Advisory Council on Student Behavior and Discipline

Proactive, Positive Approaches Working Group

Minutes – August 24, 2018

The Proactive, Positive Approaches Working Group convened at approximately 10:30 AM on August 24, 2018.

Shawn Fleming called the meeting to order.

**Members:** JoAnn Achord, Katie Barras, Christina Conforto, Gina Easterly, Shawn Fleming, Liz Gary, Melanie Jacobs, Cyndy Rutherford, and Arielle McConduit

**Chairman Selection.** JoAnn Achord nominated Shawn as chair. With no other nominations or interest in serving as chair, the motion for Shawn to serve as chair passed without objection.

The Committee discussed the state-of-the-state regarding statewide implementation for each of the main areas of:

* Improving classroom management using positive behavioral supports and other effective disciplinary tools.
* LEA implementation of Model Master Discipline Plan.
* Providing better assistance to parents in knowing about and accessing family strengthening programs, including improved parental involvement.

**Decisions:**

Work group members agreed to submit prior to next meeting:

* + Definitions of classroom management.
  + Any research, surveys, reports or other indicators regarding the implementation of classroom management practices.
  + Measures of implementation by schools use of behavior practices.
  + Definitions of Family Assistance, Involvement and Engagement.

**Classroom Management.** A discussion of indicators of implementation for improving classroom management using positive behavioral supports and other effective disciplinary tools consisted of:

* Teachers surveyed at one school indicate a desire for more training in classroom management. Significantly, even veteran teachers with seemingly strong classroom management strategies expressed a need for more training. This school is a model program for restorative practices which has resulted in reduced referrals/removals of students.
* Parents always report classroom management as a top priority.
* In selecting which ACSBD workgroup to be on 2/3 teachers and 2/3 parents prioritized this workgroup indicating the priority of people dealing with directly with kids each day.
* State law indicates classroom management training is the school system responsibility. In practice, it seems each school is held responsible to provide classroom management training for teachers.
* Training for teachers focuses on “curriculum, curriculum, curriculum” with little focus on classroom management.
* More teachers are needed.
  + Current teacher shortages require hiring anyone who applies.
  + Teachers are overburdened with high student loads.
* What is effective shifts depending on cohorts of students or students presenting particularly challenging behaviors.
  + Some cohorts (i.e., specific grade level of students) do not respond well to existing classroom management practices which had been effective with previous cohort groups.
  + Specific children, often with disabilities, present unique challenges. Teachers struggle with balancing:
    - Avoiding isolating, removing or ‘singling them out’ students
    - Using strategies which appear fair to all students
    - Knowing what is effective for some children.
  + What worked 20 years ago is not necessarily effective today and what is effective today may not be effective with next year’s student cohort.
* Effective classroom management training includes on-site, modeling, demonstration and follow-up technical assistance and coaching.
* A definition for “Classroom Management” is necessary:
  + Working Group members agreed to send Shawn definitions of classroom management for consideration at the next meeting. Some shared during the meeting included:
    - **Classroom management** is a term [teachers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Teacher) use to describe the process of ensuring that classroom [lessons](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lesson) run smoothly without [disruptive behavior](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Challenging_behavior) from [students](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Student) compromising the delivery of instruction. The term also implies the prevention of disruptive behavior preemptively, as well as effectively responding to it after it happens. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Classroom_management>

Working Group members agreed to research and share any indicators of the implementation classroom management.

Initial recommendations for specific areas of focus related to Classroom Management included:

* Meeting the individual needs of students
* Integration into the school culture and practices.

**LEA Implementation of the Model Master Discipline Plan**

Discussion consisted of:

* Debate over whether state law (R.S. 17:252) indicated LEAs were compliant with meeting the Model Master Discipline Plan by a single submittal of their plan or whether there is an expectation of an ongoing use of a data driven approach to discipline by school systems. It seems the law required both an immediate response from school systems and ongoing use of data to drive classroom management training.
  + The Juvenile Justice Reform Act (Act 1225 of 2003; [R.S. 17:252](http://www.legis.la.gov/Legis/Law.aspx?d=80374)) indicates:
    - BESE had to produce a model master plan for improving behavior and discipline within schools by March 1, 2004
    - Each LEA had to submit a master plan for improving behavior and discipline by October 1, 2004.
    - Each school master plan shall make provision for pre-service and ongoing grade appropriate classroom management training.
    - Each LEA shall provide classroom management and regularly review discipline data from each school to determine what additional classroom management training is needed, if any, and what additional classroom support activities should be provided by the principal and school administration.
* There do not seem to be any clear indicators of implementation of the Model Master Discipline Plan by school systems at the state level.
  + Problem with exclusive self-report data from schools
  + Behavior data is not standardized
    - All other data sets in schools seem to be standardized.
  + Discussion over why schools can’t have standardize behavior data?
    - Katie indicated LDOE is avoiding requiring or promoting any single specific behavior approach. LDOE is going to use the [Multi Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS](http://www.legis.la.gov/Legis/Law.aspx?d=80374)). Therefore, LDOE does not believe any single data set can capture whatever practice a school decides to use.
      * There are [tools available to measure implementation fidelity for MMTS](https://intensiveintervention.org/implementation-support/fidelity-resources)
    - As indicators of implementation is seems disciplinary outcomes (i.e., suspensions/expulsions) are considered more than evidence based practices. (seems like using grades or test scores rather than evidence of effective instructional practices).
* There are indicators of the use of data in making decisions related to discipline practices within some LEAs:
  + [A/BIT](http://jpschools.org/department/student-support/special-education/pupil-appraisal/) in Jefferson Parish
  + [DOJO](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ClassDojo)
  + [HERO](https://herok12.com/classroom-management)

**Family Assistance, Involvement & Engagement**

The workgroup agreed a definition of family assistance, involvement and engagement would be beneficial. Workgroup members agreed to share definitions for consideration at the next meeting.

Examples of family engagement, or not, were shared. Strategies schools use to provide family assistance and increase family engagement were shared, including:

* Scheduling Open House on the weekend. Differences in parental participation at open houses vs. teacher conferences.
* Community activities and ‘fun” opportunities for involvement
* Specific roles for families
* Proactive vs. Reactive Engagement tactics
* Student driven parent conferences
* Sharing the framework the school uses for discipline practices.