



B6 - Changing the Narrative: Engaging Black Families and Students to Address Disproportionate Disciplinary Outcomes

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University of South Florida

Exemplar Presenter: Mike Lastra, Principal, Brooksville Elementary School,
Hernando County Schools, FL

Key Words: Equity, Family, Youth Voice



Session Objectives

- Describe a rationale for including family and student perspectives when addressing disproportionate discipline.
- Describe a process for obtaining family and student perspectives on disproportionate discipline.
- Apply family and student perspectives to develop strategies that address disproportionate discipline.

Session Norms

- Avoid generalizations/ Use “I” statements
- This is a safe space: What is said stays, what is learned leaves
- Be supportive: Help everyone learn alternative approaches
- Be present

Rationale: Is there a difference between school teams' problem solving with and without family & student input?

WITHOUT Family/Student Input

Hypothesis	Strategy
African American peers encourage bad behavior	Separate African American students so they have fewer same-race peers in class
African American students have poor impulse control when being addressed about a discipline issue	Expand mentoring program
African American students are overly sensitive when they feel they've been treated disrespectfully	Social skills instruction on "respectful" behavior

WITH Family/Student Input

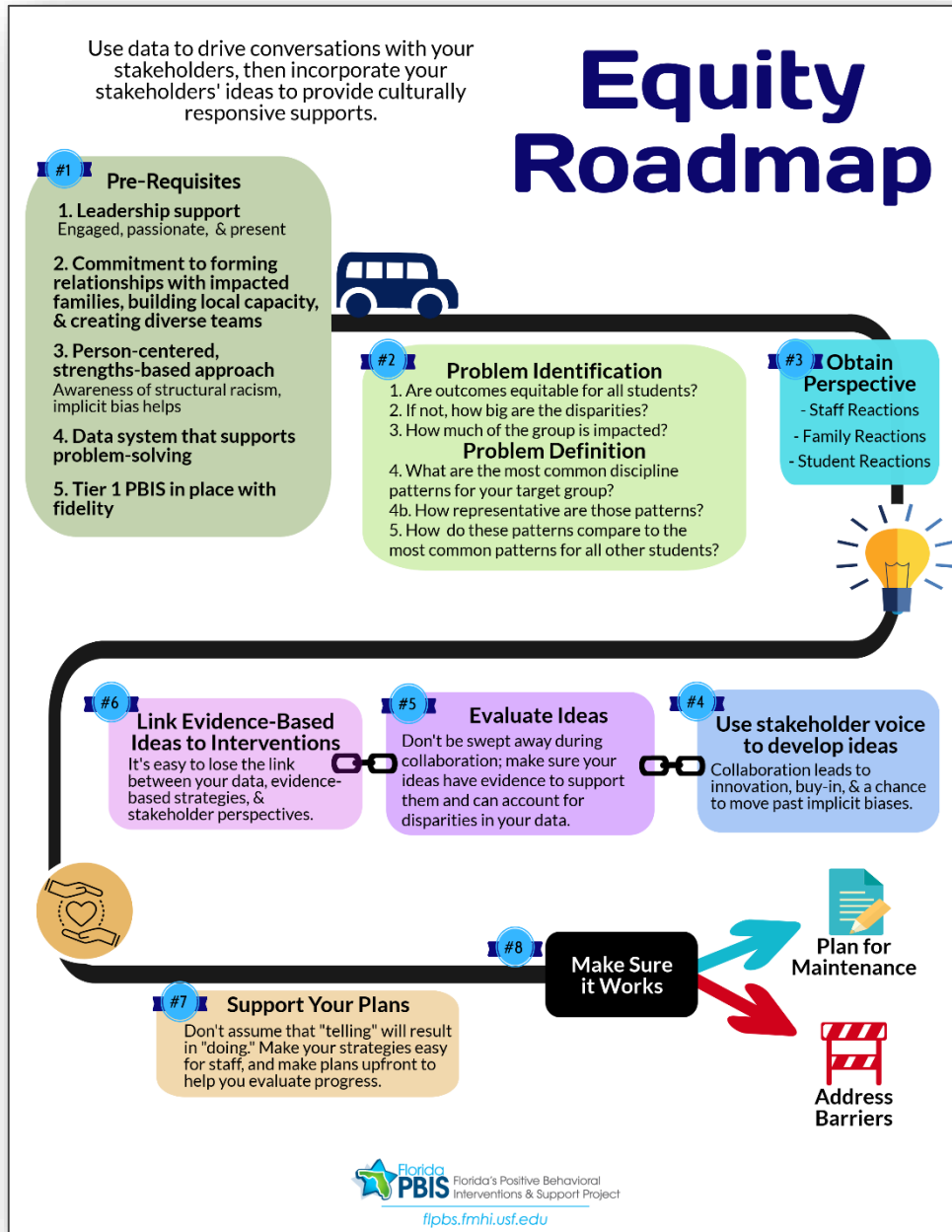
Hypothesis	Strategy
Teachers and African American students lack positive relationships with one another	Utilize half-day schedule to provide student-teacher special interest clubs
There are misunderstandings regarding behavior between students, teachers and families, and relationships have become strained	Provide teacher training on mentoring
There is a lack of positive communication between staff and families	Administration accountability for positive calls – phone log; script provided to make calls easier for teachers

Florida's Process for Collaborative Problem-Solving

20 schools
in 5 districts

Handout: Equity Roadmap

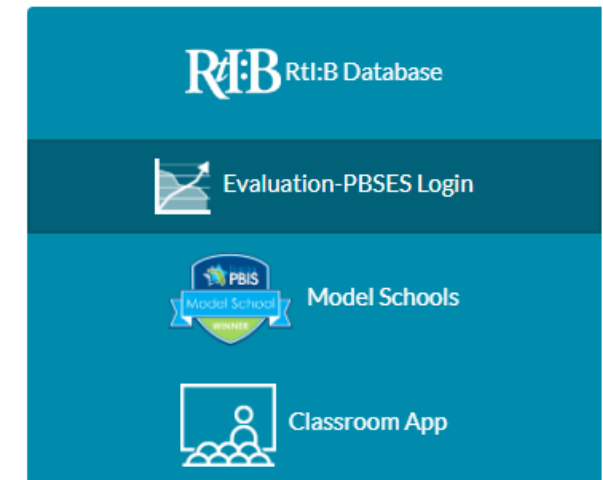
1. Pre-Requisites
 - Leadership support
 - Commitment to forming relationships with impacted families
 - Person-centered, strengths-based approach
 - Data system
 - Tier 1 PBIS
2. Problem ID & Definition
3. Obtain perspective
4. Incorporate others' ideas
5. Evaluate team ideas
6. Link ideas to interventions
7. Support interventionists
8. Follow up



Problem Identification & Definition

- School leadership team uses **equity profile** and **problem definition template** to:
 - Confirm disproportionate outcomes for specific group(s)
 - Identify size of disparities
 - Identify how much of the “target” group(s) is impacted
 - Describe major discipline patterns for “target” group
 - Compare discipline patterns of target group to all other students
 - Identify vulnerable decision points (see Kent McIntosh)

<http://bit.ly/SchoolEquityProfile>



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Evaluation
Binder #4



Next Step: Obtain Perspective

Staff

- School-wide perspective on behavior
- Support for change
- Responsible for implementation

Students

- Unique perspective on disciplinary events
- Opportunity to build leadership/advocacy skills
- May increase engagement with school

Families

- Personal knowledge of cultural & historical contexts
- Opportunity to build relationships
- May become a resource for implementation

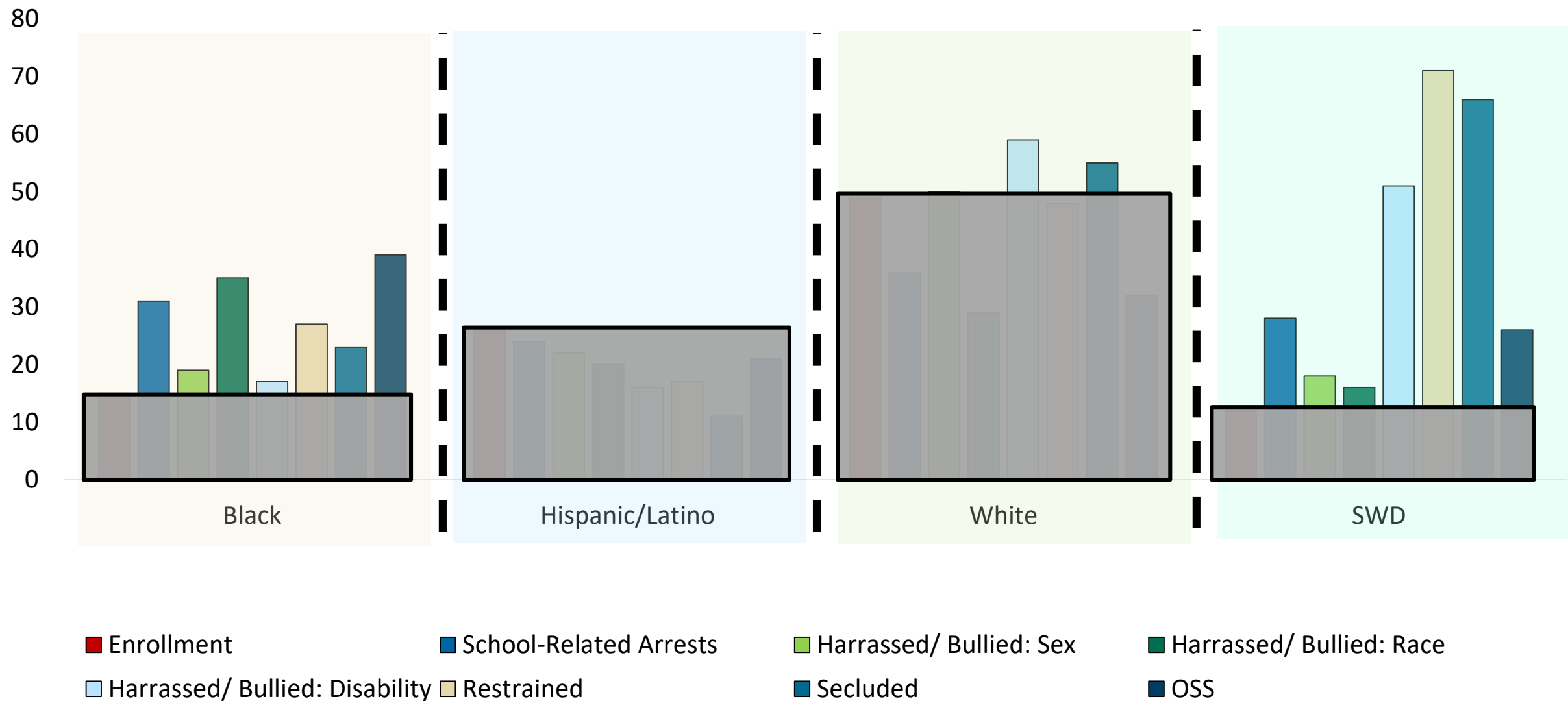
Community

- Facilitate partnerships with families
- Knowledge of cultural & historical contexts
- May become a resource for implementation

Starting the Conversations

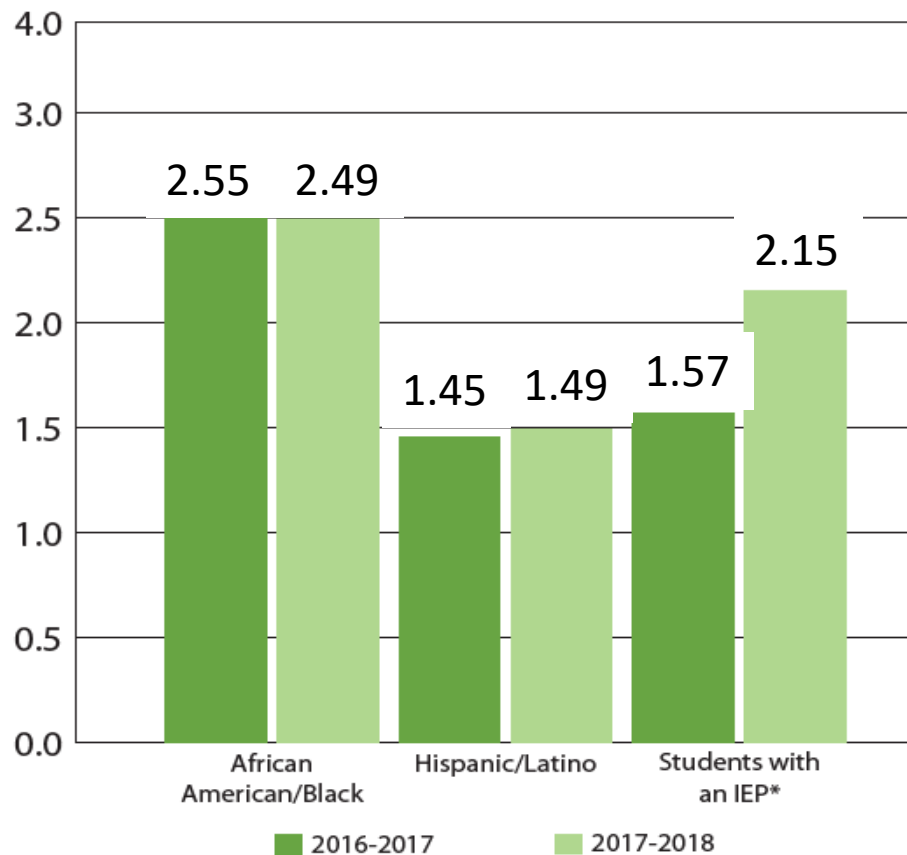
- Teams opted to share disproportionality data with staff first
 - PLCs, staff meeting, grade level meetings
- Format for conversations:
 - 1) Establish context (national, state, local data)
 - 2) Ask open-ended question
 - 3) Record responses
 - Listen & confirm what you think you're hearing
 - Technology may facilitate data collection & review
 - Nearpod
 - Padlet

Setting the Context: 2015-16 National Data/ 2018 OCR Report

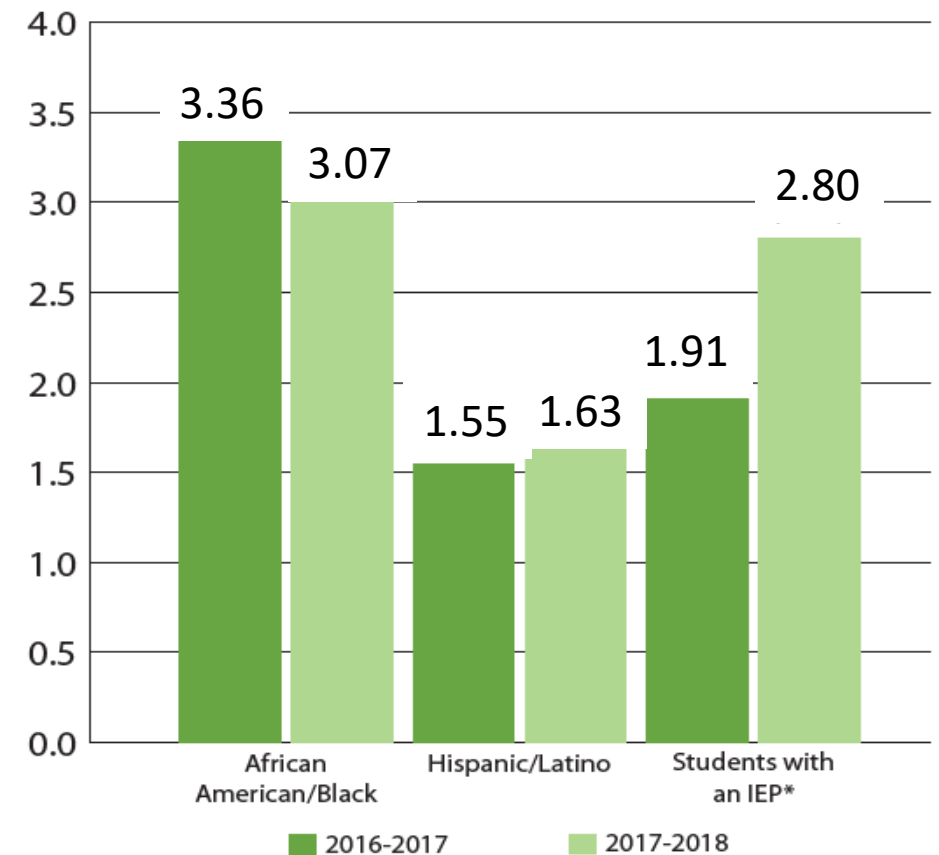


Setting the Context: Statewide PBIS Schools*

AVERAGE RISK RATIO FOR ODR ACROSS SCHOOLS
WITH DISPROPORTIONATE OUTCOMES



AVERAGE RISK RATIO FOR OSS ACROSS SCHOOLS
WITH DISPROPORTIONATE OUTCOMES



The Question:

Same for all stakeholder groups

“We’ve learned that disproportionate discipline is a nationwide issue and have started to investigate how that applies to our school. This is what we’ve learned...(insert your data summary here)

How does this match up to your experience with discipline at our school?”

You can share your own personal experiences, or those you’ve heard from other individuals.

Family & Student Participation

Identifying Representative Focus Group Participants



Family and Community Members: Who to Invite

The goal for this stage of the root cause analysis is to learn how families who are representative of your target group have experienced your school's discipline process. The first step in doing this is to identify potential family and community members who can provide this information.

1. Which demographic group(s) are you focusing on? (*This is your target group*)

2. Identify at least 2-3 students in your target group who received multiple referrals. If there are many students who receive multiple referrals, try to pick at least one student from the low end of this distribution, one from the middle of the pack, and one from the highest end of the distribution.

	Name	Number of Referrals	Problem Behaviors
Student 1:			
Student 2:			
Student 3:			

3. Identify at least 2-3 students in your target group who received only one referral.

	Name	Number of Referrals	Problem Behaviors
Student 1:		1	
Student 2:		1	
Student 3:		1	

4. If necessary, randomly select additional student names from among those in your target group who have received referrals until you have at least six students listed in the above tables.

5. Identify two students in your target group who have zero referrals:

	Name	Number of Referrals
Student 1:		0
Student 2:		0

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- Consider:
 - The target group you're trying to reach
 - The amount of discipline received by students in the target group
 - Students with no discipline issues
 - Shared characteristics within the target group that go beyond federal demographic categories
 - Grade level, academic level, ESE status, siblings who attend(ed) the school

Family-Centered Focus Group Logistics

- Ask **families** to determine:
 - Start time (allow time for family members to return from work/commitments)
 - Needs for:
 - Child care, language assistance, transportation
 - Provide food / make it comfortable for families to share
 - Follow-up to remind/confirm attendance
- Attend to group composition when identifying focus group facilitators
 - Race, power, overall supportiveness
 - Develop a script to ensure communications are on-point & effective

During the group

- Listen
- Be humble
- Be transparent
- Try to take others' perspectives
- Use paraphrasing, summarizing, & other “active listening” skills to help people feel understood
 - Problem solving is not therapy, but helping others feel “heard” can be healing

Family Focus Group Questions

~90 minutes

1. Prior attempts to obtain their ideas about how to support student behavior
2. Same open-ended question as the staff received
3. Ideas for reducing disproportionate discipline
4. What they would like to see as next steps following the focus group

Share information about student focus groups, obtain permission slips

Student Focus Group Questions

~90 minutes

Ask the students about behavior & discipline at their school to get a general sense of how they perceive their school.

- What are your school rules/expectations?
- Describe what happens to a student if they don't follow a school or class rule
 - Describe what happens and which rule was not followed.
- Does that happen to every student who does not follow that rule?

Share national trends in data & ask for students' local perspective.

- Across the United States, schools are noticing that students of color are receiving office referrals at higher rates than other groups of students.
- We are interested to know how that compares to what is happening at your school. Do you notice that students of color are receiving more office referrals in your school? **OR**
- Do you see students treated differently about their behavior? Can you give me an example?

Find out what students would like to see so they may feel like they've been "heard."

- What are some suggestions you have for improving behavior/discipline at your school?

Considerations for Student Focus Groups

- Consider students' developmental levels
 - Be prepared if students gossip
 - Be aware of student perceptions of “authority figures”
- Maintain confidentiality
- Do not require participation

Sample Results of Stakeholder Feedback

A Multi-Tiered System of Supports



This product was developed by the Florida Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support Project, a project funded by the State of Florida, Department of Education, K-12 Public Schools, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, through federal assistance under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part B.

Common Themes across stakeholders

Faculty Statements

Real life prison statistics are comparable to school statistics (1)

They run the streets more; more freedom; less supervision (1)

Instability at home, home life (3)

Family Statements

Occurs in law enforcement as well (3)

Lack of parental involvement (3)

Behavior starts at home with high expectations and follow up (3)

It “takes a village” (1)

Home environment. Lack of parenting. Lack of follow-up at home. (4)

Parents are younger (1)

More grandparents raising children (1)

Faculty Statements

Frustrated with school structure (1)
Students are sent to the dean
because the teacher has already
dealt with it (3)

Students are more abrasive toward
the teachers so the teacher is less
likely to work it out with them (1)

*No comparable ideas were shared by
faculty*

Family Statements

Teachers need to be compassionate
and patient (4)

School needs to be more
understanding of home life (3)

We need to treat the whole child &
be aware of their lives (4)

There is an inconsistency with
consequences (1)

Discipline process may be unclear (1)

Progressive discipline is helpful (1)

We need programs instead of
suspension (1)

Common Themes from Students

Grades 4-12

All grade levels:

Increase student voice

Teachers label based on past behavior

Teachers don't notice peers' racial comments

Teachers "like" some students better

Students want teachers' help

Secondary level:

Articulated racial differences

Not surprised by issue, reported their own experience

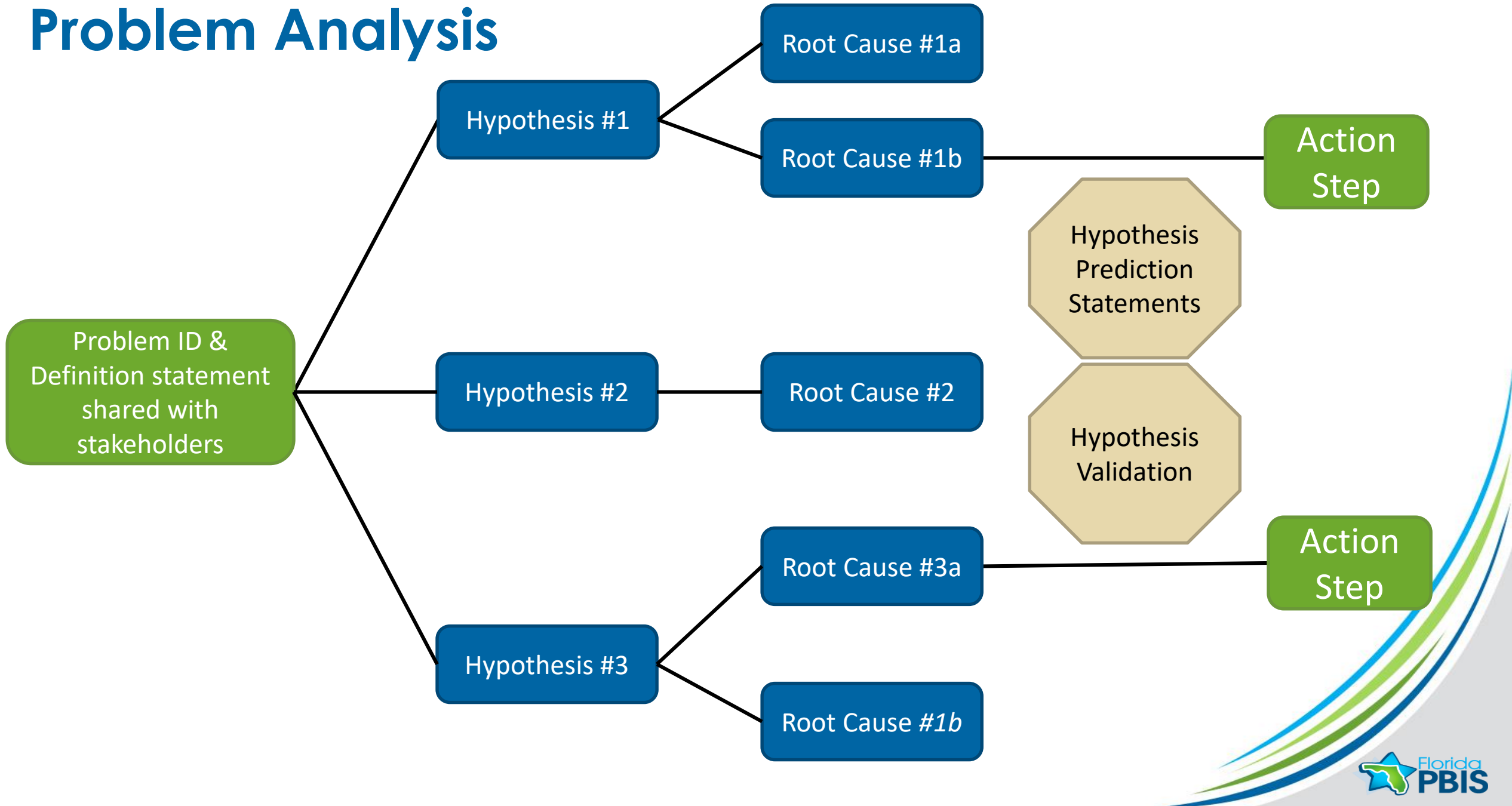
Articulated differences across schools

Using the information

A Multi-Tiered System of Supports

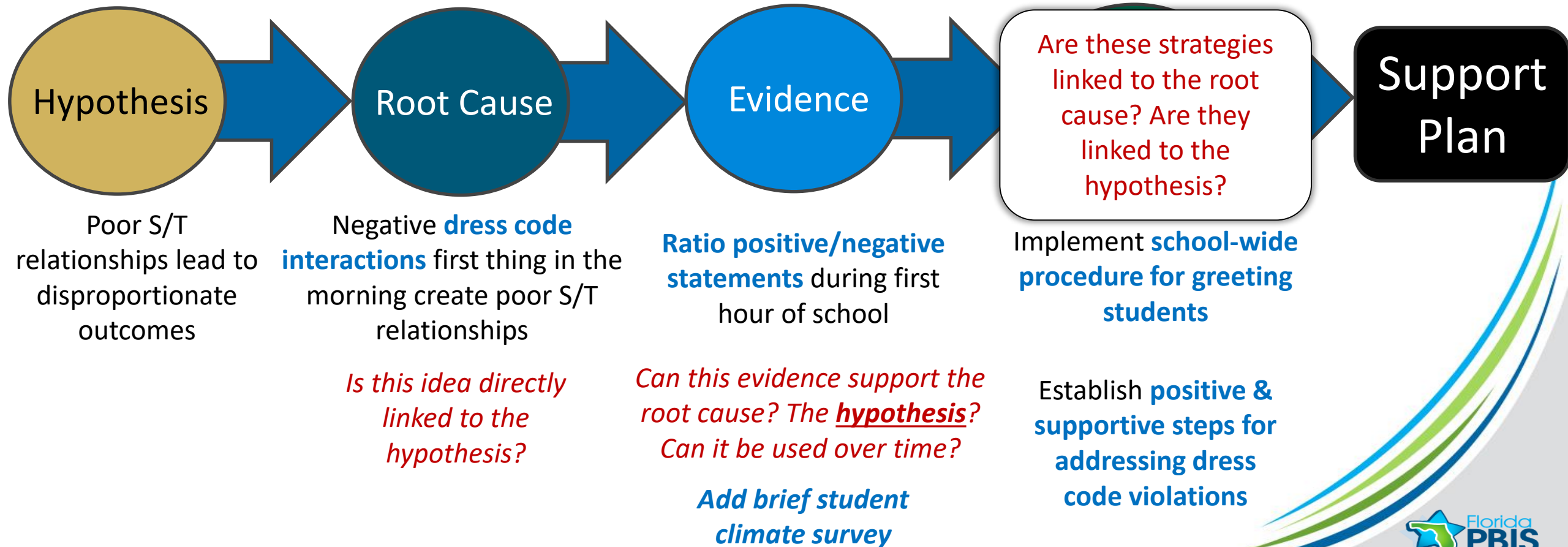
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Problem Analysis



Linking evidence-based ideas to interventions

*All ideas must be directly related to one another – ensure there is a link from the **strategies** back to the **root cause**, and also back to the **original hypothesis**.*



Culturally Responsive Implementation

- Prior to finalizing strategies: **Include your target group**
 - Share your data & your thought processes
 - Provide opportunity for stakeholders to validate your thinking
 - Provide opportunity to brainstorm strategies
 - Offer your ideas as a way to start the ideas flowing
 - **Obtain consensus on 1-2 strategies** *(to start with)*
 - Establish a plan for measurement & follow-up

Seek feedback
early to
increase buy-in

The Hernando County Experience

Mike Lastra, Principal
Brooksville Elementary School
Hernando County Public Schools

A Multi-Tiered System of Supports



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Overview of Hernando County Public Schools

Hernando County Public Schools consist of:

- 10 Elementary Schools
- 3 K-8 Schools
- 4 Middle Schools
- 5 High Schools
- 2 Alternative Education Schools

Hernando County Schools Racial Demographics:

- 63 % Caucasian
- 20.7 % Hispanic
- 7.5% African American

Brief History of Disproportionality/Inequity in HCS

Hernando County seat is located in Brooksville, FL

Long History of Inequity

- Name change in 1856 from Pierceville to Brooksville
- Highest rate of violence in the United States during the 20th centuries
- Neighborhood Zoning Law instituted in 1948
- Schools were segregated until 1969 although declared unconstitutional in 1954 / Desegregation Law of 1972
- Signs of Unification 1988

Disproportionality/Inequity At Brooksville Elementary

2017-2018 Data

At Brooksville Elementary School:

- 30% of all written disciplines in 2017-18 came from only Black/African American students (11% of the population)
- Black/African American Students are 1.83 times more likely to receive a discipline than all students from other subgroups.

Planning Family & Student Focus Groups

Confronting our data

Selection of Students

Contacting Families

Conversation upon contacting Students

Conversation upon contacting Families

Next Time:

- Invite Families in Person
- Include Families that appear to be more challenging and or vocal

Facilitating Family & Student Focus Groups

Developing a Rapport with Student and Family

Setting the Tone for the Group

Setting the Environment

Following up with Families

Next Time:

- Sharing Feedback with Families
- Change time of meeting

Reactions

Family Focus

- Consequences are too quick/harsh
- “Talking back” doesn’t necessary mean a write up
- Parents don’t understand the discipline process
- Students getting “labeled” and not getting a fair chance
- Teachers aren’t calling parents until the issue is already a big one
- Only call when student is in trouble
- Student and teacher relationship issues

Student Focus

- African American students are more likely to get in trouble and get suspended because they don’t cooperate as much
- I sometimes get in trouble for doing things that are being done by other students but they don’t get in trouble.
- I never have the chance to move my clip up
- Non African American students don’t get in trouble
- I wish teachers were better at handling students that are frustrating
- I want teachers to call my mom before it gets too wild

Results and Impact of the Family & Student Focus Groups

Revealed:

- The wide range of poor relationship building skills of staff, families & students
- Open the eyes of those with unconscious biases
- Students feel singled out but unable to speak their truths
- Cultural differences with regards to what disrespect is

New Process:

- Teachers no longer write disciplines for Level 1 offenses such as classroom disruption
- ISS rebranded to In School Solutions
- Teachers must complete 3 interventions prior to making discipline referrals:
 - After Class Conversation with Student; Contact & Document Conversation with Family; Assign Lunch Detention

Making it Work

A Multi-Tiered System of Supports

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Impact

- Root cause process jump-started ongoing home-school communication and positive school-community-family **partnerships**
 - Families members strongly advocate for ongoing sessions
 - Community day developed
- Personal lives were impacted (for the better)
 - Family member decided to become a teacher
- Eye-opening for schools/districts, “big win” systems change strategy
 - Administrator accountability, incentives and fidelity monitoring of positive phone call logs
 - Simple strategy resulting in significant change and impact

Barriers & Strategies to Overcome Them

Barriers

- Fear, resistance
- Communities with historical issues around race
- Distrust of school staff
- Educators' desire to work with familiar groups
- Time of day

Strategies

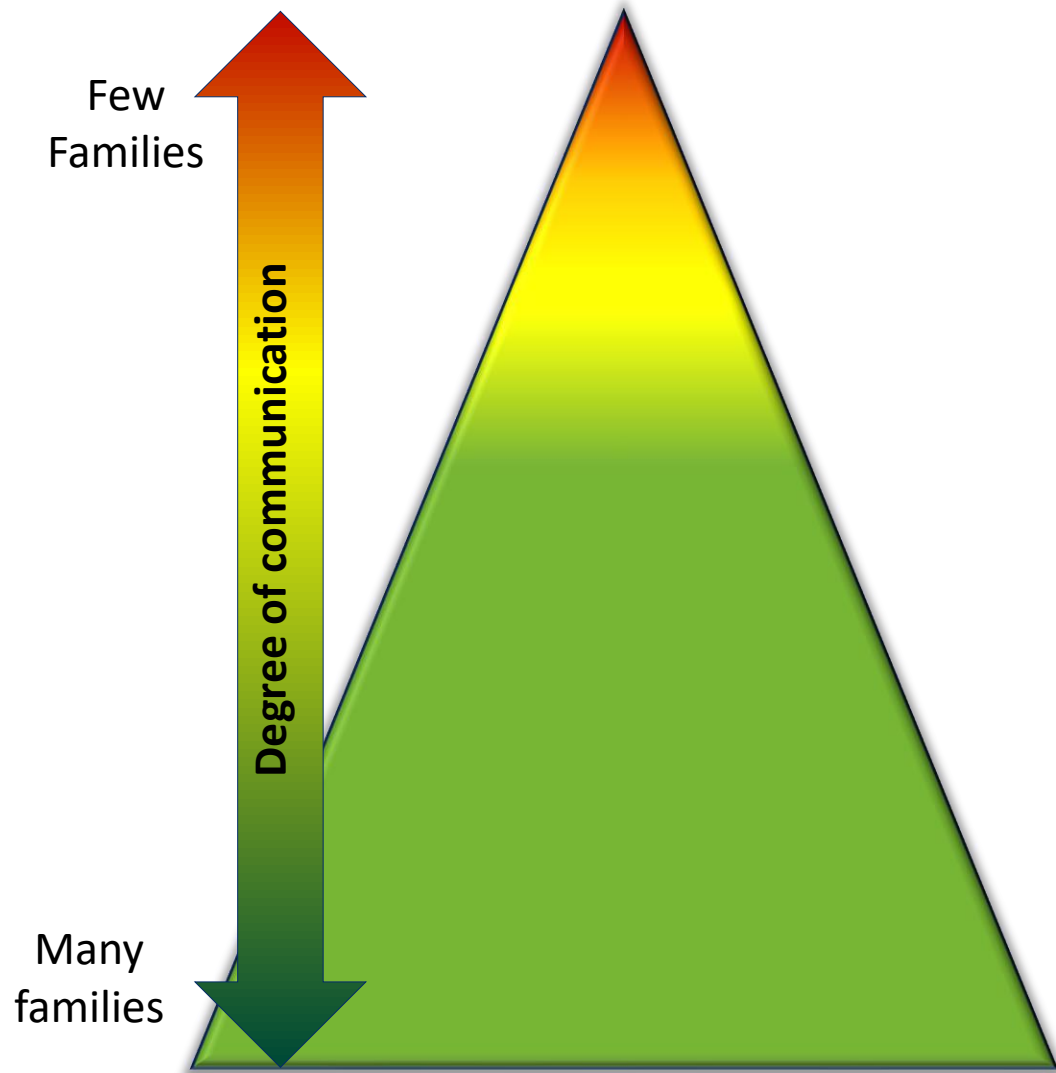
- Work with community advocates to support the work
- Outside staff facilitate focus group
- Ask families permission for school staff participation
 - Honor families decision
- If results aren't representative of target group, repeat focus group

PBIS Center Recommendations

1. Collect, use & report disaggregated discipline data
2. Implement a behavior framework that is preventive, multi-tiered, and culturally responsive
3. Use engaging instruction to reduce the opportunity (achievement) gap
4. Develop policies with accountability for disciplinary equity
5. Teach strategies for neutralizing implicit bias in discipline decisions

<https://www.pbis.org/school/equity-pbis>

Apply Tiered Logic to Family Engagement



Positive home visits
Personal invitations to events
Providing resource rooms/ resource nights

Walking students home
Listening sessions with focused groups
Push-Out to community centers & activities
Providing transportation, language support for school events

Strength-based phone calls home
Interest surveys (students & families)
Talking with community leaders
Community-focused events
Connecting on social media
Understanding the prevalence of trauma in the community



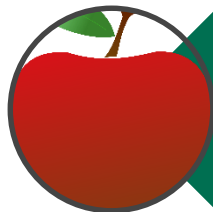
Sharing Data about Disproportionality



Establish history of “safe” data sharing, set norms for feedback



Avoid jargon, establish common understanding



Keep it simple

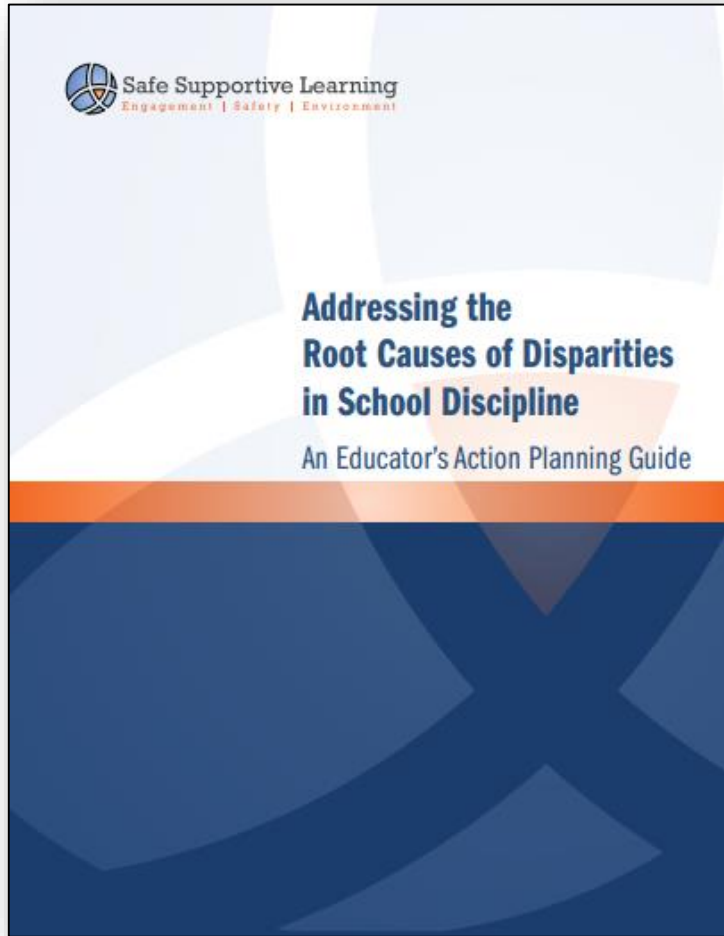


Listen, and don't tell



School teams did not recognize how valuable family or student focus groups could be until they experienced one.

Root Cause Analysis Guide



“A method of problem solving that tries to identify the root causes of problems or patterns found within data. “

Definition of “root,” from Merriam-Webster:

“The origin, cause or source of something; an underlying support.”

Available free of charge at: <https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/sites/default/files/15-1547%20NCSSLE%20Root%20Causes%20Guide%20FINAL02%20mb.pdf>

Resources

OSEP PBIS Practice Guides:

<https://www.pbis.org/school/equity-pbis>

- General recommendations
- Recommendations for data
- Policies
- Instruction
- Culturally Responsive Implementation

Examples of Engaging

Recommendations for Discipline Disproportionality in Education

Kent McIntosh, Erik J. Girvan, Robert H. Horner, Keith S.

A 5-Point Intervention Approach for Enhancing Equity in School Discipline

Kent McIntosh, Erik J. Girvan, Robert H. Horner, Keith Smolkowski, & George Sugai

Discipline disproportionality is one of the most significant problems in education today (Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010; U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2013). The results of decades of research consistently show that students of color, particularly African American students (and even more so for African American boys and those with disabilities), are at significantly increased risk for receiving exclusionary discipline practices, including office discipline referrals and suspensions (e.g., Fabelo et al., 2011; Girvan et al., in press; Losen & Gillespie, 2012). These differences have been found consistently across geographic regions and cannot be adequately explained by the correlation between race and poverty (Noltemeyer & McLoughlin, 2010; Morris & Perry, 2016). Given the negative effects of exclusionary discipline on a range of student outcomes (American Academy of Pediatrics Council on School Health, 2013), educators must address this issue by identifying rates of discipline disproportionality, taking steps to reduce it, and monitoring the effects of intervention on disproportionality. Disproportionality in exclusionary discipline blocks us from the overall objective of promoting positive outcomes for every student.

Components of Effective Intervention to Prevent and Reduce Disproportionality

No single strategy will be sufficient to produce substantive and sustainable change. Multiple components may be needed, but not all components may be necessary in all schools. We describe here a 5-point multicomponent approach to reduce

1. Collect, Use, and Report Disaggregated Discipline Data

Any school or district committed to reducing disproportionality should adopt data systems that allow disaggregation of student data by race /ethnicity and provide instantaneous access to these data for both school and district teams. Some discipline data systems

iveness

Guide for

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ing equity in school dis-
intervention described
. The 5 points include
culturally-responsive
equity policies, and
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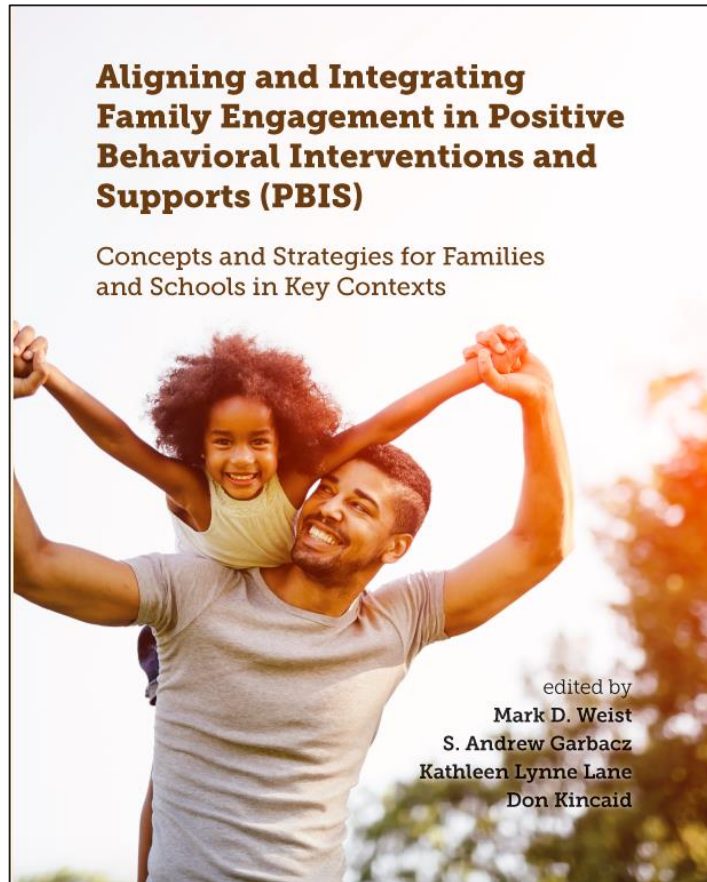
policies and procedures to reduce racial
examples of key elements for policy and
policies to enhance equitable discipline.

ethnic disproportionality in school
es of content that could be included in
use this guide in developing school-
or policies required by local, state, and

Family-School-Community Alliance (FSCA)

Vision

Promote family, youth, and community engaged partnerships in research, practice, and policy to improve prevention and intervention in the systems and practices of positive behavioral interventions and supports and related multi-tiered systems of support toward improvement in valued outcomes.



- Workgroup of the PBIS Technical Assistance Center supported by the Office of Special Education Programs developed from [e-book](#)
- If interested in connecting with or participating in the workgroup, contact dminch@usf.edu for more information.

Go to:
Flpbis.org

Accessing FLPBIS Equity Resources

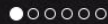
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Home Coaching Tiers Contact

Welcome to the new Florida PBIS!



Welcome to the new Florida PBIS website! Take a look around and let us know what you think!



Maximize positive outcomes for students.

Your vision for effective Multi-Tiered Support Systems (MTSS) requires practical strategies, targeted interventions, and efficient tools. Working smarter requires a strong foundation, leadership, professional growth, and collaboration that make practice easier. The FLPBIS Project offers training and technical assistance, resources, to develop systems that sustain a practical, positive and proactive environment.

About PBIS

Evaluation – PBSES Login

Binder #4: Equity & Climate Resources

DC CORNER



designed exclusively for current FLPBS District Coordinators in the state of Florida

COACHES' CORNER



designed exclusively for our current FLPBS Coaches in the state of Florida

MODEL SCHOOLS



designed exclusively to showcase exemplar FLPBS schools in the state of Florida

CONTACT

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Please enter password.

Access Type

School ▼

Login

[Forgot your password?](#)



3. FLPBIS Classroom Assistance Tool (CAT)

FLPBIS Classroom Assistance Tool (CAT)

By: USFPBS_Org Updated: 01-18-2018 Education



4. Equity & Climate Evaluation Resources

Additional tools and resources to support evaluation of PBIS that are not related to Mid or End Year PBSES Evaluations.

By: USFPBS_Org Updated: 03-20-2018 Education

Updated



5. Classroom Tools & Forms

Data collection tools and other templates to support classroom-level PBIS.

Contact Information and Resources

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OSEP TA Center on PBIS

- www.pbis.org

Association on PBIS

- www.apbs.org



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Interventions & Support Project



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<https://www.youtube.com/user/flpbs1>



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3) QR Code: Scan the code here (or in your program book) and chose your session from the dropdown Menu.

