

A Continuum of Behavior Support: Filling in the Gaps

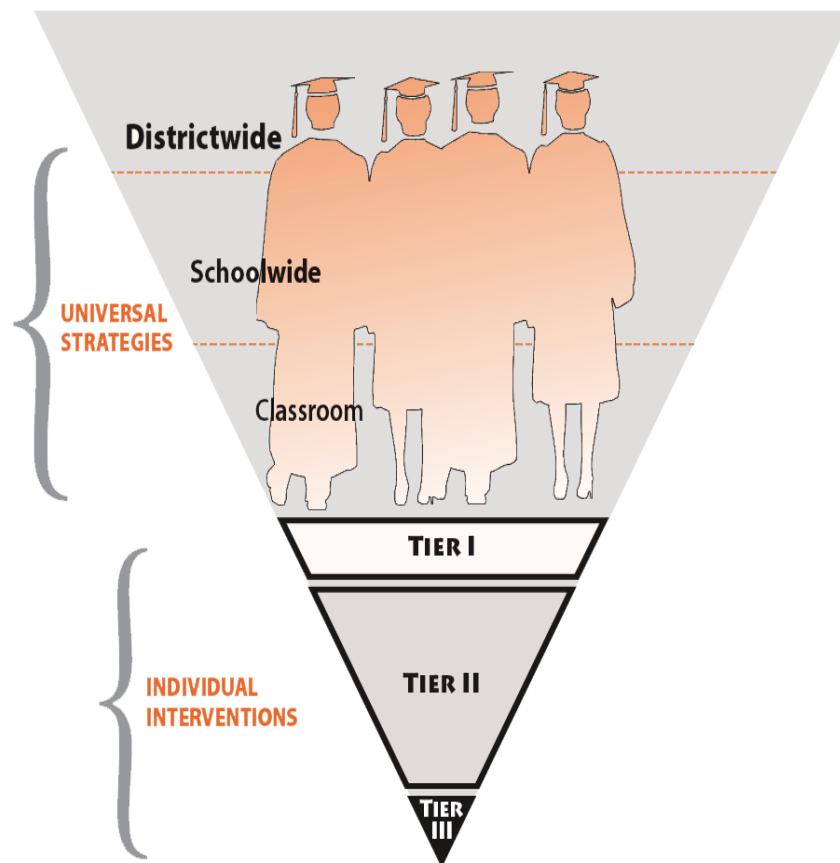
Presented by Randy Sprick, Ph.D.

What Is RTI-B?

A continuum of behavior support (safety, climate, discipline) that emphasizes prevention and ensures that the intensity of intervention matches the intensity of need.

____ Safety _____, _____, _____ Motivation _____,
_____, _____ Connectedness, _____

One vision of a continuum: The goal is that no student falls through the cracks!



Some common gaps in that continuum—some staff may

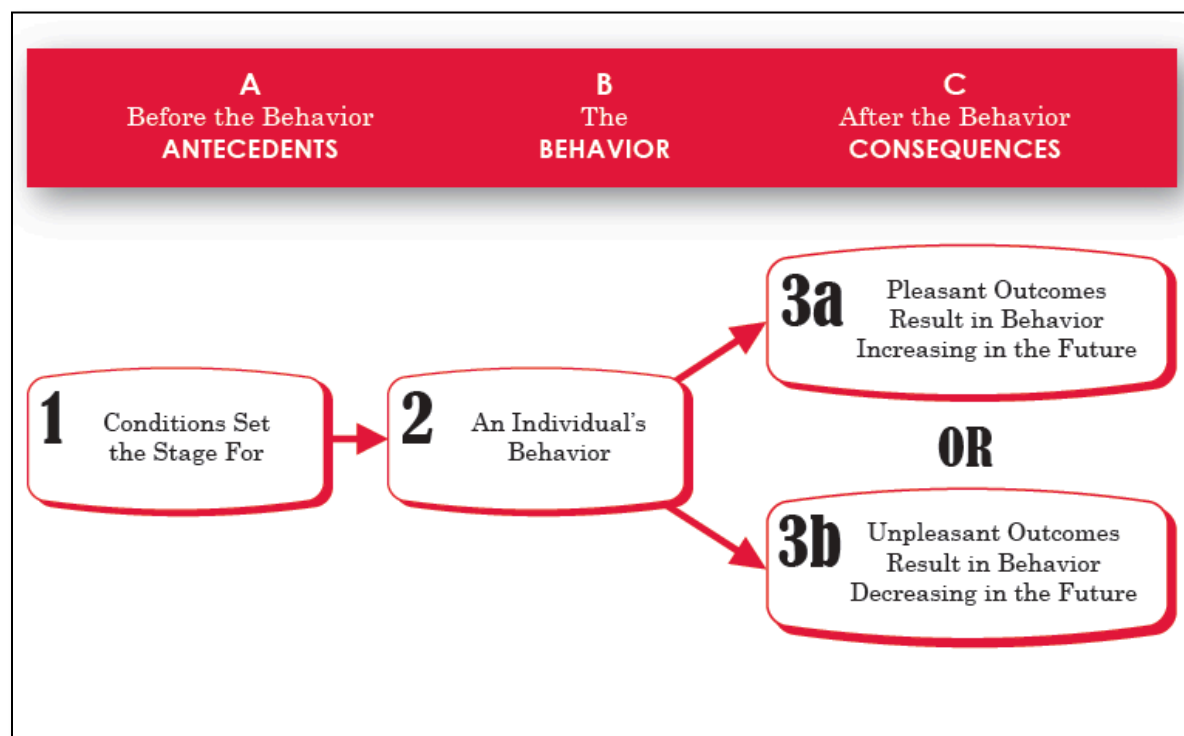
- Assume that the behavior you see is all that you can expect.
- Still overly rely on emotional and/or punitive techniques.
- Have a rosy view of universal safety and climate.
- View RTI-B as just a different set of hoops required to get students placed in alternative settings.
- Believe that “this too shall pass.”

Gap 1: Some staff may assume that the behavior you see is all that you can expect.

If anyone thinks, “That is just the way _____,” it would seem silly and require a great deal of pointless effort to implement interventions.

The Problem	Some Strategies
Low expectations	Teach staff to understand behavioral theory—starting with concept that behavior is changeable. See Figure 1 below.
“These kids should just shape up!” & “If these parents would just do their job . . .”	Keep reminding staff that behavior can be changed—that is what teaching is about.
“Not my job!”	The word <i>discipline</i> is derived from the same root as the word <i>disciple</i> , which long ago was used in verb form to mean to guide, lead, or teach.

Figure 1. Variables That Affect Behavior



“Treat people as if they were what they ought to be, and you help them become what they are capable of being.”

—Goethe

Gap 2: Some staff may still overly rely on emotional and/or punitive techniques.

You can never punish anyone into being _____, _____,
or _____.

The Problem	Some Strategies
<p>Power struggles</p> <p>Helplessness</p>	<p>Empower staff with strategies to prevent misbehavior. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Use proximity management. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide positive feedback/ratios of interactions. <input type="checkbox"/> Build relationships: Use student names, greet students, communicate value. <input type="checkbox"/> Create fallback routines for predictable problems, such as not having materials. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide support for student success.
<p>Overreliance on punitive consequences</p>	<p>Continually remind staff about the utility, but also the severe limitations, of consequences for misbehavior.</p> <p>Some students are inured to any punitive consequence.</p> <p>Emotional reactions to misbehavior:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk being reinforcing to some students • Risk making timid students afraid of you • Provide a terrible model of leadership
<p>Some staff want it to be easy</p>	<p>“It’s not easy, but that’s why they call it _____.”</p> <p>Teach staff a “sticky” way of remembering variables with which they can experiment—STOIC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Structure for success <input type="checkbox"/> Teach expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Observe/supervise <input type="checkbox"/> Interact positively <input type="checkbox"/> Correct fluently

Encourage staff to stretch and add new strategies to their repertoire every year.

Gap 3: Staff may not be unified in regard to behavior support.

“If _____ would just _____, we would not have these problems!”

The Problem	Some Strategies
No one is “pushing” behavior support.	The school needs an influential leadership team that includes active support from the principal.
Some staff may think there is no need to make the school better.	“Our school is just fine the way it is now.” Collect and analyze multiple data sources about behavior: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Discipline referral<input type="checkbox"/> Surveys of staff, students, and parents<input type="checkbox"/> Observations of common areas<input type="checkbox"/> Injury reports<input type="checkbox"/> Focus groups Analyze trends by location, type of problem, race, gender, grade level.
Staff may not see the point in addressing behavior.	Use the data to point out how behavior/climate can create barriers to academic achievement. Use multiple data sources to identify priorities that will unify the staff. Implement a continuous improvement cycle.

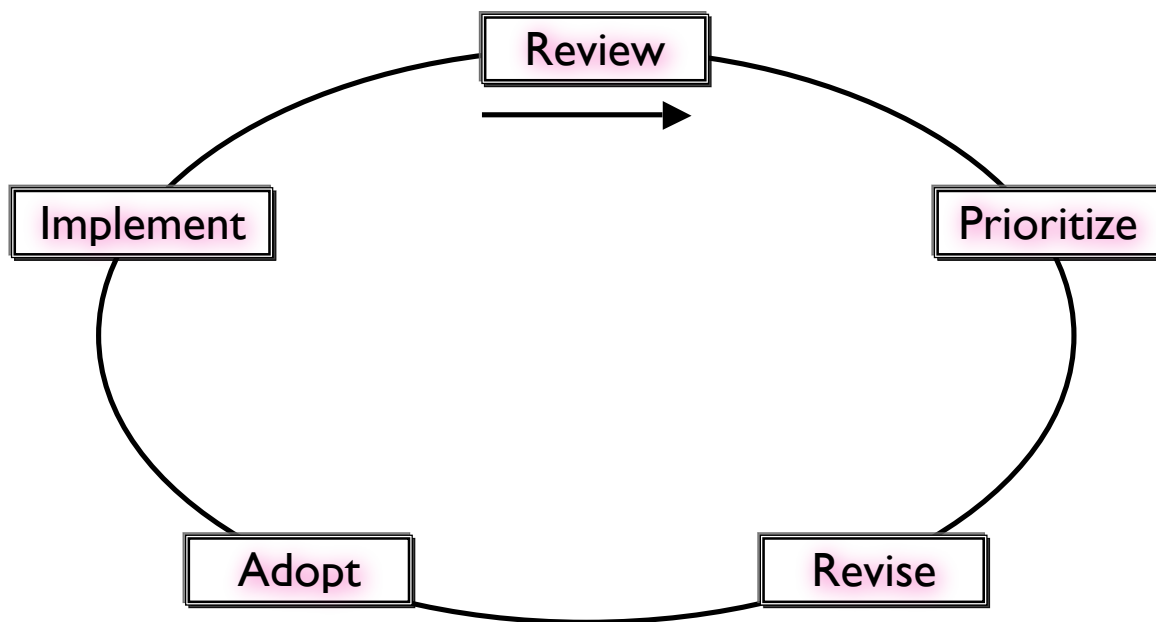
Sample Survey Data

Staff / Student / Discrepancy

14	Students treat each other respectfully in the hallways. [Staff]	Student–Student Interactions	50.0	48.4	1.6
28	If students have a problem they can't solve on their own, they know they can go to a staff member (e.g., teacher, counselor, principal) for help. [Staff]	Staff–Student Interactions	91.7	48.4	43.3
13	Students treat each other respectfully in the cafeteria. [Staff]	Student–Student Interactions	66.7	51.6	15.1
21	Staff members are kind to students. [Staff]	Staff–Student Interactions	91.7	51.6	40.1
19	Students treat each other respectfully in their classrooms. [Staff]	Student–Student Interactions	58.3	54.8	3.5
24	Staff members treat students fairly. [Staff]	Staff–Student Interactions	91.7	54.8	36.8
42	Students are proud to be part of this school. [Staff]	Students' Feelings About School	8.3	54.8	46.5
17	Students treat each other respectfully in the bus loading/unloading areas. [Staff]	Student–Student Interactions	66.7	58.1	8.6
20	Students treat staff members respectfully. [Staff]	Staff–Student Interactions	58.3	58.1	0.3
27	Staff members let students know when they do things right. [Staff]	Staff–Student Interactions	83.3	58.1	25.3
39	For most classes, teachers do a good job of making sure students know how they can get help if they fall behind. [Staff]	Rules, Expectations, and Procedures	100.0	58.1	41.9

“The measure of success is not whether you have a tough problem to deal with, but whether it is the same problem you had last year.”

—John Foster Dulles



Safe & Civil Schools
Dr. Randy Sprick, Director

Creating a Functional Team

Actively involving the entire staff in a unified and consistent approach is crucial to implementing positive behavior interventions and supports (PBIS) and response to intervention (RTI) for behavior-related issues through *Safe & Civil Schools*. Although a functional leadership team has been shown to be a key to effective implementation, a fully functioning team is absolutely essential to creating consistency within a very large staff. Following are leadership team suggestions gleaned from more than 20 years of working with elementary and secondary school teams on schoolwide discipline and behavior support.

To be most effective, this leadership team should consist of six to nine staff members, including a school-based administrator and representatives of the entire staff. The suggestion of six to nine is based solely on group dynamic considerations. If the team gets too large, it becomes very difficult to sit around a table and discuss issues. The team must meet on a regular basis to maintain the cycle of reviewing data, selecting priorities, and revising policies and procedures you want the staff to adopt and implement. If the team stops meeting (or meets but is not efficient), the process of continuous improvement grinds to a halt.

The principal must be actively engaged with the team and with the PBIS/RTI processes. Either the principal or an assistant principal may lead a PBIS initiative on a campus and be an actively participating team member. However, if it is an assistant principal, the principal must be actively supportive and participate in communicating to the entire staff the importance of the work the team is doing. The principal must also help ensure fidelity of implementation of any agreed-upon policies and procedures. The staff has to see that the principal is directly engaged, or the chance of a faction within the staff being unwilling to follow through increases dramatically. In every example of a great implementation of *Safe & Civil Schools* in a large urban school, the principal has been actively and vocally supportive of all the efforts.

Representation on the team must mirror, as closely as possible, the population of the staff. Because general education teachers make up the largest percentage of the staff, there must be an adequate number of general education teachers on the team. In a high school, this representation of general education teachers might be organized by departments, grade levels, teachers with common planning periods, or professional learning communities, depending on how the lines of organization and communication work within the school. There should be at least one special education teacher to represent the special education staff. Once representation of teaching staff is achieved, ensure that every member of the school staff is directly connected to a member of the team. **For example, someone on the team must directly represent the custodial staff, even if that person is not a custodian. Someone must represent counseling staff, clerical staff, food service staff, etc.** To limit the team to nine members, some members will have to represent multiple groups. Following is an example of a team configuration. Keep in mind that this is only one example. Each school should form its team based on lines of communication, influence, and affiliation.

Sample Staff Representation on the Team:

Team members	Who each member represents
Principal	Administrative team
9th grade teacher	9th grade teachers and clerical staff
10th grade teacher	10th grade teachers and counseling staff
11th grade teacher	11th grade staff, parent advisory groups, and PTA
12th grade teacher	12th grade staff, student council, and all other student groups
Special education teacher	Special education staff, psychologist, social worker, and mental health liaison
Custodian	Custodial staff and food service staff
Campus security officer	Campus security, nursing, and school volunteers

Once the groups and representation are formed, identify actual team members by asking each group to select someone to represent them. In one very successful high school, each group was told to identify someone they respected and could learn from. In other words, because the team was going to be receiving ongoing training in PBIS and RTI, each group decided who they wanted to attend the training and bring the information back to them. If the team members are not well respected and influential, there is greater risk that the team may be ineffective, perhaps even creating greater divisions among staff instead of serving as a unifying force.

Whenever the team is going to discuss an issue that affects constituents not on the team, the team member who represents that constituency should not only seek input from his or her constituents, but also invite them to the next team meeting. For example, if the team is going to discuss some aspect of the cafeteria, food service and custodial personnel should be invited to join the next team meeting. If they cannot attend, their representative should bring their thoughts and opinions to the meeting.

Note that no parents or students are on the team; instead, staff members on the team serve as student and parent representatives. Sometimes the team may need to discuss important internal staff business, such as staff morale or staff inconsistency in implementing a particular policy. It may be very difficult to have a frank discussion about important business (which could be viewed as “airing dirty laundry”) with a parent or student in attendance. We support actively involving students and parents in many specific PBIS activities (such as collecting and analyzing data, selecting priorities for improvement, and serving on task forces to develop new policies), but the leadership team needs the freedom to have frank, open, and even occasionally contentious discussions about internal staff issues.

Once the team is functioning and receiving ongoing training and support, it can take specific actions to guide and unify staff in design and implementation of PBIS and a three-tiered RTI model. By striving to ensure that all staff have adequate representation through a voice on the team and by “marketing” their efforts and purpose, the team can serve to unify and motivate staff to actively follow through on all agreed-upon policies and procedures.

Foundations Sustainability—The Annual Journey

Early Fall

1. Discuss the launch of the new school year. What went well? Should some things be done differently next year? Should there be a brief staff celebration of an effective launch?
2. Discuss and complete the Module 1 Implementation Checklist. Ensure effective team functioning and establish renewed staff energy for implementing Guidelines for Success and maintaining and implementing Staff Beliefs.
3. Discuss last year's patterns of disciplinary referrals. Are there times of year or other patterns that can be proactively addressed now?

Mid Fall

4. Prepare to re-administer staff, student, and (optionally) parent surveys.
5. Prepare to conduct common-area observations.
6. Use these data sources to identify at least one common area to improve for the year. Use Module 2 to look at structure and organization, teaching expectations, and quality and type of supervision.
7. Also use the above data sources to identify one attitude or trait that will be a major goal for the year. This could be to solve a problem that was identified on the surveys, such as disrespect, students finding it difficult to make friends, or bullying. This could be to create links to academic improvement, such as homework, motivation, and self-discipline. It could be as seemingly mundane as reducing litter and improving school pride. Pick one thing and make it a priority for the semester or the year.

Late Fall

8. Analyze patterns of disciplinary referral for the year to date. Determine whether any urgent priorities emerge (other than those already identified).
9. Evaluate whether and how to teach and review essential classroom management considerations—*CHAMPS*.

Mid Winter

10. Analyze patterns of disciplinary referral for the year to date. Determine whether any urgent priorities emerge (other than those already identified).
11. Determine whether some staff morale-building activities are needed to help staff stay positive and unified.
12. Conduct the Module 3 Implementation Checklist to identify whether any Safety, Disciplinary Referral, or Basic Needs issues need to be addressed.

Mid Spring

13. Analyze patterns of disciplinary referral for the year to date. Determine whether any urgent priorities emerge (other than those already identified).
14. Develop a plan to re-energize staff around maintaining high expectations, using class time effectively, and maintaining positive ratios of interactions.

Late Spring

15. Analyze patterns of disciplinary referral for the year to date. Determine whether any urgent priorities emerge (other than those already identified).
16. Begin developing plans and assigning tasks for the first week of school. Be sure to include:
 - Plans to orient new teachers
 - Plans to teach expectations for all common areas, critical code of conduct content, and Guidelines for Success.

Summer—Complete final preparations to launch the New Year.

Gap 4: Some staff may view RTI-B as just a different set of hoops required to get students placed in alternative settings.

Some staff may view collection and analysis of behavioral data as an annoyance and distraction rather than as an essential tool for _____ about efficacy of interventions.

The Problem	Some Strategies
<p>There is great variability among staff regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Knowledge of behavioral strategies with individual students• Use of data as a tool to drive behavior change• Willingness to collaborate with other staff on implementation• Willingness to <i>actually</i> implement	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Train staff in a protocol of early-stage interventions that become part of the common language of the district.2. Ensure that data collection and debriefing are in the middle of that protocol.3. Monitor fidelity of implementation and provide supports to ensure actual implementation.4. Building-level and district-level administrators must be the advocates for points 1, 2, and 3 above.5. If a student does not respond to well-implemented early-stage interventions, subsequent problem-solving and intervention design should be collaborative—matching intensity of intervention to intensity of need.

Create a culture of data-driven **early-stage** interventions planned and conducted by all teachers (Tier 1).

- A. Planned Discussion
- B. Academic Assistance
- C. Goal Setting
- D. Data Collection and Debriefing
- E. Increasing Positive Interactions
- F. STOIC Intervention and Analysis

From *Interventions: Evidence-Based Behavioral Strategies for At-Risk Students*

Train support personnel in Tier 2 group-based interventions such as:

- Connections (Check & Connect)
- Meaningful Work
- Mentoring

Train all support personnel in efficient problem-solving and intervention design processes.

- 25-Minute Planning Process
- Intervention Decision Guide (IDG): Teacher Interview
- Intervention Decision Guide (IDG): Multi-Disciplinary Team

From Behavioral Response to Intervention: Creating a Continuum of Problem-Solving and Support

Intervention D:
Data Collection and Debriefing

Behavior Counting Form

Logan Firth
Student

6
Grade/Class

Jean Polese
Teacher

Apr. 20
Week of

Monday																									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	
Tuesday																									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	
Wednesday																									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	
Thursday																									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	
Friday																									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	

Blurting Out in Class

▪ **Teacher-Directed Instruction**

|||| |

▪ **Cooperative Groups**

||||

▪ **Independent Work**

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Gap 5: Some staff may believe that “this too shall pass.”

A few things are different about both behavior support and RTI: convergence of academic accountability, _____, and a research base from multiple disciplines.

The Problem	Some Strategies
<p>Everybody says, “Research says . . .”</p>	<p>Research from multiple disciplines:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Positive Behavior Intervention and Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Technical Assistance Center (OSEP) <input type="checkbox"/> Safe & Civil Schools (National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices [NREPP]) 2. Mental Health (e.g., Adelman, Hawkins, and Catalano) 3. Social-Emotional Learning standards (e.g., CASEL, state standards) 4. Public health (e.g., Center for Disease Control, school connectedness)
<p>There is a significant risk that the “this too shall pass” mentality could be true, unless action is taken to insure sustainability.</p>	<p>At the building level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Each successful policy, procedure, and ritual/tradition should be archived into a blueprint for the conscious construction and maintenance of school climate. <input type="checkbox"/> There should be accountability from district level administrators. See attached Talking Points/Questions document. <input type="checkbox"/> Each year, school improvement plans should include both a behavioral and an academic component. <p>At the district level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Establish district protocols on three-tiered approaches for continuous improvement of behavior and academics, early-stage interventions, and data-driven decision-making processes. <input type="checkbox"/> Establish board policies to solidify effective practices. See attached Appendix A from Chicago Public Schools.

Proposed Talking Points/Questions Regarding Schoolwide PBIS

for Area Superintendents During School Visits

Principals should be introduced to this concept, the talking points, and their purpose in a general meeting so all principals know that no one is being singled out and that this process is simply part of the partnership between central administration and each campus.

The purpose of this process is to ensure that each campus maintains a continuous improvement process related to safety and civility.

Begin each visit by reasserting that this is not a “gotcha” process but rather a way to identify strengths to celebrate and areas to target for improvement in the safety, civility, culture, and climate of the school.

1. **Let’s discuss (examine) your most current safety and civility data.** This data can include annual surveys, quarterly observations of common areas, patterns of disciplinary referral, Foundation Implementation Tool (FIT), Foundations and/or CHAMPS rubrics, and so on.
2. Based on that information, **what are your strengths to celebrate?** How do you know? Have you involved staff, students, parents, central office, and community in the good news? Have you and your staff formally adopted the new policy/procedures? Have you archived the new policy/procedure in a staff handbook and your Foundations notebook?
3. Based on your data, **what are your current priorities for improvement?** Why did you select them? For each priority, describe the outcomes you hope to achieve.
4. Have you developed a STOIC intervention plan for addressing each priority? (STOIC stands for Structure, Teach Expectations, Observe/Monitor, Interact Positively, Correct Calmly.) **Describe the intervention plan.** Can central office assist with any aspects of the plan—e.g., barriers to reduce, needs to address, information to provide?

Closing:

Thank the principal for his/her commitment. Summarize what you (central office) said you would do to provide support. Ask if there are questions you have neglected to ask. Invite the principal to email or call you if s/he thinks of any related issues or things you can do.

Some weeks later:

5. **How are things going with . . .** (each major priority and plan in Question 4 above)? How do you know?

To keep the dialogue about the cycle going, go back to Question 1. Ask about any new data and whether that data indicate a change in priorities.

Date: _____
School _____

Area Superintendent _____
Discussion participants: _____

1. **Let's discuss (examine) your most current safety/civility data.** This can include annual surveys, quarterly observations of common areas, patterns of disciplinary referral, Foundation Implementation Tool (FIT), Foundations and/or CHAMPs rubrics, and so on.

2. Based on that information, **what are your strengths to celebrate?** How do you know? Have you involved staff, students, parents, central office, and community in the good news? Have you and **your** staff formally adopted the new policy/procedures? Have you archived the new policy/procedure in a staff handbook and your Foundations notebook?

3. Based on your data, **what are your current priorities for improvement?** Why did you select these priorities? For each priority, describe the outcomes you are hoping to achieve.

4. Have you developed a STOIC intervention plan for addressing each priority? (STOIC stands for Structure, Teach Expectations, Observe/Monitor, Interact Positively, Correct Calmly.) **Describe the intervention plan.** Can central office assist with anything—e.g., barriers to reduce, needs to address, information to provide?

Some weeks later:

5. **How are things going with . . .** (each major priority and plan in Question 4 above)? How do you know?

Student Code of Conduct from Chicago Public Schools

APPENDIX A - BEST PRACTICES FOR PROACTIVELY SUPPORTING POSITIVE STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Establish a safe, supportive environment for learning.

- Research shows that schools with a safe and supportive environment for learning achieve better academic, behavioral and social outcomes for students than schools without such a climate for learning.
- All adults contribute to a safe and supportive learning climate – especially security, office staff, lunchroom staff, and those who interact with students at the beginning and end of each day.
- All student benefits from a safe, supportive learning environment, even those who are not disruptive.
- Students are more likely to engage in instruction and take risks with challenging instructional content and tasks when they feel safe and supported by adults and peers.

Develop expectations.

- Provide a short, clearly written set of expectations for positive student behavior; have 3-5 general expectations that apply to all students and staff (e.g. Be respectful; Be responsible; Be prepared; Be safe).
- Ensure expectations are positively worded statements of how to achieve desired behavior, rather than a description of what not to do. You can *never* list all the “don’ts”; you can provide strong guidance on what to do and teach students to use that guidance to make good decisions about what they should and should not do at school.
- Customize and explain the general expectations in all settings: hallways, bathrooms, lunchroom, outdoors, entering/leaving school, etc.
- Allow teacher teams to customize the expectations for each grade level (where departmentalized) and/or classroom.
- Involve students in the development, refinement, and communication of those expectations.

- Have expectations ready for the first day of school.

Use expectations to proactively support positive student behavior.

- Post the expectations in all settings; post the customized explanation appropriate to each setting.
- Teach the expectations to all students; ensure they are taught on the first day of school and throughout the first week of school. If necessary, continue this instruction on expectations until students demonstrate mastery. Ensure with every teaching event students have the opportunity to watch an adult model what is expected, and physically practice it themselves.
- Reteach after long breaks from school or after a major disruptive event to reset the tone of the learning environment.
- Develop a procedure to teach the expectations to students who transfer in after the first week of school.
- Ensure adults model the expectations for all students in all settings; this includes training parent volunteers, after school providers and community partners to use, reinforce and re-teach the expectations for students under their supervision. Hold all staff accountable when they model inappropriate behavior.
- Provide encouragement and praise when students meet expectations; research shows positive behavior must be recognized three times as often as negative behavior to be reinforced.
- Ensure all staff use the expectations to correct and redirect student behavior.
- Reteach the expectations as needed to address problem behaviors.

Guide daily interactions.

- Schools leaders must ensure that all adults model expected behaviors; adults who do not model expected behaviors communicate to students that deviation from expectations is acceptable.
- Schools leaders must ensure that most adult-student interactions are positive and encouraging, including:
 - Providing positive interactions as soon as students enter the school campus and building to ensure students feel

welcomed into the learning environment; this provides a critical opportunity to counteract any negative experience the student may have had since leaving school last.

- Ensuring teachers greet students entering each classroom; this engages students in the learning environment even before learning begins and communicates they are wanted in school.
- Opening lessons with excitement and communicating high expectations for student success.
- Interacting with students during work periods –invite questions, offer encouragement and support.
- Providing students frequent positive feedback on behavioral and academic effort.
- School leaders must ensure that most student-student interactions are positive and encouraging, including:
 - Being inclusive (rather than cliquish or exclusionary),
 - Being supportive (as compared to hostile or sarcastic), and
 - Being gently intolerant of bullying of others (“We don’t treat people that way in this school.”).
- Ensure all adults actively supervise students in all settings. Active supervision significantly reduces student misbehavior and provides more opportunities to reinforce expected behaviors. It includes:
 - Engaging positively with the students they are supervising (chatting, waving, smiling, etc.),
 - Making eye contact with students,
 - Circulating among students continuously; never stand in one place or to one side of the area of supervision,
 - Providing a high concentration of adults in settings that have high potential for conflict (stairs, busy intersections, bathrooms), and
 - Covering all settings when many students are present.
- Develop, teach and reinforce routines, procedures and transitions that support positive behavior and minimize opportunity for conflict.
 - In the classroom, this is especially important for entering, leaving, submitting work and changing between different instructional tasks.
 - In other school settings, this is important for stairwells, lunch periods, the beginning and end of the day, and any

other time when many students are in common areas together.

When expectations are not met, use corrective consequences.

- **All behavioral correction should be done calmly and in a manner that demonstrates that the student is safe and supported at school.**
- View misconduct as an instructional opportunity; reteach what is expected, and allow the student to practice what is expected.
- Use consequences that promote student self-reflection: What harm was caused? What can be done to correct the harm? Why did the student make that choice? What could they have done differently? What help does the student need and from whom to make a different choice next time?
- Communicate the importance of instructional time; correct student behavior and return them to the instructional setting as quickly as possible.
- Document the use of corrective consequences to track their success.

Available strategies and support options:

- Contact the Office of Special Education and Supports at 553-1800 or cpspeducation.org for additional information on strategies that support these best practices.

References

The practices outlined herein are supported by the following references:

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