

Best Practices in School Discipline Workgroup
January 25, 2013
Minutes

Attendees:

Susan Barrett, Katrina Dehorn, Janice Briscoe, Theo Devine, Ginny Dolan, A. Blaine Hawley, Heather Lageman, Debra Munk, Katherine Rabb, Elizabeth Ray, Jean Satterfield, Frank Stetson, David Stovenour, Stanley Truman, Buzz Williams, Rosanne Wilson, June Zillich, Jill Hauk, Megan Lucy, Lynsey Westan, Meghan Finney, Chuck Buckler, Andrea Alexander, Sally Dorman, Martha Essenmacher, Judy Kowarsky, and Toni Montoya

- I. Sally Dorman opened the meeting. Given the predicted weather, she offered to move through the day without a formal break. She opened the floor for discussion/reaction to the Sandy Hook tragedy, which took place since our last meeting. Harford County Schools shared that they are working on balancing public trust and doing what is right for children with the spike in office referrals since Sandy Hook.
- II. Toni Montoya gave an overview of DocuShare, which is where reference documents are being stored for this Workgroup. Articles will be placed on docushare. Toni: handout passed out. Details to access docushare were described with screen shots.
- III. Katharine Rabb shared the progress and actions of the Code of Conduct workgroup. They are focusing now on the critical features of the code to build guidelines for revisions to the code of conduct. The goal is to reduce the disproportionality of suspensions and expulsions. In addition, surveys of parents, students, superintendents, BOEs, etc. are being circulated through the Advancement Project and there is talk about extending the deadline for them. They are considering moving the regional conferences back to September so more work can be completed. Meeting on 2/27 will include a more in depth report out. Workgroup minutes will be on the MSDE webpage from both workgroups.
- IV. Presentation #1
Frank Stetson presented on "Rethinking Suspensions: *Student Suspensions as Teaching and Learning Issues*" along with several colleagues from Montgomery County Public Schools. The colleagues are Betty Collins and Dr. Benjamin OuYang. This presentation was given at NASSP. Details and Presentation are on the Docu-share.
 - A) First, the presenters declared suspension as a race issue; in keeping with the research. Montgomery County discovered that changing the discipline policy did not work to reduce suspensions. So they asked the question, "What would you do if you could not suspend?" They also mandated that only a principal could suspend. They created a workgroup whose emphasis was on teaching and learning. Implementation of the recommendations did reduce the number of Suspensions.
 - B) MCPS Disproportionate Suspension Rates Workgroup focused on teaching and learning, student engagement, behavior development, and identifying alternative responses to inappropriate behaviors

C) Recommendations: Address Cultural Competence, Install Equitable Practices, Develop Relationships, Increase and Improve Communication. Use suspension ONLY as a consequence for behavior that is disruptive and detrimental to the operations of the school.

D) RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Build local capacity of current and aspiring leaders in behavior management, data analyses, cultural sensitivity, etc.
2. Include suspensions as a MSTAT data point
3. Review data at the district and school level
4. Disaggregate data by incident type.
5. School Improvement must include issues of equity
6. Focus is on "How we change adult practice"

E) OUTCOMES:

1. SPECIAL ED disproportionality rates rise to the top, especially for African American males
2. Number of OOS suspensions and trends in reasons for them
3. Downward trend in numbers of suspensions including the last two years

F) The Principal's Perspective

1. Rigor, relevance, relationship, and routine are the 4 R's. Rules without relationship lead to rebellion
2. Have to ask if physical safety violated;
3. All administrators are involved and must come to consensus.
4. Consequences are most often suspension, and or multiple after school detentions.
5. Student Voice, monthly town hall meetings—share the data with students;
6. Build in student appropriate incentives

V. Presentation #2-

Susan Barrett, National Technical Assistance Center on PBIS/Sheppard Pratt Health System
Ginny Dolan, Anne Arundel County Public Schools
Katrina Debnam, Johns Hopkins University, Bloomberg School of Public Health
Details and Presentation are on the Docu-share.

A) School-wide PBIS is a decision making framework that guides selection, integration, and implementation of the best evidence-based academic and behavioral practices for improving important academic and behavior outcomes for all students.

B) Evidence-based features of SW-PBIS

- i. Prevention
- ii. Define and teach positive social expectations
- iii. Acknowledge positive behavior
- iv. Arrange consistent consequences for problem behavior
- v. On-going collection and use of data for decision-making
- vi. Continuum of intensive, individual interventions.
- vii. Administrative leadership – Team-based implementation (Systems that support effective practices)

C) Anne Arundel County presented on the history of PBIS in their School System and how it has become an integral part of their District Plan. They have also integrated strategies to address disproportionality.

- D) Johns Hopkins provided the rigorous research and findings they have published about PBIS implementation; impact on staff; and impact on Students.
- E) All presenters pointed to the Maryland Safe and Supportive Schools Initiative which is in its 3rd year of implementation. Maryland was one of 11 states to receive funding through this competitive grant process. Goals are to:
 - i. Assess school climate, student engagement, and the school environment using a validated school climate measure
 - ii. Implement evidence-based programs (EBPs) to meet student needs, based on survey
 - iii. Improve conditions for learning,
 - iv. Reduce school violence and substance use, and improve student engagement and the school environment to support student learning.