

I.D.vii

Schools that Are Safe and Drug-Free, and Conducive to Learning

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.

NCLB requires states to identify persistently dangerous schools. In Maryland, 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 (2½%) 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. Schools are placed into “persistently dangerous” status in a given school year based on their suspension data in the prior year. **Note:** Information associated with Safe Schools is also included in Part II, Additional Federal and State Reporting Requirements and Attachment 11: Title IV Part A, Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities.

Table 7.1: Number of Persistently Dangerous Schools						
	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009
# of Schools	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 7.2: Probationary Status Schools			
School*	9/30/2008 Enrollment	# of Suspensions and Expulsions	Percentage of Enrollment
NONE			

Table 7.3: Schools Meeting the 2½ Percent Criteria for the First Time			
School*	9/30/2008 Enrollment	# of Suspensions and Expulsions	Percentage of Enrollment
NONE			

Table 7.4: Elementary Schools with Suspension Rates Exceeding Identified Limits					
	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009
	Number With a Suspension Rate that Exceeded 18%	Number With a Suspension Rate that Exceeded 18%	Number With a Suspension Rate that Exceeded 16%	Number With a Suspension Rate that Exceeded 14%	Number With a Suspension Rate that Exceeded 12%
# of Schools	1	0	0	0	0

Table 7.5: Identified Schools That Have Not Implemented PBIS			
School*	School year in which the suspension rate was exceeded	Provide reason for noncompliance	Provide a timeline for compliance
NONE			

A. Response to Examination of Persistently Dangerous Schools Data (Table 7.1 – 7.5)

- Where first-time schools are 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?
- **Response: N/A**

Table 7.6 Incidents of Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation				
	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009
Number of Incidents	61	27	37	35

B. Response to Examination of Data on Incidents of Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation (Table 7.6)

Annually, local school systems are required to report incidents of bullying, harassment, or intimidation as mandated by the Safe Schools Reporting Act of 2005.¹

1. Bullying, harassment, and intimidation are the exception rather than the rule at Somerset County Public Schools.

a. Data

- Bullying, harassment, and intimidation incidents for 08-09 are 43% less than those in 05-06.
- Specifically, there were 61 incidents of bullying, harassment, or intimidation reported via the report forms in the 05-06 school year compared to 27 incidents during the 06-07 school year, 37 during the 07-08 school year, and 35 during the 2008-2009 school year. Following a decrease of more than 50% of reported incidents in 06-07, a reported incidents increase of 33% in 07-08, and a small decrease of 5% in 08-09, there remains a 43% overall decrease from 05-06 to 08-09.
- Referrals were also reduced by half from 06-07 to 08-09 (187 to 96).
- The majority of the referrals (68%) were categorized as “harassment” in 06-07; these dropped to 49% in 07-08 and 47% in 08-09.
- Males represented 3/4ths (74%) of all referrals.

a. Explanation: Increasing administrator, teacher, staff, student, and parent awareness of bullying, harassment, and intimidation as well as the serious harm caused to the victim by looking the other way, forced a review of behaviors and targeted training that in turn enabled positive change.

Specific descriptions are:

<i>CATEGORY</i>	<i>PROGRAMS OR PROCEDURES</i>	<i>FUNDING SOURCE AND COST</i>
Procedure	Revision of Bullying, Harassment, and Intimidation Policy with Reporting Procedures Put in Place	Source: Staff Time Cost: \$0
Training	Awareness Training with Administrators	Source: Staff Time Cost: \$0
	Awareness Training with All Staff	
Information Sessions and Guidance	Training Occurred with All Students	Source: Staff Time Cost: \$0
Information Distribution	Brochures Sent Home to All Parents	Source: Local Cost: \$100
Materials	Olweus Curriculum	Source: SS/HS Grant Cost: \$1,276
Training	Prevention and Response Training through Olweus in three (3) Sites (MSP, PAE,SIS)	Source: SS/HS Grant Cost: \$3,200

¹ Section 7-424 of the Education Article of the Annotated Code.

2. Multiple methods of communication and training to increase staff, parents, and students awareness of the Bullying, Harassment, and Intimidation Form are used.

<i>CATEGORY</i>	<i>METHODS</i>	<i>FUNDING SOURCE AND COST</i>
Internal Distribution	Forms distributed to Administrators at Opening A&S	Source: Staff Time Cost: \$0
Training	Policies and Forms Reviewed with Deans and VPs at Deans' Monthly Meeting Policies, Procedures, and Forms Reviewed with New Teachers and Substitutes at Orientation	Source: Staff Time Cost: \$0 Source: Local Cost: \$24,600
Information Sessions	Policy and procedures shared with bus drivers' during in-service	Source: Local Cost: \$2,100
Information Sessions and Guidance	Training Occurred with All Students through Counselors	Source: Staff Time Cost: \$0
External Information Distribution	Brochures Sent Home to All Parents Policy Is Included in the Students' Agendas and Staff Handbooks	Source: Local Cost: Absorbed in Local Office Supplies Budget
Electronic Access	Policy and Forms Are Posted on SCPS Website	Source: Staff Time Cost: \$0
Monitoring	Principals Ensure that All Staff Are Aware of Policy during Opening Staff Meeting. Principal Verification Form Is Completed.	Source: Staff Time Cost: \$0

Table 7.7: Number of Suspensions/Expulsions for Sexual Harassment, Harassment, and Bullying						
Offense	Sexual Harassment		Harassment		Bullying	TOTAL
2003-2004	10		8			
2004-2005	18		30			
2005-2006	13		3		7	
2006-2007	14		22		13	
2007-2008	6		7		8	21
2008-2009	8		8		6	22

C. Results of Examination of Suspension and Expulsion Data for Sexual Harassment, Harassment, and Bullying (Table 7.7):

1. System-wide strategies that are being used to prevent/reduce suspensions and expulsions for sexual harassment, harassment, and bullying include climate based strategies, training, increased communication among stakeholders, mentoring, parent involvement, and direct instruction.

a. Data

- 06-07: 49 suspensions; 07-08: 21 suspensions; and 08-09: 22 suspensions
- The number of suspensions due to bullying, harassment, or sexual harassment has decreased by more than 50% over the last three years.

b. Strategies for Prevention and Reduction

<i>CATEGORY</i>	<i>PREVENTION AND REDUCTION STRATEGIES</i>	<i>FUNDING SOURCE AND COST</i>
Climate Based Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention & Supports) Strategies • Reinforcement of school rules • Incentives for positive behavior • Reviewing of data to include location • Consistency in discipline consequences across all disciplinarians • Parental awareness & support 	Source: SS/HS Cost: \$7,753
Training-Consultants	Student and Parent Summits (Providing Participants with Skills, Information, and Support to Make Good Decisions)	Source: SS/HS Cost: \$7,600
	Explicit, repeated, and clear	Source: Staff Time

<i>CATEGORY</i>	<i>PREVENTION AND REDUCTION STRATEGIES</i>	<i>FUNDING SOURCE AND COST</i>
Communication	communication of policies and procedures to all stakeholders	Cost: \$0
Mentoring	Mentoring of Elementary and Middle Students by High School Students	Source: Mentoring Grant Cost: \$39,732
Parent Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent Involvement Opportunities Expanded • Volunteer Program Expanded 	Source: Staff Time Cost: \$0
Instruction	Implementation of Cyber Bullying Program	Source: Staff Time Cost: Local

Table 7.8: Number of Students Suspended - In School - by Race/Ethnicity and Gender (Unduplicated Count)

School Year	Enrollment	African American		American Indian/Alaskan Native		Asian		Hispanic		White		Male		Female	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
2006 - 2007	495	308	62.2	2	0.4			5	1	180	36	304	61	191	38.6
2007 - 2008	467	283	60.6	1	0.2			13	3	170	36	321	69	146	31.3
2008 - 2009	483	309	63.9	0	0	0	0	16	3.3	158	32.7	321	66.5	162	33.5

Table 7.9: Number of Students Suspended - Out of School - by Race/Ethnicity and Gender (Unduplicated Count)

School Year	Enrollment	African American		American Indian/Alaska Native		Asian		Hispanic		White		Male		Female	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
2005 - 2006	516	318	61.6					10	2	188	36	322	62	194	37.6
2006 - 2007	478	300	62.8					9	2	169	35	322	67	156	32.6
2007 - 2008	410	257	62.7	1	0.2			9	2	143	35	288	70	122	29.8
2008 - 2009	381	244	64	1	0.26	0	0	8	2.1	128	33.6	256	67.2	125	32.8

Table 7.10: In-School and Out-of-School Suspensions by Most Common Offense Category

School Year	In-School Suspensions			Out-of-School Suspensions		
	#1	#2	#3	#1	#2	#3
	Classroom Disruption	Disrespect	Insubordination	Disrespect	Fighting	Classroom Disruption
2007-2008	Classroom Disruption	Disrespect	Insubordination	Disrespect	Fighting	Classroom Disruption
2008-2009	Classroom Disruption	Disrespect	Inciting/Participating in Disturbance	Disrespect	Fighting	Disturbance

D. Results Based on the Examination of Suspension Data (Tables 7.8 - 7.10):

1. Diverse system-wide strategies are being used to prevent/reduce suspensions.

a. Data

On Gender Differences

- Male students continue to be suspended at a much higher rate than females; 67.2% received an out of school suspension compared to 32.8 % females during the 2008-2009; in school data is very similar: 63.9% males compared to 33.5% females

On Racial Differences

- 64% of the out of school suspensions were African American students compared with percentages of 33.6% White and 2.1% Hispanic.
- While SCPS suspension numbers have continued to decrease from 478 in 2006-2007 to 381 in 2008-2009, the percentage of suspensions among African American students compared to the whole has increased by 1.2%. In 2006-2007 African American made up 62.8% of the total suspensions; White student suspensions made up 35.4%, and Hispanic 1.9% of the total suspension. In 2008-2009 African Americans made up 64%, White students 33.6%, and Hispanic 2.1% .
- Suspensions among the Hispanic students have been a constant around 2% of the total number of out of school suspensions.

On Common Offenses

- “Classroom Disruption” and “Disrespect” continue to be the most common offense category for in school suspensions.
- “Disrespect” and “Fighting” continue to be the most common offense category for out of school suspensions

b. Strategies for Prevention and Reduction

Strategies are described in the following chart:

<i>CATEGORY</i>	<i>PREVENTION AND REDUCTION STRATEGIES</i>	<i>FUNDING SOURCE AND COST</i>
One to One Mentoring Program	Pair students at risk of expulsion or suspension with student mentors	Source: Staff Time Cost: \$0
Student Activities	Expose students to positive behavior models through character education	Source: Local Cost: \$305,643
Programs	Engage students in school activities such as clubs, to increase student valuing of being present in school	Source: Local Cost: 120,918
Student Support Teams	Involve suspended or at risk of suspension students in <i>Second Step</i> , <i>Why Try</i> , and counseling groups	Source: Local Cost: \$140,939
Program	Provide intensive case management for referred students	Source: Local Cost: 311,414
Training	Encourage positive student behavior through PBIS (Note: PBIS is fully implemented in 6 of 8 schools)	Source: SS/HS Cost: \$12,097 Source: Local Cost: \$10,000
	Investigate Staff Training in Cultural Proficiency	Source: Staff Time Cost: \$0

2. A commitment has been made by the system to overcome challenges that block student access to the learning environment of the classroom .

a. Challenges include:

- Parents do not appear to understand the importance of students coming to school and being prepared to learn
- Many students are experiencing chaotic situations at home and in the community making their transition to different expected behaviors in the schools and classrooms difficult.
- Staff are not fully trained in awareness and skills for interacting with students of various socio economic and racial classes.
- A consistent use of the discipline flowchart among all staff to address student infractions by keeping the consequence as close as possible to the event is a challenge.

b. Strategies to Overcome Challenges

- Providing parents with information and guidance on the importance of their children coming to school and being prepared to learn.
- Recognizing the chaos at home and in the community that has a large impact on a significant number of students and providing supportive transitions to school expected behaviors.
- Providing sensitivity and awareness training for staff on interacting with students of various socio economic and racial classes.
- Monitoring each staff’s consistent use of the discipline flowchart to address student infractions keeping the consequence as close as possible to the event.

<i>CATEGORY</i>	<i>PLAN S TO OVERCOME CHALLENGE</i>	<i>FUNDING SOURCE AND COST</i>
Collaboration	Continue to review data at monthly VP/Dean of Student meetings	Source: Staff Time Cost: \$0
Program	Implement a Character Education program as a school wide program rather than through individual classroom setting	Source: Staff Time Cost: \$0
Training	Explore and begin cultural proficiency training opportunities for staff	Source: Staff Time Cost: \$0
Communication	Increase educational guidance to staff and parents on “ways to help students be successful” via county and school newsletter	Source: Staff Time Cost: \$0
Program	Provide counseling groups based on individual school discipline data through counselors and Learning Support Specialists	Source: Staff Time Cost: \$0

The Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) requires that each local school system provide a coordinated program of pupil services for all students (13.A.05.05.01.A)^{2, 3, 4} and that the program of pupil services focus on the health, personal, interpersonal, academic, and career development of students (13A.05.05.01B).

E. Results of Examination of Programs and Services Coordinated with Community Mental Health Providers and Agencies to Support Students with Emotional and Behavioral Needs

Somerset County Public Schools maintains an active collaboration with county agencies on both a formal and informal basis in order to provide timely and effective support to students with emotional and behavioral needs.

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been signed with community mental health organizations to provide school based mental health services to our students.
- Mental health providers are members of SS/HS Steering Team that meets monthly and will continue to meet even though the SS/HS grant has concluded.
- A Multi-D forum is used to discuss student and family issues regarding students with emotional and behavior needs.
- A “Somerset Helping Somerset” community based task force was formed, has hosted several community workshops, and plans to continue.
- The local school system collaborates with community mental health providers on a frequent and regular basis as well as in times of emergency.
- The local health department provides anger management and substance use/abuse screenings and/or treatment for students that have been identified through the LST process and or behavior incidents (i.e. fighting).
- In collaboration with the Local Management Board and an external mental health provider, an intensive outpatient program is available for K – 5th grade students.

² COMAR 13A.05.05.03(A). The Pupil Personnel Program is a systematic approach to programs and services that use the resources of the home, school, and community to enhance the social adjustment of students.

³ COMAR 13A.05.05.13(E). Health services provided in school shall be coordinated with other health services within the community.

⁴ COMAR 13A.05.05.06B(12). "Special health needs" means temporary or long-term health problems arising from physical, emotional, or social factors or any combination of these.