Transforming Culture and Climate in Oakland Schools

School Security Officer Professional Development
June 17-25, 2014
Police Services Building
Goals for Today

- Unpack changes in school discipline policies and practices
- Analyze data on inequities
- Share selected best practices for reducing unfair treatment of African American students
- Explore the impact of trauma on student behavior
- Practice de-escalation techniques for problem behaviors
- Engage in restorative justice community building practices
Voluntary Resolution Plan

- Based on 2010-11 suspension data, the US Office of Civil Rights (OCR) reprimands OUSD for pushing out African American students

- 2011-12 -- OUSD enters a voluntary agreement with OCR promising broad, systemic discipline reform

- OCR seeks dramatic reductions in suspensions by 2017:
  - <1% suspensions for elementary school students
  - <5% suspensions for middle & high school students
Inequities in OUSD

- In Oakland Unified we have 33% African American Students and they receive 67% of suspensions

African American male students make up 17% of our student body and receive 42% of all suspensions
Racial Inequities 2011-12

2011-12 OUSD Student Enrollment by Ethnicity
Total = 37,742

- African American: 32%
- Asian: 15%
- Latino: 38%
- White: 10%
- Other*: 6%

* Other includes: Filipino, Native American, Pacific Islander, Multiple Ethnicities, and Not-Reported

2011-12 OUSD Suspended Students by Ethnicity
Total = 2,964 suspended students

- African American: 63%
- Asian: 4%
- Latino: 27%
- White: 3%
- Other*: 3%

* Other includes: Filipino, Native American, Pacific Islander, Multiple Ethnicities, and Not-Reported
Percentage of Boys in All Grades Suspended Once or More, 2005-06 to 2010-11

Source: Oakland Unified School District (OUSD)
Note: District average includes African American males.
Percentage Suspended by Reason (Grades K-12) 2010-11

- Proportion of Other Students Suspended
- Proportion of AAM Population Suspended
Patterns of Offenses for African American Males with Multiple Suspensions in 2010-11

- All Offenses - Defy Authority: 44%
- All Offenses - Threat or Cause Injury: 20%
- Both Defy Authority & Threat/Cause Injury: 28%
- Neither Defy Nor Cause Injury: 8%
Reducing Suspensions for Defiance

When School Discipline Does Damage
Impact of unequal suspension on African American students

- Increase alienation from school
- Increase risk of dropout
- Increased risk of incarceration
- Reduced classroom instruction
- Reduced academic achievement
- Reduced life expectancy
Obama’s Issues Guiding Principles on Improving School Culture and Discipline

1. Create positive climates and focus on prevention
2. Develop clear, appropriate, and consistent expectations and consequences to address disruptive student behaviors
3. Ensure fairness, equity, and continuous improvement
Promising Community School Approaches

- Restorative Justice
- Culturally Responsive Instruction
- Trauma Informed Practices
- Positive Behavioral Support
Expanding Best Practices

- Restorative Justice at 24 schools
- Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports (PBIS) expansion at 26 schools
- Manhood Development Classes at 15 schools
- Staff Professional Development on Trauma-Informed Practices
- Universal office referral form piloted at 10 schools
African American Male Achievement Initiative

- **Manhood Development** provides a school day program for African American students in grades 6-10.
- Program incorporates culturally relevant social emotional development curriculum, team building exercises, cultural field trips, case management, and college tours.
We are not dangerous. Racism is.
Restorative justice is based on the idea that *because crime hurts, justice should heal* (Braithwaite).
## Restorative Justice Paradigm Shift

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Retributive Justice</th>
<th>Restorative Justice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What rule or law was broken?</td>
<td>What harm was caused and to whom?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who broke it?</td>
<td>What needs and obligations were created?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the prescribed punishment?</td>
<td>What shall be done to repair the harm?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3 Tiers of Whole-School Restorative Justice

Tier 1: Establishing relationships

Tier 2: Reparative response to harm

Tier 3: Supported re-entry

Circles of Support & Accountability

Community Conferencing/Conflict Resolution processes

Classroom Community-Building Circles
Response to Intervention

Continuum of School-Wide Instructional & Positive Behavior Support

- **Tertiary Prevention:**
  - Specialized
  - Individualized
  - Systems for Students with High-Risk

- **Secondary Prevention:**
  - Specialized Group
  - Systems for Students with At-Risk Behavior

- **Primary Prevention:**
  - School-/Classroom-Wide Systems for All Students, Staff, & Settings
I started a fire in the lab—on purpose! How about you?

I tapped my pencil on my desk during study time.
What are the Rules Video
School-Wide Positive Behavioral Intervention & Support (SW-PBIS)

- Common practice and approach to discipline
- Clear set of positive expectations and behaviors
- Consistent teaching and reinforcing of positive behavior
- Common procedures for discouraging problem behavior
- Use of data for progress monitoring
Universal Referral Form

- Tracks office referrals and Pre-Referral Interventions
- Supported by student information system (AERIES)
- Pilot launched in January with 10 schools for full roll-out to 86 schools in 2014-15
Why a Universal Discipline Referral Form?

- Standardize data reporting across all sites
- Shift focus to prevention
- Promote pre-referral interventions
- Collect referral data for decision-making
- Identify students with chronic behavioral problems for tiered interventions
- Reduce racial bias in discipline
## Pre-referral Interventions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic support plan</th>
<th>Mental Health Counseling</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Behavior support plan</td>
<td>Mentoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community service</td>
<td>Parent consultation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COST Referral</td>
<td>Reparation/Restitution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug Counseling</td>
<td>Restorative Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily progress report</td>
<td>Conference/Mediation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detention</td>
<td>Student Support Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of privilege</td>
<td>Written reflective process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mediation</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2012-2013 Suspensions Way Down

- 3,036 OUSD students were suspended once or more in 2011-12 vs. 2,071 in 2012-13 – cut by one-third in one year.
- The district suspension rate dropped from 8% to 6%.
- 1,254 African American male students were suspended once or more in 2011-12 vs. 794 in 2012-13 – cut by more than a third.
- The suspension rate for African American male students dropped from 21% to 14% in one year.
Trauma Informed Practices
What do we mean by a Trauma?

An event that poses an immediate, severe threat of injury, harm, or even death to the person or someone critically important to them.

Most Common Childhood Traumatic Events

Child abuse (shaking, burning, sexual abuse, neglect, malnutrition, assault)

Witnessing Family and Community Violence
Types of Traumatic Stress

- **Acute trauma** is a single traumatic event that is limited in time.
- **Chronic trauma** refers to the experience of multiple traumatic events.
- **Complex trauma** describes both exposure to chronic trauma—usually caused by adults entrusted with the child’s care—and the impact of such exposure on the child.
How Common is Trauma?

Figure 1. Prevalence of Adverse Child and Family Experiences among US Children Age 0-17 years

- 52.1% No adverse family experiences
- 25.3% One adverse family experience
- 22.6% Two or more adverse family experiences

Source: 2011/12 NSCH
How can I tell if a child has a trauma history?

Some warning signs are

- Unregulated emotions
- Hard time putting feelings into words
- Impossible to tell what ‘triggered’ them
- Sees threats or insults where there are none
- Cannot seem to calm down from upsets
- Finds it difficult to shift from one activity to the next
- Easily over-stimulated
Adolescent Development and Trauma

• In response to trauma, adolescents may feel:
  • That they are strange, different or “going crazy”
  • Embarrassed by their inability to control their fears, emotions, and behavior
  • Isolated and alone in their pain and suffering
  • Anxiety and depression
  • Intense anger
  • Low self-esteem and helplessness
Children with Disabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incidence per 1,000</th>
<th>Children w/out Disabilities</th>
<th>Children w/ Disabilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical Abuse</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Abuse</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Abuse</td>
<td>2.9 (Goldson, 2002)</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Neglect, physical abuse, and emotional abuse are most often perpetrated by immediate family members. Sexual abuse is largely perpetrated by extrafamilial members (Sullivan and Knutson, 2000).
How does Trauma impact behavior?
How does Trauma impact behavior?

- High
- Low

CALM

Behavior Intensity vs. Time graph
1. Calm

• Student is cooperative.
  • Accepts corrective feedback.
  • Follows directives.
  • Sets personal goals.
  • Ignores distractions.
  • Accepts praise.
How does Trauma impact behavior?
2. Trigger

- Student experiences a series of unresolved conflicts.
  - Repeated failures
  - Frequent corrections
  - Interpersonal conflicts
  - Deadlines
  - High rates of negative feedback
Stages of Trauma Reaction

Time

Behavior Intensity

High

Low

AGITATION

*
3. Agitation

- Student exhibits increase in unfocused behavior.
  - Off-task
  - Frequent start/stop on tasks
  - Out of seat
  - Talking with others
  - Withdrawn
How does Trauma impact behavior?

ACCELERATION
4. Acceleration

- Student displays focused behavior.
  - Provocative
  - High intensity
  - Threatening
  - Personal
Survival Mode: Fight/Flight/Freeze

The Learning Brain shuts down and the Survival Brain take over.

Learning/Thinking Brain (Prefrontal Cortex)

Survival/Emotion Brain (Limbic System)
Trauma Reaction
Consciously avoid responses that lead to more serious behaviors:

- Shouting
- Engaging in power struggles
- Moving into the student’s space
- Touching the student
- Sudden or very quick movements
- Criticizing
- Becoming defensive and arguing
- Threatening posture
How does Trauma impact behavior?

![Graph showing behavior intensity over time with a peak at the center.](image-url)
5. Peak

- Student is dis-regulated and may engage in
  - Physical aggression
  - Property destruction
  - Self-injury
  - Escape/social withdrawal
  - Hyperventilation
Peak

- Intervention is focused on safety.
  - focus is on de-escalation strategies
How does Trauma impact behavior?

![Graph showing behavior intensity over time with a peak labeled DECELERATION.](image_url)
6. De-escalation

- Student displays confusion but with decreases in severe behavior.
  - Social withdrawal
  - Denial
  - Blaming others
  - Minimization of problem
How does Trauma impact behavior?

![Graph showing the impact of trauma on behavior intensity over time. The graph shows an increase in behavior intensity peaking at a high point before recovering to a low point. The term 'RECOVERY' is highlighted at the low point.]
Recovery

Help student to reflect and repair:

- What happened, and what were you thinking at the time?
- What have you thought about since?
- Who has been affected by what you have done? In what way?
- What about this has been hardest for you?
- What do you think you need to do to make things as right as possible?

International Institute for Restorative Practices
Avoid Re-escalation:
Where Are You in the Cycle?

Adapted from SFGH Safety Management and Response Techniques (SMART) Training
J. Dorado (2014), UCSF HEARTS, Child & Adolescent Services, UCSF/SFGH
• De-Escalating Problem Behavior
KEEP CALM AND CIRCLE UP

OUSD RESTORATIVE PRACTICES
How Circles Work

- Only the person with the talking piece may speak. Everyone else should be actively listening to them.
- Follow the guidelines
- Pass the talking piece in one direction around the circle, not across.
- Everyone answers the same question from their own perspective.
Questions for Circles

1. If you had a superpower, what would it be?
2. What triggers you in this work?
3. What do you need in the moment to be able to handle the situation without escalating it?
4. What skills do you call internally to not get sucked in?
5. How do you sustain yourself in this work over time?
6. Name an intention you want to set for yourself going into next year.
Aggression → Harm → Trauma

Fight, Flight, Freeze

Safe environment, caring adults, academic, social-emotional, & behavioral supports

Executive function

Engaged Learning