

## THE THERAPEUTIC RESIDENTIAL MODEL AT THE L1 SITE

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*Abstract: This site is an intertribal residential grant school annually enrolling over 250 students in grades 1-8 from tribes located in three states on the Northern Great Plains. From its inception in 1890, the boarding school's mission has been to provide services for young children in need of a safe and supportive living and learning environment. For over a decade, this site has used strategies centered on respecting children, structuring students' time, and providing the therapeutic benefits of a well-maintained campus. This site also has a long history of believing in each child's inherent value and potential. When Therapeutic Residential Model funding commenced at the midpoint of the 2002-2003 school year, L1 focused these new resources on strengthening and refining its program. The number of personnel positions increased from 98 to 135, with new positions principally going to dormitory staff and four Masters-level counselor positions. This increase in staff allowed L1 to proactively address the children's developmental needs. The site also adopted and implemented the Applied Humanism caregiving model. In accordance with Applied Humanism, an interview was utilized that allowed the site to identify and hire applicants possessing the attitudes and skills necessary to be good caregivers, existing staff were trained so that they understood the kind of caregiving that would be expected of them, supervision procedures and practices were implemented that supported and encouraged good caregivers and provided time-limited assistance to those who were not, and relevant agency policies and procedures were revised as needed to align with the Applied Humanism philosophy. In addition, the Morningside program was brought in to systematically address the students' academic lags in reading. The results of implementing the Therapeutic Residential Model were a reduction in behavioral incidents, a decrease in the amount of money spent on external mental health services, an increase in the retention rate, an increase in academic skills in selected areas, and higher scores on pre-post measures of adjustment, interpersonal relationships, and adaptability.*

This off-reservation boarding school was originally begun in 1890 as a BIA Indian Industrial School. The boarding school was reconfigured three decades ago as a special needs school. It was taken over by the Indian Board of Education under the Indian Self Determination Act and renamed. The boarding school's target population then became students who were orphans, socially maladjusted, academically behind, or chronically absent from their community-based school. During the next two decades, the boarding school acquired the regional reputation of being a holding tank for seriously troubled youth. However, in 1994 a new administration set out to develop a therapeutic residential community based on a child-centered philosophy. Accordingly, the school implemented strategies designed to address four goals: " (1) develop the social, emotional, spiritual, intellectual, and physical health of all students; (2) promote opportunities and experiences that allow students to explore their cultural identities and practices; (3) provide an emotionally and physically safe alternative home environment that supports the personal growth and development of both students and staff; and (4) create a culture where every staff member is devoted to the whole being of the students and is supported with sufficient and appropriate training." By implementing this vision, the school reduced negative behaviors among the students. Incidents of physical assaults dropped from 697 reported in school year (SY) 1998-1999 to 8 in SY 2002-2003, the year in which Therapeutic Residential Model (TRM) funding was awarded. Absent Without Leave (AWOL) incidents similarly declined, from 681 in SY 1993-1994 to 22 in SY 2002-2003. Self-choking, suicidal ideation, and suicidal gestures went from 115 in SY 1991-1992 to 31 in SY 2002-2003.

### Student Characteristics

Life Stressors. The Prevention Planning Survey section of the American Drug and Alcohol Survey (ADAS) was administered to the seventh and eighth grade students in fall 2003 and again in fall 2004. Table 1 shows that many incoming students arrived with known risk factors for behavior problems, social maladjustment, and academic difficulties. Moreover, Table 1 suggests that there was an upward trend in the numbers of students arriving with known risk factors.

**Table 1**  
**History of Incoming 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Students at Site L1**

American Drug and Alcohol Survey Item	Fall 2003	Fall 2004
History of Antisocial Activity		
- Have been arrested	34.9%	42.9%
- Have robbed someone	24.7%	34.9%
- Have beaten up somebody	78.0%	81.0%
- Have hurt someone using a club/chain/knife/gun	20.5%	21.7%
School Failure		
- Have flunked a grade	50.6%	53.6%
- Have been expelled from school	21.0%	21.6%
Victimization		
- Have been beaten up by peer	29.8%	43.4%
- Have been beaten up by someone not of same age	33.7%	44.7%
- Been hurt with a club/knife/gun	26.5%	29.3%
- Been robbed	21.4%	37.3%

Many of the seventh and eighth grade students arriving in fall 2003 also reported gang association (see Table 2). Again, there was an upward trend in the number of seventh and eighth grade students arriving in fall 2004 who reported gang association.

**Table 2**  
**Gang Affiliation of 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Students at Site L1**

ADAS Gang Response Options	Fall 2003	Fall 2004
I will never join a gang	47%	28%
Former gang member	13%	17%
Will join gang later	2%	5%
No, I only hang out with a gang	15%	23%
Current gang member	23%	27%

The Youth Risk Behavior Survey was also administered in fall 2003. According to the students' responses, 32% of the seventh and eighth grade students reported having seriously thought about killing themselves. In fall 2005, the Children's Depression Inventory was administered to students in grades 5-8. One item addressed suicidal ideation. As shown in Table 3, nearly one-half of fifth and sixth graders and one-third of seventh and eighth graders had thought about suicide in the previous two weeks.

**Table 3**  
**Distribution of Student Responses on CDI Suicide Item by Grade**

Responses	5 <sup>th</sup> -6 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup>
I do not think about killing myself.	53.5%	66.7%
I think about killing myself but I would not do it.	40.8%	30.8%
I want to kill myself.	5.6%	2.6%

The Jessor Alienation Inventory was administered in fall 2003 and fall 2004. As can be seen in Table 4, alienation indices were high among these incoming students.

**Table 4**  
**Percentage of Incoming Students agreeing with Jessor Alienation Items**

Responses to Individual Items from the Jessor Alienation Scale	5 <sup>th</sup> -6 <sup>th</sup> Graders		7 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup> Graders	
	Fall 03 N=70	Fall 04 N=76	Fall 03 N=83	Fall 04 N=74
Hardly anything I'm doing in my life means very much to me.	58.0%	56.6%	44.6%	39.2%
I sometimes feel unsure about who I really am.	58.6%	46.1%	37.0%	38.8%
It's not up to me to help out when people I know are having problems	52.9%	42.7%	36.1%	33.3%
It's hard to know how to act most of the time since you can't tell what other people expect.	61.4%	64.4%	63.8%	51.4%

The BarOn Emotional Quotient Inventory focuses on four domains necessary for successful functioning in the world: intrapersonal (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 for students aged 10-15 at the beginning of the school year are shown in Table 5. The results indicated that interpersonal skills and adaptability were the areas of greatest need.

**Table 5**  
**Percentage of Incoming Students aged 10-15 Scoring Low to Markedly Low on the BarOn Subscales**

	Intrapersonal	Interpersonal	Stress Management	Adaptability
Fall 2003	34%	59%	39%	52%
Fall 2004	33%	55%	29%	56%

Substance Abuse. As shown in Table 6, many incoming students anonymously reported on the ADAS that they had been introduced to substance use.

**Table 6**  
**Percentage of Incoming Students Having Used Mood-altering Substances and Tobacco**

	4 <sup>th</sup> -6 <sup>th</sup> Graders		7 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup> Graders	
	Fall 03	Fall 04	Fall 03	Fall 04
Alcohol	29%	34%	73%	76%
Marijuana	31%	31%	73%	80%
Inhalants	20%	22%	31%	41%
Cigarettes	44%	45%	77%	89%

In summary, about one-half of the incoming students each year arrive as high-risk children who will require a broad array of services and resources to adequately meet their needs.

## Site Resources

### Facility

This site operates on a campus of 240 acres at the edge of a town. The grounds and the buildings are well maintained. Following the philosophy that the physical environment affects feelings of self-worth in students, the grounds are attractive and free of graffiti and trash.

There are two large dormitories on campus. One dorm houses students in grades 1-5 and the other houses students in grades 6-8. The one-story buildings are sturdy brick and concrete block structures. The dormitories are clean, with no accumulation of dirt or evidence of mold. Doors to student's rooms are open throughout the day. Entrances and exits do not have monitoring stations. Lighting in hallways is low, with a number of lights kept off because they generate too much heat. Each wing has a kitchen and a number of group rooms. The fallout shelters in the basements are set up as recreation centers. Dormitory walls are decorated with American Indian murals and certificates or notes from staff documenting the positive behavior of individual students. Counselors, nursing staff, wing managers, and the residential director have their offices in the dormitories.

In the dorms, up to five students are housed to a room. Each room is furnished with attractive sturdy furniture, a television set in the corner, and curtains on the windows. Stuffed animals are very much in evidence in the younger children's dorm. Children who arrive without a stuffed animal to call their own are provided one.

The adjacent cafeteria is small, seating a maximum of 160 students. Therefore, students eat in shifts. The building also contains offices, the woodworking shop, art room, and special education workrooms.

The school is located in a handsome, two-story building constructed in the 1930s. It has large classrooms. Additional classrooms and some special education services are provided in six prefab units and a small, one-story building adjacent to the main classroom building. Two geodesic domes contain the library, a conference room, the Native language lab, and the computer classroom. There is also a guest house and an administration building. Some staff housing is located on the south edge of the campus.

Recreational facilities are available across the campus. There are stables and a small pasture for several dozen horses at the southeast corner of the campus. The classroom building contains the original but functional gymnasium. A new a state-of-the-art gymnasium sits on the north edge of the campus. Soccer fields are to the west of this building. Two basketball hoops and four sets of swings and playground equipment lay between the two dormitories. The school also has a boat for fishing and excursions on an adjacent river. A ropes course is located on campus.

### **Financial and Staff Resources**

Beginning in 2002, a tighter definition of the use of special education funds was applied Bureau-wide. As a result, a number of innovative elements that contributed to the quality of this boarding school were cut back. However, the effect of these deletions was blunted by the TRM monies which replaced funding for some of these activities. Other activities were continued when members of other departments volunteered their services to operate such key child-centered activities as woodworking, leather crafts, and equine therapy.

Prior to TRM funding, the ratio of students to employees was 2.5:1. TRM funding reduced the ratio to 2:1. All personnel at this site are considered to be part of the therapeutic team and are expected to contribute to the children's well being. Thus, maintenance, cafeteria and recreation staff contribute to the therapeutic culture by befriending students and forming bonded relationships. Any staff who shirk this expectation experience the disapproval of their peers.

### **Family and Community Involvement**

The school enjoys a harmonious relationship with its school board. Board members were seen on campus during evaluation visits and in attendance at training meetings. Staff feedback was positive on the contribution of the school board to the school. In spring 2004, staff rated on a scale of 0 (*not a problem here*) to 4 (*a major problem*) factors in the environment often seen as creating barriers. Only 13% of the staff gave a rating of 3 or 4 to "School Board policies."

The school makes efforts to keep parents involved. Parents receive letters notifying them of upcoming meetings about their children; letters are followed up by phone calls. In addition, the parents receive information through newsletters, calendars of events, and other mailings. The social worker makes many phone calls and drives a considerable number of miles

to make home visits. The social worker also helps parents fill out their state's Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIPs) applications and negotiate with their social services systems.

Yet, staff surveys indicated that parents were seen as providing inadequate support for their children. Across the three spring measures, an average of 63% of staff rated "Low parental expectations of their children" as a serious (3) or major (4) problem, while 82% rated "Lack of support from the home" a serious or major problem. However, staff concerns need to be put into perspective. Limited parental support is the reason that many of the attending children need this site.

When the new administration arrived in 1994 it was noted that that many students were not returning after vacations, resulting in a large intra-academic year loss of students. In response, the boarding school began limiting home visits for the general school body to summer and Christmas. The exceptions to this policy are death or serious illness of an immediate family member and special family occasions when it is vitally important to the parents to have the entire family present. However, families are encouraged to visit their children at school on weekends and especially on holidays. These policy changes enhanced intra-academic year retention. The school also does aggressive follow-up of students leaving the school, to ensure that parents place them in another school. When children are found to not be attending school elsewhere, the administration has taken legal measures and other actions to force parents to live up to their responsibilities.

Child abuse prosecution is a complex issue that impacts the relationship between the school and parents. The school has a reputation for aggressively following up with legal and social services in home communities when students disclose abuse. One repercussion often is an abrupt decrease in the number of children sent from that community.

In the public relations arena, the administrator has worked hard to upgrade the profile of the boarding school and its students in the local community. Among other gestures, the new gymnasium and the extensive outdoor fields have been made available to community groups, and a mentoring program has been set up that pairs police trainees with students.

## **Program and Service Components**

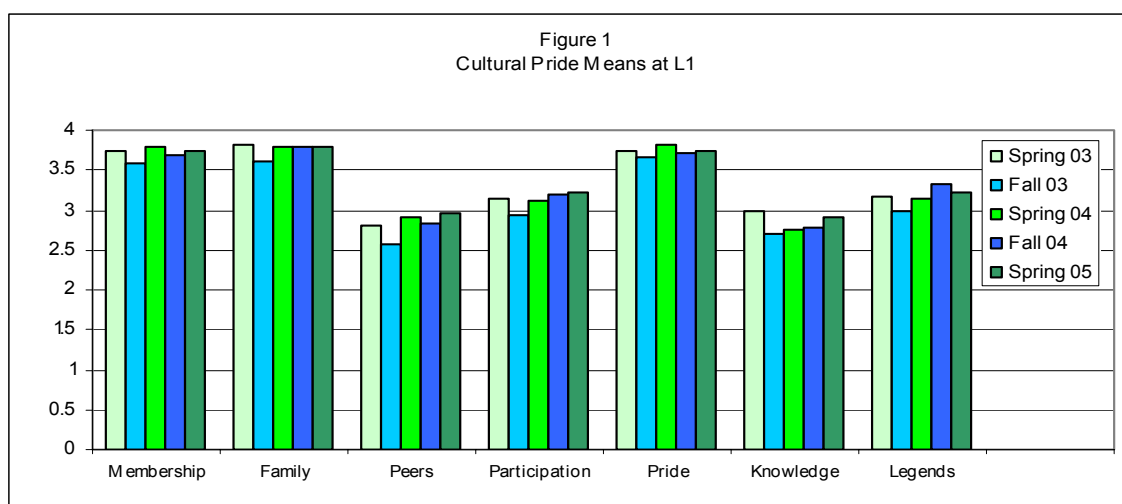
### **Cultural Programming**

This site has an overt philosophy about cultural programming that goes beyond hiring a few traditional people with cultural knowledge. Their goals are to foster personal awareness in staff by helping them to examine their values, stereotypes, and worldview; to develop staff knowledge of cultural, social, and family dynamics within the larger matrices of social, historical, economic, and political contexts; and to integrate this perspective into skills, treatment, and assessment strategies.

With parental permission, students are given a range of options for carrying out religious traditions, including drum group, sweats, honoring ceremonies, and church services of choice. Cultural activities include traditional dance, music, spiritual ceremonies, history, art, crafts, seminars, folklore, and off-campus cultural celebrations. All students receive instruction to learn one of five Native languages; computerized programs developed by the school assist in this area. The instructor is a Native speaker who has her Masters Degree in linguistics. There is also an American Indian Culture class and two cultural libraries on campus. All students participate in life skills groups that utilize an American Indian-based curriculum. Students who are involved in traditional dance made their own regalia. The drum group is dynamic and inclusive, including both beginners and more proficient students in learning songs and tradition as well as

performing. Speakers and tribal leaders are brought in for group discussions of past and present issues. Traditional arts and crafts available to students include leatherworking, painting, drawing, beading, and sculpture.

Students were asked to indicate their feelings for and involvement in their culture on a 4-point scale (1 = *not at all*, 2 = *a little*, 3 = *somewhat*, 4 = *a lot*). As evidenced by the students' responses across time points (displayed in Figure 1), the students consistently feel a great deal of cultural pride. While high initial scores created a ceiling effect on most items, a paired *t*-test of the students' responses in fall 2004 and spring 2005 showed a significant shift upward only on the Knowledge item ( $p = .028$ ).



**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**

The elements that enhance children's social development and life skills typically involve both reactive (discipline) and proactive (prevention) policies. Of these two elements, the TRM funding led to the most changes in the reactive or disciplinary element.

Reactive Elements. Prior to TRM funding, this site used a combination of punishment-oriented discipline and regimented structure to control students' behavior. The punishment-oriented discipline model was partially a result of the necessity to control many children with a small number of staff, and it was partially a result of precedent - Indian boarding schools have historically used such a model. However, there are four downsides to a punishment-oriented discipline model: (1) It does not address the developmental needs of young children. (2) It

does not ameliorate the root causes of the students' behavior problems. (3) It does not create a culture that sets the expectation for age-appropriate behavior. (4) It imposes – rather than instills – discipline.

L1 received TRM funding midway through SY 2002-2003. Since this boarding school already embraced a therapeutic residential community model, the funds did not radically change the treatment model. Rather, the TRM monies allowed the therapeutic residential model to further evolve. One of the enhancements was the adoption and implementation of the Applied Humanism model of caregiving (Hall, 1992).

The Applied Humanism model of caregiving maintains that an agency can both manage behavior and foster children's social and emotional development by integrating six principles into components of its service delivery system. Moreover, these six principles constitute the sufficient and necessary set of qualities of a good caregiver.

The first three principles define the characteristics of caregiving that fosters children's social and emotional development. They are:

1. Ensuring Success (Dreikurs & Stoltz, 1964) – We value children for the socially appropriate behaviors they can demonstrate, and then we provide children the structure, the support, and the recognition they need to frequently display those behaviors.
2. Independent Decision-Making (Perske, 1972) – We recognize that children learn best if they are allowed to independently make decisions and then experience the natural consequence of those decisions, good or bad. Children should be barred only from making decisions that could hurt anyone, damage property, or disrupt others' learning and living environment.
3. Teaching for Behavior Change (Hall, 1989) – Good caregivers help children replace problem behaviors with appropriate behaviors. This is accomplished by having empathy for misbehaving children, identifying the underlying skill deficit, breaking the deficit into teachable components, and setting up positive learning experiences to teach those social skills.

The remaining three principles guide how caregivers should respond when children display inappropriate behavior. In this context, inappropriate behavior is doing things that could hurt someone, damage property, or disrupt others' living and learning environment. When children display inappropriate behaviors, staff must respond. However, they must respond in ways that simultaneously accomplish two goals: protecting people and their basic rights, and preserving children's dignity. To simultaneously accomplish these two objectives, staff must display the following three caregiving qualities:

4. Gentle Interventions (Hall, 2003) – Staff do only what is necessary to disrupt the inappropriate behavior. Thus, staff gently defuse and/or redirect the behavior in order to protect other people's rights, in a manner that preserves children's dignity.
5. Logical Consequences (Dreikurs & Grey, 1968) – Good caregivers help children understand that there is a relationship between how they behave and what then happens to them. Responsible behavior garners age-appropriate privileges. Inappropriate behaviors result in a loss of privileges to the extent necessary to protect people from being hurt, to prevent property from being damaged, and to protect other children's living and learning environments.



6. No Punishment (Hall & Braun, 1988) - In this model, punishment is defined as intentionally doing anything to make children feel guilty, humiliated, remorseful, or fearful in an attempt to change their behavior. Good caregivers understand that punishment temporarily imposes discipline, but it does nothing to instill discipline. Furthermore, punishment breaks the adult-child bond, making it difficult to create the foundation children need for their social and emotional development. Therefore, good caregivers do not punish children.

Prior to the start of SY 2003-2004, the board of directors at this boarding school unanimously voted to adopt the model, and issued a directive for the philosophy to be infused into the key components of the boarding school's delivery system – hiring, staff training, staff supervision, and pertinent policies.

Hiring. The Applied Humanism model believes that good caregivers are not made, they are found. In other words, an agency cannot rely on training to transform employees with poor relationship skills into good caregivers. As the research suggests, long-held attitudes are difficult if not impossible to change. Therefore, this site set out to hire only job applicants whose inherent value system about caregiving was consistent with principles of Applied Humanism. Accordingly, all of the administrators at this boarding school received a one-day training on the Applied Humanism Interview. They learned how to use the interview's 24 situational questions to determine an applicant's caregiving posture, thereby enabling the administrators to hire only staff who inherently had the attitudes and skills necessary to be good caregivers.

For the past three years, this boarding school has used the Applied Humanism Interview to hire all new employees. Although no hard data were obtained, after using the Applied Humanism Interview to hire staff, every member of the administrative team involved in hiring strongly believes that the interview questions enabled them to hire staff who "have the right stuff." Furthermore, the administrative team believes that using the Applied Humanism Interview was a critically important tool in the quest to create a boarding school culture where children are happy and where they blossom socially and emotionally.

Training. All staff received an overview of the six caregiving principles during a condensed, day-long training held in August 2003. As part of the training, all staff members were given specific assignments to carry out over the course of their first two weeks back at work. The assignments gave the employees practice at implementing each of the caregiving principles. The direct-care staff were also required to share the results of their assignments with their immediate supervisors, thereby giving them feedback on their ability to implement these caregiving principles.

As expected, not all staff embraced the Applied Humanism model of caregiving. The transition from applying rules to keep children under control to almost the opposite – using violations of rules as an opportunity to help children learn socially responsible behavior – was daunting for many staff. Initially, a good number of staff mistakenly believed that No Punishment meant no discipline. Believing that, some residential staff quit and others were apprehensive about the new philosophy of child care.

The training in the caregiving principles of Applied Humanism was repeated several times over the course of the first year to small groups of newly hired staff. The following year, in fall 2004, the training was provided to all newly hired staff. Concurrently, a training of trainers was conducted for the four Masters-level dorm counselors. Following this training, the four dorm

counselors – each of whom was assigned to one of the four wings – were given the Applied Humanism training videotape, the trainer’s manual, and copies of the participants’ manual. At that point, the counselors took over responsibility of training all direct-care resident staff on how to be nurturing caregivers.

Supervision. The job descriptions of the direct-care staff were modified to reflect the type of caregiving expected by Applied Humanism model. Concurrently, the therapeutic counselors’ job description was revised. They were asked to teach the residential staff these caregiving skills, to model this caregiving posture for the residential staff, and to help the wing manager evaluate the direct-care staff on their ability to be good caregivers.

Aligning Policies and Procedures. The final component of implementing Applied Humanism was to align all relevant policies and procedures so they were consistent with the six caregiving principles. In addition, it was necessary to write some new policies so that the benefits of a particular caregiving principle would impact the children. New/revised policies and procedures included:

***Ensuring Success*** – Three policy changes were made to implement this principle:

1. As part of their training assignments, all staff were asked to select a specific problem child and complete 19 assignments that required them to apply all six caregiving principles in their interactions with the child. On the first of these 19 assignments the staff were asked to identify the socially appropriate behaviors that the child displayed. The next assignment asked the staff to provide the support and structure the child needed to display these behaviors, and the third assignment asked the staff to do specific things to value the child for displaying these socially appropriate behaviors. The valuing could include making a private comment, writing a letter to the child’s parents telling them of something positive the child had done and then showing the letter to the child before mailing it, or giving the child a written note of commendation. Most staff chose the last option. Soon, students were posting the positive notes they received on their dorm-room doors.
2. The honoring ceremony was also modified. Previously, students who made good grades, scored many points in a competitive sports game, or did some other exemplary action were recognized. The director of residential services concluded that this practice of acknowledging only students who displayed excellence was neither equitable nor consistent with the principle of Ensuring Success. He modified the honoring ceremony so that all students had an opportunity to be honored for some accomplishment.
3. The counselors at most residential programs for youth have a distinctive and unique role in comparison to the direct-care staff. The direct-care staff are the logicians. They are responsible for rousting the students out of bed in the morning, getting them off to school, escorting them over to the cafeteria in the evening, doing room inspections before bedtime, and making sure that all students are in their beds when the lights are turned off. The direct-care staff are also the enforcers. If a student breaks a rule, the direct-care staff are expected to catch him or her, and then do something about it – preferably something sufficiently horrendous that the student will never again display that behavior.

Counselors, on the other hand, don't issue commands and demands. They don't catch students being bad, and they don't punish children. Instead, counselors listen. And they listen mostly to children who are having behavior problems. A counselor's time is limited and expensive, making it a precious commodity. A counselor's time is so precious that it is booked from the beginning to the end of the shift with individual appointments of students who are having problems.

And that is the problem. Children are not fools. They quickly come to understand that the only adults who give them one-on-one, warm, supportive attention and unconditional acceptance are the counselors. But the children also realize that in order to command any of the counselor's precious time you must have a problem – the more deep seated, the more complex the problem, the more time you get with the counselor.

Reputedly, Goethe, the German writer and natural philosopher, said of scientists, "Tell me what they are looking for, and I will tell you what they will find." The same thing can be said about attention-starved children in residential programs. "Tell me what gets them one-on-one staff attention, and I will tell you how they will behave."

Prior to TRM funding, the counselors at this site spent most of their time being empathetic listeners to children who had deep-seated problems. Indeed, the counselors spent so much time behind their closed office doors in their one-on-one sessions with children that the director of residential services threatened to remove their office doors. But more to the point of the concern, there was no objective data to show that counselors were having a positive impact on the behavior of these targeted children. In fact, just the opposite was the case. Most of the children who were seen in counseling never seemed – as judged by behavior incident reports – to get better.

When TRM funding arrived, pertinent members of the administrative team took a fresh look at the counselors' role, and decided to make some fundamental changes. One change was that the counselors would no longer self-select the students who needed counseling. Instead, when there were concerns about a child, a team of involved staff would meet to share their information, discuss the problem, and propose a plausible solution. Due to their training in Applied Humanism and modeling by key administrators, the team began to look first at the caregiving that the child was receiving. They asked themselves such questions as "Are we adequately ensuring the child's success? Does anyone in this group have a strong supportive relationship with the child?" The principle of Teaching for Behavior Change was also considered, causing the team to ask, "What are the child's social skill deficits, and what can we do to remediate those deficits?" Similar questions were asked about the team's application of the principles of Gentle Interventions, Logical Consequences, and No Punishment. These were all changes in the team's caregiving posture toward the child, and they were changes that would impact the child daily. These types of modifications became the changes of choice. However, the team could also recommend one of three other interventions: counseling, in-depth evaluation, or temporary placement in an off-site mental health facility. Since these three recommendations had resource implications, they then needed to be approved by the on-staff school psychologist, the most highly trained mental health professional at the site.

This new policy markedly reduced the number of children being seen in expensive one-on-one counseling sessions. Moreover, the new policy had the effect of making everyone on the team responsible for helping children change their inappropriate behavior. Finally, and most importantly, the new policy in combination with other elements of Applied Humanism enabled the students to get attention and nurturing by displaying age-appropriate, socially positive behaviors, and it significantly lessened the students' incentive to gain attention by displaying pathological behaviors.

### ***Independent Decision-Making***

1. This principle was mainly implemented through the weekly staff training sessions conducted by the therapeutic counselors. Through this training, direct-care staff began to understand that it was okay if a child did not put his coat on when he ran over to lunch. If he got cold, he would learn to put a coat on next time. It was also okay if a student didn't eat everything on his plate. And it was even okay if a student did not complete his desk work. He or she would experience the natural consequence of earning a low grade.
2. The principle of Independent Decision-Making was the focus when L1 developed "Kids Pick." Kids Pick happened four evenings a week. During this time, residential staff offered an age-appropriate activity that interested them, often selecting a hobby or a special skill area. Students signed up for the activities they would like to attend with the stipulation that each student must sign up for one activity in each available time slot.

Kids Pick also embodied the principle of Ensuring Success. When doing Kids Pick activities, children were provided the support and structure they needed to display appropriate behavior. As one wing supervisor put it, "My staff can either spend their time sharing an interest and supervising an activity or they can spend it chasing after bored kids trying to make them behave. We like the former." Finally, putting fun enjoyable activities into the children's hands gave staff continuous opportunities to value the children and thereby strengthen their relationships with the children. Children who feel valued by an adult also tend to listen when the adult gives a directive, and they try to behave in ways that please the adult.

### ***Teaching for Behavior Change***

This caregiving principle was implemented when a child displayed inappropriate behavior resulting in placement in either in-school suspension or in the status room in the dorm. In order to earn his or her way out of these rooms, the student needed to develop a "can do" plan for showing appropriate behavior in lieu of inappropriate behavior. Working with staff support to develop a "can do" plan entailed applying the principle of Teaching for Behavior Change.

The principle of Teaching for Behavior Change was also invoked when teams met to develop intervention plans for students who were displaying behaviors not in their best interest.

### ***Gentle Interventions***

Not long before the commencement of the TRM project, students at this boarding school who displayed inappropriate behaviors were forcibly put in a padded time out room. In order to get resistive children into Time Out, staff did takedowns. Under the TRM project, this practice was discontinued. To ensure that the practice of forcibly putting children into Time Out was not reinstated, the residential director made the time out room into a quiet lounge with carpet, a new sofa, and a TV. This motivated direct-care staff to learn how to do Gentle Interventions.

The principle of Gentle Interventions was also reflected in the implementation of the red card room. Prior to receiving TRM funding, classroom teachers maintained control by using the Assertive Discipline Model (Canter & Canter, 1989). Since many of the students were at-risk

children who came from backgrounds where aggression was used instrumentally, the Assertive Discipline Model resulted in many children being punished daily or near daily for their behavior.

The red card room was implemented as a replacement for this punishment-oriented model for classroom discipline. Under the red card system, a student who was feeling upset and on the verge of losing control could hold up a red card, wait for the teacher to acknowledge it, and then leave the classroom. Upon leaving the classroom, the student went immediately to the red card room. A teacher could also ask a student to go to the red card room if his or her behavior was interfering with other students' learning.

In the red card room, the student received what might be called a short course in "life coaching." It amounted to giving the student a few minutes to calm down, assisting the student to analyze the sources of his or her behavior problem, and helping the student develop a simple strategy for going back to the classroom and being successful. The red card room served three objectives: (1) It was a mechanism for quickly removing a disruptive student from the classroom, but doing so in a manner that preserved the child's dignity. (2) It helped the student regain emotional control in a safe setting. (3) It returned the student to the classroom as soon as he or she was emotionally capable of rejoining the class.

Three pieces of data support the efficacy of the red card room: (1) The teachers reported on a survey that they found the red card room to be useful and wanted it continued. (2) A survey of the students who accessed the red card room indicated that they understood its purpose and found it helpful. (3) The numbers of the students seen in the red card room consistently decreased as the academic year progressed.

However, the success of the red card room was not due merely to it being a good idea. Its success was directly attributable to the exceptional caregiving skills of the room supervisor. He did not demean or berate students. Yet he did not minimize the inappropriateness of the behavior that necessitated the visit. He had an exceptional knack for reading students, knowing when they needed to be left alone for a while to cool down, and when they were ready to go back to the classroom.

### ***Logical Consequences***

Good caregivers help children understand that there is a relationship between how they behave and what then happens to them. Responsible behavior garners age-appropriate privileges. Inappropriate behaviors result in a loss of privileges to the extent necessary to protect people from being hurt, to prevent property from being damaged, and to protect other children's living/learning environment.

Two procedures were written so that the boarding school staffs' caregiving posture reflected the principle of Logical Consequences. One procedure directed how staff should respond when students displayed inappropriate behavior. The other procedure ensured that when students displayed age-appropriate, responsible behavior they were given age-appropriate privileges.

The first application of Logical Consequences resulted in modifying the status room in the dorm and the in-school suspension room in the school. Students who displayed inappropriate behaviors were sent to the status room or to in-school suspension so they could regain control of their emotions and remediate the episode-causing deficits in their social skills. To develop these key social skills, the students were asked to complete a Reflection Sheet. Following a Reality Therapy format (Glasser, 1989), the Reflection Sheet helped students take responsibility for their behavior and then, with staff guidance, develop a "can do" plan for changing that behavior.

Another change was that students were no longer sentenced to Time Out for a specified amount of time. Instead, the amount of time they spent in Status depended largely on their ability to regain control, receive targeted social-skill training, and complete a Reflection Sheet. In short, the students earned their way out of the status room in the dorm or the in-school suspension room in the school.

A survey of the students revealed that they were fully cognizant of the behaviors that would, in their words, "never fail to get you in Status." Also, a focus group held with the students determined that they did not get angry at staff for "putting them in Status." As one student said and the others acknowledged by head nods, "If we get into Status it is our fault. We need to learn to make better decisions, and in Status staff help us learn how to do that."

Another policy change that reflected the principle of Logical Consequences was called the gold card system. In this system, if children display responsible behaviors they earn age-appropriate privileges. Some of the privileges that students can earn include being able to stay up later in the evenings, going on off-campus walks with two other same-gender students, and being taken to the mall (with money in hand) for unsupervised shopping trips.

Of course it is not socially responsible to grant such privileges to children who do such things as steal, get into fights, and fail to be at designated places at specified times.

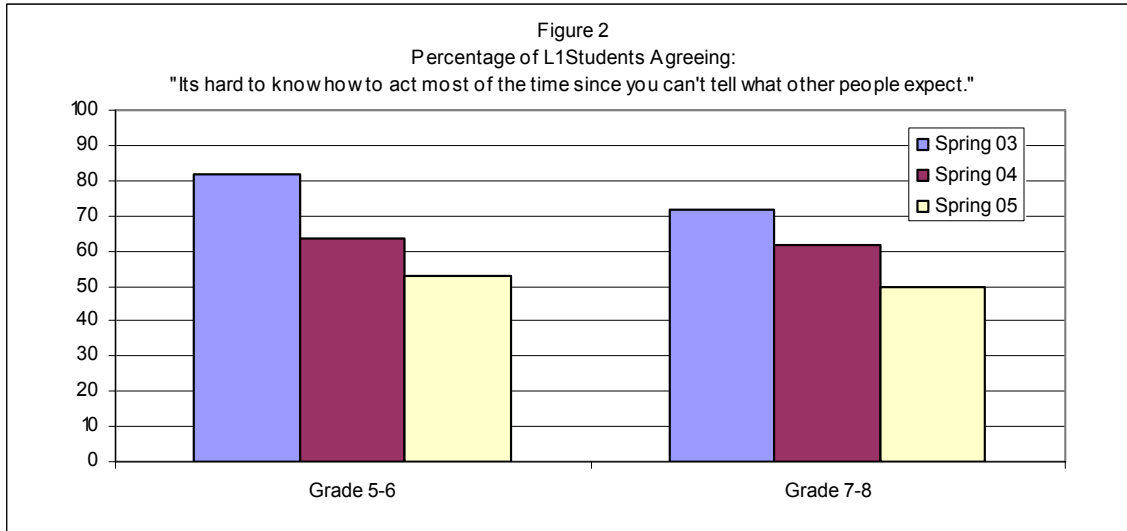
Students seem to inherently understand the logic of this association between privileges and responsible behavior, generating within them a desire to display age-appropriate behaviors.

Implementing the gold card system initially posed a problem: At the time, when the city police saw any of "our children" – a euphemism for an American Indian child – in the community, the officer's first thought was that the child was AWOL from the Indian boarding school. The officer therefore collared the child, put him or her in the squad car, and returned the child to the boarding school. The police officers' typical and predictable response caused the administrative team to realize that excessively close supervision was negatively shaping the children's self-concept and simultaneously depriving them of the opportunity to acquire age-appropriate socialization skills.

It was therefore necessary to meet with the police captain to explain the new policy so that police officers would not immediately suspect Indian children out in the community of being runaways from the boarding school. It was also necessary to literally issue students cards bearing their pictures so they could verify their status and their right to be out in the community without supervision.

The biggest payoff of the gold card system came months after it was implemented. Some of the older male students were regularly signing out on Saturday afternoons to go the city Y Center to play basketball with other same-age White children in the community.

Data supported the conclusion that the new system enabled students to more clearly understand behavioral expectations. This was indicated by the students' response to the Jessor Alienation item: "It's hard to know how to act most of the time since you can't tell what other people expect." As cross-sectional data shown in Figure 2 indicate, the number of students agreeing with this statement declined after the TRM was implemented.



Proactive elements. In addition to the Applied Humanism model of caregiving, other proactive elements were put in place. These included social skills training, service leadership, inclusive sports programs, student employment opportunities, and substance abuse-prevention programming.

Social Skills Training. This site had an eight-year history of doing "groups" four evenings a week. However, the TRM funding allowed the group size to be reduced by one-half, increasing student interaction. Seeing that the social skills training now had potential to give the students skills that would change their behavior, staff made the groups more focused, allowing them to evolve into targeted social skills training using multiple strategies focused on specific behaviors then happening in the dorm. For example, one week the social skills groups in the younger boys' dorm focused on aggression. Another week the focus was on stealing. Periodically, the group leaders obtained data that allowed them to assess any resultant behavior change. For example, one group leader took a pre-treatment assessment of the amount of stealing, conducted four sessions on aspects of stealing, and a week later did a post-treatment assessment of the amount of stealing. As can be seen in Table 7, stealing decreased markedly following the targeted social skills training.

**Table 7**  
**Number of Students Reporting Things Stolen**  
**From Them in the Previous Week**

	Reported Stealing	Reported no Stealing
Pre Training	63	4
Post Group	49	13

The material for the social skills training addressed such important issues as alcohol, drugs, gangs, prevention, communication skills, decision-making, cultural awareness, sexuality, and grief. The materials came from many sources; one heavily used resource was the Character Counts curriculum and materials.

Service. This boarding school has a number of activities designed to instill in the children a sense of service, leadership, and cooperation. Such activities include leadership class, young authors, chess, drum groups, gifted and talented, and destination imagination. Nurturing and empathetic skills are developed in the therapeutic equestrian program. A TRM-funded ropes course is also offered.

In addition, the students rotate in picking up trash in assigned areas of the campus. According to Hawkins and Weiss (1985), such chores are ideal service learning activities. They teach pride and instill ownership in the facility, and they give the children a sense that they are making a contribution to the group welfare.

Sports. Since many children arrive at the boarding school with histories of failure, they are in need of a sports program that counteracts their sense of helplessness and their expectation of failure. L1 has an inclusive sports program that encourages all students to participate in at least one of the sport options – football, basketball, soccer, or cross country. This inclusion promotes social development by maximizing bonding, cooperation, and leadership. This approach is compatible with the most recent thinking in the field of sports psychology with regard to sports for children and young adolescents that focus on teamwork, cooperation, and bonding rather than on winning.

However, after observation and information-gathering discussions the external evaluator concluded that the boarding school has not yet maximized the potential of sports as a therapeutic tool. Many students and a few staff members, coming from communities that place a high value on winning in athletic competition, are not used to this orientation. Another barrier slowing the conceptual shift is that the philosophy of including all students in a competitive game decreases the probability of winning. While some coaches have been able to positively redefine failure and success, other coaches struggle with their desire to win. Unfortunately, lines of authority in the sports area are blurred, causing some staff to be reluctant about stepping onto contested turf to challenge old ways of doing things. A significant asset at this site is the presence of a stellar physical education instructor and coach who is a former professional basketball player. In all ways he has modeled the benefits of using sports as a therapeutic tool.

Student Employment. Each child gets an allowance every week, which is earned by doing chores. Also, some older students are employed in work-study jobs in the cafeteria and elsewhere on campus.

## **Academic Program**

The academic program offers the traditional core academic instruction. In addition, there is specialized instruction for students who qualify for gifted and talented services, or who have a communication disorder or a diagnosed learning disability. The academic department has a staff of approximately 40 certified teachers; 5 are special education teachers, 2 are speech therapists, and 3 are chapter teachers. They are supported by a principal, a school psychologist, an educational diagnostician, and two secretaries.

In SY 2002-2003, 62% of the students were eligible for and received therapy for expressive and/or receptive communication problems. In that same year, 36.4% of the students qualified for and received special education (SPED) services. The percentage of students qualifying for these services appears to be increasing about 2% per year. Some speculate that this trend, which has been observed elsewhere, may be the result of community-based schools on the reservations trying to meet No Child Left Behind standards by sending lower-functioning



students to boarding schools. As a group, the students' academic skills at this school are one full year below their academic placement. But even that statistic obscures the magnitude of the problem, because roughly 50% of the students had already been retained a grade by their community-based school.

Student Assessment. The language skill level of all students in grades 4-8 is determined at the beginning of the year by administration of the Language Assessment Scales. At three times during the academic year, the academic skill of all students is assessed by obtaining curriculum-based measurements for reading, arithmetic, spelling, and writing. In the spring, the students in grades 3-8 take the Dakota STEP to assess their academic skills.

Special Education. The SPED program assesses student needs and uses a variety of service delivery strategies to meet the needs of students who qualify for services. The program has a number of tracks determined by level of need. Special education students are included as much as possible in the general education classroom. However, the majority of them receive pull-out special services in the afternoons. It had been determined that few of these SPED students work best in a resource room environment. For these students, a self-contained classroom is also available.

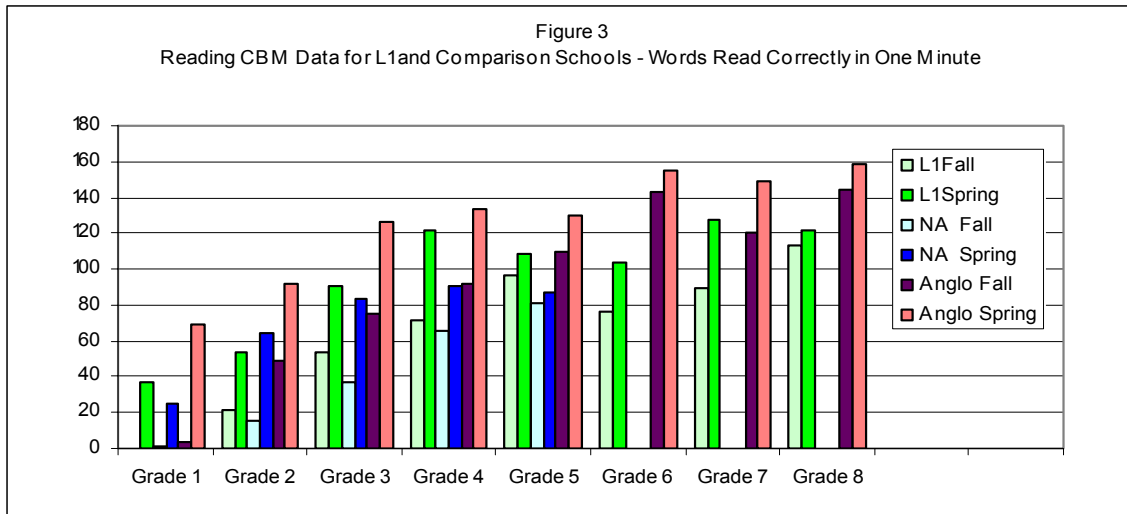
Tutoring Program. During the evening hours, students in need of remediation in reading attend a "diagnostic-prescriptive reading tutoring program" in the dormitory. Under the service delivery plan, each student is tested to diagnose areas of need, an individual remediation plan is developed, and progress reports are kept. Students behind on their academic assignments are not eligible for off-campus trips.

Student Proficiency. Table 8 shows student data at the beginning of the TRM funding as compared with Bureau-wide statistics. It was determined that 146 of 261 of the students at this site had expressive and/or receptive language communication problems and were provided speech and language services during SY 2003-2004. That same year 100 students qualified for SPED services. Thus, this school had more than double the percentage of SPED students found in the average BIA school. This differential could be expected to create a significant impact on overall proficiency levels, as the proficiency average for SPED students Bureau-wide is over 28% lower for language, over 27% lower for reading, and over 26% lower for math. Despite this significant handicap, the L1 student body outperformed the Bureau average on two of three measures. In addition, the academic proficiency of the SPED students at this site was more than 10% higher on all measures than the Bureau-wide average.

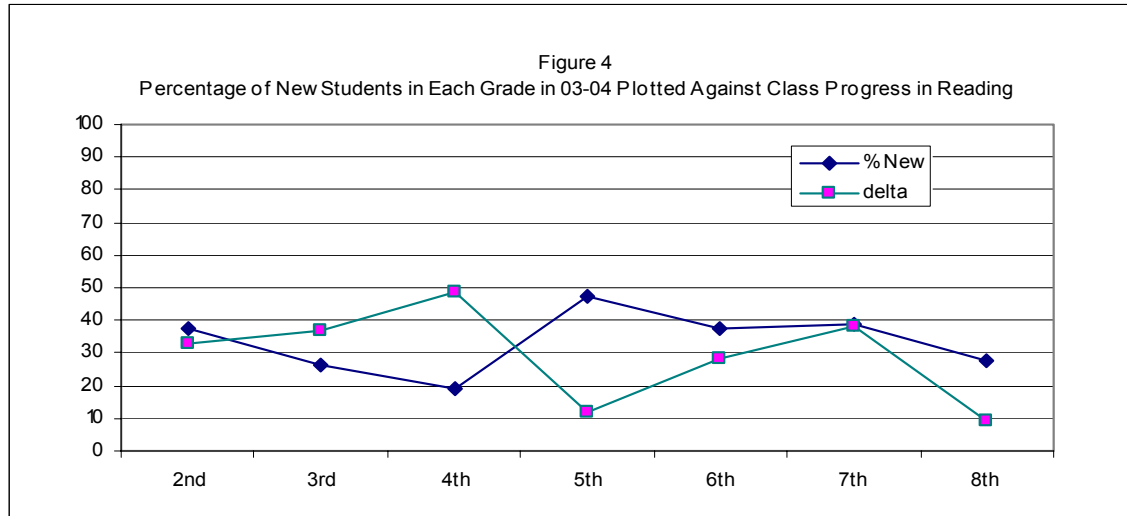
**Table 8**  
**Comparison of L1 with Bureau-Wide Statistics, 2002-2003**

	% of All Students Proficient or Advanced		% of SPED Students Proficient or Advanced		Gap between SPED and "All Students"		% of SPED Students in Population	
	L1	BIA	L1	BIA	L1	BIA	L1	BIA
Language	56.76	50.48	36.23	22.27	20.53	28.21		
Reading	57.84	52.47	37.68	25.06	20.16	27.41	36.47	16.18
Math	51.89	54.01	39.13	27.44	12.76	26.57		

Academic Outcomes – Reading. After receiving funding, this site began using curriculum-based measurement (CBM) scores to measure students’ progress. The CBM “probe” can be efficiently used to track progress of lagging students on a weekly basis, providing data-loops that allow teachers and students to measure gains in performance. CBM scores can also be used to compare metrics between sites. Figure 2 shows beginning- and end-of-academic-year comparisons of L1 students with students in an American Indian day school and with students in a day school attended by Anglo students.



As Figure 3 shows, incoming L1 students in grades 2-4 begin the year reading an average of 20-28 words per minute less than their Anglo day school counterparts. Each year, progress relative to these starting points (delta = spring - fall scores) is made that is comparable to that of students at other schools. When the percent of new students in a grade is plotted against reading gains (delta) Figure 4 shows a mirror relationship. Highest gains are in fourth grade, which has the lowest influx of new students (19.4%), while the high influx in fifth grade appears to be associated with lack of gain in that year. A correlation between percentage of new students in each grade for grades 2-7 with the delta of reading CBM scores found a significant negative correlation between the two (Pearson Correlation [2-tailed]  $r = -.875$ ,  $p = .022$ ).



As the comparison schools are community day schools, the turnover rate across grade groups is very likely stable. Therefore, the influence of the influx of new students at L1 probably is one source of the year-to-year low reading scores of the students.

Due to the many problems of entering students, academic staff face a significant challenge trying to bring these students up to proficiency levels. While this school has actively sought culturally appropriate techniques to assist students in maximizing their potential, staff and administrators expressed the need for additional help in this area. During the first year of funding a high degree of frustration was evident in the academic department as the administration attempted to focus a variety of teaching styles and attitudes on student achievement. The school began working with the Morningside program during its second year to increase the students' reading ability. The Morningside program sorts students into groups according to their reading proficiency and provides each group with exercises that are designed to enhance the students' reading. Implementation of this system helped to put the teachers on the same page, pedagogically speaking.

### Mental Health Services

The philosophy at this boarding school is that students' mental health is affected by their surroundings. Therefore, L1 provides an atmosphere of respect, structure, and beauty. For the majority of students this is enough to allow them to thrive. The culture and the caregiving posture of the staff are sufficient for their proven natural resiliency to emerge, allowing them to put aside defensive postures, learn to trust, and to form relationships with caregivers and peers that promote healthy social and emotional development. However, some students need more. For these students, TRM funds were used to develop additional therapeutic resources in accordance with a triage structure. As a result, the number of students who exhausted the internal resources markedly dropped from the onset of TRM funding. During SY 2004-2005, only two students exhausted the internal resources and needed stays at inpatient mental health treatment facilities.

Triage to Meet Emotional Needs. This boarding school implemented a triage system for delivering mental health services. The majority of students have experienced emotional, physical, or sexual abuse; or have issues of grief, abandonment, or other stressors; and are eligible to receive Intense Residential Guidance. Accordingly, group sessions, as described in the section on Social Skills Training, are mandatory for all students four evenings a week. Based on intake evaluation, referrals, records, and behavior, students can also receive additional individual services. A case management system that uses some of the new TRM positions is now used to triage students. Table 9 shows the system as presented in the spring 2003 service delivery plan.

**Table 9**  
**Case Management System**

Level of Need	Indicators	Responsibility
Low	- Behavioral problems	- Direct-care counselors
Moderate/ Severe	- Psychological or social issues - Gang involvement - Drug/alcohol problems	- Therapeutic Team Leaders
High	- Extreme trauma, sexual abuse - Self-mutilation/suicidal tendencies	- Psychologist - LPC
Medical/ psychiatric	- Inability to control behavior without medication	- Behavioral - Pediatrician/Psychiatrist - Referral for tertiary services

Not all students are screened using psychological tests, as that would be time-consuming and expensive; moreover, it would identify too many false positives. Instead, every student showing indicators of behavior or emotional problems is evaluated. Once the nature of the problem is understood, the most common intervention is to provide the student the structure and support he or she needs to be successful. Psychotropic medications are used as needed, but sparingly. In spring 2003, less than 15% of students were receiving medication for ADHD; less than 4% were receiving Zoloft, Celexa, or Paxil; and less than 2% were receiving sleep medication.

Increase in Staff. TRM funds were used to significantly increase therapeutic resources at this site. The numbers of mental health and residential staff were both increased, strategically strengthening all dimensions of the residential program. At the base level, 12 direct-care counselors (dormitory staff) were added, which improved the ratio of staff in day-to-day contact with the children. Four Masters-level therapeutic counselors were added, as were two intervention counselors, two social workers, and an internal evaluator/program consultant. TRM funds also supported external contracted mental health providers (behavioral pediatrician/psychiatrist, adolescent female therapist, sexual abuse therapist for females, sexual abuse therapist for males, chemical abuse therapist, and a psychologist). An equine therapy component was added in SY 2004-2005.

These new services complemented the existing services of a school psychologist, an intervention counselor, and the contracted services of a behavioral pediatrician.

By strengthening the boarding school's internal capacity to meet the children's mental health needs, the amount of money spent to purchase external mental health services markedly dropped each of the last three years of the TRM project, from \$134,590 in SY 2002-2003, to \$72,158 in SY 2003-2004, to \$7,820 in SY 2004-2005.

### **Physical Health Components**

Nutrition. The food service facility conditions are cramped but adequate. Staff are friendly and appear to be following good food service practice. The students' diet is reviewed annually by the Child and Adult Nutrition Services. Also, the menus are analyzed via the Nutri-Kids computer system, ensuring that the nutritional needs of the students are met. The food service supervisor collaborated with supervisors at other TRM sites to decrease the use of fried foods and increase the awareness of healthy nutrition. A salad bar was added at the beginning of TRM funding and has been expanded over time. Medical personnel reported a drop in the number of students seen for constipation after the salad bar was added.

Students' physical fitness. During SY 2004-2005, the students' ability to do sit-ups, long jump, and shuttle run was used to determine whether there was improvement in their physical fitness. Using a multivariate analysis for repeated measures, it was found that the students significantly improved their fitness over the course of the academic year ( $F = 34.34$ ,  $df = 3/70$ ). Furthermore, they improved in each of the three areas: sit-ups,  $F = 454.91$ ,  $df = 1/72$ ; long jump,  $F = 42.28$ ,  $df = 1/72$ ; and shuttle run,  $F = 24.50$ ,  $df = 1/72$ .

Unfortunately, there is no agreement among the leading physical educators on the essential aspects of physical fitness, and there also is no standardization on how each aspect or component should be measured. Therefore, it was possible to compare the physical fitness of the students at this site with nationally normed data on only one measure – the shuttle run. On this measure of physical fitness, the students at L1 met or exceeded the nationally normed data.

However, this boarding school has no organized system to ensure that all of the students become physically fit. For the last two years, the weights and heights of all students were obtained in order to identify students whose body mass index (BMI) exceeded 85% for their age and gender. This screening determined that the BMI distribution of the students at L1 is similar to the distribution of body mass indexes for students across the nation. Namely, using the cutoff score of BMI > 85%, about 15% of the students are overweight. Some attempts were made for each of the last two academic years to help these students lower their BMI. On the other side of the weight issue, staff reported that at the beginning of the academic year many children arrive thin and lethargic, apparently as a result of inadequate nourishment during the summer. Each fall, the strength of these students is rebuilt.

Health. Two nurses are stationed in the younger children's dormitory. These professionals are available to respond to emergency situations. They also do routine assessments and care for health related needs. The nurses handle health records, oversee the sickroom, make appointments, and communicate with the residential and school staff.

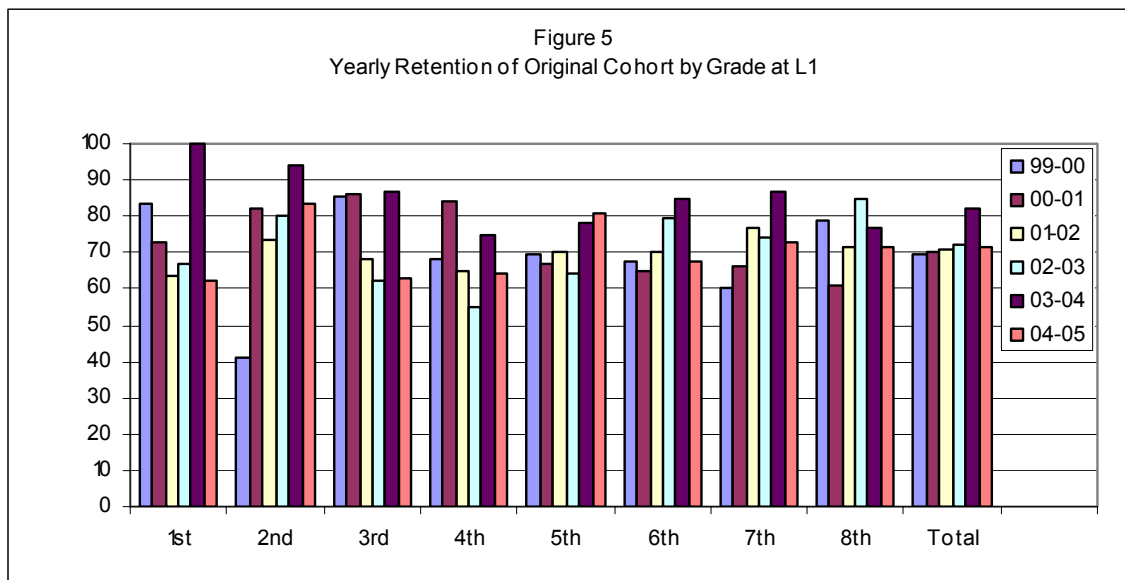
This boarding school requests that all new students arrive in the fall with results of a recent physical examination. However, 85 to 90% of the students arrive without these records, necessitating considerable expense and a great deal of work to obtain this information. In addition, all students are screened in the fall for dental, hearing, and vision problems. Over 60% of students fail the vision screening and require follow-up action. Nearly all of the students require dental procedures. In November, the students receive flu shots and any needed immunizations. Most of the students have medical coverage through private, tribal, or Medicaid sources. The school requires a complete application before a child is accepted. Part of this application requires medical coverage or application for such coverage. The social worker spends much of his time in the communities assisting parents to fill out this paperwork. After screenings are complete, children with health needs are prioritized for appointments.

**Outcomes**

Outcome data tracked a number of indicators. Retention and return rates were considered the major indicators of a successful program. In addition, data were examined to evaluate key indicators associated with developmental success: school bonding, peer and social bonding, adaptability and stress management, meaning and identity, and academic achievement.

**Retention/Return Rate**

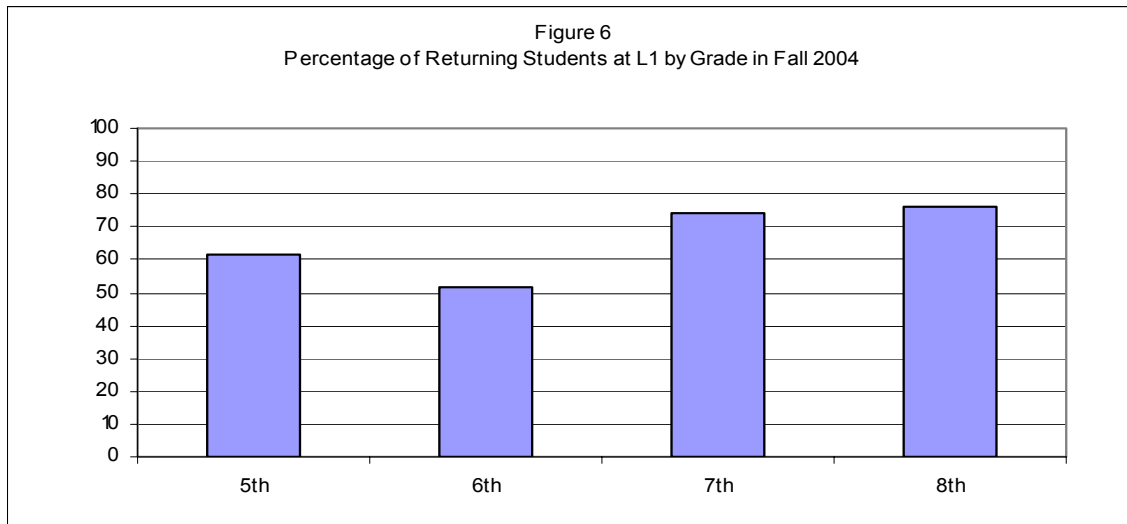
Figure 5 shows retention of students before the TRM project and their retention when the project was well underway. Table 10 shows percentages by grade. Retention showed incremental improvements over the years, starting at 70.7% prior to TRM funding. Under TRM funding, retention rose to a peak of 82.5% in SY 2003-2004. As many students leave for reasons outside their control (such as a change in custody, parents needing their presence to receive public assistance, or family need for babysitters) this rate of retention is outstanding.



**Table 10**  
Retention Percentages by Grade for All Students Enrolling during the First Month of School

Grade	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
1 <sup>st</sup>	83.3	72.7	63.6	66.7	100.0	62.5
2 <sup>nd</sup>	41.2	82.4	73.3	80.0	93.8	83.3
3 <sup>rd</sup>	85.7	86.4	68.2	62.5	87.0	63.0
4 <sup>th</sup>	67.9	84.2	64.9	54.8	75.0	64.5
5 <sup>th</sup>	69.8	66.7	70.5	64.1	77.8	80.9
6 <sup>th</sup>	67.3	65.2	70.2	79.2	85.4	67.5
7 <sup>th</sup>	60.0	66.1	76.5	74.5	86.5	72.7
8 <sup>th</sup>	78.6	60.7	71.4	84.6	76.6	71.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>69.3</b>	<b>70.2</b>	<b>70.7</b>	<b>72.5</b>	<b>82.5</b>	<b>71.8</b>

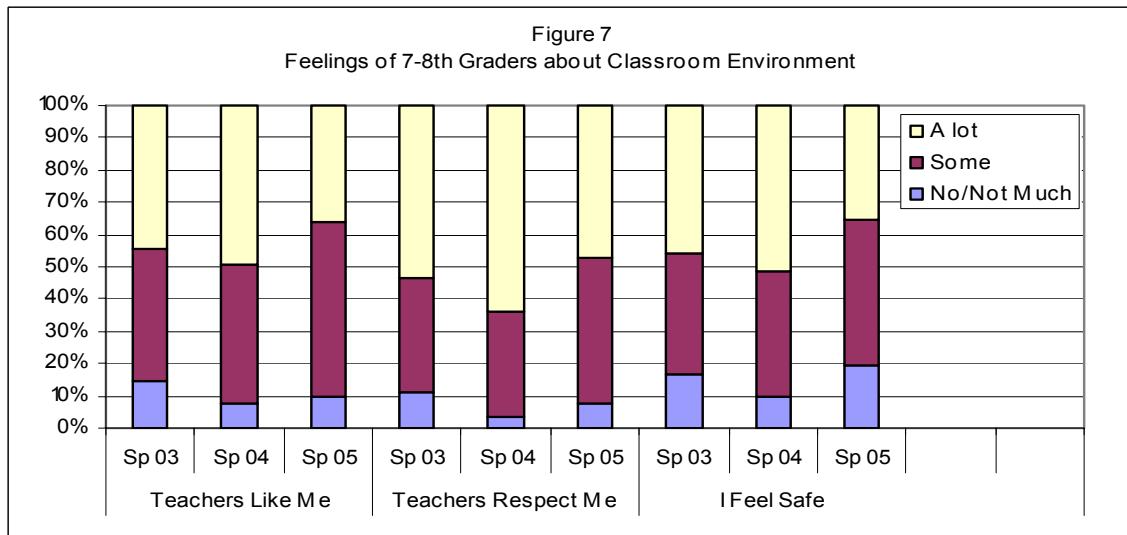
This site had a high return rate at the beginning of SY 2004-2005, as shown by the percentages of returning students at each grade level shown in Figure 6.



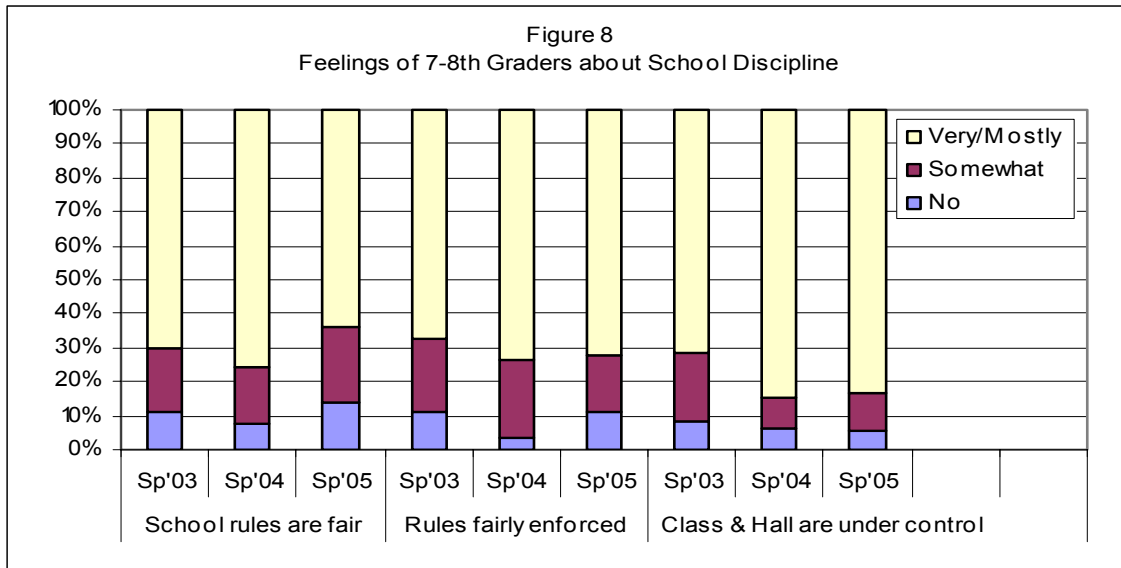
### Key Indicators

#### School Bonding Indicators

A positive relationship existed between the teachers and students at this boarding school. The ADAS contained a number of items assessing student opinions of the school environment. As Figure 7 shows, students generally felt liked and respected by their teachers, and felt safe at school.



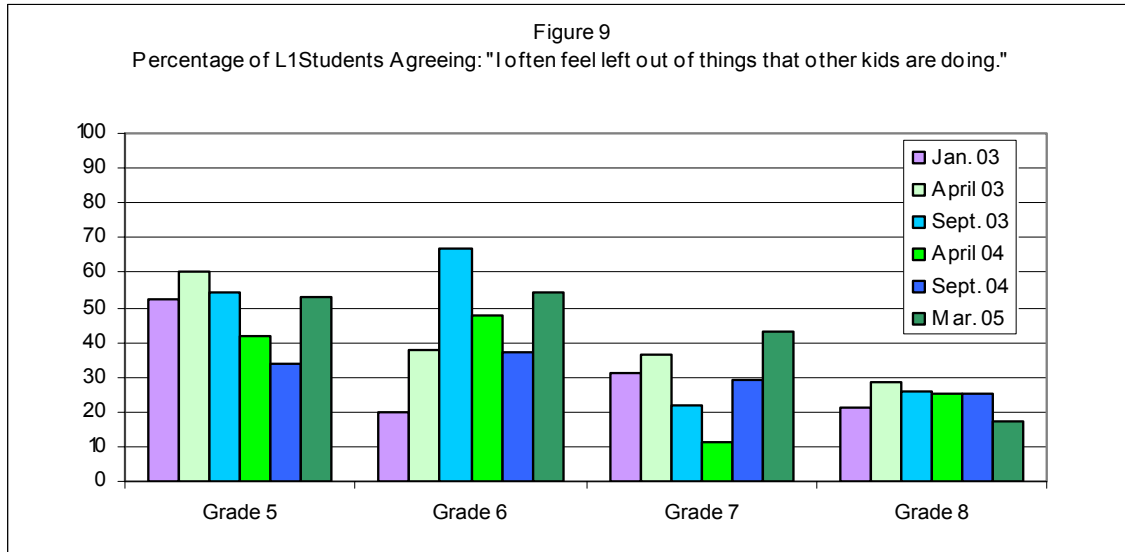
Most students also indicated that they thought “the school rules are fair,” “the school rules are fairly enforced,” and “the classrooms and hallways are kept under control” (Figure 8).



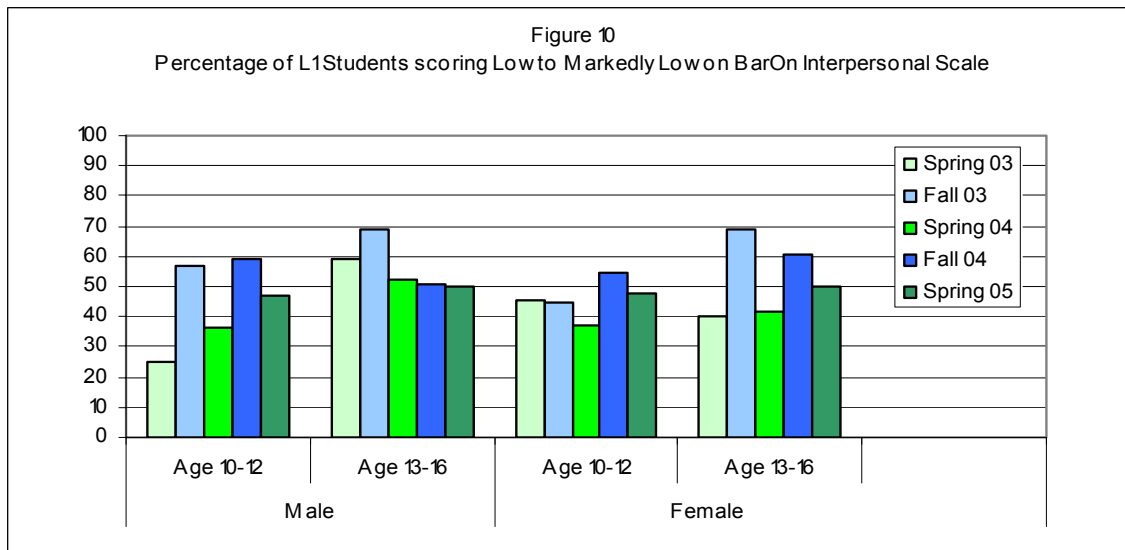
**Peer and Social Bonding Indicators**

Over the course of funding, this boarding school moved away from “troop movement” that put students into tightly structured group schedules, and moved towards promoting individual choice of after-school activities. L1 also added a gold card system that gave students in grades 6-8 an incentive for displaying responsible behaviors and granted privileges that led to the development of self-regulatory behavior. Prior to the TRM project, differential treatment of students was resisted. Rather, the operating mantra was an emphasis on strict equality of treatment of students and group responsibility. There are some indications in the data that, while the Kids Pick modification made in the second year of funding may have been beneficial, the differential reward system (the gold card) added in the third year may have had side effects as shown in the following figures. For example, in the second year there was a decrease between fall 2003 and spring 2004 in the percentage of students in grades 5-7 indicating they felt left out; in the third year the shift was in the opposite direction. As the change was implemented out of concern for transitioning eighth graders, it appears that this site may want to examine confining this system to only those students, or otherwise modify the system to address this possible side effect.





BarOn Interpersonal Scale. Figure 10 shows mean scores of all fifth through eighth grade students at each time point on the BarOn Interpersonal scale.



As percentages shown in the figure include all students present at each time point, pre-post analysis considered only scores of students present at both fall and spring time points during a school year (survivors). Table 11 shows three sets of comparisons: (1) pre-post test comparisons of means of fifth through eighth grade students present at both fall 2003 and spring 2004; (2) pre-post test comparisons of means for fifth through eighth grade students present at both fall 2004 and spring 2005; and (3) a comparison of fall 2003 intake scores of students in grades 4-8 who completed the school year (survivors) vs. those who left during the course of that year (non-survivors). Pre-post analysis of fifth through eighth grade students present in

both fall 2003 and spring 2004 found a significant increase in scores on this measure for both the overall group and for the older girls. Pre-post comparison of fall 2004 and spring 2005 scores found no significant change on this measure (fall mean=17.42, spring mean=17.84). Comparisons of means of incoming students who subsequently dropped out (non-survivors) were not significantly different than those of survivors in fall 2003.

**Table 11**  
**Interpersonal Score T-test Comparisons of Means**

Survivor Paired T-tests, 2003-04	Mean (SD), Fall 2003	Mean (SD), Spring 2004	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Boys aged 10-12	16.09 (4.37)	17.51 (3.22)	2.02	34	.051
Boys aged 13-16	16.11 (4.08)	16.64 (2.66)	0.735	35	.467
Girls aged 10-12	18.12 (3.70)	18.20 (3.03)	0.102	24	.919
<b>Girls aged 13-16</b>	<b>17.40 (3.09)</b>	<b>19.13 (2.95)</b>	<b>2.642</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>.015</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>16.78 (3.96)</b>	<b>17.72 (3.07)</b>	<b>2.574</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>.011</b>

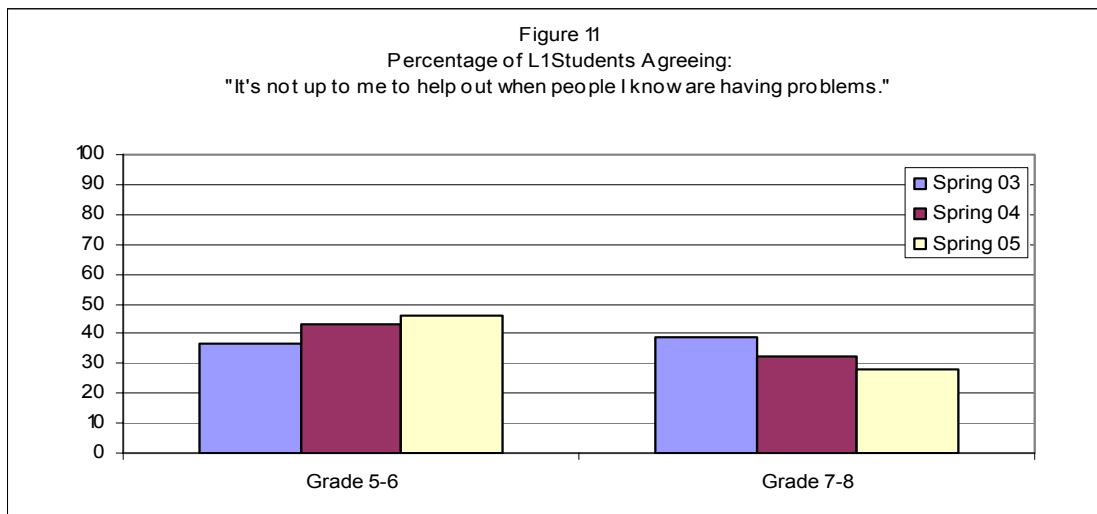
  

Survivor Paired T-tests, 2004-05	Mean (SD), Fall 2004	Mean (SD), Spring 2005	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Boys aged 10-12	17.08 (3.39)	17.81 (3.41)	1.171	25	.253
Boys aged 13-16	17.16 (3.69)	16.89 (3.25)	0.395	27	.696
Girls aged 10-12	18.13 (3.02)	18.37 (3.05)	0.367	33	.716
Girls aged 13-16	17.83 (2.37)	18.57 (2.37)	1.627	22	.118
<b>Total</b>	<b>17.42 (3.43)</b>	<b>17.84 (3.13)</b>	<b>1.241</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>.217</b>

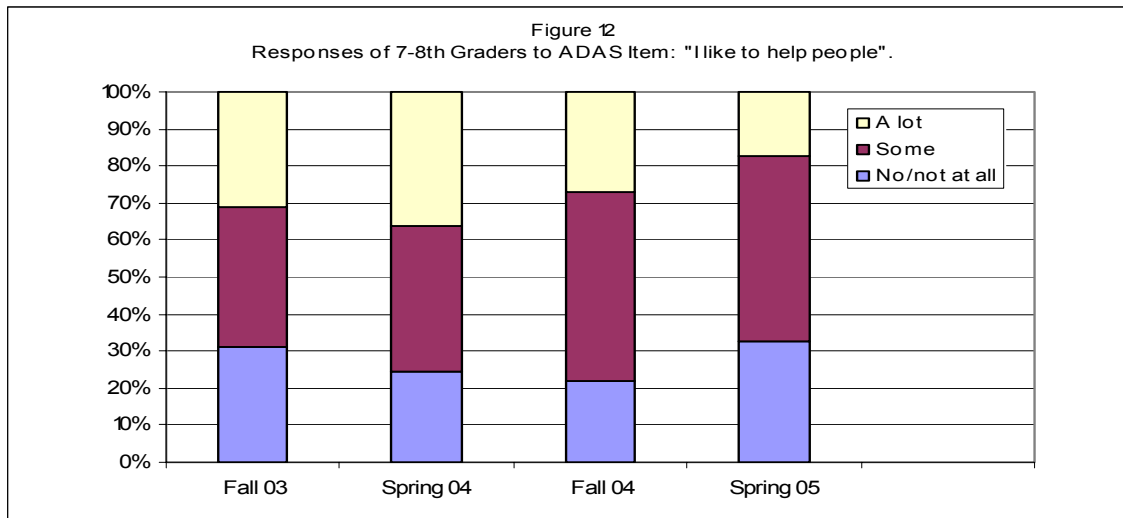
  

Fall 2003 Survivor vs. Non-survivor T-tests	Survivor Mean (SD)	Non-Survivor Mean (SD)	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Boys aged 10-12	16.64 (4.51)	16.53 (4.06)	.080	56	.936
Boys aged 13-16	16.11 (4.08)	17.00 (4.63)	.632	46	.531
Girls aged 10-12	17.97 (3.49)	18.17 (2.34)	.200	43	.842
Girls aged 13-16	17.40 (3.09)	17.20 (2.77)	.131	27	.897

**Social Responsibility.** As seen in Figure 11, a cross-sectional analysis showed a slight trend in the younger group toward a decrease in social responsibility across the time points and an increase in the older group as implementation progressed.



Responses of seventh and eighth graders on the ADAS Item "I like to help people" are shown in Figure 12. This figure indicates that charity was at its highest point in spring 2004, and it increased over the level at fall 2003 intake. The figure suggests that in the following year when the gold card system emphasized individual achievement and privilege, the trend went in the opposite direction.



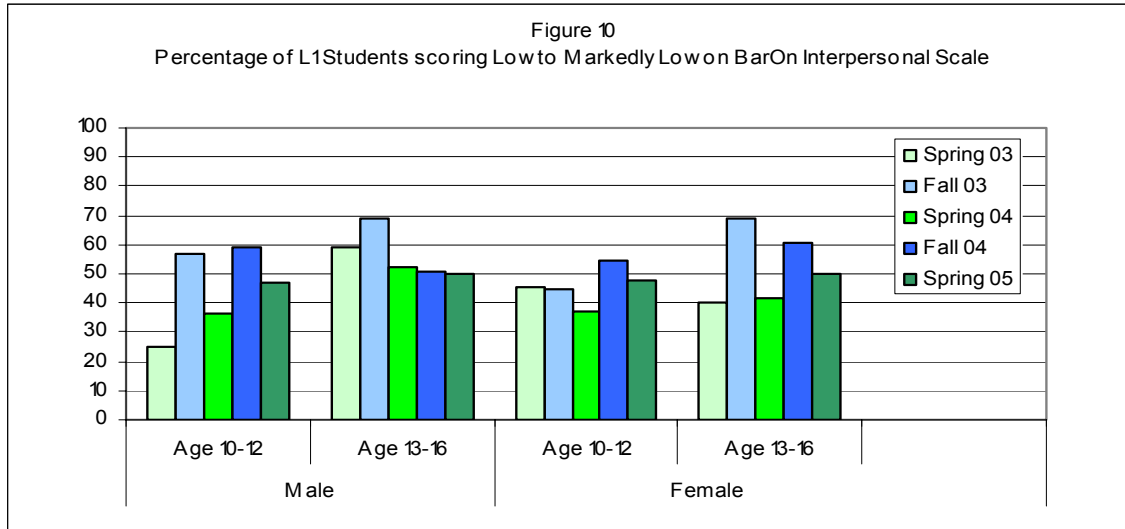
While close supervision protected students from overt victimization, observations and staff interviews verified that some students continued to bully others, and some students stole from their peers. Table 12 shows the number of students who reported that their friends bullied other students. Since some group sessions under TRM funding focused on getting students to recognize bullying behaviors, results may indicate an increased awareness of bullying rather than an actual increase in the behaviors.

**Table 12**  
**Bullying in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade L1 Students (ADAS-survey data)**

Do your friends pick on or bully other kids?	A lot	Some
Spring 2003	14%	27%
Spring 2004	12%	33%
Spring 2005	9%	38%

### Adaptability and Stress Management

Adaptability. Figure 13 shows mean scores of all fifth through eighth grade students at each time point on the BarOn Adaptability scale, based on items reflecting confidence in ones' ability to deal with problems.

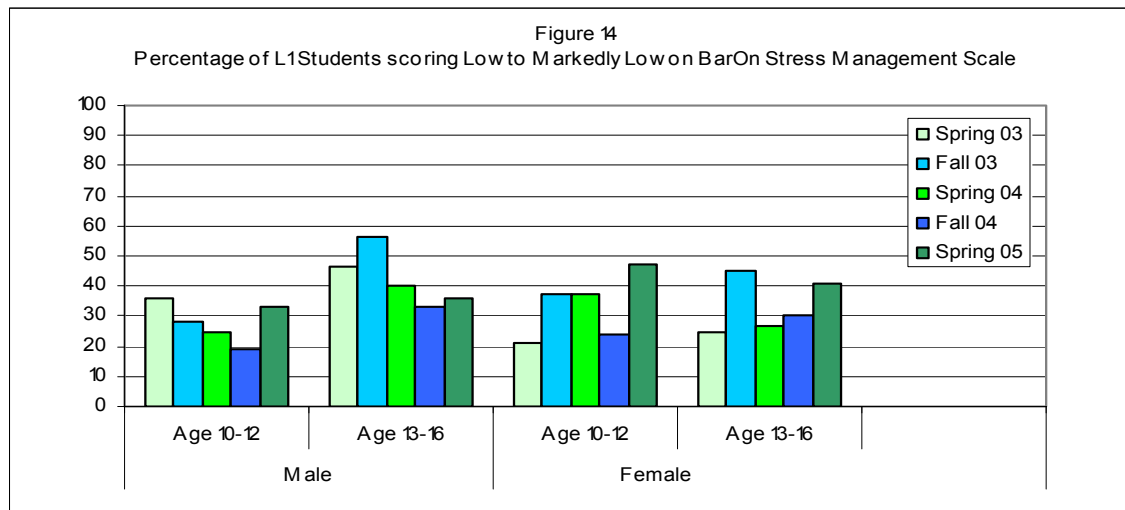


Pre-post analysis considered only scores of students present at both time points. Table 13 shows means of these students, as well as a comparison of survivor and non-survivor scores in fall 2003. Pre-post comparisons of fall 2004 and spring 2005 means for all surviving students showed a trend toward improvement in adaptability, increasing from a mean of 14.65 in the fall to a mean of 15.50 ( $t = 2.49$ ),  $p = .014$ ). As this indicator tended to go in a negative direction in the previous year, programs implemented in SY 2004-2005 may be responsible for this improvement.

**Table 13**  
**Mean BarOn Scores on Adaptability**

Survivor Paired T-tests, 2003-04	Mean (SD), Fall 2003	Mean (SD), Spring 2004	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Boys aged 10-12	15.51 (3.35)	14.86 (2.69)	1.028	34	.311
<b>Boys aged 13-16</b>	<b>15.47 (4.00)</b>	<b>14.08 (4.10)</b>	<b>2.208</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>.034</b>
Girls aged 10-12	14.48 (4.16)	14.48 (3.47)	.000	24	1.00
Girls aged 13-16	14.60 (4.01)	14.67 (5.56)	.061	23	.952
<b>Total</b>	<b>15.10 (3.84)</b>	<b>14.51 (3.94)</b>	1.677	119	.096
Survivor Paired T-tests, 2004-05	Mean (SD), Fall 2004	Mean (SD), Spring 2005	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
<b>Boys aged 10-12</b>	<b>14.62 (3.34)</b>	<b>16.81 (3.09)</b>	<b>3.22</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>.004</b>
Boys aged 13-16	15.50 (3.35)	15.63 (4.23)	.201	27	.842
Girls aged 10-12	14.53 (3.03)	14.68 (3.54)	.261	33	.796
Girls aged 13-16	14.61 (3.69)	15.39 (4.21)	1.003	22	.327
<b>Total</b>	<b>14.65 (3.53)</b>	<b>15.50 (3.82)</b>	<b>2.493</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>.014</b>
Fall 2003 Survivor vs. Non-survivor T-tests	Survivor Mean (SD)	Non-Survivor Mean (SD)	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Boys aged 10-12	15.76 (3.40)	15.00 (4.02)	.708	56	.482
<b>Boys aged 13-16</b>	<b>15.47 (4.00)</b>	<b>12.83 (3.24)</b>	<b>2.064</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>.045</b>
Girls aged 10-12	14.90 (4.22)	15.73 (3.22)	.672	43	.505
Girls aged 13-16	14.60 (4.01)	14.00 (2.45)	.322	27	.750

**Stress Management.** Figure 14 shows mean scores of all fifth through eighth grade students at each time point on the BarOn Stress Management scale.

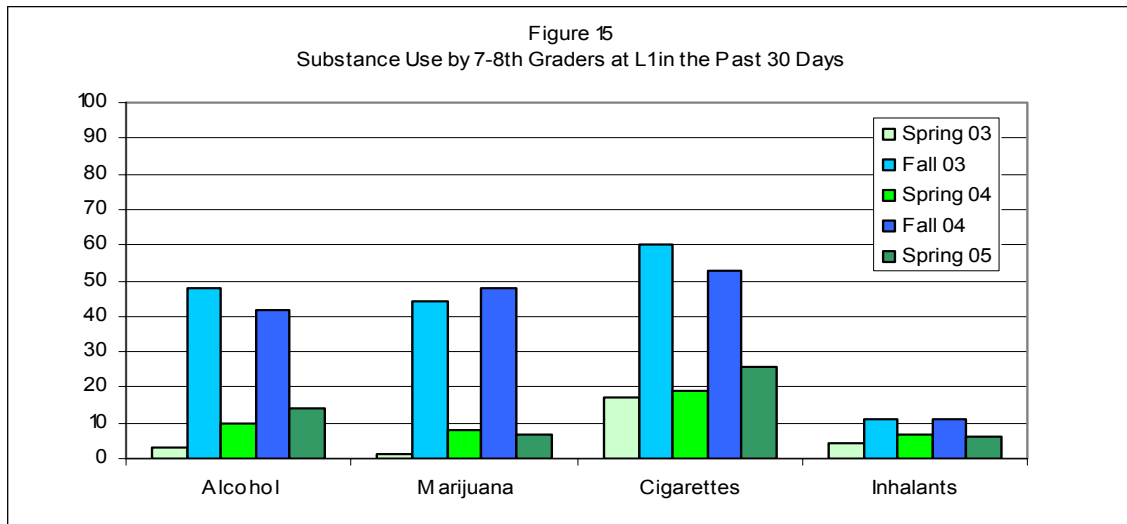


Pre-post analysis considered only scores of students present at both time points. Table 14 shows means of these students, as well as a comparison of survivor and non-survivor scores in fall 2003. Pre-post analysis found no significant overall change on this measure. However, analysis of subgroups indicated that while stress management scores for the older girls appeared to rise during SY 2003-2004, they dropped precipitously for the younger girls the following year (2004-2005), a year where there was significant overcrowding in the younger girls' dormitory.

**Table 14**  
**Mean BarOn Scores on Stress Management**  
**Compared for Fall and Spring**

Survivor Paired T-tests, 2003-04	Mean (SD), Fall 2003	Mean (SD), Spring 2004	t	df	p
Boys aged 10-12	16.31 (3.79)	16.31 (4.41)	0.000	34	1.00
Boys aged 13-16	14.25 (4.07)	14.67 (4.56)	0.533	35	.597
Girls aged 10-12	17.60 (3.91)	16.56 (4.40)	1.206	24	.240
<b>Girls aged 13-16</b>	<b>15.02 (4.63)</b>	<b>16.81 (4.06)</b>	<b>2.250</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>.034</b>
Total	15.70 (4.22)	15.97 (4.41)	0.668	119	.505
Survivor Paired T-tests, 2004-05	Mean (SD), Fall 2004	Mean (SD), Spring 2005	t	df	p
Boys aged 10-12	16.73(3.81)	16.15(4.15)	0.654	25	.519
Boys aged 13-16	16.11(3.33)	16.25(3.18)	0.200	27	.842
<b>Girls aged 10-12</b>	<b>17.01(4.12)</b>	<b>14.24(3.92)</b>	<b>3.617</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>.001</b>
Girls aged 13-16	16.00(4.44)	16.09(3.53)	0.153	22	.880
Total	16.33(4.12)	15.64(3.80)	1.618	112	.108
Fall 2003 Survivor vs. Non-survivor T-tests	Survivor Mean (SD)	Non-Survivor Mean (SD)	t	df	p
Boys aged 10-12	16.81(3.75)	15.67(3.68)	1.025	56	.310
Boys aged 13-16	14.25(4.07)	15.08(3.14)	.646	46	.522
Girls aged 10-12	17.13(4.35)	15.30(4.11)	1.356	43	.182
Girls aged 13-16	15.02(4.63)	13.40(6.02)	.679	27	.503

**Substance Use.** Figure 15 compares use rates of incoming students (fall) with those in residency at the school (spring), showing the school was largely successful at reducing use during the school year.



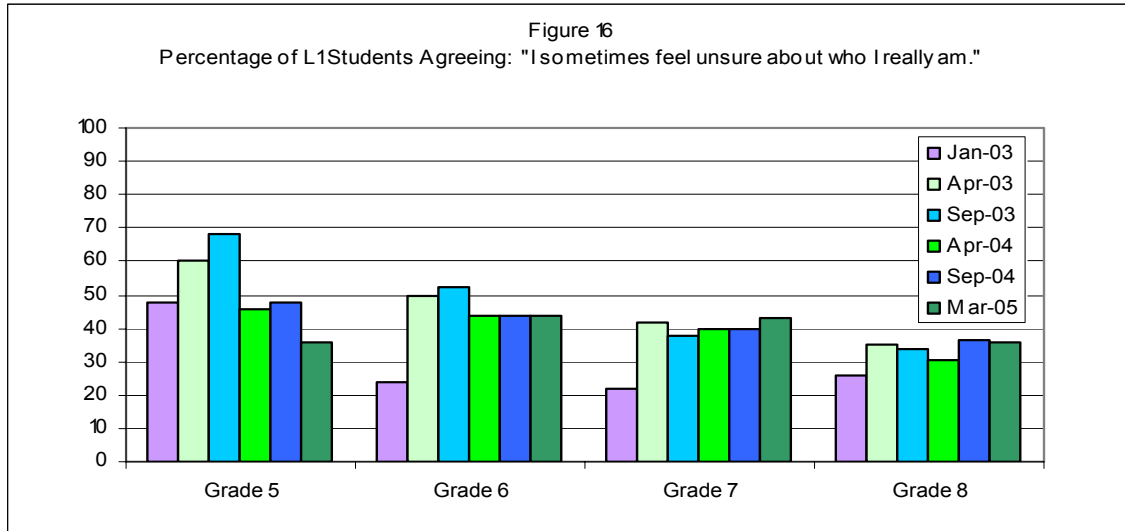
**Behavioral Incidents.** Table 15 presents statistics on Behavioral Incidents at this site over a 14-year period. Over this time period, there was a dramatic decrease in each category.

**Table 15**  
Number of Behavioral Incidents

	1991-1992	1992-1993	1993-1994	1994-1995	1995-1996	1996-1997	1997-1998	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
AWOL	459	656	681	165	37	11	15	54	41	30	28	25	28	22
Assault	246	324	445	227	79	22	5	2	2	3	9	8	12	2
Suicide attempt	31	16	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0

**Meaning and Identity**

Figure 16 shows responses of students on identity and meaning items of the Jessor Alienation Scale. The initial January survey showed identity problems to be most common among fourth and fifth graders, with only low levels indicated in the older groups. Uncertainty about identity increased across grades 5-8, prior to the return home in the spring (April 2003). In the opinion of many staff, this was fueled by the emotional preparations the students make prior to returning home. Levels continued to be high for incoming students in the younger groups in September 2003 and 2004.



Pre-post test comparisons of student scores in fall 2004 and spring 2005 showed no significant change.

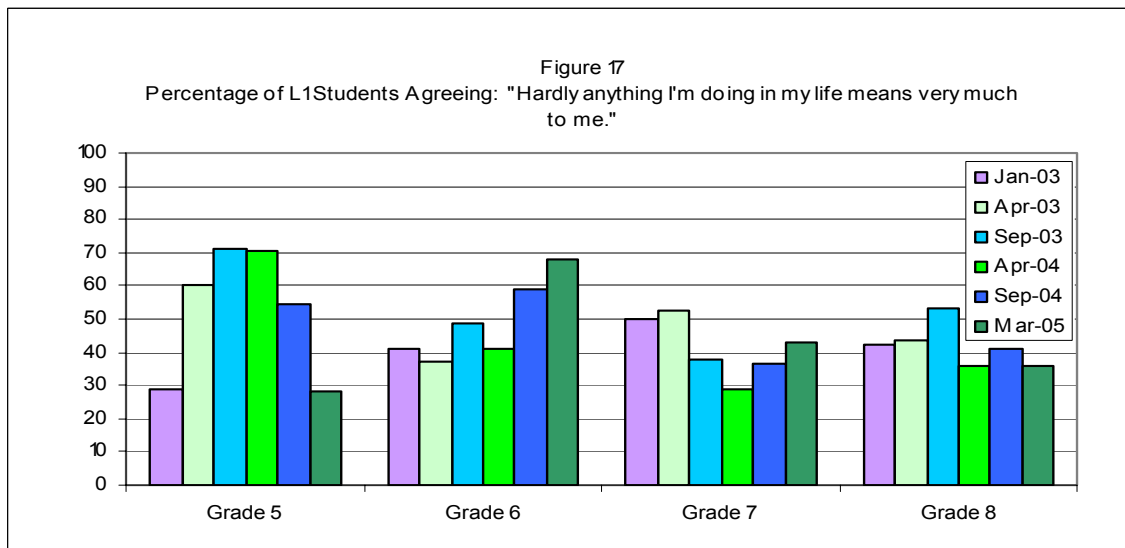
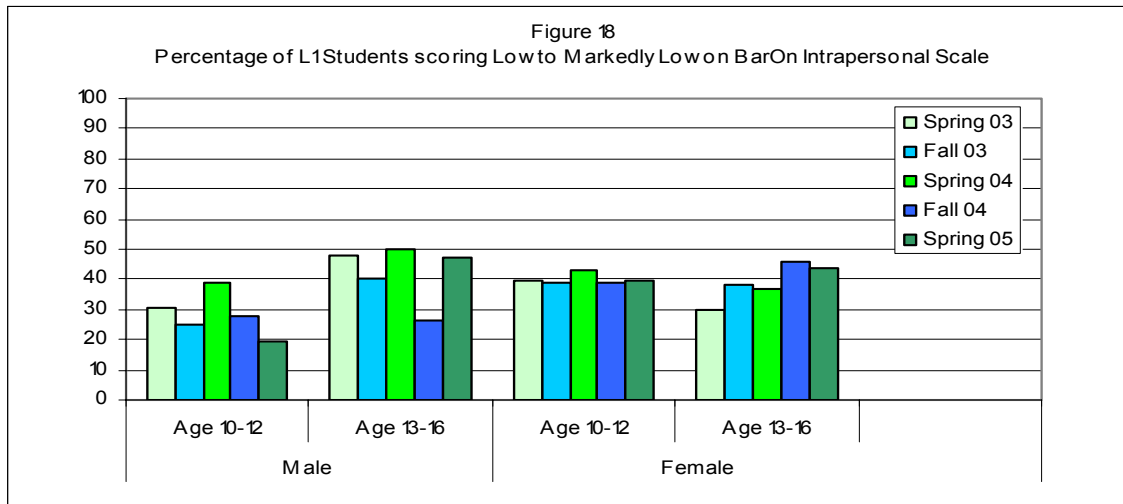


Figure 17 indicates that a significant number of students were still struggling for meaning. While grade 6 had been the most reactive on other items, it appears that from this age group onward, the meaning aspect has stabilized. Grade 5 results in April 2003 were examined to rule out gender differences, given the involvement of gender in the Jessor item regarding feeling "left out." Results on this measure appeared to be related more to age than gender. The percentages of boys and girls in the fifth and sixth grades were close to a 50% split for each grade level. Sixty-nine percent of fifth grade boys (N=13) and 50% of fifth grade girls (N=12) agreed with the "lack of meaning" statement, while 30% of sixth grade (N=20) boys and 45% of

sixth grade girls (N=20) agreed with it. Chi square tests for responses of each grade group found gender differences were not significant. Pre-post test comparisons of student scores in fall 2004 and spring 2005 showed no significant change.

**Intrapersonal.** Figure 18 shows mean scores of all fifth through eighth grade students at each time point on the BarOn Intrapersonal scale.



As percentages shown in the figure include all students present at each time point, pre-post analysis considered only scores of students present at both time points. Table 16 shows means of fifth through eighth grade students for SY 2003-2004 and for SY 2004-2005, as well as a comparison of survivor and non-survivor scores in fall 2003.

**Table 16**  
**Mean BarOn Scores on Intrapersonal Scale**

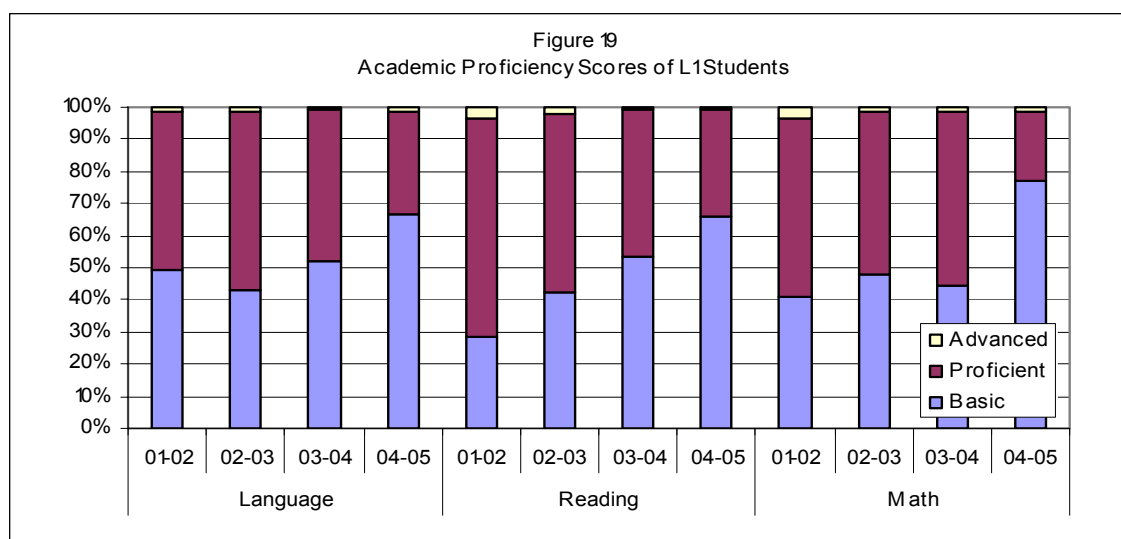
Survivor Paired T-tests, 2003-04	Mean (SD), Fall 2003	Mean (SD), Spring 2004	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Boys aged 10-12	13.74 (3.13)	12.80 (3.03)	1.8113	34	.079
Boys aged 13-16	12.85 (3.26)	12.36 (3.60)	0.778	35	.442
Girls aged 10-12	13.64 (3.26)	13.76 (4.11)	0.135	24	.894
Girls aged 13-16	13.19 (2.32)	13.58 (3.28)	0.515	23	.611
Total	13.34 (3.04)	13.03 (3.50)	0.933	119	.353
Survivor Paired T-tests, 2004-05	Mean (SD), Fall 2004	Mean (SD), Spring 2005	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Boys aged 10-12	13.65 (3.24)	13.29 (3.22)	0.659	25	.516
Boys aged 13-16	14.39 (2.30)	13.21 (2.96)	1.723	27	.096
Girls aged 10-12	13.47 (3.59)	13.28 (2.98)	0.299	33	.767
Girls aged 13-16	13.61 (3.95)	12.96 (3.78)	1.066	22	.298
Total	13.60 (3.52)	13.15 (3.19)	1.369	112	.174
Fall 2003 Survivor vs. Non-survivor T-tests	Survivor Mean (SD)	Non-Survivor Mean (SD)	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Boys aged 10-12	14.41 (3.26)	13.26 (2.55)	1.227	56	.225
Boys aged 13-16	12.85 (3.26)	13.67 (4.12)	.706	46	.484
Girls aged 10-12	13.17 (3.42)	12.60 (2.56)	.566	43	.575
Girls aged 13-16	13.19 (2.32)	11.20 (2.49)	1.726	27	.096



As percentages shown in the figure include all students present at each time point, pre-post analysis considered only scores of students present at both time points. Pre-post analysis of spring and fall scores for students present at both time points found no significant change on this measure.

### Academic Achievement

The school faced a staggering number of challenges in this area. Fifty percent of the incoming students had failed a grade. Within these grade placements, students still averaged academic skills that were a year behind that grade level. This school had more than double the number of special education students as the average BIA school. Figure 19 shows the cumulative effect of this challenge as this school struggled against increasing challenges of bringing students up to their potential.



Academic Outcomes – Reading. Despite its enthusiastic adoption, Morningside’s assistance did not enhance the students’ reading ability. Evaluation at the end of SY 2004-2005 found that students who had experienced the Morningside program for one year did not improve their norm-referenced reading ability, and even students who experienced the Morningside program for two academic years did not improve their norm-referenced reading ability. On average, the students’ reading ability at L1 is one academic year below grade placement. A within-subject comparison of the students’ reading scores, as measured in normal curve equivalences (NCE), at the end of the 2004 academic year and at the end of SY 2004-2005 did not find a gain in their relative standing compared with other students across the country. Additional support for this conclusion was drawn from the CBM data. After the Morningside program was used with the students in grades 1-4 for two years, and with students in grades 5-8 for one year, the CBM trend lines were similar to those generated in spring 2003. The average NCE reading score of students at L1 at the end of SY 2004-2005 was 35.8, which is .67 of a standard deviation below the national average.

Academic outcomes – Math. At the end of SY 2004-2005, an assessment was made of the math ability of the 110 students in grades 4-8 for whom national normed achievement scores were also available for SY 2003-2004. As a group, the students increased their math NCE score only .84 units. This small change is well within the range of measurement error.

Academic outcomes – Language Arts. This same group of students significantly increased their language arts scores on these nationally normed achievement tests from spring 2004 to spring 2005 ( $t = 2.08$ ,  $df = 109$ ,  $p = .025$ ). It is speculated that this significant improvement was due to two factors. First, 61% of the students received speech and language services during the course of the academic year. Second, upon leaving their reservation-based homes, the students found themselves immersed in a more diversified boarding school culture, and the exposure helped to increase their language arts scores.

Academic outcomes – Social Studies. When the scores of students in grades 4-6 were collapsed, there were 54 students in these grades who had taken a nationally normed achievement test both years. These students showed a gain in their understanding of social studies relative to the national average ( $t = 3.02$ ,  $df = 53$ ,  $p = .025$ ). However, no such gain was obtained for the aggregated data of students in grades 7 and 8.

### **Discussion**

Using TRM funds, this boarding school provided a highly structured environment that emphasizes the students' roles and responsibilities within that structure. Historically, the system of discipline at this site focused on punitive consequences for inappropriate behavior and also on fitting students into the social order. With the onset of TRM funding, a distinct caregiving posture was adopted across campus, wherein all staff adopted a supportive role and aimed at individual therapeutic goals. All staff coming in contact with the students were expected to be part of the therapeutic team, supported by paraprofessionals and counselors who were expected to operate "on the hoof." Residential staff were expected to operate in an authoritative parental role, requiring an increase in the exercise of their judgment on how to handle situations in a manner that balanced the need for social order with the unique needs of individual children.

The environment at this boarding school provided a great deal of personal safety for the students. Ongoing monitoring by staff exercising a high level of responsibility resulted in the occurrence of only two assaults in the course of the final year of funding. Students reported feeling liked and respected by their teachers.

This boarding school promoted emotional stability. A fairly low level of medication was used at L1; 15% of students were on ADHD medication, and less than 4% were on depression medication. Only two students were sent out for more than a week of inpatient treatment.

There was a high retention rate at this boarding school, indicating that the site has been successful at addressing many of the barriers to retention.

The boarding school had a confluence of factors that worked together to provide favorable outcomes. A well-maintained and attractive physical environment gives a message to the students that they are valued. A strong administration was present that was committed to a therapeutic vision and supported positive change. Staff had a high level of support for the administration and demonstrated an attitude of responsibility and caring commitment to the students. A cohort of students who had attended the school from early elementary grades through the upper grades formed a peer group nucleus that reinforced pro-social norms and behavior.

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