Developing Consistency in Behavior Data Collection

Supporting all school staff in understanding the need for consistency in the collection of behavior data is key for ensuring data that can be used for decision making as a part of School-wide PBIS implementation. This document provides an overview of the work a school staff must engage in to get to this level of consistency

School-wide Information System (SWIS)

- Your school will be using the School-wide Information System (SWIS) as a data system for organizing information regarding discipline referrals
- SWIS will provide visual displays of data related to discipline referral data collected in your school
- SWIS is designed to help school staff use discipline referral data to support decision making
- Your school will have a local SWIS Facilitator who will help your School Leadership Teams and school staff with these activities as well as support your use of SWIS
- There are "readiness activities" that will set your school up for success in consistency in the collection and use of SWIS data

Moving Towards Consistency in Data Collection

Understanding Discipline Referrals as a Data Source

There are two common misrules when it comes to discipline referral data:

- Misrule #1: Discipline referrals are a consequence or punishment for a student when she or he engages in problem behaviors
- Misrule #2: Discipline referrals should be used as a part of teacher evaluation

The first misrule comes from a misunderstanding what a discipline referral actually is – a data source intended to assist with problem solving at the school, grade, classroom, and individual student levels. The discipline referral in and of itself is not a punishment for student behavior – meaning it will not decrease the likelihood of the behavior occurring in the future. It is purely a means of collecting data on problem behaviors happening in school.

The second misrule comes to the forefront in current times in schools when teacher evaluation has taken center stage in schools across the country. The intent of collecting discipline referral data is not to evaluate teachers. Recall it is a data point that is intended to support problem solving and action planning at the school, grade, classroom and individual student levels. Using discipline referrals as a part of teacher evaluation can lead to teachers and other staff

decreasing or eliminating the use of discipline referrals all together, even though problem behaviors persist. This is not helpful for problem solving and can lead to larger systemic problems.

School Leadership Teams and District Implementation Teams will need to work in tandem to help support school staff in understanding discipline referrals as a data source for problem solving and to guard against both of the misrules previously described.

End Result:

Your school will have a discipline referral form and definitions for problem behaviors that result in a clear understanding of the following:

- Which behaviors are considered to be major problem behaviors and which are considered minor problem behaviors
- Of the major problem behaviors, which are office managed and which are staff managed

Developing these common and clear understanding will allow your school to utilize SWIS as intended – a data system for documenting problem behaviors for problem solving and progress monitoring at the school-wide, grade level, classroom and individual student levels with the ultimate goal of improving the climate of the school and increasing opportunities for student learning. Addressing the steps described below will help to ensure that the data are more reliable and accurate by minimizing judgment calls.

Steps Necessary

The following steps are necessary for ensuring consistency in data collection for problem behaviors:

1. Defining problem behaviors
2. Distinguishing between major and minor problem behaviors
3. Determining which problem behaviors are managed in the office and those managed by staff

Defining Problem Behaviors

In order to have consistency amongst staff, problem behaviors must be:

- Operationally defined
- Clear and concise
- Simple
- Predictable
- Consistent
- Approved by all staff

When problem behaviors are defined, ALL building level staff, administrators, students and families will need to be trained on the definitions. This includes revisiting the problem behaviors on an annual basis.

Distinguishing Between Major and Minor Problem Behaviors

When working with the staff on defining problem behaviors, time must also be spent on distinguishing the difference between which behaviors are considered a major and which behaviors are considered a minor. For some schools that document a large amount of major problem behaviors, they may not want to document minor problem behaviors until they experience a reduction in major behaviors over time.

Minor Problem Behaviors

- Behaviors are managed "on the spot"
- Students can be quickly redirected with classroom management and/or active supervision strategies
- Behaviors that are always staff managed

Major Problem Behaviors

Major problem behaviors can be office or staff managed. These behaviors are more intense and/or require a different response than the minor problem behaviors previously described.

Determining Which Major Problem Behaviors are Office Managed vs. Staff Managed

Major problem behaviors can be classified into two categories, those that are office managed and those that are staff managed.

Office Managed Major Problem Behaviors

Office managed major problem behaviors are considered behaviors that are harmful to self and others, are illegal and are prescribed by the continuum of predetermined response to correcting behavior errors that is established as a part of your implementation of School-wide PBIS.

Staff Managed Major Problem Behaviors

Staff managed major problem behaviors are managed through classroom management and active supervision. In the case of staff managed major problem behaviors, the student can be redirected quickly.

SWIS Facilitator

Your school's SWIS facilitator will provide additional information and support your school staff in accomplishing this work. After having reviewed this document, please capture any follow up questions or points needing clarification from your SWIS Facilitator. Be sure to bring these questions to the meeting between your SLT and SWIS Facilitator.