ADDRESSING SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS' SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING TO AVOID THE SCHOOL-TO-PRISON PIPELINE

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OVERVIEW OF SERVICES THAT SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS NEED

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GOAL OF OUR TRAININGS

- AIM/SEL curriculum
  - Move from managing behaviors to Shaping Expected Behaviors
  - Teaching students behavior is just as important as teaching them Reading, Writing and Arithmetic

- Build capacity with Educators on Trauma Sensitive Classrooms

- Keep students in school and reduce disciplinary actions

- Reduce Burnout of educators by providing Teacher Self-care and building the capacity of managing the weight of trauma in the classroom

- Building the gap between School and Home. The same trainings that we offer APS Educators, we are offering to our parents.

AIM –SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING CURRICULUM

- AIM is a combination of three very well-established evidence-based practices.
- First, AIM incorporates <u>Mindfulness</u> as a general stance
  - orienting the student to be psychologically in the present moment with their thoughts.
  - non-threatening, non-confrontational approach
  - involves the child noticing the sights and sounds around them, learning how to take deep breaths, to notice thoughts but not let them dominate their mind, and finding the joy in the here and now.
  - teaching mindfulness helps the child see the benefit of pushing through for the benefits that can come in the future.

- Second, AIM incorporates <u>Acceptance and Commitment Training</u>
  - documented successful approaches to cognitive-behavioral therapy
  - ACT is considered an Evidence-Based Practice by the National Institute of Health
  - helps the student goal set, learn how to accept challenges that may arise at school and life, and learn perspective taking skills to grow socially
- Finally, AIM infuses the best practices of <u>Applied Behavior Analysis</u>
  - serves as progress monitoring and classroom/school wide behavior management system
  - each student has a dedicated data tracking tool that allows for positive behaviors to be monitored and reinforced at 30-60 minute intervals
  - emphasis is on positive classroom and social behaviors, coupled with reinforcement for also engaging in mindful practices
  - curriculum helps shape the behavior while focusing on the Function of the behavior

[Roughly half](#) of American school children have experienced at least some form of trauma. In response, educators often take on the role of counselors, supporting the emotional healing of their students, not just student, academic growth. Schools also must consider needs of educator supporting students.

Weekly Paid Educator Trainings
- Trauma-informed care
- Adverse Childhood Experiences
- Zones of Regulations
- Psychological Flexibility
- Social Emotional Training
- Teaching Restorative Practices with Classroom Circles

Clinical Social Workers provide trainings to prevent Educator burnout
- Self-care
- Vicarious trauma
- Compassion Fatigue

WHAT DO DISTRICTS AND SCHOOLS NEED TO SUPPORT SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS?

- Funding
  - Curriculum
  - Trainers
  - Staffing to support

- Community Engagement and School "Buy In"
  - Create more community schools with mental health services
  - Increase mental health/behavioral health facilities and services within our state
  - Rethink student discipline and SEL instruction with teachers across schools and districts

- Change of mindset
  - Identify what kids need to stay in school
  - Eliminate the "not in my school" ideology
  - Identify and accept that educators need support
  - Break silos across disciplines
  - Eliminate mental health stigma

RESTORATIVE PRACTICES AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO SUSPENSIONS AND ARREST

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CHANGING THE LENS TO ENGAGE STUDENTS:

SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS REFERRED FOR DISCIPLINE MUST BE ENGAGED IN CONVERSATIONS TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER (SRO)

- SROs are sworn law enforcement officers

- SROs are responsible for providing security and crime prevention services in the school environment and are typically employed by a local police or sheriff's agency.

- SROs work closely with administrators in an effort to create a safe environment for students and staff.

- Other responsibilities should include:
  - Partnerships with staff, students, families
  - Provide education about local laws to staff students and families
  - Provide pro-active positive support for staff, and families to resolve school community challenges
  - Point of contact for communities adjacent to the school community
  - Establish a relationship with local law enforcement officers to address negative student behaviors

CHANGING THE CYCLE OF INCARCERATING YOUTH IN A SCHOOL COMMUNITY

The following are suggestions and considerations for school police and school staff to reduce referrals to juvenile courts:

- Identify the role of the school resource officer as a partner in school based discipline.

- Create alternative to detention programs within the school community by partnering with internal and external resources.

- Review reporting methods to determined how violations can be resolved within the school community.

- Train school resource officers/security staff on the use of restorative practices.

SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS

SCHOOL COMMUNITY

- Administration

- School Resource Officer

- Teachers

- Counselors/social workers

- Students

- Family members

- Internal school resources

- External district resources

COMMUNITY

- Non-profit community organizations
  - Drug/alcohol education

- For profit organizations
  - Drug use assessment/treatment

- Mental health providers
  - Community based

- Other law enforcement agencies

- Juvenile Probation/Courts

- Neighborhood organizations for community engagement.

LAW ENFORCEMENT OPTIONS AS ALTERNATIVE TO ARREST

- 15 hour educational program designed by students
  - Parent Approval w/agreement as an alternative
  - After school for one hour on school day
  - Drug education (individual or group based on behavior)
  - Conflict resolution
  - Proper use of social media
  - Healthy relationships
  - Healthy life style (food, meditation, seeding for stress)
  - Campus/classroom expectations (student advocacy and reporting)
  - Community engagement (on/off campus with other clubs)
- Once student completes program, no further action is taken unless agreement involves re-offending with similar behavior.

EXAMPLES OF RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

- Connection Circles

- Restorative Conversations

- Restorative Agreement meetings

- Restorative Mediation

- Problem Solving Circles

- Community circles/Re-integration Circle

- Restorative practices should be used as alternatives to expulsion and suspension

  - All opportunities are designed to engage staff and students to build relationships, change behavior and engage in agreements and consequences which are constructed by the student and/or family member.

REDUCING DETENTION REFERRALS FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

School Resource Officer role:

- Be familiar with in Individualized Education Plans for students within assigned school
  - Participate in discussing Behavioral Intervention Plans
  - Knowledge of de-escalation techniques used by staff
  - Knowledge of de-escalation methods used by guardians
    - Ensure guardians are familiar with staff responses to de-escalation
  - Consistent interactions with students to build positive relationships
  - Participate in the IEP/BIP when a child's behaviors may escalate to a violation
  - Avoid generalized responses to behavior and focus on individual needs of students when addressing threating behavior.
  - Include SRO in Crisis Intervention and S.E.L professional development with school staff

CLOSING

- [HB 330](#) TRAINING LAW ENFORCEMENT FOR SCHOOL RESOURCES

REQUIRING CERTIFIED LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS WHO WORK AS SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS TO BE SPECIFICALLY TRAINED FOR THOSE POSITIONS; ALLOWING SCHOOL DISTRICT POLICE AGENCIES THAT HAVE FULL-TIME SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS TO RECEIVE FUNDING FROM THE LAW ENFORCEMENT PROTECTION

- [HB 490](#) SCHOOL TRAINING FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT

REQUIRING ALL CERTIFIED AND COMMISSIONED LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS EMPLOYED BY THE NEW MEXICO STATE POLICE DIVISION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY, MUNICIPAL POLICE DEPARTMENTS AND COUNTY SHERIFF OFFICES TO HAVE INITIAL AND IN-SERVICE SCHOOL-SPECIFIC TRAINING.

What is an IEP (Individualized Education Plan)?

- An IEP is a map that lays out the program of special education instruction, supports and services kids need to make progress and succeed in school.

- IEPs are part of our public education system. They are given to eligible kids who attend public school to include charter schools as well.

- After a student has been evaluated the results of that evaluation allow the parent and the school to create a program of services and supports tailored to meeting each child's needs.

Social Emotional Support Service (SESS)

- Students may be referred to a SES program when the IEP team decides if SEL services are necessary for that child to be academically successful.

- The IEP team then decides if the package of services that the student needs can be provided at their neighborhood school.

- If placement at the neighborhood school is not an option the team will look into other district service packages to see where the student can be placed.

- APS offers SESS1 and SESS2 programs

Social/Emotional Curriculum
AIM = Accept. Identify. Move.

1. AIM is the outcome of the implementation of 3 evidence based practices of intervention for children
2. The 3 elements of AIM are Mindfulness Training, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), and Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA)
3. When fused together in a dynamic system, the results include a promising recipe of support for social and emotional problems in childhood
4. Social and Emotional Learning is the process through which children and adults understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions

CASEL.org (2019)

WHO | WHAT | WHEN

- All staff and students are expected to participate and model all aspects of the AIM curriculum in group and through out the day.

- Addressing functions of behavior such as: attention, escape, tangible or sensory needs, as is relates to each individual student

  - A Behavior Analytic Curriculum for Social-Emotional Development in Children
  - MarkR. Dixon PH.D/BCBBA-D
  - Dana Paliliunas, MS/BCBA

- Everyday, all staff and students participate in a psycho-educational community meeting, focused on a specific AIM lesson

WHERE	WHY	HOW
• Any common area that can support all staff and students in one location. We are currently using our Life Skills Community Area	• To promote and provide social emotional skills for interpersonal relationships, distress tolerance, and psychological flexibility	• ACT lessons that have been modified and individualized for our specific population • Staff and student agreed upon behavioral expectations • Point System • Hexaflex

Present Moment
1. Being here now
2. Engaging in what is happening now
3. Not going through the motions
4. Not drifting into own thoughts

Defusion
1. Watch your thinking
2. Detaching from thoughts or memories
3. Not getting caught up in thoughts
4. Letting go of thoughts

Acceptance
1. Opening up
2. Making room for feelings
3. Letting thoughts be and not getting overwhelmed

Self-as-Context
1. Pure awareness
2. Separating the thinking self and the observing self
3. Recognizing changes
4. Being "the observing self"

Values
1. Knowing what matters
2. Standing up for something
3. Choosing or recognizing a purposeful direction or behavior
4. Using one's own "compass"

Committed Action
1. Doing what it takes
2. Taking effective action
3. Moving in a chosen direction

Present Moment Awareness: Be Here Now.

Acceptance: Be OK with things.

Values: What are you working for?

Psychological Flexibility

Defusion: Step back from your mind.

Self-as-Context: Be the real you.

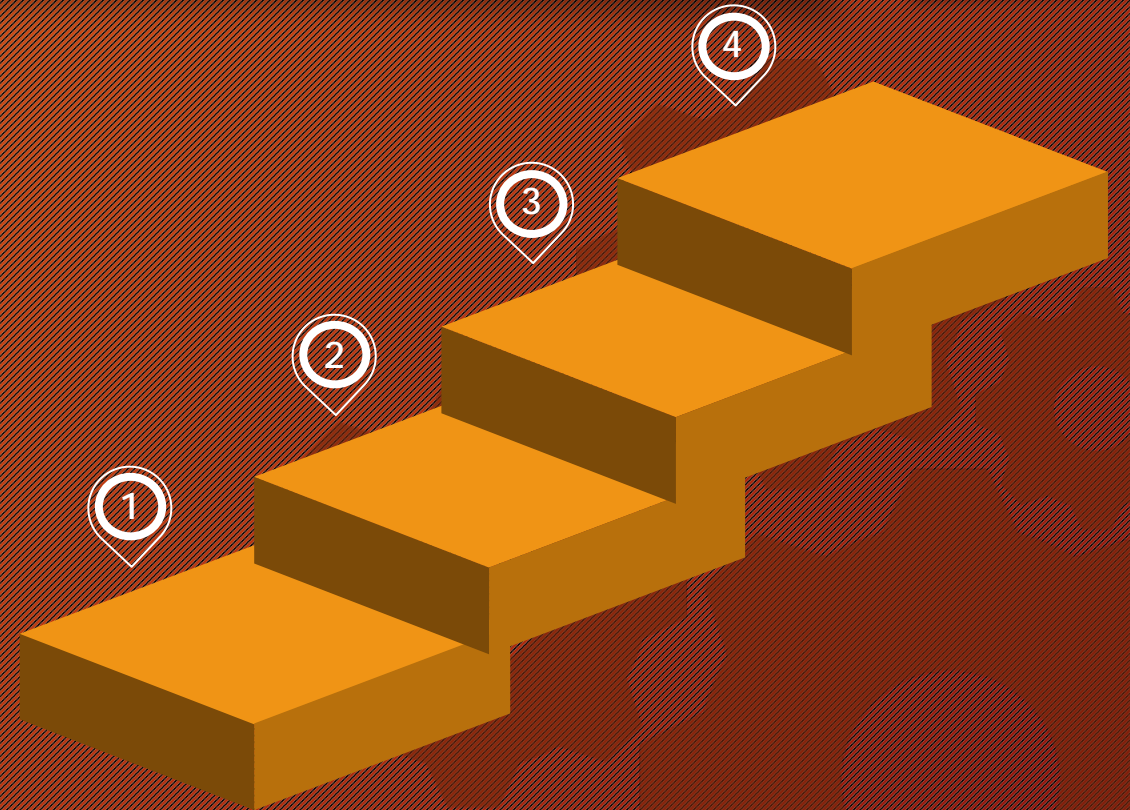Committed Action: Don't give up.

What are our next steps?

- Student led micro-committees that identify student preferences (music room, garden, art room, sensory room) – giving ownership to the students

- Increased Psychological Flexibility for EVERYONE

- Continued Data Collection

Thank you for this opportunity