

I.D.vii
Schools that are Safe, 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.

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**

Annually, local school systems are required to report incidents of bullying, harassment, or intimidation as mandated by the Safe Schools Reporting Act of 2005.⁵

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

| Table 7.6 Incidents of Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation | | | | 2008-2009 | 2009-2010 |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | 2005-2006 | 2006-2007 | 2007-2008 | | |
| Number of Incidents | 61 | 27 | 37 | 35 | 45 |

⁵ Section 7-424 of the Education Article of the Annotated Code.

1. Bullying, harassment, and intimidation, an age old problem, continues to be an area of progress and challenge that requires more focused attention.

a. Data:

- Bullying, harassment, and intimidation incidents have continued to fluctuate from 2005 to 2010. The difference between 08-09 and 09-10 is an increase of 10 incidents or 28.6% increase. However the difference from 01-06 to 10-11 is a decrease of 16 incidents or a 26.2% decrease.
- Referrals in this area decreased significantly from last year by 10.4 % (96 to 86).

b. Explanation: Policies and procedures have been revised to alert and equip school staff, students, and parents on the prevalence of bullying, harassment, or intimidation issues. Reporting Forms and age appropriate brochures were made available and sent home to every parent with the beginning of the year documents. Review bullying, harassment, and intimidation of data and regular discussions have occurred at Monthly Dean’s/VP meetings. Positive Behavior Intervention & Supports (PBIS) programs are operating in 6 of the 8 schools and school counselors have conducted numerous counseling groups addressing bullying and peer issues. Lastly, a school bullying proof resource guide has been developed and approved to assist school staff with appropriate strategies to address this issue.

| CATEGORY | STRATEGY, PROGRAM, OR PRACTICE AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT | FUNDING SOURCE AND COST |
|--|---|---|
| Procedure | Revision of Bullying, Harassment, and Intimidation Policy with Reporting Procedures put in Place | Source: Staff Time Cost: \$0 |
| Training | Required Awareness Training with Administrators and Staff | Source: Staff Time Cost: \$0 |
| Information Sessions and Guidance | Training Occurred with All Students | Source: Staff Time Cost: \$0 |
| Information Distribution | Brochures and Forms Sent Home to All Parents | Source: Local and Safe and Drug Free Schools Cost: \$600 |
| DATA | PBIS | Source: State Fiscal Stabilization Cost: \$5000 |
| Information Distribution and Character Development | Core Essentials Character Education Program Materials Distributed to All School Staffs for Classrooms Use | Source: Safe & Drug Free Schools Grant Cost: \$149 |

2. Multiple methods of communication and training to increase students, staff, and parents’ awareness of Bullying, harassment, and intimidation are used.

| CATEGORY | STRATEGY, PROGRAM, OR PRACTICE AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT | FUNDING SOURCE AND COST |
|------------------------------------|---|---|
| Training and Internal Distribution | Policies and Forms Reviewed with Administrators, Deans and VPs at Deans' Monthly Meeting Policies, Procedures, and Forms Reviewed with New Teachers and Substitutes at Orientation | Source: Staff Time Cost: \$0 |
| Information Sessions | Policy, Procedures, and Strategies Shared with Bus Drivers' and Cafeteria Workers during In-service | Source: Staff Time Cost: \$0 |
| Information Sessions and Guidance | Training Occurred with All Students through Counselors | Source: Staff Time Cost: \$0 |
| External Information Distribution | Brochures and reporting forms Sent Home to All Parents Policy Is Included in the Students' Agendas and Staff Handbooks | Source: Local Cost: \$600 Source: Staff Time Cost: \$0 |
| 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 and Sent to the Student Services Department. | Source: Staff Time Cost: \$0 |

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

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 | 23 |
| 2006-2007 | 14 | 22 | 13 | 49 |
| 2007-2008 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 21 |
| 2008-2009 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 24 |
| 2009-2010 | 6 | 10 | 16 | 32 |

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 communications among school staffs and stakeholders, mentoring, parent involvement, and direct instruction.

a. Data

- While there has been an increase in the number of suspensions for harassment and bullying, there was a decrease from 8 to 6 of suspensions for sexual harassment from 2008 to 2009.
- The uniforms initiative piloted at two elementary schools resulted in a decrease in the number of bullying, harassment, or intimidation suspensions at one school and an overall decrease in the number of suspensions for the other school.

b. Strategies for Prevention and Reduction

| <i>CATEGORY</i> | <i>STRATEGY, PROGRAM, OR PRACTICE AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT</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 • School uniforms was piloted at two elementary schools with the hopes of expanding to all elementary schools and the middle school | Source: State Fiscal Stabilization (stimulus) and Safe and Drug Free Schools grant Cost: \$8,300 |

| | | |
|--------------------|--|---|
| | during next year | |
| Communication | Explicit, repeated, and clear communication of policies and procedures to all stakeholders | Source: Staff Time Cost: \$0 |
| Mentoring | Mentoring of Elementary and Middle Students by High School Students/Mentoring of students by school staff | Source: Connect Ed Mentoring grant Cost: \$28,282 |
| Parent Involvement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parent Involvement Opportunities Expanded – Parent Involvement Coordinator Volunteer Program Expanded Regularly scheduled Coffee and Conversation with the Superintendent at each school | Source: ARRA (stimulus) Cost: \$38,777 Source: Staff Time Cost: \$0 Source: Staff Time Cost: \$0 |
| Instruction | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of Cyber Bullying Program <i>Net Smart</i> booklet Core Essentials Character Education materials and morning announcement shared with school staffs Expanded Student leadership academy participants and instruction School Counseling groups were conducted on bullying, respect, and other peer related issues | Source: MSDE provided materials Cost: \$0 Source: Safe & Drug Free Schools Grant Cost: \$185 Source: Staff time Cost: \$0 Source: Staff time Cost: \$0 |

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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 | 36.4 | 304 | 61.4 | 191 | 38.6 |
| 2007-2008 | 467 | 283 | 60.6 | 1 | 0.2 | | | 13 | 2.8 | 170 | 36.4 | 321 | 68.7 | 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 |
| 2009-2010 | 454 | 261 | 57.5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 16 | 3.5 | 177 | 39 | 303 | 66.7 | 151 | 33.3 |

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

| School Year | Enrollment | African American | | American Indian/Alaskan Native | | Asian | | Hispanic | | White | | Male | | Female | |
|-------------|------------|------------------|------|--------------------------------|-----|-------|-----|----------|-----|-------|------|------|------|--------|------|
| | | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| 2005-2006 | 516 | 318 | 61.6 | | | | | 10 | 1.9 | 188 | 36.4 | 322 | 62.4 | 194 | 37.6 |
| 2006-2007 | 478 | 300 | 62.8 | | | | | 9 | 1.9 | 169 | 35.4 | 322 | 67.4 | 156 | 32.6 |
| 2007-2008 | 410 | 257 | 62.7 | 1 | 0.2 | | | 9 | 2.2 | 143 | 34.9 | 288 | 70.2 | 122 | 29.8 |
| 2008-2009 | 381 | 244 | 64 | 1 | 0 | - | - | 8 | 2 | 128 | 34 | 256 | 67 | 125 | 33 |
| 2009-2010 | 369 | 230 | 62.3 | 1 | 0.3 | 1 | 0.3 | 12 | 3.3 | 125 | 33.8 | 250 | 67.8 | 119 | 32.2 |

“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 |
| 2007-2008 | Classroom Disruption | Disrespect | Insubordination | Disrespect | Fighting | Classroom Disruption |
| 2008-2009 | Classroom Disruption | Disrespect | Inciting/Participation in Disturbance | Disrespect | Fighting | Disturbance |
| 2009-2010 | Classroom Disruption | Disrespect | Tardiness | Disrespect | Insubordination | Fighting |

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

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

a. Data

- Somerset continues to see a steady decrease in the number of out of school suspensions. Specifically, there was a 7% decrease from the 2007-2008 to the 2008-2009 school with a 3 % decrease from 2008-2009 to 2009-2010.
- Male students continue to be suspended at a much higher rate than female students; 67.8% males received an out school suspension as compared to 32.2% females.
- “Classroom Disruption” and “Disrespect” continue to be the most common offense category for in school suspensions.
- “Disrespect” , “Insubordination”, and “fighting” are the most common offense categories for out of school suspensions.

b. Strategies for Prevention and Reduction

| CATEGORY | STRATEGY, PROGRAM, OR PRACTICE AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT | FUNDING SOURCE AND COST |
|------------------------------|--|---|
| One to One Mentoring | Pair students at risk of suspension or expulsion with student and adult mentors | Source: Connect Ed Mentoring Grant and Staff Time Cost: \$28,882 |
| Program | Expose students to positive behavior models through character education | Source: Safe & Drug Free Schools and Staff time Cost: \$185 |
| Student Activities | Engage students in school activities such as clubs, to increase student valuing of being present in school | Source: Stars Grant Cost: \$5,874 |
| Programs | Involve suspended or at risk of suspension students in <i>Second Step</i> , <i>Why Try</i> , and counseling groups | Source: Local Cost: \$17,609 |
| Student Support Teams | Provide intensive case management for referred students and support to parents utilizing Counselors, Learning Support Specialists and the Parent Involvement Coordinator. | Source: Local and ARRA (stimulus) Cost: \$772,507 |
| Parental Involvement/Support | Developed relationships healthy relationships with parents; Provided parents with support and community resources for their students and families utilizing Counselors, Learning Support Specialists and the Parent Involvement Coordinator. | Source: Local and ARRA (stimulus) Cost: \$772,507 |
| Program | Encourage positive student behavior through PBIS (Note: PBIS is fully implemented in 6 of 8 schools) | Source: State Fiscal Stabilization (stimulus) and Safe and Drug Free Schools Grant Cost: \$8,300 |
| Training | Provided the Administrative staff both central office and school based with cultural proficiency activities " <i>Building community and Combating Hate</i> "; Continued to investigate systemic staff training in Cultural Proficiency | Source: Staff Time Cost: \$0 |
| Program | Partnered with local community based mental health agency to develop a Type III school that provided students with the academic and mental health support that was needed | Source: IOP Grant Cost: \$104,980 |

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

a. Challenges include:

- A significant number of parents are having difficulties managing their children and ensuring they are prepared for the educational setting.
- Many students are experiencing chaotic situations at home and in the community making their transition to expected school and classroom behavior 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
- Working collaboratively with community agencies and providing supportive transitions to school expected behaviors
- Providing *Beyond Diversity* training for staff to assist with interacting with students of various socio economic and racial classes
- Monitoring each staff's consistent use of the discipline flowchart to address student infractions and reviewing the data during monthly Deans/VP meetings
- Utilizing the Learning Support Team process to engage parents of struggling learners by developing support for the student & families
- Enhancing PBIS program and incentives to encourage students to follow established rules/guidelines

| CATEGORY | STRATEGY, PROGRAM, OR PRACTICE AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT | FUNDING SOURCE AND COST |
|-----------------|---|---------------------------------|
| Collaboration | Continue to review data at monthly VP/Dean of Student meetings | Source: Staff Time Cost: \$0 |
| Collaboration | Monitor the use of the discipline flowchart in each school for consistency | Source: Staff Time Cost: \$0 |
| Collaboration | Continue to meet with community agencies review services offered to students and families | Source: Staff Time Cost: \$0 |

| | | |
|---------------|--|---|
| Training | Begin Beyond Diversity training | Source: State Fiscal Stabilization (stimulus) Cost: \$50,000 |
| 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 |

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

1. 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. Each school in Somerset County has a Learning Support Team (LST) which consists of the school counselor, school nurse, Learning Support Specialist (LSS), an administrator and teachers.
- b. Team meetings are scheduled with parents to discuss the construction of a service plan for the student. This plan may include referrals to mental health agencies, health department as well as other community agencies.
- c. Parents are assisted in connecting with the outside agencies as well as school based programs.
- d. A memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been signed with community mental health organizations to provide school based mental health services to our students.
- e. A Multi-D forum is used to discuss student and family issues regarding students with emotional and behavior needs.
- f. Students who participate in mental health counseling can be seen during the school day at the school once appropriate written permission is received.
- g. In collaboration with the Local Management Board and an external mental health provider, an Intensive Outpatient program (Type III School) is available for K – 5th grade students.

The Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 13.A.08.06.01-02 requires that each local school system ensure that any elementary school with a suspension rate⁶ of 10% or higher implement Positive

⁶ The calculation for suspensions is an offender rate: The unduplicated number of suspended students divided by Sept. 30 student enrollment.

Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) or another behavior management system. If a school meeting that target has already been trained in PBIS or another behavior management system, the local school system, in collaboration with the Maryland State Department of Education, will ensure that additional training is provided to expand the school's capacity to intervene. In addition, COMAR 13.A.08.06.01-02 requires that each local school system ensure that ALL schools with a habitual truancy rate⁷ of 6% (SY 2009/2010) implement PBIS or another behavior management system. This percentage decreases to 4% in SY 2010/2011; 2% in SY 2011/2012 and 1% in SY 2012/2013.

F. PBIS is an integral part of the school culture in 6 of the 8 SCPS schools.

- Each school team attends a training workshop during the summer at WorWic Community College. This 2 day workshop is coordinated among the 3 lower shore counties.
- Funds for PBIS incentives are built into grants when appropriate and minimal funds are available in the local budget.
- All schools identify a PBIS coach for their school. The PBIS coach responsibility does not reside with one particular position.
- Supervision for the overall county program WAS provided by one of the school coaches who was formerly the coordinator of a grant that originally brought the PBIS program training to Somerset County 9 years ago. She serves as a Learning Support Specialist for one of the high schools and oversight has transferred to the Student Services division.

G. Based on the Examination of Suspension data:

1. **Identify how many elementary schools have a suspension rate of 10% or higher, how many of those schools have already been formally trained in PBIS, and how many have not.**

Response: No elementary schools have a suspension rate of 10% or higher.

H. Based on the examination of Habitual Truancy¹⁰ data:

1. **Identify how many schools have a habitual truancy rate of 6% or higher, how many of those schools have already been formally trained in PBIS, and how many have not.**

No schools have a Habitual Truant rate of 6%.

2. **For those schools previously trained, please describe strategies to support/improve the implementation of the PBIS framework in those schools. Finally, please project the number of schools that will require New Team PBIS Training in the summer of 2011, based on this regulation.**

Response: **NA**

⁷ Habitually truant means a student that meets all of the following criteria: (a) The student was age 5 through 20 during the school year; (b) The student was in membership in a school for 91 or more days; and (c) The student was unlawfully absent from school for more than 20% of the days in membership.

3. Please identify other district level strategies to address the needs of schools that meet the target for Truancy. Do they need additional training? Are there Technical Assistance needs to ensure fidelity of implementation?

Each school's PBIS plan includes an attendance component. Learning Support Teams "case manage" students with attendance issues and link them to services. In addition, Somerset County Public Schools participates in the Truancy Reduction Pilot Program for the First Judicial Circuit.