

FIX SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

**How We Can Fix School Discipline Toolkit for
Community Members**



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Dear Students, Parents, Community Members and Organizations,

During the 2011-2012 school year, California schools issued more suspensions than diplomas.¹ Among suspended and expelled students, glaring racial disparities are apparent.² Overwhelming numbers of students who have been suspended or expelled from schools are permanently pushed out of school and into the criminal justice system. Even more troubling, suspension and expulsion are not actually effective methods for preventing unwanted student behavior or making schools safer.³

Harsh school discipline policies and practices exact extraordinary harm on students and impact communities throughout California. Out-of-school suspension, except for the most serious safety-related offenses, amounts to unsound educational policy. It has no benefit for our students, our schools, or our communities. It is time for a change! **The How We Can Fix School Discipline** Toolkit was designed to provide tools that you can use to make the change in your community.

Over the past two decades educators have created proven, research-based alternatives to harsh school removal practices. These alternatives work for all students, not only those struggling with behavior.

Some educators and community leaders in California, who are already implementing proven alternative approaches to managing students' behavior and improving school climate, have begun to see real positive, measurable results. In this Toolkit, you will learn about these leaders, their successes, and how to get their help.

Unfortunately, in other communities, some educational leaders know there are options but they are not putting them in place or are erecting false barriers to avoid making changes. In other places, educators do not know about alternatives or do not think there is a problem with discipline practices that needs to be fixed.

This Toolkit is a step-by-step guide with ready-to-use resources, sample letters and information about other leaders in California who can help you fix school discipline. You can tear out and use most of these pages. With this Toolkit, you can convince your school and school district to put in place great alternatives to harsh discipline that actually work for all students. Through your advocacy, we can begin to stop the school-to-prison pipeline in California!

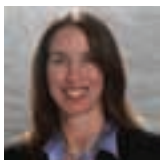
Step-by-step, you will learn:

- ▶ Why we must reform school discipline in California;
- ▶ About proven, effective alternatives to ineffective harsh discipline practices;
- ▶ About the experts and allies in the state who can help you make change;
- ▶ How to collect data and community stories to advocate to school leaders;
- ▶ How to ensure that schools in your community properly implement the alternatives to harsh discipline; and much more.

To learn more, read more interviews, and access **bolded and underlined** tools, you can visit www.FixSchoolDiscipline.org. There you will find the latest research, newspaper articles, and updates on community victories and best practices. You can also click on the "Help!" tab to get technical assistance from Public Counsel, the not for profit law firm working to make sure all California students have a chance to stay in school and succeed.

It is our hope that you will use this Toolkit to help schools stop the harsh and punitive discipline practices that push students out of the classroom, to greatly reduce the number of suspensions and expulsions, and to improve school culture and climate.

Sincerely,



Laura Faer
Statewide Education
Rights Director



Sarah Omojola
Statewide Education Advocate

1 California Department of Education DataQuest, available at <http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/> (2013)

2 Understanding School Discipline in California: Perception and Practice, EdSource September 2012, citing *Opportunities Suspended: The Disparate Impact of Disciplinary Exclusion from School*, The Civil Rights Project, UCLA, August 2012. <http://civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/resources/projects/center-for-civil-rights-remedies/school-to-prison-folder/federal-reports/upcoming-ccrr-research>

3 *Creating Positive School Discipline*, Dignity in Schools, citing Russell Skiba et al., *Are Zero Tolerance Policies Effective in the Schools?*, American Psychological Association Zero Tolerance Task Force, 2006.

WHY WE MUST REFORM SCHOOL DISCIPLINE IN CALIFORNIA

The Big Picture:

One of the most important functions of public education is to lay the foundation for future opportunity and educational success for all students. However, California's current harsh discipline policies and practices operate in the opposite way. Instead of correcting students' behavior and making communities and schools safer, the quick-push out methods—out-of-school suspension and expulsion—deprive students of the chance to receive the help and education they need, making it far more likely that they will enter the criminal justice system, drop out of school, and place their future options in jeopardy.

How do harsh and zero-tolerance discipline methods work in California schools?

Currently, California schools issue more suspensions than diplomas each year.⁴ During the 2011-2012 school year, California schools issued more than 700,000 out-of-school suspensions,⁵ and more than 366,000 students were suspended out-of-school at least one time.⁶

"That's enough students suspended out-of-school to fill every seat in all the professional baseball and football stadiums in the state, with no guarantee of any adult supervision."⁷ In the same year, only 418,598 students received their high school diplomas.⁸

Contrary to common perceptions, a significant number of California's suspensions are unrelated to school safety but instead are for minor, vaguely defined behavior infractions.⁹

Disruption/willful defiance (often simply called "willful defiance") was identified as the most "severe" grounds for 43% of all suspensions—more than any other grounds—and 6% of all expulsions in California in 2012-13, and has been applied to failing to turn in homework or bring the right items to class, not paying attention, refusing to follow directions, and failing to take off a hat.¹⁰

Suspensions for "willful defiance" can include anything from chewing gum in class, to talking back, or wearing the wrong clothes. As a former Vice Principal in Los Angeles told the Associated Press when explaining why he took suspension off the quick-trigger menu, "willful defiance" is the big umbrella --- anything can fit in that category.

Do suspensions and expulsions change and improve student behavior?

Two decades of research have clearly shown that "there is no research base to support frequent suspension or expulsion in response to non-violent and mundane forms of adolescent misbehavior;... frequent suspension and expulsion are associated with negative outcomes; and better alternatives are available."¹¹

4 California Department of Education DataQuest, available at <http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/> (2012) [hereafter, CDE DataQuest].

5 Id.

6 Losen, D., Martinez, T., & Gillespie, J. (2012), *Suspended Education in California*, The Center for Civil Rights Remedies at the Civil Rights Project.

7 Id.

8 CDE Dataquest (2012).

9 Skiba, R.J. (2000), *Zero Tolerance, Zero Evidence: An Analysis of School Disciplinary Practice*.

10 CDE Dataquest (2013)

11 Losen, D.J. (2011), *Discipline Policies, Successful Schools and Racial Justice*.

In fact, these strategies often have the opposite effect of exacerbating the problem, sending the student on an unsupervised vacation and further alienating him or her from the school environment.¹²

Which students are suspended and expelled in California?

In California, students of color are suspended at disproportionately higher rates than white students. Students with disabilities and LGBTQ students are also suspended at rates much higher than their non-disabled peers.

Gender also plays a role in whether a student will be suspended. Nationwide, more suspensions are given out to males than females; males make up 66% of the students receiving a single out-of-school suspension and 74% of the students expelled.¹³

In California, African American students are 3 times as likely to be suspended as their white peers (18% vs. 6%). In some districts, the disparities are more profound:

The out of school suspension rate for blacks in Los Angeles Unified is nearly 6 times the rate for whites (17.3% vs. 2.9%). The Latino rate is 5.2%.

For San Francisco Unified, black suspension rates are more than 6x the rate for whites (14.4% vs. 2.2%). The Latino rate is 5%.

For Sacramento City USD, black suspension rates are 3 1/2 times that of whites (21.2% vs. 6%). The Latino rate is 9.3%.¹⁴

Research about student behavior, race, and discipline has found no evidence that African-American overrepresentation in school suspension is due to higher rates of misbehavior.¹⁵ Instead African-American students are far more likely to be punished than their white classmates for reasons that require the subjective judgment of school staff, such as disrespect, excessive noise, and loitering.¹⁶ For students with disabilities, the race disparities are even more glaring. In California,

nearly 28% of African American students with disabilities are suspended at least once.¹⁷

Children most likely to be suspended or expelled are those most in need of adult supervision and professional help because they have witnessed violence or been subjected to other major home life stressors and trauma. These children are also the most likely to have no supervision at home.¹⁸

In San Mateo County, roughly one-third of the youth in foster care for more than two years had been suspended; foster children were also ten times more likely than their non-foster counterparts to be expelled from their school district.¹⁹ A study of middle school students in San Francisco found that one in every 6 students (an average of five or six children in every classroom) surveyed experienced at least one traumatic event, such as community violence, abuse, the death of a loved one, putting them at risk for mental health and trauma related symptoms that can manifest into difficult classroom behaviors.²⁰

Variation in suspension rates among schools is due as much to the characteristics of the school and behavior of school personnel as to the behavior of students; schools with high suspension rates typically have high student-teacher ratios, low academic quality ratings, reactive (as opposed to proactive) disciplinary programs, and ineffective school governance.²¹

How does harsh discipline harm our students?

Students who have been suspended have far higher dropout rates and are significantly more likely to become involved in the juvenile justice system than their peers.²²

12 American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on School Health. (2003), Policy Statement: Out-of-school suspension and expulsion, 112 (5), 1206-1209.

13 Office of Civil Rights, Civil Rights Data Collection (2012).

14 Office of Civil Rights, Civil Rights Data Collection (2012).

15 McCarthy, J.D. & Hoge, D.R. (1987), The social construction of school punishment: racial disadvantage out of universalistic process, *Social Forces*, 65, 1101-1120.

16 Skiba, R.J., Michael, R.S., Nardo, A.C., & Peterson, R.L. (2002), The color of discipline: Sources of racial and gender disproportionality in school punishment, *The Urban Review*, 34, 317-342.

17 Losen, D.J., Martinez, T., & Gillespie, J. (2012), *Suspended Education in California*, The Center for Civil Rights Remedies at the Civil Rights Project.

18 American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on School Health. (2003), Policy Statement: Out-of-school suspension and expulsion, 112 (5), 1206-1209.

19 Castrechini, M. (2009), Educational Outcomes for Court-Dependent Youth in San Mateo County, John W. Gardner Center for Youth and Their Communities.

20 Tucker, J. (2012), *Studying Trauma in Middle Schools*.

21 Christle, C.A., Nelson, M. & Jolivet, K. (2003), School characteristics related to the use of suspension.

22 Leone, P.E., Christle, C.A., Nelson, M., Skiba, R., Frey, A., & Jolivet, K. (2003), School failure, race and disability: Promoting positive outcomes, decreasing vulnerability for involvement with the juvenile delinquency system, The National Center on Education, Disability, and Juvenile Justice; Wald, J. & Losen, D. (2003), *Deconstructing the School-to-Prison Pipeline: New Directions for Youth Development*.

In one study, students suspended during the first marking period of 6th grade had more than three times the odds of dropping out than students who were not suspended. For the first marking period of 9th grade, being suspended nearly doubled the odds of students dropping out compared to students who were not suspended.²³

A comprehensive statewide study from Texas found that students who are suspended or expelled are 5 times more likely to drop out, 6 times more likely to repeat a grade,²⁴ and also 3 times more likely to have contact with the juvenile justice system in the following year than similar students who were not suspended or expelled.²⁵

In another study, students who received an out-of-school suspension in middle school were half as likely to graduate on time as students who did not.²⁶ Research on the frequent use of school suspension has shown that even after race and poverty are controlled for, higher rates of out-of-school suspension correlate with lower achievement scores.²⁷

How does this harm all of us and our communities?

There is little evidence that suspension and expulsion benefit students or their communities. Psychologists have found that disciplinary exclusion policies can increase “student shame, alienation, rejection, and breaking of healthy adult bonds,” thereby exacerbating negative mental health outcomes for young people.²⁸ The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) has found that suspension can increase stress and may predispose students to antisocial behavior

and even suicidal ideation.²⁹ Removing students from school through disciplinary exclusion also increases their risk of becoming victims of violent crime. Rates of serious violent crime against school-age youth, including rape, sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated assault, are more than twice as high outside of school as they are in school.³⁰

Of course, when harsh disciplinary policies push students to dropout, crime rates and juvenile incarceration rates increase and everyone loses. High school dropouts are over 3 times more likely to be arrested, and 8 times more likely to end up in jail or prison.³¹

If we keep our students in school and increase graduation rates by 10 percentage points, we could prevent 400 murders and over 20,000 aggravated assaults in California each year.³²

23 Just the Right Mix: Using an Early Warning Indicators Approach to Identify Potential Dropouts Across All Grades, <http://new.every1graduates.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/JusttheRightMixWest20131.pdf>

24 Fabelo, T., Thompson, M., Plotkin, M., Carmichael, D., Marchbanks, M.P., & Booth, E.A. (2011), *Breaking Schools' Rules: A Statewide Study of How School Discipline Relates to Students' Success and Juvenile Justice Involvement*, Council of State Governments Justice Center.

25 Id.; Skiba, R., Simmons, A., Staudinger, L., Rausch, M., Dow, G., & Fegins, R. (2003), *Consistent removal: Contributions of school discipline to the school-prison pipeline*, presented at the School to Prison Pipeline Conference, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.

26 Id.; Skiba, R., Simmons, A., Staudinger, L., Rausch, M., Dow, G., & Fegins, R. (2003), *Consistent removal: Contributions of school discipline to the school-prison pipeline*, presented at the School to Prison Pipeline Conference, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.

27 Skiba, R.J. & Rausch, M.K. (2006), *Zero tolerance, suspension, and expulsion: Questions of equity and effectiveness*.

28 American Psychological Association Zero Tolerance Task Force (2006), *Are Zero Tolerance Policies Effective in the Schools: An Evidentiary Review and Recommendations*.

29 American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on School Health. (2003), *Policy Statement: Out-of-school suspension and expulsion*, 112 (5), 1206-1209.

30 Dinkes, R., Cataldi, E.F., Kena, G., Baum, K., & Snyder, T.D. (2006), *Indicators of School Crime and Safety*.

31 Catterall, J.S. (1985), *On the social cost of dropping out*, Center for Education Research; Bridgeland, J.M., Dilulio, J.J., & Morison, K.B. (2006), *The silent epidemic: Perspectives of high school dropouts*, Civic Enterprises.

32 Lochner, L. & Moretti, E. (2004), *The effect of education on crime: Evidence from prison inmates, arrests, and self-reports*, *The American Economic Review*, 94(1), 155-189.

THE GOOD NEWS:

THERE ARE EFFECTIVE ALTERNATIVES THAT KEEP SCHOOLS SAFE WHILE HOLDING STUDENTS ACCOUNTABLE FOR THEIR BEHAVIOR

Every young person has the right to a high quality education and to learn in a safe, respectful school environment that protects human dignity. Research shows that punitive, zero-tolerance approaches to discipline do not prevent or reduce misbehavior or even make schools safer. To the contrary, they have significant negative impacts on learning and can make schools less safe and effective.

There are proven alternatives that can help students behave appropriately and hold them accountable for their actions while supporting their full development and making schools better places for all students to learn. There is also a practical reason to adopt a research-based alternative: alternatives can increase school funding because they result in higher student attendance and lower suspension rates.

CONTROL (LIMIT-SETTING, DISCIPLINE) → HIGH	Do to... Punitive	Do with... Restorative
	Not do... Neglectful	Do for... Permissive
	LOW ← SUPPORT (ENCOURAGEMENT, NATURE) → HIGH	

It is important to note that many schools that are successfully reducing suspensions and improving school climate use a multifaceted approach by layering more

than one approach. For examples, see the factsheet on page 11 and highlights on Pioneer High (pg. 13), Vallejo City USD (pg. 20), and Leataata Floyd Elementary (pg. 41). Here is an overview of a few school-wide solutions that are being implemented successfully in California and nationwide.

When a student needs “discipline,” there are now proven alternatives that can support students’ full development and help make schools better places for all students to learn. Here are a few school-wide solutions that are being implemented in California and nationwide:

Restorative Justice or Restorative Practices³³

Restorative Justice is an approach originally used in the justice system that emphasizes: (1) repairing harm, (2) bringing together all affected to collaboratively figure out how to repair harm, and (3) giving equal attention to community safety, victims’ needs, and offender accountability and growth.³⁴

Restorative Practices, which build upon Restorative Justice and applies them in the school context, are used to build a sense of school community and resolve conflict by repairing harm and restoring positive relationships through the use of regular “restorative circles” where students and educators work together to set academic goals, develop core values for the classroom community and resolve conflicts.

Proof Restorative Justice works to hold students accountable and keep them in school

- ▶ A UC Berkeley study of a Restorative Justice program at Cole Middle School in Oakland showed an 89% drop in suspensions from 2006-2007.³⁵
- ▶ At Richmond High School in West Contra Costa Unified School District, as reported by New American Media, a 2011 Restorative School Discipline Program had cut the school’s nearly 500 suspensions by January 2011 in half by January 2012.³⁶

33 Some experts believe that there is a difference between Restorative Justice (RJ) and Restorative Practices (RP); they perceive RJ to be a restorative model for juvenile or criminal justice settings and RP to be a restorative model for school settings. Throughout this toolkit, the authors interchangeably use Restorative Practices and Restorative Justice, to refer to restorative discipline strategies used in schools.

34 Information in this section adapted from Restorative Justice for Oakland Youth, “Restorative Practices are Evidence Based,” <http://www.rjyoakland.org>; Dignity in Schools, <http://www.dignityinschools.org/>; San Francisco Unified Restorative Practices training manual.

35 San Francisco Unified School District’s Restorative Practices training; Thelton E. Henderson Center for Social Justice, University of California Berkeley, School of Law (Boalt Hall) (2010), *School-based Restorative Justice as an Alternative to Zero-Tolerance Policies: Lessons from West Oakland*.

36 Lumpkins, D. & Marshall, M. (02/28/2012), Suspensions at Richmond High Plummet, New America Media available at <http://newamericamedia.org/2012/02/suspensions-at-richmond-high-plummet.php>.

- ▶ West Philadelphia High School was on the state's "Persistently Dangerous Schools" list for six years. After one year of implementing Restorative Justice, the climate improved dramatically: suspensions dropped 50%,³⁷ violent acts and serious incidents declined 52% in 2007–2008, and another 40% by the end of the Fall semester in 2008–2009.³⁸

See pages 25–34 to read about school leaders implementing RJ.

School-Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS)

School-Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports is a comprehensive, school-wide research-based system that is "based on the assumption that actively teaching and acknowledging expected behavior can change the extent to which students expect appropriate behavior from themselves and each other."³⁹

Proof SWPBIS works to hold students accountable and keep them in school

As of 2010, over 13,300 schools across the country were implementing SWPBIS. Studies have shown reductions in office discipline referrals of up to 50% per year.⁴⁰ Schools also report reductions in problem behavior, a more positive school climate, greater safety, and improvements in academic achievement and attendance.⁴¹

At Edison Middle School in Los Angeles, where the district's PBIS policy is being implemented, the school experienced an 89% reduction in suspensions, from 225 in 2005–2006 to 29 in 2009–2010.⁴²

See page 11 for more information and see pages 13–23 to read about school leaders implementing SWPBIS.

37 Adams, C. (2008), *The Talk It Out Solution: How can you promote safety? Try getting rid of the metal detectors*, ScholasticAdministrator; see video: "The Transformation of West Philadelphia High School: A Story of Hope" <http://www.iirp.org/westphilahigh/>

38 Lewis, S., Ed. (2009), *Improving School Climate: Findings from Schools Implementing Restorative Practices*, International Institute for Restorative Practices, available at <http://www.iirp.org/pdf/IIRP-Improving-School-Climate.pdf>.

39 Sprague, J., & Horner, R. (2007), *School Wide Positive Behavioral Support* in S. R. Jimerson & M. J. Furlong (Eds.), *Handbook of school violence and school safety: From research to practice*.

40 Sprague, J., & Horner, R. (2007), *School Wide Positive Behavioral Support* in S. R. Jimerson & M. J. Furlong (Eds.), *Handbook of school violence and school safety: From research to practice*.

41 ID

42 Excerpted from *Redefining Dignity in Our Schools: A Shadow Report on School-Wide Positive Behavior Support Implementation in South Los Angeles, 2007–2010*, pp. 43–47; California Department of Education. (2012). DataQuest.

Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

SEL is the process of acquiring and effectively applying the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to recognize and manage one's own emotions; develop caring and concern for others; make responsible decisions; establish positive relationships; and handle challenging situations capably.

Students are taught five key competencies which are actively modeled, practiced and reinforced in class and school instruction and programs. These competencies are:

- *Self-awareness—Identification of one's own emotions*
- *Social awareness—Empathy, respect for others*
- *Responsible decision-making—Evaluation and reflection*
- *Self-management—Impulse control, stress management, and persistence*
- *Relationship skills—Cooperation and communication.*

Proof SEL works to hold students accountable and keep them in school

In Los Angeles USD, in 2007–2008, 58% of the model SEL schools showed 43% fewer discipline referrals, a 45% reduction in physically aggressive behavior, a 64% reduction in disruptive behavior, and at least 30 points of growth in academic performance.⁴³

Secondary benefits of SEL include improved graduation rates and reduced violence.⁴⁴

Positive Action an SEL program was found to have reduced disruptive behaviors by 72% and suspensions by 24%. In another rigorous study, Positive Action reduced suspensions by 73% and grade retention also by 73 percent.

See pages 39 for more information and see pages 41–44 to read about school leaders implementing SEL.

Trauma Sensitive Schools

Other promising alternatives, such as utilizing trauma-sensitive strategies and addressing implicit racial bias, have been shown to improve school climate

43 Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning, *Program Implementation: A Key to Success*, available at <http://casel.org/research/publications/?t=case-studies>.

44 Zins, J.E. & Elias, M. (2008), *Social Emotional Learning, Children's Needs III*.

and student well-being, while reducing out-of-school discipline.

Everyone wins when schools use alternatives to schools removals!

See pages 45-47 for more information and to read about school leaders creating a trauma-sensitive school.

CALIFORNIA AND FEDERAL LAWS REQUIRE THE USE OF ALTERNATIVES TO OUT-OF-SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

Not only do alternatives to out-of-school suspension work better, increase school success, funding and student outcomes, they are required by federal and state law!

In California, education is a fundamental right “at the core of our free and representative form of government”⁴⁵ and “necessary for full participation in the ‘uninhibited, robust, and wide-open’ debate that is central to our democracy.”⁴⁶

The excessively punitive disciplinary policies and practices that give rise to school push out and the “school-to-prison” pipeline are unlawful because they effectively force students out of school, denying them this fundamental right. There is no legitimate interest in employing such a system, where research shows that such policies serve no educational goals: they are ineffective at reducing misbehavior, do not make schools safer and result in lower academic achievement levels for impacted students.⁴⁷ As such, when a school district permits or supports the use of exclusionary discipline measures with frequency and

for all but the most egregious misbehavior, students can be deprived of their fundamental right to an education under the California Constitution.⁴⁸

The Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment⁴⁹ and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964⁵⁰ prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin. The California Education Code and other state statutes prohibit discrimination in state-financed programs and also provide that “schools have an affirmative obligation to combat racism, sexism, and other forms of bias, and responsibility to provide equal educational opportunity.”⁵¹ That there are gross disparities in the manner in which suspension and expulsion laws are being applied to students of color and students with disabilities is evidenced in the data showing disproportionate suspension rates across students similarly situated from different racial and ethnic groups and with or without disabilities. All schools and the state have an obligation to address these disparities.

Moreover, the California Education Code requires that for most offenses, including where a student is threatening to disrupt instruction, suspension shall ONLY be used when other means of correction have been utilized and have failed.⁵² In order to ensure equal and consistent application of discipline, schools must have a clear and consistently applied system for providing interventions prior to out-of-school removals and to ensure that students are not receiving different punishments for the same conduct.

The whole-school strategies and systems laid out in this Toolkit are designed to help schools meet the

45 *Serrano v. Priest*, 18 Cal. 3d 728, 767-68 (1976) (*Serrano II*)

46 *Hartzell v. Connell*, 35 Cal. 3d 899,908 (1984).

47 See, e.g., Skiba R., et al., *Are Zero Tolerance Policies Effective in the Schools? A Report by the American Psychological Association Task Force* (2006); Skiba, R. & Rausch M., *Zero Tolerance, Suspension and Expulsion: Questions of Equity and Effectiveness*, in C.M. Everston & C.S. Weinstein (Eds.) *Handbook of Classroom Management: Research, Practices, and Contemporary Issues* (2005); Skiba, R., *Zero Tolerance, Zero Evidence: An Analysis of School Disciplinary Practice* (2000).

48 *Serrano II*, 18 Cal. 3d at 760-768.

49 The equal Protection Clause states, in relevant part, that “[n]o State shall...deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.” U.S. Const. amend XIV, § 1.

50 Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 provides, in relevant part, that “[n]o person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation n, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.” 42 U.S.C. § 2000(d).

51 Cal. Ed. Code § 200. Section 220 provides that “[n] person shall be subjected to discrimination on the basis of disability, gender, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation ... in any program or activity conducted by an educational institution that receives” funding from the state.

52 Cal. Ed. Code § 48900.5(a), which provides: “Suspension, including supervised suspension as described in Section 48911.1, shall be imposed only when other means of correction fail to bring about proper conduct.”

requirements in California law and, several of them, including positive behavior supports (also known as positive behavior interventions and supports) and restorative justice, are explicitly outlined in law as other means of correction that can and should be used across the State.⁵³ In addition, federal law, the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act, requires consideration of the use of positive behavior interventions and support when data shows disparities related to long-term suspensions and expulsion for students with disabilities, and it provides that federal funding can be used to support SWPBIS implementation for all students.⁵⁴

The California Legislature has made it clear that state policy does not support unequal application of discipline practices or harsh and punitive punishments. Rather, it is state policy to “provide effective interventions for pupils who engage in acts of problematic behavior to help them change their

behavior and avoid exclusion from school.”⁵⁵ In addition, the Legislature has declared that

(a) The overuse of school suspension and expulsion undermines the public policy of this state and does not result in safer school environments or improved pupil behavior. Moreover, such highly punitive, exclusionary practices are associated with lower academic achievement, lower graduation rates, and a worse overall school climate.

(b) Failing to teach and develop social and behavior skills in pupils leads to the depletion of funding through decreased average daily attendance, increased rates of teacher turnover, and increased pupil dropout rates.

(c) School suspension and expulsion are disproportionately imposed on pupils of color, pupils with disabilities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender pupils, and other vulnerable pupil populations.

⁵³ Cal. Ed. Code § 48900.5: “(b) Other means of correction include, but are not limited to, the following: (1) A conference between school personnel, the pupil’s parent or guardian, and the pupil. (2) Referrals to the school counselor, psychologist, social worker, child welfare attendance personnel, or other school support service personnel for case management and counseling. (3) Study teams, guidance teams, resource panel teams, or other intervention- related teams that assess the behavior, and develop and implement individualized plans to address the behavior in partnership with the pupil and his or her parents. (4) Referral for a comprehensive psychosocial or psychoeducational assessment, including for purposes of creating an individualized education program, or a plan adopted pursuant to Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. Sec. 794(a)).

(5) Enrollment in a program for teaching prosocial behavior or anger management.

(6) Participation in a restorative justice program. (7) A positive behavior support approach with tiered interventions that occur during the school-day on campus.

(8) After-school programs that address specific behavioral issues or expose pupils to positive activities and behaviors, including, but not limited to, those operated in collaboration with local parent and community groups. (9) Any of the alternatives described in Section 48900.6.”

⁵⁴ See, e.g., 20 U.S.C. § 1465, the Secretary may support and fund activities, including training and implementation that increase behavioral supports and research-based systemic interventions for ALL students, among these positive behavior interventions and supports is explicitly included.; 20 U.S.C. § 1414 (d)(3) (B) (i), “The IEP Team shall-- (i) in the case of a child whose behavior impedes the child’s learning or that of others, consider the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and other strategies, to address that behavior.”; 20 U.S.C. § 1412(a)(22) (A): “The State educational agency [shall] examine[] data, including data disaggregated by race and ethnicity, to determine if significant discrepancies are occurring in the rate of long-term suspensions and expulsions of children with disabilities. . . If such discrepancies are occurring, the State educational agency reviews and, if appropriate, revises (or requires the affected State or local educational agency to revise) its policies, procedures, and practices relating to ... the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports... to ensure that such policies, procedures, and practices comply with this title [20 USCS §§ 1400 et seq].”

In conclusion, schools and school districts must look closely at their current discipline practices, disproportionate impacts of various student groups, and ensure that they have a uniform, consistent, and clear alternative system that focuses on ways to address unwanted student behaviors and supports positive behavior other than through out-of-school removals.

When you are deciding which alternative strategy/ies you would like to see implemented in your district, it is important to understand the strategies, how they work in practice, and how your school or school district can begin to implement them. The following pages are designed to give you a more in-depth understanding of each strategy and help you share this knowledge with your school district.

⁵⁵ Assembly Bill 1729 (Ammiano), effective date 1/1/13.

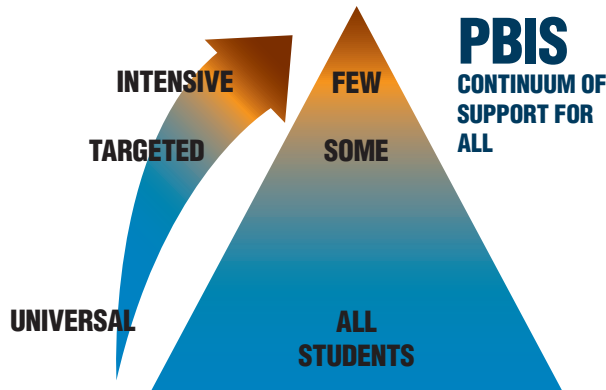
Top Ten Pieces of Advice from Community Organizers for Community Organizers



1. Plan for the fact that winning the policy change is only part of the battle. It takes consistency to hold systems accountable to actually implement the changes in a real way. It also means developing real solutions and being willing to be in the work for the long haul. – Jasmine, Black Organizing Project (BOP)
2. Don't forget about the teachers when getting buy-in from educators in your district and schools; you need buy-in from all stakeholders. Karym Sanchez, North Bay Organizing Project (NBOP)
3. In youth and adult partnerships make sure that you are always building trust, listening to youth voices and having adults support all efforts to elevate youth perspectives. – Miriam Hernandez, Youth Leadership Institute (YLI)
4. Always bring your own solutions; don't assume that the institution knows what to do. – Jasmine Jones, BOP
5. Bringing delegations of your members and organizers, no matter how small, really pays off; maintaining a steady presence with your targets helps to tip the scales. – Karym Sanchez, NBOP
6. When you are working in a group or coalition make sure that everyone is on the same page and you're not just proceeding with the ideas of one person. – Miriam Hernandez, YLI
7. Do not compromise your bottom lines for the sake of winning. – Kevine Boggess, Coleman Advocates for Children
8. Stay patient, passionate, and persistent. – Rob McGowan, Community Asset Development Re-Defining Education (CADRE) (quoting parent leader Rosalyn Broadnax)
9. Those who are the most affected are the best to support in finding solutions. We base our organizing on human rights. We feel everyone is a potential leader and has the acumen to analyze and redfine how education best supports their community. – Rob McGowan, CADRE
10. Make sure the most impacted people are central to the work, leading the strategy and participating at the negotiation tables. – Kevine Boggess, Coleman Advocates for Children and Youth

School-Wide Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support (SWPBIS)

What is SWPBIS?



SWPBIS is a comprehensive and preventative approach to discipline. The main goal of SWPBIS is to decrease unwanted student behavior in schools and classrooms and to develop integrated networks that support students and adults at the school, classroom, family, and individual student levels. Under SWPBIS, serious behavior problems and overall school climate improve because faculty and staff actively teach positive behavior, through modeling expected behavior and rewarding positive behaviors, such as academic achievement, following adult requests, and engaging in safe behavior.

The overarching and continuous goal of SWPBIS is to establish a positive school and classroom climate, in which expectations for students are predictable, directly taught, consistently acknowledged and actively monitored.⁵⁶

What are some of the key features of successful SWPBIS policy?

1. Focus on specific behavioral expectations and rewarding youth for desired behavior

2. Prevention

⁵⁶ Adapted from Osher, D., Bear, G.G., Sprague, J.R., Doyle, W. (2010), *How can we improve School Discipline*; Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (2012), *What is Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports*, www.PBIS.org.

- Defining and teaching a common set of positive behavioral expectations throughout the school,
- Acknowledging and rewarding expected behavior, and
- Establishing and using consistent consequences for problem behavior.

3. Multi-tiered Support

- Primary or Universal Intervention: school-wide support and positive behavior instruction for all students
- Secondary or Targeted Interventions: support catered to students who are at risk, and
- Tertiary or Intensive Intervention: intensive support focused on students who are the most chronically and intensely at risk of anti-social behavior

4. Data-based Decision Making

- Collecting and recording when, where, why, and to whom suspensions are given in order to make smart decisions about resources and assistance

What does SWPBIS look like in a school?

SWPBIS emphasizes uniform and continuous instruction for all students concerning desired and expected social behaviors.

All classrooms in SWPBIS schools have the same set of common classroom-level rules and positive reinforcement systems that are consistent with the school-wide plan

Behavioral problems that are handled in the classroom versus those that are handled by administrators with higher level interventions are clearly defined

Data on patterns of problem behavior are regularly summarized, presented, and discussed at faculty meetings and new strategies utilized

Why is SWPBIS a proven better approach than quick removals?

In general, schools that adopt a proactive approach to improving school climate through the creation of

positive behavior incentives, classroom management and conflict resolution training for teachers and staff, and encouragement of greater parental involvement demonstrate low rates of suspension and reductions in office discipline referrals of up to 50% per year.⁵⁷

A 2008 study of 28 K-12 schools and early childhood programs found that implementation of SWPBIS resulted in a significant reduction of office discipline referrals and suspensions, with middle and high schools experiencing the most benefit. These reductions helped recover 864 days of teaching, 1,701 days of learning, and 571 days of leadership. Implementation was associated with academic gains in math for the vast majority of schools who implemented with fidelity.⁵⁸ Secondary benefits of SWPBIS include improved academic achievement, reduced dropout rates, higher teacher retention and a more positive school culture.⁵⁹

Are there other districts and schools in California effectively implementing SWPBIS?

Yes!

Pioneer High School in Woodland Joint Unified School District, where implementation of the system of SWPBIS has resulted in a 62% reduction in suspensions and significant increases in school attendance and achievement. See the next page for more information on how Pioneer High School did it!

Similarly at Garfield High School, SWPBIS resulted in a reduction from 510 suspensions during the 2007-08 school year to 1 suspension during the 2010-11 school year. Additionally, the school experienced significant improvement in API points: 597 points in 2007-08 to 707 in 2010-11. See page 16 for more information on how Garfield High staff made it happen!

To help you get started, we have uploaded a number of the training materials, policies and

procedures, handbooks, and tools used by these and other school districts and schools to FixSchoolDiscipline.org. Take a look!

Where can I go for additional information, resources and research?

Office of Special Education Programs Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports – www.PBIS.org

Safe and Civil Schools—
<http://www.safeandcivilschools.com/>

57 Raffaele Mendez, L.M., Knoff, H.M., & Ferron, J.M. (2002). *School demographic variables and out-of-school suspension rates: A quantitative and qualitative analysis of a large, ethnically diverse school district*, *Psychology in the Schools*, 39 (3), 259-277

58 Losen, D. J. (2011), *Discipline Policies, Successful Schools, and Racial Justice*, The Civil Rights Project at UCLA and National Education Policy Center, citing Muscott, H.S. et al. (2008), *Positive behavioral interventions and supports in New Hampshire: effects of large-scale implementation of schoolwide positive behavior support on student discipline and academic achievement*, *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 10, 190-205.

59 *Id.*

Highlight: Pioneer High School

Woodland Joint Unified School District

School snapshot: Pioneer High School (PHS), located in Woodland, CA in the Woodland Joint Unified School District, serves 1,585 students. 60% of the school's students are Latino, 26% are white, and 10% are Asian students. African American, American Indian, and multiracial students each account for 1% or less of the school population. Before the implementation of SWPBIS and youth development strategies, PHS suffered from tensions between student members of rival gangs and high levels of suspension. Since the implementation of these alternative discipline practices, there have been no gang-related fights at the school and suspensions have gone down significantly.



Principal Kerry Callahan

Why did you decide to implement a School-wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (SWPBIS) system for your school?

During my second year as Principal, the Woodland Joint Unified School District (WJUSD) Director of Student Services, Debbie Morris, was engaged in PBIS, through Placer County Office of Education (PCOE) and the Building Effective Communities Together (BEST) curriculum, which is based on the School Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports model developed at the University of Oregon and the National Center on PBIS (www.pbis.org). We were introduced to BEST at a curriculum instruction meeting which all principals attend. Schools were given the choice whether to be part of phase one, and we jumped right on.

What was the climate of the school like before you implemented the PBIS system?

There were a lot of gang issues at the school. The first year I was here, there was a huge riot. We had a big issue with bystanders. There were only ten kids actually in the fight but we were unable to break it up because of all the kids around who were excited to watch. That's a school climate issue. So we had to deal with it.

Our suspensions were mostly to Latino boys, some of the boys were in special education and some of those in special education were emotionally disturbed. About six students per day were being suspended, primarily for drugs, fights and "willful defiance." Parent involvement was pretty non-existent. There were 60 members of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA), but only about three would come to meetings.

Additionally, there were tensions between students and teachers. For instance, we have a rule that no cell phones are allowed on campus and one student had his cell phone out in class but told the teacher it was an emergency. The teacher let him use his cell phone, only to find out that the kid called his mother to bring his tennis shoes for gym. Of course, the teacher referred him to the office.

When did you put in place alternative discipline practices and can you describe some of them?

In 2010-2011, we made several significant changes. We did a training to get every teacher in the school on the same page and then implemented SWPBIS with the 9th grade team. We taught the 9th graders the three rules --- be safe, be respectful and be responsible. Teachers actively pushed strategies, such as creating classroom or hallway rules that fit our big three rules and sending home positive notes. We also actively reinforced good ninth grade behavior with Patriot Pats, play money that can be redeemed for prizes, which are given to a student who is exhibiting positive behavior. By the time Year 1 of PBIS was over, we saw much more parent involvement because we had had hundreds of

parent conferences. We utilized our three tiered [intervention protocol](#).

In 2011-12, after learning all the lessons we learned in Year 1, we made adjustments and rolled out SWPBIS systemically to all grades.

What kind of training did you receive for BEST, who went and how did it help change what you were already doing?

Four ninth grade team leaders, an English Language teacher, my secretary, one of the vice principals, our lead security officer and I received training from the Placer County Office of Education (PCOE). We attended five sessions over five weeks. This training cost about \$500 to \$1000 per person. We paid for it with a Safe Schools Healthy Communities federal grant. Additionally, PCOE provided a few small follow-up trainings and coaching.

The team that went to the BEST training at PCOE became our leadership team on PBIS implementation. We came together on a regular basis to talk about how to implement strategies and collect data; we put together PowerPoint presentations for the teachers and staff that didn't attend the BEST training at PCOE; and worked with everyone to develop a three tiered intervention protocol and they disseminated it to the rest of staff and students. The intervention protocol gives the teacher numerous steps of interventions before referring a student to the office. We had teachers and support staff make detailed rules about what being Safe, Respectful and Responsible look like in the classroom, in the cafeteria, and in all of the key areas of the school.

When you first implemented PBIS at Pioneer, were there setbacks or a bumpy

phase where things were not going the way you had expected?

The biggest obstacle was changing staff mentality, and there were a lot of old-school teachers who feel it is their job to teach and the students' job to learn: "If they don't show up and they don't want to learn, then they need to get out of my class." Some believe that some kids should not be here and why are we even trying to keep them in school? There are some people who think building culture is fluffy. Some teachers didn't feel supported like "Why are you taking the kids' side over mine?"

Some administrators say, "I can't afford to do it," but they can afford it because they can read what is out there and then implement it without much money.

I had to have difficult conversations with these teachers about my expectations. I believe that you can't change a person's belief system but you can change their behavior. If they see and hear about positive outcomes, then they'll change their behavior accordingly. There was a science teacher who was the number one in office referrals, after the training and experiencing positive results, he never sends students to the office.

How was the climate of the school after you got past the bumpy phase and what other changes have you experienced?

Oh my gosh, calmer! Kids are running to class, opening doors for people to go inside. There is a lot more school spirit. We experience far fewer negative behaviors on campus even though there are a lot more students on campus. Suspensions went down from 6 per day to about 1-2 per day in 2011-2012. However, we are still seeing disproportionality in suspensions of Latino boys. We are doing research on methods for combating this and to learn about the cultural disconnect that our mostly white staff is having with Latino boys.

There is now a lot more parent and community involvement. The PTA now has 700 paying members and about 30 regularly attend meetings. This is a vast

improvement that didn't come until after we engaged the kids more.

We used to have a problem with trash being thrown everywhere and that just went away without us even targeting it. I think it's because of school pride, meaning when students feel more connected to their school and the adults on campus, they feel more comfortable and safe then they want to make sure it's a good place to be so they don't throw trash everywhere.

How much does it cost per school year to implement these alternatives? How are you paying for them?

SWPBIS doesn't really cost anything, maybe \$2000 on SWPBIS materials, like the Patriot Pats we give to kids for good behavior and our school-wide rule posters. It doesn't cost money to change. It takes time. It's simple. If you spend time at the beginning to do it right and teach students the expectations, you save so much time and energy and you gain positive feelings when things are going smoothly. Additionally, teachers have time to teach because they aren't dealing with behavior issues all the time. It's ultimately the idea that if you don't remediate the problem that existed then it will just continue. These practices remediate and change the behavior.

We have seen the financial benefits of our investments. Because of our increase in attendance, there is a daily payout increase to the district. It costs more money to do the wrong thing because you lose money when kids don't want to come to school.

Do you have any advice for principals in your position who want to start implementing practices like these ones?

Read about brain research and the way adolescents' brains are wired that impacts how they behave. We have to guide them and help them rewire their brains. I recommend *Rewired: Understanding the iGeneration and the Way They Learn*, by Larry D. Rosen.

Crunching the Numbers: Does it Work?

School Year	API
2009-2010	672
2010-2011	718
2011-2012	742

Since the implementation of SWPBIS and BEST, PHS has experienced a reduction in suspensions and an increase in academic performance index (API) points, which in 2011-2012 meant an increase in ADA funding of \$97,200.

Feel free to call me:

Kerry Callahan, Principal
Pioneer High School
Phone: 530.723.8292
Email: Kerry.callahan.wjUSD.org

Additional resources:

Youth Development Network - www.ydnetwork.org,

Challenge Day - www.challengeday.org

Woodland Joint Unified School District, Building Effective Communities Together - www.wjUSD.org/BEST

To read Kerry Callahan's full interview, and access all of the tools discussed, visit www.FixSchoolDiscipline.org

Highlight: Garfield High School

Los Angeles Unified School District

InnerCity Struggle – Maria Brenes, Executive Director, previously Youth Organizer

InnerCity Struggle is a non-profit organizing youth, families, and community residents to build power and promote safe, healthy, and non-violent communities in the Eastside of Los Angeles since 1994. In 2003, they began organizing to secure the construction of a new high school to alleviate the overcrowding issues affecting Garfield High School, which was, at the time, the only high school in East Los Angeles. In 2010, as a result of their organizing and advocacy, a new comprehensive high school was opened, which relieved Garfield. With a smaller student population, school leaders were positioned to implement academic and best practices around alternatives to discipline, such as school-wide positive behavior intervention and supports and small learning communities. How did you begin organizing around changing Garfield High School?

In 2003, United Students, a campus-based student organization supported by InnerCity Struggle, was frustrated with the overcrowding and high dropout rates at Garfield High School. Garfield was originally built for 1,500 students but was instead attempting to serve 5,000 students on a year-round, staggered, multi-track system. Some tracks were preferred and, therefore, there was entrenched inequality of course offerings, academic opportunities and quality of teaching staff. There seemed to be no incentive to support all students to remain in school and this led to the implementation of policies such as a tardy room, where students were sent and held for long periods of time if they arrived at school even 1 minute late, and high suspension rates. United Students launched a campaign to eliminate the tardy room. After securing a commitment from Garfield administration that they would eliminate the tardy room and implement a proactive approach, the school Principal changed and the tardy room was returned. We realized we needed to address

the root cause of the multiple issues impacted by overcrowding.

The following school year United Students then started organizing to educate the community about what was happening at Garfield – low graduation/high dropout rates (only 1 in 16 entering 9th graders graduated and enrolled in a four-year California public university), low college/career readiness, and the tardy room – and they collected more than 7,000 signatures in support of the construction of a new high school. That year, 400 youth, parent, and community members from our organization marched to LAUSD demanding that they approve the construction of the new school.

Once the construction of the new school was approved in 2004, we then focused on the academic structure of the new school and researched data and best practices. We also surveyed more than 6,000 Eastside community members about the type of school they wanted the new school to be. In 2007, InnerCity Struggle released a report that outlined policy recommendations from families and students. We wanted to make sure that the new school wouldn't replicate the problems of the old school. We wanted a small learning communities/small schools model, A-G course offerings, career preparedness, a culturally relevant curriculum, and wrap-around support services for all students. We demanded that teachers work in teams to submit proposals for operating the five small schools on the campus to demonstrate their plans were high quality and aligned with the community's vision. We wanted Eastside residents to have excellent choices for high school and worked with teachers to develop proposals.

In 2009, while we engaged in the campaign to ensure the new school opened with quality instructional models, we raised the urgency for improving Garfield's academic program to school and district officials. In July 2009, the administrative and teaching staff were directed to come up with a plan to increase

attendance, graduation, and college preparedness. Initially, staff and faculty were resistant to the ideas proposed by InnerCity Struggle but gradually came to agree that Garfield needed to change. With the great leadership of Principal Huerta, the school staff worked with parents and community to develop a plan to improve the school and that included the small learning community model and meaningful implementation of positive behavior interventions and supports.



Principal Jose Huerta, Assistant Principal Rose Anne Ruiz, Dean of Students Aurora Mellado, Gelber Orellano, PSW, and former Assistant Principal Ramiro Rubalcaba

When and how did you implement a positive behavior intervention and support model at Garfield?

Former Assistant Principal Ramiro Rubalcaba (Rubalcaba): In 2007, LAUSD passed a policy requiring PBIS as the alternative to suspension and expulsion framework. At that time, we had been issuing over 600 suspensions per year. During the spring of the 2008 - 2009 school year, Principal Jose Huerta, selected me to be assistant principal and work with discipline, and I came back to Garfield from other assignments. We were mandated to go to training. We were hesitant at first but once we got there and took the training, we saw that there was really something to PBIS. Additionally, I took a

road trip around LAUSD and visited other schools implementing PBIS. We decided that we were going to eliminate suspensions of all kinds for the rest of that school year and explained to staff that we were no longer going to suspend students. Instead, we fully implemented School-Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS).

In 2009-2010, we implemented a computer-based referral system. We became a data-centered school. Teachers had been referring students for insignificant things, and we couldn't track all the data: who sent which student for what? Many times, students would just tear up the referral. We trained the teachers during the summer of 2009 on the online referral system and gave them a clear understanding of what we would be doing with the referrals and that we would be assisting the students or staff who needed the most help. We put a [progressive discipline policy](#) in writing. In this policy, we made it clear that safety and discipline were everyone's responsibility. Before a teacher could send a student to the office, there was a list of interventions that needed to be completed. That year, there were 150 suspensions for the entire 2009-2010 school year.

Additionally, we got students involved in governance. We had them make motivational posters about the school rules and present them at assemblies.

Assistant Principal Rose Anne Ruiz (Ruiz): We incorporated the three SWPBIS rules - Be Safe, Responsible and Respectful - into our three Expected Schoolwide Learning Results (ESLRs) that we had always used: Persons of Character, Communicators, and Critical Thinkers.

How has the climate of your school changed since implementation?

Principal Jose Huerta (Huerta): Ten years ago, this used to be a school where students would get jumped into gangs in the restroom. We had a severe gang problem, which was apparent from all of the tagging (graffiti) on campus. There were also drug problems on campus. It was a chaotic environment, inside and out. We've come a very long way and

have really shifted the culture. Our main focus now at Garfield High School is student academic achievement. Our teachers and staff believe that our students can achieve academically. We raised our API scores 115 points in the last four years. Our students believe in themselves and feel confident that they can compete academically with any high school in our district. Additionally, when I hire teachers and administrators, it is critical that they can connect with the students; we are staffed with great people who care about and respect our students.

Because of all of the work we have done since 2009 engaging the parents and the community around us, we don't have the safety issues that we used to have outside of the school. For instance, we don't have a gang problem anymore; the students don't even dress the part because we have made it clear to them that Garfield HS is an institution for learning and not for mischief. It is about making everyone accountable for their actions. Many parents in the community support me on this and help me monitor student behavior and dress code.

Ruiz: In 2010-2011, there was one suspension that was mandatory because a student brought a knife to school. In 2011-2012, we had one mandatory suspension that resulted from a student with a disability grabbing a female student inappropriately. So far, during this school year (2012-2013), we have had no violent incidents and have issued zero suspensions.

Rubalcaba: A lot of the parent involvement started because we got creative about engaging the parents. Once we purchased polo shirts for them, more and more parents volunteered to supervise. Those shirts were about \$500 total but we gained thousands of dollars in free supervision. Presence prevents problems. When we reached out to parents and let them know what we were doing, they would walk around the school and talk to kids and report things to us.

Huerta: The parent volunteers calculated the cost of free supervision. They provide about 7000 volunteer hours, which is worth at least \$56,000. We want to keep our whole community healthy, I want as many parents here as possible. I have coffee with the parents and we brainstorm on how we can improve our school's climate. They understand that we value their input and they continue to be our eyes and ears.

There are a lot of students on this campus, what happens when two of them have a physical altercation? Or what happens if they bring drugs to school?

Huerta: Once in a while, there is a verbal/physical altercation between two teenagers, but instead of suspending them; our number one goal is keeping both students on campus where they can receive the support they need to get them through their problems. Additionally, in the rare case that a student is caught with some drugs on campus, we immediately contact parents and refer them to a drug counselor in our community. Our students know that they are here to get an education, and we aren't going to send them home on a suspension. They are instead going to stay in school and receive counseling. After all, they are our students and all of their problems are our problems; we don't pass the buck.

Dean of Students Aurora Mellado (Mellado):

Let me give you a more specific example about the interventions that we provide that help resolve problems and address the issues instead of just suspending students. I am trained in conflict resolution, so if two students get into a fight, I separate them. I take testimony on both sides and investigate the situation. Usually, the students come clean about what the fight is about and usually, it's about Facebook or a girlfriend/boyfriend situation. Then we come together, and I have the students talk about what they told me. Usually, they both decide that their fight was silly and inconsequential.

Unlike in the traditional model where the Dean just suspends when a referral for discipline comes to them, I look at attendance, grades, and everything because a student doesn't just start acting up out of the blue; there are triggers and signs. Additionally, any punishment we give, like a detention for using a racial slur, is an educational opportunity. In that case, we would have a teacher teach and facilitate a discussion about why slurs are harmful and unacceptable at our school during the time that the student is in detention. So, the detention is a time for reflection, discussion and to talk through the problem.

Ruiz: We also take a lot of preventative measures that are part of the proactive steps that PBIS lays out, so

that rules and policies are consistently and clearly communicated to the entire school community. We have assemblies with our small learning communities (SLCs) where we review rules, dress code and policies. Our school police officer presents the laws about sexual harassment, weapons, and drugs. We also have a lot of trainings that one of the administrative team does with parents.

We also offer a lot of services to deal with student issues that arise and come onto campus, including drugs. We don't kick students out or send them to another school when we see that they are struggling with a drug problem; we try to help them.

Social Worker Gelber Orellano: Let me give you another example. Currently, we are dealing with a little bit of a bullying problem at the school. Instead of suspending, we have sessions with the bullies and the bullied to teach what bullying is, what it looks like and why it is unacceptable.

Part of keeping suspensions at zero is making sure you document everything that is happening with the students and that you are completely consistent. For instance, all adults in the school can make a referral to our Coordination of Services Team (COST) for a student having a problem, behavioral or otherwise. The [COST referral form](#) is extensive and ensures that a student gets all of the interventions and services s/he needs. After the referral, we always follow-up and make sure to keep open lines of communication about everything that is happening with the students. The COST team has a meeting every Thursday to follow-up on all cases that have been referred.

Huerta: Suspensions and expulsions don't deter bad behavior, what we're doing does because students don't want to deal with all the adults who will become involved in their lives when they step out of line. A student who misbehaves is going to have to meet with Ms. Mellado, Mr. Orellano, his or her parent, maybe visit a counselor, and maybe talk to me. They don't want to do that.

Rubalcaba: There was a student who was behind in his work. He then acted out in class and was rude to a teacher. We took away his lunchtime privileges so he had to eat in the Dean's office and catch-up on his school work. After one day of this, he asked to be suspended. Clearly suspension, which is really

a break from school or dealing with the issues, is preferable to losing socialization time, so why would we give that to them to punish them?

Ruiz: It's a lot of work but the results – improved climate, better student achievement, increased community involvement – are why we are always having meetings and collaborating.

Feel free to visit or call us:

Garfield High School

5101 E. Sixth St

Los Angeles, CA 90022

O: 323.981.5500

To read the Garfield team's full interview and access all of the tools discussed, visit

www.FixSchoolDiscipline.org.

HIGHLIGHT: VALLEJO CITY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Superintendent Ramona Bishop and Dr. La Tonya Derbigny, Director of School and Student Accountability

District snapshot: Vallejo City Unified School District is located north of the San Francisco Bay Area. It is a district with 13,500 students attending 22 schools. In 2009-2010, as a district that suspended 21% of its students, Vallejo City was one of the top 10 suspending districts in the entire state. Of the suspended students, 37% were African American, 30% were American Indian, 16% each were Latino and White and 7% were Asian and Pacific Islander.

Why did you decide to implement an alternative discipline system focusing on Positive Behavior Interventions and Support in Vallejo City Unified?

Superintendent Ramona Bishop: The short answer: The way we were managing our schools and classrooms in Vallejo was to kick children out. When I brought Dr. Derbigny on staff, her job was to look at all of our data district-wide and figure out what we needed to increase academic success at all of our schools. Not only did we see high rates of suspensions and expulsions, but extraordinary disproportionality in the way those out-of-school discipline methods were being implemented. Also, when we disaggregated the academic achievement scores, the achievement gap was clear and it mirrored our practices related to out-of-school discipline. Because our District is 30% African-American and 30% Latino, and these were the students with the lowest achievement levels and highest suspension levels, we knew we had to do something fast.

When I visited schools, there was no evidence of PBIS. When you go to a PBIS school, the evidence is everywhere and the school looks different - there is structure and coordination and students are learning.

Dr. La Tonya Derbigny: We came to the realization that change was needed during the summer of 2011.

In the first presentation that we gave to principals, teachers, and other district staff the data painted a clear picture that the drop out and discipline data rates were correlating with the unemployment rates in the City. It was all interlinked. The data showed that what was happening at the school level related to what was happening at the city level. We all had to face the fact that we are self-inflicting the outcomes that we see in our City. With a 50% drop out rate and a similarly high unemployment rate, it was an “aha” moment for principals, teachers, staff, our board, and community.

Next, we worked closely with our School Board to turn a regularly scheduled School Board Meeting into a “Community Listening Session”, where we invited everyone in the community to come to spend several hours reviewing the data with us and creating a joint vision and goals for the future of the District. After sharing the academic and behavioral progress of our students in grades 3, 6, 9, and 12 with the Board, community members, teachers, parents, and students who were present, we had 2 hours for working group sessions. No one in the room had previously seen this type of data disaggregated by group and race. The community was brought in to help us create the solutions. We reached out to all of the people who had been frustrated and angry with the District for the lack of progress and had been vocal in the papers. [Out of that intensive listening session came our mission, vision, values, and goals.](#) The

Board then approved this document, which not only included reducing suspensions and expulsions but ensuring, for example, that every third grade student is proficient and every student graduates having met the A-G requirements.

How did you know that SWPBIS would work for Vallejo City to help reach the goals that had been established?

Sup. Bishop: I had put SWPBIS in place, as a principal, in Sacramento and saw that it worked for all students. An Associate Superintendent colleague told me about a training on PBIS. We were supposed to bring a team with us – a strong special education teacher, one of our classified staff members, several teacher leaders, and an outspoken and involved parent. Dr. Jeff Sprague from the University of Oregon led the training. We spent one day with him and another day planning. Our team that went to the training got it right away and understood how it could change the environment at the school. When we got back to school, that team shared what they had learned with the entire staff and got their buy-in and engagement. After implementation, we reduced our office referrals and suspensions significantly. We also went from a similar schools ranking of 4 to an 8.

Often school leaders are concerned that they won't get buy-in from teachers and others and that SWPBIS will just be seen as another thing they have to do. What are your thoughts?

Sup Bishop: This is why it is critical to bring an inclusive leadership team. At the training, they are very clear that the Principal needs to be a leader for this to work, but that it is the leadership team itself that goes back and takes the initiative to present what they learned to the rest of the staff and lead the efforts around implementation. Our team got input from the staff about where the problem areas in the school were and we created a matrix and shifted resources to address safety issues in the bathroom and on the playground, for example. The leadership team broke the work into pieces and everyone had input and so there was buy in. Once the leadership team presented the data and research on where we were academically and with suspensions and office discipline referrals, it was clear that something had to

be done to change the way the school was working. The staff was willing to create a new system to address the issues in a structured and systemic way.

After we created the matrixes which are centered around three rules, “Be Safe, Be Respectful, and Be Responsible” to address all of the difficult areas in the school, we put in place the positive behavior rewards system with tickets for the students and “Fun Fridays” where students are rewarded publicly for their positive behavior. Teachers and students could see the benefits. We also saw that SWPBIS resulted in additional parents engaging in the school and more parent leaders joining us. One of the parents who was on the team when I was Principal is still there helping run that school.

You have 22 schools in your District, so how do you roll out SWPBIS so that every school understands how to implement and is implementing?

Sup. Bishop: First, I called Dr. Jeff Sprague, and I said we need you to come out to partner with us and train our schools. Then, we allocated a portion of our Title I professional development dollars to send a “Design team” from every school in the District to three separate days of training over the first school year. Because we are a Program Improvement District and Title I is about closing the achievement gap, the funding was the perfect match. After each day of training, each team had assignments and homework that they would bring back to the next training day. Of course, some of the teams really took on implementation with gusto and completed the homework and others did not implement as well.

There will always be school leaders, teachers and others who are skeptical about this kind of change and resist a different model.

What tips do you have for other administrators trying to implement a different way of addressing discipline problems?

Sup Bishop: Well, I think the brilliance of the SWPBIS team model is that it develops accountability on all sides and it includes a representative from all of the key parties in the process of developing what implementation looks like at each school

site. For example, at one of our training sessions, a parent from a school team stood up and said, “Now, I have been here this whole time and I want you to know that I am going to hold all of you and all of us accountable for implementing what we have learned and getting the results that we all are hoping for.” When the “Design” teams were created, we did not dictate who the site leaders should bring for training, but we did say bring your teacher leaders and your parents who are outspoken and want to participate fully and a classified staff member. Many of our classified staff members live in our communities and know all of the parents and students so they are a real critical piece of the reform efforts.

What have been some of the challenges during the first year of implementation?

Sup. Bishop: Well, there had been 6 different Superintendents in a 10 year period, so I think a lot of people, including a lot of teachers, did not think that I would stay. They had seen other reform efforts come and go, so when we rolled out the training, implementation did not appear to be a priority. Some people were not happy that we were trying to make such changes and they fought us. Even so, in that first year, we reduced our overall suspension rate by 35%. As part of the cultural shift in the District, we had to make it clear that we were serious about implementation and accountability around implementation and that this was a structure and system that we wanted to see in every school.

What are some of the systems that you are putting in place this year to help increase implementation?

Sup. Bishop: Well, we are offering 9 more trainings for the entire district from Dr. Sprague this year. For nine trainings, we are spending a total of \$27,000. This money comes from our Title I district level funding. It is a very small amount of money to pay for trainings that will transform our school climate and culture.

We are also adding another level of accountability. Our evaluation team has aligned our evaluation tools for our school administrators with our strategic actions. Of course, implementation of SWPBIS is just one of the mechanisms by which our administrators will be evaluated. In our [“Evaluation Expectations”](#)

guide, we have set forth the strategic actions, step-by-step, that school site administrators should take each month of the school year to implement PBIS. We will be checking on implementation through site visits, data review and other accountability mechanisms. We have also invited our community partners and parents to join us on those site visits and be a part of this process, so that they are fully engaged in and understand what the District is doing to reach its goals.

What about outcomes? How are you defining success?

Sup. Bishop: Well, we have a strong data system in place, AERIES. We are currently in the process of creating a dashboard that will have all of our indicators, including those around attendance, achievement, school climate, and discipline. Our Design teams at the individual schools are responsible for monitoring and meeting monthly to look at all of the data being collected and the bigger picture and see what is happening and to make ongoing and continuous improvements.

Dr. Derbigny: We will also be monitoring the number of Restorative Justice circles and Student Study Team meetings being conducted at our school sites. The Student Study Team process is one of our key interventions for students who are struggling. We are also rolling out Restorative Justice, which will be critical to establishing school climates that address the root cause of behaviors within the school setting instead of just suspending students when they misbehave. Restorative Justice is really about student accountability and working with our students and staff to transform negative cycles of behavior and adult responses into positive relationships, so it is a key tool for our young people who are really struggling with persistent behavior issues.

What about disproportionality in the suspensions being given to students of color? How do you address that head on?

Sup. Bishop: This is the place that the work must be done to change the outcomes. I believe that our achievement gaps are expectation gaps. So, if we hold all of our students to the same high expectations that we have for our own children and for children in more affluent communities, we will eliminate those

gaps. The ways we treat one another, whether we call that unconscious bias or something else, if we can focus on the outcomes in class and in school and say, “We want and every child will go to college like my child did,” we can eradicate these gaps. We have not done explicit training around bias because the data is in our face. We can see the gaps.

Over time, how do you make certain that these changes become a permanent part of the school’s culture and practices even if leadership and staff change?

Sup. Bishop: Our community members and parents have been invited in to, not only participate in the Restorative Justice and PBIS trainings, but to walk through the schools. We need a “Superintendent-proof” system, so that the systems and structures that create change will remain. We are seeing that many of our parents know the systems so well, that they are talking to other parents and saying, “Did you ask for the SST? Do you know about PBIS?” We have over 200 active and engaged parents in the District who are knowledgeable and working on all aspects of the reforms. These parents and community members are key because this whole effort has to go beyond any one administration; the community must own it as well.

Dr. Derbigny: You can expect what you inspect. We are seeding change and as we provide intensive and ongoing support, we are expecting to see the change we seek become a reality.

What has happened since last year?

Sup. Bishop: We really have built a system where all students will be college and career ready. The full-service community schools initiative is the umbrella for all of our reforms. When I think about full-service community schools, I think about the whole student. Currently, fifteen of our schools are full service and by the 2014-2015 school year, all of them will be. Since last year, using the strategies mentioned above, we have further reduced out of school suspensions by 60%.

Each of the full-service community schools, offer comprehensive academic, social, mental, and physical education services to meet student, family, and community needs. Each school has an Academic

Support Provider (ASP) staff position. That person’s responsibility is to fill in any gaps in the student’s academic, social and emotional profile. The ASP creates a school-based community advisory board; monitors parent engagement; facilitates Student Success Team meetings (SST); trains staff on restorative justice and runs circles; and serves as a liaison for principal to the community at large. Each of our full-service community schools serves breakfast, lunch and dinner for students, and provides services unique to the school community that may include: School-based health clinics, family resource centers, on-site food and clothing banks, etc... The schools are supported by a team at the central office that cultivates strategic relationships with larger corporate partners.

Additionally, this year, we are beginning training on trauma-sensitive strategies. We received \$50,000 from Kaiser Permanente to train all of our staff and service partners. This year, Kaiser will place six doctors in our district; the following year there will be 12 and the year after that there will be 18, all making sure that our students are socially and emotionally healthy by developing and implementing trauma-sensitive strategies. This is really important because trauma affects all of us and affects our ability to work and learn effectively. With all of these strategies in play – PBIS, RJ and trauma-sensitive strategies – we are helping all students including those who need more for one reason or another.

We are continuing to be very active with grant writing and resource partnership. We are also excited about the new Local Control Funding Formula because it allows for us to really work with the community engagement focus area and make sure that we are offering research-validated programs that the community believes will actually help our students succeed. We are taking surveys of the community as a way of hearing the voices of as many stakeholders as possible. Once we have the results, we will run through the summaries with our advisory groups and create a plan based on what we have heard. Stay tuned as we are a work in progress!

Feel free to contact us

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To read the Vallejo City Unified School District team’s full interview and access all of the tools discussed, visit www.FixSchoolDiscipline.org



RESTORATIVE JUSTICE OR RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

What is it?

Restorative Justice, originally used in the justice context and adapted for use in the school context, is a set of principles and practices centered on promoting respect, taking responsibility, and strengthening relationships. Restorative Justice invites a fundamental shift in the way we think about and do justice, from punishing individuals after wrongdoing to repairing harm and preventing its reoccurrence. It is an “alternative to retributive zero-tolerance policies that mandate suspension or expulsion of students from school for a wide variety of misbehaviors” that are not necessarily violent or dangerous. The term “Restorative Practices” is used by a number of practitioners to describe how the concepts of Restorative Justice are then utilized to create systems change in the school system. Hereinafter, Restorative Justice and Restorative Practices are used interchangeably.

What are the features of successful Restorative Practices?

The core belief of Restorative Practices is that people will make positive changes when those in positions of authority do things with them rather than to them or for them. Therefore, a successful restorative system:

Acknowledges that relationships are central to building community

Builds systems that address misbehavior and harm in a way that strengthens relationships

Focuses on the harm done rather than only on rule breaking

Gives voice to the person harmed

Engages in collaborative problem solving

Empowers change and growth

Enhances responsibility

How is it different?

Restorative Justice changes the way that schools think about student discipline and school climate. Instead of the traditional student-teacher-

Traditional Approach	Restorative Approach
School rules are broken.	People and relationships are harmed.
Justice focuses on establishing guilt.	Justice identifies needs and responsibility.
Accountability = punishment	Accountability = understanding impact and repairing harm
Justice directed at the offender; the victim is ignored.	Offender, victim, and school all have direct roles in the justice process.
Rules and intent outweigh whether outcome is positive or negative.	Offender is responsible for harmful behavior, repairing harm and working towards positive outcomes.
Limited opportunity for expressing remorse or making amends.	Opportunity given to make amends and express remorse.

administration hierarchy, Restorative Justice emphasizes every school members' responsibility to the school community.

What does Restorative Justice look like in a school?

The Restorative Justice "circle" is used as a critical way to emphasize community, relationship building, and build trust.

In classrooms, chairs are placed in a physical circle with no additional furniture blocking any participants.

A facilitator, the "circle keeper," can be a student or a teacher who makes introductory comments, including a discussion about the values and positive agreements that will govern that circle.

A talking piece, that has some significance to members of the circle, allows only the person holding it the right to speak.

Participants "check-in" to talk about how they are feeling physically, mentally or emotionally and "check-out" to discuss how they are feeling as the circle ends.

Teachers regularly use circles to work together with students to set academic goals, explore the curriculum, and develop core values for the classroom community. Circles are used to help prevent harm and conflict by helping to build a sense of belonging, safety, and social responsibility in the school community. Additionally, circles are used when harm happens. Depending on the gravity of the harm, these conflict circles may include the person who did the harm, the person who was harmed, parents of both parties and a facilitator.

Why is Restorative Justice a better approach than quick removals?

Restorative Justice not only reduces out of school suspensions and expulsions, but the actual incidents of harm to the school community, making it a safer place for all students. Here are a few examples of Restorative Justice in action:

Restorative Justice for Oakland Youth (RJOY) instituted a RJ program at Cole Middle School in Oakland that reduced suspension rates in its first year by more than 75%, and reduced violent fights and expulsions to zero.

At Richmond High School, RJ cut the school's nearly 500 suspensions in half from January 2011 to January 2012.

Denver Public Schools adopted new discipline policies in 2008-2009 that use Restorative Justice, resulting in a 68% reduction in police tickets in schools and a 40% reduction in out-of-school suspensions.

Several schools in Marin County that are implementing Restorative Practices and using a peer resolution approach have seen reductions in suspensions and bullying.

Where can I go for additional information, resources and research?

Dignity in Schools – an organization committed to advocating for school discipline policy and adoption of alternatives to zero-tolerance discipline - <http://www.dignityinschools.org/>

Restorative Justice Online – a service of the Prison Fellowship International Centre for Justice and Reconciliation which provides intensive information about Restorative Justice - <http://www.restorativejustice.org>

HIGHLIGHT: RJOY AND OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

FANIA DAVIS, RESTORATIVE JUSTICE FOR OAKLAND YOUTH (RJOY), CO-FOUNDER & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Why was Restorative Justice for Oakland Youth (RJOY) formed and how did RJOY bring Restorative Justice into Oakland schools?

We created RJOY because we wanted to shift the culture in Oakland away from knee-jerk punitive responses to youthful wrongdoing that replicate harm instead of healing it. From the beginning, we had a triple focus: sow the seeds of Restorative Justice (RJ) in our schools, communities, and juvenile justice system.

Former Oakland City Council member Nancy Nadel, Oakland community activist Aeshah Clotey, and I founded RJOY in 2005. That same year we gave a training about RJ. One of the attendees was a counselor at Cole Middle School (Cole). She was taken with RJ. On a volunteer basis, she conducted some circles at Cole Middle, which quickly resulted in good outcomes such as elimination of violence and reduced suspensions and expulsions. Nancy was impressed by this data. With her assistance, RJOY applied for and received a Measure Y grant to launch pilot a program at Cole in 2007. Measure Y provides funding in Oakland for violence prevention programs for high-risk youth and young adults. Measure Y continues to fund our work in two West Oakland schools today.

Nancy Nadel, an Oakland City Council member who is a strong advocate of RJ, Aeshah Clotey of Attitudinal Healing, and I founded RJOY in 2005. That same year we gave a four-day Peacemaking Circle training to about 40 people in Oakland. One of the attendees was Rita Alfred, then a counselor at Cole Middle School (Cole). Deeply impressed with the promise of RJ, she began implementing restorative alternatives to suspensions at Cole, which fairly quickly brought about positive outcomes.

Nancy was impressed by this data. With her assistance, RJOY applied for and received a Measure Y grant, which provides funding in Oakland for violence prevention programs for high-risk youth and young adults to pilot a program at Cole.

What are the goals of RJ in a school?

When implemented as a whole school approach, the goal is to effect a culture shift where all members of the school community respond to conflict in healing instead of punitive ways. Instead of punishing and excluding the young person who breaks school rules or causes harm, RJ seeks to involve all affected persons in a shared process to address needs, fulfill obligations, and repair the harm that was caused. The essence of the work is relationship building and community building. So we do a lot of proactive work meant to create a strong, healthy, and nurturing school community where students and teachers can thrive. Of course, to be successful, family and community engagement is an important piece.

What schools must understand is that RJ is not a program for their “bad” kids; RJ is for the entire school and community. RJ is for the teachers, the site administrators, the school security officers, the students and their families because everyone contributes to the climate inside the school and student behavior management. If we do an excellent job, eventually, the school will no longer need RJOY to be present in the school because the members of the school community themselves are carrying the work forward.

The culture shift that is the goal of whole school RJ is expressed in a number of ways. For instance at Bunche High School, after two and one-half years of RJ, the school went from being one where fights

and suspensions were commonplace to today, where violence has been eliminated and suspensions have been virtually eliminated. Racial disparity in discipline has also been eradicated. Neither a single individual nor a single program could ever be the driver of these outcomes. There are no longer fights at this school because the whole school community is actively engaged and united.

How did you convince the administration at Cole Middle and other schools to allow RJOY to come into the schools?

It's all about relationship-building, consistently doing the work, and fidelity to the model. Because we were seeing such strong results at Cole Middle School, one of the RJOY board members, who is also an Oakland Unified School Board Member, offered a Board Resolution, which would launch a district-wide RJ initiative. Youth also did organizing work around it. In January 2010, OUSD passed the RJ resolution unanimously, and OUSD supported the policy by hiring a full time RJ Manager and Coordinators at an increasing number of sites over the years since.

How does RJOY help a school implement the RJ policy?

We have a conference with administration and discuss RJOY's responsibilities, school site administrative responsibilities, teacher responsibilities, and the outcomes that the school wants. People from the district also come to this conference at the school. We make sure we all have a meeting of minds before the school year begins.

We then write a letter of understanding that memorializes everyone's responsibilities and desired outcomes. This letter sets out the responsibilities and roles of the school site administration and the RJOY school coordinator. For example, a school might arrange for all staff to receive RJ training and regular continuing education, create an RJ site leadership team, and create an RJ discipline matrix with protocols for classroom managed versus office managed discipline. The RJOY school coordinator's duties include assisting in data collection to help the school administration make informed discipline decisions and assisting in crisis intervention to resolve critical incidents.

When the school year begins, the RJOY school

coordinator works in the school to actively and intentionally create relationships with every student and staff member at the school. That coordinator also facilitates proactive circles that build community and restorative circles that repair harm. Additionally, I stay in contact and check in at all times to see how things are going.

Is the success of a Restorative Justice program tied to the effectiveness of the RJOY School Coordinator?

At the beginning, yes; however, if we do our job properly and the school site administration is receptive, then the school coordinator can leave the school and school administration can carry on the work.

What setbacks have RJOY or School Coordinators experienced after instituting RJ at a school site?

The intellectual buy-in of school site administrators is tested when violence happens or drugs are found at a school and, out of habit, leadership might revert to punitive retributive justice models. Using RJ requires a transformation in thoughts about school discipline and a lot of mindfulness to make change. It's not enough to attend training and return to your school; it's about what you do with the things that you've learned and how you respond in the moment in often very challenging situations where the pressure is on to take strong action.

What type of RJ training do you provide at the three school sites that RJOY serves?

During the first two to three years at a school site, with a population of 200-500 students, we provide one full-time RJ coordinator, who facilitates or co-facilitates training, implements circles, integrates RJ into the daily school functions, engages in intentional relationship-building with every member of the school community, and collects and evaluates data. There should also be a part-time RJ coach who builds implementation capacity with the school staff, but in most cases, this is also the work of the Coordinator. Ideally, eighty percent of the school staff and a significant number of students receive 16-20 hours of training in RJ.

We have three tiers of training. Tier 1 involves

everyone in the school. We train teachers, school security officers, and administrators in community building circles and proactive restorative strategies. There is a continuum of restorative strategies, such as in class, value circles, where students and teacher work with one another to come up with values that will guide the classroom. During this phase, we are constantly coaching the school in implementation.

Tier 2 involves training about facilitating conflict circles to repair harm. This is an alternative method to suspension and expulsion. It is not necessarily for teachers because it takes a lot of time to get buy-in from the person who was harmed, the person who did the harm, their parents, and any other people who were affected by the harm. When we first start implementing RJ at a school, the RJOY school coordinator facilitates conflict circles. Then, towards the end of our program at the school, the school site administrator, who is in charge of discipline, such as a vice principal or counselor, will conduct these restorative response circles.

Tier 3 involves training in circles for youth who have been suspended or incarcerated and are now coming back to the school setting. Usually these circles incorporate probation officers, parents, teachers, and administrators, as well as the student reentering the school setting and peers.

OUSD has established a regular schedule of district-wide trainings. OUSD and RJOY are currently focusing on creating manuals, formalized curricula, videos, and building a cadre of trainers, which will allow them to develop the training capacity to support expansion of RJ to a greater number of schools.

Feel free to contact us:

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What does Restorative Justice actually look like in a school?

Eric Butler, RJOY School Coordinator at Ralph J. Bunche Continuation High School in West Oakland

Many school administrators and teachers just want students to come to school and do as they are told. But with RJ we work with the students to create values, to find out what their needs are, other than just getting an education. Before RJ, when something bad would happen, teachers or administration just wanted the kid out and punished. But with RJ, we ask meaningful questions, “What happened?, What were you thinking at the time?, and How are you feeling about it now?” Then everyone in that restorative circle will work together to come to a solution about how the person who did the harm can repair the person harmed and the community.

You have to think about it like this, “What am I willing to give up? Can I give up ten minutes for a check in with my students at the beginning of class every day?” The answer is, “Yes.”

Lorna Shelton, Assistant Principal at Ralph J. Bunche

People always ask about discipline when they talk about schools. An entire paradigm shift is needed in education. If I wanted to focus on discipline, I would have been a correction officer. Students need to be able to self-correct. Usually, the students who get suspended continue to get suspended, so clearly that method isn't working. We must try something else. If you want to teach students math but they are failing at it, you don't kick them out of the classroom; you work with them and teach them. But we don't use this approach for social and emotional competence. If a kid doesn't exhibit that competence, we kick them out. If we look at social and emotional competence as equal to academic subjects like Math and English and treat it with the same importance, we are getting there. Restorative Justice is about getting there..

What does Restorative Justice look like at the district level?

David Yusem, OUSD Restorative Justice Program Manager

Our overarching goal is to create an environment where suspensions and expulsions are reduced and students graduate. Our targeted goal, under the Voluntary Resolution Plan, is to eliminate racially disproportionate discipline of our African-American students. In order to achieve these goals, we are working together to implement a variety of alternatives, including RJ. Since RJ is a philosophy, and not a program, it looks different at different schools. Currently, there are 10 more schools, 24 in total, in various stages of RJ implementation. Using Oakland Fund for Children and Youth funding from the City of Oakland, we have placed peer RJ coordinators at 8 middle schools. Some of those people also act as whole school RJ Coordinators. However, at some of our schools, RJ coordinators are often a counselor or support person that also is tasked with supporting the school in implementing RJ.

Because retributive punishment is ingrained in the fabric of our society, RJ is a large culture shift. When people think of consequences, they usually think of punishment and it is hard for them to get past the perception that RJ is soft. In fact, it is much harder for a student to be accountable for something he or she has done and seek to repair the harm. It is harder to sit with the harmed student or school community member and acknowledge that you harmed that person. It also takes time to build community, but, of course, it is time well-spent. Regularly sitting in circle affords us the opportunity to get to the root of unwanted behavior. Certain behaviors are actually coping mechanisms for trauma. So a lot of behavior seen as “willful defiance” is actually an attempt to deal with external issues. Harmed people harm other people. If we address the root of the behavior, then we can stop the cycle of harm.

I am also currently collaborating with our other initiatives, African-American Male Achievement and social emotional learning units. RJ also works

very well with the Social Emotional Learning (SEL) approach. In an RJ circle, students and adults are passively exercising and honing SEL skills – such as empathy, decision making, social awareness and self-regulation. As students master these skills, they can sit in a circle effectively and discuss curriculum-specific topics and SEL topics, such as “What does it mean to be a good friend?”

In OUSD, RJ is proving to be very effective with engaging students, reducing violent incidents, suspensions and expulsions, and creating a positive school climate overall. We have students asking for circles instead of fighting with each other. They understand that RJ is not a top down punitive model and their voices will be heard. However, we have a long way to go too. This work is leading to a district-wide culture shift, which is going to take many years, starts and stops, and successes and failures.

To read the full highlight on RJOY and RJ in Oakland Unified School District, visit www.FixSchoolDiscipline.org.

HIGHLIGHT: SAN FRANCISCO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

In 2009, after community-based organizations pushed for change, the San Francisco Unified School District Board of Education adopted Resolution #96-23A1, [“In Support of a Comprehensive School Climate, Restorative Justice and Alternatives to Suspensions and Expulsions” \(hereinafter Restorative Practices Resolution\)](#). This policy was passed primarily to address the increasing numbers of suspensions and expulsions and the disproportionate number of suspensions and expulsions issued to African American and Latino students. In order to implement Restorative Practices district-wide, SFUSD began implementation in November 2010. Currently, SFUSD has implemented Restorative Practices as a whole-school model at three schools, including Rosa Parks Elementary School. They are also providing training and support to a number of other schools in the district.

Coleman Advocates for Children and Youth (Coleman) is a grassroots community organization located in San Francisco. Coleman advocates to improve the lives and opportunities of children and youth by fighting for education equity, good jobs for low-income families, and affordable family housing.

Coleman Advocates, Kevine Boggess, Civic Engagement Director

How did Coleman successfully advocate for the Restorative Practices Resolution to be passed by the San Francisco Unified School District?

In 2008, we launched the A-G Campaign, which aimed to increase the number of low-income African American, Latino, and Pacific Islander youth who were graduating from high school with the requirements to enter four-year universities, and not just trade/vocational programs or community college technical certificate programs. During the campaign, there was an increasing concern that Black, Latino and Pacific Islander youth were being suspended the most. We were looking at the suspension/expulsion numbers because we were looking at graduation rates. It was almost an accident but we noticed that the same students who did not graduate were the same ones that were getting suspended. All of this data came from San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD).

Coleman Advocates joined a working group to address the district’s discipline policies. SFUSD

Board of Education members, Kim-Shree Maufus and Sandra Fewer, in collaboration with community partners drafted and proposed the Restorative Practices resolution. Coleman organized youth and parents to testify strongly in support of the resolution and met with other Board Members; it passed unanimously on October 13, 2009.

What successes and challenges has Coleman experienced in relation to implementation of the Restorative Practices resolution?

There is still a lot of work that remains to be done. It is now the 2012-2013 school year and we are seeing that suspensions are slowly being lowered but the racial disparity has not gone away. San Francisco is a unique place because it’s a progressive city where making community change is possible but addressing the racial disparity in suspensions and expulsions remains an uncomfortable topic for the district and district leadership to discuss. But we need to remember that we all are complicit in this, so we all need to talk about the solutions, including racial bias and institutional racism.

What advice do you have for other community organizations that want to advocate for a similar alternative discipline policy?

Looking back, the challenge was not really getting the

policy resolution passed but monitoring the progress of the policy. The issue we are having right now is getting the district to give us their disaggregated data and work with us to come up with solutions to decrease the racial disparity; progress is happening but slowly. Throughout this process, we have learned that the role of community, students, and parents is essential and to create a sustainable program and not just a temporary grant-funded initiative; you must include all the stakeholders from district and school administration, parents, students, school support staff, and teachers.

Kerri Berkowitz, MSW, PPSC, Restorative Practices Coordinator

Why did San Francisco Unified adopt the Restorative Practices resolution?

The resolution was adopted primarily to address the increasing numbers of suspensions and expulsions in our district and to address the disproportionate numbers of African American and Latino students who were being suspended.

How much did it cost to begin implementing Restorative Practices in your district and how does the district pay for it?

In March 2004, San Francisco voters approved the ballot initiative, Proposition H that established the Public Enrichment Education Fund (PEEF). The PEEF budget provided money for social workers, student wellness, sports, and violence prevention. Initially, each school received some portion of the violence prevention monies to fund their choice of violence prevention programs or activities. When the resolution was passed in 2009, those funds were refocused towards implementing Restorative Practices. Currently, we budget approximately \$600,000 for restorative practices. This currently pays the salaries of my team - three restorative practices coaches and me and all of our training materials and expenses. We also use these funds to pay stipends for RP Site Leaders from participating schools, substitute coverage for school site staff attending our centralized trainings, and extended hour pay for school teams meeting about RP after school hours.

Our initial training and consultation with the

International Institute of Restorative Practices (IIRP), cost about \$2,000¹ per day, plus travel costs of the trainers. During one day of training, IIRP consultants trained about 40-45 people. In fifteen days of training over the course of our first half year, IIRP trainers trained about 351 administrators, counselors and other support staff. They also provided trainings for all of the staff (350-360 people) at our three demonstration schools through their **Safer Safer Schools** program for \$75,000 per school. That price includes follow-up trainings and coaching for two years.

Additionally, through the Middle School Counseling Grant, a state funded grant for which we applied², we partnered with **Educators for Social Responsibility**, an organization that provides professional development on classroom management through a restorative practice lens. With the counseling grant, we were able to provide training for about 120 people and an additional half-time social worker or counselor to increase the student support services offered and support the implementation of RP in the participating middle schools.

IIRP provided us with a solid foundation. They helped us build our capacity and we are now in a position to provide our own trainings and implementation support.

How are you continuing Restorative Practices work in your school district?

We are continuing to offer centralized trainings in Restorative Practices to the schools that are interested in implementing RP whole-school. We support RP School Site Leaders through a monthly Professional Learning Community and recently introduced a Whole-School Implementation guide to support schools in their implementation efforts. We offer introduction presentations to schools in their early phase of implementation and offer greater support, coaching, modeling, and training to the schools as they move through the implementation plan. Our approach isn't just to provide RP trainings to school site staff. We aim to support schools in

¹ Prices will vary per school district or school site. To get a quote for your school district or site, contact John Bailie, Director of Continuing Education at IIRP. His contact information can be found in the contact pages on page 82-91.

² This program is now an unrestricted categorical program open to entities that applied and received funds during the 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 school years.

a sustainable way that builds internal capacity of the school community, including students, families, and community partners. Our goal is for the RP principles, concepts, values, and practices to become embedded in the culture of our schools and district. This requires a shared commitment among all members of the school and district community.

A Day at a School Implementing Restorative Practices:

Rosa Parks Elementary School, Principal Paul Jacobsen and Teachers Cecily Ina and Emily Geiges



Rosa Parks Elementary School is located in San Francisco United, near downtown San Francisco. The school serves a population of 391

students. Of these students, 34% are African American, 22% are Asian, 15% are Hispanic or Latino, 13% are white, 8% are multiracial, 4% are Filipino, and less than 1% each are American Indian and Pacific Islander. Before the implementation of Restorative Practices (RP) at the school, there were 40 out-of-school and in-school suspensions during the 2008-2009 school year. After implementation, during the 2010-2011 school year, there were only 5 suspensions. Rosa Parks Elementary's Academic Performance Index (API) has similarly improved. API has grown from 713 points in 2009 to 747 points in 2011 to 792 in 2012.

On Thursday, October 11, 2012, during the lunchtime recess period, Principal Jacobsen made his routine rounds of the playground. A game of tag and play fighting had become far too rowdy and a teacher intervened and sent some of the students to a time-out away from the playground. One of the students

had become increasingly sullen and complained that the group of boys “messed with” him every day. Principal Jacobsen escorted the unhappy student, Arnold, to his class so that they could have a restorative conference with a student involved in the altercation.

Principal Jacobsen explained, “Restorative conferencing usually occurs after lunch because that’s when two different grades mix and a lot of altercations occur. We have about 2-3 of these restorative conferences a day. We could just take the kids off the yard when this occurs but they would just simmer and we would not get to the bottom of the issue. RP doesn’t just eliminate conflict. It is an approach to dealing with conflict. Conflict is a part of life. Sometimes that conflict is caused by something at home, which can result in some serious acting out.” After consulting Arnold’s teacher, Principal Jacobsen told Arnold that he would be back to pick him up for a restorative conference with Elvin.

On the way back to the 5th grade classroom, First Grade Teacher Emily Geiges was leading her class of students to another classroom. She told one of her students, “It makes me sad when I have to keep telling you to keep your arms by your sides when we’re walking in a line.” Principal Jacobsen explained that this teacher was using another feature of whole-school RP implementation, “affective statements,” which are personal expressions of feeling in response to others’ positive or negative behaviors. “Using affective statements helps us to specify the behavior that a student is exhibiting and encourage or discourage that behavior while improving or maintaining the relationship between the teacher and student.”

After retrieving Arnold from his classroom and Elvin from a 4th grade classroom, Principal Jacobsen sat the boys across from each other and asked Elvin to explain what happened. Elvin explained that he believed that Arnold was picking on his cousin. To which Arnold replied, “Everyone in the school is your cousin.” Elvin fired back, “Everyone in the school is your mom.” At that point, it became clear to Principal Jacobsen that the boys were not ready to resolve their conflict, he told the boys that he would put their conflict in the “parking lot” and they would pick back up in the morning. He then sent Elvin back to his classroom and escorted Arnold back to his classroom, on the way back downstairs.

Back in his office, Principal Jacobsen wrote both students' names on a dry erase board labeled "Parking Lot" on the wall next to his door. He also telephoned the parents and caregivers of both students. He explained to each of them that there had been tensions between the 4th and 5th grade boys for a few days and that Arnold and Elvin were unable to make leeway during a restorative conference.

After he ended the second parent phone call, Principal Jacobsen commented on that day's progress, "Usually you don't take an hour settling a conflict but sometimes, you must. Sometimes you also need the parents to come in because when they are involved, we have a better chance of long term success."

After helping students during dismissal, Principal Jacobsen headed up to the library for the Parent Empowerment class. Parents who attend the class are taught about [RP principles and practices](#) that they can use with their children. The class began with a circle in which the facilitator, Ms. Geiges, who is on a RP leadership team, explained that the class would begin and end with a circle. In the opening circle, Ms. Geiges described the talking piece, "The only person who has the right to speak is the one holding the talking piece; it allows us to slow down, think about what we are about to say and listen to the other people in the circle." She then asked every person in the circle to explain their knowledge about and/or relationship with RP principles.

One of the parents related the successful use of affective statements, the strategy that she had learned the week before. Through an interpreter, she said, "I was trying to get my youngest girl to get dressed in the morning and she would not do it and it was taking too long. She was making us all late. So I used to say, "Why can't you just listen and get dressed?" Of course, she still wouldn't get dressed. Last week, after class, I told her that it made me frustrated when she did not get dressed because then we were late to school. She dressed herself in the morning and then I told her, "I am very happy when you dress yourself."

After the opening circle, parents reviewed affective statements and then moved on to restorative questions. Ms. Geiges, explained that restorative questions are non-judgmental questions that communicate a desire for understanding and that they are best used in a private setting. "If you are unable to ask your student these questions

without anger or judgment, than you should wait for a time when you're ready and able to discuss the conflict without strong emotions. Additionally, when participating in a restorative conference, it is important to say exactly what you heard in response to the questions." She then provided the parents with [a list of questions](#) to ask kindergarten, first and second graders and a separate list for third, fourth and fifth graders. She explained:

"These questions are asked when a child has exhibited unacceptable behavior, such as hitting a sibling or classmate or cursing. Parents or teachers should ask the student to recall what s/he was thinking when the incident occurred, who was affected by his/her actions, what s/he has thought about the incident since it occurred and what s/he thinks can be done to correct the effects of the incident." She told the group that if there are two or more students involved in an incident, they should be told that they will each be allowed to answer the questions and tell their side of the story. Teachers and school staff carry these questions with them at all times.

After practicing the questions in pairs, the parents, teachers, and a cafeteria worker returned to a closing circle to end the class. While passing the talking piece in the opposite direction from the opening circle, parents discussed how they were planning to use what they had learned. One parent planned to use restorative conferences when her two young children argued about their toys, while teacher Cecily Ina said that she planned on using more affective statements with her husband. After the circle adjourned, Ms. Ina talked about the changes she had observed since the implementation of RP at Rosa Parks Elementary.

"I have been teaching for ten years, the last five of which have been here at Rosa Parks. This is our second year with Restorative Practices and the climate here is much better. There is a lot less screaming and fighting from the kids. I also see a lot fewer 'frequent fliers', who usually are repeatedly referred to the office. Now you go through a restorative conference and that's it. I think that the students feel like their voices are being heard so they are less angry and less likely to act out." ■

HIGHLIGHT: REID HIGH SCHOOL IN LONG BEACH AND CALIFORNIA CONFERENCE FOR EQUALITY AND JUSTICE IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Reid High School, a continuation high school located in Long Beach, CA, serves 396 students. About 70% of the students are Latino or Hispanic, 19% are African-American and about 10% are Filipino, American Indian, Pacific Islander, white, and multiracial.

What does RJ look like at Reid High School?

Restorative Justice Coordinator Rob Howard: We are beginning our second year of RJ implementation here at Reid. In my human relations class, I work with 11th Graders and 12th Graders who do not have enough credits for their grade level or to graduate from high school. There are also students who were sent here because they have behavior issues or have been involved in the juvenile justice system. Generally, this school has had a bad rap. According to other people, this is where “bad” kids go.

I teach the human relations class here. Many of the students in my class were referred to this class for one reason or another. The students enrolled in this class vary and have been very traumatized by violence in their communities or homes and have been pushed out of their home schools. Usually, they don't like school and have struggled in school. To add another wrench, because of where the school is located, there are a lot of issues with gangs, race, religion and homophobia. We are working on breaking down those lines and, literally, becoming friends.

I am using elements in the restorative spectrum – such as active listening, affective questions and statements, and circles - to build relationships and community within Reid. That's really what RJ is. It's all the stuff that we should do, that it makes sense to do but we don't do it because we are swamped and always say we don't have the time. But, we can't reach

these students and change their lives, if we don't make the time.

Additionally, we are integrating RJ with the California Conference for Equality and Justice's (CCEJ) human relations concepts. CCEJ provides training and technical assistance with implementing human relations concepts into the curriculum to a variety of schools. In this class, we are learning about the systems of oppression that are in place in society and schools that funnel students into the school-to-jail track. In addition to participating in circle, students complete projects and assignments about social justice/anti-oppression elements and we display these around the room. (PICTURES)

What changes have you seen at Reid as a result of RJ?

Howard: The energy is different. Students are showing up and staying at school more. There are less physical conflicts on campus. We are able to intervene in conflict before having to suspend or involve the police.

Reid High Graduate and Restorative Justice Youth Coordinator Alexis “Cherry” Cox: When I came to Reid, I was having a lot of problems. I was going through personal issues with my family and my school, and I failed my 10th grade year. I didn't really know anyone here. Because of all the problems, I was having I was referred to the Building Bridges Camp that is run by CCEJ. There we learned about different

human relations concepts and how discipline and separation impact education and how we could create change on campus and in our families.

Since Rob Howard came here and since we've started working with RJ, students have started to really know each other on a deeper level and as people. People were separated into their own cliques before. Also, students are now controlling their behavior and actions and being held responsible for fixing conflicts. In fact, one of the students that we are working with this year implemented RJ into her home life and uses it at her house to resolve conflicts. Personally, through working with RJ at Reid, I have become a better person. I'm now a youth mentor and a policy advocate for RJ in all schools.

The California Conference for Equality and Justice (CCEJ) is a non-profit organization that has been implementing human relations programming in Los Angeles County for 50 years. These programs primarily involve engaging youth and adults in dialogue around identity, oppression, bias, bigotry, and other community issues.

How did CCEJ begin coordinating Restorative Justice in schools?

Restorative Justice Program Specialist Alicia

Virani: Implementing and advocating for Restorative Justice (RJ) in schools was a natural evolution and a perfect fit for CCEJ because of our focus on human relations. We had been hearing stories of outrageous and unfair disciplinary policies used against students of color in the middle and high schools where we worked throughout Los Angeles County. These practices led students to be pushed out of school and, often, into the juvenile justice system. Additionally, we observed the fracturing of different school communities that gave rise to a climate of conflict and harm.

We believe that RJ works as a direct intervention into the school-to-prison pipeline and the punitive discipline practices that disproportionately target students of color. RJ is about shifting the way we think about school climate, relationships, and harm and wrong-doing.

Our staff, including myself and Rob Howard, a CCEJ RJ coordinator, received RJ training at Rita Alfred's Restorative Justice Training Institute. Ms. Alfred also supplied the training for our youth volunteers.

During the 2012-2013 school year, our first year of RJ implementation, we worked with two schools: Roosevelt High School and Reid High School. One principal at Roosevelt Senior High School, in Boyle Heights, brought us on and was really excited about implementing RJ because the school had been the target of a lot of truancy ticketing and the community had begun organizing about what to do to address the issues there. We also started working at Reid High School in Long Beach. At Roosevelt, we reduced suspensions by 60%. During this 2013-2014 school year, we have expanded our work to additional schools - Markham Middle School, Gompers Middle School, and Augustus Hawkins High School.

What are the first steps that CCEJ takes when beginning to implement RJ at a specific school site?

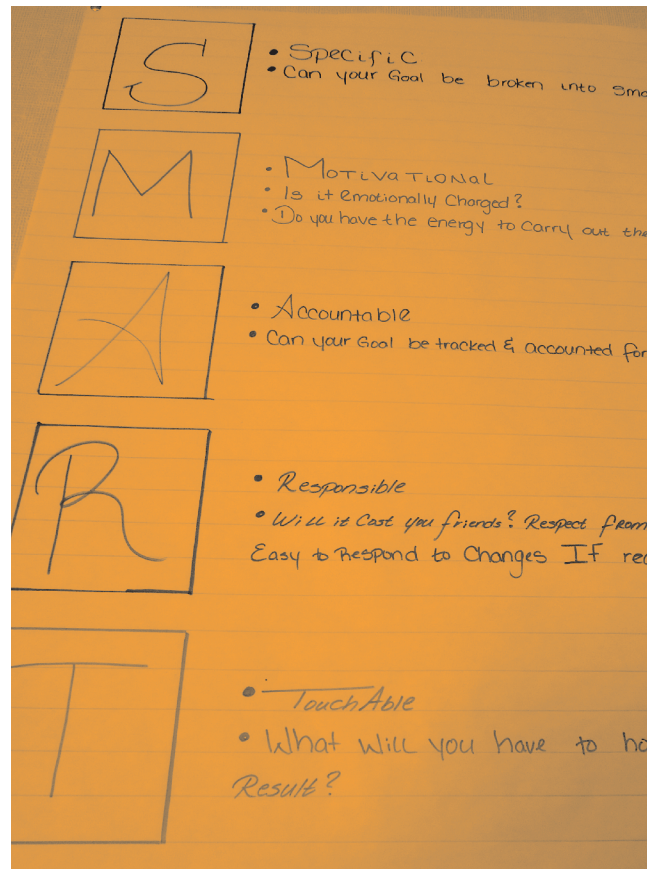
Virani: Typically, we begin with 12 hours, which span over two days, of RJ training for all school staff. We start with doing community building circles. Most of our training is experiential, we want school staff to frequently sit in circle with each other, conduct professional development in circle and have staff meetings in circle as well. That is what helps the paradigm and culture shift of the school. Part of our professional development also includes training on self-reflection about harming and being harmed, anti-bias, anti-racism, and the school-to-prison pipeline. We are also working with schools that have only limited amounts of time to receive training but allow us to coordinate RJ and community building circles on a full-time basis. In a few other schools where we are working, we have trained and assisted with establishing an RJ taskforce that meets monthly and consists of parents, teachers, students and administrative staff.

What do you think a school needs to implement RJ at their site? What advice do you have for other schools who are interested in implementing RJ at their sites?

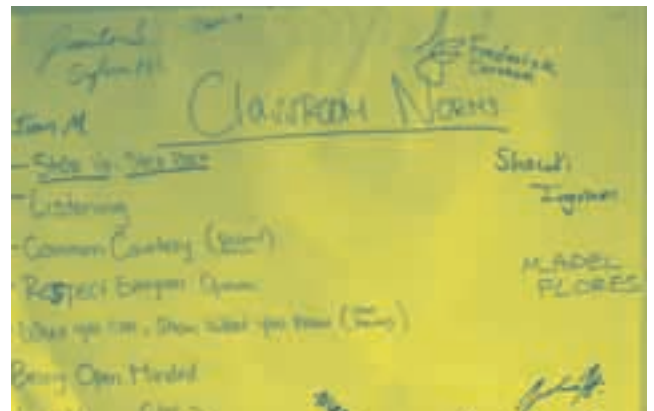
Virani: This varies because RJ looks different at different schools of different sizes with various school climate issues. We believe that it is fundamental to have a person at the school-site who is dedicated as the Restorative Justice Coordinator. This does not need to be a new staff person, but it is important that

this person's duties are distinct and separate from that of a dean or other school staff who may also engage in punitive discipline. Ultimately, when RJ works, it is possible that all deans can instead be RJ Coordinators.

I recommend that to get started a school receive training in RJ for the entire staff and begin doing community building circles just with school staff and incorporating circle into professional development. RJ is a way of being and communicating so it's not an alternative just for students; everyone should be expected to interact this way. Additionally, educators should know that the goal of RJ isn't just to reduce suspensions, although this is incredibly important. The goal is also to reduce the incidents that would have precipitated a suspension in the first place. We need to focus on the preventative aspect to truly change school climate and culture.



RELIGIOUS OPPRESSION		Racism		Sexism	
Advantages	Disadvantages	Advantages	Disadvantages	Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christians • Catholic • Protestant • Baptist • Lutheran • Mormon • Jewish • White • Gay • Adventist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Atheist • Muslim • Hindu • Islam • Jewish • Korean • Agnostic 	Whites	People Of Color	Male	Female
Ageism		Ableism		Heterosexism	
Advantages	Disadvantages	Advantages	Disadvantages	Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18-64 year old 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0-17 year olds (minors) • 65+ (elderly) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • healthy • bodied • able bodied • able-minded • smart 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • blind • deaf • handicap • paralyzed 	Heterosexuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lesbians • gay • Transsexual • Transgender • Drag Queen • & K • Bisesex



North Bay Organizing Project

Santa Rosa, CA

The North Bay Organizing Project, based in Santa Rosa, CA, is a diverse, multi-issue organization collaborating with working people, congregations, environmentalists, neighborhood organizations, young Latino professionals and youth who are eager to lead but lack venues. NBOP is working for equity in members' neighborhoods, communities and regions.

What led to the North Bay Organizing Project (NBOP) organizing around restorative justice programs?

Karym Sanchez (NBOP Education Task Force Founder and Co-Chair): NBOP is made up of member organizations that democratically choose issues to work on among member organizations. In 2011, I was part of the only youth organizing group and voiced that we needed to work on education issues and put together an education taskforce. Since education is a broad issue, we identified a tangible issue that we could win.

The first issue that we organized on was Proposition 30. After that passed, we identified reducing suspensions and expulsions as a key priority. From November 2012-January 2013, we organized and researched school discipline issues in Santa Rosa and found that our district, Santa Rosa City Schools (SRCS) had really high per capita suspension and expulsion rates. We learned from contacts in our district about the implementation efforts around AB 1729, the bill that emphasized that suspension should be a last resort. We researched possible solutions, such as restorative justice and what that could look like in schools.

We then met with each of the school board directors individually, and twice with the Superintendent and realized we had some real allies. For instance, we were

able to meet with the official who oversaw expulsion proceedings for the district who saw restorative justice as a real alternative to suspensions and expulsions for our district and was observing restorative justice in different counties, districts, and schools.

On April 15, 2013, the school official presented a report at the school board meeting that outlined AB 1729 implementation, SRCS suspension and expulsion data and restorative justice. Basically, he said the numbers and statistics were not good and that the District should focus on using restorative justice. NBOP members were there to testify and say that these changes were needed because our students were being pushed out of school. After the presentation, the SRCS Board unanimously decided that restorative justice was the alternative that they wanted to implement in SRCS but they didn't come up with a plan that night. They also approved a companion restorative discipline program for all expulsions in the district that would be provided by Restorative Resources.

David Hoffman (NBOP Education Task Force Co-Chair): We actually realized that we needed to figure out how to make things work. We have a special situation in Santa Rosa with Measure O funding for fire and police departments with 20% going to gang prevention. The existence of this fund and the possibilities to use it to fund the restorative justice programs led us to engage with city council and the mayor. Soon we were working on facilitating between the district and city.

On September 16th, NBOP held a public forum where we laid zero tolerance to rest. There was a bagpipe procession and students working with NBOP laid zero tolerance to rest in a coffin. The Superintendent and the Director of the Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force attended this event and confirmed their commitment to a restorative justice pilot program. Shortly thereafter, the District's School Board committed to funding the pilot until 2015 with \$125,000.

Starting October 2013, the restorative justice pilot programs began at Lawrence Cook Middle and Elsie Allen High Schools, which were deemed to have the highest need for restorative justice and serve many of our Latino and low-income students.

On December 10, the City Council approved \$250,000 in Measure O money, earmarked for direct grants to school districts serving Santa Rosa. Both the President of the School Board and the Mayor's Gang Task Force Director identified expanded restorative discipline as an excellent use for these new grants.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING



What is it?

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) focuses on developing the individual qualities, strengths, and assets of a child related to social, emotional, cognitive, and moral development and positive mental health.

School-based educational initiatives that focus on youth development, health promotion and problem prevention can be organized through SEL instruction.¹ Students learn, apply and practice SEL skills similar to the way that they learn other academic skills through instruction in the classroom. These skills are then reinforced in the classroom by the teacher and other students as situations arise where they need to be applied, throughout the school day, at home and in the community.

What are the features of a successful SEL system?

Instruction in SEL is taught in the classroom and reinforced throughout the school and can be used as a proactive and preventative way to impart skills that will help avoid behaviors that harm the community. Through various pre-packaged curriculums, SEL can be taught and reinforced in concert with other frameworks such as School-Wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (SWPBIS) or Restorative Justice (RJ) and can easily be coordinated with a broad array of prevention and promotion efforts.

¹ Ji, P., Axelrod, J., Foster, C., Keister, S., O'Brien, M.U., Ogren, K., & Weissberg, R.P. (2008), A model for implementing and sustaining school-wide social and emotional learning, *The Community Psychologist*.

Through SEL programs, students learn five key competencies:

Self-awareness—Identification and recognition of their own emotions, recognition of strengths in themselves and others, sense of self-efficacy, and self-confidence.

Social awareness—Empathy, respect for others, and perspective taking.

Responsible decision-making—Evaluation and reflection, and personal and ethical responsibility.

Self-management—Impulse control, stress management, persistence, goal setting, and motivation.

Relationship skills—Cooperation, help seeking and providing, and communication.²

What does SEL look like in school?

SEL instruction can be implemented either through a pre-set curriculum taught in every classroom and/or in coordination with other prevention and promotion efforts, such as SWPBIS or RJ. For example, SWPBIS requires explicit instruction around behavior expectations, and SEL programming can be used to fulfill instruction. Additionally, in RJ circles, students can discuss topics that require SEL competencies, such as “What does it mean to be a good friend?” Teachers teach key competencies similar to and in addition to academic subjects. Effective SEL programming is a coordinated effort: teachers directly teach SEL skills inside classrooms, and

² Id.

parents, administration and other non-instructional staff reinforce SEL skills outside of the classroom. For example:

Students are taught positive interpersonal skills and intrapersonal emotional intelligence using various combinations of media, including videos, pictures and text.

Lesson plans help students recognize and understand a variety of emotions and their causes.

Administrators and parents further strengthen the key competencies by questioning students and reinforcing expected behavior. For example, a principal may walk through the school and ask students what “focusing attention” is and bulletin boards in common areas may exhibit pictures modeling “focused attention” and tips about how to “focus attention.”

Students are encouraged to keep a journal chronicling events in their lives as well as their emotions surrounding those events.

Students are empowered to resolve their own conflicts through the use of peer mediation.³

3 CASEL SEL Stories, *SEL Impacts on Students (Brooklyn)*, available at www.casel.org.

Why is SEL a proven better approach than quick removals?

An in-depth study found that students who receive SEL instruction had more positive attitudes about school and improved an average of 11 percentile points on standardized achievement tests compared to students who did not receive such instruction.⁴

Positive Action, an evidence-based SEL approach that promotes an interest in learning and encourages cooperation among students, was found to have reduced disruptive behaviors by 72% and suspensions by 24%. Positive Action is based on the intuitive philosophy that students feel good about themselves when they engage in positive actions. In a rigorous study, Positive Action reduced suspensions and grade retention by 73% each.

Since implementing SEL, a school in Chicago has seen great improvement in student achievement. Before SEL programming, during the 2004-2005 school year, 38% of the students met or exceeded state standards. By 2007-2008, 75% of the students met or exceeded state standards.⁵

Other examples of demonstrated benefits include improved graduation rates, reduced violence, lowered substance abuse, and decreased teen suicide attempts.⁶

4 Durlak, J.A. (2011), *The Impact of Enhancing Students’ Social and Emotional Learning: A Meta-Analysis of School-Based Universal Interventions*, *Child Development*, 82(1), 405-432.

5 CASEL SEL Stories, *Principal Leadership: A Key to Success* (Chicago), available at www.casel.org.

6 Zins, J.E. & Elias, M. (2008), *Social Emotional Learning, Children’s Needs III*.

HIGHLIGHT: LEATAATA FLOYD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

(FORMERLY JED SMITH)

Sacramento City Unified School District



Billy Aydlett, Principal and Cory Jones, Assistant Principal

Tell me about how you came to work at Leataata Floyd Elementary and about the climate of the school before you instituted Positive Behavior Interventions & Support (PBIS) and Social Emotional Learning (SEL)?

Principal Billy Aydlett (BA): This school was being operated like a school from the 1950s but, obviously, things have changed. The school had an in-school suspension model that involved students being sent to a room called the “Dungeon.” The school’s leadership had hired a substitute to watch the students in the Dungeon and make them sit quietly. They did not receive any instruction and they were not given any school work to do. Additionally, that room was full of black and brown boys.

Under the Superintendent’s No Child Left Behind Priority School Initiative, teachers and staff were given the choice to leave at the end of the year. Mr. Jones and I let the instructional staff know our goals for transforming the school, which included, among other things, daily use of technology tools

during instruction to increase student engagement; daily use of culturally and linguistically responsive teaching strategies; Individual Learning Plans for high achieving students; regular after school team meetings to discuss data, instructional response, and intervention; and extended day instruction. After learning what our goals were eleven of our thirteen instructional staff left.

Why did you decide to implement PBIS and SEL?

BA: We had focused on rigorous academic instruction. From the beginning of Day One, we knew that we prepared for the wrong thing.

Assistant Principal Cory Jones (CJ): <starts laughing>

What’s so funny?

CJ: It’s not really funny but it was immediately obvious that we had more serious work to do to get students ready to learn. On the first day of school, after we had sent all the kids to class, a kindergartener continued to play outside and made no moves to go to class. I went over to her told her who I was and asked her name. She looked at me, said nothing, turned around and continued playing. I asked her again and she told me, “You’re a stranger, I don’t know you, I don’t have to listen to what you say.”

BA: I saw this happening and it was humbling and inspiring.

CJ: Later, at the end of the first day, we had a meeting with the staff to talk about how things had gone and one teacher, who is usually very good at establishing relationships and reaching kids, just broke down and cried. She basically went through her entire bag of teaching strategies and tricks that had been



successful at other schools and she didn't get the desired effects. She felt like she was ill prepared to teach these students and felt sorrow because the students were so academically and socially behind.

BA: What I learned is that what our students need the most is not negative consequences and zero tolerance policies. What our students need is absolutely consistent and urgent support around maintaining appropriate behavior. They need to feel valued and confident in school. The traditional model says, "Throw kids out for refusing to listen to you." After a couple of weeks of experiencing more of what we had experienced the first day, we held a school-wide staff meeting and asked, "What can we do differently?"

How then did you decide to implement PBIS and SEL?

BA: We initially received an inclusive practices training. The only part of that training that was particularly good was PBIS, as a subset of inclusive practices. We are a full inclusion model school. This means that all of our special education students are mainstreamed and receive instruction in the same classroom as our regular education students. We further sought out training from the employees of Ravenswood because the demographics of their schools are similar to ours and they had been implementing PBIS as part of a court settlement and seeing dramatic and good results for children. We also attended a PBIS training by Placer County Office of Education.

We had heard about the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning's (CASEL's) Collaborating Districts Initiative (CDI) because Sacramento is one of the districts collaborating with CASEL. Through CDI, the District has received a planning grant of \$125,000 and is eligible to apply for

implementation grants in fall 2012. This grant pays for whatever the district and CASEL decide would be best. In our case, the grant pays for Second Step, a multimedia SEL curriculum that assists teachers with teaching SEL skills in the classroom, and which costs about \$3,000. Cory and I heard that there would be a CASEL meeting at the District. We assertively invited ourselves to the meeting. Getting resources to help your school improve sometimes takes aggressive advocacy.

How can other school and district leaders bring PBIS and SEL into their schools?

I would recommend that other Principals and educators contact the PBIS main office for their region or county, if one exists. At Placer County Office of Education, as a part of their special education team, they had PBIS experts and were using federal Individuals with Disability Education Act funding to help schools like ours implement PBIS. I also really recommend contacting CASEL directly; they are very helpful people who will provide guidance about implementing SEL in your school.

What changes did you make to your curriculum or school structure to implement PBIS and SEL?

BA: At the time, we had two curriculum instruction training specialists. We designated one of those training specialists to be a full time SEL and PBIS person. While instruction is very important, Academic Percentage Index (API) points are not immediately important to the families we serve.

We eliminated the Dungeon because it was stupid. When you are dealing with kids who are disengaged with school it doesn't make any sense to take them out of it.

Additionally, we started taking and recording data. We have three data tracking systems. First, we use Google Docs to create a database for tracking office referrals. Second, Mr. Jones inputs that data into ZANGLE, which is the district-wide student information system. Finally, we also use a program called School-Wide Information System (SWIS), which tracks where and when behavioral incidents occur and tracks Tier 2 PBIS interventions, such as Check-in/Check-out systems, for individual students.

CJ: We created a [video handbook](#) for our parents. We created a video because the community wants to know what's going on in our school.

BA: Fortunately, after that first year of redesign no one left. Changing the culture of a school is difficult and you have to work with some teachers who don't necessarily agree. Of course, there is still a lot of work to do.

What does PBIS look like on a daily basis?

BA: At our school, there are three tiers of interventions. At Tier 1, all students are taught that our school-wide rules and expectations in all areas of the school are to be responsible, respectful, and hardworking. Students are taught lessons from the Second Step curriculum about three times a week in their classrooms. There is also a clear positive behavior support system with rewards for good behavior that is witnessed in all areas of the school. The students earn Panther Way tickets that can be redeemed. Tier 1 serves about 90% of our students.

Tier 2 includes Check In/Check Out procedure for about 6% of students who need a more focused attention. If there is a student exhibiting behavior that goes against the school-wide expectations, we create a contract with that student, detailing the targeted behavior. That student then checks in with us, or another designated adult, in the morning, before recess, before lunch and at the end of the day. The staff member is responsible for detailing whether the student needs support or is doing well managing his/her behavior.

Tier 3 is for individual students who need the most intensive instruction. At this level, intervention can take many forms, including working with the parents of that student in the school and referral to the counselor. In order to make what we're doing meaningful, we need to spend time talking to kids

about the PBIS and SEL systems at school.

BA discusses the Tier 1 interventions, Second Step and positive behavior reinforcement system with two 4th grade students and a 1st grade student.

BA: So, what happens when you are caught doing good in school?

4th grade boy: You earn Panther Way tickets when you are being good. The Green tickets are for recess for being helpful, like helping to put balls away. The orange tickets are for the cafeteria by not cutting in line or running around. Then kids write their name on the ticket and put them in a bucket. If your name is picked out of the bucket, you can get privileges like playing on the iPad, or helping count the tickets, or eating lunch on stage or with the Principal or Vice Principal.

BA: Teachers teach SEL lessons from the Second Step curriculum about three times per week. This includes 5-10 minute transitional videos and pictures. Let's take a look at a classroom implementing the curriculum.

BA opens the door to the classroom. So, in this first grade classroom, students are mastering Focusing Attention, Self-talk - calming yourself down when you are angry or upset - and Avoiding Distractions.

BA stops outside the first grade classroom, where a first grader shares a picture of 3 students doing schoolwork and one student looking around the room. The first grader points at the picture and explains:

1st Grade Girl: He's not focusing attention, and we are helping him focus attention.

BA: How is he not focusing attention?

1st Grade Girl: Everyone is working and he's looking at them and not his paper.

BA: What are some things he can do to focus his attention?

1st Grade Girl: He could look at his own paper and not get distracted.

BA opens the door to a fourth grade classroom where students are playing a "Name That Emotion" game. One student goes to the front of the classroom, picks an emotion from the board and models it for the rest of the class. In a classroom with 35 fourth graders, all

are absolutely silent during transitions in the game and all raise their hands before speaking.

Two fourth graders join BA outside the classroom to discuss why they are using Second Step:

4th Grade Boy: Second Step helps us with trying to figure out what other people's feelings are and if they're sad so we can help them out.

BA: Why is that important?

4th Grade Girl: It's important to help people fix their problems because when people are happy, they make good choices and go all the way up to a successful career.

What does it cost to implement PBIS and SEL at your school?

BA: PBIS is not expensive; it's about \$300 (300 dollars) yearly. Anyone who says money is a factor or a barrier to implementing an alternative discipline practice doesn't want to change. This reluctance to implement these alternatives is just an extension of white privilege and not wanting to change to serve your community.

The Second Step curriculum, which provides SEL instruction, costs about \$3000 and is paid for through CASEL's CDI grant to SCUSD. Similar grants have been granted to eight other large school districts.

Since last year, what benefits have you experienced and what, if any, new programs are you implementing?

BA: There is no longer a 75% attrition rate at this school. Since the 2011-12 school year, we have seen a significant decrease in suspensions and in physical fighting. We have further reduced suspensions by 42%. We are still implementing PBIS and SEL and have also layered on restorative justice. We are seeing that students now trust adults more and we are working to similarly improve peer relationships. Most of our office referrals are for disruption due to verbal peer-to-peer conflict. Also, all of the teachers are still here with the exception of one.

How do you effectively fit PBIS, SEL and RJ together?

BA: Something that has helped us layer these alternatives together is using inclusive practices. All students, no matter where they come from or what their achievement levels are, belong in the same classrooms. Students with a variety of needs and exceptionalities can all be accommodated in the same classroom.

Inclusive practices sets the foundation for making sure that everyone collaborates. Since suspensions affect students with the greatest needs disproportionately, we are creating a system that goes against that. Inclusivity forces us to be accountable for all students.

Logistically, it works like this: we use PBIS to get on the same page and reinforce positive behavior. We use the SEL curriculum to be explicit about teaching behavior. Additionally, we use community building RJ circles as a universal intervention and restorative circles to help us deal with when a kid messes up. Each classroom has a circle for community building at least once weekly. We are also implementing something more intensive. When students get into fights with each other, we now require them to spend five lunches together, in the office, doing community building circles and other activities with each other.

It would be fascinating if we held our adults to the same standard as we hold our kids. Think about if kids got the same supports that adults get when they mess up. What happens when a teacher or administrator shows up late or skips work? There is some support before termination, so, therefore, it's not only unlawful but mind boggling to suspend kids for being tardy to school or skipping class.

Feel free to call us:

Principal Billy Aydlett
Cell: 916.752.3324
Billy-aydlett@sac-city.k12.ca.us
Assistant Principal Cory Jones
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Trauma Sensitive Schools and School Districts

Children's exposure to community and family violence is a significant problem in many of our communities around the state. Studies estimate that between 3.3 million and 10 million children in the U.S. witness violence in their own homes each year.¹ Children who have experienced early, chronic trauma, such as family or community violence, can develop emotional, behavioral, cognitive and relationship difficulties that can adversely affect their ability to learn and function well in school (Cole, et al., 2005). Exposure to trauma is associated with a higher risk for school drop out (Porche, et al., 2011), and in turn, dropping out of school increases the risk of being imprisoned (Center for Labor Market Studies, 2009).

Unfortunately, students who have experienced violence and trauma may act out, refuse to obey teachers, fight, be unable to pay attention or follow directions. In fact, the area of a child's brain that is associated with the fear response may become overdeveloped, causing the child to act using a fight or flight response when triggered by a trauma reminder, even when there is no actual threat to fear. In Jenny Horsman's book, *Too Scared to Learn*, an adult survivor of childhood sexual abuse describes how the trauma she experienced affected her ability to learn:

I remember crying in the night. I found it difficult to hear Mrs. Patterson when she spoke in the classroom. I felt as if she were speaking from beneath tumbling water, or from the end of a long tunnel. She assumed I was daydreaming. I stopped imagining that I might one day be a teacher No longer did my imagination dance me through the leaves. The sound of ringing church bells irritated me. Mostly I felt

*ashamed, different.*²

The goal of creating a "trauma sensitive school" is to reduce problem behaviors and emotional difficulties, as well as optimize positive and productive functioning for all children and youth. When schools are able to address the behavioral health needs of students in a proactive manner, rather than a reactive one, they can increase the resources available to promote educational goals. School leaders in such Trauma Sensitive Schools recognize the importance of behavioral health and dedicate resources as part of an overall effort to reduce barriers to learning. Measurable goals around attendance, academic achievement, graduation rates, bullying incidents, office referrals, suspensions, and expulsions are used to determine whether behavioral health initiatives are successful.³

Other key elements of a school that successfully addresses trauma and behavioral health needs include:

1. A School and Behavioral Health Support Team, which refers to any team established to address behavioral health needs and, like a Student Support or Wrap-Around Services team, is used to plan, coordinate and evaluate services
2. Mapping of existing mental and behavioral health services and their adequacy and utilization of mental health resources inside and outside of the school community, and training for staff, like paraprofessionals, secretaries, bus drivers, and others to provide ongoing support
3. Employing a school curricula that includes instruction in problem solving, life skills,

1 Carlson, B.E. (1984). "Children's observations of interparental violence." In Roberts, A.R. (Ed.) *Battered Women and Their Families* (pp. 147-167). New York: Springer Publishing.

2 *Helping Traumatized Children Learn, A Report and Policy Agenda*, Massachusetts Advocates for Children: Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative In collaboration with Harvard Law School and the Task Force on Children Affected by Domestic Violence (2005). To purchase or download please go to www.massadvocates.org or contact: Anne Eisner, aeisner@massadvocates.org, ph: 617-998-0110.

3 *The Behavioral Health and Public Schools Framework*, Introduction to the Framework, visit <http://BPHS321.org>, p. 2.

social-emotional development, interpersonal community, self-regulation, and violence prevention, such as Second Step or Social Emotional Learning Welcoming parents of students with behavioral health challenges to participate as equals in the planning and evaluation of programs and services

4. Creating professional developmental trainings that respect and take into account ethnic and cultural diversity
5. Ensuring that school personnel are trained and actively engaged respectfully and supportively with students and families⁴

To learn more about how to implement a behavioral health framework that supports a Trauma Sensitive School with step-by-step implementation ideas, please visit <http://BPHS321.org> or www.FixSchoolDiscipline.org

HIGHLIGHT: THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA SAN FRANCISCO, CHILD AND ADOLESCENT SERVICES, DEPT. OF PSYCHIATRY, HEARTS (HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS AND RESPONSE TO TRAUMA IN SCHOOLS) PROJECT⁵

UCSF HEARTS is a multi-level school-based prevention and intervention program for children who have experienced trauma that aims to promote school success for traumatized children and youth by creating school environments that are more trauma-sensitive and supportive of the needs of these students. This project draws its model in part from the flexible framework for trauma-sensitive schools described in the section above, published by Massachusetts Advocates for Children in the book entitled, *Helping Traumatized Children Learn: A*

⁴ Id. at p. 3.

⁵ A collaboration between Child and Adolescent Services (CAS) at UCSF-SFGH Department of Psychiatry and the UCSF Center of Excellence in Women's Health. This section adapted from "UCSF HEARTS", Summary of Accomplishments (June, 2012).

Report and Policy Agenda.⁶

HEARTS has implemented its multi-level program in four San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) schools in the southeast sector of San Francisco: El Dorado Elementary, Bret Hart Elementary, Paul Revere School, and George Washington Carver Elementary. These schools serve some of the most under-resourced and chronically traumatized neighborhoods in San Francisco. HEARTS provides services within the three-tiered framework for prevention and intervention that is similar to the framework employed by PBIS:

- 1) primary prevention or "fostering the emotional well being of all students through school-wide safe and supportive environments."⁷ e.g., classroom presentations on coping with stress;
- 2) secondary prevention or "supports and services that are preventive and enable schools to intervene early to minimize escalation of identified behavioral health symptoms and other barriers to school success,"⁸ e.g., skills building groups for at-risk youth; and
- 3) tertiary interventions or "intensive services and schools' participation in coordinated care for the small number of students demonstrating significant needs,"⁹ e.g., trauma-informed therapeutic interventions around post-trauma difficulties.

A key ingredient of the HEARTS program is that it addresses the effects of trauma not only at the student level, but also at the adult caregiver level, and at the system level (i.e., school climate, procedures, and policies). The HEARTS team provides critical support and training to parents/guardians through support groups and workshops, and to school personnel through professional development training, mental health consultation, and wellness support that addresses burnout and vicarious traumatization. Such training and support to school staff helps to build capacity in school staff and provide them with trauma-sensitive strategies to address classroom behavioral difficulties, training that educators typically do not receive in teacher

⁶ *Helping Traumatized Children Learn, A Report and Policy Agenda*, Massachusetts Advocates for Children: Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative In collaboration with Harvard Law School and the Task Force on Children Affected by Domestic Violence (2005).

⁷ The Behavioral Health and Public Schools Framework, Introduction to the Framework, visit <http://BPHS321.org>, p. 1.

⁸ Id.

⁹ Id.

education coursework.

In partnership with SFUSD, the HEARTS mental health practitioners have delivered more than 1800 hours of training and consultation to SFUSD and trained 700 SFUSD staff and affiliates. In the target schools, HEARTS provides on-site psychotherapy and mental health consultation three days per week. In surveys, school staff at these schools report a 57% increase in their knowledge about trauma and its effects on children, and a 64% increase in their use of trauma-sensitive classroom school practices. At El Dorado Elementary School, where HEARTS has been in operation for 4 years and where the school consistently tracked office discipline referral data, staff reported a 32% decrease in such referrals and a 42% decrease in violent student incidents after the first year of HEARTS implementation(2009-10 academic year).

School staff at target sites have told HEARTS that the training and support has changed their perspective from “these are problem children” to “these are scared and hurt children.” A principal at one of the HEARTS’ schools stated:

[This] has shifted the way we discipline students at the school, we are a lot more empathetic. We take more time to allow kids to cool off, to have those meltdowns and then come back without being suspended or sent home. Getting at that Cradle to Prison pipeline, we’re not reproducing the same model of ‘oh, you’re out of here,’ ostracizing kids and sending them home for things that they may feel are out of their control.

To learn more about trauma sensitive schools and read an interview with HEARTS Project leaders, visit www.FixSchoolDiscipline.org





YOUTH JUSTICE COALITION, FREE L.A.

(Fighting for the Revolution that will Educate and Empower Los Angeles) High School

FREE LA High School first opened in 2003 to serve system-involved students being kicked out of traditional school settings and those returning from juvenile detention facilities and other lock up facilities. This alternative school (a partnership between the Youth Justice Coalition and YouthBuild Charter School), located in Chuco's Justice Center on the border between South Central LA and Inglewood, is open to students 16-24, who want to finish high school and receive a diploma. Students are engaged in all academic subject learning while organizing for youth justice. Community organizing, community education and advocacy is incorporated into the school.

How is the culture at Free LA High School different from schools that you previously attended?

Julio Marquez, 12th grade student: Before coming here, I was at a different school where I was in honors classes but I started having health issues that were getting in the way of my focusing on school. No one really cared about what was going on with me so I became depressed and started failing my classes. At my other school there were security guards with guns and the culture was oppressive and not welcoming. Here, everyone belongs and can bring something into the space. This is most definitely a better way of learning.

Another great thing about FREE LA High School is that we practice transformative justice to resolve conflicts. Transformative justice is a little different from restorative justice. Restorative justice looks at repairing harm and restoring something that was lost. Transformative justice does that too but then

works on advancing together and transforming the society around you; it seeks to repair, prevent and move forward. For instance, say that I was at your house and I wrote graffiti on your walls. If we are working with restorative justice, I would apologize and clean or paint your walls to get rid of the graffiti. Transformative justice takes it further so we could figure out why I tagged your walls in the first place. Maybe I was bored or maybe I needed to do something artistic. We would then figure out how to deal with my boredom or artistic needs that would prevent another graffiti incident and would give me an outlet. Actually, here at FREE LA, we have a Graf Room that students can use for tagging and other graffiti to prevent them from getting in trouble on the streets.

We really take revolution seriously here. Every Friday, we attend a class, "Street University," where we learn about how different systems work to oppress different groups of people. Then we organize and advocate for things that will empower us, our families and our community.

Visit, call or email us:

FREE L.A. High School
Chuco's Justice Center
1137 E. Redondo Blvd., Inglewood, CA 90302
323.235.4243 | FreeLANow@yahoo.com

RACIAL BIAS AND DISCRIMINATION: STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS DISPROPORTIONALITY IN DISCIPLINE HEAD-ON

Racial disparities in discipline are stark in California with 3 times as many African-American students being suspended as their white peers. This is cause for alarm because studies on race and school discipline do not support a conclusion that such disparities are based on African American students having higher rates of misbehavior, and do provide evidence that they receive harsher punishments than white students receive for the same behavior.¹⁰ In implementing alternative discipline strategies, it is equally important to mindfully assess the existence and causes of such disproportionate disciplinary treatment and use proactive strategies with any alternative approach that address the issue head on.

What are some of the causes of disproportionate treatment in discipline and how can they be proactively addressed?

A myriad of overlapping factors cause disproportionate treatment:

Implicit Racial Bias

- Implicit prejudices are social preferences that exist outside of conscious awareness or control. We are all affected, in one way or another, by the society in which we exist.
- Implicit prejudice is understood to reflect associations between social categories (e.g. Black/White, old /young) and evaluations (e.g. good/bad, smart/dumb)
- Implicit bias means people are not aware of the prejudices they have.

The vast majority of people with implicit bias hold no explicit bias.

Conditions that encourage perpetuation of implicit bias are akin to the conditions in which teachers and

administrations frequently operate, such as time constraints, ambiguity, cognitive overload/busyness, and lack of attention being paid to tasks at hand

Social class, generational, and experiential differences increase the divide and subsequent misunderstanding between African American students and their teachers and administrators, even those with similar ethnic backgrounds.

Cultural conflicts exist between many African American students' culture and the dominant culture of the schools they attend.

- For instance, many African American students are accustomed to engaging in multiple, varied tasks simultaneously when outside of school. If a school's instructional activities are structured around working silently and on one activity at a time, some African American students may be perceived to be willfully defiant for talking or working collaboratively.¹¹
- Verbal and nonverbal communication differences can create further cultural conflict and misinterpretation between school staff and African American students. Many teachers may misinterpret the more active and physical style of communication of African American males to be combative or argumentative.¹² Teachers who are prone to accepting stereotypes of adolescent African American males as threatening or dangerous may overreact to relatively minor threats to authority.¹³

Racial disparities are significantly larger when analyzing suspensions for subjectively defined offenses, such as willful defiance, versus suspension for other more serious and less subjective categories.¹⁴

¹¹ Townsend, B. (2000), *The Disproportionate Discipline of African American Learners: Reducing School Suspensions and Expulsions, Exceptional Children*, 66(3), pp. 381-391.

¹² *Id.*

¹³ *Id.*

¹⁴ For offenses involving weapons, drugs and violence resulting in injury, white students were suspended at a rate of 1.6 students per 100 white students and black students were suspended at a rate of 4.5 students per 100 black students. This is a gap of 2.9 suspensions. However, when analyzing data for "willful defiance" (Cal. Ed. Code 48900(k)), white students were suspended at a rate of 2.4 suspensions for 100 white students, whereas black students were suspended at a far greater rate of 10.1 suspensions per 100 black students. This is a gap of 7.7 suspensions. Dan Losen and Tia Elena Martinez, 2013

¹⁰ Center for Evaluation and Education Policy, Skiba et al., 2002

Fortunately, implicit bias is quite malleable to context and environment. Schools can begin to address disparate treatment inflicted on students of color by adopting culturally conscious classroom management practices and revising their discipline policies to remove subjective offenses from the menu of options.

Here are a few additional suggestions:

Gain awareness of factors that influence discipline decisions. Take the Implicit Bias test at implicit.harvard.edu.

Hire a diverse instructional and administrative staff. Students of color stay in school longer and perform better when they have teachers who look like them and who they can relate to and look up to.¹⁵

Examine suspension and expulsion data and systemically address disproportionate discipline results. *Do this to influence decisions about discipline policies and to ensure that differential discipline is not applied to any group of students based on ethnicity, gender, ability, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation or any intersection of those identities.*

Adopt an alternative discipline policy, making sure to be mindful of and proactively seeking to combat implicit and explicit racial bias

- Increase the awareness of teachers and administrators of the potential for bias when issuing referrals for discipline,
- Utilize a range of consequences in response to behavior problems and treat suspension as a last resort¹⁶
- Make a concerted effort to understand the roots of behavior problems, including making relationships with students and employing a trauma-sensitive approach,¹⁷
- Remove subjective offenses from the menu for discipline and ensure that every offense has clear, objective parameters.

Actively pursue and maintain relationships with family and community. *Fostering collaborative relationships with individuals who*

are members of students' culture will increase educators' understanding of student background. This partnership will, therefore, minimize students' disconnect from school environment and assist schools with effective, culturally competent management of student behavior.

Teach Culturally Responsive Classroom Management (CRCM).¹⁸

CRCM is a pedagogical approach to running classrooms for all children in a culturally responsive way. Using this approach, teachers

- Mindfully recognize their biases and cultural values and reflect on how these influence their behavior expectations and interactions with students;
- Examine the broader, social, economic and political context in which all members of the school exist;
- Filter all decision making about the physical environment in which students learn through a lens of cultural diversity making sure that many different cultures, including the students' backgrounds, are represented; and
- Commit to building a caring classroom community by actively developing relationships with students.

Employ a "So What" Test. *While clear behavioral expectations are necessary to create and maintain an environment conducive to academic and social learning, some expectations have more to do with power and control than a student's learning. When a student's behavior doesn't conform to a certain expectation, a teacher or administrator can ask him/herself, "So what if the students work together on an assignment instead of alone?" or "So what if the student wants to partially stand while doing his work?" By assessing what is the potential harm of a behavior, a teacher can direct teaching time and effort at rules that protect and improve student education and learning environments.*

For more information on promising practices for addressing implicit bias and an informative webinar, visit www.FixSchoolDiscipline.org/toolkit/webinar-archive and view "Disproportionate Discipline: Addressing Implicit Racial Bias in Suspensions."

15 Tammy Johnson, Racial Profiling and Punishment in U.S. Public Schools, Erase Initiative, Applied Research Center, p. 21.

16 This method is also consistent with current California law. See Cal. Ed. Code 48900.5(a).

17 See information on page 45 about Trauma-Sensitive Schools and Districts.

18 Information in this section adapted from Metropolitan Center for Urban Education (2008), Culturally Responsive Classroom Management Strategies, Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development.

FINDING ALLIES IN YOUR COMMUNITY AND DEVELOPING A GROUP TO TAKE ACTION TO FIX SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

In order to make these important changes in your school system, you not only need to tell a compelling story with data and stories from students and parents (see page 54), you will need a strong group of people to stand together to demand that real change happen!

You may already be part of an organized group of students, parents, educators and/or community leaders who are demanding reforms to the broken, harsh system of school removals in California. If you would like to expand your group, here are a few ideas that can help.

In California, there are a number of organizations and groups who have already committed to reforming the school discipline system. Many of them may have a chapter or a satellite office or members in your community. In addition, there are organizations and individuals in organizations who would be great to sit down with to share information about this issue because their interest in reforming the school discipline system may be the same as yours.

First, there are groups who have publicly joined in the struggle to fix school discipline and stop the school-to-prison pipeline. Additional contact information for these and even more groups is in our Community Leaders section beginning on page 82. You can also find a full list online at www.FixSchoolDiscipline.org

These agencies or organizations should also be contacted to see if they will stand with you:

Juvenile Public Defenders and their association
County and city juvenile public defenders see firsthand what happens when children are removed from or arrested at school. They have a strong interest in dismantling the school-to-prison pipeline.

Parent Teachers Association (PTA) – *At the state level, they stood in support of a number of bills to reform school discipline. Reach out to a local chapter to talk about getting them on board!*

Religious leaders/organizations – *Often religious entities and organizations see the direct impacts on children in their community who have been pushed out of school. You can connect with them to see if they will stand with you.*

Teachers' Union – *Teachers have an interest in helping ensure that all children succeed in school and in making certain teachers have the supports they need to manage classroom behaviors and help students struggling with mental health and other traumas. The current discipline regime focuses on quick removals and not on helping solve the underlying issues and providing longer term support. Speaking early with teachers about these issues and asking them to stand with you is important to bringing about long-term change.*

What should I bring to meetings with individuals and organizations who might be interested in standing with me to fix school discipline?

We recommend that you bring copies of the fact sheets on pages 3 to 9 that talk about the problems and solutions around school discipline. If you have also created a local fact sheet, you should bring that with you too.

If you have been unable to reach someone by phone to meet, you could also send a letter to request a meeting. Here is a sample you might use:



Sample Letter

Dear _____:

I am a (parent/student/educator/community leader/member of name of community organization) who is very concerned about the number of students in our community who are being removed from school each year through harsh and punitive discipline practices. The data in California is troubling. We have become a national leader in school removals and are currently issuing more suspensions than diplomas each year. Discipline issues that used to be handled with a parent-principal conference are now resulting in suspensions for multiple days at a time. [Insert local facts, if available]

It is critical that we help students understand when their behaviors are harming others and the school community, but we need to do it in a way that does not send them to an often unsupervised vacation from school or push them to drop out or become involved in the juvenile justice system. Fortunately, there are a number of proven alternatives to the existing punitive discipline system that not only lower suspension rates and hold students accountable, but result in overall academic and attendance gains for ALL students. They help make the school climate safer and stronger and are a win-win for all children, not just those struggling with behavior issues.

I am hoping that you can spare a few minutes to sit down with me to discuss this issue and how we can transform our broken practices around school discipline. I will follow-up by phone and email to see about your availability. Thank you in advance for your time.

Sincerely,

[Your Name, Title and any other organizations or individuals working with you]

CONTINUED

FINDING ALLIES IN YOUR COMMUNITY AND DEVELOPING A GROUP TO TAKE ACTION TO FIX SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

Where else can you find community leaders who might stand with you?

Questions to think about:

Are there other groups or organizations in your community who play a big role in how schools work in your community? Do you hear them sometimes on the radio or quoted in the newspaper?

Are there parent or student leaders who have spoken out on this issue?

Are there teachers or other educators who have expressed concerns in school board meetings or other forums?

Are there Judges who have taken a stand or expressed concern with the number of children entering the juvenile justice system?

Each community is different, so knowing your community and who else might be an ally is key.

How can you bring a group together or expand your existing group?

There are already other alliances and groups in communities around the state who are working together to fix school discipline. Many groups start out small with like-minded folks who want to make a change.

If your community does not have an existing organization, it is often helpful to give your group a name that is recognizable so that you can identify yourself when talking to school leaders, offices, the media, and others in the community.

You might consider:

Starting a Dignity in Schools Chapter in your community. *Dignity in Schools is a national organization with local chapters, and it focuses on reforming school discipline and putting an end to the school-to-prison pipeline. See www.dignityinschools.org for more information!*

Example: In Los Angeles, CADRE, Public Counsel, Youth Justice Coalition, Children's Defense Fund, ACLU and Community Rights Campaign are all members of Dignity in Schools-LA, and these groups work together to pursue efforts to make change.

Start a Fix School Discipline group, e.g. Fix School Discipline San Bernardino. *Whether this is the name you choose or something else, it is always a good idea to create a name that is easily identifiable in terms of the purpose of the group and its goals.*

Once you have found others who are interested in fixing school discipline, you can hold an in person meeting to develop a plan for addressing the issues in your school community. In the pages that follow, we lay out a potential plan, provide sample alternative discipline policies, and other tools to help you make the ideas for reform a reality.

TELLING A COMPELLING STORY ABOUT HARSH DISCIPLINE IN YOUR COMMUNITY

How to Create Your Own Fact Sheet or Presentation about How Harsh Discipline is Impacting Your Community

1 You are going to need data to tell this story. You can find data about school discipline in your community from four key online sources:

- ▶ California Department of Education (CDE) Dataquest website, where you can find basic data related to suspensions, expulsions, and truancy, disaggregated by race, ethnicity, and gender and offense for the school and district. <http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>
- ▶ Office of Civil Rights Data Collection webpage, where you can find information about suspensions and expulsion rates disaggregated by race, ethnicity, and gender for the 2009-2010 school year. schooldisciplinedata.org
- ▶ The Center for Civil Rights Remedies webpage, where you can find suspension rates in different states and districts, based on data from the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) www.ocrdata.ed.gov.

- ▶ California Healthy Kids Survey, where you can find information about students' perceptions of safety and violence in school, as well as information about their physical health.
- ▶ California Health Climate Survey, where you can find specific information pertaining to perceptions of school climate as reported by teachers, administrators and other school staff.

While you are collecting, compiling and looking at the data, ask yourself:

- ▶ What kinds of offenses result in the most suspensions and expulsions?
- ▶ Are the majority of students at a particular school suspended or expelled for dangerous offenses? Or for non-dangerous and/or vague violations, such as disrupting class or willful defiance?
- ▶ Are certain groups of students, such as students of color or disabled students, suspended more than other students?
- ▶ How many days of school are being lost to suspension? What does this mean in lost money to the school district, if each day a student is suspended the school loses between \$30-50?

Step-by-Step Guide to Researching Data

How to find the data you need from each of these sites

ACCESSING DATA ON CDE DATAQUEST

1. Visit <http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>
2. From the first dropdown menu, select the level of information you want to view.

Questions: DataQuest | DataQuest Management Team | (916) 319-0947 or (916) 327-0193

October 2010 CDECS Enrollment		Number of students with an unexcused absence or tardy of more than 30 minutes on 3 or more days (truancy)	Truancy Rate (Number of Truancy/Enrollment)
		1,777	88.5%

Ed Codes	Ed Code Test	Number of Expulsions	Number of Suspensions
48000a(1)	Related to physical injury to another person	3	30
48000a(2)	Related to use of force or violence	5	47
48000a	Related to firearms, knives, explosive devices, etc.	4	10
48000b	Related to possession or sale of controlled substances, alcohol, or tobacco	1	25
48000c	Committed or attempted to commit felony or violation	1	3
48000d	Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property	1	3
48000e	Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property	1	3
48000f	Related to possession or use of tobacco products	2	2
48000g	Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity	1	6
48000h	Related to possession or sale of drug paraphernalia	2	2
48000i	Related to disruption of school activities or willful defiance	0	114
48000j	Related to sexual harassment	1	3
48000k	Related to harassment, threats, or intimidation	1	4
48000l	POS-Related to processing, selling, or otherwise furnishing a firearm	1	1
48000m	POS-Possession of an explosive	1	1

Overall Total	18	249
Violence/Drug Total	16	134
Violence/Drug Rate (Violence/Drug Total / Enrollment)	0%	4.89%
Total of Possessory Charges/Expulsions/Drug	3	564
Number of Non-Student Firearm Incidents	1	1

Use of blank spaces in this report for reporting by school sites to the LSA results in many errors. A self-explanatory table input form is available at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/ls/lsr/>

Site school at risk of being designated "seriously dangerous" for 2008-2009 NCI

Site school at risk of being designated "seriously dangerous" for 2008-2010 NCI

Site school at risk of being designated "seriously dangerous" for 2010-2011 NCI

of these categories and get separate reports!

5. Submit to view your data. If you are interested in comparing different school years, you can select a different year using the dropdown menu on the top right corner of the screen. Note: In order to access this data for the 2012-2013 school year only, you must select "Total Offenses Committed" from the Report drop-

down menu and select a specific school from the School drop-down menu.

- If you want to view information for the school that your students attend, choose "school." If you are interested in data on the entire district or county, then choose district or county.
- From the second dropdown menu, select the topic about which you are concerned.
 - For this selection, the dropdown menu is extensive and topics include school performance, test scores, student demographics, student misconduct and intervention. For suspension and expulsion data, scroll down and select "Expulsion, Suspension, and Truancy."
 - You can also select, "Create your own report."
 - On the following page, select the school year and type a portion of the name of school, district or county that you are researching. **Note: Many schools have the same or similar names. Make sure you are selecting the right one. It is easier to locate the correct school, district or county if you type only a portion of the name.**
 - For the 2011-2012 school year, CDE required schools and districts to disaggregate, by race and ethnicity, their suspension, expulsion and truancy data. Additionally, suspension and expulsion data was disaggregated by type: Expulsion by Federal Offense; Suspension by Federal Offense; Suspension, Expulsion and Truancy Rates; 48900(k) Defiance Suspension and Expulsion; and Total Offenses Committed. So, you can sort by any

- In order to analyze what types of behavior lead to suspension and expulsion at a particular school in your community, click on the name of a school. This will bring you to a page that displays grounds for each of the suspensions at that school based on the provisions of the California Education Code. See screenshot above. (Screenshots courtesy of Mary Lou Fulton, "How to Research California School Suspension and Expulsion Data," California Endowment).

ACCESSING DATA FROM THE CENTER FOR CIVIL RIGHTS REMEDIES

Visit schooldisciplinedata.org

- Choose one of the following options and then click "Go!"
 - Show secondary school results
 - Show K-12 school results
 - Show elementary school results
 - Compare elementary and secondary school results
- On the following page choose your state and district from the drop-down menus.
- Under the drop-down menus, select whether you want data comparing two districts or data for race, ethnicity, and English Learner status with or

without Disability status.

4. In order to see the exact suspension rate for race, ethnicity or for English Learners, put your cursor over the corresponding bar in the graph.

Note: The data in the web tool describes the unduplicated number of students suspended at least once as a percentage of each sub groups' total enrollment in a district. This tool does not include data for individual school sites.

ACCESSING DATA FROM OCR CIVIL RIGHTS DATA COLLECTION

Visit www.ocrdata.ed.gov.

- ▶ Select the 2009 District or School Reports by clicking the hyperlink or the arrow to the right.
- ▶ Fill in the information for the school you are researching, or
- ▶ Select the District tab and fill in the information for the district you are researching.

ACCESSING DATA FROM SURVEYS

California Healthy Kids Survey

1. Visit www.chks.wested.org/reports/search
2. Select the county and type the main name of the district in which you are interested.
3. Click on the name of the report you would like to view, which will download a PDF document to your computer.

California School Climate Survey

Visit www.cscs.wested.org/reports/search.

- Select the county and type the main name of the district in which you are interested. (Do not include the words “unified,” “school,” or “district”.)
- Click on the name of the report you would like to view, which will download a PDF document to your computer.

2 You want to collect real stories about who discipline impacts from current and/or former students, their families, and, if possible, teachers in your community. These stories will help to put a real face on how suspension and expulsion have negatively affected the community.

Here are summaries of real stories that students and

families have shared in hearings around the state on this issue or in meetings with key leaders:

1. A parent of an Oakland Unified high school student explained how racial bias and cultural insensitivity led to her son’s frequent office referrals and lots of missed class time:

“My son is an African American boy in the tenth grade and he is 6’5” and about 250 pounds. He’s bigger than most of his teachers. When he disagrees with something one of his teachers says he says so. This might be scary for some of those teachers but he’s just speaking his mind and he gets sent to the office for defiance.”

2. A student in LAUSD talked about his in-school and out-of-school suspension history:

“I was sent to the office a lot for talking to the person next to me, drawing, not doing my work alone, coming to class tardy and sometimes I was sent to the office for a more personal reason. The teacher would exaggerate about the cause of my referral. I was suspended 12 or 13 times for different reasons like coming to school or class late, having insufficient work incentive, and making fun of my teacher’s hair in class.”

3 You need to organize the data and stories in a way that is clear, concise and also interesting to the school leaders in your community who you are hoping will stop harsh and punitive school discipline practices. This document can also be shared with the media.

To help you do this, first, here is an example of a document created by Community Rights Campaign, Public Counsel, and ACLU after they collected data and stories about harsh punishments around truancy in Los Angeles from various sources and students and to convince Councilmembers and others to support a change in the laws.

On page 57, there is a template you can make for your community.

YOUR COMPELLING STORY TEMPLATE

WHY WE NEED TO REFORM SCHOOL DISCIPLINE IN [INSERT Community name]

We are sending way too many children in [Community] out of school to an unsupervised vacation, denying them valuable instruction, and putting them on the path to drop out! There are better ways to hold students accountable for their behavior while also keeping them on track to graduate!

In [INSERT school year], [INSERT number or percentage] of students were suspended from [INSERT community name] schools.

- ▶ This means [INSERT number] school days lost and [INSERT number of] students who were not in class learning. At [INSERT name of school in community where data is particularly troubling], [INSERT number of willful defiance suspensions] out of [number of suspensions] were for willful defiance, the most discretionary of suspension justifications.
- ▶ In [INSERT community name], [XX%] of African-American, [XX%] of Latino, and [XX%] of students with disabilities are being suspended. This shouldn't be happening!

Suspensions are an unsound educational policy. They don't help students improve their behavior or hold them accountable, they just make it far more likely that they will drop out and end up in the juvenile justice system.

- ▶ The research is clear that when we suspend students they are as much as 5 times more likely to drop out, 6 times more likely to repeat a grade and 3 times more likely to have contact with the juvenile justice system than similar students who did not receive a suspension.¹
- ▶ Students who received an out-of-school suspension in middle school were half as likely to graduate on time as students who did not.²
- ▶ And, even after race and poverty are controlled for, higher rates of out-of-school suspension correlate

with lower achievement scores.³

- ▶ In [INSERT community name], the drop-out rate is [Insert RATE]; the drop-out rate for these populations is [INSERT RATE].

Parents, students, community members and teachers in [INSERT community name] are calling for change!

[INCLUDE 2-3 stories or quotes from parents of students and students who have been suspended and students who have had contact with the juvenile justice system after being pushed out or suspended from school and, if possible, teachers/educators, police or other officials who can talk about why a better system is needed and how suspensions are harming students.]

1. **Student story**
2. **Parent or community member story**
3. **Teacher or educator story**
4. **Police/probation officer/public defender story**

When you remove a student from school through disciplinary exclusion, you also increase his/her risk of becoming a victim of violent crime. Rates of serious violent crime against school-age youth, including rape, sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated assault, are more than twice as high outside of school as they are in school.⁴

There are low cost proven solutions that work for all students – they results in lower suspensions, increases in academic achievement, higher attendance rates, and a more positive school climate! There is no excuse not to reform school discipline today.

That is why we are asking that the School Board/ Superintendent [INSERT name] in [INSERT Community]:

[LIST YOUR DEMANDS – See section on sample policies in other districts and template policies on page 71, as well as the sections on alternatives to harsh, zero tolerance discipline.]

[INSERT the names of all the organizations and individuals who are working with you/support the request to make these changes to school discipline practices]

1 Skiba, R., Simmons, A., Staudinger, L., Rausch, M., Dow, G., & Feggins, R. (2003), Consistent removal: Contributions of school discipline to the school-prison pipeline, presented at the School to Prison Pipeline Conference, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.

2 Balfanz, R. & Boccanfuso, C. (2007), Falling off the Path to Graduation: Early Indicators Brief, Center for the Social Organization of Schools.

3 Skiba, R.J. & Rausch, M.K. (2006), Zero tolerance, suspension, and expulsion: Questions of equity and effectiveness.

4 Dinkes, R., Cataldi, E.F., Kena, G., Baum, K., & Snyder, T.D. (2006), Indicators of School Crime and Safety.

USING THE CALIFORNIA PUBLIC RECORDS ACT PROCESS TO LEARN MORE ABOUT SCHOOL DISCIPLINE PRACTICES

You have decided that you want more information about school discipline practices because the information on the California Department of Education's Dataquest, in your school's School Accountability Report Card, and from the Office of Civil Rights isn't enough to tell the story and understand the problem.

What can I do to get more information about what is happening with school discipline practices?

Of course, you can always ask your school principals or District administrators to give you more information. If you do this, we recommend that you put your request in writing and provide a timeline for them to respond. Unfortunately, a general written request may still not get you the information you need in a timely manner.

If it doesn't, then we recommend that you file a more formal request using the California Public Records Act, which entitles any individual in the community to receive copies of any public documents. This means you can ask for overall discipline data but not personal information about individual students. For example, you can receive documents regarding the number of suspensions issued and instructional days to suspensions lost, but you can't receive personal information about an individual student's suspension.

HOW DO I WRITE A PUBLIC RECORDS ACT REQUEST AND BY WHEN DOES THE SCHOOL OR SCHOOL DISTRICT HAVE TO PROVIDE ME WITH THE RECORDS?

A sample Public Records Act Request that you can edit is available at www.FixSchoolDiscipline.org to help get you started. Here are a few other tips for writing the letter:

State that the request is being made under the California Public Records Act;

- ▶ Be sure to send it to the School Superintendent and the Custodian of Records;

- ▶ Call the school district to make certain the right person has received the request and ask them when they will provide the records and make certain they have your address and phone number, if you will be receiving the records;
- ▶ Be very clear about the types of information that you want and the time periods for which you want the information;
- ▶ Be sure to KEEP a copy of the request for your records with PROOF that you mailed it or sent it in; and
- ▶ If it works better for you, you can let the school district know that you are happy to receive the documents on a CD or by email.

If you don't receive a response, keep calling and reminding them of the deadlines. They must provide you with some response within 10 days of receipt of your request, even if it is to let you know that they will need more time to collect the documents. The additional time to collect the documents needs to be reasonable.

If you have tried everything you can to get the documents and they refuse to give them to you, you can contact Public Counsel through the "I Need Help" function on our web page at www.FixSchoolDiscipline.org/contact. Someone on our team will get back to you!

WILL THERE BE A CHARGE FOR THE DOCUMENTS?

In your letter, you can specifically ask that any fees for the documents be waived if you are unable to pay for the fees yourself. The school District may still ask you to pay for just the basic cost of copying the documents and no more. If you have a copier, you can bring that to the District and avoid the fee.

The District may also try to charge you for any cost for the time it takes its staff members to run a special electronic query for the documents from its database. However, you should NOT be charged for the cost of putting together ANY existing documents or for queries that they have already run for other school business.

HOW TO MAKE THE CASE AND CONVINCE SCHOOL DISTRICT AND SCHOOL LEADERS TO HELP US PUT A STOP TO HARSH DISCIPLINE

In order to convince the schools in your community to utilize proven discipline alternatives instead of the broken traditional discipline system, you should write, call, and meet with key school leaders and officials to inform them about the problems with school discipline and offer proven alternative solutions. In California, school districts consist of key players who influence how discipline policies are created and implemented in the schools in your district.

The Superintendent is the main decision-maker of the district where your school is located. If you convince her/him that adopting your proposed discipline alternative is a good idea, then s/he has the power to put that alternative in place for all schools in the district. Sometimes a School Board resolution is also needed and if a new allocation of funding is required, the school board may need to approve it.

A Principal is the main decision-maker in the school your students attend. Convincing the Principal is important so that s/he can work with all of the staff and teachers to create a working model of your proposal that fits the needs of the students and families in that school.

Teachers are important because they directly interact with our students and see firsthand many of the problems with harsh school discipline. Teachers are the ones who will take the lead in implementing the policy in the classroom and on the playground

after the school adopts your proposed discipline policy. Teachers can be great allies and advocates for adopting an alternative discipline policy. However, if they are not on board, alternative discipline policies will not be implemented with fidelity. Contacting the **Teachers' Union** in your community is equally important because they can disseminate your requests to more teachers more quickly than you may be able and their support is usually very critical to getting the support of many of the teachers in the community.

It is important to make relationships with **School Board Members** because they have the power to pass an alternative discipline policy resolution. They make important decisions about how school district money is spent. Additionally, once a policy is adopted they can help establish systems and processes for the school district to remain accountable to the community for implementing the policy.

There may be other key leaders in your school district, such as a Deputy Superintendent or the Director of Discipline, who you might also want to sit down with.

In sum: It is easier to make meaningful, lasting change when all of the key players are on board.

Below, you will find a sample letter that can be adapted and sent to school leaders to request a meeting and outline why this issue is important and the changes you are hoping for:



Sample letter

Dear [Superintendent/Principal/Teacher/Board Member/]:

I am a (parent/student/educator/community leader/member) of [name of community organization] who is very concerned about the number of students in our community who are being removed from school each year through harsh and punitive discipline practices. The data in California is troubling. We have become a national leader in school removals and are currently issuing more suspensions than diplomas each year. Discipline issues that used to be handled with a parent-teacher or parent-principal conference now result in suspensions for multiple days at a time. Here, in [INSERT NAME OF COMMUNITY], the data we have collected shows: [INSERT FACTS FROM YOUR RESEARCH ON DATAQUEST AND OCR related to your community (see pages 54-56 of the Toolkit); make sure to communicate your/your organization's feelings about this data and additional issues with disparities in discipline]

It is critical that we teach students what we expect of them and help them understand when their behavior is harming others and the school community. We need to teach them in a way that does not send them on an often unsupervised vacation from school, push them to drop out or cause them to become involved in the juvenile justice system. Two decades of research has now made it abundantly clear that out-of-school removals are an unsound way to discipline students - they often make the behaviors worse, have not been shown to improve school safety, and result in terrible outcomes for students. Students who are suspended are 5 times more likely to drop out and three times more likely to enter our juvenile justice system. In addition, the disproportionate impact that these practices have on students of color and students with disabilities is alarming.

California law requires that alternative means of correction be used and have failed before suspensions are used, but this does not appear to be happening in our District. It is also unlawful for school districts to treat students differently on the basis of race, gender, ethnicity, or disability; the data on discipline includes disturbing evidence that all students are not being treated equally. In addition, under the new Local Control Funding Formula all districts are required to look at their discipline data and school climate indicators and set goals for reducing suspensions and expulsions and improving school climate with funding and policy changes tied to those goals.

Fortunately, there are a number of proven alternative means of correction that not only lower suspension rates and hold students accountable, but result in overall academic and attendance gains for ALL students. Several of these alternatives, like School-Wide Positive Behavior Support and Restorative Justice, are explicitly mentioned in California law. And, when these alternatives are implemented, schools also see an increase in ADA funding from the state because attendance rates go up overall! These alternatives help make the school climate safer and are a win-win solution for administration, teachers, parents, and all children, not just those struggling with behavior issues.

[I/We am/are] requesting an in person meeting with you to discuss this issue and how we can fix our school discipline practices and improve overall academic outcomes for students in the District. [I/We] will follow-up by phone/email to see about your availability. Thank you in advance for your time.

Sincerely,

Name

Organization

Phone number

Email Address

[INCLUDE ALL ORGANIZATIONS MAKING THE REQUEST]

FUNDING SOURCES FOR IMPLEMENTING ALTERNATIVES TO SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

As a community member or organization advocating for the implementation of proactive school discipline strategies, it is equally important to know what funding is available to districts. Here are just a few of the federal and state funding sources available to schools, districts and community organizations:

FEDERAL FUNDING SOURCES

INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is the primary federal program that authorizes state and local aid for special education and related services for children with disabilities. The California Department of Education distributes federal IDEA funds to local educational agencies (LEAs). A portion of the total federal allocation may be reserved for discretionary purposes. Additionally, up to 15% of IDEA special education funds may also be used to support early intervening services for low achieving and at-risk students, such as providing training and development of PBIS and response to intervention (RTI).⁷

For an example of a school using IDEA funding to institute PBIS, see the interview with Principal Kerry Callahan on page 13 of this toolkit.

TITLE I, PART A

Title I, Part A federal funds help to meet the educational needs of low-achieving students in California's highest-poverty schools by supporting effective, research-based educational strategies that close the achievement gap between high- and low-performing students. Alternatives to suspension and expulsions such as PBIS and RJ are such proven and research-based strategies that can close the achievement gap.⁸

For an example of a school using Title I funds for PBIS see the highlight on Garfield High School in Los Angeles on page 15 and Vallejo Unified School District on page 20 of this toolkit.

⁷ 20 U.S.C. § 1401(c)(5)(F).

⁸ 20 U.S.C. 7201, sec. 5131.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANTS (SIG)

Authorized under section 1003(g) of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (Title I), SIG funds help (LEAs) address the needs of schools in improvement, corrective action, and restructuring to improve student achievement. SIG funds are to be used to leverage change and improve technical assistance through LEAs targeting activities towards measurable outcomes. Expected results from the use of these funds include improving student proficiency, increasing the numbers of schools that make adequate yearly progress, using data to inform decisions, and creating a system of continuous feedback and improvement. Schools that receive SIG funds can use them to implement alternatives to discipline because such alternatives are directly correlated to improved student achievement, attendance and success. When grant funding is available, the CDE will conduct a grant process that begins with the release of a Request for Applications.

For more information, visit <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/sw/t1/sig09progdesc.asp>

ECONOMIC IMPACT AID

The Economic Impact Aid (EIA) program is a state categorical program for K-12 to support additional programs and services for English learners, limited English proficient (LEP) and State Compensatory Education (SCE) services for educationally disadvantaged students as determined by a school's LEA. Although the deadline has passed, awarded recipients and future grantees may use EIA funds to support programs and activities designed to improve the academic achievement of educationally and economically disadvantaged pupils; PBIS, RJ and SEL incorporate such programs and activities. Allowable expenditure of EIA funds can include the purchase of supplemental materials and expenses that support paraprofessionals, supplemental resource teachers, and the operation of EL advisory committees.

For an example of a school using EIA funds, see the online version of the interview with Kerry Callahan.

For more information: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/aa/ca/eia.asp>

STATE FUNDING SOURCES

LOCAL CONTROL FUNDING FORMULA

The newly passed Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) requires schools and districts to develop an accountability plan that focuses on, among other things, improving school climate, as measured by reductions in suspension and expulsion rates. LCFF funds should be used to support the implementation of alternative and positive discipline strategies that reduce suspensions and expulsions and improve school climate. For more information about how LCFF funds can be used to support implementation of alternative, non-punitive discipline strategies, see the following pages.

SCHOOL SAFETY AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION ACT, CALIFORNIA SCHOOL SAFETY CONSOLIDATED COMPETITIVE GRANT

The School Safety and Violence Prevention Act provides now-unrestricted grant funds encompassed in the School Safety Block Grant. It establishes a program providing grants to school districts serving pupils in grades 8 through 12 for the purpose of promoting school safety and reducing school site violence. The funds can be used to hire personnel such as school counselors, social workers, or nurses who are trained in conflict resolution; establish in-service staff training for school staff to identify at-risk pupils; provide instructional curricula and materials to equip pupils with skills necessary to prevent school violence; and, any other purpose that would materially contribute to the goals of safe schools and preventing violence. Alternative strategies, like PBIS, RJ and SEL, have been directly correlated to preventing violence in the school setting.

For more information, visit <http://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/aa/ca/schoolcommunity.asp>, <http://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/aa/ca/combat12ltr2.asp>

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ACT, PROPOSITION 63

Proposition 63 funds have been distributed through the California Department of Mental Health to county mental health agencies. County Offices of Education contract with county mental health agencies to access these Proposition 63 funds to provide PBIS in schools. An LEA may develop a

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or contract with its county mental health agency to access this funding to address the provision of mental health services in pupils' IEPs.

Currently, Placer COE, which provided PBIS training and coaching support to Leataata Floyd Elementary, Pioneer High and Gibson Elementary Schools, uses Proposition 63 funds to provide free training to any school that wants to implement SWPBIS. For information on other COEs that provide training through the use of Proposition 63 and other funding sources, see the Appendix, page 82.

For more information: http://www.dmh.ca.gov/Prop_63/MHSA/Funding.asp

PRIVATE FUNDING SOURCES

CALIFORNIA ENDOWMENT

The California Endowment makes grants to organizations and institutions that directly benefit the health and well-being of Californians. Support is provided to 501(c)(3) organizations and that are classified as a public.

The Innovative Ideas Challenge (IIC) is a highly competitive grant-making program available under the Building Healthy Communities initiative. Specifically, the IIC program seeks to identify and fund promising innovations that address the 4 Big Results or 10 Outcomes from the Building Healthy Communities strategy with a primary goal of prevention or early intervention.

For more information, visit <http://www.calendow.org/grants/>

SOROS

Campaign for Black Male Achievement (CBMA) provides funding for a wide range of policy advocacy. CBMA funds national, state, and local organizations focused on outcomes in various U.S. regions. CBMA will consider letters of inquiry from organizations or projects if the proposed activities have clear and demonstrable potential for national impact and/or replication in localities or regions other than the currently funded areas.

For more information, visit <http://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/grants/campaign-black-male-achievement>

For more private funding sources, visit www.FixSchoolDiscipline.org

ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON FOUNDATION

The Robert Wood Johnson (RWJ) Foundation provides grants for projects in the United States that advance its mission to improve health and healthcare for all Americans. The RWJ Foundation funds innovative projects that have measurable impact and create meaningful transformative change. Through Forward Promise Innovation Grants, a \$9.5 million initiative, the RWJ Foundation is focused on promoting opportunities for the health and success of middle and high school aged boys and young men of color.

For more information visit <http://www.rwjf.org/en/grants/grantees/forward-promise/forward-promise-innovation-grants.html>

CRICKET ISLAND FOUNDATION

Cricket Island Foundation supports organizations committed to youth-led social change. Grantmaking develops capacity and commitment of young people to improve their lives and communities by supporting organizations that offer meaningful opportunities for youth to contribute to positive societal change.

Organizations can apply for support around empowering and working with youth to fix school discipline policies and other aspects of education. While the Cricket Island Foundation is not currently accepting applications, interested organizations should periodically check the website, www.cricketisland.org, or email info@cricketisland.org.

AKONADI FOUNDATION

The Akonadi Foundation is focused on gaining equity for youth of color in Oakland and is guided by its vision for a racially just society. Through its Arc Toward Justice Fund, the Akonadi Foundation invests in complimentary strategies that can bolster success of its primary grant partners, such as supporting legal and policy advocacy and research that adds power to grassroots change efforts. Akonadi grantmaking focuses on supporting organizations working to stop the criminalization of youth of color, end the school-to-prison pipeline, and build responses to harm that nurture wellness

and wellbeing. Based on the timeline for the 2013 Arc Toward Justice Fund, organizations interested in applying for grants in 2014 should visit the Akonadi website to take the eligibility quiz, which will determine eligibility to submit a letter of inquiry.

HOW CAN LCFF HELP FIX SCHOOL DISCIPLINE AND STOP THE SCHOOL TO PRISON PIPELINE?

For the first time, the California's new Local Control Funding Formula passed by the legislature includes additional funding specifically to improve services for low-income, foster, and English learn students.

While districts will have more flexibility over how to spend their money, LCFF funding has to be targeted at 8 state priorities.

Improving school climate—including by reducing suspension and expulsion rates—is one of the 8 priority areas that districts must focus on!

Districts must establish goals, and describe the actions they will take to reduce suspension and expulsion rates and otherwise improve school climate. The goals and actions have to be not only district-wide, but also for each school and each student subgroup (such as race/ethnicity, English language learners, socio-economically disadvantaged, students with disabilities).

By July 1 of this YEAR, your school district will be required to adopt a district-wide plan to spend this money and address the 8 state priorities. The new plan is called the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP). The LCAP will guide the district for the next THREE years (and must be updated annually)! It must be linked with the entire school district's budget and the budget and LCAP must be adopted at the same meeting.

HOW CAN I ENSURE THAT LCFF FUNDING IS USED TO FIX SCHOOL DISCIPLINE AND STOP THE SCHOOL TO PRISON PIPELINE?

1) Participate in your district's planning process

IMPORTANT: By law, your school district must

obtain community input on the LCAP before adopting it! At a minimum, the school district must obtain comments and feedback:

- ▶ From a Parent Advisory Committee;
- ▶ An English learner parent advisory committee (if 15% EL students); and
- ▶ From the public, in at least ONE public hearing

It is a state priority to have meaningful parent and community involvement! **Make your voice heard in the process!**

TIP: We recommend that you set up meetings with School Board Members, the Superintendent, and school district budget staff as soon as possible to tell them what you want to see included in the LCAP for school climate! See if you can identify School Board Members who would be most open to your proposals.

We also recommend that you meet with other allies and community and parent groups to ask them to support your recommendations.

If the Parent Advisory Committee is not representative of the community, make a request to the School Board or the Superintendent to expand the Committee or ensure there are other forums to receive parent input.

2) Make sure your district's plan includes what's needed to fix school discipline

You can help ensure that the district's LCAP includes the needed baseline data, sets the right goals, and includes the actions needed to achieve those goals.

In the LCAP, each school district must, for each school and subgroup:

1. Create a Baseline for a Needs Assessment: set a baseline using its existing data on suspension and expulsion rates and disaggregate by all student groups, including ELL and foster youth, and by school and using survey data on school climate
2. Set Yearly Goals for Reducing Suspension and Expulsion Rates and Improving School Climate
3. Include Specific Actions the district will take to reach the goals

4. Funding Expenditures: include the amount of funding that will be spent to reach the goals

ALTERNATIVES INCREASE SCHOOL FUNDING

There is another practical reason to adopt a research-based alternative. These alternatives increase school funding because they result in higher student attendance and lower suspension rates. Schools implementing alternative strategies, such as SWPBIS, have shown that minimal or negligible upfront costs for implementation result in great benefits, including cost savings and funding increases, over time, as attendance and achievement rates improve and out-of-school suspensions decrease.

1. Pioneer High School in Woodland, highlighted on page 12

School staff and parents have been implementing SWPBIS for three years and in one year implementation resulted in increased funding of \$97,200.

Average Daily Attendance (ADA) is up:

- 30 more students attending daily, based on 95.46% for 2011-12 school year, up from 93.52% the previous year
- ADA funds received = \$97,200/year (\$18/student/day)

Suspensions are down:

- 65% reduction in suspensions: 2.2 days of suspension assigned per day of school in 2011-2012 school year to date, down from 6.3 days in the prior year
- This constitutes \$13,284 of the \$97,200 ADA cost savings

Academic Performance is up:

720 API score in 2010-11, a gain of 48 points from the prior year

Start-up costs were minimal and finite

To obtain these results, Pioneer High used \$30,000 in 2009-10 and \$40,000 in 2010-11. Because Pioneer High has now built capacity among its existing staff,

it anticipates no additional expenditures moving forward.

Los Angeles Unified School District

Los Angeles Unified School District required PBIS in its discipline policy adopted in 2007. Results include:

Garfield High School, highlighted on page 15

School staff and parents have been implementing SWPBIS since the 2009-10 school year and, in one year, implementation resulted in increased funding of \$363,216.¹

Average Daily Attendance (ADA) is up:

- 69 more students attending daily, based on 94.68% ADA for 2010-11 school year, up from 92.32% prior to implementation
- ADA funding increase = \$363,216/year

Suspensions are down:

- Suspensions virtually eliminated: Only one suspension in 2010-2011 school year, down from 683 suspensions in the year prior to implementation
- This reduction constitutes \$14,769 of the \$363,216 ADA funding increase

School costs were negligible to non-existent and district costs were relatively small

A team of administrators and teachers attended district training on implementing SWPBIS under Los Angeles Unified School District's discipline policy. Using existing staff, the team trained the rest of the staff and implemented SWPBIS with no additional funding.

¹ Id. Estimated cost savings are based on \$30.08/day lost for each suspension averted, by comparing actual number of suspensions in 2010-11 with expected number of suspensions if suspension rate remained the same as in 2008-09.

**I DON'T WATCH
MY NEIGHBORS.
I SEE THEM.
WE MAKE OUR
COMMUNITY
SAFER
TOGETHER.**



Justice Families
Night Out for Safety
and Democracy

Youth
Justice
Coalition

**THIS IS WHAT PUBLIC
SAFETY LOOKS LIKE.**

National Night Out for Safety and Justice

Tuesday, August 6th, 2013 at 6pm

STOP THE ECHO PARK GANG INJUNCTION

JOBS, YOUTH CENTERS AND INTERVENTION/PEACEBUILDERS = PUBLIC SAFETY

at the Echo Park Walgreens Store Parking Lot

1625 W Sunset Blvd corner of Echo Park Avenue 3 blocks East of Glendale Blvd.,
Los Angeles, CA 90026

HIGHLIGHT: SUCCESS

(STUDENTS UNITED TO CREATE A CLIMATE OF ENGAGEMENT, SUPPORT AND SAFETY)

A project of the Youth Engagement Team Fresno, led by a coalition including the Youth Leadership Institute, Californians for Justice, The Center for Multicultural Cooperation, The Know Youth Media, Boys and Girls Clubs of Fresno County and Fresno Pacific University

Interview with MaryJane Skjellerup (MaryJane), Senior Director of Programs, YLI and SUCCESS youth members Brooklyn Taylor (Brooklyn) and Miriam Hernandez (Miriam)

How did you start organizing around the drop out and school climate issues in your community?

Brooklyn: Two years ago, several organizations were looking at different issues related to school climate and drop out rates. For instance, Miriam and I also belong to Californians for Justice (CFJ), and we were starting to talk about these problems. Youth Leadership Institute (YLI) had conducted over 100 surveys with community members to understand the issues with school climate and drop out and find alternatives.

MaryJane: Concerns about what was happening in our schools started bubbling up from the community. The California Endowment (the Endowment) had just identified Fresno as one of their communities for their Building Healthy Communities initiative (BHC). During the BHC planning process, the Endowment was looking at student attendance data. In the fall of 2010, our organization received funding from BHC to do research with a deliberate focus on what our young people were concerned about, namely the extraordinary amount of time that students were spending outside of school. For instance, we found that students had missed 32,180 school days because of suspension.

Miriam: To deal with the school climate problems, SUCCESS was created from the membership and different groups that involved youth: YLI, Boys and Girls Club of Fresno County, The Know Youth Media Magazine, Fresno Pacific University Center for Peace

and Conflict Studies and the Center for Multicultural Cooperation.

How did you learn more about school discipline issues in Fresno?

MaryJane: We gathered data about Fresno Unified School District from California Healthy Kids Survey, California School Climate Survey, California Department of Education Dataquest and the Office of Civil Rights, Civil Rights Data Collection, all of which can be searched online. We found that students missed 32,180 days because of suspensions, that only 42% of students felt like they are a part of their school, and that only 22% of teachers strongly feel that discipline is handled effectively. From the surveys and data, we figured out what we wanted to know more about.

Using this information, we created focus groups by engaging our different partners that worked with the students, such as the Boys and Girls Club. We asked them to get involved and send us students, parents and community members to participate in our focus groups. We asked the focus groups, "Why is this happening, why are so many students being suspended and dropping out of school?"

Brooklyn: We learned that a lot of students didn't feel like there was an adult who cares about them at school and that they don't feel safe at school. That was a big pattern; students always got bad feedback from their teachers and a lot of teachers and staff would belittle them and treat them like they were lesser.

Miriam: Students said that they felt like they were just going to school and that's all that mattered. No one cared what they were going through at home.

What did you do with the survey data and the information you received from the focus groups?

MaryJane: We then spent a year teasing out the themes of these focus groups, learning more about data analysis, analyzing data, and setting goals. YLI worked with the members of SUCCESS on team building. We went slowly, which is good so members of the collaborative group have a good sense of what is happening and what their roles are. We had a team retreat that was so important. Things can fall apart quickly if you don't remind yourselves about your goals and message. Other people and organizations were coming to us asking, "Do you want to take on the Superintendent?" and that's another political issue that was not ours. We wanted to work with the school district, schools and Superintendent to increase student attendance, graduation and the rates of students going to college.

Miriam: We also spent that year, meeting for at least an hour after school, once a week to be trained in research, how to talk to school board administration, and what we wanted to change. Then, after that year we had a SUCCESS Conference. About 110 people, students of all ages, teachers, FUSD administration, courts, police enforcement, and community members attended the Conference.

MaryJane: There was a data board with [charts and graphs](#) detailing what we learned with focus groups. We had a panel presentation about rights and responsibilities. For instance, people from the school district explained the suspension/expulsion and attendance rules while people from the American Civil Liberties Union talked about due process and civil rights. A police officer and judge also spoke about their experiences with students in the juvenile and criminal justice area. We also learned about Restorative Justice from a professor from Fresno Pacific University who wrote a book called *Discipline That Restores*.

After this conference and receiving all of this information, what did YLI and SUCCESS do next?

Miriam: After the conference, SUCCESS decided on pursuing Restorative Justice as a policy that the Fresno Unified School District should adopt and decided that we wanted to meet with the Superintendent.

How did you convince the Superintendent to meet with a group of students and community organizations?

MaryJane: Our district had a sense that discipline is a problem and could admit that publicly to a certain extent. Fresno Unified views students as a powerful force so it was pretty easy to get a meeting with the Superintendent because we had done our homework and knew our issue. SUCCESS caught the District's eye because people who worked at the District attended the SUCCESS conference. It also helped that news stories were coming out in the Fresno Bee about suspensions and the drop out rate in Fresno.

Additionally, we had also built the relationship, so all we did was send an email and work out scheduling. It's really important to develop relationships. To build the relationship, you should go to every Board meeting and have a conversation with the administrators there, including the Superintendent, and talk to them as humans. The District people and Superintendent have to be at these Board meetings and you have their attention during the down times while nothing is happening; they can't go anywhere. Tell them who you are and your goals. Keep conversation grounded in the bigger goal. We aren't coming after anyone; we just want to focus on what's good for our children and youth.

What happened in the meetings with the Superintendent and what were the results?

MaryJane: At the first meeting with the Superintendent, we presented the data to him in a [PowerPoint](#). He saw that we had really done our homework and understood the problem, and he realized that we were a legitimate group.

The Superintendent was very receptive. He said, "We know about these problems too but there are considerations and barriers to fixing the problem." For instance, scalability was an issue. The big question with scalability is, "How do you implement a solution for 74,000 students and 8,000 staff?" But that's always an issue and that's why he's in charge, but we are willing to help prepare students and families to embrace the changes that were about to result. We had an honest conversation about the lack of will to take on the drop out crisis and racial disparities in discipline. We also proposed Restorative Justice as an alternative. This first

meeting was successful and led to two more meetings with him and the youth.

These discussions led to the SUCCESS team capitalizing on the formation of a community Graduation Task Force. The District invited SUCCESS youth leader Miriam to be a part of this Task Force as well as a couple of SUCCESS adult team members from YLI and The Know Youth Media.

What is the Graduation Task Force and what is its role in all of this?

Miriam: In mid-April to June, students, community members, teachers and a school board member regularly met as the Graduation Task Force. We conducted more focus groups with students who were at risk of dropping out. We collected all of our thoughts about the data and stories that we heard and came up with [18 recommendations](#) for the Fresno Unified School Board, one of the recommendations is about implementing Restorative Justice.

MaryJane: There was a rally outside the meeting with about 80 young people from different schools. And the Board accepted all the recommendations of the Task Force and set aside \$2 million to implement the recommendations.

This was important but it is only the beginning. We're pushing for a policy that includes the requirement to implement Restorative Justice and other restorative practices that result in returning students to learning in all schools and training and any resources needed to make this happen district-wide.

What has YLI been working on since last year?

Miriam: Due to the campaign and work of the S.U.C.C.E.S.S. Team, the Fresno Unified School Board adopted the Resolution in Support of a Restorative Justice Framework in June of this year. After that, summer break happened and the policy just kind of sat there. When school began we hadn't yet been told which schools sites would pilot restorative practices and we were working to have a meeting with the new Restorative Practices Manager. When we finally had the meeting it was October. The RP Manager let us know that McLane High School and

the elementary and middle schools that feed into McLane were selected to pilot RP. She also told us that they had begun training teachers and staff in October. So things have barely started.

We are currently waiting to hear from her about how the training is going and how we can be a part of it.

In the meantime, I am working with YLI as a program assistant with Gina Rodriguez, and building a base of high school students with the S.U.C.C.E.S.S. Team. Many of the students who fought for the resolution are now in college. We are also going to meet with our base, some of whom attend McLane to find out if and how restorative practices are working there.

One of the challenges that we are currently trying to overcome is scheduling and relationship building with District members but we're keeping at it. For the months to come, we are building relationships between S.U.C.C.E.S.S. Team and the Restorative Practices Manager and teachers so that they become a part of the ongoing work to implement this policy.

Feel free to contact us at:

MaryJane Skjellerup, Youth Leadership Institute

Senior Director of Programs, Central Valley

Office: 559-255-3300 ext. 222

To read the full interview with MaryJane, Brooklyn and Miriam, visit FixSchoolDiscipline.org.

CONGRATULATIONS! YOU SUCCESSFULLY CONVINCED SCHOOL OFFICIALS TO MEET WITH YOU TO DISCUSS ALTERNATIVES TO HARSH DISCIPLINE!

What next? It is time to prepare for the meeting. Here are some thoughts about the documents you might bring with you and how you might structure the meeting to tell the story about the problems in your community, build a relationship, and start discussing the need for reform.

CHECKLIST OF DOCUMENTS YOU MIGHT BRING TO A MEETING WITH A SCHOOL OFFICIAL

- ▶ Why We Must Reform School Discipline in California, page 3-5
- ▶ Why We Must Reform School Discipline in [Your Community], page 57
- ▶ The Good News: There are Effective Alternatives That Keep Schools Safe while Holding Students Accountable and Teaching Them a Better Way, page 6-9
 - ▶ *Positive Behavior Intervention and Support*, page 11
 - ▶ *Restorative Justice or Practices*, page 25
 - ▶ *Social Emotional Learning*, page 39
 - ▶ *Funding Sources for Implementing Alternatives to Suspension and Expulsion*, page 61

Any other document, news article, or fact sheet that you think would be helpful to give the school official and/or leader all the information they need to make the right decision. You can visit www.FixSchoolDiscipline.org to find a lot of great newspaper articles from papers all across the State of California that talk about the problem with out-of-school discipline and ways to fix that problem. Print these out to show your school administrators that other school leaders are making reforms work and receiving accolades for doing so!

MEETING OUTLINE

Introductions/building rapport

- ▶ Of course, introduce yourself, why you care about this issue, and your relationship to the community and role in the community
- ▶ Establish a theme or norm that will guide the meeting. For instance, the Youth Leadership Institute in Fresno established at the beginning of their meeting with the Superintendent that they wanted to work together to find solutions to suspension and drop out rates.

Present the evidence of suspension and expulsion in your community. Since you will not have unlimited time, make sure to present the most persuasive information and evidence.

Present alternatives. It is important to explain the alternatives that you are hoping that they will adopt with proof that they work and that implementation can be done. You might consider:

- ▶ Emphasizing that students will still be held accountable for misbehavior but in a way that actually helps not harms.
- ▶ Using one or more of the fact sheets to present the alternatives. See pages 11, 25, or 39.
- ▶ Using the interviews about schools and districts implementing these alternatives to show that it can be done and that other school leaders are already succeeding. See pages 11-48.
- ▶ Coming to the meeting with thoughts prepared about the key elements that you would want to see adopted around the alternatives you are proposing and the reasons why those elements are important.

Continued on following page.

Note: you also want to hear and be open to ideas that the school leaders have about alternatives that they are interested in and want to pursue.

Question and answer. *School officials will likely have questions for you about how they can actually implement these alternatives. Their concerns will most likely concern funding. You can use the information in the following fact sheets to help share that these solutions increase attendance and funding and result in higher academic achievement for all students and that funding sources are available:*

- ▶ Why Alternatives to School Discipline Make Money for Your School and District, page 65.
- ▶ Funding Sources for Implementing Alternatives to Suspension and Expulsion, page 61.

Closing and next steps. *Reiterate your specific requests around reforms. Assess how willing the school leaders and officials are to take up your proposal and listen to understand any barriers that they identify.*

- ▶ Ask who else they think you need to speak with about reforming school discipline and to put your requests into action.
- ▶ If necessary, set a time and date for a follow-up meeting.
- ▶ If they are willing to work with you on the reforms, set some timelines for the next steps that are needed to really put the reforms in place and/or get the policy or resolution drafted/passed
- ▶ Make sure to follow through with the tasks you took on in the meeting.

Send friendly reminders to the school leader and/or officials about tasks they took on in the meeting.

ALTERNATIVE DISCIPLINE RESOLUTIONS AND POLICIES FROM DISTRICTS IN CALIFORNIA

If you are able to convince school district leadership to put in place an alternative practice and focus on reducing suspensions and expulsions, you may want the School Board to pass a resolution to provide clear direction to the Superintendent about what should be implemented and by when, or you may prefer to work directly with the Superintendent to put in place an alternative strategy in support of goals already supported by the School Board. In either case, several school districts have already passed alternative discipline resolutions and/or put in place policies, which require alternatives, like SWPBIS, SEL and Restorative Justice, to be instituted district-wide.

Here is a summary of a few of those resolutions and policies, the complete versions of which can be found online at [FixSchoolDiscipline.org/toolkit/community/alternativesinc/](https://www.fixschooldiscipline.org/toolkit/community/alternativesinc/)

FRESNO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT (FRESNO UNIFIED) BOARD RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF A RESTORATIVE JUSTICE FRAMEWORK

On March 8, 2013, as a result of the tireless advocacy and work of the Students United to Create a Climate of Engagement, Support and Safety (SUCCESS) Team and the support of Fresno Unified teachers and administration, the Board adopted a Resolution to create and implement restorative school discipline principles and practices.

This Resolution states that discipline should be “equitable, timely, consistent, fair, developmentally appropriate, and match the severity of the student’s misbehavior, while ensuring school safety.” Other notable features of this resolution include:

- ▶ Discipline practices that define and communicate expectations for student behavior and staff responsibilities that balance student needs, needs of the people affected by student behavior and the safety needs of the overall school community;
- ▶ Every effort being made by the school and district to engage parents/guardians early in discipline process, including making sure that discipline policies and practices are linguistically accessible; and
- ▶ Disciplinary actions starting on the lowest possible level and designed to change student’s behavior and minimize any loss of instructional time.

To learn more about the youth-led advocacy campaign that led to the adoption of this Resolution, see the highlight about the SUCCESS Team and Youth Leadership Institute on page 67.

LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT (LAUSD) DISCIPLINE FOUNDATION POLICY

In March 2007, after an extensive campaign led by parent organizing group CADRE and others, LAUSD passed a Discipline Foundation Policy based on School-Wide Positive Behavior Support. This policy is grounded in the belief that every student, pre-school through adult, has the right to be educated in a safe, respectful and welcoming environment and every educator has the right to teach in an atmosphere free from disruption and obstacles that impede learning.

This policy mandated the development of a school-wide positive behavior support and discipline plan including positively stated rules, which are taught, enforced, advocated and modeled at every campus in LAUSD. It further mandated staff and parent training in the teaching and the reinforcing of the skills necessary for implementation of this policy.

Notable features include

- ▶ Responsibilities outlined for every student, parent/caregiver, teacher, school administrator, school support personnel, school staff, local district staff, central office staff, visitor and community members
- ▶ Mandatory professional development in the area of school-wide positive behavior support that is broad-based and inclusive of all staff involved in supporting schools and students.

School Discipline Policy and School Climate Bill of Rights

On May 14, 2013, building upon the school discipline reform work begun in the Discipline Foundation Policy and in response to a community-led school discipline reform campaign, which included Dignity in School Los Angeles and Brothers Sons Selves and its strategic partners, the LAUSD Board of Education (the Board) adopted the School Discipline Policy and School Climate Bill of Rights (SCBR). The SCBR directed the Superintendent to eliminate

suspensions and expulsions for “willful defiance” (Cal. Ed. Code 48900(k)) by Fall 2013 and implement restorative justice in all schools by 2020. Other notable features include:

- ▶ Collecting and publicly sharing aggregate discipline data disaggregated by subgroup and by type of disciplinary action at the district and school levels
- ▶ Defining the role of police on school campuses and limiting police involvement in non-threatening school discipline actions
- ▶ Requiring that schools demonstrate that they have exhausted all alternatives to suspension before suspending a student for non-mandatory offenses
- ▶ Creating a complaint process for parents and students if SWPBIS has not been fully implemented at their school-site

OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT (OUSD)

Restorative Justice Initiative Resolution

In December 2009, the OUSD Board of Education (OUSD Board) passed a resolution to launch a district-wide Restorative Justice Initiative to institute Restorative Justice as a proactive approach to student behavior. This Initiative included professional development of administrators and school site staff, redesign of District discipline structures and practices, and promotion of alternatives to suspension at every school.

Implementation of this initiative included partnership with local law enforcement, Alameda County Probation Department, and the State Disproportionate Minority Contact Office to “promote a district-wide “Culture of Caring” serving the whole child, which promotes both social-emotional and intellectual development.” The resolution included that “success” would be dependent on “the meaningful inclusion of students, parents, teachers, administrators, and OUSD leadership in efforts to create a safe and equitable learning environment where all students can excel.”

More information about implementation and progress can be found at <http://publicportal.ousd.k12.ca.us/1994105819855310/site/default.asp>

Office of Civil Rights Voluntary Resolution Plan (VRP) addressing disproportionate use of suspension and expulsion

In May 2012, Urban Strategies Council published a report that revealed that African American boys comprise 17% of OUSD students but 42% of the suspensions.⁵ One in ten African American boys in OUSD elementary schools, one in three African American boys in middle schools, and one in five African American boys in high schools are suspended.⁶ In an effort to address the racial disproportionality present in suspensions and expulsions and the United States Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights (OCR) compliance review about this issue, the OUSD Board passed a resolution to enter into a five-year agreement (or VRP) with OCR on September 27, 2012.

The VRP will be implemented in two phases, during which the District will focus resources on

Former OUSD Superintendent Tony Smith said of the VRP, **“This agreement is a powerful and positive step that will force Oakland – regardless of who is elected to the school board or who is running the school – to stay on track in reducing suspensions.**

those schools with the highest disproportionality in suspension by race.

Notable features of this VRP include:

- ▶ Utilization of school-wide Response to Intervention (RTI) frameworks at all middle schools and at targeted elementary and high schools, including but not limited to, Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, Restorative Justice, Caring School Community, and the African American Male Achievement Manhood Development program.
- ▶ Development of a data system that will track

⁵ Urban Strategies Council (2012), “African American Male Achievement Initiative: A Closer Look at Suspensions of African American Males in OUSD (2010-11).”

⁶ Id.

all types of office discipline referrals and out-of-school removals that can be used to analyze and track progress

- ▶ Data review at the conclusion of each school year by OUSD Superintendent with principals of VRP schools to examine steps that are being taken to ensure fair and equitable implementation of discipline policies. Click here to view the VRP plan: <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/investigations/09125001-b.pdf>

SAN FRANCISCO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT (SFUSD): RESTORATIVE JUSTICE FRAMEWORK AND THE ALTERNATIVES TO SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION RESOLUTION & SAFE & SUPPORTIVE SCHOOLS RESOLUTION

In October 2009, the SFUSD Board of Education (SFUSD Board) adopted [the New Restorative Justice Framework and the Alternatives to Suspension and Expulsion Resolution](#). With this resolution, the Board dissolved the “SFUSD Discipline Taskforce” and created a new “Restorative Justice and School Climate Taskforce,” comprised of students, parents, school site staff and other stakeholders. This Taskforce advises the SFUSD Superintendent and the Board in designing, implementing and evaluating a student discipline policy based on Restorative Justice.

The overarching goals of this policy are to reduce student suspensions, increase student attendance, and create school climates that support joyful learners.

Notable policy components include:

- ▶ Implementation and integration throughout all Middle Schools and targeted elementary and high schools in the 2010-2011 school year
- ▶ Requirements that all principals must, unless strictly mandated by law, utilize alternatives to suspension and expulsion that are available at their school sites.



- ▶ Professional development periods will include training in conflict resolution, escalation skills and the New Restorative Justice Framework and Alternatives to Suspension and Expulsion Policy.

The SFUSD is now poised to take another major step to set a model for districts statewide. It is expected to pass the Safe and Supportive Schools Resolution that would require the Superintendent to establish and implement a plan to ensure that SWPBIS and restorative practices are implemented district-wide and that as of next year, suspensions for willful defiance are eliminated.

More information about the Safe and Supportive Schools Resolution and implementation and progress can be found at FixSchoolDiscipline.org and at <http://www.sfusd.edu/en/programs/restorative-practices.html>

LE GRAND HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT RESTORATIVE JUSTICE INITIATIVE RESOLUTION

On September 12, 2012, Le Grand Union High School District Board of Education in East Merced passed a [**Restorative Justice Initiative Resolution**](#). In this resolution, the Board announced its commitment to “creating and supporting a culture shift in the way district systematically responds to students discipline problems.” A Restorative Justice approach

in schools serves students’ social-emotional and intellectual development, includes student, parents, teachers, administrators, and District leadership, and promotes and sustains a safe and equitable learning environment where all students are cared for and can excel.

The resolution is to be implemented at all school sites; include professional development of administrators, school site staff and parents; a redesign of discipline structures and practices; and promote alternatives to suspension.

Other states are also putting in place critical reforms around discipline, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Denver have Discipline Codes that were developed with community input, have clear guidelines regarding the types of interventions/other means of correction that must be used prior to suspension, and have been held up as models for helping to significantly reduce school removals and improve school safety.

Visit FixSchoolDiscipline.org to download and read these policies and access an editable, Model Alternative Discipline Policy and Implementation Plan, which incorporates the best elements from policies and plans in California and nationwide. Use this framework and the elements to help you create a policy/plan for your district.



GETTING THE MESSAGE ABOUT FIXING SCHOOL DISCIPLINE TO THE MEDIA

Reaching out to your local media early on to start educating them about the need for school discipline reform is an important part of making change.

The tools you have already created, such as the fact sheet on why harsh and severe punishments hurt children and communities and why the alternatives work are a win-win for all students, can be used to help educate the reporters who cover education in your community. The specific information you have collected about the harmful school discipline data in your community and the stories from young people and parents are key to telling the story.

HOW DO I FIND THE REPORTERS IN MY COMMUNITY WHO WILL COVER A STORY ABOUT THE NEED TO REFORM SCHOOL DISCIPLINE PRACTICES?

The first step is to figure out which newspaper, blog, radio, online, and television reporters cover education stories in your community. To do this, first make a list of all of the various news organizations in your community, such as the local paper and local radio station. Then, call them

directly and ask them who covers education. If they don't have a specific reporter, ask them which reporter would be most likely to cover an education story.

Make a spreadsheet or document with their phone number, email address, and the issues they cover. Include any notes about the kinds of stories they have written about. Keep this updated.

You might also be able to find this information out online.

WHEN AND HOW DO I SET UP A MEETING WITH A REPORTER? WHAT SHOULD I BRING AND SAY?

It is important to be ready with all of your facts and information and stories before you contact the reporters. On pages 54 to 61 you will find the Tools you need to create the fact sheets and information to share with a reporter. If you have an organized group, you can also contact the reporter as a representative of that group. When you do, you can let the reporter know that you would like to talk to him/her about an important issue that is impacting

students in the schools around harsh and punitive discipline and that you want to share facts and real stories with him/her about what is happening.

The reporter may not want to meet with you right away unless you are able to tell him/her that something “newsworthy” is going to happen, such as a hearing with public school officials about the issue or a rally to fix school discipline outside of the school board or the introduction of your school board resolution.

Some reporters will take the time to sit down with you and hear more about what your group is doing and learn about what is happening, particularly if you let them know that you will be asking for reforms and a change in practices in the community.

If you get the meeting with the reporter, it is also a good idea to see whether the reporter would like to also hear directly from students, parents, or teachers who are impacted by punitive school discipline or who have seen the benefits of an alternative way of addressing school discipline.

If there is no “newsworthy” event planned, then the meeting is an important one to build the relationship with the reporter and help educate him/her about the issues and their importance to the community. When you are ready to move forward with a newsworthy event, then you will already have the list of reporters to contact in advance to invite to the event and they will already have information about the problem and the solutions.

HOW DO I GET THE NEWS MEDIA TO COVER THE STORY ABOUT OUR GROUP PUSHING FOR CHANGES?

The best way to do that is to do something that will highlight the problem and be a direct call on school leaders for change.

For example, you can hold a hearing on school discipline in your community. Last year, six different communities in California held school discipline reform hearings. They invited legislators and school officials and students, parents, teachers, and others testified about the problems and what needed to change. If you want to read more about these hearings, you can go to www.FixSchoolDiscipline.org

Of course, if you have been able to get a school board member(s) to put forward an alternative school discipline policy or you have secured a time at a school board meeting to talk all about school discipline reform, these are also “newsworthy” events. When Restorative Justice for Oakland Youth organized to pass the Restorative Justice Policy in Oakland (see page 27 for more), they let the media know and the story got positive attention. This helped lead to additional funding and a paid school coordinator.

WHY IS NEWS MEDIA COVERAGE EVEN IMPORTANT?

Community leaders pay attention to the news, and a story that really explains the problem can help influence how they think about or view the issue and help gain momentum for change. Press coverage is also important because it helps keep the issue in the forefront and emphasizes its importance. If the school district is in denial about the school discipline practices being a problem, a strong story with real facts and real stories can change the equation.

When you have a victory around school discipline, it is important to share it with the news media, as this can also help with implementation and really memorialize the changes you were able to make so you can share them with more people in the community who might want to get involved.

HOW DO I LET THE NEWS MEDIA KNOW ABOUT THE EVENT AND WHAT INFORMATION SHOULD I BE PREPARED TO GIVE THEM?

You already made a list of all the news media in your area, so you will want to send them a press alert or release that tells them the three “W”s about your event, namely Who, What and When.

Try to send it out at least two days before the event, if you can. Also, it is very important to follow-up with phone calls.

In the press release, let the media know who will be available for interviews, such as teachers, parents, and students. Also, if you are going to do anything with banners or posters or hold a rally, let them know what to expect regarding what they will see.

On the next page, you will find a sample press release to help you get started!

I'VE WRITTEN A PRESS RELEASE. NOW WHAT?

Here's where having your reporter list really helps. When it's time to send out your press release, you'll know where the reporters are and how to reach them. It's usually best to just paste your press release into the body of the email. Reporters won't have to open an attachment to read your press release, and you won't have to spend extra time formatting it.

Don't count on email to do your job for you. Always call reporters after you've sent the email and ask them: will you be able to cover this event? Don't assume they have already received the press release. Always start your call by telling them why you are calling.

DON'T: "Hi, I'm calling to see if you received my press release."

DO: "Hi, I'm calling because parents and students are holding a public hearing on October 12 about the school district's new school discipline policy, which is aimed to reduce school suspensions. Can you cover it?"

Expert's hint: If there's someone you REALLY want to cover your event, don't call them first. Practice your pitch with another reporter first. That will help you get your rhythm and know what questions to anticipate.

After the call: Write down any questions they asked. That will help you think about how to answer them at the event.

At your event: Make sure to bring a few printed copies of the press release and any other relevant documents to your event. You can staple these together into a simple press packet.

This is the person who will answer reporters' calls and emails and connect them with people who can speak on the issue

You can use a kicker or subheadline to give context

The headline is the most important part of your press release. It should clearly explain the "news," i.e. the event that you are holding. It should always have an active subject and object (WHO IS DOING WHAT) and can even include the date of your event for added clarity. When you email press releases to reporters, you should include this headline in the subject line of your email.

The dateline tells reporters where this is happening

Always lead with the news hook.

Are you doing something active and dramatic? Or visual and interesting? Include it at the top.

If you want reporters to cover your event, include a WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, and any VISUALS you will have for photographers or videographers.

Include quotes directly from people involved in the issue. Don't be afraid to have personality – there's nothing worse than a press release quote that sounds like nobody would ever say it. Reporters may use these in their story, or ask to speak to these people. The quotes should come from people who understand the issue and will be available to speak to reporters.

Give more context lower in the press release. Why is this important?

Always include a short "about us" explaining who your organization is. And link to your website, reports, or other online resources.

shows reporters the end of the release

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE



For immediate release: Day, Month DD, 20YY

Media contacts: Angelo Zepeda, 555-555-5555, azepeda@studentgroup.org

As School Board Votes to Support New School Discipline Policy...

Parents and Students to Hold Public Hearing with School Leaders on October 12 to Reduce Suspensions

AMITYVILLE - A coalition of parents, students and civil rights groups said the school district is "leading the way" after school board members voted unanimously to support adopting a new district-wide discipline policy to reduce out of school suspensions. They will hold a public hearing on October 12 with school district leaders at Amity Junior High School.

Parents will unveil a student-oriented poster campaign that will be launched at all district schools educating students, faculty and parents about the new policy and how they can do their part. The poster campaign "Every Minute Counts" shows students and educators talking about why being in school matters, and include and educators' messages of support for students.

WHAT: Public Hearing with parents, students and school leaders

WHEN: Thursday, October 12, 2012

WHERE: Amity Junior High School, 125 Freedom Lane, Amityville, CA

WHO: School district superintendent James Carlos, Amity Junior High Principal Fay Flinch, students, and parents

VISUALS: Parents with signs and banners with photos of students

"Every minute that you're in school means you're one step closer to your dreams," said Joshua Mata, a 7th Grader at Amity Junior High School who helped create the poster campaign. "Students need to know that they have the support to stay in school whatever is happening at home or in their lives." "The old 'scare kids straight' strategy wasn't working, and was actually making it more likely that students who struggled with behavior would drop out and enter the juvenile justice system," said June Casa, a parent of an 8th grader at Amity Junior High School. "Now our school district is leading the way by bringing students, parents and educators together."

The new school discipline policy is a major change for the district. It replaces harsh disciplinary policies with effective, evidenced-based alternatives to hold students accountable for their behavior while supporting them to stay in school.

About us: FixSchoolDiscipline.org is a project of parents, students and local educators who want to fix problems with harsh school discipline that lead to too many students suspended and expelled from school for minor behavioral issues. Learn more at www.FixSchoolDiscipline.org.

###

Making Certain That Your Victory Results In Real Changes In Classrooms, In Schools And For Children:

CREATING AND IMPLEMENTING A MONITORING AND ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN

Excellent! You have convinced your school or school district to adopt alternatives to traditional discipline and maybe even secured a policy outlining a timeline and structure for implementation. You may have also received a commitment of money in the budget to go toward these efforts.

The next critical step is to make certain that everything you have worked for results in real reforms in classrooms, in schools, and for the students.

Your community’s plan to monitor implementation will depend on what you have been able to put in place and what your policy or resolution says, if one was adopted. Even so, there are common pieces that should be in any good plan:

1 Putting the Timeline and Specific Steps for Implementation Into Writing:

Obtain a written plan from the school or school district for how they will provide training and support to make certain that the alternatives are truly implemented. Make certain that plan has real timelines! Any plan that the school district or school creates is a Public Record and so you should be able to get a copy with a simple request, but if not, you can use the Public Records Act sample that is online at www.FixSchoolDiscipline.org. Modify it to request any plans for implementations, schedules for trainings, and anything else that you would like to know.

Here is an example of a very simple version of what a school district plan for PBIS implementation might look like in the first year:

Action Step	Timeline for Completion
Develop Training for Schools In Coordination with Experts/Using Existing Tools from PBIS.org/Safe and Civil Schools/BEST, etc.	August 1
Invite Leadership Teams from 50% of Schools To Attend Training and Hold All Trainings	September 30
Provide Additional Training to Instructional Leaders At All Schools On Tier 1 – Proactive Teaching and Modeling of Positive Behavior, Developing an In-Class Positive Behavior System, and Provide Curriculum to Be Used (e.g., Second Step)	February 20
School Leadership Teams to Present to School Staff, Develop and Turn in Their Plans and Steps for Implementation and Discipline Matrixes (Be Safe, Be Responsible, and Be Respectful) To District	March 30
Begin School Visits to Check for Evidence of PBIS and Provide Support and Assistance with Implementation	May 1
Hold Monthly Meetings to Go Over School Discipline Data Collected (including ODR) With Principals and Discuss Any Challenges with Implementation and Discuss Additional Needs/Resources Related to Tier 2 and 3 Interventions for Students Needing More Supports	Starting March 30 (monthly)
Provide Bi-Annual Report to School Board and Community On Progress of Implementation, Including Data Comparisons on Discipline and Academic Performance Data	June 15

2 Create Your Own Monitoring Plan: You will also want to create a monitoring plan that should include:

- a. **Evidence That the Plan Was Implemented:** Ideally, your community group will be at the table during the implementation process and invited to the trainings and meetings, so you will see in person how implementation is going. If not, again, you can request documents in writing and using the Public Records Act request to school board members who are allies to obtain evidence that implementation is occurring.
- b. **Reviewing the data** on discipline (office discipline referrals, suspensions, expulsions) and academic achievement to see if the alternatives are making a difference. In the best case, your policy will already require the school district and schools to share this data with you on a quarterly basis or more often. If not, then you can make a request in writing or using the Public Records Act sample on www.FixSchoolDiscipline.org. If the data shows that problems still exist, continue to tell the story at school board meetings, with the press, and with school leadership to put more emphasis on the immediacy of the need to implement alternatives.
- c. **Looking for Evidence of the Alternative In Practice:** From reading this Toolkit, you will have learned a lot about how these alternative practices look when they are really implemented in our schools. As parents, you have a right under California law (see FixSchoolDiscipline.org/for a [Parents' Rights Brochure](#)) to visit and observe what is going on in your schools, so you can also request to visit classrooms and tour the school to see if you see signs of the alternatives in practice. Also, all of the alternatives depend on real parent involvement, so if you are working with parents and youth from a number of schools, they can be the eyes and ears to report on the changes they are seeing or not seeing and they should actually be involved in the implementation efforts at the schools. To make certain everyone is looking for the same thing, you may want to create a Monitoring Tool or a Survey.
 - i. **For PBIS:** Go to FixSchoolDiscipline.org and you can find the Rubric of Implementation that has been used to assess compliance in Los Angeles Unified and provide feedback to school administrators.

You will also find the Monitoring Report that CADRE, Public Counsel and MHAS published. It outlines all of the steps that we took to see if PBIS was being implemented in Los Angeles two years after the policy was put in place.

- ii. **For Restorative Justice,** you can find out how RJ elements, such as circles, are happening in classrooms, after-school and with parents and learn how they are affecting referrals and violent incidents.
- d. **No Cooking the Books:** It is always possible that when the school district leadership begins standing up and saying, "Out-of-school suspensions aren't working and we need to change practices," that some school leaders will cut corners. Instead of learning how to put in place good alternatives and interventions, they might send students home illegally (without providing proper notice or reporting it) or they may just start sending students to the office for multiple periods without giving them instruction or help. It is much harder to monitor these illegal practices, but here are a few tips:
 - i. Parents and students know what is happening at their schools. Collect stories from them if you begin to hear that this is happening.
 - ii. Collect records. Every student has an absolute right to their records. If parents and students are reporting these illegal practices, make a request for records (Go to FixSchoolDiscipline.org to obtain a Sample Records Request) and see if they are documented.
 - iii. Once you collect as much information and as many stories as possible, write a letter or make a presentation at your school board meeting about what you are hearing and seeing. If you send a letter, make certain to send it to the Superintendent, Principal, the person responsible for implementation of alternatives (if there is a school district staff person) and the School Board with a specific request that the problem be investigated and that intervention be provided so that good practices are put in place.

Because school districts and schools have competing priorities, it is important to keep this issue in the forefront through these efforts. Too often a good or well-intentioned policy sits on the shelf and never becomes a reality. You can help make certain that doesn't happen!

HIGHLIGHT: CADRE, SOUTH LOS ANGELES PARENT ORGANIZING AND EMPOWERMENT ORGANIZATION

In 2005, CADRE, with support from Public Counsel and others, successfully organized and led a broad-based campaign to pass a resolution to create Los Angeles Unified School District's (LAUSD) Discipline Foundation: School-Wide Positive Behavior Supports Policy. LAUSD was one of the very first and the largest District in the nation to adopt a research-based school-wide strategy for all of its schools. Since that time, CADRE has worked in partnership with Public Counsel and others to ensure that implementation occurs in all of the District's 800 schools.

Maisie Chin, Executive Director of CADRE

Knowing what CADRE knows now, what would CADRE have wanted included in the original LAUSD DF/SWPBIS Policy to facilitate faster implementation of that policy?

Knowing what we know now as a result of our monitoring, the original LAUSD Discipline Foundation - School-Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports Policy needed built-in incentives to ensure faster implementation as well as parent, student, and community participation. Quarterly and public reporting of data and progress at regular school board meetings, with opportunity for public comment and recognition of schools with full implementation, would be key to the policy. In addition, implementation needs to mean more than training and checklists of documents being created - the full benefit of SWPBIS must be made clear. We need to tie implementation to specific outcomes, such as reduction in suspensions and office referrals, elimination of racial disproportionality of African American students suspended, reduction in willful defiance suspensions, and increased attendance and graduation rates. And lastly, District resources and funding need to be re-directed to ensure that there is a budget for implementing alternatives to suspension. In our work on the School Climate Bill of Rights that recently passed, we took steps to ensure that these important pieces were included. Now, again, we are working hard to ensure real implementation occurs. Already, we have seen significant improvements but the work continues.

Knowing what CADRE knows now, what would CADRE have wanted included in the Policy or Board resolution around the Policy to ensure participation of parents and community in the implementation process?

In addition to the above, the Policy needs to include a mandate for schools to show evidence of school-wide alternative practices to suspension being implemented.

What do you think are the key elements of an implementation monitoring plan to ensure that alternatives to discipline are appropriately and quickly implemented and why does a school district benefit when there is strong role in the process for parents/community/youth?

Schools need to have opportunities to learn new practices and their benefits. As part of implementation, schools should have guidance around culturally responsive behavior support, both prevention and intervention, and be asked to involve parents/youth/community in selecting and developing their school-wide alternatives. Such parent/youth/community participation would facilitate the shared accountability and relationship-building that is so vital for transforming schools.

Feel free to contact us:

CADRE
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Los Angeles, CA 90003
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CONTACT LIST

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Regional Trainers

Mike Lombardo, Director of Interagency Facilitation	Placer County Office of Education	Ph: 530.745.1493, mlombardo@placercoe.k12.ca.us	SWPBIS Trainer
Renee Regacho, Ed.D., Associate Superintendent Educational Services	Placer County Office of Education	Ph: 530.745.1480, rregacho@placercoe.k12.ca.us	SWPBIS Trainer
Rebecca Mendiola, SWPBIS Coordinator	Santa Clara Office of Education	Ph: 408.453.6706, Email: Rebecca_mendiola@sccoe.org	SWPBIS Trainer
Lisa Andrews, Ed.D, Director of District and Schools Support Services	Santa Clara Office of Education	Ph: 408.453.6634, Email: Lisa_andrews@sccoe.org	SWPBIS Trainer
Tyrone Botelho, Restorative Justice Program Manager	Hayward and Berkeley Schools	Ph: 415-283-5393 tyrone@seedscrc.org www.seedscrc.org/rj	Restorative Justice

OAKLAND

Trainers

Fania E. Davis, Executive Director	Restorative Justice for Oakland Youth	Ph: 510-931-7569 Email: Fania@rjoyoakland.org	Provides Restorative Justice (RJ) training
Eric Butler, RJOY Coordinator	Restorative Justice for Oakland Youth	Ph: 510.586.6228 Eric@rjoyoakland.org	Provides Restorative Justice (RJ) training and technical assistance for schools

School Officials

Gary Yee, Interim Superintendent	Oakland Unified School District (OUSD)	Ph: (510) 273-3200 gary.yee@ousd.k12.ca.us	Restorative Justice
Curtiss Sarikey Associate Superintendent	OUSD	Ph: (510) 273-3200 curtiss.sarikey@ousd.k12.ca.us	Restorative Justice
Theresa Clinicy Program Manager Attendance and Discipline Support Services	OUSD	211 International Blvd, Rm 10 Oakland, CA 94606 Office: 510.434.7920 theresa.clinicy@ousd.k12.ca.us	Restorative Justice
Lauran Waters-Cherry	OUSD	lauran.cherry@ousd.k12.ca.us	Restorative Justice

Barbara McClung, LMFT Director of Behavior Health Services, Complementary Learning	Oakland Unified School District	Barbara.mcclung@ousd.k12.ca.us Cell: 415-533-3709	Restorative Justice
Betsy Steele, Principal	Ralph Bunche Continuation High School, OUSD	Betsy.Steele@ousd.k12.ca.us. Ph: 510.879.1730	Implementing RJ in high school
Community-based Organizations			
Jackie Byers	Black Organizing Project	510.891.1219 jackie@blackorganizingproject.org	Community-based organization doing advocacy around STPP
Jasmine Jones	Black Organizing Project	510.891.1219 jljones1103@gmail.com,	Community-based organization doing advocacy around STPP
Pecolia Manigo, Program Director	Bay Area Parent Leadership Action Network	510.44.7526 pecolia@parentactionnet.org	Community group organizing parents to transform schools
Other			
Judge Gail Brewster Bereola	Superior Court of California, County of Alameda		RJ
Rose Owens-West, Ph.D., Director	Region IX Equity Assistance Center, WestEd	300 Lakeside Drive, 25th Floor, Oakland, CA 94612, 510.302.4246	
SACRAMENTO			
Trainers			
Stella Connell Levy, JD, Board President	Restorative Schools Vision Project	restorativeschoolsproject@gmail. com, 916.396.7592	Provides Restorative Justice (RJ) training
Richard Cohen	Restorative Schools Vision Project	restorativeschoolsproject@gmail. com	Provides Restorative Justice (RJ) training
School Officials			
Billy Aydlett, Principal	Leataata Floyd (formerly Jedidiah Smith) Elementary, Sacramento City Unified School District	Billy-Aydlett@sac-city.k12.ca.us Ph: 916-752-3324,	Implementing SWPBIS and SEL in elementary school
Cory Jones, Assistant Principal	Leataata Floyd (formerly Jedidiah Smith) Elementary, Sacramento City Unified School District	Cory-Jones@sac-city.k12.ca.us	Implementing SWPBIS and SEL in elementary school

Carl Pinkston, Secretary	Black Parallel School Board	916.484.3729, info@blackparallelschoolboard.com	Community group organizing parents to transform schools
SAN FRANCISCO			
School Officials			
Kerri Berkowitz, Restorative Practices Coordinator	San Francisco Unified School District, SFUSD	berkowitzk@sfusd.edu, 415.695.5543 x13046	Implementing RP district-wide
Paul Jacobsen, Principal	Rosa Parks Elementary, SFUSD	jacobsenp@sfusd.edu	Implementing RP in elementary school
Emily Geiges	Rosa Parks Elementary, SFUSD		On RP Base Team in elementary school
Cecily Ina	Rosa Parks Elementary, SFUSD		On RP Base Team in elementary school
Joyce Dorado, Ph.D. Associate Clinical Professor Project Director, Director of Clinical Research and Evaluation	UCSF HEARTS (Healthy Environments and Response to Trauma in Schools)	Child and Adolescent Services, Dept. of Psychiatry University of California, San Francisco - San Francisco General Hospital (415) 206-3278; cell: 415-307-5403 Joyce.dorado@ucsf.edu	Trauma Informed Schools
Lynn R. Dolce, MFT Associate Director Assistant Clinical Professor	SFGH Child and Adolescent Services, UCSF Department of Psychiatry	School of Nursing 415-206-6598 Lynn.dolce@ucsf.edu	Trauma Informed Schools
Community-based Organizations			
Kevine Boggess, Director of Civic Engagement	Coleman Advocates for Children and Youth, San Francisco	415-239-0161 kboggess@colemanadvocates.org	Community group organizing around discipline practices and police in schools
Gabriel Santamaria, Program Associate,	Homies Organizing the Mission to Empower Youth, San Francisco	415-861-1600, educatedpath@gmail.com, www.homeysf.org	Community organizing around schools and STTP
Ailed Paningbatan-Swan, Director of Community Engagement	Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center, San Francisco	t: 415-206-2140, x130, apaningbatan@bhnc.org	Community organizing around schools and STTP

Other			
Mario Rubiano Yedidia, Director, Youth Commission,	City & County of San Francisco, City Hall, Room 345, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, San Francisco, CA 94102-4532,	mario.yedidia@sfgov.org Direct: 415-554-6254 Main: 415-554-6446	
SAN RAFAEL			
Harriet MacLean, Principal	Davidson Middle School, San Rafael City Schools	415.492.2404, hmaclean@srcs.or	RJ and peer-led youth courts in middle school
Karen Junker, Teacher, Coordinator of Climate and Culture, Trainer	Davidson Middle School, SRCS	415.492.2400, kjunker@srcs.org	RJ Trainer/Consultant, RJ and peer-led youth courts in middle school
SANTA ROSA			
Community-based Organization			
Davin Cardenas, Lead Organizer	North Bay Organizing Project	707.318.2818, dcardenas@northbayop.org	Community organizing around eliminating suspensions and expulsions and establishing RJ in schools
Karym Sanchez and David Hoffman Education Task Force Co-Chairs	North Bay Organizing Project	ed.tf.nbop@gmail.com	Youth and community organizing around school climate and education in the North Bay
West Contra Costa County			
Trainers			
Millie Burns, Deputy Chief of Programs	Catholic Charities of the East Bay	Direct: 510.768.3188 Email: mburns@cceb.org	Restorative Practices (RP) training for WCCC schools
School Officials			
Antonio Medrano	West Contra Costa Board of Education	406 Linda Drive, San Pbalo, CA 94806-1131, 510-223-0237 Amedrano3@sbcglobal.net	
Vallejo			
School Officials			
Superintendent Ramona Bishop	Vallejo City Unified School District	Rbishop@vallejo.k12.ca.us 707-556-0921	Implementing SWPBIS district-wide
Dr. Derbigny	VCUSD	lderbigny@vallejo.k12.ca.us	Implementing SWPBIS district-wide

Woodland

Kerry Callahan, Principal	Pioneer High School, WJUSD	kerry.callahan@wjusd.org	Implementing SWPBIS in high school
Scott Clary, Principal	Gibson Elementary School, WJUSD	scott.clary@wjusd.org, 530-662-3944 x5521	Implementing SWPBIS in elementary school
Carolynne Bottum, former Assistant Principal at Pioneer High School	Roseville City School District	carolynne.bottum@wjusd.org	Implemented SWPBIS in high school

CENTRAL CALIFORNIA

Regional Trainers

Tina Frazier, Administrator	Fresno County Office of Education	Ph: 559.265.3049, Email: tfrazier@fcoe.org	SWPBIS Trainer
Leslie Cox, Program Manager	Fresno County Office of Education	Ph: 559.312.5200, Email: lcox@fcoe.org	SWPBIS Trainer

Fresno

Community-based Organizations

Mary Jane Skjellerup Senior Director of Programs, Central Valley	Youth Leadership Institute	559-255-3300 ext. 222 www.yli.org	Youth organizing around increasing graduation rates and implementing restorative discipline strategies
Miriam Hernandez, Youth Organizer		559.255.3300, mhernandez@yli.org	
Gina Rodriguez, Youth Organizer		559.255.3300, grodriguez@yli.org	

Selma Unified School District

Steve Gonzalez, Ed.D., Director of Pupil Services	Selma Unified School District	Ph: 559.898.6500 ext. 46515, Email: sgonzalez@selma.k12.ca.us	SWPBIS Trainer
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Tulare County Office of Education

Eileen Whelan, PHD.D., BCBA-D Administrator Behavioral Services	Tulare County Office of Education	eileenw@tcoe.org 559-730-2910 ext. 6810	
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SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Regional Trainers

Cristy Clouse, District PBIS Coordinator	CalTAC, Inc.	Ph: 714.904.8849, Email: cristyclouse.caltac@gmail.com	SWPBIS Trainer
Marie Williams, IUSD, District PBIS Coordinator	CalTAC, Inc.	Ph: 949.246.2465, Email: mariewilliams.caltac@gmail.com	SWPBIS Trainer
Robert "Bob" Mata, Ed.D., Categorical Program Unit Project Director	Los Angeles County Office of Education	Ph: 562.922.6792, Email: Robert_mata@lacoe.edu	SWPBIS Trainer
Nancy Franklin, Ed.D., Director	Los Angeles Unified School District	Ph: 213.241.8086, Email: Nancy.Franklin@lausd.net	SWPBIS Trainer

Laura Zeff	Los Angeles Unified School District	Email: Laura.Zeff@lausd.net	SWPBIS Trainer
Arthur Cummins, Ed.D., Administrator	Orange County Department of Education	Ph: 714.327.1071, Email: acummins@ocde.us	SWPBIS Trainer
Sheri Wilkins, Ed.D., Program Manager	Desert Mountain SELPA	Ph: 760-242-6310, 760.242.6333, Email: Sheri_wilkins@sbcss.k12.ca.us	SWPBIS Trainer
Gail Angus, Ed.D., Assistant Director,	Riverside County SELPA	Ph: 951.490.0375, Email: gail@rcselpa.org, gangus@valverde.edu	SWPBIS Trainer
Corinne Foley, Program Manager, Behavioral Health Services	Desert Mountain SELPA	Ph: 760.242.6336, Email: Corinne_foley@sbcss.k12.ca.us	SWPBIS Trainer
Ramiro Rubalcaba, Principal	Azusa High, Azusa Unified School District	626.815.3400, ramiror@azusausd.k12.ca.us	SWPBIS in high school
Long Beach			
Belia Saavedra, Restorative Justice Program Strategist	California Conference for Equality and Justice	562.435.8184, bsaavedra@cacej.org	Technical assistance for schools around RJ implementation in Los Angeles County
Community-Based Organizations			
Sophya Chum, Ashley Uyeda, Community Organizers	Khmer Girls in Action	562.986.9415, justice@kgalb.org	Community organizing around gender, racial, economic justice in education
Centinela Valley			
Allan Mucerino Assistant Superintendent	CENTINELA VALLEY UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT	mucerinoa@centinela.k12.ca.us	
Corona-Norco			
Yvonne McFadzean, Assistant Principal	Corona-Norco Unified School District, Santiago High School	Ph: 951.739.5606 ymcfadzean@cnusd.k12.ca.us	Created mentoring program to address racial disparity
Desert/Mountain SELPA			
Sheri Wilkins, Ph/D Program Manager	Desert/Mountain SELPA	Ph: 760-242-6333, ext. 147 Sheri_wilkins@sbcss.k12.ca.us Dmselpa.sbcss.k12.ca.us	

San Diego

Nancy Kelly Project Director Technical Assistance Specialist	EDC, Inc., San Diego	11706 Carmel Creek Rd #302 San Diego CA 92130 nkelly@edc.org 858-461-1067 phn/fax 619-997-8223 cell www.promoteprevent.org www.tribalyouthprogram.org	
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Los Angeles

Trainers

Scott Wood, Loyola Law School	Center for Restorative Justice	213-736-8301, Scott.Wood@lls.edu	Restorative Justice for Youth in JJ system
Belia Saavedra, Restorative Justice Program Strategist	California Conference for Equality and Justice	562.435.8184, bsaavedra@cacej.org	Technical assistance for schools around RJ implementation in Los Angeles County
Schoene Mahmood, Restorative Justice Specialist	Center for Urban Resilience, Loyola Marymount University	schoene@gmail.com, 626.529.5413	Restorative Justice Training

School Officials

Jose Huerta, Principal	Garfield High School, LAUSD	jose.huerta@lausd.net, 323.981.5550 x5658	Implementing SWPBIS in high school
Rose Anne Ruiz, Assistant Principal	Garfield High School, LAUSD	323.981.5550	Implementing SWPBIS in high school
Aurora Mellado, Dean of Students	Garfield High School, LAUSD	323.981.5526	SWPBIS, Conflict Resolution
Gelber Orellano, PSW	Garfield High School, LAUSD	323.981.5550	SWPBIS, Psychiatric Social Worker
Randy Delling, ACSA Board of Directors	North Hollywood Senior High	818.753.6200, rdelling@lausd.net	
Ramiro Rubalcaba	LAUSD Coordinator Human Resources Division, formerly Garfield High School Principal	Ramiro.rubalcaba@lausd.net 213.241.5121, cell323.228.5867	Implemented SWPBIS in high school
Marsha Watkins, Principal	Christa McAuliffe High School, Camp Challenger	Watkins.Marsha@lacoedu.edu,	Implementing SWPBIS at school in juvenile probation camp
Kimberly Humphries, Assistant Principal	Christa McAuliffe High School, Camp Challenger	Humphries.Kimberly@lacoedu.edu	Implementing SWPBIS at school in juvenile probation camp
Kiela J. Snider, Ed.D, Principal	Palm Springs Unified School District	760.251.7200, ksnider@psusd.us	Lowered suspensions using Discipline with Dignity

Community Organizations			
Maisie Chin, Executive Director, Co-Founder	CADRE	maisie@cadre-la.org, 323.752.9997, ext. 311	Community organizing around school discipline and education issues in South LA
Maria Brenes, Executive Director	InnerCity Struggle	323.780.7605, maria@innercitystruggle.org	Youth, family and community organizing to promote safe, healthy and non-violent communities in the Eastside
Kim McGill, Organizer	Youth Justice Coalition, FREE L.A. High School	323.235.4243, freelanow@yahoo.com	Youth organizing around dismantling the schoolhouse-to-jailhouse track
Manuel Criollo, Director of Organizing	Labor/Community Strategy Center	213.387.2800, www.thestrategycenter.org	Community organizing around ending the criminalization of low-income youth and youth of color
George Weaver, Nathan Sessoms	Brotherhood Crusade	323.235.5536, bcinfo@brotherhoodcrusade.org	
Alberto Retana, Sandra Hamada	Community Coalition	323.750.9087	
Researchers/Experts			
Tia Martinez	UCLA Civil Rights Project	tia.e.martinez@gmail.com	Research on effects of suspension and expulsion
Dan Losen	UCLA Civil Rights Project	losendan@gmail.com	Research on effects of suspension and expulsion
School Officials			
Vicente Bravo Consultant II, Division of Student Support Services	Los Angeles County Office of Education	Bravo_Vicente@lacoed.edu 562-922-6897, 562-922-6233	SWPBIS
Lynwood			
Edward Velasquez, Superintendent	Lynwood Unified School District	evelasquez@lynwood.k12.ca.us	SWPBIS
Pomona			
Richard Martinez, Superintendent	Pomona Unified School District	richard.martinez@pusd.org implementing PBIS at 2 school sites	
San Bernadino County			

Benton Dorman, Ed.D Program Specialist Special Education	Desert Sands Unified School District	Benton.dorman@dsusd.us Tel: 760-771-8790	
San Diego			
Nancy Kelly, Project Director Technical Assistance Specialist	EDC, Inc., San Diego	nkelly@edc.org, 858-461-1067 www.promoteprevent.org www.tribalyouthprogram.org	Technical Assistance to schools
Santa Ana			
Doreen Lohnes Assistant Superintendent	Santa Ana Unified School District	Doreen.Lohnes@SAUSD.US]	
Laura Kanter, MSW	The Gay and Lesbian Community Services Center of Orange County	714.953.5428, laura.kanter@ thecenteroc.org	Youth and community organizing around school climate, education equality, and student rights for LGBTQ youth in Orange County
STATEWIDE			
Trainers			
Barbara Kelley, M.A. CEO	CalTAC	949-933-5015 Barbarakelley.caltac@gmail.com www.pbiscaltac.org	SWPBIS Statewide
Marin Brown, MAIS, Project Operations Manager	CalSTAT	707-849-2265 marin.brown@calstat.org	SWPBIS
Dr. Jeffrey Richard Sprague, Co Director	Univ of Oregon Institute on Violence and Destructive Behavior	1265 Univ of Oregon Eugene, OR 97403 Tel: 5413463592 Cell: 5419140960	SWPBIS Expert and Trainer
Center for Advancement of Social Emotional Learning		www.casel.org, skeister@casel.org, 614.327.3096	
Rose Owens-West, Ph.D., Director	Region IX Equity Assistance Center, WestEd	300 Lakeside Drive, 25th Floor, Oakland, CA 94612, 510.302.4246	Provides technical assistance to educators around alternative discipline approaches and data analysis
Adrian Uribarri	Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL)	312-212-8135 http://www.casel.org/contact/	SEL

Stella Connell Levy, Board President	Restorative Schools Vision Project	916.396.7592 restorativeschoolsproject@gmail.com	RJ
Carolyn Pirtle, Consultant and Member of Implementation Design Team	Positive Action, Inc	208.732.1132, www.positiveaction.net	SEL
Researchers/Experts			
Russ Skiba, Professor	Center for Evaluation and Education Policy	Room 509, E Third Street, Bloomington, IN 47401 Ph: 812 855 4438	Racial Bias
Dr. Dan Losen, Director	UCLA Center for Civil Rights Remedies	losendan@gmail.com	Research and analysis regarding impact of suspension and expulsion on boys and young men of color
Tia Martinez, Researcher	UCLA Center for Civil Rights Remedies	tia.e.martinez@gmail.com	Research and analysis regarding impact of suspension and expulsion on boys and young men of color
Community Organizations			
Californians for Justice		CalJustice.org	Community organizing throughout California around racial and educational justice
Charhys Bailey, Director of California Programs	Gay Straight Alliance Network	cbailey@GSANetwork.org	Community organizing around equitable educational environments and opportunities for LGBTQ youth
George Galvis, Executive Director	Communities United for Restorative Youth Justice (CURYJ)	2289 International Blvd. Oakland, CA 94606, ggalvis@curyj.org	Provides restorative justice and nonviolence trainings

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