

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA
SAFE AND DRUG-FREE SCHOOLS PROGRAM

EVALUATION OF THE
CHAMPS PROGRAM: A POSITIVE AND PROACTIVE APPROACH TO
CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

SCHOOL YEAR 2004-2005

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School District of Gadsden County, Florida
Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program
CHAMPS Program
Final Evaluation Report 2004-2005 School Year

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Gadsden County Safe and Drug Free School (SDFS) Program selected the CHAMPS Program (CHAMPS: Proactive and Positive Classroom Management) as one of its SDFS programs to be implemented during the 2002-03, 2003-04 and 2004-05 school years. CHAMPS is designed for use in Grades K-9 to help school personnel ensure that all school settings are safe and civil. In so doing, they lay the foundation to enhance student engagement and learning by teaching students how to behave responsibly and respectfully and staff to structure the school with expectations for responsible student behavior. CHAMPS is not identified as a proven program, but has been shown to demonstrate positive results in other districts across the nation when used as a basis for positive, pro-active classroom management. It is based on 30 years of research regarding:

- Establishment of classroom routines,
- Teacher-student interactions,
- The use of incentives, recognition and rewards to promote excellence, and
- The setting of clear, consistent standards for behavior.

The CHAMPS Program is a proactive, positive approach to managing student behavior and enhancing student motivation that is designed to help teachers and schools develop consistency and fairness in treatment of all students. The research-based premise upon which it is based is that when students know exactly what teachers expect of them in terms of behavior, the amount of misbehavior will be significantly reduced and the amount of learning that takes place will increase concomitantly. The idea behind the program is that when students know during each activity and transition exactly what level of **C**onversation, **H**elp, **A**ctivity, **M**ovement, and **P**articipation is expected, teachers do not need to expend energy on explaining or correcting misbehavior, but can focus on rewarding positive behavior and spend more time teaching. When

the school also develops a uniform approach to expectations for student behavior at the bus area, in halls and in classrooms, student misbehavior also decreases dramatically.

The materials do not include specific curriculum, but an extensive “how-to” teacher guide with a myriad of materials to use in the classroom for all aspects of implementation. Processes the program fosters include:

- Self-reflection on the part of the school staff,
- Utilization of data,
- Structuring for success, and
- Collaboration.

Because of its nationally demonstrated positive results and testimony and commitment by the regional Florida Diagnostic and Resource Learning Systems (FDLRS) staff, the district originally chose to evaluate CHAMPS implementation in order to document its impact on student behavior at its most challenged school, Chattahoochee Elementary. After a semester of implementation there, the program was expanded to the only other school in that community, Chattahoochee High School. However, during the 2003-04 school year, Chattahoochee High School was closed prior to the end of school, leaving only Chattahoochee Elementary School as an implementation site in the 2004-05 school year. During the 2003-04 school year, at both Chattahoochee Elementary and Chattahoochee High Schools, data indicated that implementation of the CHAMPS program contributed to a positive impact on the school climate in terms of reduced numbers of incidents of battery, fighting, and threat/intimidation. At the close of the 2003-04 school year, there was also a change in administration at Chattahoochee Elementary with both administrators from Chattahoochee High being transferred to lead the elementary school. Neither new administrator was as well-grounded in the CHAMPS philosophy and components as the former elementary administrators who had both been a part of the school-wide decision to adopt CHAMPS in 2002.

Specifically, the evaluation focused on the following questions:

1. Is there a positive change in behavior and attitudes among students in the program?
2. Is there a positive change in behavior and attitudes among teachers in the program?
3. How is the program being implemented?

Past evaluation reports have included as a measure of student and teacher attitudes data from a nationally validated Effective Schools survey that the district had selected the Effective Schools survey because of its use by the state of Florida for climate assessment in low performing schools, It had been administered in all Gadsden County schools. One of its components relates to a “Safe and Orderly Climate for Learning.” Since it is already administered to all Gadsden students, and it would not necessitate an additional instrument’s administration, it was selected as one instrument to be utilized in examining changes in attitudes among students and teachers. The assessment is comprised of 19 questions that determine if the school has an “orderly, purposeful atmosphere which is free from the threat of physical harm... (and) reflects students’ involvement in learning.” Its data were compared for the school years in which it was utilized. However, no data was available for use during the 2004-05 school year.

Teacher interviews, and classroom and general school common area observations were also used to examine implementation of the program and to identify strengths upon which to build in implementation and barriers to successful implementation.

The findings from the study were as follows:

- 1. There remains an exigent need in the district for a comprehensive, district-wide approach to creating safe, orderly campuses for students and staff.**
2. Although in the 2003-04 school year, **the CHAMPS program, implemented at Chattahoochee Elementary School and Chattahoochee High School appeared to have contributed to a decrease in incidents of battery, fighting, and threat/intimidation,** and those results were sustained in the 2004-05 school year, the relationship between the results is tenuous, based on classroom and common area observations and interviews with staff.
3. **CHAMPS, as currently implemented is ineffective at Chattahoochee Elementary School.**

Significant recommendations for future action relating to the program and its implementation are:

- 1. Consider adopting a uniform approach district-wide to teach students expectations for behavior, create unity of approach throughout school staffs and campuses, and create a common language with which to discuss behavioral expectations with students and staffs.** The approach must have monitoring as a fundamental part of its implementation or it, too, will not reap the desired results. This will also create a common language with which to discuss behavioral expectations with students and staffs.
- 2. When adopted, ensure that training and planning time occur during the summer for full implementation school-wide at the beginning of the school year.**
- 3. Regardless of the approach to uniform, district-wide behavioral expectations that is chosen, ensure that training and planning time occur during the summer for full implementation school-wide at the beginning of the school year.**
- 4. When a program is selected, develop an induction process that ensures that all administrators know what it should look like in schools, how to observe its presence, how to provide feedback to teachers, and that all new staff receive immediate training in its elements so that the entire staff remains consistent in expectations and application.** An induction process will assist them in understanding the purpose, processes, and protocols of such programs so that every staff member at the school is conversant with it and applies it uniformly across the campus as well as in every classroom.
- 5. Schools' and the district's selected approach to student behavior must also entail training teachers in strategies to negate misbehavior among students who repeatedly disrupt the learning climate for other students.**

CHAMPS: A Positive and Proactive Approach to Classroom Management

Final Evaluation Report

Program Implementation in Gadsden County 2004-2005 School Year

INTRODUCTION

CHAMPS was initially implemented during the 2002-03 school year at Chattahoochee Elementary School. It was selected because no in-service training in the district is mandatory, contributing, thus far, to a “shotgun” approach to creating any semblance of consistency in an approach to discipline. The hope was that, if found effective at the district’s most challenged school, other principals would willingly adopt it, leading to a consistent, pro-active approach to discipline district-wide. In fact, Chattahoochee Elementary’s initial success after one semester of implementation led the administration of Chattahoochee High School to adopt it for use with its faculty and students during the 2003-04 school year. Due to the fact that no other schools in Gadsden County had demographics in any respect similar to those in the community of Chattahoochee, discussion at the district level led to a decision not to use other schools for comparative purposes as there were felt to be no similarities from which to draw conclusions regarding program success. Near the end of the 2003-04 school year, even before a full year of implementation, Chattahoochee High School was closed, making evaluation of the impact of the program on that school’s students and staff questionable despite an apparent positive effect.

PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

The evaluation was two-fold: first, to assess the effectiveness of CHAMPS in meeting its objectives of changing student and teacher attitudes and behaviors. Secondly, it was to identify implementation strengths and barriers to improve implementation and program success.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The evaluation addressed program effectiveness and implementation.

General and specific evaluation questions were:

1. Is there a positive change in behavior and attitudes among students in the program as measured by the Effective Schools Survey and classroom observations?
2. Is there a decline in referrals to the office/counselor?
3. Is there a positive change in behavior and attitudes among teachers in the program as measured by the Effective Schools Survey and classroom observations and teacher interviews?
 - a. Are classrooms consistently structured using CHAMPS language and expectations for student behavior during activities/transitions?
 - b. Do teachers proactively respond to responsible student behavior rather than reacting to misbehavior?
 - c. Do teachers respond briefly, calmly and consistently to student behaviors?
4. How is the program being implemented?
 - a. Which components of the CHAMPS training were implemented consistently across classrooms?
 - b. What administrative actions contribute to or deter effective implementation?
 - c. What are common implementation strategies that teachers experiencing reduced disciplinary referrals and/or improved student achievement are using?

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

All four questions were examined using interviews of instructional staff, classroom observations and examination of student discipline data provided by the district and Effective Schools survey data regarding school climate.

Staff Interviews

Teachers were interviewed regarding four general topics:

- Training needs,
- Comparative observations between each year's level of CHAMPS implementation,

- Support for CHAMPS existing/needed in the school, and
- Needs that would improve the level of CHAMPS implementation to achieve the staff's goals in selecting it as a means of managing student behavior.

Interviews were conducted with CES staff in January of 2005 and again in May, 2005. No administrators attended the grade level or individual teacher interviews to possibly influence staff expressions of opinion. Subsequent to staff interviews, the evaluator met with administrative representatives to share observations and make verbal suggestions for more efficient, effective implementation as well as following up with them and the district SDFS Coordinator in person and in writing.

Formal and Informal Observations

Throughout the year, the evaluator and school administration agreed upon proposed dates with the evaluator meeting with school administrators early in the mornings prior to conducting classroom and common area observations in order to be apprised of special circumstances. Observations typically lasted between 20 minutes and an hour per class. Students and staff were observed during instruction, at lunch, in the halls, in special areas, immediately upon return from lunch and special areas and during student arrival and dismissal. On observation days, teachers were also often informally interviewed. Subsequent to classroom observations in January and in May, notes were either left on teachers' desks or in their boxes, identifying excellent practices and making suggestions that would improve classroom management using CHAMPS procedures.

The observer visited all regular classrooms but one and one special area class. No classes with substitutes in them were observed. In most cases, observations lasted at least 20 minutes per classroom. Hallways were also periodically observed throughout the day as was the cafeteria during two lunch periods. The January day of observations was the first day of a new schedule for both teachers and students. This should be taken into account in drawing strong conclusions from observation notes about teacher-student interaction. However, observations in classes of teachers who were trained in CHAMPS and used it last year are valid as instruction in CHAMPS expectations and processes should be the same from one year to the next.

In quite a few classes, during the observation, there was no need for the teacher to use the CHAMPS process as classroom management was excellent due to the teacher's having students actively engaged in instruction and/or holding their attention during instructional presentations. Instructional activities were already underway in several classes when the observer walked in and students were quiet and attentive, whether they were in a group setting or working independently or in small groups at their desks. In one case, the electricity went out for several minutes and the teacher *immediately* changed from the planned activity that was occurring prior to the outage to an active review of reading terms and probing of student understanding by having them provide examples after defining the words. Absolutely no instructional time was lost despite the electrical disruption and no student misbehavior occurred.

Issues teachers identified as standing in the way of more effective implementation were communicated verbally face-to-face with school administrators as well as in writing after the meeting. One common impediment that teachers identified, a lack of follow-up on the part of administration subsequent to referrals to the office was also reflected in administrators' concern that proper documentation did not uniformly accompany students referred for administrative action. The evaluator also met with the SDFS Coordinator to discuss additional training and/or materials needs and to plan subsequent evaluation steps.

One of the standards of a successful student behavior program is consistency of application across the board from classroom to classroom and among administration and teachers, as well as in common areas of a school. All staff must use the same language and expectations and apply them consistently to all students wherever they are and throughout the school day. These characteristics were what the staff sought in its decision to adopt CHAMPS as a student behavior management approach several years ago. In 2003-04, Chattahoochee Elementary School had made tremendous progress toward all staff applying uniform, agreed upon expectations and consequences to all students in all areas of the school at all hours of the day. That was true despite some disagreement regarding specific aspects of procedures. However, because staff members were all committed to the program, those who disagreed with particular specifics of the

agreements overlooked personal opinions to enforce the generally agreed upon expectations and procedures.

This year, when school began, teachers report that CHAMPS posters had been posted in the halls and cafeteria. However, few currently still remain and reports varied regarding enforcement and student compliance with CHAMPS expectations for both the hall and the cafeteria. Some teachers noted that the halls are relatively consistent and that teachers and paras are using expectations in the cafeteria with students responding appropriately. Another observed that custodial and lunchroom staff had told her they saw things more controlled with CHAMPS and more consistency with the program and its protocols, but noted that practice is still needed.

While staff had agreed last year to play music in the cafeteria to soothe the students while they ate, there is currently no music being played. Reports also varied regarding level of use of CHAMPS in the cafeteria. Some teachers said that they still admit only five students at a time into the cafeteria line and they require their students to use all of the formerly agreed upon cafeteria behavior and dismissal procedures. Others noted that use of procedures is not consistent. During evaluation visits, no evidence was observed in the cafeteria of the use of formerly agreed upon CHAMPS procedures.

In general, teachers noted a difference this year in hallway lines that were orderly last year in contrast to this year's less orderly hall behavior that was witnessed during evaluation visits. Some interviewees questioned why, since many of the same teachers are currently on duty as were trained and implementing CHAMPS in common areas last year, they are not holding students accountable for agreed upon behavior this year. Similarly, one teacher stated that "we CHAMP and CHAMP and CHAMP and kids don't do what we expect." She then postulated that this could be because expectations are not being reinforced in other places in the school. A likely contributing factor to that situation is that not all staff has been fully trained. Another hypothesized that teachers have not bought into it, but see it as one more thing to do. Considering the level of implementation last year compared to this with many of the same teachers in the school, buy-in does not appear to be the cause of lowered levels of implementation this year, since there was more uniform use of it last year with many of the same

teachers. Rather, the issue seems to be a lack of prioritization of CHAMPS implementation for consistency across the school as a result of less administrative emphasis.

Training was offered to new teachers during the fall term, but only four took advantage of it. Others had had training in some of the modules so saw no need to attend a repeat of training they had already received. Regardless, they saw its potential, if implemented consistently and all staff members were trained in it. Those new teachers who did participate were also enthusiastic about its potential to bring order to the school with one experienced teacher new to the school saying that she saw it as a good program that used lay terms, was simple to understand, and provided visual aids to help those young students who can't yet read. One benefit of the program noted when students learn the program and teachers use it effectively was that the visuals of the charts give teachers something to refer to quickly and without loss of instructional time that occurs when teachers continually correct students with words. One new teacher reported that she had had behavior problems earlier this year but saw students now taking responsibility for their own behavior. Newly trained teachers also said that they had learned the cafeteria procedures during the training offered in the fall. Another possible contributing factor to reported inconsistency is that, with the addition of sixth grade to the school, teachers were moved and some grade level teachers were separated, preventing them from working together easily on discipline issues including CHAMPS implementation and planning.

Some aspects of CHAMPS still remain common across the school. Many teachers noted that they hear references to voice levels often around the school. Another reported that students participating in an early morning program arrive in class knowing what to do without problems or disorder.

A notable difference in school environment and CHAMPS implementation indicators was seen in visits throughout the 2004-05 school year. During all observations on the campus and in specific classrooms, fewer posters were seen compared to during the 2003-04 school year; halls were disorderly with teachers raising their voices instead of using the voice level signal; cafeteria procedures were not uniform; and even teachers who had well-conceived, comprehensive

CHAMPS posters did not reference them during student misbehavior; nor did teachers hold students accountable for complying with them, for the most part.

Support Needed/Provided to Make the Program More Effective

Support teachers commented on that they felt would enable the school to create a climate more conducive to student learning fell into four categories:

- consistency,
- student services,
- parental awareness of the program, and
- professional development (see below).

Several teachers were concerned that some misbehavior was arising from the fact that students are not receiving sufficient counseling (groups, classroom counseling), and that ESE referrals were not being processed quickly enough to meet their needs in a timely manner. A continuing concern expressed was that a structure needs to be in place with a discipline plan that is supported and followed for every teacher and child. There is a perceived need for sure and timely consequences that are consistently applied to all when students are sent for disciplinary action (concrete consequences with consistent application). Teachers repeatedly said that every teacher must adhere to it and administration must monitor and provide follow-up to ensure consistency; they noted that this needs to be a helping tool, not a critique of classroom management.

Both teachers and administrators reported that there is inconsistency in student referrals from classes in terms of communications. Teacher interviews reflected that teachers admit that they are not consistently doing their part in enforcing CHAMPS elements that they had previously enforced; however, they also expressed a concern that they were not routinely informed regarding what happened after students were referred to the office. Administrators provided the insight that teachers themselves are not complying with processes that have been established to create a climate conducive to learning. Paperwork often does not accompany students sent to the office, leaving administrators to have to either guess, solicit information from students (questionably reliable), or take time to call teachers to solicit background on the referral. When

all employees use established processes and paperwork designed to decrease student misbehavior, consistency will become much more universal across the school.

Formal outreach to the community for volunteers to help in classes and to bring parents into the equation to address student misbehavior needs to be a concerted effort. This is an observation that has been made during interviews every year and continues to be a strong need in the eyes of the staff.

Professional Development

CHS teachers who transferred to CES with the sixth grade this year had training through module 4 or 5, but have had no additional training this year, as the training that was provided began with Module 1. They did not attend because they did not feel that they needed a refresher but said they would like to complete the training. When asked about receiving additional training, teachers said that they felt that the best time for additional training would be on Saturday mornings.

An additional stated training need was for teachers to be taught skills to use with the students who are repeat offenders who, again, need to be handled and dealt with firmly. When such consistency occurs, they said that it would send the message to other students that there are consequences for misbehavior. Teachers noted that the current perceived lack of consistency communicates, instead, to students that there are no consequences for misbehavior.

Suggestions Resulting from Observations/Interviews that were Shared with Administration

- Administration should meet with staff and remind them of paperwork processes as well as steps that need to be taken in classrooms prior to referral to the office. They should ensure the teachers that when they (teachers) do their part in maintaining order in the school and enforcing CHAMPS processes, they will be supported by administrative actions and communications.
- As agreed, administration should constantly keep CHAMPS before the staff to raise awareness as well as reinforce those who are complying with processes the staff has established.

- Once CHAMPS elements are again consistently enforced across the school and more than voice levels are common elements, professional development relative to handling repeat offenders should be provided for all staff.

Suggestions offered by teachers and administrators during interviews that would improve consistency and fuller implementation of the program are:

- Invite someone to model a lesson, or another teacher to talk to the faculty about their experiences using CHAMPS and to answer specific questions,
- Get a video segment of the “real thing in action” on classrooms instead of training videos,
- Set up visitations so teachers can see the program in action in a real school setting where it has been used for a period of time and get tips and other ideas from those using it,
- Provide an external contact person for teachers to network with for ideas,
- Get visuals of posters or activities from other schools and suggestions for centers regarding what to include or not,
- Develop uniform rules across the grades so that, for instance, when children are in SRA in each grade, they have the same understanding of expectations; the belief in this suggestion is that, as a school, we should be able to develop consistent rules for most activities (i.e. hands-on, SRA, main subjects, and in pull-out programs). If that were to occur, then once students learned expectations at one grade, there would be little need for re-teaching in higher grades,
- Set aside time on a Saturday for teachers or paras to make posters and laminate them for teachers so that they could more fully CHAMP different activities such as lining up, transitions from one activity to another, etc.,
- Decide on rules together and have someone print them to post everywhere to save teacher time,
- The school needs to reach out to parents to help them understand the program and its expectations and to secure buy in for consistency across the board,
- Get videos for students to be able to see other kids using CHAMPS, during transitions, etc.; this should be available for check out for them to take home to watch with their parents,

- Teachers need to follow procedures and use proper forms for referrals to the office so that administrators know the background for which students are referred in order to deal with discipline appropriately with a minimal loss of time; in return, notice of disposition of the referral needs to be communicated to teachers after action.

Effective Schools Survey

In 2001, when the Florida Department of Education decided to use the nationally validated Effective Schools survey as a measure of school climate in D and F schools, Gadsden County decided to use it in all of its schools as a consistent, reliable measure of school climate and aspects relating to school effectiveness research. One component of the survey is evaluation of a safe, orderly learning environment. That part of the Effective Schools survey has been one of the evaluative elements used in examination of progress relating to student and teacher attitudes regarding school safety and the impact that the CHAMPS program may have had on it at Chattahoochee Elementary School. However, the survey was not administered during the 2004-05 school year, so no comparative data are available.

DATA ANALYSIS

Student Discipline Data from the School Crime and Violence Report, the School Environmental Survey Incident Report, and the Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey

Two measures on the Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey (FYSAS) are indicative of issues related to student behavior in Gadsden County Schools. Of Florida's 67 school districts, Gadsden County students reported one of their highest percentile scores for the community risk factor scale *Community Disorganization*. According to the FYSAS report, this means that students are less likely to become involved with prosocial organizations and positive role models in their communities. Additionally, the report reflects one of the lowest percentile scores for the reward-based protective factor scale *School Rewards for Prosocial Involvement*. This means that "schools need to provide additional positive feedback to students, to help them form prosocial bonds in their schools." Compared to national statistics, Gadsden youth are reporting delinquent behavior that may negatively affect their lives and the community as a whole. The FYSAS further reports trends between 2000 and 2004 of an increase among middle school students in attacking someone with intent to harm (2000 16%; 2004, 19.6%) and an increase among middle

school students in suspensions from 30.9% in 2000 to 33.9% in 2004. At the high school level, students report an increase over time in carrying a handgun from 6% in 2000 to 6.4% in 2004.

Incidents of battery, fighting and threat/intimidation were selected as indicative of the district's/school's progress toward creating a safe, orderly learning environment. An examination of comparative data from 2001-2004 must take into account a change in the district's configuration of its schools that occurred at the end of both the 2002-03 and the 2003-04 school years. At the end of the 2002-03 school year, several schools were closed and/or merged with others, requiring data analysis to reflect the transfer of student data to new or pre-existing schools from those that were no longer in existence for the 2003-04 school year. Additionally, the closing of Chattahoochee High School prior to the end of the 2003-04 school year apart from the planned changes that took place earlier in the year exacerbated both evaluation and data analysis.

Table 1 shows a comparison of incidents of battery, fighting and threat/intimidation in the district during the school years 2001-04 per 1,000 students. The table shows:

- An increase in those three years of 1.93 incidents of battery per 1,000;
- A more dramatic and troubling increase between 2001-02 and 2003-04 of 10.34 incidents per 1,000 of fighting among district students; and
- An increase in those same years of threat/intimidation from 13.77 to 20.14 per 1,000, for a total increase of 6.37/1,000.

TABLE 1
Comparison of Selected Incidents Per 1000 of Violence
In the District Between School Years 2001-02 and 2004-05

Total Offenses Per 1000 Students Per Category				Total change from 2001-02 to 2003-04
Offense	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	
Battery	3.14	5.18	5.07	+1.93
Fighting	86.03	90.01	96.37	+10.34
Threat/Intimidation	13.77	25.57	20.14	+6.37

Source: School Environmental Survey Incident Report

Table 2 shows a comparison of total numbers of incidents of battery, fighting, and threat/intimidation at Chattahoochee Elementary School between the 2002-03 school year and 2004-05. It reflects that between the 2002-03 and the 2004-05 school years:

- There was a reduction in number of incidents of battery from 11 to 0,
- There was a reduction in number of incidents of fighting from 34 to 11, although 11 represents an increase from the 2003-04 school year, and
- There was a reduction in number of incidents of threat and intimidation from 9 to 2.

The table further reflects the following changes at Chattahoochee Elementary School in percentages of each type of incident compared to the district during the three years:

- A decrease in battery from 23% to 0%,
- A decrease in fighting from 6% to 2%, and
- A decrease in threat/intimidation from 5% to 2%.

An examination of comparative data on selected violence incidents between the 2002-03 and 2004-05 school years displayed in Table 2 shows decreases at CES in both the number and the percentage of incidents of battery, fighting and threat/intimidation between 2002-03 and 2004-05.

TABLE 2

**Comparison of 2002-03 through 2004-05 School Year
School Crime and Violence Incident Data
for Chattahoochee Elementary School**

Offense	2002-03		2003-04		2004-05	
	Chattahoochee Elementary School	District	Chattahoochee Elementary School	District	Chattahoochee Elementary School	District
Battery	11	47	1	30		28
Fighting	34	576	7	450	11	481
Threat/Intimidation	9	193	2	106	2	128
Total Incidents	54	816	10	586	13	637

Source: School Crime and Violence Report, Gadsden County Schools.

Data in Table 3 depicts decreases district-wide in numbers of incidents of battery, fighting and threat/intimidation between 2002-03 but increases in both fighting and threat/intimidation from 2003-04 to 2004-05. Between 2002-03 and 2004-05, numbers of incidents in each category in the district decreased as follows:

- Battery from 47 incidents to 28, a decrease of 19 incidents,
- Fighting from 576 to 481, a decrease of 95; however, 481 represents an increase of 31 from the 2003-04 school year,
- Threat/intimidation from 193 to 128, a decrease of 65,
- For a total district-wide decrease in incidents of battery, fighting, and threat/intimidation from 816 during the three years between 2002-03 to 637 in 2004-05.

However, the only selected act of violence in which the district sustained a decrease from the 2002-03 school year through the end of the 2004-05 school year was battery, with fighting and threat/intimidation both rising from the 2003-04 school year to the 2004-05 year. Furthermore, while a district-wide decrease in total incidents of battery, fighting, and threat/intimidation did occur between the 2002-03 year and the 2004-05 year from 816 to 637, the total number of offenses rose between the 2003-04 and the 2004-05 years from 586 to 637, an increase of 51 incidents of violence in district schools, indicating a reversal of progress during the 2004-05 school year.

**TABLE 3
Comparison of Selected Incidents of Violence
In the District between School Years 2002-03 and 2003-04**

Total Offenses per Category						
Offense	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	Change from 2002-03 to 2003-04	Change from 2003-04 to 2004-05	Change from 2002-03 to 2004-05
Battery	47	30	28	-17	-2	-19
Fighting	576	450	481	-126	+31	-95
Threat/Intimidation	193	106	218	-87	+112	+25
Total Offenses Each Year	816	586	727	-230	+141	-89

Source: School Crime and Violence Report, Gadsden County Schools

Table 4 depicts the changes in incidents of battery, fighting, and threat/intimidation among district elementary schools specifically and secondary school incidents in general from 2002-03 to 2004-05. It shows that:

- There were 65 fewer incidents of fighting in district elementary schools compared to its secondary schools,
- At the elementary level, there were 20 more incidents of threat/intimidation than in secondary schools,
- While there were 192 fewer elementary incidents than secondary of battery, fighting, and threat/intimidation in the 2002-03 school year, there were only 50 fewer in district elementary schools than secondary schools in the 2003-04 school year, and
- There were 51 fewer incidents of battery, fighting, and threat/intimidation in district elementary schools than secondary schools in the most recent 2004-05 school year.

TABLE 4
Comparison of Selected Incidents of Violence in All Gadsden Elementary Schools
2002-03 through 2004-05

	CES	Gretna	GEMS	GWM	HES	GES	St. John	Stewart St.	Total Elem Offenses	Total 2^{ndary} Offenses
Battery 2004-05				8	2			1	11	17
Fighting 2004-05	11	2		46	64	17	17	51	208	273
Threat/Intimidation 2004-05	2			23	24	4	4	17	74	54
Total Offenses 2004-05	13	2	0	77	90	21	21	69	293	344
Total Offenses 2003-04	10	5	0	52	102	14	15	70	268	318
Total Offenses 2002-03	54	13	0	32	95	48	23	47	312	504

Source: School Crime and Violence Report, Gadsden County Schools.

- CES Chattahoochee Elementary School
- GWM George W. Munroe Elementary
- HES Havana Elementary School
- GES Greensboro Elementary School
- Stew St. Stewart Street Elementary
- GEMS Gadsden Elementary Magnet School

FINDINGS

- 1. Although in the 2003-04 school year, the CHAMPS program, implemented at Chattahoochee Elementary School and Chattahoochee High School appeared to have contributed to a decrease in incidents of battery, fighting, and threat/intimidation, and those results were sustained in the 2004-05 school year, the relationship between the results is tenuous, based on classroom and common area observations and interviews with staff.**
- 2. There remains an exigent need in the district for a comprehensive, district-wide approach to creating safe, orderly campuses for students and staff from PreKindergarten through high school.**

Although there has been an overall decrease across the district in violent incidents in schools, three elementary schools are increasing in the number of incidents. Furthermore, although Havana Elementary School decreased between the 2003-04 and 2004-05 school year, total numbers of incidents remained at a level near that of the 2002-03 school year. The number of fights incurred there in the past year (64) and at Stewart Street (51) were more than at both West Gadsden (54) and Havana Middle (46) and only slightly less than at East Gadsden (65). At George W. Munroe (46), numbers of fights were still equal to those at Havana Middle (46).

Those three elementary numbers represent 1/3 of the total fights in district schools, less than the percent of fights in middle (31%) and high schools (25%).

- 3. CHAMPS, as currently implemented is ineffective at Chattahoochee Elementary School.**

Although student behavioral data appear to demonstrate that the program is achieving the desired results for which it was adopted, little consistency exists among teachers in implementation of CHAMPS. No common areas demonstrate wide-spread use of the

program to either monitor or control student behavior. Only when there is a concerted effort on the part of school administration to see that all faculty are trained, that the language is embedded in the school's culture, that parents understand how they can reinforce CHAMPS concepts at home, and that teachers' and other staff's implementation is monitored for consistent application, will the program become effective.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. The school staff should have an extensive discussion regarding continuation of the program and agree to common practices and monitoring should they decide to continue it.**

If they all choose to continue CHAMPS, then they need to set specific expectations and monitoring procedures that will ensure consistent application by all staff in all roles at the school. **Safe and Drug-Free Schools funds cannot be used another year for its implementation as it has been used for three years without demonstrable success in changing the school climate.**

- 2. Consider adopting a uniform approach district-wide to teach students expectations for behavior, create unity of approach throughout school staffs and campuses, and create a common language with which to discuss behavioral expectations with students and staffs. The approach must have monitoring as a fundamental part of its implementation or it, too, will not reap the desired results.**

Research demonstrates and common sense upholds that students learn best in climates where they feel safe, secure and free of threat. School effectiveness research finds that one of the seven characteristics of a highly effective school is maximized time on task, but that only approximately 28-56% of time in the elementary schools studied was devoted to academic learning time. When teachers have to spend time correcting student or dealing with fights, they cannot maximize student learning time. Academic achievement suffers. In schools where adults make a commitment to reinforce the kind

of behavior they desire from students and monitor the results, the climate improves with a concomitant increase in student achievement due to students being more engaged in learning and less time being spent on re-directing student misbehavior.

Beyond a discipline plan/code of student conduct, Gadsden County has not had a consistently applied district-wide approach to classroom management and proactive prevention of behavior problems. The result has been differential application and interpretation of the code of student conduct. Data throughout the evaluation report, taken directly from the data that the district itself maintains and its students' report (in the FYSAS), demonstrate clearly that that approach has not been effective in deterring incidents of violence in its schools, but in fact, incidents have escalated between last year and this. The highest number of incidents continues to occur in fighting with the number of incidents per 1,000 students increasing on a yearly basis.

3. Regardless of the approach to uniform, district-wide behavioral expectations that is chosen, ensure that training and planning time occur during the summer for full implementation school-wide at the beginning of the school year.

Neither of the two original CHAMPS schools completed their staff training until the end of the first semester of the intended year of implementation. As a result, even though teacher anecdotal observations and classroom visits originally reflected a positive impact in some respects on the school or classroom climate and student behavior, those changes were far from universal and did not result those first semesters in the kind of student behavioral changes demonstrated by CES during its first full year of implementation, 2003-04. Nor were those results sustained over time with new staff not being provided/taking advantage of training that would enable them to implement it effectively despite their desire to do so. District data trends on battery, fighting and threat/intimidation demonstrate that a full scale approach is needed to deter the types of severe, violent behavior found in many district schools and to create a learning environment conducive to high academic achievement.

4. **When a program is selected, develop an induction process that ensures that all administrators know what it should look like in schools, how to observe its presence, how to provide feedback to teachers, and that all new staff receive immediate training in its elements so that the entire staff remains consistent in expectations and application.**

One of the primary contributing factors to the failure of CHAMPS to maintain its momentum and universality at Chattahoochee Elementary is that new staff, including instructional, non-instructional, and administrative were not fully indoctrinated into the principles of effectiveness of program implementation, so were not conversant with how to implement or support it. Another key issue was a lack of emphasis and monitoring of program aspects to ensure uniform application school-wide.

5. **Schools' and the district's selected approach to student behavior must also entail training teachers in strategies to negate misbehavior among students who repeatedly disrupt the learning climate for other students.**

This concern has been voiced by teachers throughout the 3 years of implementation of the CHAMPS program. Regardless of a consistent, uniform "program" or approach to classroom management, there remain students for whom additional strategies will be necessitated. Teachers embrace the concept of uniformity, but also repeatedly request additional suggestions to enable them to minimize disruptions by repeat offenders.