

The School District of Philadelphia

Trauma & School District of Philadelphia

The School District of Philadelphia has been focused on how trauma impacts our students and what can be done to help them. This school year marks the **first time** the School District has worked on a comprehensive level to address trauma in our schools. We are doing this work with the Institute of Family Planning(IFP)/Lakeside.

- Over the summer we were in communication with $\frac{2}{3}$ of our principals about trauma and new steps we need to take
- As of January, 453 SDP staff members have been trained in IFP trauma courses
- 1150 classes were taken by SDP employees, but 696 of those were by employees who had already taken the class before
- IFP has conducted Trauma Awareness Training in 18 SDP schools. We are in the process of scheduling seven more for a total of 25 classes to be offered on site

Additional Efforts on Trauma

- Hired a Director of Trauma-Informed School Practices, who will start on April 10th
- We must focus systemic issues of trauma, how they impact our students and how we can help them overcome these challenges
- With trauma, we must continue to train teachers, but also coach them and implement strategies to deal with trauma across our District
- It is also important to make a complete paradigm shift across our District -- most often it is not that children are but, that something bad happened to them -- we can get to the root of it to help the child, so they can focus on learning and growing
- We are adopting this new mindset helps us distinguish between behavior (students acting out) and behavioral health issues (where students need more assistance)
- We need to continue this focus to build capacity and competency in addressing trauma all across our District
- At the end of the day it is all about safe learning environments and the positive development of each child -- addressing trauma at its root is the solution to many problems

Arrest Diversion Program

Why the Diversion Program was started?

We worked in close partnership with the Philadelphia Police Department and the city's Department of Human Services to start the Diversion Program to stem the School-to-Prison pipeline here in Philadelphia. We knew we need to change the culture of our schools and significantly decrease the number of students who are arrested.

What actions did you take to start the program?

- Eliminated Zero Tolerance

- Worked to transform school climates with a Deputy for School Climate and Safety
- Worked with State and Local judicial and law enforcement to develop the program
- Emphasized de-escalation and conflict resolution
- Stopped arrests for low level offenses that lead to school dropouts

How has it been going?

This Diversion Program began in the Spring of 2014.

In 2014-2015 we decreased arrests by 54%, from about 1580 in **2013-2014** to about 725. In **2015-2016** arrests dropped an additional 10% to about 570.

Since the program has been in place there has been a 16% decline in serious incidents.

From 2014-2015 to 2015-2016, a greater percentage of Diverted students completed school year and re-enrolled the following fall than students who were arrested.

90% of the Diverted students voluntarily accepted services through DHS.

That has a monumental positive impact on our students. In addition, we have done the following:

- Eliminated suspensions in Kindergarten and gradually eliminating suspensions in grades 1 and 2.
- Eliminated out of school suspensions for dress code violations
- Continuing to improve school climate and culture through training and development for principals and teachers [**NOTE:** Our School Progress Reports that we released in late January found that school climate has increased for 74% of our district schools (160 district schools in total) and 53 district schools increased at least one tier in climate.]
- Focus on increasing attendance and keeping children in school

What are the metrics related to the Diversion Program? *(from our District Wide Survey)*

During the 2015-2016 school year high schools with 50 or more students involved in the diversion program had increases in the number of students reporting that:

- they are "Never" bullied in school
- they are "Never" treated badly at school because of their race or background
- they are "Never" treated badly at school because they are dealing with a disability
- they are treated with respect by other students "Most or all of the time"
- when they are at school, they feel like they belong "Most or all of the time"

From 2014-2015 to 2015-2016, there were increases in the number of our students reporting that:

- they are "Never" bullied in school

- they feel safe in the neighborhood surrounding their school "Most or all of the time"
- they are "Never" treated badly at school because they are dealing with a disability
- they are treated with respect by other students "Most or all of the time"

Diversion Program Partners

Philadelphia Police Dept.	DHS	Drexel University
JDAI Task Force	Community Providers	Behavioral Health
Public Defender	District Attorney's Office	Family Court

Behavioral Health Accomplishments:

Partnership with DBH/CBH:

- STS (School Therapeutic Services) remain in over 80 schools
- BHRS (Behavioral Health Rehabilitation Services) are available to students authorized throughout elementary and middle schools which do not have existing STS programs • Outpatient satellites in 8 high schools (Frankford, MLK, West Philly, Dobbins, Bartram, Ben Franklin, Southern, and Northeast
- STEP initiative – 22 schools (one is a charter school) to receive a behavioral health team to include 22 social workers, behavioral health consultants, case workers, and family peer support liaisons. The program will: provide sustainable support to schools to address underlying issues of trauma and ensure coordination of services between the city's HHS continuum and the district to better serve students.

Professional Development:

Trauma Informed Care – Lakeside Family Services, funded with grant from United Way, for the past three years is providing a series of trauma informed care courses for all employees.

School counselors and teachers have taken great advantage of the trainings.

Behavioral Health 101, trauma care for school based staff, trauma care for students – provided to all new teachers, new SPOs, all school counselors, and provided to all-school staff in select schools at the school's request.

Act 71 – suicide prevention training to all school-based staff

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