DEVELOPING AN INCLUSIVE SCHOOL CLIMATE: PART 1

LRE Training Module
Office of Special Education Programs
New Jersey Department of Education
2015-2016 School Year
Welcome! What You Need Before We Begin

- Before we get started, make sure you have copies of the following handouts for your reference:
  - Handout 1: PowerPoint
  - Handout 2: Think-Pair-Share
  - Handout 3: New Jersey School Climate Survey
  - Fact Sheet
  - Handout 4: NJ School Climate Survey Staff
  - Handout 5: NJ School Climate Survey Student
  - Handout 6: NJ School Climate Survey Parent
Workshop Goals

• To identify examples of school climate factors, practices, programs and strategies associated with inclusion;

• To understand the importance of supporting a school-based, multidisciplinary leadership team to establish and implement a goal-driven plan to improve the school’s inclusive climate;

• To identify the domains of the NJDOE School Climate Survey;
Workshop Goals

• To identify a tiered system of support such as Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports, designed to meet the needs of all students in the school.
What is SWIFT?

School wide Integrated Framework for Transformation
The SWIFT domains and features are the building blocks of effective inclusive education. Research shows it takes administrative leadership, a multi-tiered system of support, family and community partnerships, an integrated educational framework, and inclusive policies and practices to effectively meet the needs of ALL students, including students with disabilities and those with the most extensive needs.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If NJDOE</th>
<th>Then</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provides training and technical assistance on proactive techniques that reinforce a positive behavior approach and a culture in the general education classroom that is responsive in support of all learners</td>
<td>...more schools will implement a school-wide, positive behavioral support system</td>
<td>...students with behavioral or emotional difficulties will be supported with interventions that are targeted and evidence-based</td>
<td>...an increased percentage of students with IEPs will benefit from education in general education settings for a greater percentage of their school day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...LEAs will become better equipped at implementing the School Climate Survey leading to greater accuracy of results</td>
<td>...removal of students with IEPs from classrooms and schools for disciplinary reasons will be reduced</td>
<td>...students will experience greater success in utilizing research-proven des-escalation techniques</td>
<td>...referrals to the office for all students will decrease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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Educating Students with Disabilities

• Educating students with disabilities together with typically developing peers has been a principle objective since the 1997 Reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

• New Jersey Administrative Code (N.J.A.C. 6A:14) requires that students with disabilities are educated in the least restrictive environment.

• An essential element is the provision that district boards of education ensure that, *to the maximum extent appropriate, a student with a disability is educated with children who are not disabled* (N.J.A.C. 6A:14-4.2(a)1). Federal and New Jersey courts have upheld and reinforced this provision.
Developing an Inclusive School Climate

• As the trend to educate students with disabilities in inclusive settings has increased, the need to support the academic, social, and emotional success of students with disabilities has become even more critical.

• Through the lens of school climate, NJOSEP is able to focus on creating a positive learning environment where all students better understand one another, feel safe and supported, have positive relationships, and are more respectful and accepting of each other.
Inclusion

• Inclusion refers to the provision of quality instruction through an appropriate delivery system and relevant supports to students with disabilities so they have access to the general education classroom and curriculum to achieve positive educational outcomes.

• There is growing agreement that inclusion should not be conceptualized simply as the place where teaching and learning occurs.
  
  • (McLeskey, Landers, Williamson, & Hoppey, 2012; Soukup, Wehmeyer, Bashinski, & Bovaird, 2007; Zigmun, 2003)
Think, Pair, Share

You have been invited to a dinner party by a friend and this friend has invited twelve other friends.

**Scenario (1):** You arrive and he shows you the wine, the cheese and says “mingle and have fun”, and then walks away.

**Scenario (2):** You arrive and he introduces you to the other guests and while he is doing so, he tells each person what they have in common with each other, so as to break the ice.
Think, Pair, Share

• Which of the two scenarios will cause you to stay at the party longer and why?

• Assume you are the host of the party, What steps could you take to make your guests feel welcome and included?

• Now think of your school, what steps could you take at your school to make your staff and students feel included?
Definition of School Climate

• Quality and character of school life;

• Based on patterns of students’, parents’, and school personnel’s experience of school life;

• Reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures.

• (NJDOE, Office of Student Support Services)
Inclusion, School Climate, and Disability Awareness

- Schools successfully involved in inclusion foster a shared vision, create structures for staff collaboration, encourage professional development, make use of data-based decision making, have leaders that lead by example, promote learning communities, and value sustainability.
  

- A culture of collaboration, administrative support, commitment to the success of every student and the availability of programs/activities for all students are critical factors for an inclusive school climate.
  
  (Burstein, Sears, Wilcoxen, Cabello, & Spagna, 2004; Friend & Cook, 2003; Miller & Schlein, 1999; Pivik, McComas, & LaFlamme, 2002)

- Co-teaching models that combine the expertise of special and general educators can benefit all students.
  
  (Volonino & Zigmond, 2007; Zigmond & Baker, 1995)
NJDOE School Climate Survey (NJSCS)

• Was developed in 2012 and revised in 2014.
• It is designed to collect and analyze objective information from diverse school populations for reinforcing positive conditions and addressing vulnerabilities in local conditions for learning.
• Four different surveys
  • Grades 3-5 (students)
  • Grades 6-12 (students)
  • Staff
  • Parents
• It is a free resource. Additional materials to support administration and analysis of the survey are available here:

http://www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/behavior/njscs
NJDOE School Climate Survey (NJSCS)

*The Survey is comprised of 8 Domains:*

- Physical Environment;
- Teaching and Learning Capability;
- Morale in the School Community,
- Quality of Relationships;
- Level of Parental Support and Engagement;
- Safety Situation;
- Emotional Environment, and;
- Perception of Administration Support.
NJDOE School Climate Survey (NJSCS)

Let’s take a look at information from the survey:
http://www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/behavior/njscs/NJSCS_Admin_Guide.pdf

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Question Number</th>
<th>Question Item</th>
<th>Total Respondents</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Mean Rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1a</td>
<td>The length of the school day is about right</td>
<td>4590</td>
<td>926</td>
<td>917</td>
<td>916</td>
<td>894</td>
<td>937</td>
<td>3.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>1b</td>
<td>I often do not have enough time to get from one class to the next</td>
<td>4593</td>
<td>913</td>
<td>895</td>
<td>970</td>
<td>934</td>
<td>881</td>
<td>2.99</td>
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<tr>
<td>1c</td>
<td>My school is kept clean</td>
<td>4588</td>
<td>934</td>
<td>911</td>
<td>959</td>
<td>912</td>
<td>872</td>
<td>2.97</td>
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<tr>
<td>1d</td>
<td>I like my school building</td>
<td>4584</td>
<td>896</td>
<td>906</td>
<td>920</td>
<td>991</td>
<td>871</td>
<td>3.01</td>
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Strong Positive School Culture & Integrated Educational Framework

- Everyone feels like they belong!
- School staff, families and students collaborate to realize the school vision, “All means All.”
- Happy caring community.
- Values everyone’s needs.
- Students with disabilities are in the same educational setting as students their age.
- Special educators teach alongside their peers.
- All students have access to extracurricular activities.
- Culturally responsive schools and districts include families on committees.
- Curriculum reinforce the contributions of a variety of cultures.

https://www.youtube.com/v/vO0jwSDdqb4
Moving Forward

“Stepping onto a brand-new path is difficult…”

Maya Angelou
NJ PBSIS is a collaboration between the New Jersey Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs and The Boggs Center, Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. NJ PBSIS is funded through the I.D.E.A. 2004, Part B Funds.
PBSIS
Positive Behavior Supports in Schools

• The purpose of PBSIS is to build capacity to support the social-behavioral needs of all students, including students with disabilities. Including:
  
  • a) Increasing available instructional time;
  
  • b) Encouraging and supporting pro-social student behavior;
  
  • c) Using a continuum of function-based problem solving to address behavior and conduct issues; and
  
  • d) Creating environments conducive to including students with disabilities and behavior support needs.

  • http://www.njpbs.org/
School-Wide Positive Behavior Support

• Is a multi-tiered intervention model.
• Offers a continuum of intervention to address all students’ needs.
• Emphasizes shifting the point of intervention from reactive to proactive.
• Based on an extensive body of evidence.
  • http://www.njpbs.org/
The PBSIS framework is comprised of three tiers that include a continuum of interventions to address climate, culture and social conduct in school settings:

• **Tier 1: Universal Interventions**

• **Tier 2: Secondary Interventions**

• **Tier 3: Tertiary Interventions**
All staff will:
- Use consistent expectations
- Increase giving positive feedback
- Consistently apply the Office Conduct Referral procedures
- Effectively redirect occurrences of behavior
- Use function based problem solving to constructively reflect on behavior incidents and independently problem solve to address emerging behavior issues

Comprehensive individualized planning using function based problem solving to result in students being successful in general education programs

Early intervention for at risk students:
- Articulate at-risk indicators
- Link office conduct decisions & intervention planning
- Use function based problem solving to guide intervention development

Universal Intervention Tier

Secondary Intervention Tier

Tertiary Intervention Tier
PBSIS

• Research suggests that schools with a positive social climate are associated with fewer occurrences of conduct problems and better student performance outcomes (e.g., achievement and attendance).

• While a positive school climate benefits all students, students with individualized behavior needs particularly benefit when school environments are positive, welcoming, and supportive of individual needs.
Building An Inclusive Climate in Schools
Thank you!

Please feel free to contact the NJDOE, Office of Special Education, should you have any questions or concerns.
References


References


http://allkindsofkinds.org/
http://www.njpbs.org/
http://gsappweb.rutgers.edu/facstaff/dynamic/profile.php?ID=954