

START on Time!--Safe Transitions and Reduced Tardiness in Secondary Schools

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Presentation 1: Planning Steps (Training for administrators and/or leadership team)

What *START on Time!* Can Do for Your School

Step 1: Understanding the *START on Time!* Procedures

Step 2: Determine Administrative Commitment

Step 3: Establish a Planning Task Force and a Timeline

Step 4: Identify the Problems & Establish Baseline Data

Step 5: Design a Plan to Obtain Staff Commitment

Step 6: Organize for Success

Step 7: Determine Expectations for Students and Design Lessons

Step 8: Determine Expectations for Staff and Prepare a Training Session

Step 9: Prepare for Implementation

Step 10: Monitor & Adjust

A Presentation on Effectiveness (from one school)

Presentation 2: Implementation (Training for the teaching staff)

Topic A: Understand the *START on Time!* Procedures

Topic B: Supervising the Hall and Starting Class on Time

Topic C: Conducting the Sweep

Topic D: Role of Administrative and Security Staff

START on Time!

What *Start on Time!* can Do for Your School

Tardiness

- If infrequent, it is a pretty minor problem
- If frequent, teachers may report that the first four to eight minutes of class is almost a waste of time
- Many schools may have as many as 400, 600, or even a thousand tardy incidents per day
- These incidents result in referrals to the office, which can then overwhelm administrative staff

Poorly Structured Passing Periods Create

- A major loss of instructional momentum
- A high potential for serious misbehavior
- Increased opportunity for fighting, bullying and illegal behavior
- Opportunity for severe misbehavior and minor horseplay in the halls to carry over into classrooms, wasting instructional time

START on Time! is a step-by-step planning tool that can help your staff address all these problems.

Potential results:

Teachers never delay the start of class to deal with tardiness or other misbehaviors from the halls.

Frequency of tardiness is reduced by up to 90%.

Staff increases coordination and orchestration for dealing with misbehavior.

Students who are tardy do not get the benefit of increased social time with peers and are not allowed the opportunity to disrupt classroom instruction by entering class late.

School safety is enhanced.

Helps document staff efforts to maximize safety.

Friendly interactions between adults and students increase, improving school climate.

***START on Time!* may be useful in your school if you are concerned about:**

- Lost class time due to tardiness
- Number of students late to class
- Safety—fighting, harassment, bullying and horseplay in the halls
- Hallway misbehavior carrying over into class
- Liability/Accountability

What does *START on Time!* do?

- Provides step-by-step guidance to a school-based problem solving team about how to adapt the *START on Time!* procedures for your school
- Provides staff training in implementing the procedures
- Provides lesson plans for teaching appropriate and responsible behavior

The *START on Time!* material includes two CD-based video presentations and corresponding print material:

CD #1: *Planning Steps* provides 10 steps that can be used by a leadership team in the school.

CD #2: *Implementation* provides training for the staff. Multiple copies of this CD are included.

The print materials provide outlines, implementation tools, sample documents, sample lessons for students and more.

STEP 1:

Pre-plan (Understanding the Procedures)

WHY STUDENTS ARE LATE:

- Socialization
- No positive incentives
- No immediate consequences
- Lack of supervision
- Lack of hallway flow

CORE of START on Time! are **THREE STAFF GROUPS**, each having very specific responsibilities:

1. Teachers with a class next period
2. Teachers with a planning period
(the “Positive Sweep Team”)
3. Administrator/counselors/security officers
(the “Administrative Team”)

CD # 2: **TRAINING** provides more detailed training for each of the three above groups.

CD # 1: **PLANNING STEPS**, on the other hand, provides information on, among other things:

- Structuring your hallways for success
- Designing lessons that teach students responsible passing period behavior
- Insuring comprehensive supervision of the entire school

TEACHERS WITH A CLASS FOLLOWING PASSING PERIOD

Responsibilities include:

- Greet students at their classroom door
- Supervise students in their classroom
- Supervise the hallway near their classroom
- Intervene in any severe misbehavior and “hand off” the situation to a member of the “Positive Sweep Team”
- Close the classroom door when the passing period ends and begin class immediately
- Allow no hall passes for students during the first ten minutes of class

STAFF MEMBERS WITH A “PREP PERIOD” FOLLOWING PASSING PERIOD

(This is the “Positive Sweep Team” and each member is assigned to a “zone” of supervision. Each zone is covered by one male and one female staff member.)

Responsibilities during passing period include:

- **Circulating** through their designated zone
- **Conducting** the “Positive Sweep” after class begins, gathering students who are in their zone
- **Escorting** tardy students to the “Sweep Room”
- **Supervising** tardy students in writing a note to their parents; completing and turning in tardiness records
- **Returning** students to their classrooms and monitoring their manner of returning to class

(Once its “positive sweep” responsibilities have been completed, this team is free to go about its own business.)

ADMINISTRATORS, COUNSELORS AND SECURITY STAFF (“ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM”)

RESPONSIBILITIES include:

- Having at least one person cover the halls and make contact with members of the “positive sweep” during the passing period and the first five minutes of class
- Taking over, and escorting students who engaged in severe misbehavior to the office and following up on any necessary referral forms or other paper work

START on Time! works because:

- Procedures provide pre-planned and well-defined supervision of all settings during all passing periods.
- Everyone gets the message that the staff places a high value on uninterrupted class time.
- Escorting students denies that time being tardy is used for socializing.
- The consequences for being tardy are more consistent and immediate.
- Late students get less attention by their tardiness.
- Staff can “take over” for classroom teachers in dealing with violations of expectations.
- Many adults are present to assist traffic flow during passing periods.

DRAWBACKS AND BENEFITS

- **Drawback:** Conducting the “positive sweep” requires one to ten minutes of each staff member’s prep time.
- **Benefit:** Teachers never have to stop class to process late students.
- **Benefit:** The school has a calm, respectful, business-like setting.

ACHIEVING DRAMATIC RESULTS

- **START on Time!** procedures must be implemented **DAILY** for **EVERY** passing period.
- Careful planning can create major changes in behavior of students and climate of the school.
- Working through subsequent planning steps will help insure successful implementation.

STEP 6:

Organize for Success

Organize a detailed proposal to present to the administrative team and the staff.

Address key issues that may prevent problems. Consider thinking creatively.

DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF ISSUES/QUESTION:

IS THE LENGTH of passing periods too long, too short, or just right?

- Determine by following a 6th or 9th grader (preferably one of smaller stature) from one end of the building to the other during a typical passing period.

ARE THE BELLS AND CLOCKS organized in a way that is efficient and consistent? If not, try to identify alternatives.

IS THERE A WAY to indicate that the passing period is drawing to close?

- For example, one school plays music for the first four minutes; when the music stops, students and staff know that class will begin in one minute.

SHOULD THERE BE any changes in how students manage materials?

- Do you really need student lockers?
- Could you have double sets of books (each student has one at home and each classroom has a classroom set.)
- Should students be allowed to have bags/backpacks?

DOES THE CURRENT SYSTEM of hall passes need modification?

- Would staff agree not to write passes for the first ten minutes of class?
- Should there be an alternative to a hall pass system?

Use of student planners?

Construction vests?

DESIGN the “zones” of supervision.

- Insure that the entire building is covered.
- Specify potentially problematic areas:

stairwells

blind corners

banks of lockers

restrooms

commons

other

- Use a map of the school to insure that all parts of the school are covered.
- Take a walking tour of the school to check the zones and adjust as necessary.

ARE THERE ANY structural or organizational variables that should be considered or modified?

- Are there any obstacles that reduce traffic flow?
- Could any alternative routes be designed to reduce the number of students in particularly crowded hallways?
- Could a narrow circular or rectangular set of halls be made one-way?

INSURE AN ADEQUATE NUMBER of adults within each zone.

- For the “positive sweep” there needs to be at least one male and one female in each zone for each passing period.
- There needs to be a sufficient number of teachers in each hall during each passing period.

This can be accomplished by having all teachers out at each passing period.

Or, each wing can arrange schedules so that at least a certain number of teachers are out at each passing period.

IDENTIFY IF non-teaching positions will have specific “sweep” assignments.

- Coordinate “sweep teams” with “administrative teams” to insure that all staff members are supported and the lines of communication are established.
- Identify where the “positive sweep” rooms are for each period.

DETERMINE HOW TARDINESS procedures relate to record-keeping for absenteeism.

- When do classroom teachers take attendance and how does that relate to students who are tardy?
- Identify an immediate consequence for students who are tardy.
- We suggest they fill out a form that will be sent to their parents along with a letter from the principal that specifies the consequences for tardiness. A sample is provided on page 16.

Note: If students are required to fill out an envelope, it can save clerical staff time. Random spot checks can be done to reduce the likelihood of students writing an inaccurate address.

STEP 8:

Expectations for Staff

THE PLANNING GROUP should preview the content of CD #2 “Training.”

- If the information is adequate, schedule a time to have staff view and discuss the content of CD #2 “Training.”

Note: Use an LCD projector and external speakers if the video presentation is to be viewed by more than two or three people.

- If the content needs to be revised, prepare your own training session to present to staff.

DEVELOP A WRITTEN SUMMARY of expectations for staff that outlines responsibilities (a sample of which is provided in the written material). This should address:

- Expectations for staff who have a class following the passing period
- Expectations for staff who are on the “positive sweep”
- Expectations for administrative/counseling/security staff

PROVIDE A SET of sample written expectations for staff. This should include:

- Expectations for teachers with a class the following period, (see the sample on page 28)
- Expectations for teachers on the sweep, (see the sample on page 32)
- Expectations for the administrative team (see the sample on page 34)

EXPECTATIONS FOR TEACHERS WITH A CLASS THE FOLLOWING PERIOD

HALLWAYS set the climate of the school.

- If student behavior is chaotic, it affects the first minutes of every class.
- If student behavior is calm and respectful, a disciplined attitude carries over into the classroom.
- All staff have an obligation to assist in setting a respectful and positive climate in the halls of the school.

SUPERVISION TIP #1: Position yourself strategically.

- Supervise your own classroom and the adjacent hallway.
- Two places from which to supervise:

Just outside your doorway

The center of the hall

SUPERVISION TIP #2: Pay attention.

- Visually scan.
- Listen for changes in the type of noise.
- Investigate anything that might be suspicious or warrant intervention.
- Visitors or strangers—do something!
- If there is a problem brewing, be prepared to assist other supervisors.

SUPERVISION TIP #3: Interact positively; be intentionally inviting.

- Build relationships with students.
- Model friendly, tolerant, inclusive, respectful interactions. Remember that adults set the tone.
- These interactions can be conducted in a manner with which you are personally comfortable, for example, friendly or business-like.

SUPERVISION TIP #4: Intervene with misbehavior calmly and consistently.

- Be aware of your school's rules and expectations and intervene even with low-level misbehavior.
- Examples of low-level misbehavior include:

Disrespect to students (verbal & non-verbal)

Disrespect to adults (verbal & non-verbal)

Disrespect to property

Obvious obscenity

Put downs/teasing

Congregating in a way that blocks movement

Congregating in a manner which indicates trouble is brewing

CORRECT LOW-LEVEL MISBEHAVIOR with low-level corrections.

Examples of low-level corrections follow.

- Quick reprimands:

“Slow down please.”

“Keep things moving.”

“Please don’t block the hall.”

“That is not acceptable language at school.”

“That would not be appropriate in a business office, so it is not acceptable at school.” or “Catch and Release”

- Brief delay:

“Alan, I have spoken to you about that kind of language before. Please wait over here for a couple of minutes.”

- Positive practice (have the student repeat the action using a more appropriate behavior):

“That’s not an appropriate way to enter class. Please come out and try that again.”

CORRECT HIGHER LEVEL MISBEHAVIOR:

- Turn problems over to a staff member on the “sweep.”
- Examples of referable behaviors that may require this sort of coordination include:

Dress code violations

High-level disrespect

Verbal abuse or gender/racial harassment

Illegal activity

SUPERVISION TIP #5: As the end of the passing period approaches, remind students to get to class.

- When the bell rings, close your door and begin class.
- Acknowledge punctuality.
- Make the first moments in the class interesting and important.
- During the first ten minutes of the period, do not allow students to go to lockers or the restroom unless it is truly an emergency.
- If a student enters late without having been “swept”, send him/her out of class so you do not have to do any paperwork.
- “Please exit and ask the teachers on the sweep to assist you. I need to stay focused on the lesson.”

CONCLUSION:

- Primary responsibility: Start your class on time.
- Secondary responsibility: Provide positive supervision in the halls.

EXPECTATIONS FOR TEACHERS ON THE SWEEP

DURING THE PASSING PERIOD, provide positive supervision:

- Interact positively.
- Correct any observed misbehavior.

IN ADDITION to these basic supervisory responsibilities, plan to:

- Circulate through:

The specified zone during the passing period

*Any spots that cannot be seen by teachers at their doors—
stairways and blind corners*

The gender-appropriate restroom

Courtyards or other areas in your zone.

- Circulate in an unpredictable pattern.
- Informally check in with teachers at their doors.

*Provide a supportive presence that communicates a
willingness to assist with any situation that may interfere
with a teacher beginning class on time.*

Have disciplinary referral forms with you.

- Supervise restrooms, but be sure to protect yourself against accusations of impropriety.

AFTER THE BELL RINGS:

- Circulate throughout your assigned zone again.
- Ask any students not in class to accompany you as you continue your sweep.

Interact respectfully with these students.

Do not argue with a student or allow excuses.

If a student refuses to accompany you, do not try to force the student.

- Turn over any emergency situations or referable behaviors to the administrator on the sweep.
- Escort students to the assigned “Sweep Room” for “processing.”

Have each student fill out the “Explanation for Being Late to Class” form. Collect the form; fill out any other record keeping required to document the incident (e.g., a referral form).

- Escort students back to their classes.

Signal to the teacher that you have “processed” this student.

Insure that the student does not disrupt the class as she/he enters.

- Turn in the paper work to the office (or to the administrator on the sweep).

CONCLUSIONS:

- Circulate (both during the passing period and during the first minutes of class).
- Your presence allows your colleagues to start class on time and provides the link to administration.
- Once implemented, there will be very few tardy students, and after conducting your sweep your responsibilities are finished.

EXPECTATIONS FOR THE ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

INTRODUCTION:

- Teaching staff need to know that administrative support and intervention is immediately available.

THERE MUST BE at least one person with administrative clout who rotates through the building during each passing period.

- These responsibilities may be shared by counseling staff and security staff, but someone must be available and circulating daily during each passing period.
- Have a walkie-talkie or a cell phone so you can be immediately informed of an emergency situation requiring your presence.

DURING THE PASSING PERIOD, your responsibilities include:

- Greeting staff and students in the halls.
- Being a visible presence—for both staff and students.
- Being available to take over in case of a severe misbehavior.

AFTER THE BELL RINGS, your responsibilities include:

- Making contact with staff on the sweep to determine if there are any “referable offenses” that should be taken over.

OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES include:

- Arranging a substitute if, for any reason, you cannot get out on the sweep.
- Monitoring progress and implementation.

Observe whether staff are in the halls before they begin class.

Observe whether classroom teachers start class on time.

Observe whether the teachers on the sweep are following through on their responsibilities.

- Meet weekly for the first month of implementing *START on Time!*, and at least monthly thereafter to discuss implementation.
- If staff is following through on their responsibilities, be sure to provide positive feedback and outcome data.
- If many staff members are not implementing agreed-upon procedures, plan an inservice to re-teach the expectations for staff behavior.
- If only a few staff members are not meeting expectations, meet with those people individually to go over expectations—emphasizing the importance of staff functioning as a team.

CONCLUSIONS:

- Administrative support is essential. Staff need to see that they have immediate and consistent support that allow them to intervene with misbehavior in the halls, but still start their own classes on time.
- Administrative staff must be in the halls, working as part of a united front to insure safety, reduce misbehavior, and allow classes to *Start on Time!*