

2021 SPP/APR Stakeholder Improvement Strategies Feedback Process

SUMMARY OF BREAKOUT SESSIONS

INDICATOR 4 (Suspension/Expulsion) 9 and 10 (Disproportionate Representation)

INDICATOR 4 (Suspension/Expulsion) Improvement Strategies

The following information/feedback was collected from a representative group of Connecticut Stakeholders:

Factors:

- *Planning for and addressing language and cultural differences within the community with regard to the topic of Suspension/Expulsion.*
- *Potential for over-identification of Emotional Disturbance in special education if student behavior challenges are not addressed early on in a student's educational journey.*
- *Provide classroom teachers with additional help/support to address challenging behaviors (consistent, preventative support).*
- *There is a need/urgency for stakeholders to get beyond "admiring the problem" and begin working on collaborative solutions.*
 - *School districts and families cannot keep doing the same things and expecting different outcomes.*
- *Specialists within this area are not readily available to support educators and teams and/or there is a long wait to access their support.*
- *When students are removed from the classroom, are they receiving the supports and services or are they only being maintained in a segregated setting?*

Suggestions/Strategies

- *Work with school districts to connect with families regarding language barriers.*
 - *Before school starts and after meetings.*
 - *Oral and Written supports*
- *Reduce the use of exclusionary practice; replace with therapeutic supports and services.*
- *Go to the community and work with families rather than having families come to school.*
- *Work with the English Learners department to help with strategies regarding communication with families (strategies).*
- *Districts build sessions that support families' dominant language (strategies).*
- *Partner with community providers to help the school districts who are experiencing challenges with resources and capacity to provide more support proactively.*

Indicator 4, 9, and 10 Improvement Strategy Feedback

- *Districts should invite families for dinner with regularly scheduled workshops on specific topics and more communication between teachers and families to help each other (training and strategies).*
- *Provide creative incentives to increase participation in parent training.*
 - *Build relationships and connections, and problem-solve together.*
- *Identify themes and engage in root cause analysis of disciplinary data within the school district.*
- *Focus on proactive strategies to support students rather than the end result in discipline.*
- *Align this work with chronic absenteeism initiative.*
- *Infuse this work with MTSS (SEL) training.*
- *Develop students' coping skills (SEL).*

Resources & Guidance/Training

- *Develop and offer training related to alternative strategies to address challenging behaviors for all educators (training).*
- *Train general education teams responsible for early intervention (social/emotional behavior); during the training, make connections to indicator 4.*
- *Differentiated/Specific training for de-escalation/redirection and developing student's social emotional regulation skills for PreK (early childhood) students.*
- *Additional resources or guidance required to build local capacity. More students are arriving at school requiring social/emotional supports, and we need to invest more time and interventions to help these students.*
- *Local training/support for families to understand behaviors and social development.*
- *Increase response/capacity for specialists to support school districts.*

What data should the CSDE be using to inform the development of improvement activities and continuous improvement for students with IEPs?

- *Analysis of significant behaviors/ significant offenses (when and where they are occurring at the local level).*
- *Concerns about data reporting. Instances of suspension may not be reported when a student is removed from the classroom and/or a parent is asked to pick a student up from school to bring them home. How can we better understand this issue? If a student is removed from the classroom and/or a parent is asked to pick a student up from school to bring them home (are these instances documented as suspensions?)*

What recommendations do you have for the CSDE to evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies?

- *Explore possibilities for aligning accountability structures (beyond the special education SPP/APR indicators to emphasize the importance of these activities).*
- *Assess the effectiveness of trauma informed care.*

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INDICATOR 9 and 10 (Disproportionate Representation) Improvement Strategies

The following information/feedback was collected from a representative group of Connecticut Stakeholders:

Factors:

- *The importance of equity as it relates to the intersection of race with disability and engaging participants/stakeholders in this discussion.*
- *Emphasize the importance of communication with non-English speaking families.*
- *Increase expertise for educators to differentiate between cultural/linguistic differences from disabilities or disorders in students. This issue results in over-identification and disproportionality.*
- *Overreliance on standardized tests which may not be normed on a sub-population of students and failure to consistently use tools such as dynamic measures of language learning.*
- *There are a variety of factors that contribute to disproportionality which requires a collaborative approach--not just special education (Gender/Race/Disability Status).*

Suggestions/Strategies:

- *Include teachers and parent groups in future national technical assistance calls/training opportunities.*
- *Create structures at the local level to connect parents with similar interests/challenges to establish connectivity/support groups.*
- *The CSDE self-assessment tool should be completed collaboratively.*
- *Strengthen systems of support for school districts.*
- *Conduct focus groups.*
- *Develop creative strategies to engage the community and families.*
- *Increase the availability of interpreters during Planning and Placement Team meetings.*
- *Remove language barriers to improve access.*

Indicator 4, 9, and 10 Improvement Strategy Feedback

- *Invest additional funding and research on emotional disturbance as a special education primary disability category, specifically for students in early childhood.*
- *Engage in root cause analysis protocol (provide technical assistance to local school districts to engage in this process).*
- *Provide a variety of opportunities to engage and inform families.*

Resources & Guidance/Training

- *Provide additional/supplemental information about emotional disturbance as a special education primary disability category— for educators and families.*
- *Provide training and technical assistance to assist evaluation teams in differentiating cultural/linguistic differences from disabilities.*
- *Provide technical assistance for specific/identified school districts.*

What data should the CSDE be using to inform the development of improvement activities and continuous improvement for students with IEPs?

- *Use of data from EdSight to analyze the various areas of concern to guide strategic decision making.*