Enhancing Equity in School Discipline 1:

Using Discipline Data to Assess and Address Disproportionality

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Handouts: http://www.pbis.org

Overview of Today’s Session

1. Describe the challenge of disproportionality in school discipline
2. Share an intervention approach for enhancing equity in school discipline
3. Guide you through a process for using data to:
   1. Assess levels of disproportionality
   2. Identify causes and solutions
   3. Plan to monitor progress

Disproportionality in School Discipline (Losen et al., 2015)

Figure 1. Elementary and Secondary Out-of-school Suspension Rates by Subgroup, 2011-12
Addressing Common Questions

“Isn’t it all really about poverty?”

- Poverty plays a role, but racial disproportionality remains, even when controlling for poverty
  - American Psychological Association, 2008
  - Skiba et al., 2005
  - Wallace et al., 2008

Addressing Common Questions

“Aren’t Black boys just more violent?”

- No evidence of different base rates of behavior for any subgroups
  - Bradshaw et al., 2010
  - Losen & Skiba, 2010
  - Skiba et al., 2014

Addressing Common Questions

“Are you saying that all teachers are racist?”

- No! Our research indicates that disproportionality comes from unconscious bias – that we’re not even aware of.
  - Banaji & Greenwald, 2013
  - Greenwald & Pettigrew, 2014
  - van den Bergh et al., 2010

A few assumptions…

- We are aware of the extent of disproportionality
- We are committed to enhancing equity in school discipline
- This work is uncomfortable
- There are a wide range of approaches that could work to enhance equity
Starting Questions:
How much do you agree?

1. I am **aware** of my personal biases.
2. I am **concerned** about the consequences of bias in education.
3. I have **effective strategies** for reducing bias in educational decisions.

(Devine et al., 2012)

A 5-point Intervention Approach to Enhance Equity in School Discipline

**1. Why a focus on engaging academic instruction?**

**1. Use engaging academic instruction to reduce the achievement gap**

**2. Implement a behavior framework that is preventive, multi-tiered, and culturally responsive**

**3. Collect, use, and report disaggregated student discipline data**

**4. Develop policies with accountability for disciplinary equity**

**5. Teach neutralizing routines for vulnerable decision points**

http://www.pbis.org/school/equity-pbis

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**5-point Intervention Approach**

1. Use engaging **academic instruction** to reduce the achievement gap
2. Implement a **behavior framework** that is preventive, multi-tiered, and culturally responsive
3. Collect, use, and report **disaggregated student discipline data**
4. Develop **policies** with accountability for disciplinary equity
5. Teach **neutralizing routines** for vulnerable decision points

http://www.pbis.org/school/equity-pbis
What do we mean by engaging academic instruction?

- Explicit instruction
- High rates of opportunities to respond
- Quality performance feedback
- Progress monitoring and data-based decision making

(Hattie, 2009)

Effects of Engaging Instruction on the Achievement Gap

Tigard-Tualatin School District (Chaparro, Helton, & Sadler, in press)

2. Why start with a foundation of SWPBIS?

1. Proactive, instructional approach *may* prevent problem behavior and exposure to biased responses to problem behavior
2. Increasing positive student-teacher interactions *may* enhance relationships to prevent challenges
3. More objective referral and discipline procedures *may* reduce subjectivity and influence of cultural bias
4. Professional development *may* provide teachers with more instructional responses

(Greflund et al., 2014)
How inviting are we for all?

Which SWPBIS Features are Most Related to Equity? (Tobin & Vincent, 2011)

- Examined change in Black-White Relative Risk Index for suspensions in 46 schools
- Two key predictors of decreased disproportionality:
  - Regular use of data for decision making
  - Implementation of classroom SWPBIS systems

Which features predicted decreased disproportionality?

- Expected behaviors defined clearly
- Problem behaviors defined clearly
- Expected behaviors taught
- Expected behaviors acknowledged regularly
- Consistent consequences
- CW procedures consistent with SW systems
- Options exist for instruction
- Instruction/materials match student ability
- High rates of academic success
- Access to assistance and coaching
- Transitions are efficient and orderly

Culturally Responsive SWPBIS Implementation

- Ensure equitable access to praise and acknowledgment systems
- Develop and revise school-wide systems with active involvement of families, students, and the community
- Use regular student and family surveys to assess acceptability and fit
Student Input & Satisfaction Survey

PBIS Cultural Responsiveness Companion

- Aligned directly with SWPBIS Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) Tier I Scale
  - Identifies SWPBIS critical feature
  - Identifies cultural responsiveness concept
  - Provides non-examples, examples, activities, and resources

PBIS Cultural Responsiveness Companion

- http://tinyurl.com/ncn8fmf
3. Using disaggregated data to assess and address equity

- Disproportionality Data Guide

http://www.pbis.org/school/equity-pbis

4. Implement policies with accountability for equity

- How **could** policy work fit into enhancing equity?
  - Could highlight a common priority
  - Could reduce effects of explicit bias
  - Could enable implementation of other aspects of equity interventions
  - Could reduce use of discriminatory practices

What does **not work** in policy

- Enacting policies that nobody knows about
- Enacting policies that don’t change practice
- Policies without accountability for implementation

**Equity Policy Recommendations**

- **Include a Specific Commitment to Equity**
  - Create mission statements that include equity
  - Enact hiring preferences for equitable discipline

- **Install Effective Practices**
  - Require clear, objective school discipline procedures
  - Support implementation of proactive, positive approaches to discipline
  - Replace exclusionary practices with instructional ones

- **Create Accountability for Efforts**
  - Create teams and procedures to enhance equity
  - Share disproportionality data regularly
  - Build equity outcomes into evaluations
5. How can we reduce implicit bias in our decision making?

Stay tuned (next session…)

**Discipline Data Systems Needs**

- **Required** features:
  - Consistent entry of ODR data and student race/ethnicity
  - School enrollment by race/ethnicity
  - Instantaneous access for school teams (not just district teams)
  - Capability to disaggregate ODRs and patterns by race/ethnicity

- **Recommended** features:
  - Standardized ODR forms with a range of fields (e.g., location, time of day, consequence)
  - Clear definitions of problem behaviors
  - Clear guidance in discipline procedures (e.g., office vs. staff-managed)
  - Instantaneous graphing capability
  - Capability to show graphs by race/ethnicity
  - Automatic calculation of disproportionality data

- The School-Wide Information System (SWIS) meets these criteria
  - Available at [http://www.pbisapps.org](http://www.pbisapps.org)
Worksheet Activity

- What data sources will you be using?
- Options:
  - School-level data systems (e.g., SWIS)
    - Which school(s)?
  - State-level data systems
  - Nothing? Use the SWIS demo account data

Discipline Data System Example

- SWIS Demo Data: [http://www.pbisapps.org](http://www.pbisapps.org)

General Problem Solving Model

1. Problem Identification
   - Is there a problem?
2. Problem Analysis
   - Why is it happening?
3. Plan Implementation
   - What should be done?
4. Plan Evaluation
   - Is the plan working?
Step 1: Problem Identification

Is there a problem?

1. Problem Identification

2. Problem Analysis

3. Plan

4. Plan Evaluation

Step 1: Problem Identification

- General problem-solving approach:
  - Use valid and reliable metrics that assess outcomes of concern
  - Quantify the difference between current outcomes and expected outcomes (goals)

- For disproportionality:
  - Compare outcomes (e.g., discipline rates) across racial/ethnic groups (e.g., Black vs. White)
  - Quantify these differences
  - Multiple metrics are recommended (IDEA Data Center, 2014)

Step 1: Problem Identification

Common Metrics

- **Risk Index**
  - Percent of a group that receives an ODR or suspension (i.e., risk for that outcome)

- **Risk Ratio**
  - Risk index for one group divided by risk index for comparison group (usually White students)
  - 1.0 is equal risk
  - > 1.0 is overrepresentation
  - < 1.0 is underrepresentation

### Common Metrics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th># of Enrolled Students</th>
<th># of Students With Referrals</th>
<th>% of Students Within Ethnicity With Referrals</th>
<th>Risk Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Native</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40.00%</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>47.62%</td>
<td>0.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>60.00%</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>82.11%</td>
<td>0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>60.00%</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>64.71%</td>
<td>0.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Listed</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-racial</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>66.67%</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals:</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>337</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Risk Index of Target Group

Risk Index of Latino/a Students

= Risk Index of Comparison Group

Risk Index of White Students

= 1.27
Step 1: Problem Identification
Common Metrics

- **Risk Ratio**
  - Risk index for one group divided by risk index for comparison group (usually White students)
  - 1.0 is equal risk
  - > 1.0 is overrepresentation
  - < 1.0 is underrepresentation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Index of Target Group</th>
<th>Risk Index of Comparison Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.82</td>
<td>.65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Available for free at [http://goo.gl/mNcgVS](http://goo.gl/mNcgVS)

Step 1: Problem Identification
Procedure

1. Select metrics to use
2. Calculate metrics and compare to goals
   - Previous years from same school
   - Local or national norms
     - 2011-2012 U.S. public schools using SWIS with at least 10 Black and 10 White students
       - Median Black-White ODR risk ratio = 1.84
         (25th percentile = 1.38)
   - Logical criteria
     - U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)
       - Disparate impact criterion (goal risk ratio range between .80 and 1.25)

School Example: Rainie Middle School

School-wide Information System (SWIS)

- Metric: risk ratio
- Goal: All groups with a risk ratio < 1.25

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White 48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black 31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino/a 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian 10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STEPS

- Calculate risk indices
- Calculate risk ratios
  - African American = 3.2 (significant)
  - Latino/a = 1.1
Step 1: Worksheet Activity

1. Complete STEP 1 (pp. 1-2)
   1. Select metrics to use
   2. Calculate metrics
   3. Compare to goals
2. Reflect on your data:
   - to what extent is there a problem?
   - How clear are you on these steps?

Step 1: Worksheet Activity

- Share out...
  - How were the steps?
  - What metrics did you select?

Step 2: Problem Analysis

- General problem-solving approach:
  - Identify underlying causes of the problem
  - Focus on variables that can be changed
- For disproportionality:
  - Identify whether disproportionality is consistent across all situations or more pronounced in some situations
  - Assess other causes, such as:
    - Achievement gap
    - Fidelity of implementation of discipline or equity interventions
Identifying Patterns of Explicit vs. Implicit Bias

Explicit Bias (conscious)
- Pattern: Consistent disproportionality across all situations
- Implications: Address through strong policy, regular reporting of data, and accountability for change

Implicit Bias (unconscious)
- Pattern: Peaks and valleys of disproportionality depending on the situation
- Implications: Clarify discipline procedures, provide strategies for decision making

What is a Vulnerable Decision Point (VDP)?
- A specific decision that is more vulnerable to effects of implicit bias
- Two parts:
  - Elements of the situation
  - The person’s decision state (internal state)

Options for Identifying VDPs for Intervention

Levels of specificity:
1. All ODR/suspension decisions (general self-instruction routine)
2. Identify VDPs through national data
3. Use school or district data

National SWIS Data (2011-12)
- 3,026,367 ODRs
- 6,269 schools
- 47 states, plus DC
Office Referrals by Problem Behavior

Subjective problem behavior
- Defiance, Disrespect, Disruption
- Major vs. minor

Non-classroom areas
- Hallways

Afternoons

VDPs from national ODR data

- Subjective problem behavior
  - Defiance, Disrespect, Disruption
  - Major vs. minor
- Non-classroom areas
  - Hallways
- Afternoons

AMBIGUITY
LACK OF CONTACT
FATIGUE
SWIS Drill Down ([www.swis.org](http://www.swis.org))

Add demographic group of interest as a filter (click to “Include in Dataset”).

Click each graph and compare to overall patterns.

### School Example: Rainie Middle School

- Assess PBIS implementation
- TFI indicates successful implementation
- Improve office vs. staff-managed systems
- Improve consequence systems
- SWIS Drill Down for precise problem statement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier 1</th>
<th>Tier 2</th>
<th>Tier 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>Met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino/a</td>
<td>52</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Step 2: Worksheet Activity

1. Complete STEP 2 (pp. 3-4)
   1. Assess PBIS fidelity
   2. Identify vulnerable decision points
   3. Assess achievement gap

   - How clear are you on these steps?

- Share out…
- How were the steps?
- What did you find?
Step 3: Plan Implementation

- **General problem-solving approach:**
  - Use the information from Step 2 (Problem Analysis) to select strategies
  - Create a plan to ensure adequate implementation of the strategies

- **For disproportionality:**
  - No differences from general approach

### Step 3: Plan Implementation Options

- **All issues**
  - Calculate and share disproportionality data regularly

- **Inadequate PBIS implementation**
  - Implement core features of PBIS to establish a foundation of support
  - Clarify ODR definitions and procedures

- **Misunderstandings regarding school-wide expectations**
  - Enhance cultural responsiveness of PBIS with input from families, students, and community

- **Significant academic achievement gap**
  - Use effective academic instruction

- **Disproportionality across all settings (indicating explicit bias)**
  - Enact strong equity policies that include accountability

- **Disproportionality in specific settings (indicating implicit bias)**
  - Teach neutralizing routines for vulnerable decisions

### School Example: Rainie Middle School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Activity Task Analysis</th>
<th>Who</th>
<th>When</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Plan Implementation</td>
<td>Match Plan to Assessment Data</td>
<td>Leadership Team</td>
<td>Next staff meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All Parties Informed</td>
<td>Dr. Stoll</td>
<td>Daily for 2 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plan Matched to Resources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Plan Implementation</td>
<td>a. Plan staff activity/discussion to clarify (a) classroom vs. office managed behaviors, (b) dress code policy, and (c) instructional responses to inappropriate language</td>
<td>Diana and Thomas</td>
<td>One week prior to next staff meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Review ODR procedures with all staff and complete staff activity/discussion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. Provide all staff with reminder to consider instructional alternatives to ODRs “just before lunch” at morning staff announcement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d. Evening meeting to review expectations with students and families</td>
<td>Erika and Lise</td>
<td>Three days after staff meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>e. Regular monitoring and evaluation of 6th grade reading implementation and outcomes, with report to Leadership Team</td>
<td>Jonas</td>
<td>1st and 3rd Friday of each month</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Step 3: Worksheet Activity

1. Complete STEP 3 (pp. 5-6)
   1. Identify strategies to implement
   2. Create a detailed action plan

- How clear are you on these steps?

Share out...

- How were the steps?
- What are you planning...
  - Now?
  - After that?

Step 4: Plan Evaluation

- General problem-solving approach:
  - Assess whether the plan is implemented
  - Calculate metrics (from Step 1) regularly
  - Compare outcomes to predetermined goals

- For disproportionality:
  - Disproportionality metrics may not be as sensitive to rapid change as other measures
  - Consider monthly assessment of implementation and quarterly assessment of disproportionality metrics
  - Avoid using risk indices (will rise throughout year)
Step 4: Plan Evaluation Procedure

1. Identify the time periods for evaluating disproportionality data
2. Assess fidelity of plan implementation
3. Calculate metrics selected in Step 1
4. Compare to the goal determined in Step 1
5. Share results with relevant stakeholders

School Example: Rainie Middle School

- 6th grade team may need a refresher on office vs. staff-managed behaviors

Black-White ODR Risk Ratio

- Revise action plan for next year
- Continue evaluation cycle

Step 3: Worksheet Activity

1. Complete STEP 4 (p. 7)
   1. Identify the time periods for evaluation
   2. (complete later)
   3. (complete later)

How clear are you on these steps?

Step 4: Worksheet Activity

- Share out…
- How were the steps?
- What are your time periods going to be?
Big Ideas

- Disproportionality in school discipline is one of the biggest challenges in education today
- We can use data to assess and monitor how we are doing
  - If you don’t have the data you need at hand, advocate for it
- The same steps we have for solving discipline problems work for disproportionality

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References


