

I.D. ix
Safe Schools

No Child Left Behind Goal 4: All students will be educated in learning environments that are safe, drug-free, and conducive to learning.

No Child Left Behind Indicator 4.1: The number of persistently dangerous schools, as defined by the state.

The *No Child Left Behind* Act requires that local school systems report the number of persistently dangerous schools.¹⁵ A “persistently dangerous” school means a school in which each year for a period of three consecutive school years the total number of student suspensions for more than 10 days or expulsions equals two and one-half percent or more of the total number of students enrolled in the school, for and of the following offenses: arson or fire; drugs; explosives; firearms; other guns; other weapons; physical attack on a student; physical attack on a school system employee or other adult; and sexual assault. Schools are placed into “persistently dangerous” status in a given school year based on their suspension data in the prior year.

Instructions:

Complete Table 9.1 which reports the number of schools identified as persistently dangerous.

Table 9.1: Number of Persistently Dangerous Schools				
2003-2004 Status (Based on 2002- 2003 Data)	2004-2005 Status (Based on 2003- 2004 Data)	2005-2006 Status (Based on 2004- 2005 Data)	2006-2007 Status (Based on 2005- 2006 Data)	2007-2008 Status (Based on 2006- 2007 Data)
0	0	0	0	0

Note: Issues associated with Safe Schools are also discussed in Additional MSDE Requirements: Safe Learning Environments and Attachment 11: Title IV, Part A – Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities.

¹⁵ Section 13A.08.02.18B(4) of the Code of Maryland Regulations.

Safe Schools (continued)

Schools Meeting 2-1/2 Percent Criteria for the First Time

A school must be placed on “probationary status” if each year for a period of two consecutive school years, the total number of student suspensions for more than 10 days or expulsions equal to 2-1/2 percent or more of the total number of students enrolled in the school, for any of the following offenses: arson or fire; drugs; explosives; firearms; other guns; other weapons; physical attack on a student; physical attack on a school system employee or other adult; and sexual assault.¹⁶

Instructions:

Using Table 9.2, identify all schools that met the 2-1/2 percent criteria for the first time at the end of the 2006-2007 school year.

Table 9.2: Schools Meeting 2-1/2 Percent Criteria for the First Time			
School	2006-2007 Enrollment	# of Suspensions and Expulsions	Percentage of Enrollment
NONE			

Based on the Examination of Table 9.2:

- 1. Where first-time schools were identified, what steps are being taken by the school system to reverse this trend and prevent the identified school(s) from moving into probationary status?**

NA

¹⁶ Section 13A.08.01.19A of the Code of Maryland Regulations.

Safe Schools (continued)

Probationary Schools

Instructions:

Using Table 9.3, identify all schools that met the criteria at the end of the 2006-2007 school year for placement on “probationary status,” as defined above, in the 2007-2008 school year.

Table 9.3: Probationary Status Schools			
School	2006-2007 Enrollment	# of Suspensions and Expulsions	Percentage of Enrollment
NONE			

Safe Schools (continued)

**Suspensions and Expulsions for
Sexual Harassment, Harassment, and Bullying**

Using Table 9.4, provide trend data for suspensions/expulsions due to sexual harassment, harassment, and bullying.

Table 9.4: Number of Suspensions/Expulsions for Sexual Harassment, Harassment, and Bullying					
Offense	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
Sexual Harassment	4	10	18	13	14
Harassment	19	8	30	3	22
Bullying				7	13
TOTAL	23	18	48	23	49

Grade Level	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Grand Total
Bullying					1	1	3	5	3		13
Sexual Harassment		4		1	2	2	1	2	1	1	14
Harassment	1		2	1	1	1	4	3	7	2	22
Grand Total	1	4	2	2	4	4	8	10	11	3	49

The data shows that suspensions in these categories increased by 53% over 2006. This can be attributed partially to the increased education conducted with staff and students resulting in more referrals for harassment offenses. These types of offenses may have been previously coded to other categories. While the numbers of sexual harassment suspensions remained consistent, bullying and harassment suspensions show a significant increase. Further breakdown of the data indicates that the middle level, grades 6-8, have the highest suspension rate.

A. ACTIONS TAKEN TO PREVENT/REDUCE INCIDENTS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT, HARASSMENT, AND BULLYING:

1. Policy Development, Revision and Review

Somerset County Public Schools has had a policy on Bullying and Harassment in place since May 2001. This policy is reviewed each year, revisions are made if necessary and it is adopted by the Board of Education. The current policy was approved in May 2006. The Student Services Department distributes the policy to students, staff and parents each year. Policies are reviewed with students, staff and parents through brochures and presentations. Staff is familiarized with the definitions pertaining to student bullying & harassment, student reporting procedures and formal investigating procedures.

Specific Implemented Master Plan Steps in this area are:

- 5.2.1 Implement a procedure to distribute current student policy information to schools to publish in student/parent handbooks.
- 5.2.2 Update the Bullying & Harassment brochure.
- 5.2.2 Ensure all staff members, students and parents are trained on revised policies and reporting forms.
- 5.2.4 Provide in-service training at the site level for all school based administrators and teachers regarding the implementation of the revised bully & harassment policy & procedures.

2. Increased Staff and Data Collection

Student support staff was maintained to allow for a complete team at each school. These teams deal with referred students who have disciplinary issues, one of which could be bullying and harassment. Behavior plans are written for each student and their behavior is monitored by the Learning Support staff assigned to their case.

The increase in staff not only provides more services to students but enables the school system to collect and analyze data related to bullying & harassment. All student support staff were trained in data entry, generating reports and reviewing the data.

Specific Implemented Master Plan Steps in this area are:

- 1.1.27 Maintain learning support process for identifying the appropriate services and strategies for struggling student.
- 5.1.7 Use Power School to collect, report and track student attendance and disciplinary data.
- 5.2.2 Continue to provide student, staff, parents, with training on current policies and programs for harassment & bullying
- 5.2.7 Increase Character Education staff to include a teacher at each elementary school.
- 5.2.12 Utilize monthly reports to ensure that Learning Support Teams are addressing all barriers to learning and the mental health services are being provided when needed.

3. Program Implementation

The PBIS program is operational in six schools, which represents 75% of the schools in Somerset County. Although each of the schools are at varying levels of implementation, the program has decreased the number of referrals in our schools. Suspension and referral data can be found on page 235 and 236 of this document. Three of our six schools have been named Exemplary PBIS schools in 2007. Somerset County Schools has had a Character Education program in place for over 5 years. In 2005 the program was expanded to include programs in every elementary school. A pilot project using the *Olweus* Bullying & Harassment program was implemented in 2 schools in 2007 and will be expanded in 2008.

Specific Implemented Master Plan Steps in this area are:

- 5.1.2 Implement PBIS program in the Intermediate School.
- 5.1.2 Provide training and support to existing PBIS programs with the assistance of the PBIS coaches.

- 5.2.3 Implement the *Olweus* Bullying Proof Program in two schools
- 5.2.7 Increase Character Education staff to include a teacher at each elementary school.
- 6.1.8 Implement character education programs K-12

B. Related Resources

RELATED RESOURCES FOR SAFE SCHOOLS	
Staffing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintained 3 Behavior Intervention Specialists and 7 Learning Support Specialists. 	Cost: \$ 388,364 Source: SS/HS Grant (\$265,926) Local (\$86,079) Thornton (\$ 36,359) <i>* Duplicated Reference</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supported 1 Full Time Character Education teacher and 2 half time Character Education teachers at the elementary schools. 	Cost: \$ 166,458 Source: Local (\$ 143,705) Thornton: (\$ 22,753) <i>* Duplicated Reference</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintained 1 full time school counselor at each elementary school 	Cost: \$ 208,150 Source: Local (\$163,640) Thornton (\$ 44,510)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintained secondary school counselors 	Cost: \$ 350,046 Source: Local (\$232,844) Thornton (\$ 54,063) Gear Up (\$62,599)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintained Supervision of Student Services 	Cost: \$ 250,062 Source: Local (\$164,674) SS/HS (\$ 54,063) LMB (\$46,483)
Professional Development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trained all staff on the revised Bullying & Harassment policy during the school day. 	Cost: \$0 Source: Staff Time
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trained PBIS teams from all six PBIS schools during the summer of 2006. 	Cost: \$2,000 Source: SS/HS Grant <i>* Duplicated Reference</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trained teams from one elementary and the intermediate school on the <i>Olweus</i> Program(2 day training) 	Cost: \$3,436 Source: SS/HS Grant
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trained Student Support Teams on data entry and analysis 	Cost: \$0 Source: Staff Time

Core Program & Intervention	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchased the <i>Olweus</i> Bullying Program to use with 2 schools. 	Cost: \$4,702 Source: SS/HS Grant
Materials & Supplies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchased materials for use in Character Education 	Cost: \$761 Source: Title IV
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided incentives for the PBIS initiative. 	Cost: \$2,000 Source: SS/HS Grant
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Printed and distributed a county School Calendar Handbook which contains policies to parents 	Cost: \$4,100 Source: Local

Safe Schools (continued)

Elementary Schools with a Suspension Rate That Exceeds 16 Percent

Each county Board of Education and the Board of School Commissioners of Baltimore City must require elementary schools that have a suspension rate that now exceeds **16** percent of the elementary school's enrollment (for the 2006-2007 school year) to implement a positive behavioral interventions and support program (PBIS) or an alternative behavioral modification program in collaboration with the Department (Section 7-304.1, Education Article, Annotated Code of Maryland).

Table 9.5.A: Schools With Suspension Rates Exceeding Identified Limits, 2004-2005 and 2005-2006			
2004-2005		2005-2006	
Number of Elementary Schools	Number With a Suspension Rate that Exceeded 18%	Number of Elementary Schools	Number With a Suspension Rate that Exceeded 18%
6	1	6	0

Table 9.5.B: Schools With Suspension Rates Exceeding Identified Limits, 2006-2007	
2006-2007	
Number of Elementary Schools	Number With a Suspension Rate that Exceeded 16 %
5	0

Table 9.6: Non-PBIS Schools			
School Name	School Year in which the suspension rate was exceeded	State reason for noncompliance	Provide a timeline for compliance
NONE			

Additional Local Data

	2005-06	2006-07	Difference
Total Students Suspended	516	478	-38
Students w/Disabilities Suspended	106	87	-19
Incidents by Major Category			
Attendance Related	52	36	-16
Dangerous Substances	16	14	-2
Weapons	17	18	1
Attacks/Threats/Fights	322	307	-15
Arson/Fire/Explosives	7	5	-2
Sex Offenses	16	19	3
Disrespect/Insubordination	701	524	-177
Other Offenses	86	87	1
Total No. of Incidents	1217	1010	-207

Unduplicated Count of Students Suspended

	2005-2006	2006-2007	Difference	Suspension Rate			
Race/Ethnicity					2005-2006	2006-2007	Difference
Asian	0	0	0	Enrollment	2760	2773	13
African Am.	318	300	-18	Students Suspended	516	478	-38
White	188	169	-19	Suspension Rate	18.7%	17.2%	-1.5%
Hispanic	10	9	-1	Number of times Suspended			
Gender				Number	2005-2006	2006-2007	Difference
Male	322	322	0	1	277	245	-32
Female	194	156	-38	2	91	111	20
Grade				3	46	45	-1
PK	0	1	1	4	37	30	-7
K	2	17	15	5	16	19	3
1	5	11	6	>5	49	28	-21
2	9	17	8	Total	516	478	-38
3	17	13	-4	Suspensions by Level			
4	28	32	4		2005-2006	2006-2007	Difference
5	29	45	16	Elementary	90	136	46
6	76	56	-20	Middle	147	120	-27
7	71	64	-7	High	279	222	-57
8	82	80	-2	Total	516	478	-38
9	79	39	-40				
10	50	45	-5				
11	42	33	-9				
12	26	25	-1				
Total	516	478	-38				

Grade	Out of School Suspensions			Total Referrals		
	SY 05-06	SY 06-07	Difference	SY 05-06	SY 06-07	Difference
1	4	11	+7	36	83	+47
2	15	34	+19	50	143	+93
3	31	23	-8	145	75	-70
4	51	57	+6	241	186	-55
5	45	65	+20	189	215	+26
6	261	143	-118	1010	380	-630
7	239	139	-100	931	389	-542
8	147	134	-13	208	415	+207
9	99	149	+50	459	628	+169
10	101	81	-20	499	352	-147
11	54	63	+9	342	291	-51
12	41	40	-1	275	163	-112
Total	1088	939	-149	4385	3320	-1065

B. PROGRESS TOWARD ESTABLISHING AND MAINTAINING SAFE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS:

- 1. The increased services to students and improvements in the learning environment are beginning to show an impact on the disciplinary data in the intermediate school and high schools.**

Somerset County's overall suspension rate decreased by 1.5% over 2006. While this may seem like a small decrease significant progress is being made in several areas. There was a 17% decrease in the total number of discipline incidents with a 25% decrease in incidents related to Disrespect/Insubordination. Violence related suspensions decreased from 346 to 305. Middle and High school data reflects a decrease of 84 students in the unduplicated count of students suspended. There is also a decrease of 19.6% in the number of females suspended. Twenty six fewer students were suspended 3 or more times.

C. PRACTICES, PROGRAMS, OR STRATEGIES AND THE CORRESPONDING RESOURCE ALLOCATIONS:

- 1. Improvements in the Learning Environment**

In 2005, a comprehensive security assessment was conducted in all schools by Business Integrated Technology Solutions. A written report was given to the Director of Facilities & Transportation to initiate improvements. As a result the following recommendations were made to the Board of Education:

- 1) Increase the use of cameras on all buses
- 2) Increase exterior lighting at one elementary school
- 3) Install additional cameras at the intermediate school

As a result of these recommendations, additional cameras were installed at the intermediate school and one elementary school. Cameras were also installed on 3 more buses resulting in 100% of the school buses being equipped with cameras. Improved lighting in the parking lot

of one elementary school was also completed. The survey recommendations were also used to plan the renovation of one of our elementary schools which opened in the fall of 2006 with improved security measures, including cameras, classroom telephones and lighting.

Specific Implemented Master Plan Action Steps in this area are:

- 5.2.8 Enhance and equalize surveillance systems across all schools and all school buses.
- 5.2.8.1.1 Utilize the safety and security assessment report as the basis for recommended improvements.
- 5.2.8.1.2 Develop a plan to implement telephones in every classroom for security.

2. Increased Services and Programs for Students

The PBIS program now operates in six schools. Three elementary schools have been named Exemplary PBIS schools. A Character Education program is also being taught at the elementary level. This program has been in place for more than five years. *Lions Quest* is being taught at the Intermediate School in grades 6 & 7.

Specific Implemented Master Plan Action Steps in this area are:

- 5.1.2 Implement PBIS program county wide.
- 5.1.2 Provide training and support to existing PBIS programs with the assistance of the PBIS coaches
- 5.1.3 Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of PBIS coaches on school level programs and adjust accordingly.
- 5.2.7 Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of character education programs in all elementary schools.
- 6.1.8 Implement character education programs K-12

There are school counselors and learning support specialists in all schools who have implemented a flowchart of service developed for the 2007 school year. This flowchart was designed to provide direction to staff so that interventions would occur consistently and early. The school system endorses and supports Learning Support Teams (LST) at each site to facilitate strategies and services for struggling students. The LST assess student needs and address them through service linkage. Parent and guardian involvement has improved as well. Community agency collaboration has increased through the Steering Committee meetings of the Safe Schools/Healthy Students (SS/HS) grant.

Specific Implemented Master Plan Action Steps in this area are:

- 1.1.27 Maintain learning support process for identifying the appropriate services and strategies for struggling student
- 5.2.11 Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the Learning Support Specialist role.
- 5.2.12 Utilize monthly reports to ensure that Learning Support Teams are addressing all barriers to learning and the mental health services are being provided when needed

The Alternative Learning Center (ALC) teaching staff was trained in the *Why Try?* program and implemented a short term intervention with students as a step before placement in the ALC. Sixty five (65) students participated in this program. Procedures were revised to help ALC students with successful transitions to their home school. Learning Support staff met with students weekly while in attendance at ALC to improve the transition back to the home school.

Specific Implemented Master Plan Action Steps in this area are:

- 5.2.6 Implement policy and procedures to ensure all students' transitioning from an alternative setting have an appropriate plan in place.
- 5.2.6.2 Continue to utilize the "*Why Try?*" programs in the ALC with some modifications.
- 5.5.3 Utilize Learning Support Specialist teams to monitor and evaluate transition plans for incoming students

RELATED RESOURCES FOR SAFE SCHOOLS	
Staffing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintained 3 Behavior Intervention Specialists and 7 Learning Support Specialists. 	Cost: \$ 388,364 Source: SS/HS Grant (\$265,926) Local (\$86,079) Thornton (\$ 36,359) * <i>Duplicated Reference</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supported 1 Full Time Character Education teacher and 2 half time Character Education teachers at the elementary schools. 	Cost: \$ 166,458 Source: Local (\$ 143,705) Thornton: (\$ 22,753) * <i>Duplicated Reference</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintained 1 full time school counselor at each school 	Cost: \$ 528,968 Source: Local (\$471,620) Thornton (\$ 57,348) * <i>Duplicated Reference</i>
Professional Development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supported a week long <i>Lion's Quest</i> Curriculum Training for one teacher Summer, 2006. 	Cost: \$1,035 Source: Title IV
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trained PBIS Teams from all six PBIS schools during the summer of 2006. 	Cost: \$2,000 Source: SS/HS Grant
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supported <i>Why Try?</i> training for one Alternative Learning Center teacher in Summer, 2006. 	Cost: \$1,985 Source: Title IV * <i>Duplicated Reference</i>
Core Program & Intervention	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installed cameras in schools and on buses. 	Cost: \$37,427 Source: SS/HS Grant
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Made capital improvements to enhance safety and security – lighting at one elementary school 	Cost: \$ 24,390 Source: Capital Improvement Funds
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanded PBIS program to include six schools 	Cost: \$0 Source: Staff Time
Materials, Supplies & Equipment	

RELATED RESOURCES FOR SAFE SCHOOLS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purchased videos for the elementary Character Education program. 	Cost: \$761 Source: Title IV
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purchased videos and consumables for the <i>Why Try?</i> program 	Cost: \$1,018 Source: Title IV

C. CHALLENGES FOR CREATING A SAFE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT:

1. The number of suspensions has increased at the elementary level.

The number of students suspended at the elementary level has increased in 2007. The unduplicated count increased from 90 in 2006 to 136 in 2007. This represents an increase of 46 students. The largest increases were in Kindergarten (15) and 5th grade (16) which represented more than half of the increase. There is also an increase in the number of suspensions (44) and referrals (41) in 2007 at the elementary level.

- We are challenged to decrease the suspensions in grades K-5.

2. Seventy percent of the bus suspensions occurred at the middle level.

There were 284 bus suspensions in 2007, 199 of them occurred in grades 6-8. This represents 70% of all the bus suspensions in the school system.

- We are challenged to decrease the bus suspensions in grades 6-8.

D. CHANGES OR ADJUSTMENTS FOR CREATING A SAFE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT ALONG WITH RELATED RESOURCE ALLOCATIONS AND A TIMELINE:

We are challenged to decrease the suspensions in grades K-5.

In order to meet this challenge the system will evaluate the current programs at the elementary level and investigate the need for additional disciplinary measures for this age group. *Why Try?*, currently available to grade 6-10, will be implemented in grade 3-5 by school staff. The use of In School Suspension will be expanded as a discipline intervention at the elementary level. PBIS and Character Education will continue and be integrated into instruction. Increased positive parent involvement will be pursued with those parents of students with significant discipline issues. The *Olweus* bullying educational program will be expanded into 2 new elementary schools during the 2008 school year. Monthly administrative meetings will be held to review discipline reports and plan for consistent application of policies and procedures among schools.

ACTIONS & RESOURCES TO MEET CHALLENGE 3A1	
Core Program	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand implementation of the <i>Why Try?</i> program at the elementary level 	Amount Budgeted: \$1,000 Source: Local Timeline: Fall 2007
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand the <i>Olweus</i> Bullying program to include two additional elementary schools. 	Amount Budgeted: \$12,000 Source: SS/HS Grant Timeline: 2007-2008

ACTIONS & RESOURCES TO MEET CHALLENGE 3A1	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distribute the updated Discipline Procedures Manual to all administrators. The manual contains all policies, guidelines, and procedures related to the disciplinary process in SCPS. 	Amount Budgeted: \$0 Source: Administrator Time Timeline: August 2007
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand involvement of Learning Support Team (LST) staff to students having behavior problems 	Amount Budgeted: \$0 Source: LST Time Timeline: 2007-2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand in-school response to elementary misbehaviors requiring removal from the classroom by reconfiguring staff (GES;PAE;WES) 	Amount Budgeted: \$0 Source: Local Timeline: 2007-2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convene monthly meetings of Deans to review and discuss the discipline reports 	Amount Budgeted: \$0 Source: Staff Time Timeline: 2007-2008
Materials, Supplies & Equipment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distribute materials to parents regarding discipline policies and procedures. 	Amount Budgeted: \$500 Source: Local Timeline: 2007-2008 <i>* Duplicated Reference</i>

We are challenged to decrease the bus suspensions in grades 6-8.

In order to meet this challenge, bus drivers will receive in-service training on dealing with discipline issues. Referrals will be monitored to ensure that all drivers are consistently implementing the bus discipline procedures. Transportation brochures will be reviewed with students and parent/guardians at the opening of school. Bus aides will be provided on special education buses. Staff will accompany some bus drivers having difficulty managing their students to temporarily help establish safe and appropriate bus behaviors.

ACTIONS & RESOURCES TO MEET CHALLENGE 3A2	
Staffing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate the use of volunteer bus aides where needed 	Amount Budgeted: \$0 Source: Community Service Timeline: 2007-2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involve Learning Support Team (LST) staff with students having behavior problems 	Amount Budgeted: \$0 Source: LST Time Timeline: 2007-2008
Core Program and Interventions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assign the monitoring of all bus referrals on a monthly basis to ensure bus drives are consistently implementing agreed upon bus procedures 	Amount Budgeted: \$0 Source: Staff Time Timeline: 2007-2008

ACTIONS & RESOURCES TO MEET CHALLENGE 3A2	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand PBIS practices to include bus drivers 	Amount Budgeted: \$15,000 Source: SS/HS Timeline: 2007-2008 <i>*Duplicate Reference</i>
Professional Development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide bus driver training to include gang information, PBIS Incentives, bus discipline procedures, strategies for assuring the safety and comfort of the riders and drivers 	Amount Budgeted: \$ 2,100 Source: Local Timeline: 2007-2008
Materials, Supplies & Equipment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distribute materials to parents regarding transportation policies and procedures. 	Amount Budgeted: \$500 Source: Local Timeline: 2007-2008 <i>*Duplicate Reference</i>

