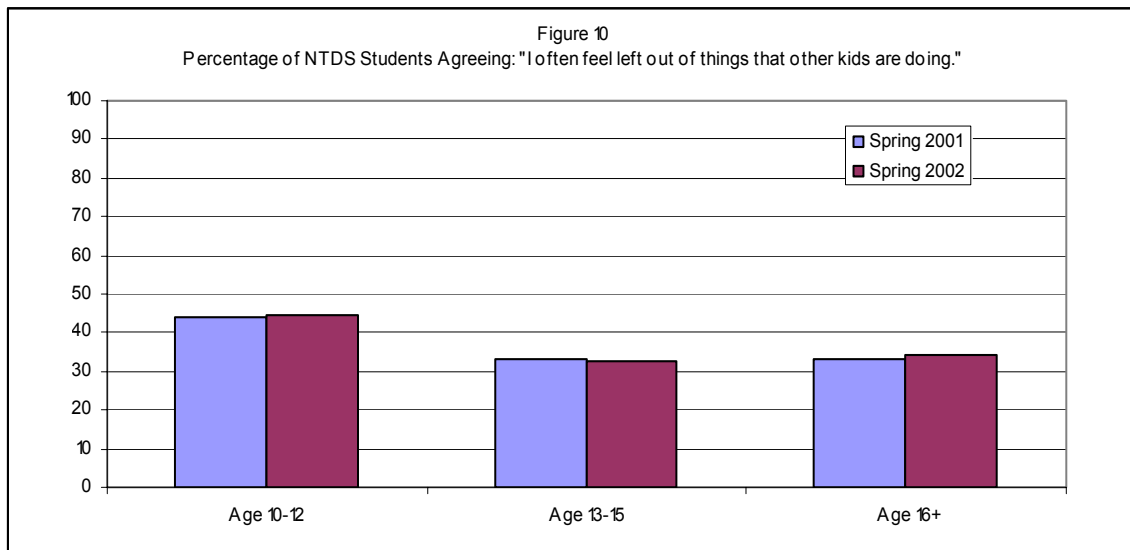
School Bonding

Figure 9, based on May 2002 data, indicates most students felt at least some liking and respect from their teachers.

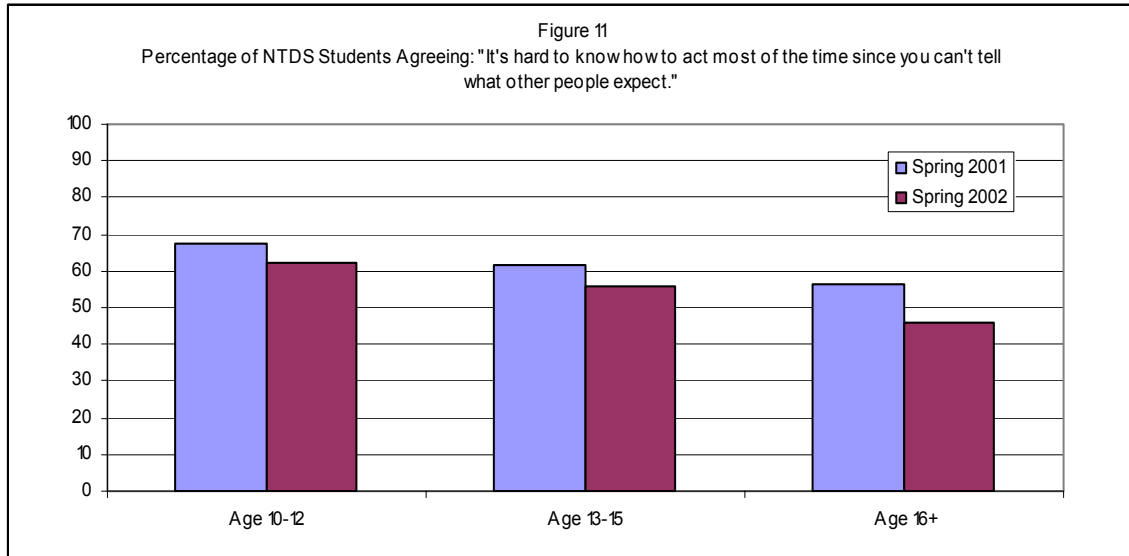


Peer and Social Bonding Indicators

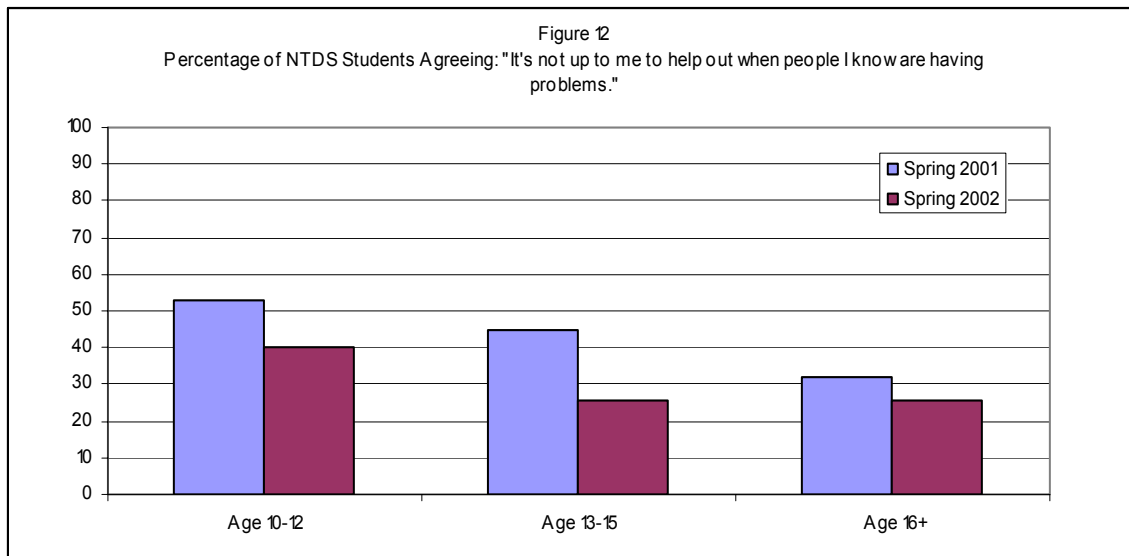
Alienation. Figure 10 shows that there was no change between spring 2001 and spring 2002 in the percentage of students agreeing with the Jessor Alienation item indicating they felt "left out."



There appeared to be a slight shift downward in the percentage of students in all age groups agreeing with the Jessor item "It's hard to know how to act most of the time since you can't tell what other people expect." Responses on this measure (Figure 11) by day school students reflect their experiences in school, home, and community. The high continuing level of agreement indicated inconsistency from significant others in the lives of these students.

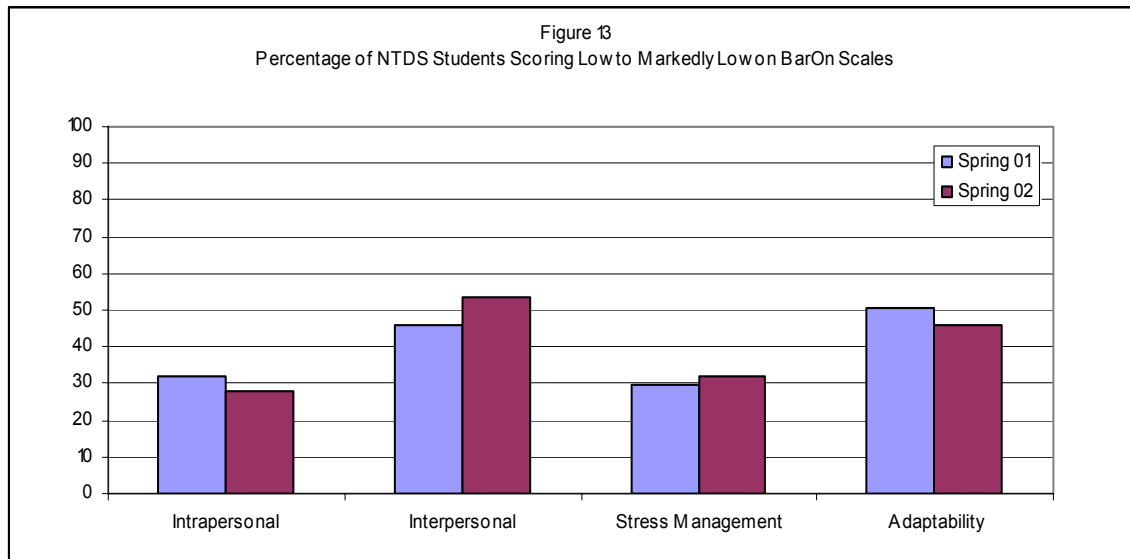


A high percentage of students agreed with the statement that "It's not up to me to help out when people I know are having problems." On the positive side, Figure 12 shows that at the end of the year of TRM funding, more students appeared to accept social responsibility than in the preceding year.



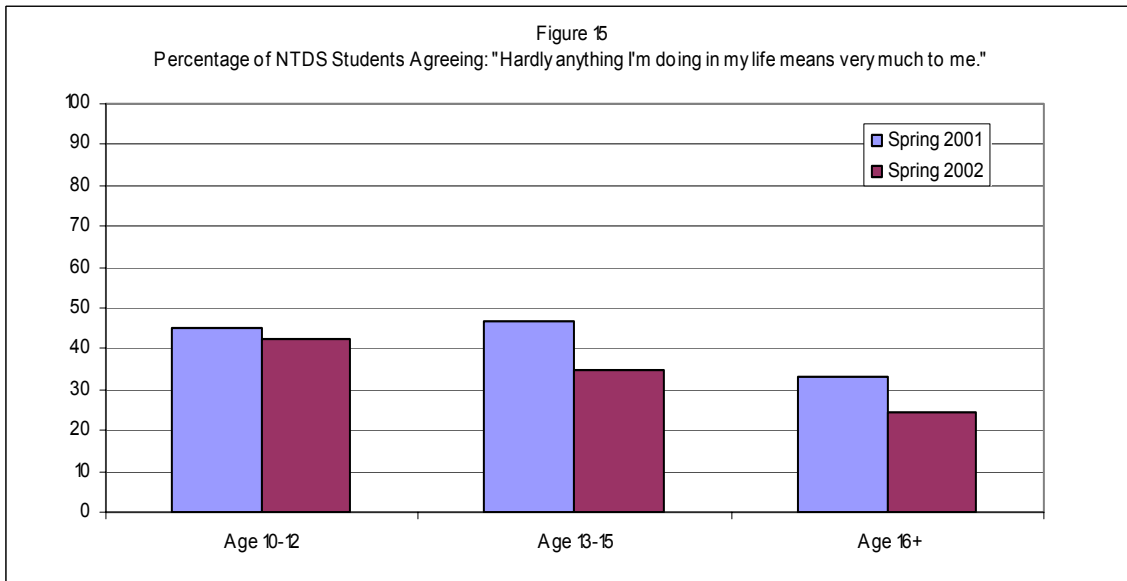
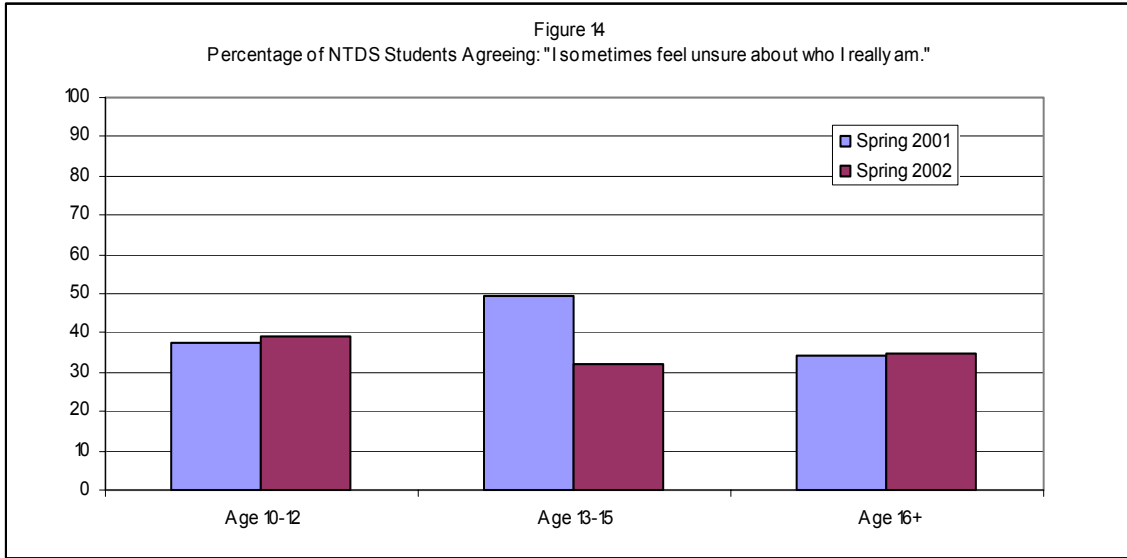
Adaptability and Stress Management

Statistics on the BarOn Emotional Quotient Inventory (Figure 13) show that there continued to be a sizable number of students at NTDS who needed assistance in their emotional lives. The greatest needs continued to be in interpersonal skills and in adaptability (confidence in one's ability to meet challenges). The percentage of students scoring low on stress management appeared close to instrument norms of 25%. Again, it should be emphasized that these results reflect the status of only those students surveyed – those who are managing to attend school.



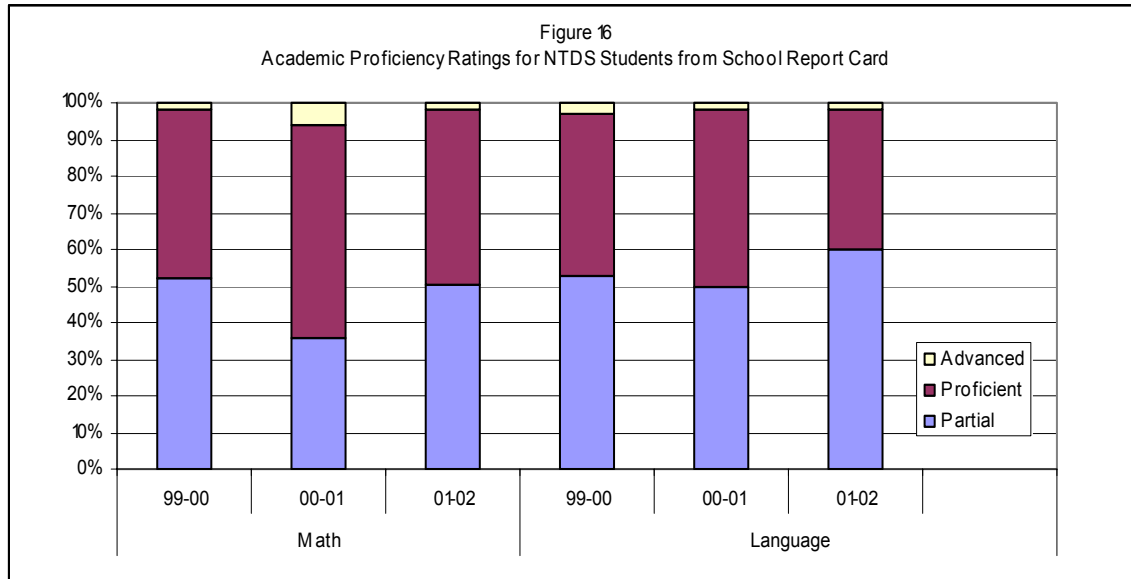
Identity and Meaning

The middle school group appeared to demonstrate a trend (χ^2 is not significant) toward a decrease in uncertainty regarding identity (Figure 14). The Jessor item having to do with meaning also showed a possible trend toward a decrease in alienation (Figure 15). Without further, more intensive study, it would be difficult to make causal attributions for such a decrease. Unlike the closed environments of the other sites which boarded students for seven days a week, there were far too many variables in this day school site to be easily monitored and measured.



Academic Achievement

Figure 16 shows academic proficiency levels based on the school report card information during the year of funding, as well as the two years preceding funding. The school has had an ongoing struggle to increase student proficiency levels.



Discussion

There was potential at this site. There were adequate resources and a number of strong, talented, high-energy staff who were committed to the students. The major barrier was that this strength was not being harnessed into a team effort. The staff were divided, angry, and frustrated at the system both inside the school and outside in the community. Rather than problem-solving and teamwork, there was a stalemate that revealed itself in chaos. Placed in a difficult position by political factions and frustrated parents in the community, administrators became targets of staff dissatisfaction – the first administrator was targeted because changes were top down and upset the status quo, and the second administrator came under fire because staff saw there were no changes to improve the status quo.

This site needed to address the lack of teamwork and accountability. It was strongly recommended that a team approach, rather than a top down approach, be utilized in addressing problems, and that the campus computer network be utilized as a channel to improve communication up and down the system.

The proposal funded at this site had not been adequately vetted by the staff and other stakeholders. The original proposal for this site was designed to replicate a situation in a very different environment – a highly structured residential setting that required students and parents to commit to extended periods of time without visits home. The site being replicated had the advantages of a unified staff, the long-term stability of a strong committed administrator, and the strong support of its school board. None of those conditions existed at NTDS. The feasibility of implementing this plan in this site was questionable, as it presumed the shift from a five-day-per-week to a seven-day-per-week residential program, a strategy that administration officials at

NTDS reported had been tried and abandoned in the recent past. Under the assumption that this demonstration project would be successful, plans had been made to build a 200-bed therapeutic dorm at this site for seven-day residential students. Questions raised by the evaluation were:

1. Can such a dorm be properly administered given the current lack of leadership and poor teamwork?
2. The current dorms are under-utilized. Students using the dormitories due to transportation issues may increasingly be accommodated by the many local schools that have sprung up closer to their homes. Is the NTDS dormitory situation an anachronism?
3. If a seven-day residential dormitory with a truly therapeutic orientation were implemented, would such a designation be accepted by the community? Many of the older students appear to be using the dormitory as a handy optional hotel complete with meals. Can the structure and designation of a therapeutic dorm fit their requirements? For local students with problem family situations, the current dormitories function as unofficial group homes. Would there be a stigma if this designation becomes formalized?
4. Given the permeability of the campus and its significant problems, is this the most appropriate location for students in need of a therapeutic environment?

The TRM proposal was developed with little real input from staff, and thus it contained elements at odds with the school's daily realities. Without staff input at the inception, the project generated little support.

This site spent approximately one-third of its allocated budget. With the exception of the Morningside program, the TRM money went to largely unsuccessful efforts to mobilize school staff to carry out the basic functions of a school. For research purposes, this site can be considered a no treatment site. Because of its inclusion in the baseline and outcome data-gathering system, it was able to gather valuable qualitative and quantitative data for comparison with other sites, and to represent an example of problems faced by some reservation day schools.

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Reference

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