



Advancing School Health in a Time of Reform

Behavioral Health Alternatives to Suspension

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#CAKidsHealth14

2 minute conversation

Why is this topic important to me and my school/community?

Where is my school/district with regards to implementing alternatives to suspension?

The Path to ATS

1982: Joe Clark, Eastside High

Early 1990's: **Zero tolerance** movement

1994: **Federal Gun Free Schools Act** (Feinstein)

2003: "Out of school placement should be limited to the most egregious circumstances"

2004: Renewal of **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act**

2008: "**Zero tolerance policies have failed** to achieve goals of effective school discipline"

2011: **National consensus document on school discipline** created

2012: Five related Bills in CA (AB 1729, 2537, SB 1088)

2013: **AB 420** gains momentum

California Suspensions

Table 1: Statewide Suspensions

Statewide Suspensions	2011-12	2012-13	Number Difference	Percent Difference
Total Suspensions	709,596	609,471	-100,125	-14.1%
Unduplicated Students Suspended	366,629	329,142	-37,487	-10.2%

Table 2: Statewide Expulsions

Statewide Expulsions	2011-12	2012-13	Number Difference	Percent Difference
Total Expulsions	9,758	8,562	-1,196	-12.3%
Unduplicated Students Expelled	9,553	8,264	-1,289	-13.5%

Table 3: Statewide Defiance Suspensions/Expulsions

Defiance Suspension/Expulsions	2011-12	2012-13	Number Difference	Percent Difference
Total Defiance Suspensions	341,112	259,875	-81,237	-23.8%
Defiance Expulsions	608	495	-113	-18.6%


Source: California Department of Ed, 2014

What is “Willful” Defiance?

"Disrupted school activities or otherwise willfully defied the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, administrators, school officials, or other school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties."

Source: California Education Code, California Department of Education, 2014

How has California progressed?

- Statewide  in suspensions over last 3 years
- AB 1729 emphasizes alternatives over school removal
- AB 2537 allows principal more discretion for “mandatory” suspension/expulsion
- SB 1088 prohibits a school from denying enrollment/readmission because of contact with the juvenile justice system
- AB 1909 affects rights of foster youth who are suspended
- AB 420 would limit the use of “willful defiance”
- CDE now releasing detailed data related to willful defiance

Source: California Department of Education, 2014; Ed Source, 2013; Black Parallel School Board, 2013)

How will LCFF and LCAP impact Alternative to Suspension opportunities?

- **Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF)** calculates how local districts will be funded for the next several years, based on size and "unduplicated students" (Free/reduced lunch, English Language Learners, Foster Youth)
- **Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP)** is the strategic plan the district must develop on how to distribute the funds. It serves as the accountability measure for the expenditures
- All districts must hold multiple **community forums** for stakeholders to weigh in about the LCAP
- LCAP's MUST address **"school climate"** including suspension/expulsion data
- Provides momentum for funding to be restored or established for programs promoting school climate and pupil engagement

Federal Support for Alternatives to Suspension

New federal recommendations on classroom discipline issued by Obama administration and Attorney General Eric Holder

- Promote use of evidence-based tiered approaches (PBIS), SEL, other school climate improvement practices
- Promote collaboration with community-based mental health services
- School staff trained in classroom management, conflict resolution, de-escalation, routine discipline practices
- Clear distinctions about school security responsibilities
- Remove students from classroom "only as last resort"
- Provide opportunities for school security to build relationships with students
- Gather data on suspensions/expulsions/police contact and demographics

Source: U.S. Department of Education, 2014

Small group discussion

1. Did you know about changes in state policy? About suspensions/ expulsions in the LCAP?
2. What is my district's policy about suspensions/expulsions?
3. Where can I find data about my district?



Where are some promising models of Alternatives to Suspension?

West Contra Costa Unified School District

Transformed School

De Anza High School




Background Information


- 1030 students
- 61% speak another language than English at home, 15% still classified as ELD
- 60% Free and Reduced lunch



The Transformation Begins...

- Turnaround model
 - New principal
 - Could not rehire more than 50% of former staff
 - School Improvement Grant (SIG)
 - Extended school day
 - Extra collaboration time
 - Additional personnel
 - Safe and Supportive Schools (S3 Grant)
 - Additional personnel
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Transformation Continues...

- Health Center
 - Trauma in the classroom PD
 - LGBTQ training for school staff
 - Stronger collaboration between school and health center
 - Restorative Practices Introduced
 - All teachers attended 2 RJ PD
 - Mandatory attendance at both
 - Individuals trained in RJ practice begin program at DA
 - Security staff is a crucial role
 - Health Center replaced conflict mediation with RJ forms
 - One security staff became RJ coordinator at 2 HS sites
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What Makes De Anza Work?

- **Administrative Support and Vision**
 - Principal mandates teachers to allow students to keep their appointments at the HC
 - Teachers and key staff trained in how to diffuse potentially disruptive behaviors in class
 - Changed school culture from punitive to positive
- **Health Center**
 - Works closely with teachers and school staff
 - Provides trainings to school staff
 - Provides support to staff in a variety of areas
 - Liaisons with various individuals on school campus to coordinate RJ interventions

San Francisco Unified School District

Drug and Alcohol Referral Policy and Brief Intervention Services

Source: SFUSD School Health Programs Department, www.healthiersf.org
Center for Applied Research Solutions, www.cars-rp.org

SFUSD Policy

SFUSD is a drug and alcohol free district. **A student MAY be suspended and/or expelled for possessing, using, selling*, furnishing or being under the influence of alcohol or drugs, and the school administration is required to report such conduct to the police within one school day of a suspension or expulsion for such offenses. Unlawful possession of drugs (other than a first offense for no more than an ounce of marijuana) requires an expulsion referral unless the principal determines that expulsion is inappropriate given the particular circumstances.** *The sale of a controlled substance at school or at a school sponsored activity off school grounds requires a mandatory suspension and expulsion referral.

In addition to these disciplinary consequences, SFUSD would like to assist students by providing them with support services (Brief Intervention Sessions) that can address potential substance abuse issues.

What is BIS?

“Brief Intervention is a mandatory counseling type intervention consisting of 2-3 one-on-one sessions that focus on why students are use drugs. It supports them to set goals and make better informed choices relating to their drug use.”

Appropriate Referrals to BIS

Who is BIS intended for?

- Students experiencing few problems with their drug use
- Have low levels of dependence
- Have a short history of drug use
- Have stable backgrounds
- Are unsure or ambivalent about changing their drug use
- Were caught using/high/drunk on campus for the *first* time

Who is BIS NOT for?

- Chronic users/ addicts
- Students who were caught *selling* on campus
- Students who have been caught high/drunk multiple times
- Students who have already been through BIS

New Haven Unified School District

Restorative Practices

James Logan High School

Source: Sandy Vaughn, LCSW, PPSC & Heather Graham, MSW, PPSC

What is Restorative Practices?

“The fundamental premise of restorative practices is that people are happier, more cooperative and productive, and more likely to make positive changes when those in authority do things *with* them, rather than *to* them or *for* them.”

-International Institute of Restorative Practices

Pyramid of Interventions at JLHS

TIER 1: Prevention & Promotion

- Community Building Activities
- Teacher/staff training
- Positive discipline and clear behavioral expectations
- Proactive circles
- Restorative dialogue

TIERS 2 & 3: Early and Intensive Intervention

- Harm circles
- Restorative conferences
- Conflict mediation
- Re-entry circles
- Ongoing mental health support and case management

How did JLHS's approach differ?

1. "School within a school" pilot
2. Restorative Practices Coordinator position
3. School Climate trainings, including "Intro to RP"
4. Created cohorts (Teacher, Admin, Counselor, Clerical/CSTs)
5. "School within a school" pilot continues
6. Created Student Groups
7. Alternatives to Suspension pilot

Implementation thoughts from the JLHS team

"In this system, it doesn't serve students to be honest. If you lie, you *might* get in trouble. If you tell the truth, you're *guaranteed* to get in trouble"

--Sandy Vaughn, District Social Worker

"Kids who rise to the level of a harm circle are your kids who are traumatized and need mental health support. If you're going to do RP, you have to have mental health services at the ready"

--Heather Graham, RP Coordinator



Four steps to successful ATS at your site

1. Administrative will
2. Teacher training and buy-in
3. Role shift for key staff
4. Involvement of school health staff

Next Steps for my school...

1. Use "Alternatives to Suspension Mini-Action Plan" to think about overall goals
2. Use "Specific Intervention Action Plan" to detail implementation



Resources

California School-Based HealthAlliance

www.schoolhealthcenters.org

Fix School Discipline www.fixschooldiscipline.org

ACE's Too High www.cestoohigh.org

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Parting Thoughts...

I hate racial discrimination most intensely and all its manifestations. I have fought all my life; I fight now, and will do so until the end of my days. Even although I now happen to be tried by one, whose opinion I hold in high esteem, I detest most violently the set-up that surrounds me here. It makes me feel that I am a Black man in a White man's court. This should not be I should feel perfectly at ease and at home with the assurance that I am being tried by a fellow South African, who does not regard me as an inferior, entitled to a special type of justice. –Nelson Mandela, 1962