Creating Safe School Environments: Preventing School Violence

School Teams: Strategic Planning for Integrating Promotion, Prevention & Intervention into School Policies and Practices

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Objectives

• 1. Understand the science behind the prevention and intervention paradigm related to safe school climate and academic and social-emotional achievement
• 2. Understand the critical need for school-based leadership teams to manage a safe and social-emotionally healthy school climate
• 3. Understand the steps to building effective school and system climate teams
• 4. Learn the ways to address the “how-to” for gaining buy-in, and selecting implementable aligned best practices for promotion, prevention, early and intensive interventions
• 5. Learn from actual field-tested examples of how school leadership teams have been formed, operationalized, supported and sustained; moving from an idea, to design of teams, to management and needs assessment over a multi-year period for application in your schools
• 6. Discuss and provide examples of ongoing activities to support goals and objectives resulting in measurable outcomes using the Logic Model
• 7. Understand how to implement steps for sustainability.
AVOIDING THE DYSFUNCTIONAL SCHOOL
“RICH IN SERVICES”

STUDENT SERVICES
SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST
SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER
*Special Education

SCHOOL SECURITY
*Police
* Violence Prevention
*Drug & Alcohol Prevention Program
Drug Counseling

SCHOOL NURSE
*STD/Pregnancy Prevention

HEALTH SERVICES
*Physical and Mental Health Services

SCHOOL COUNSELORS
*College *Class Schedule
*Mentors

SOCIAL SERVICES
*SSI *Medicaid
*Teen Mother Counseling *Pregnancy Prevention
*Child Abuse/Neglect Prevention

WHAT’S MISSING?
- INTERNAL SCHOOL TEAM COORDINATION
- TEACHER TRAINING/CONSULTATION
- POSTIVE BEHAVIORAL SUPPORTS
- SOCIAL SKILL INSTRUCTION
- INSTRUCTIONAL LEARNING SUPPORT
- INTEGRATED SERVICE PLANNING & PROBLEM SOLVING
- FAMILY CENTERED SYSTEM
- SUPPORT FOR PARENT SKILL & INVOLVEMENT
- COLLABORATION

Adapted from slide by of National Resource Center for Safe Schools Based upon Dwyer, 1992
Guiding Principles

• Complex problems can be scientifically identified and remedied using best practices.

• The change process requires sustained system and school-based leadership & ownership.

• Change requires strategic plans and action steps, and takes multiple years.

• Systems of ongoing quality improvement with a focus on needed modifications and adherence to fidelity and results-based outcomes need to be in place.

• Examples of existing initiatives you are doing and how you know they are working?
SAFE, SUPPORTIVE
AND
Successful
## Matrix of Successful Programs

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<tr>
<th>PROGRAM</th>
<th>Preschool</th>
<th>Lower El</th>
<th>Upper El</th>
<th>Middle/High Sch</th>
<th>Schoolw</th>
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Systems Strategic Plan

• Improve capacity to plan and deploy
• Improve policies, procedures and practices
• Improve school climate
• **Provide social emotional learning & reinforcement** *
• **Provide positive behavioral policies and practices** *
• Develop early warning & response system
• Enhance school-agency collaboration
• Enhance family engagement
• Provide focused professional development
• Focus funding & human resources
• Develop quality standards & ongoing improvement measures
Responsibility for Fidelity to Guiding Principle

School System Leadership Team
Directs Principles & Strategic Plans

School-based Leadership Team
Manages the implementation of the initiatives, & actions – the climate policies and practices as part of school’s plan
Why Efforts Fail

• Lack of support from system leadership
• Lack of systemic approaches
• Lack of monitoring and accountability
• Weak professional development
• Fragmentation & lack of effective communication between and among agencies, services, police, families and schools
• Cultural, structural, and historical disconnects between agencies and schools and families
• Weak implementation of innovative efforts
• Failure to systematize change in most projects – pilot programs not going to scale
• Inconsistency of services across schools
• Interventions nor robust enough to address multiple risk factors

• Other reasons why efforts fail?
The Parable of the Fish and Fish Bowl

Is the Problem:
• The Fish,
• The Water, or
• Both?

Adapted from: Beth Doll, University of Nebraska
Think Ecologically: What are the Implications of this for All Players?

- Students
- Teachers
- Staff
- Principles
- Superintendents
- SEA
- Families
- Agencies & CBOs

Adapted from: Beth Doll, University of Nebraska
Identify Protective and Risk Factors at all Levels

Where to intervene?
School, Family and Social Risk & Protection

- High levels of protection do not eliminate impact of high levels of risk
- Risk and protective factors often accumulate and also interact
- Risk and protective factors have immediate as well as longer-term outcomes
Student Level

Risk Factors

• Chronic illness
• Disability
• Poor social skills
• Low frustration tolerance
• Lack of empathy
• Alienation
• Attention and disruptive behavior problems
• Impulsivity
• Unmet mental health needs
• Traumatic stress
• Other student risk factors?

Protective Factors

• Cooperative
• Effective social skills
• Even temperament
• Empathic
• Effective listening skills
• Eager to learn
• Caring
• Tolerant
• Respectful
• Alert & attentive
• Deals effectively with conflict
• Deals effectively with frustration
• Other protective factors?
School and Community Level Risk Factors

**School**
- High rates of low academic achievement and academic failure
- Bullying
- Peer rejection
- Poor student-teacher relationships
- Poor behavior management
- Gangs
- Poor curriculum and instruction
- Poor family inclusion
- Poor cultural awareness & inclusion

**Community**
- Generational poverty
- High unemployment rate
- Scarcity of affordable housing
- Lack of mental, medical and legal services
- Food deserts
- Discrimination
- Neighborhood violence and crime Pair of ACEs
Prevalence of Academic Success
By Number of Risk and Protective Factors

Six State Student Survey of 6th-12th Graders, Public School Students

Number of Risk Factors

Number of Protective Factors

Prevalence

0 to 1
2 to 3
4 to 5
6 to 7
8 to 9
10+

0%
10%
20%
30%
40%
50%
60%
70%
80%
90%
100%
Stress Matters

- **Positive**: Brief increases in heart rate, mild elevations in stress hormone levels.
- **Tolerable**: Serious, temporary stress responses, buffered by supportive relationships.
- **Toxic**: Prolonged activation of stress response systems in the absence of protective relationships.
Anxiety and Toxic Stress

- Compromised working memory
- Less attention
- Limits to creativity
The Solution is Not About “Fixing” Teachers or Students

• The Implications of the work of Kimberly Schonert-Reichl and colleagues
  – “Stress contagion in the classroom? The link between classroom teacher burnout and morning cortisol in elementary school students” (Oberle & Schonert-Reichel, 2016)

• The Implications of the work of Mark Greenberg and Trish Jennings
  – Reduced teacher stress-> changed teacher behaviors->changed student outcomes. (Jennings, Minnici, & Yoder, 2018)

• “The best approach to safety is to fix schools and support children and staff.” (Osher, Sandler & Kelley, & 2001)
| Conditions for Learning | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| **Connection, Caring & Trust** | **Social Emotional Learning & Support** |
| **Positive Behavioral Approaches & Supports** | **High Academic Standards & Learning Supports** |
Characteristics of Strong School Climate/Leadership Teams

• **Inclusive yet efficient**
• Task-driven – Action planners & implementers
• Connected to your intervention team (student support team)
• **Why use your existing leadership team?**
  – Parallel team is not as efficient
  – Parallel teams can reduce *value*
  – Parallel team separates climate from academic mission of school
  – Stress on school’s human resources & time
School Climate Team Membership (cont.)

• Selection Criteria
  – Political – powerbrokers
  – Administrative – in charge & instructional leader
  – Socially inclusive – Cultural/ethnic leaders
  – Functional – Specialized knowledge – school psychologist?

• How chosen?
  – Volunteers requested
  – Chosen by peers - elected
  – Selected by administrator
  – Selected by community agency

• Other Ideas for Who and How chosen?
Develop a School Leadership Team to Implement Social/Emotional Climate
Core team members build the bridge across universal & individual interventions Teams.

Linking climate/leadership team to student support team

- Principal
- Teacher rep
- School psychologist

School Climate Leadership Team

Student Support & Intervention Team
Systemic Strategic Plan (cont.)

- Implement strategies developmentally over 5 years
- Employ 3-tiered approach to prevention/intervention
- Positive behavioral approaches, social emotional learning and student connectedness
- Build structures to support change
  - District Level
    - Provide appropriate professional development and coaching support
    - Improve and monitor skill-set and knowledge of ALL (Paraprofessionals, SROs, Agency & family)
    - Target resources that go to schools
    - Utilize stakeholder workgroups to select best practices for all schools
    - Monitor, respond to and support the use of Conditions for Learning data
    - Identify a set of programs and strategies that the district will use
Evaluation Methodology

• Analyze Available Data
  – Reports
  – Evaluations
  – Archival Data
  – Who looks at office referrals? Attendance?

• Key informant interviews

• Stakeholder Outreach

• Case studies
  – Stratified Random Selection of Schools
  – Stratified Random Selection of Classes to Observe and Teachers, Students, Staff, and Families to Interview
  – Expert Informants (school psychologist?)
  – Observations
  – Examination and Contextualization of School Archival Data
Intervention Evaluation Criteria

- Outcomes;
- Information on differential effects;
- Cost;
- Staffing implications;
- Flexibility;
- Compatibility;
- Implications for instructional time and;
- External support needed & available.
Evaluation Methodology (cont.)

- Validation Activities
  - Statistical Analyses
  - Focus Groups – students, staff, parents, partners

- Epidemiological Survey:
  - Conditions for Learning Survey
  - Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System
Work at All Three Levels

Build a School-wide Foundation

Intervene Early & Provide Focused Youth Development Activities

Provide Individualized Intensive Supports

Provide coordinated, intensive, sustained, culturally competent, individualized, child- and family-driven and focused services and supports that address needs while building assets.

Implement strategies and provide supports that address risk factors and build protective factors for students at risk for severe academic or behavioral difficulties.

Universal prevention & youth social skill development approaches, caring school climate, positive & proactive approach to discipline, personalized instruction, cultural competence, & strong family involvement.

ACEs & Pair of ACEs – Trauma informed plans and the Prevention/Intervention Model
Trauma Informed ACEs

- **Number of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE Score)**
- **Women Percent (N =32,539 )**   **Men Percent (N =21,245)**   **Total Percent (N =53,784)**
- 0  40.0%  41.4%  40.7%
- 1  22.4%  24.9%  23.6%
- 2  13.4%  13.2%  13.3%
- 3  8.0%  8.1%  8.1%
- 4 or more 16.2%  12.4%  14.3%

- **Note:** Reports and articles that use data from other years and/or other states may contain different estimates.

Evidence for Population-Based Perspectives on Children's Behavioral Adjustment and Needs for Service Delivery in Schools

Jean A. Baker Michigan State University, Randy W. Kamphaus, Arthur M. Home, and Anne P. Winsor The University of Georgia

Abstract. American school children show tremendous academic as well as intra- and interpersonal behavioral differences in the classroom. Current service delivery models within schools may be insufficient to meet the demand and diversity of students' needs, especially in schools serving students placed at risk by adverse life circumstances, such as poverty. School Psychology Review, 2006, Volume 35, No. 1, pp. 31-46
Impact of Climate on Math Achievement: National Surveys

- **NAEP** (*National Assessment of Educational Progress*)
  - At all three grade levels students in schools reporting an above-average climate had higher mean NAEP mathematics scale scores than students in schools reporting average or below-average school climate on the same measure.

- **NELS** (*The National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988*)
  - Adolescent perceptions of connections with teachers predicted academic growth in mathematics.
American Institutes for Research

• Results From an Evaluation of a Demonstration Program to Build Systemic Social and Emotional Learning in Eight Large Urban School Districts (2015)

—Kimberly Kendziora, David Osher, Lawrence B. Friedman, Lisa Hoogstra, Andrew Swanlund, Paul Bailey, Clare Halloran, Mark Garibaldi, Manolya Tanyu, Andrea Boyle, Michelle Olivia, and Matthew Burke
Selected Qualitative Findings

- Most superintendents affirmed a commitment to sustaining and growing SEL and said it was important to their goals.
- SEL has been embedded as a pillar in strategic plans.
- SEL is increasingly aligned with other districtwide initiatives.
- District leaders reported that the focus on SEL was contributing both to teacher quality and students’ ability to demonstrate the academic behaviors (such as attention-span).
- District leaders reported that SEL was contributing to reductions in exclusionary discipline in some districts.
Results From an Evaluation of a Demonstration Program to Build Systemic Social and Emotional Learning in Eight Large Urban School Districts
School SEL Implementation Activities and Student Record Data

• Controlling for student demographics, in 2013–14:
  – **Anchorage**: Higher implementation $\leftrightarrow$ fewer disciplinary referrals.
  – **Cleveland**: Higher implementation $\leftrightarrow$ higher reading and mathematics scores, higher GPAs, and fewer suspensions.
  – **Chicago**: No significant associations were found.
  – **Nashville**: Higher implementation $\leftrightarrow$ higher GPAs and mathematics scores (but not reading scores), higher attendance, and fewer suspensions. However, Algebra 1 scores were significantly lower in higher-implementing schools.
Problem Defined

• Objectify the problem in measurable observable terms
• Clarify how problem is barrier to school’s vision – Conditions for Learning
• Identify the root causes
• Verify root causes with data
• Consider effectiveness of present interventions (including policies and practices)
Actions

• Clearly connected to problem’s causes
• Utilize proven “best” practices that have been shown to address problem & causes
• Establish steps required to enable action – may involve multiple “actions” prior to final action.
• Include all stakeholders in selecting actions including leadership for needed resources
• Define who will do what, when and how!
Create classroom communities offering all children a strong sense of safety and belonging

- See Edutopia, “How Learning Happens”
- https://www.edutopia.org/how-learning-happens
## Logic Model

### Problem Defined

Student behavioral referrals are increasing in all grades. Achievement scores remain low.

### Action

- Adopt: resilient classroom practices
- Class meetings
- De-escalation techniques
- Planning centers

### Outputs

- # of teacher trainings
- Observation using key-word scale
- Documentation of class meetings
- Implementation of planning center practices as defined

### Outcomes

- Reduce number of referrals
- Increased student attention & instruction time
- Increased positive measures on CFL survey by students and teachers

### Vision

Improved academic achievement
Determine outputs

• Measure problems/activities that require action plans
• Selection of best practices – include implementers
• Selection of criteria for each implementation
• Fidelity measures for outputs:
  – # of trainings for class meetings & training evaluated based on criteria
  – # class meetings held; # observed; # evaluated for fidelity & results & remedies

Ideas??
Determine outcomes

• Define outcome measures using problem data and desired benchmarks, goals
• Whenever possible use existing data sets
• Outcomes must be objective – observable
• Ideas??
Address the *Conditions for Learning* in Your Action Plan
Conditions for Learning

Connection, Caring & Trust

Social Emotional Learning & Support

Positive Behavioral Approaches & Supports

High Academic Standards & Learning Supports
Connection Caring & Trust

- Train and resource classroom/school resiliency
- Student focus groups – initial steps
- Class meetings – can connect to SEL
- Advisories for all & address academic guidance and personal behavioral issues
- Extracurricular activities – training sponsors
- Name badges with large print FIRST names for all
- Family liaison staff
- Training all staff including safety/security to be respectful
Teach Social Skills

FINDINGS FROM A NATIONAL SURVEY

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Support for this study provided by:
The Atlantic Philanthropies, The California Endowment, The NoVo Foundation, and The Raikes Foundation
CASEL’s
Teaching 5 SEL Competencies

• Self awareness
• Social awareness
• Self management
• Relationship skills
• Responsible decision making
Social Emotional Learning

- Teaching social skills has been shown to increase achievement, attention & reduce behavior problems
- Start with universal SEL in the primary grades – get quickest buy-in
- Use social skills in all school environments – cafeteria, halls, recess
- Train teachers to teach SEL (2 days training) and staff to reinforce (3-6 hours) & give principal’s instructional leadership role to ensure instruction happens as required by SEL program
- Provide parent education and tips for home
- Include in language arts, creative writing, and other academic subjects.

See CASEL.org
Positive Behavior

• Rewrite discipline code using positives
• Provide students and families information to get help for behavioral issues and disseminate as part of code document
• Establish planning centers to replace in-school suspension so that students can be helped to find new ways to address their academic frustration and behaviors
• Provide PD for staff to de-escalate problems and identify early warning signs of academic and behavioral issues
• Train security staff to reinforce positive behaviors
• Establish well managed peer mediation programs
• Utilize student support team to address developing and challenging student behavioral issues
• Establish restorative justice response to problem behaviors
• Understand and when possible address ACEs
High Academic Standards & Learning Supports

• Design and support effective high standard curriculum and instruction for all
• Establish an effective student support team (SST) with knowledgeable members & make referral process easy – with resources at the table
• Engage all in adopting a problem solving “what works” approach to well identified academic problems
• Ensure that all support challenging academic standards and their instruction – principals
• Support teachers in using individualized and targeted needs-based instruction
• Support and resource after school and Saturday instructional supports
• Utilize technology to support curriculum and instruction
• Monitor student progress through SST
Lessons Learned

• Planning requires inclusive strong leadership beyond the school.
• Communication and transparency with stakeholders is paramount.
• Training must be ongoing involving coaching and monitoring.
• Data systems must be in place & user friendly.
• Data must be used to examine fidelity & outcomes.
• Climate team must be connected to all levels of intervention services.
• All activities must be aligned & seamless.
### Logic Model Worksheet

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<tr>
<th>PROBLEM DEFINED</th>
<th>ACTION</th>
<th>OUTPUTS</th>
<th>OUTCOMES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vision</td>
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What might you work on and who are your allies needed to get started – establish initiatives - monitor and sustain them?
Threat Assessment

Check NASP for threat Assessment and Crisis Response

Establish a Systemic Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management Process

The FBI’s Behavioral Threat Assessment Center (Amman et al. 2017) has offered an effective and systematic threat assessment.

See: Reeves & Brock (2017)
Readings

Resources:

School Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management


NASP Assessing the Safety of the School Environment Using the Framework for Safe and Successful Schools
• This assessment should be utilized collaboratively by the school safety team and school administration to guide efforts and identify needs within the unique context of each school community. Consider using this assessment and the attached result analysis and action planning tool in conjunction with the Policy Recommendations for Implementation the Framework for Safe and Successful Schools. Data from this assessment is not a valid method of comparing schools or measuring progress; it is intended only to guide discussion, planning, goal setting, and decision making.


Implementing the Framework for Safe and Successful Schools
Citations


“Osher, Moroney, and Williamson successfully integrate research, practice, and policy to help educators develop and implement effective and sustainable models to nurture caring schools that all children and educators deserve.”

——MARK T. GREENBERG, BENNETT CHAIR OF PREVENTION RESEARCH, PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY

EDITED BY DAVID B. PENTIMONTI AND SANDRA WILLIAMSON

Creating Safe, Equitable, Engaging Schools brings together the collective expertise of over one hundred thirty experts from a variety of fields to shine how school leaders can create communities where students feel safe, supported, nurtured, and engaged. This book is an essential guide for making sense of the latest research and practical approaches and will help schools and school districts select appropriate interventions across a wide variety of domains, including social and emotional learning, trauma, restorative practices, and academic needs of all students. It offers an essential guide for making sense of the complex issues of school leadership. "Creating Safe, Equitable, and Engaging Schools: A Comprehensive, Evidence-Based Approach to Supporting Students" is a critical resource for understanding and adopting evidence-based practices and making programmatic improvements. Educators will be inspired and inspired to adapt the strategies for learning, growth, and development. Deborah Moroney is a vice president for policy, practice, and systems change at American Institutes for Research. Sandra Williamson is a vice president for policy, practice, and systems change at American Institutes for Research.

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