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## Essential Features of an Effective Model

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*What needs to be understood, believed, refined, and implemented in order to establish an effective schoolwide discipline and student support model?*

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### CHAPTER OUTLINE

Introduction

Why Climate and Culture Matter

A Caring, Civic Community Built on Relational Trust

Qualities to Strive For

The Gears in the System

The Critical Need for Shared Responsibility of Student Discipline

## Introduction

In January of 2014, the US Department of Education published a set of guidelines to help schools to improve discipline policies and practices.<sup>1</sup> The three guiding principles shown in Figure 2.1 are supported by a robust research base, and serve as a guide for identifying some of the big ideas that need to be evident and functioning in an effective, non-discriminatory schoolwide discipline model. While these guiding principles are helping to drive important reforms in schools around the country, they are not a comprehensive “how to” guide.

Taking on the all too common problems with school discipline outlined in Chapter One and achieving the goals put forth in the federal guidelines might seem daunting, yet we know it can be done. Moreover, it will be worth the effort. Schools that commit to assessing and recalibrating their schoolwide discipline and student support policies and practices see results in reduced disciplinary incidents, increased teacher efficacy, improved school climate, and increased student achievement. Creating complex change in a school setting requires a nuanced approach, a deep awareness of what it takes to create and sustain a

shared vision, and the skills and knowledge to take the specific steps necessary for transformation.

The goal of this chapter is to set the stage for the rest of the book by providing an overview of an effective schoolwide discipline and student support model. Through our work with districts and schools across the country, Engaging Schools has identified key features of a caring and civic community, the qualities that create a fair, accountable, restorative, and viable model, and the critical shifts that generate effective and sustainable change. Along the way, we discuss why school climate and culture matter, highlight the significant differences between traditional approaches to school discipline and our own model, and introduce the key components or “gears” that make the model work. We close the chapter with a call for schools to develop a shared responsibility for student discipline. We aim to help you construct and clarify your school’s vision of an improved and more effective schoolwide discipline and student support model.

Figure 2.1

### **Excerpts from Guiding Principles: A Resource Guide for Improving School Climate and Discipline**

#### **Principle 1: Create positive climates and focus on prevention**

Schools that foster positive school climates can help to engage all students in learning by preventing problem behaviors and intervening effectively to support struggling and students at risk.

#### **Principle 2: Develop clear appropriate and consistent expectations and consequences to address disruptive student behaviors**

Schools that have discipline policies or codes of conduct with clear, appropriate, and consistently applied expectations and consequences will help students improve behavior, increase engagement, and boost achievement.

#### **Principle 3: Ensure fairness, equity, and continuous improvement**

Schools that build staff capacity and continuously evaluate the school’s discipline policies and practices are more likely to ensure fairness and equity and promote achievement for all students.

## **Why Climate and Culture Matter**

An ever-increasing body of research indicates what educators know intuitively: school culture and school climate have a significant impact on student achievement.

To tackle the discipline challenge, we must recognize that schoolwide discipline and student support live within the larger domain of school climate and culture. **School Climate** is related to the collective perceptions, mood, and morale of the staff members, students and their families. **School Culture** permeates schoolwide

discipline and student support systems because it is the beliefs, values, norms, and shared practices that communicate, “This is the way we do things around here.”<sup>2</sup> In *Shaping School Culture: Pitfalls, Paradoxes, and Promises*, Terry Deal and Kent Peterson suggest that “highly respected organizations have evolved a shared system of informal folkways and traditions that infuse their work with meaning, passion, and purpose.”<sup>3</sup> Put simply, a coherent school culture communicates:

- This is how we do school.
- This is what we expect of you and expect of ourselves.
- This is how we present and express ourselves to others.
- This is how we treat each other.
- This is how we work and learn together.
- This is how we correct mistakes, get back on track, repair harm, restore community, and make things right.

The way students, teachers, and administrators feel about school influences their actions and behaviors. We know that safe, supportive environments and positive relationships among adults and peers strengthen attachment to school and enhance adolescent resiliency and healthy development. On the other hand, when perceptions of school are dominated by adversarial, “us vs. them” relationships and feelings of anonymity, anxiety, distrust, and discouragement, students are more likely to experience school apathy and academic failure, emotional distress, and other risk behaviors.

A study of 15 urban districts commissioned by the National School Boards Association cautioned educators about focusing exclusively on instruction and testing at the cost of ignoring school climate factors that directly influence academic performance. “Good student development and academic learning are inextricably linked. Students care very much about what it feels like to be at school. Is the school safe and clean? Can they trust their teachers? And do teachers believe in and respect them? These feelings influence how students feel about themselves — how confident they are, what they think of themselves as learners, and what kind of future they see. Students cannot learn well and are not likely to behave well in difficult school environments.”<sup>4</sup>

## **A Caring, Civic Community Built on Relational Trust**

Developing and sustaining a **sense of community** among all students and adults within a school is a conscious act that requires time, attention, and intention. “A community exists when a critical mass of stakeholders are committed to each other and to the organization’s goals and values and exert effort to achieve their goals and maintain relationships with each other. A perception of community is shaped by daily experiences and probably is best engendered when a person feels welcomed, supported, nurtured, respected, liked, and connected in reciprocal relationships with others, and contributes actively to the collective identity, destiny, and vision.”<sup>5</sup>

Schools that cultivate a **caring community** emphasize a relational view of community that puts caring relationships front and center. Nel Noddings, who has taught and written extensively on the ethics of care, posits, “To care and be cared for are fundamental human needs. All human beings need to be understood, received, respected, and recognized.”<sup>6</sup> Through the reciprocal attention and responsiveness of being “cared for,” we learn how to “care about” the conditions and treatment of others. A caring community provides the conditions that make it possible and compelling to respond in a caring manner to others. “We show them how to care. Children educated in this way gradually build an ethical ideal, a dependable caring self.”<sup>7</sup>

Schools that see themselves as a **civic community** treat the idea of balancing individual rights with civic obligations as a serious school endeavor. If education is supposed to be preparation for life and citizenship, then educators must play a role in equipping students to take part in the democratic process.<sup>8</sup> Educational philosopher John Dewey argued that schools are democracy’s laboratory, “a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience” that requires the school community to find common interests and values through “an equitable opportunity to receive and to take from others through a large variety of shared undertakings and experiences.”<sup>9</sup> The most important of these shared undertakings is learning how to live within a community of rights, responsibilities, and rules.

Strong relational trust is the bedrock that grounds a school’s climate and enables a school to become a caring and civic community. Effective schools promote and model mutual respect, high quality professionalism, and transparent accountability based on relational trust among and between administration, staff, students, and families. Shame and blame are not part of the culture. In their longitudinal study of trust in schools, researchers Anthony Bryk and Barbara Schneider found that the degree of relational trust between and among administrators, staff, students, and parents not only impacted people’s general sense of purpose, well-being, and hopefulness in the daily life of the school; but relational trust also influenced the degree to which school reform efforts actually increased student achievement. Schools with low relational trust were three times less likely to produce improved outcomes from their reform initiatives.<sup>10</sup>

If there are few opportunities for people across roles and responsibilities to talk, learn, and work together authentically, relational trust is an elusive proposition. Trust emerges from interactions in which people’s interdependent relationships are made visible and expectations are clear and agreed upon by all parties. People know what they can count on from each other, they know how they will be treated, and, most importantly, they know that others will take them seriously and take their interests to heart. For students, this means that adults communicate “I’m on your side” as well as “I’m on your case” when they make mistakes. For teachers, it means that their important concerns about student discipline and support will be addressed. For administrators, it means that they can count on all adults to enforce important rules and policies. For parents, it means that they have confidence in the administrators and staff to apply disciplinary rules and policies

fairly, without favor toward or prejudice against particular students or particular groups of students. More than anything, strong relational trust communicates the shared belief in people's good intentions and their capacity to do the right thing. The result is a good will commitment to do the work that needs to be done to accomplish the goals the school aims to achieve.

Building a caring and civic community that results in high levels of relational trust is neither fast nor easy. A first step might be to have a leadership team do a frank assessment of their school's climate and culture, teacher and student morale, and major disciplinary challenges. To uncover schoolwide trends, consider having staff and students complete a valid and reliable climate and culture survey. What actions have we taken as a school community to ensure all adults have a shared vision for the school? What evidence exists that teachers feel supported by the Administrative Team? What actions have we taken to understand how students feel about how they are disciplined? What quantitative and qualitative data exists around students being sent out of class, and the way serious discipline incidents are being handled? What steps have we taken as a school community to communicate with parents about our efforts to ensure their children are getting the supports they need?

Having an independent party facilitate teacher and student focus groups can also shed light on issues that need to be addressed. Keep in mind, just as teachers need to depersonalize a student's display of negative emotions, administrators need to avoid getting defensive about the current status of their school's climate and culture. Accurate diagnosis is a necessary first step on the path to change. Often the simple act of acknowledging and wanting to understand what is not working builds trust and credibility. It also typically reveals what might be the best next planning and problem solving step, such as inviting faculty to develop a shared school vision as described in Chapter Five or generating a few important schoolwide rules as described in Chapter Six.

## **Qualities to Strive For**

An effective schoolwide discipline model should be: respectful, fair, accountable, restorative, and viable. Each of these qualities goes a long way to counter the list of complaints and grievances that surround more traditional models of school discipline. Many schools capture some of these qualities in their discipline policies and practices, but most schools do not make all five of these qualities transparent to everyone in the school community. We believe that all five of these qualities are essential if schools are committed to meeting the needs and interests of multiple stakeholders — from the school principal, to the parents of a student with disabilities, the district lawyer, the community activist, the teacher union representative, and a high school student. Interactions between and among district and school staff, students, and parents communicate respect, protect the dignity of each individual, and ensure a tone of decency when these qualities are evident.

This set of qualities also provides a kind of litmus test for school teams who are considering changes to current policies and practices. Throughout a revision and planning process, teams can use the following question to assess whether they are on track for developing more effective policies and practices: “Does the recommended change to this specific policy or practice help our model become more respectful, fair, accountable, restorative, and viable?”

### Essential Qualities of an Effective Discipline and Student Support Model



#### Respectful

Respect affirms each person’s identity, value, and dignity by appreciating what each person brings to the school community. Respect begins by calling people by name, acknowledging their presence, and listening to them attentively. It is nurtured through cultural responsiveness by welcoming, noticing, and learning about the diversity of students, staff, and families within the school and every classroom. Adults create a climate of mutual respect through asking thoughtful questions and inviting and listening to students’ different perspectives. Adolescents overwhelmingly corroborate that they want to be listened to and taken seriously. When we work with districts and schools to recalibrate schoolwide discipline and student support programs, student voices are always involved in the initial needs assessment through survey data and focus group interviews.

Adults’ direct modeling of respectful behaviors sets the stage for students to communicate respectfully. Particularly when dealing with discipline issues, we need to remind ourselves that our response will always shape the student’s



response. On that note, it is worth unpacking why “being disrespected” is the source of so many adult-adolescent conflicts. Developmentally, young people are hypersensitive when it comes to the question of respect. They tend to label any adult comments and actions that diminish their self-worth, discount their feelings, or use embarrassment or sarcasm to communicate disapproval or disappointment as disrespect — and once named, will likely heighten students’ feelings of anger and agitation. We see respectful adult-to-student communication as the cornerstone for all disciplinary practices.

### **Fair**

In addition to respect, fairness is the other quality that students care most about. For students, fairness is about when and how adults choose to engage in conversations about discipline and the way adults respond to discipline incidents. This includes assigning consequences and interventions that fit the severity and frequency of behavior violations, saving more serious responses for the incidents that most seriously jeopardize students’ safety. Students quickly abandon their good will with teachers who make a big deal over the student without a pencil or toss a student out of class for talking. Adolescents let us know that “we are supposed to make mistakes — we’re teenagers.” Thus, it is critical to create opportunities where they can reset and make a fresh start when they make a mistake. Being fair means adults treat students reasonably, interact with students respectfully, avoid favoritism that feels arbitrary, and claim the middle ground between harshness or humiliation and permissiveness or doing nothing.

As much as students want adults to respond consistently when they get in trouble, students also want to be reassured that adults will exercise a degree of judiciousness when the particulars of a situation should factor into a determination of the most appropriate consequence. Differentiated responses, however, must reside within a larger framework of equitable practices under which all students are treated fairly without favor toward or prejudice against any one group of students according to ability, talent, age, gender, developmental and acquired disabilities, race and ethnicity, socio-economic status, religious and spiritual orientation, national origin and home language, sexual orientation, and indigenous heritage. In practical terms, this means that: (1) in a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS), all opportunities and interventions must be accessible to every student, (2) Tier 2 and Tier 3 consequences and interventions must be consistently applied across all groups of students with fidelity and integrity, (3) culturally competent and responsive practices are embedded throughout the educational program; and (4) data must be transparent to determine the use and efficacy of all consequences and interventions, paying particular attention to indicators of disproportionality among various student groups.

### **Accountable**

Accountability involves an obligation or willingness to accept and account for one’s actions to others. We have never met an educator or parent who did not

want young people to be accountable for their behavior. However, when schools choose to take on the mantle of an accountable approach to discipline and student support, they need to consider the degree to which accountability is perceived as supportive and collective. Does the school leadership team operate from a more supportive or punitive stance? Punitive accountability is about “dinging” students, staff, parents, and schools when they get it wrong and, most likely, attaching punitive sanctions to wrongful actions or bad results. In contrast, supportive accountability creates an environment free from harsh criticism, blame, and shame, so people are more willing to own their mistakes and missteps and make good faith attempts to correct things and get it right.

For example, if the entire faculty agrees to be at their doors and in hallways during the change of classes, and some staff members are noticeably absent, punitive accountability would translate into a principal’s “gotcha” message directed to non-compliant staff: “Mr. Green, Ms. Brown, and Mrs. Grey, this is the second week you’ve been AWOL in the hallways. One more week of no shows and I will need to write you up.” On the other hand, a principal who believes in supportive accountability might use constructive feedback to share observable data with the whole staff. “On hall walks this week, 80 percent of staff were present in wings A and D during transitions. Less than half of the staff on B and C wings were out and about. Folks, let’s everyone ramp it up to 90 percent next week. Thanks in advance for helping make good on our agreement.” School leaders who push for supportive accountability do three other things. They expect some imperfection. “Well that didn’t go well, but it’s not the end of the world.” They are optimistic and solution-oriented. “This is fixable.” And they communicate their confidence in adults’ and students’ capacity to change. “You can do this.”

Being held accountable generates a more positive response when it is perceived as a collective endeavor. We cannot ask students to rise to the occasion and own their behavior if we are reluctant to call on adults to step up their own accountability for their words and actions. Collective accountability for establishing an effective schoolwide discipline and student support model calls on all stakeholders to accept the following obligations:

- **The School Administration** has the obligation to serve as champions of promoting a positive school climate and overseeing and supervising all personnel, systems, and structures associated with discipline and student support.
- **Teachers** have the obligation to treat all students respectfully and fairly; promote positive behaviors by teaching habits of learning and self-discipline; provide clear academic and behavioral expectations, routines, and procedures; increase students’ engagement in learning; prevent and defuse conflicts and confrontational behaviors; and use restorative strategies to help struggling students get back on track.
- **The Student Support Team** has the obligation to maximize its capacity and expertise in order to provide timely and effective interventions that will help students get back on track and function more successfully at school.



- **Students** have the obligation to accept assigned school sanctions/ consequences and fully participate in the interventions designed to address specific behaviors or disciplinary incidents.
- **Parents/Guardians/Caregivers** have the obligation to partner with school staff to support their child's success in school and their healthy development and well-being.

### Restorative

A restorative approach to discipline is based on the belief that students are resilient, capable of turning around adverse situations, and can restore themselves and their relationships with the understanding and guidance of caring adults. As illustrated in Figure 2.2 a restorative approach moves beyond punishment by providing interventions and supports to mitigate future misbehavior. More traditional school discipline focuses singular attention on the processing, assignment and delivery of a punishment when students misbehave. This “eye for an eye” principle is rooted deep in human history; however, the reality reminds us that punishments and the threat of punishments do not deter or reduce most misbehavior in schools. Students who are repeatedly removed from classrooms, sent to the dean's office, or assigned detention and suspension are caught in a cycle that makes it difficult for them to change direction and for teachers to step back and try more effective responses.

Figure 2.2

**Comparison Between a Punitive and a Restorative Approach**

	<b>Punitive Approach</b>	<b>Restorative Approach</b>
<b>Intention</b>	Punishment is an end in itself intended to inflict sufficient discomfort, unpleasantness, or undesired consequence in order to decrease the unwanted behavior.	A restorative intervention is a learning opportunity in which a student must account for his/her behavior and take some action to repair the harm done, make amends, self-correct, right oneself, problem solve, learn new behaviors, or restore one's good standing.
<b>The Process</b>	<p>Actions are done to a student through external control and authority.</p> <p>The needs and feelings of those harmed in an incident are often ignored.</p> <p>Blame and faultfinding are central.</p> <p>Perceived as confrontational or adversarial.</p> <p>Perceived as win-lose.</p>	<p>Actions are done by a student with the support of caring adults.</p> <p>When an incident has harmed others, their needs and feelings are central to the process.</p> <p>Problem analysis and problem solving are central.</p> <p>Perceived as supportive, collaborative and learning-focused.</p> <p>Perceived as win-win using fair process.</p>
<b>Parties Involved</b>	Student and district authority or school administrator.	Student, administrator, a Student Support Coach, and parties affected by the incident.
<b>Focus</b>	Primary focus on the past (What did you do?)	Primary focus on the present (What are you thinking now?) and the future (What can you do to make it right? When a situation like this comes up again, what actions might you take next time?)
<b>Accountability</b>	Involves "doing time" through the assignment of a punishment or penalty.	Involves "owing time" to account for one's actions, take personal responsibility, reflect on the impact of one's behavior, and engage in some action to make it right.
<b>Effects on the Student</b>	Tends to encourage lying, blame, and defensiveness, intensify feelings of anger, resentment, hostility, and alienation resulting in low motivation to change.	Tends to encourage candor and truthfulness, defuse anger, generate feelings of being cared for and respected, support personal agency, insight, and competence resulting in greater motivation to change.
<b>Effects on Relationships and Community</b>	Relationships tend to worsen or remain adversarial.	<p>Supports maintenance and/or repair of relationships.</p> <p>Supports restoration of one's good standing in the community.</p>
<b>Re-entry if Exclusionary Sanctions are Still in Use</b>	Planned re-entry is often absent.	Re-entry to school community involves consistent protocols and processes that are carefully planned and monitored.

A restorative approach ensures that assigned school sanctions/consequences are aligned to appropriate interventions. Moreover, it places a greater emphasis on the intervention phase of a disciplinary incident than the consequence phase. The intervention phase signals to students that they will be asked to own the problem, reflect on the impact of their behavior on themselves and others, understand *why* the behavior was inappropriate, unacceptable, or unskillful, and engage in some action with the support of a caring adult to right oneself, learn new skills and practice different behaviors, or repair the harm and make it right. Human beings are more cooperative, responsive, and more likely to make positive changes in behavior when others do things with them, not to them or for them. Interventions are likely to include restorative practices like problem solving and planning conferences, mediation, and Restorative Group Conferences for high impact incidents when students experience interpersonal conflicts. Other interventions like counseling, replacement behavior sessions, and progress monitoring support students' development of new skills and mindsets that strengthen their personal and social efficacy.

To be absolutely clear, a shift to a restorative approach does not eliminate the consequence phase of a disciplinary incident. Nor are punishments eliminated altogether. Most states and school districts have mandated punitive sanctions for the most serious behavior violations and these mandates are unlikely to change in any model. However, a restorative approach does aim to reduce and even eliminate the use, overuse, and disproportional use of exclusionary sanctions through implementation of more restorative strategies in the classroom, greater use of in-school interventions, and clearer and fewer conditions under which classroom removal and suspension may be used.

### **Viable**

This last quality is often ignored at a district's or school's peril. It is critical to ensure that all stated rules and policies are feasible and capable of working successfully. This requires that 95 percent of adults in the school are willing to do what is required to support and enforce the rule or policy. It also necessitates that all consequences and interventions are doable which means the school has the capacity in time, numbers of personnel, and expertise to manage, process, and deliver desired consequences and interventions to all students who need them. Schools want to avoid making the mistake of promoting a rule or policy that is unenforceable or offering an intervention that is never likely to be available to all students who need it. A few cautionary guidelines and examples may help teams analyze the viability of their rules and policies, sort out what to keep, what to eliminate, and what might require adjustments.

- Avoid rules and policies that require too many steps to enforce. (An electronic device policy that requires adults to confiscate all devices that are seen or heard, bag and tag the device, and then take the device to the office to be placed in the school safe is not feasibly enforceable.)

- Avoid expectations that are humanly impossible to meet. (The expectation that every single disciplinary incident will be investigated [vs. insisting on investigation for all incidents that meet certain criteria] is a promise that cannot be kept.)
- Avoid rules that will not generate at least 95 percent compliance from the staff to enforce them. (A tardy policy that expects teachers to contact a parent every time a student is late is unlikely to be enforced consistently.)
- Avoid consequences for which the time, processing tasks, and communication points required to deliver it are disproportional to either the severity of the violation or the effectiveness of the consequence. (Assigning after school detention for each tardy or minor disciplinary incidents involves an exhaustive number of steps, time, and personnel to ensure compliance to the rule. If there is no back up protocol when students do not show up, the policy becomes a joke to students.)
- Be cautious about introducing interventions for which you do not have adequate personnel to deliver. (Even though a comprehensive re-entry plan would be ideal for any suspension, it may only be viable for students returning from long-term suspensions.)

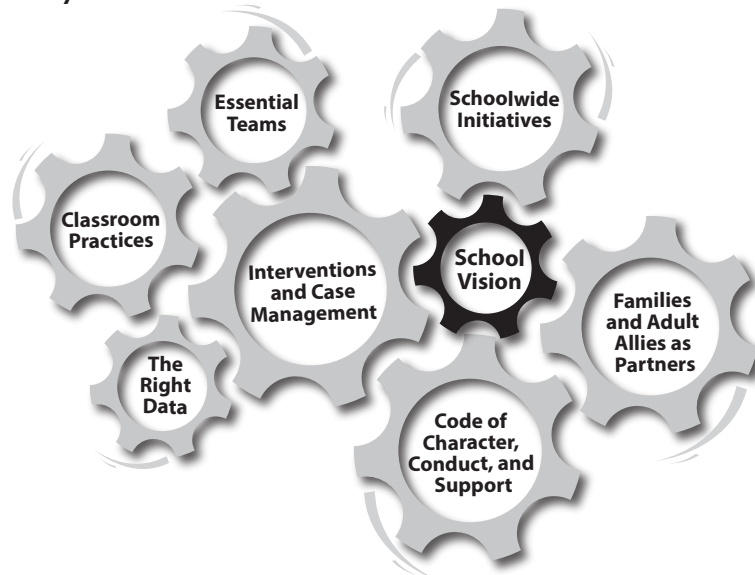
### The Gears in the System

In *Leadership and the New Science*, Margaret Wheatley eloquently describes the challenges of implementing and sustaining organizational change. “How do we create organizational coherence...how do we create structures that move with change, that are flexible and adaptive...that enable rather than constrain? How do we resolve the need for personal freedom and autonomy with organizational needs for prediction and control?”<sup>11</sup>

We have identified eight gears — system components and important shifts that help schools recalibrate a schoolwide discipline and student support model in ways to maximize students’ success in school; foster students’ academic, social, and emotional development; and maximize adult effectiveness in supporting all students. Each gear has multiple moving parts and is an essential component of the whole model. All of the gears are interdependent. The word interdependent implies that all staff members are dependent on the efficacy of each other’s actions and work collaboratively to make the model function. Making changes in any of the gears will require significant shifts in adult mindsets, development of new structures and programs, and implementation of a different set of practices used by administrators, teachers, and student support staff.

As teams identify needs and begin implementing changes with individual gears, they will find that it is important to review and fine-tune the other gears to make sure each part of the system is aligned and compatible. Consider systems change as a gestalt process where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. The graphic depiction in Figure 2.3 provides a visual overview of the eight gears that make the model work.

Figure 2.3:

**Gears in the System**

These gears will be explored in detail in Section 2.

**School Vision, Chapter Five**

A school's vision encompasses its mission, core values and beliefs and makes up a central "gear" in the model. A foundational step for any school looking to improve their discipline practices is to start by examining and articulating beliefs around discipline and ensuring that disciplinary practices are aligned with the school vision.

**Code of Character, Conduct, and Support, Chapter Six**

One of the three key principles in the federal guidelines for improving school climate and discipline centers on the development of "schoolwide disciplinary policy that sets high expectations for behavior, provides clear rules and developmentally appropriate and proportional consequences that are consistently applied, and uses disciplinary incidents to help students learn from their mistakes, improve their behavior, and meet high expectations."<sup>12</sup> For most districts and schools, meeting these standards will require close examination and changes to their code of conduct.

**Essential Teams, Chapter Seven**

Our work in middle and high schools has revealed the necessity for establishing four distinct teams that drive the work involved in implementing effective policies and practices related to discipline and student support. They are: (1) the Administrative Team, (2) the School Climate-Discipline Team, (3) the Student Support Team, and (4) the School (or grade level) Intervention Team. Each team has clearly delineated roles and responsibilities and uses structured protocols to organize and manage the work of the team.

### **The Right Data, Chapter Eight**

Collecting, disaggregating, analyzing, and using the right set of data is an essential first step to improving school climate, assigning the right consequences and delivering the right interventions, and ultimately improving students' overall behavior and academic performance. Data must also be integrated in ways that capture a holistic portrait of each student with the capacity to generate weekly individual student reports. Equally important is making data transparent and accessible with particular attention to indicators that reveal overuse of exclusionary sanctions and disproportionality among various student groups.

### **Schoolwide Initiatives, Chapter Nine**

An effective discipline and student support model focuses equal, if not more, time and effort on promotion and prevention measures as it does on reactive responses to discipline incidents. Schoolwide initiatives promote a positive school climate through activities and practices that increase student voice; maintain a safe, orderly, and attractive physical environment; and foster caring and civil communication among and between adults and young people.

### **Classroom Practices, Chapter Ten**

Teacher mindsets, knowledge, skills, and practices impact school climate and culture. They play a critical role in schoolwide discipline. This gear highlights the importance of implementing some core universal classroom practices that align with the school's goals for discipline, create orderly and engaging classrooms, support students to develop greater self-discipline, prevent most discipline problems, and use restorative processes to intervene when behavioral concerns persist.

### **Interventions and Case Management, Chapter Eleven**

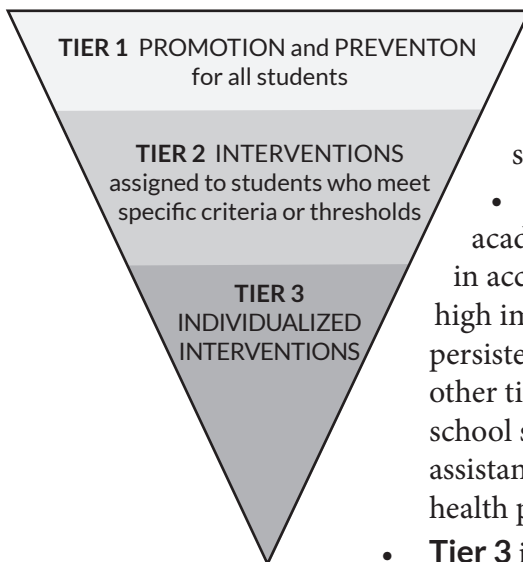
Two notable changes in the federal guidelines center around interventions and case management: (1) a stronger push for schools to develop more articulated supports and interventions; and (2) a push to increase the numbers and the capacity of school-based behavior and mental health specialists to meet the needs of students who are experiencing academic, behavioral, and mental health challenges. Anyone familiar with PBIS (Positive Behavior Supports and Interventions) or RtII (Response to Instruction and Intervention) will recognize the benefits of using a three-tiered framework to support students with different behavior and learning needs. Research indicates that a tiered framework of care and support is an effective and efficient way to (1) promote pro-social behaviors, (2) prevent misbehaviors from escalating or repeating, and (3) provide interventions for students who need a more intensive response to turn around their behavior.<sup>13</sup>



A tiered framework is essential because different groups of students need different amounts of time, attention, tasks, and supports to behave responsibly, achieve at high levels, and become college- and career-ready. For example, students who may require more flexible and individualized interventions are those with IEPs, BIPs (Behavioral Intervention Plan), and 504 Accommodation Plans, as well as those students experiencing a family or personal crisis or students exhibiting chronic aggressive behaviors.

- **Tier 1** focuses on promotion and prevention. It serves all students in the school by establishing universal expectations, common classroom practices, and schoolwide initiatives accessible to all. Promotion efforts foster the personal, social, and academic efficacy of all students through schoolwide and classroom practices and programs. They teach, practice, recognize, and assess the skills, habits, and mindsets to encourage self-discipline and responsible behavior. Prevention efforts in the classroom enable teachers to intervene early, help students to re-engage, and defuse behavioral challenges before they become unmanageable. Schoolwide prevention efforts are intended to avert disciplinary incidents in public spaces and reduce negative social behaviors and high-risk behaviors among all students.
- **Tier 2** interventions are provided for students who need additional academic, behavioral, or emotional support. Students participate in accountable, restorative interventions when they have committed high impact behavior violations or when unwanted behaviors become persistent. Sometimes these interventions are carried out by the teacher, other times they are carried out by the teacher in cooperation with other school staff and administrators. Additionally, they are carried out by assistant principals, deans, student support staff members, and mental health professionals.
- **Tier 3** interventions are provided for students with the highest level of need who require even more intensive and individualized interventions that are likely to last for an extended period of time. Interventions for these students are usually provided by counselors, social workers, psychologists, case managers, youth development specialists, and other trained mental health professionals. A typical Tier 3 intervention would involve the development of a comprehensive student success plan for students who are experiencing multiple academic, attendance, and behavioral challenges that erode a student's capacity to function successfully at school.

### A Three-Tiered System of Support



Both Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions, delivered within a coherent case management system, are discussed in detail in Chapter Eleven. See Figure 2.4, which lays out the principles behind a three-tiered framework.

Figure 2.4

**Three-tiered Framework**

Tier 1			Tier 2		Tier 3
Schoolwide norming through alignment of core beliefs, values, and practices with the school code of character, conduct, and student support.	Classroom management and discipline practices, procedures, and instructional supports that align with school-wide rules and expectations and foster student engagement.  Students learn and practice habits of learning and self-discipline.	When unwanted behaviors occur, teachers use “real time” strategies and practices that enable most students to self-correct, re-engage and get back on track.	When students engage in chronic unwanted behaviors, teachers use restorative conferencing to engage students in reflection and planning that will help them right themselves, repair harm, restore their good standing, and make it right.	Restorative interventions beyond the classroom for students whose behavior problems persist, who experience serious emotional distress, or who commit serious behavior violations that require more intensive interventions.	Restorative interventions for the highest needs students who receive intensive, individualized interventions, on-going coaching, and close progress monitoring.
Promotion		Prevention	Intervention		

**Families and Adult Allies as Partners, Chapter Twelve**

Middle and high schools are working to become more proactive and more strategic in their efforts to engage families and adult allies in supporting students' academic progress, their health and well-being, and their aspirations for the future. Administrators, school staff, and even parents themselves vastly underestimate the power of parent and family influence on students' performance in school and their postsecondary aspirations.

**The Critical Need for Shared Responsibility of Student Discipline**

Efforts to improve discipline must be implemented at the whole school and classroom levels. A school's efforts to improve schoolwide discipline and student support are dependent on efforts to implement parallel policies and practices in classrooms. The alignment between what people see, hear, and do in the larger school community and what people see, hear, and do in the classroom needs to be transparent to all stakeholders (administrators, staff, students, and families/adult allies).

Too often, administrators and student support staff are charged with developing and implementing schoolwide discipline while issues of classroom discipline remain the private domain of each individual teacher.<sup>14</sup> This type of bifurcated thinking can easily lead to an adversarial mantra from faculty that “Discipline is not my job —you fix it,” inappropriately pitting the interests of administrators and student support staff against the interests of classroom teachers.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, an artificial division of disciplinary responsibilities results in inconsistent and incoherent messages to students about what matters and what is the right thing to do.

Ultimately, discipline and student support must be seen as everyone’s job. At the heart of a healthy school culture is the commitment of all staff to take responsibility for the healthy development of students. They must model the skills, behaviors, and mindsets they seek to cultivate in young people. The word *discipline* has everything to do with instruction. Among its Latin origins are the words, *discipulus* which means “pupil or learner” and *disciplina* which means “teaching, training, and instruction” in the broadest sense. Supporting students to become more self-disciplined involves teaching and practicing the habits, skills, and mindsets that strengthen students’ personal efficacy (their belief in their capacity to manage their emotions, self-regulate, set goals, plan ahead, problem solve, and persevere.) Multiple studies confirm the role that self-discipline plays in improving students’ academic performance and preparing students to be college- and career-ready.<sup>16</sup> We owe it to students to make the development of self-discipline a primary outcome for every student in every class.

We hope that the descriptions of these essential features have both clarified and inspired your thinking. While this chapter is intended to serve as a thought-provoking introduction, Section Two of this book will provide further insight and details on ways to make these gears (components) a functioning system in your school.

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<sup>4</sup> Perkins, B.K. *Where We Learn: The CUBE Survey of Urban School Climate*. [https://www.nsba.org/sites/default/files/reports/Where-we-learn\\_1.pdf](https://www.nsba.org/sites/default/files/reports/Where-we-learn_1.pdf)

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<sup>7</sup> *ibid*

<sup>8</sup> Tauber, R. (2007) *Classroom Management, Sound Theory and Effective Practice*. Santa Barbara, CA.

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