In the following report, Hanover Research provides a discussion of several evidence-based alternatives to suspension and an overview of statewide efforts to reduce the use of suspension in Connecticut, Maryland, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. This information will assist our member in identifying promising strategies and providing technical assistance to school districts with high suspension rates.
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND KEY FINDINGS

INTRODUCTION

In this report, Hanover Research examines common alternatives to suspension and intervention strategies to reduce suspension, and examines statewide efforts to reform school discipline in Connecticut, Maryland, Wisconsin, and Minnesota.

Researchers agree that students of color, particularly African American students, are suspended more frequently than white students, and that students with disabilities are suspended more frequently than non-disabled students. Highlighting where these two groups intersect, according to a study released in August 2012, 25 percent of African American students with disabilities were suspended at least once during the 2009-2010 school year, the most at-risk population evaluated.1

As one source observes, “most school discipline plans are reactive and punitive, rather than proactive.”2 Accordingly, suspension is not typically accompanied with either instruction or intervention to encourage positive behaviors. Further sources discussed throughout this report show significant evidence that suspension can negatively impact students, schools, districts, and surrounding communities. Many schools, districts, and a handful of state departments of education are actively seeking alternatives to this approach; their efforts are detailed in this report.

KEY FINDINGS

- Hanover Research has highlighted the efforts of four states other than North Carolina that have enacted comprehensive initiatives to implement alternatives to suspension: Connecticut, Maryland, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. Associated literature is highly valuable in identifying up-to-date material to inform the development of an alternative disciplinary practices resource guide and set of best practices.

- While little was found in the way of state-developed technical assistance documents related to identifying appropriate interventions and training staff to implement them, it does appear that Maryland is currently attempting to develop such a resource for its schools.

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Available literature and practices adopted by successful schools suggest that **a fundamental step to reducing the number of suspensions is a formal recognition of the problem.** Following this recognition, schools and districts can seek to relegate suspensions to the position of a measure of last resort, treating it as a punishment for very specific categories of offenses—generally involving possession of a weapon or illegal drugs at school. Nationwide, students are most often suspended for committing lesser infractions, especially for expressing defiance toward authority figures, fighting, and creating a disruption in class. Evidence suggests that zero-tolerance policies result in greater numbers of suspensions than decisions left to the discretion of administrators based on individual circumstances.

The most common approach for schools and districts actively working to reduce the number of suspensions is to establish a **disciplinary plan** regarding suspension as a last resort. This necessitates strong school leadership and accompanying professional development opportunities. Through the implementation of such a plan, students are provided incentives to engage in positive behavior; teachers and administrators pursue constructive relationships with parents; and alternatives to suspension are ultimately instated.

A recommended approach to school discipline with wide support is **Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS).** PBIS is a proactive, tiered program for preventing problem behaviors that offers universal supports for all students, coupled with more intensive supports for small groups and individual students.

One of the hallmarks of the PBIS approach is the setting of **basic behavioral expectations** for students, and the establishment of a school culture in which these expectations are made explicit. School personnel model positive behaviors with students, and acknowledge when students display appropriate behaviors as a means of reinforcement. Students requiring more intensive interventions may participate in small-group interventions such as a Check-in/Check-out program, while more serious cases may prompt a functional behavioral assessment to determine the root cause of the behavior and the development of an individualized behavior intervention plan.

**In-school suspension has been acknowledged as an effective alternative to out-of-school suspension** in some contexts. The model typically consists of a dedicated classroom, either on- or off-site, with a permanent teacher or supervisor. Students complete classroom assignments, discuss their misbehavior, and address possible alternative choices. While this model is popular, however, the literature does not support in-school suspension as a **uniformly** successful approach for reducing disciplinary incidents or overall suspension rates.

Other alternatives to suspension include **peer mediation** programs, “**circles**” in which students and teachers discuss behavior and other issues as a group, **behavior contracts, Saturday classes,** and a “**chill out/timeout**” area that allows students to calm down and discuss an infraction with a school staff member. Additional alternatives are discussed throughout the report.
SECTION I: ALTERNATIVES TO SUSPENSION

In this section, Hanover Research discusses several evidence-based approaches to reducing suspension, namely: in-school suspension (ISS), School-Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS), Restorative Justice (RJ), and Promoting Alternative THinking Strategies (PATHS). These four strategies – which range in scope from classroom-based behavioral interventions to more comprehensive, program-based approaches – are among the most commonly-cited alternatives to suspension; each offers a strong research base from which to draw in terms of evaluation.

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION (ISS)

In-School Suspension (ISS) is a common alternative to standard suspension, and is generally considered to mitigate many of the harmful aspects of out-of-school suspension. As education and human services scholar Neil Blomburg has noted, “because ISS keeps students in the classroom environment, it is possible for school officials to both punish inappropriate behavior, and to intervene in a positive manner with students.”3 It is important to note that adopting ISS does not typically result in a full elimination of out-of-school suspension, and that in general, “parents, educators, students, and the community do not feel that ISS is an appropriate punishment for severe problems,” such as drugs, violence, and related activity.4 ISS is typically meted out to students for truancy, excessive tardiness, and other behavior which does not directly threaten the safety of a school.

An examination of ISS programs implemented in individual schools and districts across the United States reinforces the fact that “not all ISS programs have the same form or produce the same deterrent effects among students.”5 Despite this lack of standardization, however, ISS programs generally accord with the following:6

ISS is a discipline model where a student is removed from the classroom and compelled to stay in an ISS center for a variable length of time, ranging from part of a day to several days in a row. The ISS center is a specific staffed room where various behavior changing strategies [occur], ranging from punitive to rehabilitive actions that attempt to stop or change student misbehavior without having the student removed from the school environment.

Though ISS offers an appealing prospect for mitigating the negative impacts of traditional suspension, as one source states, “the story of ISS is one of both promise and pessimism.”7 Research on the benefits of ISS is somewhat inconclusive. A 2004 literature review in Villanova University’s journal Concept highlights the fact that there are “limited case

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4 Ibid.
6 Ibid, p. 2.
7 Ibid, p. 5.
examples of schools and districts that use ISS so effectively that it dramatically changes the
discipline climate and suspension rate in their schools” but goes on to note that case studies
“tend to be a description of the authors’ success, instead of a truly objective measure of change.” 8 Salient findings of relevant research on ISS highlighted in this review include the
following:9

- A large-scale report published in 1991 on a district in Des Moines, Iowa with 10 middle schools and five high schools determined a positive effect of ISS in significantly reducing OSS suspensions (in accordance with a district goal to make half of all suspensions ISS). Faculty and staff members were enthusiastic about the initiative, though the study found serious problems in racial equity, as African American students were suspended disproportionately in relation to other ethnic groups.

- Another large-scale report published in 1990 on Houston Independent School District examined the effectiveness of district student referral centers (SRCs) in dealing with student disciplinary infractions. SRCs are dedicated rooms to which students are sent after creating problems in standard classrooms. The study evaluated 14 SRCs serving 19 Houston middle schools, finding that teachers had a positive opinion of the program but noting that the centers were under-resourced, and thus ultimately less effective in fulfilling their mission. The central barrier to effectiveness was the number of students per center (an average of 25, as opposed to the recommended maximum of 20).

- One 1997 case study evaluated an ISS room in a rural high school with an enrollment of 364 students, of whom approximately half were African American, and half white. This ISS room offers an exemplar of an extremely low-cost model; the room was not staffed, but instead had a camera monitoring students. Footage was monitored by the principal and his secretary, who intervened when students spoke to one another or were disruptive. Students and teachers agreed that ISS was viewed as a “real punishment” and all surveyed teachers felt that ISS “helped with classroom discipline.” 10 However, there was no observable effect on school discipline, in terms of the number of out-of-school suspension and number of lost instructional days. Researchers viewed the program as a “limited success.”

- A 1997 dissertation examined 20 Michigan school districts with similar suspension rates, in order to compare “apples to apples” in examining the impact of an ISS program “on the rate of violent acts committed by students.” Overall, the study found that the intervention of a teacher trained in ISS “helped to reduce the number of violent acts when compared with the control schools. In fact, all of the experimental schools noted a significant change for the better.”

To ensure fidelity of implementation and effective results, research indicates that an ISS program should have a dedicated room and teacher serving each school. Students should be

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8 Ibid.
9 Ibid., pp. 5-8.
10 Ibid., p. 6.
given the opportunity to keep up with their classwork, and should also ideally be provided with some level of socio-emotional support; a recent Education World article on ISS notes that “the most effective in-school suspension programs have components to address students’ academic and social needs,” as “structured programs that address multiple issues can help students get back to class faster and stay there.” However, other researchers have cautioned that “although the majority of educators may argue for more funding or more trained staff as the answer, there is little systematic evidence of the types of programs that work.” In general, identified characteristics of effective ISS programs include the following:

- Ways to ensure in-school suspension is appropriate; in-school suspension is unlikely to resolve a truancy or homework completion problem that should be resolved through other means.
- A term limit; students should not be suspended indefinitely.
- Problem-solving and/or mediation (including peer mediation) sessions among teachers and students or students and students, which result in written contracts that spell out future expectations.
- Mechanisms that ensure students come to the program with academic assignments to complete.
- Professionals to staff the program, such as a teacher who can assess students for unidentified learning difficulties and assist in assignment completion, and a counselor who can explore root causes of problems, refer students to community services, and engage with parents.

Figure 1.1 shows several exemplars of ISS programs in schools and school districts across the United States.

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### Figure 1.1: Selected Exemplary School and District ISS Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL OR DISTRICT</th>
<th>PROGRAM</th>
<th>KEY CHARACTERISTICS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| A Crawford Mosley High School <sup>14</sup>  
Lynne Haven, FL | Positive Alternative to School Suspension (PASS) | - Students are assigned to PASS for 3, 5, or 10 days, and work on their regular class assignments while under ISS.  
- PASS begins with an orientation program explaining rules and expectations.  
- Students are graded daily (using a point system) in the areas of attendance, tardiness, ability to follow rules, classroom behavior, and “on-task academic behavior.” Points range from 0 (superior) to 5 (reassignment to O.S.S.); students receiving 5 or more points over their ISS period are reassigned to O.S.S.  
- No formal counseling component; however, teachers facilitate informal discussions regarding behavioral strategies to prevent future ISS.  
- Factors necessary for success of PASS:  
  o Preparation: Students and teachers need books and materials, and the teacher needs strategies to keep the students on task.  
  o Orientation: Ensure rules, benefits, and consequences of the program are clearly communicated.  
  o Implementation: Ensure students complete their work, the teacher keeps accurate records, and the teacher is fair and consistent.  
  o Assessment: Every program should have a method for assessing students.  
- Assessments have found that only a small number of students do not complete ISS and are assigned to out-of-school suspension; the current ISS success rate is 84.4%. <sup>15</sup> |
| North Kirkwood Middle School <sup>16</sup>  
Kirkwood, MO | North Intervention Center | - Purposed classroom with dedicated adult supervision  
- Students assigned to ISS for 1-5 days only after other disciplinary measures have been attempted, including conferences, team meetings, and lunch detentions.  
- On the first day, teacher reviews rules and discusses how students could have handled problematic situations differently.  
- In ISS, students work on regular assignments; teachers check in daily.  
- At conclusion of ISS, students meet with administrator or counselor. |
| Falcon Middle School <sup>17</sup>  
Peyton, CO | ISS | - Students are assigned to ISS after serving three detentions (or after first incidence of fighting).  
- ISS operates in a dedicated room, overseen by a monitor, with each student assigned to a study carrel.  
- Students must fill out a packet explaining why they are in ISS, and discuss with a monitor.  
- Program includes 45 minutes of community service per day.  

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>15</sup> "Mosely High School ISS Program.” http://www.bayschools.com/mhs/Academics/ISSProgram.aspx  
<sup>17</sup> Ibid.
### Nashua School District

**Nashua, NH**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Center for Enrichment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▪ Dedicated high school classroom staffed by a certified teacher, who offers academic help</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Each high school in the district has a full-time teacher dedicated to ISS; teachers run class up to four days a week for 12 students; ISS teacher also coordinates with students’ regular teachers to ensure students stay on track.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Middle and elementary schools do not have full-time ISS teachers; non-secondary district schools coordinate with Nashua Youth Council “to provide an off-site suspension center” similar to ACE. Representatives work with families to discuss students’ situations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Over the course of the most recent school year, the number of students district-wide receiving in-school suspensions has increased 91 percent, while out-of-school suspensions have dropped 8 percent compared to the previous year.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### School-Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS)

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), commonly referred to as School-Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS, as we refer to it below) when applied at the school level,\(^{18}\) is a **proactive approach to problem behavior prevention, supported by additional interventions for small groups and individual students with further needs.**\(^{20}\) The approach is strongly supported by the National Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS TA Center), established by the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Special Education Programs. While SWPBS has been frequently discussed in the context of supporting students with disabilities, it is promoted as a successful approach for all types of students.\(^{21}\)

Though programs vary by school and district, SWPBS features a series of key elements. In a 2005 article discussing the approach, two of the co-directors of the PBIS TA Center – George Sugai and Robert Horner, along with support from Claudia Vincent – explained these elements, summarized below.\(^{22}\)

- **Prevention** – Schools should seek to prevent problem behaviors rather than respond to misconduct *after* it occurs. According to the authors, this is a “more effective, cost-efficient, and productive” approach to student behavior than traditional, reactive methods.

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- **School Culture and Behavioral Expectations** – Children should be taught appropriate social behavior in the school setting, as they may come from different backgrounds where social expectations vary. As the authors explain, “schools must define the core social expectations (e.g., be respectful, be responsible, be safe), and overtly teach the behaviors and skills associated with these expectations.”

23 This will form the basis for a school social culture in which every student knows the established social expectations.

- **Recognition of Appropriate Behavior** – Instances of appropriate student behavior should be recognized on a regular basis. Elsewhere this is described as a “gotcha” system, where students are “caught in the act” of behaving appropriately.

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- **Data** – Schools should carefully track data regarding student behavior and use it to inform decisions regarding approaches to problem behaviors.

- **Investment** – In addition to their focus on student behavior, schools and districts must invest in the personnel implementing SWPBS through the establishment of teams, policies, and data structures, as well as provide needed funding and administrative support.

While much of the above description largely applies to the preventive/proactive aspect of SWPBS, as noted earlier, the approach combines prevention with more targeted supports for students continually displaying problem behaviors. As such, SWPBS may be visualized in the form of a **three-tiered approach**, as illustrated in the figure below.

### Figure 1.2: SWPBS – Tiered Framework of Behavioral Support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIER</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Tier</td>
<td>The first tier represents supports for all of a district or school’s students. It primarily features “positively stated expectations, strategies to teach expectations, high rates of reinforcement for complying with expectations, and clear routines to increase the likelihood of success.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Tier</td>
<td>Supports within the second tier are more targeted to small groups of students who need further interventions to achieve desired behavioral outcomes. Strategies used at this level include “small group instruction in self-management and social skill development as well as academic support in groups.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Tier</td>
<td>The third tier encompasses supports for individual students displaying chronic behavioral problems. The main feature of this level is the “functional behavioral assessment” which forms the basis for the development of an “individualized positive behavior support plan.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Lewis, 2005.25

23 Ibid.

This three-tiered approach is well-aligned with Response to Intervention (RTI) practices, where instruction and interventions are closely coordinated with the needs of individual students, and student data are widely used to inform decision making. Both SWPBS and RTI “are grounded in differentiated instruction” and delineate student supports along the lines of universal, secondary, and tertiary interventions.26

The PBIS TA Center offers an expansive set of resources regarding specific aspects of the implementation of SWPBS; below we provide additional details of key elements of the first, second, and third tiers of support.

**SETTING BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS AND RECOGNIZING APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR (FIRST TIER)**

As noted above, supports within the first tier are implemented for all students in a school or district and seek to prevent problem behaviors before they occur. According to the PBIS TA Center, the focus of the first tier is a set of “rules, routines, and physical arrangements” established by the school staff to prevent specific negative behaviors. The Center recommends that a team of school representatives – including administrators, general education teachers, and special education teachers – develop three to five behavioral expectations that can be easily remembered. Each expectation targets a negative behavior but restates it in a positive manner (e.g., “Respect Yourself, Respect Others, and Respect Property” or “Be Safe, Be Responsible, Be Respectful”).27

The team will next determine how students should meet these expectations in various settings. For example, specific behaviors associated with “Respect Property” would include “keeping feet and hands where they belong” on the bus, “wiping table with sponge provided” in the cafeteria, and “returning playground equipment to the proper area” on the playground. The PBIS TA Center recommends that the team develop a matrix displaying each setting and associated examples of appropriate behavior, and present them to the rest of the school staff for approval.

Once the team has achieved staff buy-in of the behavioral expectations, the SWPBS approach requires teaching the expectations to students. While there are a variety of means available to accomplish this task, some schools have elected to set aside time at the beginning of the school year to take students to various “stations” around the school to demonstrate the expected behaviors. For example, as the PBIS TA Center explains, “a bus may be brought to the school and the children will practice lining up, entering the bus,

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sitting on the bus, and exiting the bus using hula hoops to denote proper body space distance in lining up to enter the bus.”

Finally, the school’s SWPBS team will determine how to recognize students meeting the behavioral expectations. For example, some schools hand out “gotchas” – pieces of paper – recognizing that the student is behaving appropriately. The Center explains that “specific praise is extremely important in increasing the reoccurrence of appropriate behavior.”

**CHECK IN/CHECK OUT (SECOND TIER)**

For students who do not respond to first tier supports – defined as “students who visit the office between 2 and 5 times per year,” students receiving several minor referrals, and/or students who exhibit problem behavior that is not dangerous – more targeted interventions may be necessary. One example of a second tier intervention is *Check In/Check Out (CICO)*, also referred to as the Behavior Education Program (BEP). In a 2010 publication of the Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders, researchers from the University of Connecticut and Assumption College outline CICO in the following manner:

Students check in with an adult in the morning, obtain a point sheet that they carry throughout the school day and use to gather performance feedback from teachers (in the form of points and positive comments), and check out with an adult at the end of the day. A token economy is used in conjunction with the CICO system; students earn tokens (e.g., points, bucks) for meeting their individualized, predetermined point percentage goal for that day. Tokens can be accumulated and are eventually exchanged for preferred backup reinforcers (e.g., activities, privileges, or tangible items).

The above activities are coupled with regular parent communication and teacher/staff reviews of student progress. Providing an example of the latter, the Michigan Department of Education’s Office of Special Education recommends that bi-weekly meetings should be held to evaluate data regarding the progress of CICO participants. The data are then used to determine whether the student is ready to exit the program or whether the program should be revised. Commenting on the strengths of the program, a presentation by the Office explains that the students receive prompts/reminders throughout the school day regarding appropriate behavior, as well as regular feedback and rewards for correct behavior.
behavior. As such, the approach works particularly well for students who are seeking attention from adults.34

The University of Connecticut and Assumption College researchers cite multiple studies demonstrating the positive effects of CICO on social behavior at the elementary and middle school levels, while an additional study has shown positive effects at the high school level when coupling the program with academic tutoring.35 Further, CICO programs are promoted by the PBIS TA center as an effective second tier support.36

**FUNCTIONAL BEHAVIORAL ASSESSMENT AND BEHAVIOR SUPPORT PLAN (THIRD TIER)**

The third tier of support focuses on students who exhibit more severe and/or chronic behavioral problems. Supports at this level are typically comprised of two elements: (1) a functional behavioral assessment (FBA) designed to better understand the behavior and (2) the development of an individualized plan of intervention strategies, sometimes referred to as a behavior support plan (BSP) or behavioral intervention plan (BIP).

Regarding when third tier supports come into play, a document prepared by the Maryland State Department of Education on effective practices of discipline for students with disabilities lays out situations in which a student’s behavior should typically trigger an FBA:37

- Standard school or classroom management strategies have been ineffective
- The behavior occurs with a high level of intensity and/or frequency
- The student is at risk of exclusion and/or suspension
- A more restrictive placement or a more intrusive intervention is being considered

Further, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires a functional behavioral assessment and development of a behavioral intervention plan when a student with disabilities would be subject to suspension or other removal from his or her educational environment for an extended period of time.38

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An FBA is a process by which the school seeks to understand why a student is behaving in a certain manner. More specifically, it has been described as “a systematic way of gathering information in order to determine a relationship between a child’s problem behavior and aspects of the environment.” Such information may then be used to develop a plan of interventions to best meet the child’s needs.

If the school decides that third-level supports are necessary, a support team of family, teachers, and other direct service providers should be convened. Robert A. Gable, a professor of education at Old Dominion University, explains that the FBA process should then follow a series of steps, including definition of the behavioral problem, collection and analysis of data around the problem that could explain the function of the behavior (e.g., “to get attention, avoid an aversive social situation, express anger or frustration”), identification of a hypothesis regarding the function/motivation of the behavior (e.g., “under condition X, the student does Y, in order to Z”), and systematic testing of the hypothesis by changing an aspect of the child’s instruction or environment.

Ultimately the information yielded by this process will assist the team in developing a plan of targeted intervention. The team will then monitor how the plan is implemented and assess its effectiveness.

According to the PBIS TA Center, the BSP/BIP may involve making “adjustments to the environment that reduce the likelihood of the problem; teaching replacement skills and building general competencies; consequences to promote positive behaviors and deter problems; and a crisis management plan (if needed).” With regard to this last element, a crisis management plan may be necessary when severe episodes of the behavior occur and the safety of all individuals involved is in question. Such steps should draw on carefully planned procedures (developed in advance of the occurrence) and “focus on a rapid de-escalation of the behavior.”

**Restorative Justice**

Moving to another general approach to student behavior, restorative justice has been framed as a valuable “alternative to zero-tolerance policies that mandate suspension or expulsion” that seeks to address student misbehavior while keeping students in school and holding them accountable for their actions. A 2010 presentation by the Minnesota

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41 Ibid.


43 Ibid.

Department of Education highlighted the differences between a more “standard” approach to discipline and a restorative approach, as presented in the following figure.45

**Figure 1.3: Standard/Formal Disciplinary System versus Restorative Approach**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>STANDARD/FORMAL SYSTEM</strong></th>
<th><strong>RESTORATIVE APPROACH</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What was the rule and who broke it?</td>
<td>What was the harm and who was affected by it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the punishment per the student handbook?</td>
<td>How do we make amends, repair the harm, re-connect all to community?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrator decision</td>
<td>Victim/Offender/Community decision</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Minnesota Department of Education

As the figure above illustrates, **restorative approaches focus more on the practical consequences of misbehavior, rather than the specific rule that was broken.** The response to misbehavior seeks to ensure that the offending student understands the consequences of his or her actions, allows the student to restore balance to the situation created by the misconduct, and therefore holds the student accountable for his or her actions. Restorative approaches further seek to involve those hurt by the actions and offer them “empowerment from being actively involved in the justice process.”47

**Restorative justice heavily utilizes dialogue between different parties involved in a conflict,** including the victim, the offender, and members of the impacted community. These meetings are an attempt to have the offender realize the effect of their behavior and address it, while providing the victim and community members the opportunity to voice suggestions for appropriate consequences. The dialogue helps heal the community and reduces likelihood of future behavior violations.48

Though all embody the main principles discussed above, practices associated with restorative justice may take a variety of forms. Examples of specific practices that have been used in schools include:

- **Victim-offender mediation** – A trained mediator facilitates a meeting between a student who has broken school standards of conduct and the victim of his or her actions. The victim is prompted to share “their story of victimization with the
offender,” enabling the offender to better understand the consequences of his or her actions. In addition to the mediator, other individuals supporting the victim and offender (e.g., family, teachers, or social workers) may also be invited to participate. The process will often result in a “restitution plan” to re-form relationships between victim and offender and make amends for the offender’s actions.

- **Peer mediation** – A process in which student mediators are trained to facilitate meetings between students involved in a conflict. The conflict may or may not feature a “clear offender.”

- **Circles** – In this process, a group of students or a group of teachers and students sit in a circle. The group passes an item around the circle, indicating when it is an individual’s turn to talk while the others listen. The circle may be used to address situations similar to victim-offender mediation, as well as serve as a means to “create community in a classroom, reintegrate offenders into their school setting, to discuss academic concerns, or to accomplish any number of other group tasks.”

Providing a concrete example of restorative justice in a school setting, the San Francisco Board of Education implemented a restorative justice program in 2009 in an attempt “to find alternatives to suspension and expulsion.” A March 2012 article discussing the program highlighted the use of “Peer Courts,” where students who have committed infractions meet with a group of their peers “to identify who has been hurt by the crime and then help [the offenders] make things right.” As described above, the program also features “circles,” where students discuss behavioral problems with each other in class in order to find a resolution. Highlighting differences between restorative techniques and zero-tolerance policies, a member of San Francisco’s Board of Supervisors explained that rather than immediately removing a student from school, “in restorative justice, you have to actually have the offender and the victim sit down and discuss what happened and how the offender can make it better.” While progress has varied by school, the article covering the program noted that suspensions had decreased by 35 percent and expulsions had declined 28 percent since the program had been implemented.

In article regarding **alternatives to suspension for students with emotional/behavioral disorders** specifically, Reece Peterson of the Department of Special Education and Communication Disorders at the University of Nebraska - Lincoln, suggested “in-kind restitution” and “mediation programs” as viable alternatives for this group of students. In line with the discussion of restorative justice above, he explains that a restitution approach “permits the student to help to restore or improve the school environment by directly addressing the problems caused by the student’s behavior (e.g., in cases of vandalism students can work to repair things they damaged), or by having the student improve the

51 Ibid.
52 Ibid.
school environment more broadly (e.g., picking up trash, washing lockers)."53 Again similar to another feature of restorative justice programs, mediation programs may involve a students’ peers, “teach students about non-violent conflict resolution,” and allow students to practice such techniques in the school setting.54

**PROMOTING ALTERNATIVE THINKING STRATEGIES (PATHS)**

Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS) is described as “a comprehensive program for promoting emotional and social competencies and reducing aggression and behavior problems in elementary school-aged children while simultaneously enhancing the educational process in the classroom.”55 The new version of the PATHS curriculum, released in 2011, is organized into grade-specific modules for prekindergarten/kindergarten, first grade, second grade, third grade, fourth grade, and fifth grade/sixth grade. As the PATHS website states:56

PATHS is based on a theory of vertical and horizontal control that focuses on the recruitment of language for regulating emotions and the development of reasoning and frontal control of executive functions (EF) to support social and emotional maturity in early and middle childhood.

The curriculum is designed for use in a “multi-year, universal prevention model."57 The curriculum is designed to be taught two to three times per week (an average of 20-30 minutes a day) and provides “systematic, developmentally-based lessons, materials, and instructions” geared toward developing students’ “self-control, social competence, positive peer relations, and interpersonal problem-solving skills” – all of which are key to reducing the incidence of behavioral and emotional problems.58 All PATHS modules are accompanied by instructional manuals for teachers and ‘take-home’ materials for parents. Additional materials vary by grade level: the Grade 1 module includes a turtle puppet designed to help children learn the ‘turtle technique’ (going inside one’s ‘shell’ to examine feelings and think of ways to channel anger) and encourage creative play; “feeling faces” cards, to help students identify and display their feelings appropriately; posters to reinforce lessons (e.g., “Three Steps to Calming Down”); and reward stickers designed to aid in positive reinforcement.59 The Grade 5/6 module, by contrast, includes four novels designed to reinforce PATHS themes and “help teachers align their PATHS program lessons with language arts objectives,” as well as several posters aimed at reinforcing lessons about

54 Ibid., p. 1..
58 Ibid.
positive behavior. Detailed curricular breakdowns, as well as materials and pricing options, are available through the Channing Bete Company website. Trainers are available to instruct teachers in the PATHS curriculum; though this training is not strictly necessary, it is recommended for effective implementation.

The PATHS program has been recognized for demonstrated effectiveness at various grade levels; program developers cite five independent studies of PATHS, in addition to several internal studies conducted by program creators. Below we provide a brief overview of the independent studies.

- A randomized study conducted in Rochester, New York and suburban Minnesota including 781 third grade students (422 in the experimental group and 359 in the control group) from 14 schools in three districts (one urban, two suburban) determined that the PATHS curriculum resulted in “statistically positive benefits on children’s social information processing.” PATHS students displayed “less hostile attribution bias (p=.039), less aggressive social problem solving and less use of aggressive reactions to neutral provocations over time, when compared to control students.” Additionally, researchers noted “a decrease in learning problems and lower rates of acting out behavior problems over time.” While at the outset, urban students in both the experimental and the control group misbehaved at similar rates, those in the experimental group acted out less frequently over the three years of the study, while those in the control group exhibited higher incidences of behavioral difficulties.

- Another study examined results among 150 children in a high-poverty urban school in Providence, Rhode Island. Despite substantial difficulties with implementation, significant effects were found for children instructed in the PATHS curriculum. Students exposed to PATHS exhibited “higher levels of social competence” and “rated lower in peer rejection and depressive symptoms” as compared to a control group.

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66 Ibid.
67 Ibid.
69 Ibid.
A 2007 study conducted in the Netherlands on 141 boys (in regular and special education classroom) with “intermediate to high levels of aggression” found that after one year of PATHS, students exhibited a significant reduction in reactive aggression (though proactive aggression was not affected).70

A 2007 study on the effectiveness of a PATHS afterschool program evaluated 93 children in southern Germany. Teachers were trained by PATHS trainers and used the curriculum on a daily basis. The study determined “a significant reduction in problem behavior ... and a trend toward an increase in prosocial behavior.” A follow-up 2008 study showed a sustained impact, “with significant increases in prosocial behavior ... and reductions in problem behavior; the greatest effects were evident among children who at pre-test had higher rates of problem behavior.”71

Finally, a two-part study published in 1998 and 1999 involved 55 deaf and hearing-impaired children in eight primary schools for deaf children and Primary Hearing Impaired Units (HIUs) in the South of England. Results comparing the intervention and control groups after one year indicated a significant difference “in both emotional understanding and behavior.”72 The intervention group “showed a significantly more rapid rate of development” on all three measures of accurately recognizing and labeling emotions, and while the two groups were equal in social-emotional adjustment prior to intervention, after one year of PATHS the intervention children achieved “higher scores on measures of self-image and emotional adjustment.”73

73 Ibid.
SECTION II: STATEWIDE EFFORTS TO IMPLEMENT ALTERNATIVE DISCIPLINARY STRATEGIES

In this section, Hanover Research examines statewide efforts to reduce school suspension and implement alternative disciplinary strategies in Connecticut, Maryland, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. Each state offers substantial documentation on efforts to reform school discipline and reduce suspensions; we provide an overview of these resource materials below, in the interest of providing a review of relevant technical assistance documents.

CONNECTICUT

In July 2010, the State of Connecticut enacted a law (originally passed in 2007) designed to reduce the use of traditional out-of-school suspension (OSS) as a disciplinary tool, limiting the use of OSS to situations in which a pupil “poses ... a danger to persons or property,” or in cases of students with a record of infractions for whom alternative interventions have proven ineffective. 74 Under the law, any suspension not meeting this threshold must be enforced on an in-school basis, “though administrators remain free under the law to use a wide range of other alternatives to out-of-school suspensions.”75 At the time of the law’s implementation, commentators noted that while many districts were scrambling to develop and implement new programs (Bridgeport schools hired 13 new teachers’ aides at a cost of $500,000), for others, the law only served to validate existent practices.76

To aid districts in adhering to the requirements of the law, the Connecticut State Department of Education produced a Guidelines for In-School and Out-of-School Suspensions document, designed to aid schools and districts in determining the appropriateness of in-school vs. out-of-school suspension, and to identify effective strategies to prevent out-of-school suspension. The Guidelines document includes the following:

- **Data Overview**: Review of key data related to trends in student suspension at the state level;
- **Determining In-School vs. Out-of-School Suspension**: Review of central elements of the law and various considerations related to enforcement;
- **Review of Disciplinary Policy by Local and Regional Boards of Education**: Guidelines for policy development as related to suspension requirements associated with the new law;
- **Effective In-School Suspension Programs**: General review of best practices in ISS;

75 Ibid.
- **Out-of-School Suspension ‘Decision Guide,’** including an appendix of ‘case examples’;
- **Guidelines for Children with Disabilities:** Review of the law’s impact on disciplinary practices as related to disabled students;
- **Positive Behavioral Support Strategies:** General best practices in the development of “positive schoolwide academic and behavioral support strategies;” and
- A brief list of references and resources.

The DOE’s guidelines deal most substantially with in-school suspension, and reinforce many of the themes of the literature discussed in Section I. The guide notes that to ensure effectiveness, ISS programs should function as part of a broader **“system of comprehensive behavior supports”** (a tiered PBIS approach). According to the guidelines, ISS programs should:77

- Include a **designated coordinator,** who acts as a liaison with administration, faculty, staff, and parents; maintains records and collects data; and participates in the development of school-wide disciplinary policies;
- Include (as available) appropriately **certified content area teachers** in essential areas, to provide academic support;
- Include support provided periodically by **social workers, psychologists, and/or school counselors**;
- Exhibit a **low student-to-staff ratio** to ensure individualized attention;
- Explicitly elaborate rules and expectations; and
- Be held in a designated area in each school (or a centralized area), with students separated by grade and developmental level.

In alignment with the PBIS approach, the DOE additionally suggests that districts offer “small group or individualized interventions” (such as conflict management groups or counseling sessions) to students in need of more targeted attention.78

Notably, Connecticut Voices for Children, an advocacy group, has developed a substantially more comprehensive **“toolkit”** document designed to serve the same purpose at the DOE’s guidelines. The toolkit (also produced in 2010) provides an overview of the “creative, common sense, age-appropriate and often low-cost alternatives to out-of-school suspensions” employed by Connecticut districts.79 These alternatives fall into two categories: **Preventative Measures** and **Alternative Punishments.** For each alternative discussed, the document offers a general overview of associated practices; a discussion of Connecticut schools and districts that have seen positive impacts by enacting such a program; and links to relevant resources (for SWPBS, for instance, the document provides a

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78 Ibid., p. 18.
The toolkit document was developed through interviews with state school personnel (including administrators, faculty, and guidance counselors); parents; education experts; and community service providers.

The document notes that a **preliminary assessment of relevant data is essential to identifying the types of interventions and supports that will be most useful.** At the school level, administrators are advised to gather data centered around the following points:

- What types of behavior are responsible for the majority of out-of-school suspensions?
- At what time of day do disciplinary infractions that lead to out-of-school suspensions tend to occur?
- At what time in the school year do disciplinary infractions that lead to out-of-school suspensions tend to occur?
- Where do disciplinary infractions that lead to out-of-school suspensions tend to occur (e.g. in class, in the lunch room, at school-sponsored after school activities)?
- In what grades are students most likely to commit disciplinary infractions that result in out-of-school suspensions?
- Do teachers vary significantly in their disciplinary referral rates, particularly with respect to conduct that results in out-of-school suspensions?
- Are there disproportionality trends in the out-of-school suspension data (e.g. special education status, race, gender) that cause concern?
- For any particular child, does the data elucidate any patterns (e.g. problems primarily with a particular teacher, in a particular class, at a particular time of day, with a particular behavior)?
- For any particular child, does the data suggest any unmet or undiagnosed special education needs?

The preventative measures and alternative punishments detailed in the document are presented in Figure 2.1, below. It is worth noting that while evidence of effectiveness is presented for all approaches in the table below, this evidence is “practical and experiential,” and encompasses only Connecticut schools and districts.

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80 Ibid., p. 12.
81 Ibid., p. 10. Bullet points quoted from source.
82 Ibid., p. 4.
\begin{table}[h]
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\begin{tabular}{|l|l|}
\hline
\textbf{PREVENTATIVE MEASURES} & \textbf{ALTERNATIVE PUNISHMENTS} \\
\hline
- SWPBS & - Detention  \\
- Actively Teaching Social Skills – e.g., implementing lessons on cooperation and positive interaction into regular curriculum; enacting ‘community meetings’ designed to develop conflict resolution skills & - Restorative Justice  \\
- Mentoring & - ‘Cool Down’ Options – Removing children from class for a shorter period of time (e.g., 90 minutes)  \\
- Classroom Management Training – e.g., professional development geared specifically toward effective disciplinary practices & - Reflective Essays, Apologies, and Responsible Thinking Classrooms (RLCs) – RLCs are designed as spaces in which referred students spend a set amount of time reflecting on, and learning to take responsibility for, their actions.  \\
- Mediation – e.g., peer-to-peer training for conflict resolution & - Parent Meetings  \\
- Personalizing the School Experience – Ensuring students receive individualized attention (especially in larger schools), for instance, through the formation of small learning communities & - Community Service  \\
- Academic Supports & - Behavioral Monitoring (typically an element of SWPBS)  \\
- Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Supports & - Withdrawal of Privileges and “In-Kind” Responses  \\
- Behavioral Monitoring (typically an element of SWPBS) & - In-School Suspension  \\
- Withdrawal of Privileges and “In-Kind” Responses &  \\
- In-School Suspension &  \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Figure 2.1: Preventative Measures and Alternative Punishments}
\end{table}

\textbf{MARYLAND}

In July 2012, the Maryland State Board of Education released a report entitled \textit{“School Discipline and Academic Success: Related Parts of Maryland’s Education Reform,”} including proposed regulations on student discipline, particularly in relation to suspension, and a discussion of the Board’s process in developing the regulations.\footnote{“School Discipline and Academic Success: Related Parts of Maryland’s Education Reform.” Maryland State Board of Education. \url{http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/NR/rdonlyres/42ED8EDA-AF34-4058-B275-03189163882D/32853/SchoolDisciplineandAcademicSuccessReportFinalJuly2.pdf}} Maryland’s actions are intended to reduce overall suspensions and to change a situation in which minority and special education students are significantly affected by out-of-school suspension. The state department of education expects the regulation changes to be adopted before the end of 2012.\footnote{“Maryland State Board Approves Revised Safe School Report.” Maryland State Board of Education. \url{http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/pressrelease_details/2012_07_24a.htm}} If these actions are given final approval, Maryland would become “one of the first [states] to substantially restrict out-of-school suspensions.”\footnote{St. George, Donna. “Maryland school board moves to limit student suspensions.” \textit{The Washington Post}, Feb. 28, 2012. \url{http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/maryland-moves-to-limit-school-suspensions/2012/02/27/glQA6xCAhR_story.html}}

In order to establish a “rehabilitative approach to school discipline” in Maryland, the board is proposing regulations that base discipline on “the goals of fostering, teaching, and acknowledging positive behavior” and that support the goal of “[keeping] students in school.”\footnote{“School Discipline and Academic Success: Related Parts of Maryland’s Education Reform.” Op. cit., p. ii} The state Board calls for the creation of a “School Discipline Best Practices Workgroup” to address the question of the “types of professional development needed by...
teachers and administrators in [implementing] best practices [in addition to training programs for school resources officers].”

One of the “best practices” identified by the Maryland Board is PBIS, which they note is in place at 745 of 1,424 public schools. When implemented with fidelity, the use of PBIS in Maryland schools has led to reduced numbers of suspensions, fewer office discipline referrals, and improved test scores at multiple grade levels. The board goes on to indicate that most Maryland school systems still need to adopt the secondary and tertiary levels of PBIS, and they suggest that Howard County Public School System (which has full implementation) provide examples of best practices in implementing these further interventions.

The two prior paragraphs indicate that, in Maryland, training concepts and resources for school personnel introducing new disciplinary techniques to reduce suspensions will come from two main sources—the centralized School Discipline Best Practices Workgroup and the districts that have already implemented such techniques. The Board anticipates being able to assemble a list of best practice activities to support the implementation of school discipline procedures aimed at reducing out-of-school suspensions. While no technical assistance or training document along these lines exists yet in Maryland, it appears that relevant reports along these lines will be forthcoming.

MINNESOTA

In this subsection, Hanover Research discusses the Minnesota Department of Education’s Alternatives to Suspension Grant and PBIS initiative, both of which aid districts and schools statewide in identifying effective means of disciplining students through school-level support.

ALTERNATIVES-TO-SUSPENSION GRANT

In an effort to reduce out-of-school suspensions, the Minnesota Department of Education awarded grant funds to five school districts to develop alternative-to-suspension programs, along with interventions to reduce the need for suspension as a disciplinary action. The program recently released its second-year report, which detailed the five districts’ efforts with regard to “sustainable implementation strategies, common principles of effective practice and the development of a systematic data collection protocol.”

- Eagle Ridge Junior High School, Burnsville-Savage-Eagan School District
  In the second year of the Alternatives-to-Suspension Grant, Eagle Ridge Junior High School reduced its number of out-of-school suspensions by 78 percent and its office discipline referrals by 55 percent. Evening classes and Saturday school, developed as alternative to suspension programs, had 137 students participate. Additionally, 63

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87 Ibid.
89 Ibid.
parents and 85 students attended culturally diverse after-school activities and neighborhood forums, established to encourage parental engagement with the school community. Despite progress, a disproportionate number of suspended students are students with disabilities and students of color, though the proportion is decreasing in comparison to white students and students without disabilities. In the third year of the grant, the school intends to continue evening classes and Saturday school and provide professional development for staff on culturally responsive instruction, along with improving the school climate and increasing parental involvement and student engagement.

**Columbia Academy (Central Middle School), Columbia Heights Public Schools**

In the second year of the Alternatives-to-Suspension grant, Columbia Academy saw a decrease in the number of out-of-school suspensions and loss of instructional days, but an increase in the total number of behavioral referrals. The school sought to devise targeted interventions for at-risk students and offered grant funds to provide professional development to staff in a variety of techniques related to interventions and alternatives to suspension, including restorative justice and peer mediation.90

Providing additional detail on one of the school’s practices, the first-year report of the grant explained that the school had developed an “alternative to suspension classroom,” referred to as “Choices,” for students needing intensive intervention. A licensed special education teacher and a general education teacher lead the program, working “with students in a restorative justice model to hold them accountable for their actions while encouraging them to be involved in the culture of the school.” Among their duties, the special education and general education teachers develop curricula for the students, conduct academic remediation, and devise service learning opportunities (as a restorative technique) for Choices students.91

With regard to future programming, the school has noted significant overrepresentation of African American students in percentages of students receiving behavioral referrals. In response, in the upcoming year the school plans to “develop cultural competence among staff, enhance [use of] the Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework and increase efficacy of universal prevention strategies and targeted interventions.”92

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90 Ibid.
Alternative Learning Centers, Intermediate School Districts 287 and 916

Four Alternative Learning Centers (ALCs) serve students at risk of not graduating from high school. Since joining Alternative-to-Suspension and beginning to track suspension data, the ALCs have “virtually eliminated” the suspension of students for insubordination and disruptive behavior. Then the ALCs used the grant to implement a Collaborative Problem Solving (CPS) Model to decrease out-of-school suspensions. In describing the CPS Model, the report states that “CPS teaches adults and youth that challenging behavior is a result of lagging skills and unsolved problems and that challenging behavior occurs when the demands of the environment exceed a person’s capacity to respond adaptively.” CPS uses three methods to solve problems:

- **Plan A**: Unilateral problem solving
- **Plan B**: Identifying the unsolved problems that are precipitating the challenging episodes by expressing empathy and drilling down for information to develop an understanding of the person’s concern or perspective and by selecting high-priority issues to address together
- **Plan C**: Dropping the problem completely

In the upcoming year, the ALCs plan to continue implementing the CPS model and support staff in further addressing students’ challenging behaviors, with the goal of further suspension reduction “for even the most egregious behaviors.”

Proctor Secondary Schools, Proctor Public Schools

Proctor Secondary Schools also reports the benefits of tracking student disciplinary data, and was able to reduce the number of students suspended, particularly special education students, primarily through promoting awareness of the problem. With regard to programming, Proctor Secondary Schools used the Alternatives-to-Suspension grant to develop Respect and Peace in Schools (RAPS). While neither the grant document nor the Proctor website directly discusses what the RAPS program involves, the overall focus of Proctor’s alternatives to suspension efforts has been on restorative approaches. The first-year grant document highlighted the schools’ commitment to student development of “self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship skills, and responsible decision making.” In supporting this development, the school created a plan “where students who would have been suspended instead developed and followed through with a restorative plan they selected from a menu of restorative measures.”

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93 Ibid.
94 Ibid.
95 Quoted from source: Ibid.
96 Ibid.
The second-year grant document highlighted successes of students participating in the RAPS program. In particular, student participants experienced the following improvements in behavior and academic performance:

- 50 percent of the students improved their GPA.
- 90 percent of the students decreased behavior incidents.
- 80 percent of the students demonstrated improved mental health functioning.
- 60 percent of the students decreased involvement in conflicts.
- 90 percent of the students increased connection to community.
- 0 percent of the students re-offended.

**Park High School, South Washington Public Schools**

The Alternatives-to-Suspension grant at Park High School has resulted in a significant decrease in office behavioral referrals and a decrease in suspensions in most categories, though suspensions for “miscellaneous offences” have substantially increased over the same period. The average length of time for out-of-school suspensions has also decreased.

With the Alternatives-to-Suspension grant Park High School has implemented the following research-based interventions: Peer Counsel for Offense Resolution (PEER C.O.R.), a restorative justice process that involves the student offender, parents, community members, peers of the offender, and the victim; the Social Skills and Aggression Replacement Training (START) program, which helps students make better choices in conflict situations and develop stronger communication and problem-solving skills; and Career Choices, a guidance program for ninth graders. In the upcoming year, the school hopes to continue implementing suspension alternatives, reinforce a positive school community, and target intervention strategies at ninth graders in particular.

**RELATED DOCUMENTS**

All documents related to the Alternatives-to-Suspension Grant Project (as available on the Minnesota Department of Education website) are listed below. The first three documents provide brief, straightforward descriptions relating to why out-of-school suspension is often problematic and how it can be effectively replaced in many instances. The Behavior Intervention Manual is a 168-page primer and instructional guide focusing on the use of interventions in the classroom, which can be used to introduce teachers to intervention strategies and their selection.

The two documents titled “Addressing Challenging Student Behavior” focus on the development of individualized interventions in response to students’ action. This is in

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100 Quoted from source: “Special Education in the Classroom,” Minnesota Department of Education. [http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/EdExc/SpecEdClass/index.html](http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/EdExc/SpecEdClass/index.html)
distinction to whole-classroom intervention selection. Finally, blank observation forms are provided as guides for behavior assessments. These forms also contain links to numerous websites that may be useful in implementing interventions.

It should be noted that these documents have a focus on students in special education programs. However, they do appear to be potentially useful for teachers in standard classroom environments who are trying to implement new behavioral interventions.

- Alternatives-to-Suspension Fact Sheet: Outcomes of Out-of-School Suspension
- Alternatives-to-Suspension Fact Sheet: Effective Classroom Management Practices
- Alternatives-to-Suspension Fact Sheet: Multi-Tiered Behavior Support Systems
- Behavior Intervention Manual
- Part 1: Addressing Challenging Student Behavior
- Part 2: Addressing Challenging Student Behavior
- Functional Behavior Assessment Observation Forms

**POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS & SUPPORTS (PBIS)**

The Minnesota Department of Education developed its statewide Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports (PBIS) program (a behavior intervention program discussed in detail in the previous section) in collaboration with Dr. George Sugai, co-director of the national center for PBIS. As of May 2012, “over 360 Minnesota schools are in training or have completed Minnesota’s two-year scope and sequence for SW-PBIS,” the initiative including 15.6 percent of Minnesota schools and impacting over 213,000 students.\(^{101}\) The Minnesota Department of Education has a detailed, dedicated website for PBIS, which provides the following information:\(^{102}\)

- General information on PBIS;\(^ {103}\)
- History and contact information for Minnesota PBIS;\(^ {104}\)
- Information on the annual Minnesota PBIS Institute and Film Festival, “using video to provide a fun showcase to share creative ideas with colleagues;”\(^ {105}\)
- Preparation and readiness activities for schools considering adopting PBIS;\(^ {106}\)
- A list and accompanying map of all Minnesota PBIS schools;\(^ {107}\)

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102 Minnesota PBIS. http://www.pbismn.org/
103 “What Is SW PBIS?” Minnesota PBIS. http://www.pbismn.org/WhatsSW_PBIS.html
105 “Past PBIS MN Institute & Film Festival.” Minnesota PBIS. http://www.pbismn.org/PBIS_MN_Institute_past.html
Information on Regional Implementation Projects to “expand the logistical support, technical assistance, training and coaching to school districts” and support schools across the state in implementing PBIS. Four main areas of focus are Training, Coaching, Evaluation, and Coordination;108

- A calendar of events;109
- Evaluation materials;110
- An overview of coaching resources for schools implementing the PBIS process;111
- An overview of training in PBIS; and112
- A contact page with information on regional program directors and coordinators.113

WISCONSIN

Similar to Minnesota, Wisconsin has published a resource document describing alternatives to expulsion that have been implemented at various schools in the state. All of the included alternatives were noted to have reduced the number of students being expelled. The document also provides contact information for individuals working at the state districts implementing these policies.

One of these alternatives is a “First Offenders Program” at Beloit School District, which is used when students violate alcohol, drug, or tobacco rules. Rather than expelling students under the previous zero-tolerance policy, the first offenders are placed in an education program that incorporates “other support opportunities such as assessment and counseling.” Students are taught “risk assessment and reduction” strategies, among other topics, and the incidence rate of second offenses is noted to “very low.” Interestingly, Beloit is moving toward implementing a similar policy for other offenses aside from substance use, a move that will likely further reduce expulsions from the district.114

School districts in Stoughton, Janesville, Green Bay, and Hudson have all implemented similar “pre-expulsion” or “expulsion abeyance” programs for students who commit offenses that would normally have led to expulsion. All of these programs involve a range of conditions that students must meet to avoid expulsion, such as attending substance abuse counseling or anger management courses, maintaining otherwise good behavior during the abeyance period, and making restitution to other harmed parties (if any). All of the districts are noted to have successfully reduced expulsions, implying that students are successfully meeting the requirements placed upon them.115

109 “Calendar of Events.” Minnesota PBIS. http://www.pbismn.org/eventCalendar.html
111 “Coaching.” Minnesota PBIS. http://pbismn.org/coaching.html
113 “Contact us.” Minnesota PBIS. http://www.pbismn.org/contactUs.html
115 Ibid., pp. 2-4, 6.
Finally, the Oshkosh Area School District has implemented a restorative justice program after receiving a four-year grant. This program can be used in response to a wide range of rule infractions, and involves strategies such as “mediation, classroom community circles, and circle conferences, which are used to bring together the various parties involved so that discussion can lead to conflict resolution.” The report notes that the district webpage provides numerous resources on restorative justice programs for others interested in implementing similar interventions. Expulsions were noted to be very low, and “district personnel believe [involved] students will continue to thrive in school and ultimately achieve high school graduation and postsecondary success.”\textsuperscript{116}

\textsuperscript{116} Ibid., p. 5
# Appendix A: Contact Information

Figure A1 presents relevant contacts for the main resources and interventions discussed in Section I of our report.

## Figure A1: Selected Contacts by Intervention Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>In-School Suspension</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jim Lawson</td>
<td>ISS Teacher</td>
<td>A. Crawford Mosley High School</td>
<td>Lynne Haven, FL</td>
<td>(850) 767-4400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tim Cochran</td>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>North Kirkwood Middle School</td>
<td>Kirkwood, MO</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tim.coehran@kirkwoodschools.org">tim.coehran@kirkwoodschools.org</a>, (314) 213-7301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brian Smith</td>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>Falcon Middle School</td>
<td>Peyton, CO</td>
<td><a href="mailto:bsmith@d49.org">bsmith@d49.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Ryan</td>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>Nashua High School North</td>
<td>Nashua, NH</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ryan@nashua.edu">ryan@nashua.edu</a>, (603) 589-6404</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>George Sugai</td>
<td>Professor, Co-Director</td>
<td>University of Connecticut; Center of Positive Behavioral Interventions &amp; Supports</td>
<td>Storrs, CT</td>
<td><a href="mailto:george.sugai@uconn.edu">george.sugai@uconn.edu</a>, (860) 486-0289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Horner</td>
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<td>Eugene, OR</td>
<td><a href="mailto:robh@uoregon.edu">robh@uoregon.edu</a>, (541) 346-2462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Restorative Justice</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mark S. Umbreit</td>
<td>Founding Director</td>
<td>Center for Restorative Justice &amp; Peacemaking, University of Minnesota</td>
<td>St. Paul, MN</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nancy Riestenberg</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:nancy.riestenberg@state.mn.us">nancy.riestenberg@state.mn.us</a>, (651) 582-8433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mark T. Greenberg*</td>
<td>Director</td>
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<td>Seattle, WA</td>
<td><a href="mailto:pathman@yahoo.com">pathman@yahoo.com</a>, (814) 777-0897</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carol A. Kusché*</td>
<td>Co-director</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:ckuschek@comcast.net">ckuschek@comcast.net</a>, (206) 323-6688</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Greenberg and Kusché are co-authors of the PATHS curriculum.*
APPENDIX B: BROAD RESOURCE REPOSITORIES

Two websites were encountered that deliver large numbers of interventions relating to classroom behavior and similar topics that could be used to reduce the amount of behavior that leads to expulsion.

**Intervention Central**: This site describes interventions, their goals, and ways to implement them, sometimes including tips and strategies to ensure interventions remain effective after their introduction. References are also usually provided to research supporting the use of a particular intervention. The categories of “Bully Prevention,” “Schoolwide Classroom/Management” appear to be particularly relevant to our member’s initiative.

**Child Trends**: This resource has brought together an extremely large range of “Lifecourse Interventions” that have been indexed according to relevant characteristics of the child, the implementation location, the issues that prompt the intervention, and more. Searching the index using the categories of “School-based” and “Aggression/Bullying/Delinquency/Other Behavioral Problems” yielded 73 intervention programs (though not all appear to be necessarily relevant). For each program, the site provides an overview, review of evaluations, source references, and, as available, links to the specific intervention websites and cost information for programs/curricula.
PROJECT EVALUATION FORM

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