

School Climate and Culture: Shifting to a Preventative Approach in School



The System for Student Success

Important Resources

PBIS: OSEP Technical Assistance Center:
www.pbis.org/school

University of South Florida PBS Project: [//flpbs.fmhi.usf.edu/](http://flpbs.fmhi.usf.edu/)

U.S. Department of Education:
www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/school-discipline/index.html

Get Involved:

- Volunteer at DCPS:
www.duvalschools.org/domain/4549
- Attend a Parent Academy training:
www.duvalschools.org/parentacademy
- Contact NAACP Jacksonville

Session Leaders

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Other organizations

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Background/Historical Information

It is well known that the culture and climate of any system is a function of the way in which it handles discipline. What is less realized is that a system cannot “discipline” its way to success. This is particularly true for most learning environments, and more so for public education. The public education system is under more scrutiny and accountability than ever before in its history – which isn’t necessarily a bad thing - and with it comes a need to consider revising a way of work that has been around for multiple generations.

To be clear, all systems involving youth require a plan for addressing “discipline” both at the individual student level and at the school level. In fact, a quote from the pbis.org website reveals an “emphasis on school-wide systems of support that include proactive strategies for defining, teaching, and supporting appropriate student behaviors to create positive school environments.” This does not exclude individual discipline needs, but does highlight that “instead of using a piecemeal approach of individual behavioral management plans, a continuum of positive behavior support for all students within a school is implemented in areas including the classroom and non-classroom settings (such as hallways, buses, and restrooms).” As such, we take advantage of opportunities to describe, model, and blatantly reinforce expected behaviors that are unique from those that are allowed in the home, neighborhood, church, and grocery store.

Educational leadership at all levels must find the balance between consequences for undesired conduct and teaching and reinforcement of desired behavior. In other words, the challenge for adults is to express a value for the child but not the unacceptable behaviors – an expression not always easily accomplished with so many competing demands on a 21st Century educator...or learner! The good news is that there is a strong relationship between teacher well-being and the presence of positive behavior supports in a classroom, that in turn lead to positive student outcomes. A clearly articulated plan for addressing behavior through rewards/reinforcement and progressive discipline allows time for children and youth to learn new behaviors and establish a positive legacy!