

Title: A Retrospective Analysis by Students, Parents, and Teachers
Regarding the Efficacy of a Transitional First-Grade Program

Author: P. Emery D'Arcangelo

Dissertation Chairperson: Dr. Mary Renck Jalongo

Dissertation Committee Members: Dr. Robert Millward
Dr. Cahty Kaufman

This study is a retrospective analysis of an alternative placement program known as transitional first grade. The primary purpose of this study is to gain an understanding of the efficacy of one particular transitional first grade program.

Three stakeholder groups were polled for their retrospective perceptions regarding experiences with a transitional first grade program. The groups affected by the program included: (1) students who have spent a year in the alternative program referred to as transitional first grade, (2) a group of parents whose children were former participants in the program, and (3) classroom teachers who were responsible for instruction and closely associated with this alternative program. Interpretive information gathered from historical documents provided an additional and important piece that was imperative for analyzing the effectiveness of the alternative program.

This study investigated the efficacy of one particular transitional first grade program from a variety of perspectives. Although this study identified some success in terms of parental and teacher support for the program and students who participated in the program who earned high school diplomas, the overall contributions of this program remains questionable.

The study identified a number of concerns associated with the transitional first grade program. These concerns are: an inconsistent criterion for student placement into the program, low self esteem of the participants in the program, an increased school absentee rate for this population, tendencies of transient characteristics of this population, an increased possibility of

premature withdrawal from school, and a low high school graduation rate. Although the school district in which this research study was conducted used its resources in a good faith effort to address a problem with a particular student population, the efficacy of the program remains doubtful.