

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

National attention is being focused on at-risk students who are failing to complete their education and achieve marketable skills. The outward signs of distress and failure manifested by at-risk students are numerous. They include family and personal problems, alcohol and drug abuse, teenage pregnancy, attempted suicide, street crime, school truancy, and dropping out of school (DeNofa, 1993). Almost 500,000 young people drop out of public schools each year, and the number is greater among minority groups in urban schools and students from low socioeconomic backgrounds (Griffin, 1993). These half million youngsters who leave school early every year are part of an estimated seven million youngsters who engage in high risk behaviors that include delinquency, use of illegal substances, teenage sex that might lead to pregnancy, and lagging behind in school (Wehlage, et al., 1989).

Who specifically is at risk of dropping out of school? What features, traits, and characteristics help to identify at-risk youngsters? Exhibited school-related factors include: low academic achievement, grade retention,

suspensions, poor attendance, and low self-esteem (Griffin, 1993). These risk factors are more prevalent in urban areas than in other areas (Chubb & Moe, 1990). Often urban educators are faced with the challenges of educating children living in poverty (U.S. Department of Education, 1990). The greatest concern is for students living in poverty who often experience physical and emotional handicaps, lack of health care, poor nutrition, difficult family conditions, and inner city neighborhoods (Hodgkinson, Duttz, & Obarakpor, 1992). A comparison of the national, state, and local statistics of the leading risk factors which may lead to school failure indicates that urban schools have a high concentration of at-risk students and, therefore, need to address these risk factors (Sirotnik, 1991). Black Americans have a high school dropout rate near 15 percent while white Americans have a dropout rate slightly over 10 percent; nearly 90 percent of white Americans can read at the intermediate level of proficiency, whereas the figure is about 65 percent for black Americans; and writing performance and mathematics achievement for whites are above average, whereas those for black Americans are below average. Because nearly three quarters of all black Americans populate the inner cities of this nation,

all of the comparisons are magnified in urban school statistics (Sirotnik, 1991). These students are also at a great disadvantage when they consider career selection and any advanced educational opportunity.

The Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Work Skills (1991) was asked to examine the demands of the workplace and determine if students are being properly prepared to satisfy those demands. This report has determined that more than half the students who leave school do so without the knowledge or foundation required to obtain a good job.

Schools and employers need to do a better job of working together and preparing these young people for meaningful work. To achieve their desired new world-class standards by the target date of 2000, SCANS will, in the future, make efforts to:

examine how to create an assessment system that helps students understand what they have to learn and certifies that they have mastered the competencies so that employers and colleges will honor their record of high performance; consider the implications of the SCANS findings for curriculum development, school organization, teacher training,

and instructional materials and technology; and help the administration establish the public/private partnership called for in the education strategy "America 2000". (Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills, 1991, p. 12)

The Chesapeake school division is implementing a program that does much of what is recommended in the SCANS report. This program is known as "Employment Plus" (McDonough, 1993). Employment Plus is an intervention program which provides certain students with an educational option in place of a traditional high school program. Employment Plus consists of three periods of general educational development instruction and job-related skills. During the afternoon, the students are required to be employed for a minimum of 15 hours per week.

The Employment Plus Program focuses on the curriculum used in acquiring the necessary skills to achieve the required level of competency to pass the General Education Development Test (GED), thus allowing these potential dropouts to leave school with a high school equivalency certificate.

## Statement of the Problem

The Chesapeake School Board has mandated that the school system evaluate all alternative programs. The Chesapeake Public Schools Employment Plus GED Program is one of these alternative programs and comes under this evaluation mandate. Resources are expended on this program, and there is no evidence the resources are being used wisely. This study is an evaluation of the Chesapeake Public Schools Employment Plus GED Program and was guided by the following questions:

How well is the Chesapeake Public Schools Employment Plus GED Program meeting the stated goals?

Sub-questions:

1. What proportion of the students completed in the years 1991-97 all five parts of the GED test at a passing level? (For the remainder of the questions, the research was for the school year 1993-94.
2. To what extent did the program change the behavior of the students?
3. What pre-employment skills of the students were developed as a result of participation in the program?
4. What employment skills of the students were developed as a result of participation in the program?
  - (a) Once the students completed the program, what kind of work did they do?

- (b) How many students continued their education at a higher level?
5. What basic living skills of the students were improved as a result of participation in the program?
  6. To what extent did the program provide hope for the students to graduate from high school?

### **Purpose of Study**

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the Chesapeake Public Schools Employment Plus GED Program by determining whether the program is sufficiently beneficial and cost effective to command additional funds. The Chesapeake school division has to make choices about how best to use its resources for the good of the community, society, and at-risk children. An evaluation of the Chesapeake Public Schools Employment Plus Program will assist Chesapeake school officials in determining whether the investment in the Employment Plus Program warrants continuation or modification.

### **Definitions**

At-risk Students	For the purpose of determining the proportion of students completing
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all five parts of the GED, an at-risk student was one who was a member of the Employment Plus Program from 1991-97. For all other purposes, an at-risk student was one who participated in the Employment Plus Program for the school year 1993-94.

Alternative Program

For this study, the alternative program is the Employment Plus Program in the Chesapeake (VA) school system.

Academic Achievement

Academic achievement is that level of education that provides the student with the skills and knowledge necessary to master the level of competency required to successfully pass the GED test. The GED deals with five content areas: (1) science, (2) mathematics, (3) social studies, (4) writing skills, and (5) arts and literature. The measure used in this study is the proportion of at-risk students passing all five parts of the GED by the end of their second year in the program. These data were compiled for 1991 through 1997.

Pre-employment Skills

These are the skills necessary to get a job as stated in the Employment Plus curriculum guide. Information on these skills is located in Appendix A.

Employment Skills

Employment skills are those skills necessary to maintain a job and to advance in a chosen occupational field. These skills are listed in the Employment Plus curriculum guide. Information on these skills is located in Appendix B.

Basic Living Skills	These are the skills necessary for everyday living in the adult world as stated in the Employment Plus curriculum guide. Information on these skills is located in Appendix C.
Behavior	For the purpose of this study, behavior is the conduct that the students exhibited while in the Employment Plus Program as compared to behavior that was exhibited before enrolling in the Employment Plus Program.
Hope	For the purpose of this study, hope is that measure of the student's inner feeling that they were given another opportunity to graduate. This was determined from student responses to questions 4 and 5 on the Student Interview Questionnaire in Appendix D.

### **Limitations**

This study is limited to the evaluation of one program designed for at-risk high school students in the Chesapeake public schools. There are two sets of data: (1) the proportion of students who completed all five parts of the GED test at a passing level in the years 1991-97; (2) for the remainder of the questions, the research was for the school year 1993-94, the first year all of the high schools had the program in effect. The program evaluation cannot be generalized to other high schools with intervention programs



for at-risk students.

### **Organization of the Study**

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter 1 includes the introduction, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, definition of terms, limitations, and the organization of the study. Chapter 2 is a review of the literature on effective programs for teaching at-risk students. Chapter 3 contains a description of the methodology for the evaluation of the Employment Plus Program. The analysis of the data and the findings are reported in Chapter 4, and Chapter 5 contain a summary, discussion, and recommendations that there will be a follow-up by the Employment Plus teachers on the employment or career status of the students after they have been out of the program for one year or more to show what the students are doing. Also, competencies should be recorded on competency sheets by the teacher for placement in the student's permanent record to show the number of competencies that the student passed.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

We live in a world of constant change, with unlimited opportunities for educational advancement. Yet, six hundred thousand students drop out of school every year (Potter, 1993). Twenty-five percent of eighteen year olds in the United States do not finish high school (Chalker, 1996). However, there are other options for some of these students to continue their education and secure a high school diploma or GED which increases the chance for success both in the workplace and throughout life (Morley, 1991).

One of the methods found to be effective in improving the educational outcome of many at-risk students has been alternative education (Quinn, 1991). Chalker (1996) identified four commonly accepted settings for alternative education programs: the separate alternative school, school-within-a-school, continuation school, and alternative classroom settings.

The alternative classroom is a self-contained classroom within a traditional school.

The school within a school is a specialized educational program within a traditional school.

The separate alternative school is a separate, self-contained educational facility using a non-traditional structure and strategies.

The continuation school is an evening program providing instruction to individuals no longer attending a traditional daytime school.

A good alternative school represents a carefully built community, intact instructional program, and a synchronized set of organizational arrangements (Raywid, 1994). Any effective alternative program that has existed over a long period of time should have the following ten key characteristics:

1. Size - School-programs are small enough to allow students to feel a part of a group, yet, large enough to provide necessary resources.
2. Site - Program site is the most important aspect in establishing an effective alternative school.
3. Curriculum - The alternative program curriculum should be student-centered, and instruction should be related to student's personal concerns-experiences.
4. Volunteerism - As much as possible, participation in the alternative program should be voluntary for both students and staff.
5. Participatory Decision Making - Both program and organization were designed by those who were going to operate them.
6. Separate Administrative Unit - The administrator must possess strong and stable leadership capabilities. The administrator must work with students and teachers to create a

sense of community that characterizes successful alternative programs.

7. Distinctive Mission and Family Atmosphere - The program must have a shared sense of purpose, a core set of values and common goals.
8. Flexible Teacher Roles and Program Autonomy - Because of the distinct mission of alternative programs and the concept of school-as-family, teachers, counselors, and administrators accept a much broader and more flexible role than teachers in traditional programs.
9. Access to Social Services - Because alternative programs often serve disruptive and disaffected students, arrangements should be made to provide students with access to Social Services on an as-needed basis (preferable, on the school site, if not, by referral).
10. Use of Technology - Because their need is greatest, students who attend alternative programs should have at least the same level of access to technology as do students who attend a traditional program.

Four programs that were successful in keeping the students in school are examined. They have documented success in areas measured in the Employment Plus Program. The components of these effective programs were detailed in an effort to identify the similarities to the Employment Plus GED Program. The researcher followed up on Natale's 1990 research article to obtain an update on the current status of the four school systems that were successful in keeping high school students in school. The Internet was

used to locate the sites and telephone calls were made to Colorado Springs, Colorado; Washoe County, Nevada; Renton, Washington; and Central York, Pennsylvania, school systems in May 1998. It was reported by all of the school systems that the programs were ongoing and continuously meeting with success. Additional literature about the programs was mailed to the researcher.

### **Successful Programs**

In Natale's (1990) research, four school systems show what they are doing to keep the students in school or get them back on a graduation path once they have dropped out. The four programs studied by Natale and Chesapeake's Employment Plus Program have many of the same characteristics:

1. Each school system has an alternative school for students who do not fit into a regular, traditional program.
2. The students reach their competency levels at their own pace.
3. The students have flexible scheduling that allows them to spend full or partial days at school.
4. The students are permitted to work while going to school.

### The Colorado Springs Program

The Colorado Springs Program was designed to provide help for potential dropouts and is known as the Educational Opportunity Program (E.O.P.), which is an umbrella title for several efforts. The largest component in E.O.P. is an alternative secondary school for students who do not fit into the regular high school. In 1990, 276 students attended the alternative school. Some attended simply because they needed to earn an extra credit or two to graduate.

The school does not use grades to assess students, rather competency levels are used to provide an assessment that allows students to move at their own pace. Flexible scheduling allows older students to spend full or partial days at school, giving them the option to hold jobs. An on-site nursery cares for students' children. The main ideas of the alternative school program are: (1) to put the accountability on the students, and (2) to keep the students' dignity intact. In 1989, 52 percent of the

program graduates went to work or into the military, and 48 percent continued their schooling.

One outgrowth of the Educational Opportunity Program is "Vision to Potential," a program for dropouts who have been out of school for one year or more. This program is funded jointly by federal and local governments. It also offers students a full-time academic schedule with guaranteed summer part-time work. Vision also offers rich incentives to students who remain in the program; one incentive is an all expense paid first year in college.

#### The Washoe County, Nevada, Program

The Washoe County School System has implemented a program to combat a dropout rate that approaches 25 percent (Natale, 1990). The Washoe County Schools have gone to WAR (Washoe At Risk); that is, a citizens' committee (the WAR Committee) has been charged with coming up with solutions to the dropout problem. The citizens' committee is only one anti-dropout weapon in the school system's arsenal. Among the others is Washoe County High School, an alternative program now available in 27 different locations, including churches and Y.M.C.A.'s.

The alternative programs are designed for students who are not doing well in a regular high school or who need a flexible school schedule so they can hold a job. The alternative program generally runs for a half day, with students progressing at their own rates. In 1989, 160 students graduated from the school.

The school system has also forged an agreement with businesses, which allows students to hold certain jobs only so long as they keep up their grades and school attendance. If they slip, the students get counseling from both the school and the employer. In addition, the Washoe County Schools have relaxed attendance standards. Washoe County had several attendance policies and were forcing many students out of school. The school system discovered that most students will stay in school if they know someone cares about what they are doing.

#### The Renton, Washington, Program

The Renton, Washington, Program is another successful program (Natale, 1990). Its dropout rate has been reduced from 16 to 12 percent by using a comprehensive prevention program that spans elementary to high school grades. On the



elementary level, school officials have boosted the number of guidance counselors at schools that enroll high numbers of at-risk students. The counselors have emphasized reading improvement by adding after-school programs such as puppetry and theater designed to show pupils that reading can be fun.

At the middle and high school levels, many efforts are under way to keep at-risk students in school. The efforts are a peer counseling program and an adopt-a-student program in which individual teachers serve as friends and advisors to one or two troubled students.

For students who can not make it in a regular high school situation, there is the Renton Alternative High School(Black River High School). Black River High School is a small, personal, academic-vocational program designed to house students of high school status who reside in the Renton School District. The school serves 134 students and has a pupil-teacher ratio of 17-to-1. Black River High School is for secondary students in grades 10-12 who were not motivated or unable to cope with a traditional high school routine. These students may apply to be admitted to the program through their high school counselor.

The purpose of the program is to assist students in developing and accomplishing meaningful goals which may

include: re-entry into their home high school on a full or short term basis; earning a diploma at Black River High School; increasing employability; securing employment; or enrolling at a vocational school, technical college, or other higher education institution.

Personnel at Black River High School strive to help students remain in school, explore different occupations, become decision makers and to accept responsibility for their actions, to strengthen positive behavior, and to increase self-esteem.

The mission of the school is to develop a caring environment that promotes responsibility, growth, achievement and respect by providing relevant experiences to meet the challenges of a constantly changing world.

Black River High School offers the required high school academic classes in math, language arts, social studies, science, health, physical education, diversified occupations, computer technology, drama, art, home and family life, and parenting. The Running Start Program, which allows high school students the opportunity to enroll in college-level courses for credit, tuition free, and earn high school credit at the same time, enables many of the students to take advantage of vocational training at local

technical colleges or community colleges while attending Black River High School. Most of the Running Start Program students attend classes at Renton Technical College. Classes are started and completed on a six-week cycle during the school year with credits awarded at the end of each semester. Each student is assigned an advisor who is the primary contact person with the parent or guardian. The role of the advisor is to monitor advisory projects and student credits and maintain ongoing communication with students and his or her parent or guardian. Through the school advisory program and the counseling office, students are guided in selecting a program best suited to their individual needs. The school works with agencies to provide additional counseling services in drug and alcohol treatment and anger management.

The ethnic diversity of the student population shown in the 1996-97 School Performance Report brochure was as follows: the number of Native Americans was five (four percent); Asian, 12 (nine percent); African Americans, 32 (24 percent); Hispanic, 12 (nine percent); and white, 73 (54 percent). The Black River High School eleventh graders scored a less in Language Arts, History/Social Studies, Math and Science in comparison to the other students in the

schools in the district or the state. These results indicated the students attained a higher level of success than if they were not in the program.

#### The Central York, PA School Program

A fourth program developed by the Central York System has put an initiative into play to reduce its dropout rate and to get dropouts to finish their studies.

The initiative, the First Capital Compact, attempts to get students to finish school once they have dropped out. Under this compact, which is a combined effort of the school district and the local business community, businesses agree not to hire dropouts unless they have plans to complete their education. The Central York school system set up program outreach centers in various shopping malls that met with success. As a result, a program for adults was added. The partnership had ambitious aims, targeting a 25 percent reduction in the dropout rate within five years. Participating businesses pledged and raised \$500,000 for school use.

## Chapter Summary

### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FOUR PROGRAMS

Programs	Characteristics
Colorado Springs, Colorado	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. No grades.</li><li>2. Competency level that students reach at their own pace.</li><li>3. Flexible schedule.</li><li>4. Students can hold jobs.</li></ol>
Washoe County, Nevada	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Flexible scheduling to hold jobs, attend school for a half day.</li><li>2. Students progress at their own rate.</li></ol>
Renton, Washington	Peer Counseling Program and an Adopt-a-Student Program to keep at-risk students in school.
Central York, Pennsylvania	The Capital Compact Initiative. The business community will not hire students who drop out of school.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODOLOGY**

Evaluating a program to determine whether it meets its stated goals requires a basic knowledge of the program and the goals of that program. This evaluation was conducted on the Chesapeake Public Schools Employment Plus Program. This chapter contains a description of the Chesapeake Employment Plus Program, the goals of the program, the evaluation design, data needs, instrumentation, data-gathering procedures, and data analysis.

#### **A Description of the Employment Plus Program**

The Employment Plus program started in 1991-92 at Oscar Smith High School with twenty-one students. The next year the program was implemented at Indian River High School. The following year the program was implemented in the remaining three high schools of Deep Creek, Great Bridge, and Western Branch. The program was supported with vocational funding from the Carl Perkins Act of 1965.

The purpose of the Employment Plus Program is to provide selected students with an educational option in place of the completion of a traditional high school program. These students exhibit many symptoms; several appear to be generic: (1) repeating courses several times in which they have no interest and see no relevance; (2) poor self-concept; (3) poor social interaction skills with both peers and authority figures; (4) a lack of vocational and employment-seeking skills; and (5) a sense of failure with school, in their personal lives, and most of all, with their future.

Although individual schools have autonomy to accept students into the program, the general requirements to get into the program are the same citywide: (1) Students must be age 17 or older and behind two or more grade levels, (2) students must take the Pre-GED test and make a minimum score of 190, (3) students must successfully complete an interview with the Employment Plus Coordinator, and (4) they must be willing to seek and maintain employment.

The students go to school for three class periods a day

for five days each week. During the three class periods, the students receive instruction in the following areas: (1)GED preparation,(2)job-seeking skills,(3)employer-employee relations,(4)human relations, (5)basic consumer economics, and (6) occupational skills.

All schools require an interview with the student and parents or guardian at which time the student showed motivation to participate in GED preparation as well as a cooperative work experience or occupational-technical training at the Center for Science and Technology. The student and parents must sign an agreement for admittance into the Employment Plus Program. The agreement states that the student will abide by all the conditions of the agreement. The Coordinator determines the final eligibility with approval by the principal.

The Employment Plus Program consists of two components: (1) the GED portion of Employment Plus Curriculum that deal with the five content areas, (2) the required list of prepared competencies with at least 80 percent proficiency in order to be eligible by the program requirements to take the GED test.



There are five high schools with the Employment Plus Program in operation (Table 1). There were 79 students enrolled in the program in 1993-94. This was the first year that the program was in all five high schools in the school division.

**Table 1**  
**CHRONOLOGICAL ENROLLMENT OF STUDENTS BY SCHOOL**

SCHOOL	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95
Oscar Smith	21	17	16	20
Indian River		15	16	15
Deep Creek			15	18
Great Bridge			15	20
Western Branch			17	17
Total	21	32	79	90

The following program goals are from the Employment Plus Curriculum Guide. This document was adopted by the school division in 1991-92. These goals have been extrapolated from throughout the Employment Plus Curriculum Guide (McDonough, 1993). The goals have been operationalized to permit measurement.

1. To increase the proportion of the students completing all five parts of the GED test at a passing level.

Once the students pass the GED pre-test with a score of

190, the Employment Plus Students are assumed to have the basic ability to comprehend the information necessary to pass the GED test.

Once the students complete the program they will be able to pass all five parts of the GED test with at least 80 percent proficiency.

2. To improve the students' behavior in the Employment Plus Program.

The student and parent sign the contract for the student to be admitted to the program. The contract states that the student will abide by all school rules.

3. To improve the pre-employment skills of the students in the Employment Plus Program.

The students will demonstrate knowledge about the importance of working.

The student will look at job requirements and match them to individual values and personal characteristics.

The student will demonstrate skills in finding job opportunities.

The student will prepare pre-employment materials.

The student will demonstrate job interview skills.

4. To improve the employment skills of the students in the Employment Plus Program.

The student will compile job information.

The student will describe successful work attitudes and behaviors.

The student will describe factors leading to promotion, advancement, and raises.

The student will maintain and use personal pay records.

The student will explore alternatives to and identify steps necessary for job resignation.

The student will describe elements which contribute to dismissal from a job.

The student will recognize safety hazards and identify steps to take in the event of a job-related accident or illness.

The student will identify the benefits and disadvantages of employee organizations.

5. To improve the basic living skills of the students in the Employment Plus Program.

The student will develop decision-making skills.

The student will prepare a personal budget.

The student will explain different services provided by banks.

The student will explain how to use consumer credit wisely.

The student will identify contractual responsibilities.

The student will explain how to make wise consumer choices.

The student will prepare an income tax return.

The student will explain how to determine the need for insurance.

The student will effectively use the telephone directory.

The student will locate community service agencies.

The student will maintain and use personal pay records.

6. An ancillary benefit of the Employment Plus Program is to provide hope for the students.

The program will give the student a reason to try to succeed.

The program will help to improve the student's self-esteem.

### **Evaluation Design**

The goal of this study was to evaluate the Chesapeake Public Schools Employment Plus Program. One of the major purposes of evaluating a program is to help decision makers determine if the program is effectively achieving its goals or objectives (Popham, 1988). To make that determination, an assessment of the impact of the program on its stated goals and convincing evidence of the program's success must be presented.

A descriptive research design is used to evaluate the program. It is employed to (1) present evidence of success of the program and (2) obtain information concerning the status of the program.

### **Evaluation Procedures**

The following sections are a detailed discussion of the evaluation procedures: selection of participants; location of participants; data collection procedures and instrumentation, including students, teachers, and employer interview questionnaires; and the data analysis procedures.

### **Location of Participants**

The researcher became somewhat frustrated when attempting to track down the 40 students in the population. The researcher used several methods to locate the students: emergency telephone numbers on students records were called, relatives were contacted, and former classmates were asked if they knew how to get in touch with them.

### **Selection of Participants**

The population consists of 79 students who were in the program in 1993-94. The researcher interviewed 50 percent of the 79 students. The sample was 40 students (eight from each school) who were selected with a random numbers table. The researcher selected two additional students from each school to be alternates if needed because of non-responses.

**TABLE 2**

**SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS**

SCHOOLS	POPULATION	SAMPLE	ALTERNATES
Oscar Smith	16	8	2
Indian River	16	8	2
Deep Creek	15	8	2
Great Bridge	15	8	2
Western Branch	17	8	2
Total	79	40	10

**Data Collection Procedures and Instrumentation**

Three interview questionnaires were developed by the researcher with input from an expert panel; one each for students, teachers, and employers. Data on the percentages of participants passing the GED were collected from documents. The expert panel consisted of a mock dissertation prospectus examination committee which consisted of five people with doctorate degrees. A second expert panel also consisted of school administrators in a dissertation seminar.

The interviews were conducted after school, and in one

case during a lunch hour, and during the school day. The interviews were conducted from September 1997 through February 1998.

#### Student Interview Survey

The students were interviewed using open-ended questions. The items on the student interview were designed to measure the perception of students regarding the Employment Plus Program. Questions about student behavior, values, self-esteem, pre-employment skills, employment skills, basic living skills, and teacher-student relationships were included. All of the interviews were audio-taped and transcribed (See Appendix D).

#### Teacher Interview Survey

There are five teachers in the program, and all five teachers were interviewed using open-ended questions. The questions were developed by the researcher with input from an expert panel. The interviews were conducted at the convenience of the teachers. Each interview lasted between thirty and sixty minutes. The same questions were asked of each teacher; however, follow-up questions were asked if deemed appropriate by the researcher. The teacher interview has 10 items.

Questions on the interview questionnaire relate to teacher feelings about the GED program, the number of students passing all parts of the GED program, the number of students going on to a higher level of education, the student selection process for the GED program, parts of the GED program that need to be improved, student follow-up procedures by the teacher once students complete the program, the number of students mastering the Employment Plus competencies at 80 percent and the skills the teacher taught. All of the interviews were audio-taped and transcribed (See Appendix D).

#### Employer Interview Survey

The employers of the students were interviewed. The employer evaluation survey has 10 items. The ten items were developed by the researcher with input from an expert panel. The same questions were asked of each employer. The 10-item interview was designed to measure: (1) the employer's perception of how well the student performed on the job, (2) the employer's perception of the attitude of the employees in the GED program in comparison to the attitude of the employees not in the GED program, (3) the employer's selection process for students in the GED program, and (4)



whether any student in the GED program has been promoted. All of the interviews were audio-taped and transcribed (See Appendix D).

### **A Test of the Instruments**

Prior to the beginning of the study, written consent to conduct the study was given by the Research/Testing Director for the Chesapeake Public Schools. The purpose of testing the instruments was to validate the interview questions. The first test of the questions consisted of a mock prospectus exam that was presented to the dissertation seminar class. The committee then gave feedback concerning the questions on the instruments. The validation of the questions was also done by school administrators in a dissertation seminar. Each question on the instruments was read for validity and the students gave feedback to each question. A list of questions was deleted from the instruments. The remaining questions were selected to make up the survey instruments (See Appendix D).

### **Instrumentation**

#### **Documents Used for Instrumentation**

Information collected from written materials from the

Chesapeake Schools division was used to show students passing all five parts of the GED (McDonough, 1993).

### Data Analysis Methods

For all questions other than the first one, the proportion of students passing the GED, data analysis consisted of deriving themes from the interviews responses and recording frequencies and percentages for each theme. Details on this procedure are in Table 3.

**Table 3**  
**RESEARCH QUESTIONS, GOALS,**  
**SOURCES OF DATA, AND DATA ANALYSIS**

Research Question	Goal	Source of Data <sup>a</sup>	Data Analysis
1. What proportion of the students completed in the years 1991-97 all five parts of the GED Test at a passing level?	1. To increase the proportion of the students completing all five parts of the GED Test at a passing level.	<u>Document:</u> Official Report of Test Results: Test of General Educational Development for all students in the Employment Plus Program since its inception (Appendix G).	A table was used to report the number and percentages passing the GED by years of the Employment Plus Program.

Table 3 continued

Research Question	Goal	Source of Data <sup>a</sup>	Data Analysis
<p>2. To what extent did the program change the behavior of the students?</p>	<p>2. To improve the students' behavior in the Employment Plus Program.</p>	<p><u>Interview -- Student</u>            1. How did the instruction that you received in the Employment Plus Program help you with your behavior in school?</p> <p><u>Interview -- Employer</u>            3. How would you describe the Employment Plus student's attitude toward the job?            8. Do you consider the Employment Plus worker as being inferior to the traditional worker?            Explain.</p>	<p>2. The data were reported through cataloging responses. The researcher developed categories of responses or themes that emerged from those responses.</p>

**Table 3** - continued

Research Question	Goal	Source of Data <sup>a</sup>	Data Analysis
<p>3. What pre-employment skills of the students were developed as a result of participation in the program?</p>	<p>3. To develop the pre-employment skills of the students.</p>	<p><u>Interview -- Student</u>            2. What did you learn in the program that helped you get a job?</p> <p><u>Interview -- Teacher</u>            9. What data do you use to evaluate if the students demonstrated job interview skills?</p>	<p>Pre-employment skill themes were derived from the student and teacher responses.</p>

**Table 3** - continued

Research Question	Goal	Source of Data <sup>a</sup>	Data Analysis
<p>4. What employment skills of the students were developed as a result of participation in the program?                      (a) Once the students completed the program, what kind of work did they obtain?                      (b) How many students continued their education at a higher level?</p>	<p>4. To develop the employment skills of the students.</p>	<p><u>Interview -- Student</u>                      3. How did the Employment Plus Program help you to do your job better?                      a. Where did you work?                      b. Are you still on that job?                      c. How long did you keep that job?                      d. How many jobs have you had?                      8. What did you learn in the program that you are now using in your own work?</p>	<p>Themes on job-related learnings from the program were derived from responses to questions 3 and 8. Responses were categorized for each question, and frequencies and percentages were reported for each category.</p>

Table 3 - continued

Research Question	Goal	Source of Data <sup>a</sup>	Data Analysis
		<p><u>Interview -- Employer</u></p> <p>1. How would you describe the Employment Plus students' work habits?</p> <p>2. How would you describe the Employment Plus student's job related skills?</p> <p>5. How would you compare learning skills of the GED students to that of traditional students in terms of mastering job skills?</p>	<p>Themes on job related learnings from the program were derived from responses to questions 1, 2, and 5. The data were reported in frequencies and percentages by theme.</p>

**Table 3** - continued

Research Question	Goal	Source of Data <sup>a</sup>	Data Analysis
<p>5. What basic living skills of the students were developed as a result of participation in the program?</p>	<p>5. To develop the basic living skills of the students in the program.</p>	<p><u>Interview -- Student</u>            10. What skills did you learn in the program that helped you with everyday living?            a. Do you live in your own place?            b. Do you have your own transportation?</p>	<p>5. Themes on learning about everyday living were derived from the student responses. Frequencies and percentages were reported for each. The number and proportion of students living independently and having their own transportation were reported.</p>



<p>6. To what extent did the program provide hope for the students to graduate from high school?</p>	<p>6. To provide hope for the students in the program.</p>	<p><u>Interview -- Student</u>  5. How do you feel about your future?  5a. Why do you feel this way?  5b. Overall, how do you feel about the Employment Plus Program?</p>	<p>Themes related to feelings about the program were derived from student responses. If hope is an outcome, it should appear in these themes. Frequencies and percentages were reported for each theme.</p>
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<sup>a</sup>The numbers of the items in the column refer to the numbers of the items on the interview questionnaires in Appendix D.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

The purpose of this chapter is to present the data and the results of the study. The data were collected to answer the major research question: How well is the Chesapeake Public Schools Employment Plus GED Program meeting the stated goals?

This is a descriptive study. The statistical analysis and findings are organized and presented under the major research question and each sub-question. Data from student, teacher, and employer interviews not used to answer one of the research questions may be found in Appendixes H, I, and J.

#### **Proportion of Students Passing the GED**

The first sub-question and outcome goal were:

1. What proportion of the students completed all five parts of the GED test at a passing level in the years 1991 through 1997?
  - a. Once the student completes the Program he will be able to pass all five parts of the GED test with at least 80 percent proficiency. (Outcome goal obtained from the Employment Plus Curriculum Guide, 1993.)

Table 4 contains data that show that in 1991-92 and 1992-93, 66 percent of the students passed the GED test. In 1993-94, the first year when the program was in all five high schools, 73.4 percent of the students passed the GED test. This is a 7.4 percent increase in growth from 1992-93. In 1994-95, 73.8 percent of the students passed the GED. This is a .4 percent increase in growth from 1993-94. In 1995-96, 81.1 percent of the students passed the GED test. This is a 7.3 percent increase from 1994-95. In 1996-97, only 62.2 percent of the students passed the GED test. This was an 18.9 decrease from the 1995-96 school year. The researcher was told that in one of the schools only five of the twelve students passed the GED test. Five of the students that did not pass the test were each absent from school a total of 31 days. This may have contributed to why they did not pass, which subsequently lowered the percentage. In the regular school setting any students who missed 31 days in a year-long class automatically fail the class. However, the average passing percentage for the school years 1991-97 was 71.6 percent.

Table 4 also shows a truancy and drop-out rate of 86 students (28.4 percent) among the Employment Plus students

for the years 1991-97. Although the truancy and drop-out rates are high for those years, the program was determined to be successful because of the number of students passing the GED in the years 1991-97.

**TABLE 4**  
**PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS PASSING ALL FIVE PARTS**  
**OF THE GENERAL EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT TEST**  
**AND DROPPING OUT OF THE PROGRAM**  
**BY YEARS 1991-92 THROUGH 1996-97**

SCHOOL <sup>a</sup>	YEAR	NUMBER OF STUDENTS TESTED	NUMBER OF STUDENTS PASSING THE TEST	PASSING PERCENT-AGE	NUMBER OF DROP-OUTS FROM THE PROGRAM
OSH	1991-92	12	8	66	9
OSH, IRH	1992-93	33	22	66	10
OSH, IRH, DCH, GBH, WBH	1993-94	79	58	73.4	16
OSH, IRH, DCH, GBH, WBH	1994-95	65	48	73.8	16
OSH, IRH, DCH, GBH, WBH	1995-96	53	43	81.1	19
OSH, IRH, DCH, GBH, WBH	1996-97	61	38	62.2	16
	Total	303	217	71.6	86

<sup>a</sup>OSH = Oscar Smith High, IRH = Indian River High, DCH = Deep Creek High, GBH = Great Bridge High, WBH = Western Branch High

Table 5 shows that for the school year 1993-94, the first year the program was in all five high schools, the 4 percentage of students passing the GED was 73.41 percent. The percentage of students that dropped out of the program was 26.59 percent.

**TABLE 5**  
**NUMBER OF STUDENTS COMPLETING THE**  
**GENERAL EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT TEST**  
**IN 1993-94 BY SCHOOL AND THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS**  
**DROPPING OUT OF THE PROGRAM IN 1993-94 BY SCHOOL**

SCHOOL	BEGINNING ENROLLMENT	PROGRAM COMPLETERS <sup>a</sup>	DROP-OUTS FROM THE PROGRAM
OSH	16	12	4
IRH	16	13	3
GBH	15	13	2
DCH	15	10	5
WBH	17	10	7
TOTAL	79	58	21
	(100%)	(73.41%)	(26.59%)

<sup>a</sup>A program completer is a student who passed the GED.

### Student Behavior

The second sub-question and outcome goal were:

2. To what extent did the program change the behavior of the students?

a. The student and the parent sign the contract for the student to be admitted to the program. The contract states that the student will

abide by all school rules. (Outcome goal obtained from the Employment Plus Curriculum Guide, 1993.)

Table 6 shows that all of the responses about student behavior were positive and seven (17.5 percent) of the students said they did not have a behavior problem. Only two of the students were dismissed for disciplinary infractions in 1993-94.

**TABLE 6**  
**HOW THE EMPLOYMENT PLUS PROGRAM INSTRUCTION HELPED**  
**STUDENTS WITH THEIR BEHAVIOR IN SCHOOL, 1993-94 (N=40)**

RESPONSES	f	PERCENT <sup>a</sup>
Helped with their attitude	18	45
Helped to get along with others	10	25
Did not have a behavior problem	7	17.5
Helped show more respect	4	10
Helped with personal problems	2	5
Helped to stop getting in confrontations and fights	1	2.5
Helped to be responsible for their actions	1	2.5
Helped with their personality	1	2.5
Dismissed from program for discipline infraction	2	5

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of students.

Table 7 shows the largest number of employers reported that the students had good attitudes toward their jobs.

**TABLE 7**  
**EMPLOYMENT PLUS STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD JOBS**  
**AS REPORTED BY EMPLOYERS (N=10)**

STUDENT ATTITUDE TOWARD JOB	<u>f</u>	PERCENT <sup>a</sup>
Good attitude	10	100
Rough around the edges	1	10
Very cooperative	1	10

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of employers. More than one response was given by employers.

Table 8 indicates that employers did not see a difference in Employment Plus workers when compared to traditional workers.

**TABLE 8**  
**EMPLOYERS' RESPONSES AND EXPLANATIONS TO WHETHER**  
**THE EMPLOYMENT PLUS WORKER IS INFERIOR TO THE**  
**TRADITIONAL WORKER (N=10)**

EMPLOYER RESPONSE	<u>f</u>	PERCENT <sup>a</sup>
Did not see a difference in the workers	6	60
Had Employment Plus workers only	4	40
Employment Plus worker equal in:		
1. Ability to get the job done	1	10
2. Ability to learn	1	10
3. Work habits and attitude	1	10

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of employers.

### **Pre-employment Skills Developed by the Students**

The third sub-question and related outcome goals were:

3. What pre-employment skills of the students were developed as a result of participation in the Program?

To improve the pre-employment skills of the students in the Employment Plus Program.

The students will demonstrate knowledge about the importance of working.

The students will look at job requirements and match these with individual values and personal characteristics.

The student will demonstrate skills in finding job opportunities.



The student will prepare pre-employment materials.

The student will demonstrate job interview skills.  
(Outcome goals obtained from the Employment Plus Curriculum Guide, 1993)

Table 9 shows that the Employment Plus Program helped students by teaching them how to prepare resumes' and applications, and to interview effectively. The students felt that they improved verbal communication skills, eye contact, and dress while in the program.

**TABLE 9**  
**HOW THE EMPLOYMENT PLUS PROGRAM HELPED**  
**STUDENTS OBTAIN JOBS (N=40)**

HOW PROGRAM HELPED	<u>f</u>	PERCENT <sup>a</sup>
Teacher helped to obtain job	12	30
How to write a resume	8	20
Students were already employed upon entering the program	7	17.5
Job interview skills	4	10
Verbal communication skills	4	10
Did not have a job	2	5
Attended tech center	1	2.5
How to make eye contact	1	2.5
How to dress	1	2.5
How to complete an application	1	2.5

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of students.

Information on how teachers evaluated the job interview skills of students is in Table 10. Teachers evaluated students by: (1) tests, (2) having the students role play to demonstrate how they interview, (3) having the students' classmates assess how well they interviewed in a role-playing situation, and (4) by asking the students' employers how well the students did on the job interview.

**TABLE 10**  
**DATA USED BY TEACHERS TO EVALUATE STUDENT PERFORMANCE**  
**ON JOB INTERVIEW SKILLS (N=5)**

TEACHER EVALUATION DATA	<u>f</u>	PERCENT <sup>a</sup>
Tests given by teachers on interviewing techniques	5	100
Techniques used through role playing an interview	3	60
Classmate assessment of student's interview role playing	2	40
Teacher inquiry while on site visit to employer about student's job interview performance	1	20
Have guest speaker to come in and give a presentation on interiewing	1	20

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of teachers.

### **Employment Skills Developed by the Students**

The fourth sub-question and related outcome goals were:

4. What employment skills were developed as a result of participation in the program?

- (a) Once the students completed the Program, what kind of work did they obtain?
- (b) How many students continued their education at a higher level?

The program goals were as follows:

To improve the employment skills of the students in the Employment Plus Program.

The student will compile job information.

The student will describe successful work attitudes and behaviors.

The student will describe factors leading to promotion, advancement, and pay raises.

The student will maintain and use personal pay records.

The student will explore alternatives to and identify steps necessary for job resignation.

The student will describe elements which contribute to dismissal from a job.

The student will recognize safety hazards and identify steps to take in the event of a job-related accident or illness.

The student will identify the benefits and disadvantages of employee organizations. (Outcome goals obtained from the Employment Plus Curriculum Guide, 1993.)

Table 11 has data on how the Employment Plus Program helped students do their jobs better. The program helped the students to develop good work ethics, enhance their interpersonal skills, feel good about themselves, and improve their math skills.

**TABLE 11**  
**RESPONSES TO HOW THE EMPLOYMENT PLUS PROGRAM**  
**HELPED THE STUDENT IN IMPROVED JOB PERFORMANCE (N=40)**

RESPONSES	f	PERCENT <sup>a</sup>
Helped to improve student attitude	5	12.5
Helped student to get along with others	5	12.5
Teacher encouragement of students to work hard	4	10
How to deal with authority and management	2	5
Helped to improve self-esteem	2	5
How to respect others	2	5
Helped to improve math skills	2	5
How to greet the public	1	2.5
Helped student with punctuality	1	2.5

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of students.

The data on what the students learned in the program that they are now using in their own work are in Table 12.

The skills that the students developed were: (1) cognitive (math and verbal communication, reading, science), technical and work skills (computer, carpentry, following directions, punctuality), affective skills (patience), and interpersonal skills (people skills).

**TABLE 12**  
**SKILLS LEARNED IN THE PROGRAM THAT STUDENTS ARE**  
**NOW USING IN THEIR WORK (N=40)**

SKILLS	f	PERCENT <sup>a</sup>
Math	11	27.5
Verbal communication	9	22.5
People skills	7	17.5
Reading	1	2.5
Patience	1	2.5
Carpentry	1	2.5
Science	1	2.5
Computer	1	2.5
Punctuality	1	2.5
Following directions	1	2.5

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of students.

- 3a. Where did you work while in the Employment Plus Program?
- b. Are you still on that job?
- c. How many jobs have you had?

Data in Table 13 are on where the students worked while

in the Employment Plus Program and the type of work they did. The students worked in 31 different businesses. The students' jobs were categorized, and the most frequently reported job was cashier. Nearly all jobs were low-level service jobs. One student chose to go on to school in the field of automotive technology.

**TABLE 13  
WHERE DID YOU WORK WHILE  
IN THE EMPLOYMENT PLUS PROGRAM?**

PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT	CATEGORY OF WORK	f	PERCENT <sup>a</sup>
Farm Fresh	Grocery	4	10
MacDonald's	Food Service	3	7.5
Food Lion	Grocery	2	5
Truitt Junior High	Janitorial/ Handyman	2	5
Dairy Queen	Food Service	2	5
Did not have a job	N/A	2	5
Aard Screen Printing	Printing	1	2.5
Zero Subs	Food Service	1	2.5
Shoney's	Food Service	1	2.5
Gardening Soy and Grain	Landscaping	1	2.5
Cinnabon	Food Service	1	2.5
Be-Lo	Grocery	1	2.5

Privately owned plumbing business	Plumbing	1	2.5
Cibillo	Food Service	1	2.5
Associated Distributors	Retail	1	2.5
White's Nursery	Retail	1	2.5
Preferred Lawn of VA	Landscaping	1	2.5
Chesapeake Public Schools Print Shop	Printing	1	2.5
Privately owned carpentry business	Carpentry	1	2.5
Ryan's Steak House	Food Service	1	2.5
Chesapeake Airport	Janitorial/ Handyman	1	2.5
Sentry Food Mart	Retail	1	2.5
Little Caesars	Delivery	1	2.5
Aces Mechanic Shop	Mechanic	1	2.5
Great Bridge Exxon	Mechanic	1	2.5
Sears	Retail	1	2.5
Spencers	Retail	1	2.5
MCS Computers	Retail	1	2.5

The Pet Store	Retail	1	2.5
Elite Team	Retail	1	2.5
Chesapeake Technical Center	Automotive technology training	1	2.5

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of students.

The data in Table 14 show that 10 percent of the students have the same job that they had when they were in the Employment Plus Program, 90 percent have different jobs.

**TABLE 14**

**ARE YOU STILL ON THAT JOB? (N=40)**

PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT	<u>f</u>	PERCENT <sup>a</sup>
Yes	4	10
No	36	90

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of students.

The data on the average length of time the students kept the same job during the program are in Table 15. Some of the students were transient for various reasons and were unable to keep the same job the entire school year. The students who stayed in the program the entire year, the student who kept the same job the entire year, and the



student who stayed in the technical school the entire year comprise 75 percent of the respondents.

**TABLE 15**  
**HOW LONG DID YOU KEEP THAT JOB? (N=40)**

AVERAGE LENGTH OF TIME	<u>f</u>	PERCENT <sup>a</sup>
Entire school year	29 <sup>b</sup>	72.5
Six months	2	5
Four months	6	15
Tech Center - training one year	1	2.5
No job	2	5
Working there now	4	10

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of students.

<sup>b</sup>Includes the four students currently working.

Information on how many jobs the students have had since enrolling in the program and the number of students who have enrolled for further education is in Table 16. Thirty-two and one-half percent of the students furthered their education in addition to working a full-time job. A large proportion of the students have held from three to four jobs in the past four years (1993-94 to 1997-98). Only 10 percent of the students have held the same job over the four years.

**TABLE 16**  
**HOW MANY JOBS HAVE YOU HAD? (N=40)**

DISTRIBUTION	f	PERCENTAGE <sup>a</sup>
Three - four jobs	30	75
One - two jobs	10	25
Further education <sup>b</sup>	13	32.5

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of students.

<sup>b</sup>Students who took courses beyond the GED while working full-time.

Information on how the employer would describe the Employment Plus Students' work habits is in Table 17. Employers said that the students exhibited positive attitudes and good work skills on the job, and the students were willing to learn while in training on the job. Only two students had poor attendance.

**TABLE 17**  
**HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE EMPLOYMENT PLUS**  
**STUDENTS' WORK HABITS? (N=10)**

STUDENTS' WORK HABITS	<u>f</u>	PERCENT <sup>a</sup>
Positive attitude	10	100
Consistent with doing the job	9	90
Good work habits	7	70
Showed little initiative but was willing to learn once shown how to do the job	5	50
Good attendance	5	50
Poor attendance	2	20

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of employers.

Data obtained from the employer interviews on how the employer would describe the Employment Plus students' job-related skills is in Table 18. The data show that the students grasped quickly the work skills needed through on-the-job training. One student had the skills to operate a machine while other students performed menial kinds of tasks on their jobs.

**TABLE 18**  
**HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE EMPLOYMENT PLUS**  
**STUDENTS' JOB-RELATED SKILLS? (N=10)**

DESCRIPTION OF SKILLS	<u>f</u>	PERCENT <sup>a</sup>
All students were given instruction, but not necessarily trained	10	100
Students learned quickly	7	70
Some jobs required more concentration and the students could handle this	6	60
Did menial kinds of tasks	3	30
Students had job-related skills to operate the machine	1	10

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of employers.

Responses obtained from employer interviews on how they would compare learning skills of Employment Plus students to those of the traditional student in terms of mastering job skills are in Table 19. With the exception of four persons, employers saw no difference in the skills of the two groups; three employers indicated the Employment Plus students may have had a less-than-positive attitude toward their work.

One said that Employment Plus students had better work skills than traditional students.

**TABLE 19**  
**HOW WOULD YOU COMPARE LEARNING SKILLS OF EMPLOYMENT PLUS STUDENTS TO THOSE OF TRADITIONAL STUDENTS?(N=10)**

COMPARISON OF LEARNING SKILLS	<u>f</u>	PERCENT <sup>a</sup>
There was no difference	9	90
There was a less-than-positive attitude in the Employment Plus students toward their work skills	3	30
Employment Plus students had better work skills than traditional students	1	10

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of employers.

### **Basic Living Skills Developed by the Students**

Sub-question number five and related outcome goals were:

5. What basic living skills of the students were improved as a result of participation in the program?

The student will improve the basic living skills in the Employment Plus Program to help them with everyday living.

The student will develop decision-making skills.

The student will prepare a personal budget.

The student will explain different services provided by banks.

The student will identify contractual responsibilities.

The student will explain how to make wise consumer choices.

The student will prepare an income tax return.

The student will explain how to determine the need for insurance.

The student will effectively use the telephone directory.

The student will locate community service agencies.

The student will maintain and use personal pay records. (Outcome goals were obtained from the Employment Plus Curriculum Guide, 1993.)

Responses obtained from the student interviews on what they learned in the program about everyday living are in Table 20. The data show that the students were taught a number of interpersonal skills, responsibility, self-esteem, and how to manage their finances better.

**TABLE 20**  
**SUMMARY OF SKILLS LEARNED BY EMPLOYMENT PLUS**  
**STUDENTS THAT HELPED THEM WITH EVERYDAY LIVING (N=40)**

SKILLS	<u>f</u>	PERCENT <sup>a</sup>
Getting along with others	12	30
Patience	9	22.5
Managing money	8	20
Dealing with different personalities	7	17.5
Respect	4	10
Being responsible	3	7.5
Self-esteem	3	7.5
How to react to criticism	1	2.5

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of students.

The responses obtained from the student interview questions: (1) Do you live in your own place? and (2) Do you have your own transportation? are in Tables 21 and 22, respectively. Sixty-two and one-half percent of the students did not live in their own place and 22.5 percent of the students did not own their transportation.

**TABLE 21**  
**DO YOU LIVE IN YOUR OWN PLACE? (N=40)**

LIVE IN OWN PLACE	f	PERCENT <sup>a</sup>
Yes	15	37.5
No	25	62.5

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of students.

**TABLE 22**  
**DO YOU OWN YOUR TRANSPORTATION? (N=40)**

OWN TRANSPORTATION	f	PERCENT <sup>a</sup>
Yes	31	77.5
No	9	22.5

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of students.

**Hope Provided by the Program for the Student to Graduate**

The sixth sub-question and related outcome goals were:

6. To what extent did the program provide hope for the students to graduate in the Employment Plus Program?

An area of ancillary benefit of the Employment Plus Program is to provide hope for the students in the program to graduate and to help improve the student's self-esteem. Hope is measured by students' responses to the question: How do you feel about your future? Two subquestions also used to measure student hope were: (1) Why do you feel this way?,



(2) Overall, how do you feel about the Employment Plus Program. The questions are listed in Tables 23, 24, and 25.

Information obtained from the student interviews on how do you feel about your future is in Table 23. The data show that students felt that the program provided them with another opportunity to graduate (and a second chance) with a GED and that this will be helpful toward their future. This will also give them an opportunity to continue their education and the opportunity to apply for better paying jobs.

**TABLE 23**  
**HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT YOUR FUTURE? (N=40)**

STUDENTS' FEELING ABOUT THEIR FUTURE	<u>f</u>	PERCENT <sup>a</sup>
Program helpful toward their future	19	47.3
Program helped them get a second chance	10	25
Program helped them strive to get an education	3	7.3
Hope to work in computer field	2	5
Want to own their own business	1	2.5
Plan to continue present job	1	2.5
Hope to work in medical transcription field	1	2.5
Hope to work in business or marketing field	1	2.5
Hope to become a fireman	1	2.5
Hope to get hired by Gwaltney	1	2.5

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of students.

The data obtained from the student interviews on why

they felt this way is in Table 24. The data show that the students felt that after going through the Employment Plus Program and having worked with their teacher, whether they did or did not obtain their GED, the program helped to improve their confidence. The students also felt the program helped give them a more positive outlook being able to obtain a job in the future.

**TABLE 24**  
**WHY DO YOU FEEL THIS WAY ABOUT YOUR FUTURE? (N=40)**

WHY THIS FEELING ABOUT YOUR FUTURE	f	PERCENT <sup>a</sup>
Because of the teacher	21	52.5
Participation in the Employment Plus Program	14	35
Happy about what has been accomplished	2	5
Feeling confident	2	5
A combination of many feelings	1	1.5

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of students.

Information obtained from the student interviews on their overall opinion about the Employment Plus Program is in Table 25. The data show that the program provided the students with a second chance to graduate. The students

felt this was a good program and that it should be continued. The students also felt that they benefitted from the program. The students responded that they would recommend the program to other students.

**TABLE 25**  
**OVERALL STUDENT OPINION ABOUT THE**  
**EMPLOYMENT PLUS PROGRAM (N=40)**

STUDENT OPINION ABOUT THE EMPLOYMENT PLUS PROGRAM	<u>f</u>	PERCENT <sup>a</sup>
It was a good program	24	59.75
Think that the program should continue	19	47.50
Program gives students a second chance	8	20.00
Program very helpful to students	6	15.00
It gives students a chance to excel	1	2.50
Students benefit from the program	1	2.50
Recommend program to other students	1	2.50

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of students.

## CHAPTER 5

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the Employment Plus Program of the Chesapeake (Virginia) Public Schools. It was designed to determine how effective the program was in achieving its goals. Chapter 5 contains a summary of the study, a conclusion, recommendations for practice, and recommendations for further research.

#### Summary

The Chesapeake Public School System provides the Employment Plus Program as an educational option in place of the traditional high school program for certain students who have fallen behind and are at-risk of becoming drop-outs from the Chesapeake School System (Denofa, 1993).

The Employment Plus Program had not been evaluated therefore, the current study was implemented to examine how the program was meeting its goals. Six areas were examined: (1) the proportion of students completing all five parts of the GED test at a passing level, (2) the extent which the program changed the behavior of the students, (3) the

pre-employment skills the students developed, (4) the employment skills the students developed, (5) the basic living skills the students improved, and (6) the extent the program provided hope for the students to graduate.

Teacher interviews and program documents were used to assess the proportion of students from 1991-97 that completed all five parts of the GED test at a passing level. Data suggest that there was an increase in the proportion of students completing all five parts of the GED test from 1991-96 at a passing level. For the school year 1996-97, there was a decrease in the proportion of students completing all five parts of the GED test at a passing level.

Student interviews were used to assess whether the students' behavior was improved because of the Employment Plus Program. Students reported that the program helped them with their attitudes. Only two students were dismissed from the program for discipline infractions for the 1993-94 school year.

Student interviews were used to assess the pre-employment skills the students developed as a result of participating in the program. The information obtained reveals that the pre-employment skills were developed by

teaching the students how to prepare resumes and applications and to interview effectively.

Student interviews were used to assess the employment skills the students developed as a result of participating in the program. The program helped the students to develop a good work ethic and enhance their interpersonal skills.

Student interviews were used to assess the kind of work the students did once they completed the program. The data show that the students worked in various types of jobs. The jobs were seasonal, custodial, cook/cashier, tractor trailer driver, construction, door-to-door sales, computer, and supervisory.

Student interviews were used to assess the number of students continuing their education at a higher level. All of those students who furthered their education also worked a full-time job.

Student interviews were used to assess the basic living skills the students improved as a result of participation in the program. The data show that the students were taught a number of interpersonal skills as well as being taught how to manage their funds.

Student interviews were used to assess the extend the program provided hope for the students to graduate. Data from the findings indicate the students felt the program provided them a second chance to graduate, allowed them to feel good about themselves, and improved their self-esteem.

### **Conclusion**

In assessing the findings of how well the Employment Plus Program is meeting the stated goals, the researcher concluded that the Employment Plus Program is meeting the majority of the stated goals. The goals are in Table 26.

The researcher would recommend the continuance of the Employment Plus Program based on the data that showed that during the years 1991-97, 71.6 percent of the students obtained their GED. Without this program, the majority of those students would have dropped out of school or would have been withdrawn from school due to poor attendance. Another basis for the researcher to recommend continuance of the program is the response from the students who successfully completed the program. They feel the program should be available for other students who are having problems with the traditional school program. The program



provides an alternative for students who cannot successfully handle a full day of going to school to obtain the GED.

How do the students feel about the Employment Plus Program? Even though some students did not pass the GED, they felt that it was a good program. The teachers provided encouragement for some of the students who had personal problems. Most of the students had jobs, and the majority of the students felt that they had the opportunity to pass the GED whether they passed or not.

How could truancy and drop-out rates be improved in the Employment Plus Program? A method needs to be put in place to keep the students from being truant and drop-outs. One recommendation would be to provide a mentor for the students in the program. Another recommendation would be to solicit the help of guidance counselors and teachers outside of the program to provide additional support service.

**Table 26**  
**GOALS STUDENTS MET AS A RESULT OF**  
**BEING IN THE EMPLOYMENT PLUS PROGRAM**

GOAL	MET	NOT MET	PARTIALLY MET
1. To increase the proportion of the students completing all five parts of the GED test at a passing level.	X		
2. To improve the students' behavior in the Employment Plus Program.	X		
3. To develop the pre-employment skills of the students.	X		
4. To develop the employment skills of the students.			X
5. To develop the basic living skills of the students in the program.	X		
6. To provide hope for students in the program.	X		

**Recommendations for Practice**

It is recommended that there be a follow-up by the Employment Plus teachers on the employment or career status of the students after they have been out of the program for one year or more to show what the students are doing.

Competencies should be recorded on a competency sheet by the teacher for placement in the student's permanent

record to show the number of competencies that the student passed.

In interviewing an employer who supervised a school division service, it was indicated that the employer would like for the students to be able to work in the morning as opposed to coming to work in the afternoon. The researcher is recommending to the school division that the program be flexible enough to allow students to go to work in the morning rather than in the afternoon.

The school division should look into the feasibility of students being placed in internships before being allowed to go to work. This may provide the teacher with an indication of the reliability of the student before being placed on the job. It is recommended that the school division review the goals to see if they are still viable.

Recommendations for improving the program are:

1. Improve student attendance at school.
2. Improve student attendance at work.
3. Provide flexible hours for students to attend school or to work.
4. Provide a mentoring program for the students.

### **Recommendations for Future Research and Evaluation**

Future studies should use the data gathered in this study as baseline data to which comparisons may be made at a later date. Future studies using this specific questionnaire should include more explanation for terms that have new definitions and usage which respondents may use with the traditional terms such as: GED and at-risk.

Further research should include: (1) a comparison of the effectiveness of the Employment Plus Program with GED programs that do not have a work component; (2) developing a mentoring program to help the students with attendance; and (3) an evaluation of the truancy and dropout rate of students to see how it can be improved.

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**APPENDIX A**

**Pre-employment Skills**

## **PRE-EMPLOYMENT SKILLS**

### **Goal:**

To develop skills necessary for finding employment.

### **Rationale:**

In the job search process it is necessary to be able to apply an individual's occupational desires and personal information in the clearest and most positive way in order to become successfully employed.

### **Objectives:**

1. The student will demonstrate knowledge of the importance of work.
2. The student will identify individual values and personal characteristics and compare them to job requirements.
3. The student will demonstrate skills in finding job openings.
4. The student will prepare pre-employment materials.
5. The student will demonstrate job interview skills.

### **Activities:**

1. The student will participate in individual and class projects.
2. The student will participate in class demonstrations.
3. The student will develop personal employment packages.
4. The student will utilize individual learning packages.

### **Reference:**

Vocational Cooperative Education (1993). Guide for Teacher Coordinator. Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Education. Richmond, VA.



**APPENDIX B**

**Employment Skills**

## **EMPLOYMENT SKILLS**

### **Goal:**

To develop in the student those skills necessary to maintain a job and advance in a chosen occupational field.

### **Rationale:**

It is not enough for a person to find a job. An individual must also become skilled at maintaining that job and advancing in a career path.

### **Objectives:**

1. The student will compile job information.
2. The student will describe successful work attitudes and behaviors.
3. The student will describe factors leading to promotion, advancement, and raises.
4. The student will maintain and use personal pay records.
5. The student will explore alternatives to and identifying steps necessary for job resignation.
6. The student will describe elements which contribute to dismissal from a job.
7. The student will recognize safety hazards and identify steps to take in event of a job-related accident or illness.
8. The student will identify employee organizations and their benefits and disadvantages.

### **Activities:**

1. The student will participate in individual and class projects.
2. The student will participate in class demonstrations.
3. The student will prepare job-related materials and information.
4. The student will utilize individual learning packages.

### **Reference:**

Vocational Cooperative Education (1993). Guide for Teacher Coordinator. Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Education. Richmond, VA.

**APPENDIX C**  
**BASIC LIVING SKILLS**

## **BASIC LIVING SKILLS**

### **Goal:**

The student will develop those skills necessary for basic living in the adult world.

### **Rationale:**

In the drive to become independent, a student should learn those skills and that knowledge required to live successfully in the adult world.

### **Objectives:**

1. The student will develop decision-making skills.
2. The student will prepare a personal budget.
3. The student will explain different services provided by banks.
4. The student will explain how to use consumer credit wisely.
5. The student will identify contractual responsibilities.
6. The student will explain how to make wise consumer choices.
7. The student will explain how to determine the need for insurance.
8. The student will prepare an income tax return.
9. The student will effectively use the telephone directory.
10. The student will locate community service agencies.

### **Activities:**

1. The student will participate in class and individual projects.
2. The student will prepare personal and job-related materials and information.
3. The student will use individual learning packages.

### **Reference:**

Vocational Cooperative Education (1993). Guide for Teacher Coordinator. Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Education. Richmond, VA.

**APPENDIX D**  
**INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE**

## STUDENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

### Introduction

Thank you for taking the time to talk with me about the Employment Plus Program. I am working on a project to try and find out what makes programs such as this one successful or not successful. I will ask you several questions. To make sure I have an accurate record, I would like to use a tape recorder. Do you mind if I record our conversation? You can be sure that your responses will be kept confidential.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

The survey questions will be read to the respondents by the researcher who will then record the responses.

### Interview Questions:

1. How did the instruction that you received in the Employment Plus Program help you with your behavior in school?
2. What did you learn in the program that helped you get a job?
3. How did the Employment Plus Program help you to do your job better?
  - a. Where did you work?
  - b. Are you still on that job?
  - c. How long did you keep that job?
  - d. How many jobs have you had?
4. Since you left the program, how do you feel about yourself?
  - a. How do you feel about others?
  - b. Was there anything in the program that caused you to feel this way?

5. How do you feel about your future?
  - a. Why do you feel this way?
  - b. Overall, how do you feel about the Employment Plus Program?
6. Did you pass all five parts of the GED at a passing level?
7. Where are you employed since leaving the Employment Plus Program?
8. What did you learn in the program that you are now using in your own work?
9. What did you learn in the program that helped you at home?
  - a. Did you learn how to write a check?
  - b. Did you learn how to balance a check book?
10. What skills did you learn in the program that helped you with everyday living?
  - a. Do you live in your own place?
  - b. Do you have your own transportation?

## TEACHER INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

### Introduction

Thank you for taking the time to talk with me about the Employment Plus Program for 1993-94. I am working on a project to try and find out what makes programs such as this one successful or not successful. I will ask you several questions. For accuracy of response, I would like to use a tape recorder. Do you mind if I record our conversation? Please be assured that your responses will be kept confidential. Your name will not be identified in any publication that may be produced as a result of this study. A total of five interviews will be conducted.

### Interview Questions

#### Open-ended Questions:

1. What is your feeling about the Employment Plus Program?
2. How many students have completed all five parts of the GED test at a passing level for the years 1991-97?
3. How many students have been able to continue on with their education at a higher level if the student had the desire to do so?
4. How are students selected to be in the Employment Plus Program?
5. What suggestions do you feel would improve the Employment Plus Program?



6. Is there a follow-up on students to see what they are doing after they have been out of the program for one year or more?
7. How many students have mastered the Employment Plus Competencies at 80%?
8. Are the competency sheets available for me to use as a source of data?
9. What data do you use to evaluate if students demonstrated job interview skills?
10. What skills did you teach?

## EMPLOYER INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

### Introduction

Thank you for taking the time to talk to me about the Employment Plus Program. I am working on a project to try and find out what makes programs such as this one successful or not successful. I will ask you several questions. For accuracy of response, I would like to use a tape recorder. Do you mind if I record our conversation? Please be assured that your responses will be kept confidential. Your name will not be identified in any publication that may be provided as a result of this study.

### Interview Questions

1. How would you describe the Employment Plus student's work habits?
2. How would you describe the Employment Plus student's job-related skills?
3. How would you describe the Employment Plus student's attitude toward the job?
4. What is your overall opinion about hiring other GED students?
5. How would you compare learning skills of the GED students to those of traditional students in terms of mastering job skills?
6. Do you know about the GED program?
7. What are the Employment Plus student's chances of advancement?

8. Do you consider the Employment Plus worker as being inferior to the traditional worker? Explain.
9. What kind of changes would you recommend to improve the Employment Plus Program?
10. Overall, what grade, A-B-C-D-F, would you give the Employment Plus student?

1. A
2. B
3. C
4. D
5. F

**APPENDIX E**

**Chesapeake Public Schools Employment Plus Program  
Contract**

# Chesapeake Public Schools Employment Plus Program

This is an agreement for admittance into the Employment Plus Program

at \_\_\_\_\_ High School.

Name of Student \_\_\_\_\_ School Year \_\_\_\_\_

Occupational Interests \_\_\_\_\_

The Employment Plus Program is a form of cooperative, part-time vocational education between business and industrial establishments in the community and our public high schools. Employment Plus as it is called, is designed to provide industrial, technical, and service occupational training opportunities. The establishments provide on-the-job training and part-time employment for the student during and after school hours. At the same time, the school provides technical subject material related to the occupation the student is employed. The teacher-coordinator directs the training of the students through counseling, classroom instruction and periodic visits on the job. Each student follows an organized course of study designed especially for his chosen occupation. Other topics taught in the Employment Plus classroom are citizenship, character, etc. The Employment Plus student also pursues the required subjects in the G.E.D. Preparation curriculum. In this way, he is able to earn a G.E.D. and in many cases qualify for entrance into college.

1. The student must be interested in some form of industrial, technical, or service occupation that requires special training.
2. Parents or guardians will assume the **responsibility of transportation** for students, including their conduct and safety to and from the training station.
3. When sickness or emergency requires the student to miss work, the employer and coordinator must be notified before time to report to work.
4. Students understand that if they are absent from school in the morning, they will not be allowed to work in the afternoon without approval of the coordinator.

5. A student who is suspended from school will not be permitted to go to work without the permission of the coordinator.
6. Should a student be dismissed through negligence or misdemeanor, or leaves his training station without permission of the coordinator, he may be dropped from the program and will receive no credit.
7. Should an unpleasant job situation arise, the student should notify the coordinator immediately. By conference with both student and employer, the coordinator will determine the proper course of action.
8. It is important that the student realizes that his employment comes under school supervision and no student will be permitted to change jobs during the time of training without prior approval of the coordinator.
9. Infractions of any school rule or on-the-job rule such as impertinence, rudeness, or disrespect in the classroom, or on the job, directed toward the coordinator or other teacher, students or their employer may lead to dismissal from the class.
10. The student should at all times be well groomed and neatly dressed while on the job and at school. The coordinator reserves the right to determine what is proper.
11. Failure to complete satisfactorily either the classroom-related study or the on-the-job training will mean no credit.
12. Students should not loiter in the school, on the school grounds, or on the streets during school hours.
13. A minimum average of 15 hours a week will be spent in occupational on- the-job training under the supervision of the employer and teacher- coordinator.

I have studied the above conditions and agree that \_\_\_\_\_ may participate in the Employment Plus program.

PARENT'S SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

I understand the above conditions of the Employment Plus program and pledge, on my honor, to abide by them.

STUDENT'S SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

The TRAINING STATION, recognizing that a training plan is being followed and that close supervision of the student-learner will be needed, agrees:

1. To provide a variety of work experiences for the student-learner that will contribute to the attainment of the student's career objective.
2. To endeavor to employ the student-learner for at least the minimum number of hours each day and each week for the training period.

3. To adhere to all Federal and State regulations regarding employment, child labor laws, minimum wages, and other applicable regulations.
4. To assist in the evaluation of the student-learner.
5. To provide time for consultation with the teacher-coordinator concerning the student-learner when, and if, necessary.
6. To provide available instructional material and occupational guidance for the student-learner.

EMPLOYER'S SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX F**

**Employment Plus Competencies**

# EMPLOYMENT PLUS COMPETENCIES

1. The student will define the Employment Plus program.
2. The student will list the advantages of being in the Employment Plus program.
3. The student will list the choices available to him/her after completion of the program.
4. The student will list the choices available to him/her after completion of the program.
5. The student will list the rules and policies of the Employment Plus program.
6. The student will set some basic individual goals.
7. The student will define Vocational Education.
8. The student will explain cooperative education as applied to the Employment Plus program.
9. The student will identify and define forms used in Vocational, Cooperative Education as applied to the Employment Plus program.
10. The student will identify the vocational units taught in the Employment Plus Program.
11. The student will define General Education Development (GED).
12. The student will be able to identify the different content areas of the GED test.
13. The student will be able to explain in writing how the course is structured.
14. The student will identify the three different types of literature, required to successfully sit for the GED.
15. The student will be able to analyze the three different types of literature, as required to successfully sit for the GED.
16. The student will demonstrate knowledge of the importance of work.
17. The student will identify individual values and personal characteristics and compare them to job requirements.
18. The student will demonstrate skills in finding job openings.
19. The student will prepare pre-employment materials.
20. The student will demonstrate job interview skills.
21. The student will compile job information.
22. The student will describe successful work attitudes and behaviors.
23. The student will describe factors leading to promotion, advancement, and raises.
24. The student will maintain and use personal pay records.
25. The student will explore alternatives to and identify steps necessary for job resignation.
26. The student will describe elements which contribute to dismissal from a job.
27. The student will recognize safety hazards and identify steps to take in event of a job related accident or illness.
28. The student will identify employee organizations and their benefits and disadvantages.

29. The student will develop decision making skills
30. The student will prepare personal budget.
31. The student will explain different services provided by banks.
32. The student will explain how to use consumer credit wisely.
33. The student will identify contractual responsibilities.
34. The student will explain how to make wise consumer choices.
35. The student will explain how to determine the need for insurance.
36. The student will prepare income tax return.
37. The student will effectively use the telephone directory.
38. The student will locate community service agencies.
39. In the study of addition and subtraction, the student will work toward improving their skills.
40. In the study of multiplication and division, the student will work toward improving their skills. The student will also learn to solve problems that require several steps.
41. In the study of fractions,, the student will use skills, he/she learned in earlier sections to apply to new rules for working with fractions.
42. In the study of decimals, the student will use skills he/she learned in earlier sections to apply to solving decimal problems.
43. In the study of percents, the student will solve problems using utilizing percents. The student will write a percent as a decimal or fraction and, find the percent of a specific number.
44. In the study of measurement, the student will identify units of measurement and their equivalents. The student will solve problems utilizing measurements.
45. The student will use specific techniques in Reading.
46. The student will obtain meanings of words from reading the content.
47. The student will identify main ideas.
48. The student will distinguish between the different types of structural organizations of a paragraph.
49. The student will interpret what he/she reads.
50. In the study of biology, the student will identify living things associated with the study of Biology.
51. In the study of Earth Science, the student will learn about the living earth. The student will be ale to identify causes of earthquakes and volcanos, and hurricanes and ocean.
52. In the study of Chemistry the student will identify different chemical changes and different states of matter.
53. In the study of Physics, the student will identify the aspects of gravity and how it causes the tides of our oceans. The student will also be able to establish how sound travels, and identify the characteristics of light.
54. In the study of Geography: the student will identify continents, seas, and majors areas of the earth's surface.
55. In the study of history, the student will identify events of the past. Students will also study social conditions and trade



- between nations.
56. In the study of Political Science, the student will understand how federal, state, and local governments work.
  57. In the study of Economics, the student will understand how products, and services are produced, used and how they are paid for.
  58. In the study of Behavioral Science, the student will have a basic understanding of the three main branches of behavioral science, Sociology, Psychology, and Anthropology.
  59. In the study of capitalization the student will master the competencies required to successfully sit for the GED test.
  60. In the study of using punctuation, the student will identify the types of punctuation marks and how they are used.
  61. In the study of writing, clear sentences, the student will demonstrate this process.
  62. In the study of nouns, pronouns, and adjectives, the student will define each and use them correctly in a sentence.
  63. In the study of correcting spelling, the student will learn several rules that will assist them in spelling correctly. The student will also use a dictionary to check for accuracy of spelling.

**APPENDIX G**  
**Example of an Official Report of Test Results**



**Official Report of Test Results**  
**Tests of General Educational Development**  
 The General Educational Development Testing Service  
 of the American Council on Education

**Examinee:**

2900  
 CHESAPEAKE, VA 23323-0000

**Date of Birth:**  
**Social Security No.:**

**Test Format:** English Print  
**Date Scored:** 1/16/1997  
**Date Reported:** 1/16/1997

**Tested at:**

3000490070  
 Chesapeake Schools  
 Chesapeake City GED Center  
 1615 Cedar Road  
 Chesapeake, VA 23320  
 (804) 424-0542

**Reported to:** VIRGINIA

Dr. Patricia Ta'ani  
 P.O. Box 2120  
 Virginia Office of Adult Education  
 P.O. Box 2120  
 Richmond, VA 23218  
 (804) 371-2333

	Test Date	Form	Standard Score	Percentile Rank
Test 1: Writing Skills	1/04/1997	AQ	48	44
Test 2: Social Studies	1/04/1997	AQ	45	31
Test 3: Science	1/04/1997	AQ	48	41
Test 4: Interpreting Literature and the Arts	1/04/1997	AQ	48	40
Test 5: Mathematics	1/04/1997	AQ	44	26

The scores on this report are the *highest* scores achieved by the examinee and not necessarily the most recent. If the latest scores are lower than scores previously achieved, the retest scores are not reported.

**Total Standard Score:** 233  
**Avg. Standard Score:** 46  
**PASS**

Signature of Chief Examiner: Patricia S. Ta'ani

Copies of this report may be obtained from the test center listed above.

**APPENDIX H**

**Additional Data from Student Interviews**

**TABLE 27**  
**SINCE YOU LEFT THE PROGRAM, HOW DO YOU**  
**FEEL ABOUT YOURSELF? (N=40)**

RESPONSES	<u>f</u>	PERCENT <sup>a</sup>
Feel good about self	16	40
Program gave them a second chance	6	15
Have more confidence	5	12.5
Raised self-esteem	4	10
Improved their personality	2	5
Made them want to succeed	2	5
Student stayed the same	2	5
Helped to focus on setting career goal	1	2.5
Showed how to keep a job	1	2.5
How to deal with life	1	2.5
Improved pride	1	2.5
Caused lower self-esteem	1	2.5

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of students.

**TABLE 28**  
**HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT OTHERS? (N=40)**

RESPONSES	<u>f</u>	PERCENT <sup>a</sup>
Program helped them to fill better towards others	18	45
Program taught them how to get along with others	12	30
Program made them have more respect toward others	10	25
Program made them feel closer toward others	9	22.5

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of students.

**TABLE 29**  
**WAS THERE ANYTHING ABOUT THE PROGRAM THAT**  
**CAUSED YOU TO FEEL THIS WAY? (N=40)**

RESPONSE	<u>f</u>	PERCENT <sup>a</sup>
Teacher teaching	20	50
Material teacher taught in the program helped them to feel better about themselves	12	30
Program helped them to be more tolerable	7	17.5
Program helped them to communicate	6	15
Program gave them more confidence	1	2.5
Program taught them how to work with others	1	2.5

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of students.

**TABLE 30**  
**WHERE DO YOU WORK NOW THAT YOU HAVE COMPLETED**  
**THE EMPLOYMENT PLUS PROGRAM?**

PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT	TITLE OF WORK	f	PERCENT <sup>a</sup>
Not working	n/a	6	15
Car stereo shop	Manager	1	2.5
Oscar Smith High <sup>b</sup>	Custodian	1	2.5
Aristocrat Towing	Tow truck driver	1	2.5
Great Value Supermarket	Cashier	1	2.5
Auditing company	Auditor	1	2.5
Plummer	Plummer helper	2	.5
Vico Construction	Construction	1	2.5
U.S. Navy	Electronics	1	2.5
Life Touch Pictures	Photography	1	2.5
Captain D's	Cashier	1	2.5
Norfolk Voc-Tec, Construction worker	Student, Construction	1	2.5
Tractor trailer company	Drive tractor	1	2.5
Health & Thon Company	Sheet metal helper	1	2.5



**Table 30** continued

PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT	TITLE OF WORK	<u>f</u>	PERCENT <sup>a</sup>
Lillian Vernon	Seasonal worker	1	2.5
Colorado Community College	Student, Snow boarding instructor	1	2.5
Family friend's business	n/a	1	2.5
Employment agency	Temporary employment	1	2.5
Old Country Buffet	Casher	1	2.5
Chesapeake Industrial Park	I.S.T. Computers	1	2.5
Farm Fresh <sup>b</sup>	Produce Manger	1	2.5
Aegean Pool	Pool cleaner	1	2.5
C&S Lawn Care	Landscaping	1	2.5
Framing company	Construction	1	2.5
Mechanical company	Refrigeration line & plumber	1	2.5
Great Bridge Exxon <sup>b</sup>	Mechanics helper	1	2.5
Diary Queen	Cashier	2	.5
Chesapeake Airport <sup>b</sup>	Maintenance	1	2.5

**Table 30** continued

PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT	TITLE OF WORK	f	PERCENT <sup>a</sup>
Meadow Brook Memorial Gardens	Supervisor	1	2.5
Pizza Hut	Cook	1	2.5
Wendy's	Cook/Cashier	1	2.5
Wilco	Cashier	1	2.5
Elite Team <sup>b</sup>	Door-to-door sales	1	2.5

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of students.

<sup>b</sup>Students have been working on this job since they began the Employment Plus Program.

**TABLE 31**  
**WHAT DID YOU LEARN IN THE PROGRAM THAT**  
**HELPED YOU AT HOME? (N=40)**

RESPONSES	f	PERCENT <sup>a</sup>
Patience	14	25
Getting along with others	10	35
Child care	5	12.5
Budgeting money	4	10
Organization	3	7.5
Helping family members	3	7.5
Being a good role model	1	2.5
Take accurate messages and telephone etiquette	1	2.5

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of students.

**TABLE 32**  
**DID YOU LEARN HOW TO WRITE A CHECK? (N=40)**

RESPONSES	<u>f</u>	PERCENT <sup>a</sup>
Yes	40	100
No	0	0

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of students.

**TABLE 33**  
**DID YOU LEARN HOW TO BALANCE A CHECK BOOK? (N=40)**

RESPONSES	<u>f</u>	PERCENT <sup>a</sup>
Yes	40	100
No	0	0

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of students.

**TABLE 34**  
**WHAT SKILLS DID THE TEACHER TEACH? (N=5)**

SKILLS TAUGHT BY TEACHER	<u>f</u>	PERCENT <sup>a</sup>
A combination of skills for all areas the students were required to pass	5	100
Work individually with the students that needed special assistance	5	100
Did not specialize in one particular area whether it was marketing or distribution	1	10
1. Job entry skills 2. Vocational assessment 3. Where to find job openings 4. Resume writing 5. Job applications 6. Job interviews 7. Follow-up 8. Letters of application 9. Budgeting and check writing	1	10

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of teachers.

**APPENDIX I**

**Additional Data from Teacher Interviews**

## TEACHER INTERVIEW GUIDE ANALYSIS

1. What is your feeling about the Employment Plus Program?

TEACHER RESPONSES ABOUT THE EMPLOYMENT PLUS PROGRAM
1. It was a great program to help students who had no other recourse to get out of school.
2. It serves a need that prior to the program was not being addressed.
3. It was one of the best programs that has been instituted in the high schools.
4. The program is really worthwhile, it provides an opportunity for students who could not make it in the regular school setting.
5. The Employment Plus Program serves a specific need for a specific student population.

4. How are students selected to be in the Employment Plus Program?

This program is designed for students who, because of their present aptitudes, abilities and training need specific assistance to be able to enter the workforce successfully. The following criteria are applicable citywide.

ADMISSION CRITERIA FOR THE EMPLOYMENT PLUS PROGRAM
1. The student must be at least 17 years of age.
2. The student must be at least two years behind in grade level.
3. The student must show the requisite ability to complete the GED preparation component within two years (this will be accomplished by means of a pre-GED test which will require a minimal acceptance score of 190.
4. The student must successfully complete an interview with the teacher.

5. What suggestions do you feel would improve the Employment Plus Program?

The suggestions that the teachers gave that they felt would improve the Employment Plus Program are listed below.

TEACHER SUGGESTIONS ON IMPROVEMENT OF THE EMPLOYMENT PLUS PROGRAM
1. To have the student do volunteer work within the school or neighboring school, such as an internship, to stay in the program. If the student meets the criteria, they would be placed in a job.
2. To see more cooperation within the school system for hiring and working with Employment Plus students.
3. To have some schools offer the Employment Plus class in the morning and other schools offer the class in the afternoon so that some of the students could go to work in the morning.
4. After going through many changes over a five-year period, the employment Plus Program is now at top notch level.
5. Set up the Employment Plus Program on a block scheduling basis so that the class would be from September to January. A new class would be scheduled from January to June. This would allow more students to go through the program.
6. To see more students attending the Vocational Technical Center to pursue a trade.

6. Is there a follow-up on students to see what they are doing after they have been out of the program for one year or more. Explain how it is done.

The teachers provided this response: since the inception of the program in 1991, there has not been a follow-up. The teachers felt that something needed to be done to track the

students after they have been out of the program for one year or more.

7. How many students have mastered the Employment Plus competence at 80 percent?

TEACHER RESPONSES TO HOW MANY STUDENTS HAVE MASTERED THE EMPLOYMENT PLUS COMPETENCIES AT 80 PERCENT
1. All 62 competencies were not designed for the Employment Plus Program but for all of the vocational programs. All teachers did not check off on the competencies and put them in the student records.
2. Some of the competencies out of the 62 blend over into the other vocational programs. The competencies are not put in the student records.
3. The 62 competencies are for all of the vocational programs. The teacher put all the competency sheets in the student records.
4. All 62 competencies should apply to the Employment Plus Program because the Employment Plus Program is not just GED, but it is vocational, also. The student should have mastered the GED competencies at 80 percent if the student made a score of 45 or better in a section. But if the students made below a 40 on a section, then they did not master the section at 80 percent.
5. The students who pass their GED should master the GED competencies.

8. Are the competency sheets available for use for research as a source of data?



TEACHER RESPONSES TO THE AVAILABILITY OF COMPETENCY SHEETS  
FOR RESEARCH

1. The competency sheets were to be checked off and put in the student records but it was not required.

2. The teacher was unclear on the use of the competency sheet, however, filed the sheets in the student's record on an individual basis. Teacher attempted to cover all of the competencies. The teacher did not do a lot of individualization in the class. Helped the student with their special problems.

3. The teacher believes the competency sheets should be placed in the student's record, but this is not required by the state. Competencies are not required to be kept with the student records but it can be kept in the student's vocational record and not the cumulative record. There needs to be more consistency on how this should be done by the teachers.

4. The teacher was told the competency sheet must go into the files of the student record. If they are not in the files, the teacher should have them.

5. The teacher placed student competency sheets in the student records.

**APPENDIX J**

**Additional Data from Employer Interviews**

**TABLE 35**  
**WHAT IS YOUR OVERALL OPINION ABOUT HIRING OTHER**  
**EMPLOYMENT PLUS STUDENTS? (N=10)**

EMPLOYER RESPONSES	<u>f</u>	PERCENT <sup>a</sup>
Would hire	10	100
Would not hire	0	0

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of employers.

**TABLE 36**  
**WHAT DO EMPLOYMENT PLUS EMPLOYERS KNOW**  
**ABOUT THE EMPLOYMENT PLUS PROGRAM? (N=40)**

EMPLOYER RESPONSES	<u>f</u>	PERCENT <sup>a</sup>
The employer is familiar with the program	10	100
The employer thinks it is a great program	1	10
The employer thinks the school system should be credited for having the program	1	10
The program teaches the student to be independent	1	10

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of employers.

**TABLE 37**  
**WHAT ARE THE EMPLOYMENT PLUS STUDENT CHANCES**  
**FOR ADVANCEMENT? (N=10)**

EMPLOYER RESPONSES	<u>f</u>	PERCENT <sup>a</sup>
Students worked while they were in the program	6	60
Four students now work full time	4	40
One student was promoted to produce manager	1	10
One student has the same chance for advancement	1	10

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of employers.

**TABLE 38**  
**WHAT KIND OF CHANGES WOULD YOU RECOMMEND TO IMPROVE**  
**THE EMPLOYMENT PLUS PROGRAM? (N=10)**

EMPLOYER RESPONSES	<u>f</u>	PERCENT <sup>a</sup>
No changes	8	80
Would like to see students work during the summer	1	10
Would like to see the time changed for when the students report to work	1	10

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of employers.

**TABLE 39**  
**OVERALL, WHAT GRADE, A-B-C-D-E-F, WOULD YOU GIVE THE**  
**EMPLOYMENT PLUS STUDENTS? (N=10)**

EMPLOYER RESPONSE	<u>f</u>	PERCENT <sup>a</sup>
Grade A	4	40
Grade B	6	60

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of employers.

## VITA

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### EDUCATION

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University  
Doctoral Candidate in Educational Administration,  
1998.

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University  
Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study, 1984

Virginia State University  
M.Ed. Industrial Education and Technology, 1974

Norfolk State University  
B.S. Industrial Education, 1967

### EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

1982 - Present	Assistant Principal, Deep Creek High School, Chesapeake, VA
1977-82	Assistant Principal, Great Bridge Junior High School, Chesapeake, VA
1976-77	Assistant Principal, Crestwood Junior High School, Chesapeake, VA
1967-76	Teacher, John Yeates High School, Suffolk, VA

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