

DISCOVERING WHAT WORKS:
SUCCESSFUL STRATEGIES FOR
ADDRESSING DISPROPORTIONALITY IN
SPECIAL EDUCATION AND DISCIPLINE

Disproportionality LEA Technical Assistance Forum
February 27, 2013
Indianapolis, IN

Facilitated by Renae Azziz, Ed.S., NCSP
Virtuoso Education Consulting
www.virtuosoed.com

**HYPOTHESES ON THE CAUSES OF
DISPROPORTIONALITY**

► It is important to understand that there is no one over-riding cause of racial and ethnic disparities in special education or school discipline. Rather, our best knowledge suggests that a number of factors contribute:

- Test bias
- Unequal Educational Opportunity/Achievement
- Special Education Eligibility Process
- Classroom Behavior Management and Office Processing
- Poverty
- Cultural Issues

**STRATEGIES IDENTIFIED TO ADDRESS
DISPROPORTIONALITY**

1. Prevention and Early Intervention(RTI)
2. Improved Behavior Management (PBIS)
3. Improved Pre-referral Intervention Teaming
4. Improved Assessment Techniques
5. Family and Community Involvement
6. Training in Culturally Responsive Practices

QUESTIONS FOR THE PANELIST

► Post your questions to the panel at:
www.todaysmeet.com/DisproPanel

PANELISTS COMMENTS

► Each panelist will focus on:

- Trends observed
- Strategies implemented
- Outcomes observed
- Barriers Faced
- Positive Impact

TOPIC I: IMPROVED BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

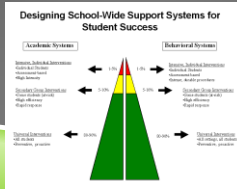
TRENDS OBSERVED



STRATEGY IMPLEMENTED

Positive **B**ehavioral **I**nterventions & **S**upport (PBIS)

- Began at Fielers in 2006
- School-wide Proactive Approach for addressing desired behaviors
- Provides intervention for students who need additional reinforcement
- Provides support for students and staff to maximize instructional time
- Data-driven decision-making tailored to meet the unique needs of your school



GETTING PBIS STARTED

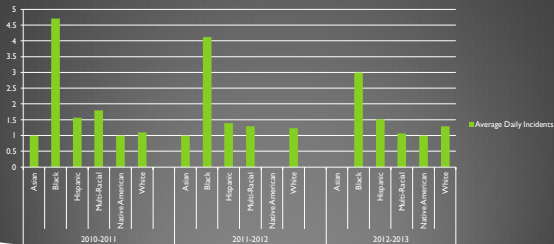
- ▶ Create a Universal Team and School Coaches
- ▶ Pick 3-4 Core Expectations/Rules
- ▶ Create a Behavioral Expectations Matrix
- ▶ Make a T-chart for teacher-managed vs. office-managed discipline issues
- ▶ Plan Rewards and celebrations systems
- ▶ Plan school-wide training for all staff and all students

PIELER PIRATES' CODE

	Hallways	Bathroom	Playground	Cafeteria	Bus	Assemblies	Library & Computer Lab	Emergency Situations	Classroom
Be Respectful Listen and follow directions of all adults at all times	Walk on the right side in the track Give others their privacy Silent Zone	Silent Zone Give others their privacy	Follow the playground rules Share and take turns Use proper language Be a good sport if you win or lose	Silent Zone during the drive and late part of lunch, table-top zone in between Tapie your hand for permission to leave your seat Keep your hands on your cutlery and belongings Listen and respect others	Listen to the bus driver at all times Keep yourself and your things in your seat Use appropriate language Use a whisper voice	Listen silently Assault Inappropriately	Silent Zone Silent your turn Be polite Follow the computer code and library rules Listen and respect others to adult directions	Listen carefully to directions Follow your teacher's directions at all times	Follow your teacher's directions at all times These all go on last and all students with respect Use kind words
Be Responsible Handle the right choices to do your job correctly	Pick up after yourself and others Go directly to your destination Wash your hands Keep pencils, water, and other clean	Go when your class goes In and Out Wash your hands	Dress appropriately for the weather Stay when you feel the need Keep pencils, water, and other clean in a single file line in number order	Time when you "do what you do best" Put your hands in the class basket in the morning Clean up your area Use nice table manners	Time your things when you enter on the sidewalk Walk directly to your assigned bus	Follow adult directions Be a good participant	Use appropriate computer programs and websites Follow your turn to everyone's safe	Accept responsibility for doing your part to everyone's safe Do your homework and turn it in	Do your work Give your personal best Do your homework and turn it in
Be Safe Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself Walk slowly and safely at all times	Stay in your own personal space Face forward Walk slowly and safely at all times	Report messes and hazards	Stay safety for the rules of the game	Stay as your assigned table Walk to that up in a line, order in station	Line up single file at bus door Keep all objects inside the bus at all times Stay in your seat at all times	Keep your feet still Stay in your own personal space	Stay in your own personal space Walk at all times Line up in number order	Follow all directions silently Be silent	Keep your hands, feet, and objects to yourself

OUTCOMES OBSERVED

Average Daily Incidents



REFLECTIONS

- ▶ Improved Culture of School
- ▶ Improved ISTEP Scores
- ▶ PBIS Teams Problem Solve on a regular basis and provide ongoing intervention and support for staff and students
- ▶ Article/Book studies provide opportunities for discussion and reflection on increasing cultural responsiveness
- ▶ Continuous Improvement is embedded in culture of the school
- ▶ Increasing number of children with behavioral and emotional needs
- ▶ Increasing transient population
- ▶ Increasing number of families with socioeconomic challenges

CONTACT INFO

- ▶ Lisa Patrick, Fieler Elementary School Principal
- ▶ lpattick@mvsck12.in.us
- ▶ Christine Kerr, Fieler PBIS Coach and 2nd Grade Teacher
- ▶ ckerr@mvsck12.in.us
- ▶ www.pbis.org
- ▶ www.pbisillinois.org
- ▶ www.indiana.edu/~pbisin/about/
- ▶ www.pbisworld.com

TOPIC 2: ALTERNATIVES TO SUSPENSIONS

TRENDS OBSERVED

- ▶ Difficulty with traditional forms of discipline
 - ▶ "Repeat Offenders" or "Frequent Flyers"
 - ▶ Removal from class, followed by return to class with no restoration.
- ▶ Fundamental Principle:
 - ▶ Human beings are happier, more cooperative and productive, and more likely to make positive changes in their behavior when those in positions of authority do things with them (restorative) rather than to them (punitive) or for them (permissive).

International Institute for Restorative Practice, 2010

STRATEGY IMPLEMENTED: THE 5 ESSENTIAL PRACTICES

1. Affective Statements
2. Restorative Questions
3. Small Impromptu Conferences
4. Proactive Circles
5. Responsive Circles

SOCIAL DISCIPLINE WINDOW:



OUTCOMES OBSERVED

- ▶ Over the course of the past 4 years, with the addition of more proactive interventions, (i.e. PBIS, Restorative Practices, and consistent data monitoring) decreases in discipline numbers across the district have been observed.
- ▶ Approximately:
 - ▶ 20% decrease in Out of School Suspensions
 - ▶ 50% decrease in In School Suspensions
 - ▶ 70% decrease in Expulsions

REFLECTIONS

- ▶ **Positive Gains:**
 - ▶ ISS, OSS, Expulsion rates are trending down
 - ▶ Teachers & Staff are utilizing more proactive interventions
 - ▶ Positive Cultural Climate Changes
 - ▶ Better Monitoring of Data and more dialogue driven by data
 - ▶ More focus on building positive relationships with students
- ▶ **Barriers Faced:**
 - ▶ Disproportionality
 - ▶ Decreases, but still needs improvement
 - ▶ “Buy-in” / Philosophical Differences

CONTACT INFO

Janell M. Carswell
District Restorative Manager
East Allen County Schools
jcarswell@eacs.k12.in.us
(260) 446-0100 ext. 3149

TOPIC 3: PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION

CONSULTING LLC

TRENDS OBSERVED

Although FWCS had the following in place...

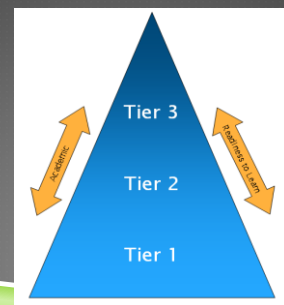
- Clearly defined district mission and goals
- Academic initiatives that fueled growth
- Consistent rules and consequences
- A behavioral data management system
- A pyramid of interventions at each building

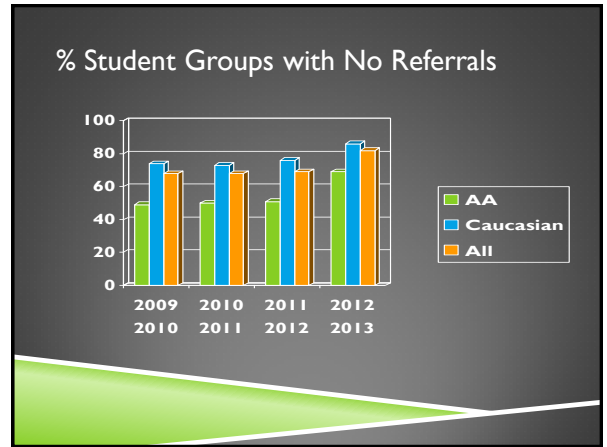
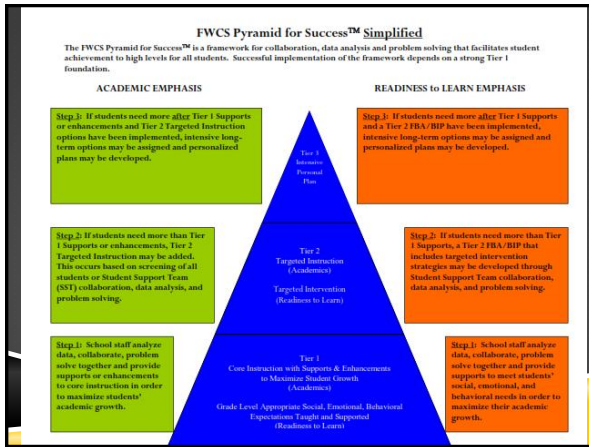
...Special Education Disproportionality continued.

STRATEGY IMPLEMENTED

- The FWCS Pyramid for Success™ was introduced to address students' Academic and Readiness to Learn needs identified from data.
- Tiers of the Readiness to Learn side of the Pyramid were designed to include CR-PBIS components.
- The FWCS Code of Conduct was revised to align with the Pyramid including CR-PBIS.

FWCS Pyramid for Success™ integrates Academic and Readiness to Learn Emphases





REFLECTIONS

- ▶ District-wide and individual behavioral expectations focus on “what we want students to do.”
- ▶ Consequences have been replaced with “corrective responses” that emphasize instruction.

- ▶ The saying “old habits die hard” includes habits of the mind. (mindset)
- ▶ The pace of change is slow in a large district.
- ▶ A strong academic focus put other emphases on the back burner.

CONTACT INFO

- ▶ Sandra Sunderland-Willis
- ▶ Director Pyramid for Success™
- ▶ Ft. Wayne Community Schools
- ▶ 1200 South Clinton St.
- ▶ Ft. Wayne, IN. 46802
- ▶ sandra.sunderland-willis@fwcs.k12.in.us
- ▶ 260-467-2100

TOPIC 4:
IMPROVED ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUES

VIRTUOSO EDUCATION CONSULTING LLC
www.virtuosoed.com

TRENDS OBSERVED

- ▶ Statistical “Disproportionate Representation” of White students in the Autism Spectrum Disorder category.

STRATEGY IMPLEMENTED

- ▶ Disproportionate Representation Self Assessment Survey.
- ▶ Review of current policies, procedures and practices for identifying students for special education and related services in the areas of:
 - Curriculum and Instruction
 - Child Find/Identification
 - Initial Evaluation and Re-Evaluation
 - Review of Existing Evaluation Data
 - Eligibility Determination

SHIFT



OUTCOMES OBSERVED



REFLECTIONS

Positive Gains

- ▶ System analysis
- ▶ Increased awareness
- ▶ Increased Personnel
- ▶ Targeted Professional Development/Academic & Behavioral
- ▶ Increased Non Violent Crisis Prevention Trainers
- ▶ Increased technology usage

Barriers Faced

- ▶ Part B Reduction of 15% for CEIS – Coordinated Early Intervening Services

CONTACT INFO

Megan Ahlers, MS
Director of Exceptional Learners
MSD Pike Township
mahlers@pike.k12.in.us

TOPIC 5:
FAMILY AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

TRENDS OBSERVED

- ▶ Over-representation of males
- ▶ Historical over-representation of students receiving FRL
- ▶ Recent under-representation of ELL students

STRATEGY IMPLEMENTED

- ▶ Family Engagement
 - ▶ Sought ways to increase involvement of families not typically participating
- ▶ Family Surveys
- ▶ Involvement at non-academic events very high but less involvement at academic events
- ▶ Seek ways to communicate with families in English and Spanish
- ▶ PD sessions—ALL staff
 - ▶ Working with students and families living in poverty
 - ▶ Sought community participants as panelists
 - ▶ Working with Latino students and families
 - ▶ Gender-based

OUTCOMES OBSERVED

- ▶ Continued over-representation of males
- ▶ FRL status now proportional

BARRIERS

- ▶ Unexpected change in administrative leadership
- ▶ Communication barrier in the past
- ▶ Home visits conducted for variety of reasons (Attendance, illness/medical, discipline, academic, other concerns) to involve parents and create working relationships between home and school

REFLECTIONS

- ▶ 99% attendance at fall conferences
- ▶ Every family who requested/needed an interpreter had one through our school staff, district Parent Liaisons, and community volunteers
- ▶ Earlier communication in discipline process using a classroom behavior referral
- ▶ Added parent representative to PBIS team
- ▶ Re-instated PTO
- ▶ Increased communication about PBIS through parent newsletter
- ▶ Everything that gets sent home is in English and Spanish, including ODRs
- ▶ Increased family involvement in events in our school through additional programming and outreach activities

CONTACT INFO

- ▶ Mrs. Sydell Gant
- ▶ Principal
- ▶ Taylorsville Elementary School
- ▶ **The School with Heart!**
- ▶ PO Box 277
- ▶ Taylorsville, IN 47280
- ▶ 812-526-5448
- ▶ gantsy@bcsc.k12.in.us

TOPIC 6: TRAINING IN CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE PRACTICES

VIRTUOSO EDUCATION CONSULTING LLC

TRENDS OBSERVED

- ▶ African American Special Education students are:
 - ▶ 3.67 time more likely to be Suspended or Expelled
 - ▶ 2.03 times more likely to be identified with a Cognitive Disability
- ▶ Academic interventions and focus on core curriculum have had a positive impact on behavior data.
- ▶ Schools are still in planning year related to CR-PBIS so we expect to see positive data trends beginning next year with implementation.

STRATEGIES IMPLEMENTED

- ▶ Corporation-wide Response to Intervention:
 - ▶ 3-5 year plan for implementation
 - ▶ Academic Interventions being piloted in elementary grades
 - ▶ Behavior Interventions being implemented
 - ▶ School Based PD on Culturally Responsive Practices
 - ▶ Use of the Intercultural Developmental Inventory in some buildings
 - ▶ Family Engagement a critical pieces of the approach
- ▶ Culturally Responsive PBIS:
 - ▶ Deliberate focus on culture
 - ▶ Building-level support to take conversations deeper
 - ▶ All 39 EVSC schools to implement CR-PBIS

OUTCOMES OBSERVED

- ▶ More focus on school-wide discipline strategies that are strength based instead of deficit-based.
- ▶ More focus on looking at academic and discipline data in tandem.
- ▶ Schools are beginning to see the impact of culture and want strategies to address cultural incongruences.

REFLECTIONS

▶ Positive Gains

- ⊙ Strategic, focused, district-wide approach to reducing disproportionality (CEIS/RTI/CRPBIS).
- ⊙ Implementation of a new behavior module in our data system to better track behavior data.
- ⊙ Schools are already making changes and seeing results.

▶ Barriers Faced

- ⊙ District remains in disproportionality.
- ⊙ Data reporting is still not where we want it to be.
- ⊙ Teachers/administrators still largely see students as needing to change, rather than themselves also needing to change.

CONTACT INFO

Dionne A. Blue, Ph.D.
Chief Diversity Officer
Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation
Dionne.blue@evsc.k12.in.us
812-435-8451

QUESTIONS FOR THE PANELIST

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THANK YOU



Virtuoso Education Consulting

Renaë Azziz

Website: www.virtuosoed.com

Email: razziz@virtuosoed.com