

Northeast and Caribbean Mental Health Technology
Transfer Center at Rutgers University

Building a Foundation for Hope

School Mental Health Summit

for New Jersey's Education Leaders

Vincent R. De Lucia

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NJ School Boards Association



New Jersey School Boards Association

www.njsba.org | 609. 695. 7600 | 888.88NJSBA

Bergenfield: March 23, 1987

"All the News That's Fit to Print"

The New York Times

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New York, N.Y., March 23, 1987
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NEW YORK, THURSDAY, MARCH 23, 1987

300 REPORTED DEAD AND 4,000 MISSING IN ECUADOR QUAKES

EQUINOX LUGGES LARGE
1,000 Fatalities Are Fanned in Shattered Jungle Area
— 75,000 Lives Threatened

Quito, Ecuador, March 23 — The devastating 6.5 magnitude quake that struck the jungle area of Ecuador on Tuesday night has killed at least 300 people and left 4,000 missing, according to a preliminary report from the United Nations.

The quake, which struck at 10:30 p.m. local time, was felt throughout the country. It was particularly deadly in the jungle area of the country, where it caused widespread destruction and killed many people.

The United Nations is now trying to coordinate relief efforts in the area. It is estimated that 75,000 people are in danger of starvation in the area.

A Dissonance Among Superficial Celluloses

David Permut, who has adapted his old cell, those, at home in the Princeton, N.J., office, said he and his husband have been trying to convert a cell for more than a decade and tried to help through in other locations. "Practically, it's a waste of time," he said. "It's the same old story."

Vatican's Moral Mission

Reputation Report Seen as Opportunity To Influence Governments in Making Laws

Vatican City, March 23 — The Vatican's moral mission, as seen in its reputation report, is seen as an opportunity to influence governments in making laws.

House in Vote To Block Funds For the Contras

By LARRY GREENGLASS
Washington, March 23 — The House of Representatives is expected to vote today on a bill to block funds for the Contras in Nicaragua.

Tiny Diamonds in Space Seen As Clue to Evolution of Stars

By ROBERT W. HAYES
Astronomers have found tiny diamonds in space, which may be a clue to the evolution of stars.

Merrill Lynch Official Named In \$4 Million Insider Scheme

By JAMES HENNINGSEN
A Merrill Lynch official has been named in a \$4 million insider scheme.

4 Jersey Teen-Agers Kill Themselves in Death Pact

Students gathered outside Bergenfield High School after news spread of teen-agers' pact.

4 Jersey Teen-Agers Kill Themselves in Death Pact



The New York Times photo shows students gathered outside Bergenfield High School after news spread of teen-agers' pact.

By MICHAEL MURPHY
Bergenfield, N.J., March 23 — Four teen-agers in this county and town, ages 15 to 16, killed themselves in a death pact in a suicide pact, the Bergen County prosecutor said.

The teenagers were found in their homes in the town of Bergenfield, N.J., on Tuesday. They were all found with gunshot wounds.

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about the pact for a week, until the parents were told, said Prosecutor Murphy.

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months' planning, according to the prosecutor. The teenagers' parents and the school principal had been told of the pact through a letter from the girls.

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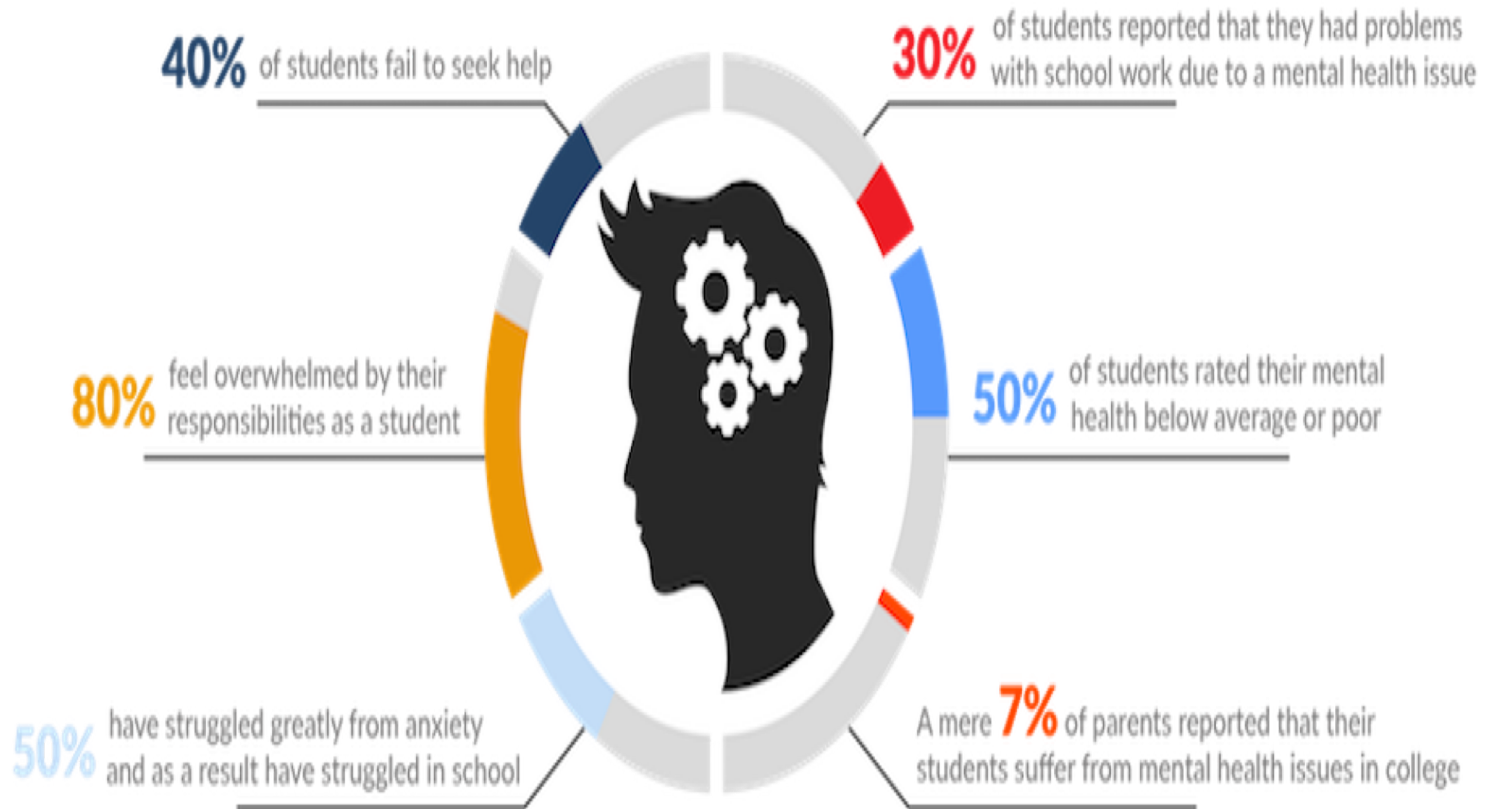
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Why Address MH in Schools?



Parents' confidence in the ability of their child's school to handle various health situations

Percent of parents who are very confident

	Elementary School	Middle/High School
Give first aid	84%	70%
Respond to an asthma attack	63%	54%
Assist with suspected mental health problem	45%	32%



Source: C.S. Mott Children's Hospital National Poll on Children's Health, 2017



Listen to the Students!

- *“As important as alcoholism and drug abuse are, we spend two weeks on those units. We spend one class – 40 minutes – on mental health awareness.”*
- *“No one says kids are cutting (themselves). I understand that it’s not socially acceptable...but when it’s a crisis, I don’t think it’s fair to expect everyone to be polite anymore.”*
- *“By saying, ‘Oh, this kid passed away,’ it’s not addressing the issue. This kid committed suicide. ... It’s almost like we have a ticking bomb going off. This is what’s happening. And we’re not doing enough.”*
- *“I cry when I feel overwhelmed... I just need someone to talk to, to have somebody listen to me.”*

— Middlesex County students, May 10, 2019



Why Study Mental Health in Schools?

- Increases in risky behaviors
- Social Media Isolation
- Who Plays Outside in 2019?
- Kids texting each other at the dinner table
- Increases in Opioid and other substance uses and overdoses
- Increases in children self reporting emotional challenges for themselves and for family members
- Prepare students for a healthy, independent future
- Mission Creep
- “It is our responsibility to advocate for all.”



Why? Class of 2030 Traits of Success?*

- Success in the Workplace-2030
 - Empathy
 - Collaboration
 - Critical Thinking
 - Storytelling: Exemplary verbal, written, listening communication skills

or

Relationships, Communications & Critical Thinking

*Reports by:

- Fortune Magazine
- National Education Association



***“Kids Do Not Care
How Much You
KNOW,
Until They Know How
Much You
CARE”***

Unknown



***Prior NJSBA Reports that Include Mental Health “Suggestions for Consideration”**

- NJSBA School Security TF- 2014 & 2018- 45 Total Suggestions
- Special Education- October 2014- 20 Suggestions
- Health & Wellness TF- August, 2015- 104 Suggestions
- Student Achievement TF- March 2017- 83 Suggestions
- Educational Opportunities for the Career Focused/Non-College Bound Learner- Oct. 2018 -69 Suggestions
- Mental Health in Schools- July 2019- 72 Suggestions
- ****Links to each report can be found at the end of this presentation or at WWW.NJSBA.ORG***



We Are All Responsible to Impact Change

6 Reports- over 100 Mental Health Related Suggested Recommendations

A Call For **Bold Actions**...

- NJSBA
- Boards of Education
- Local, County & State Governing Bodies
- Community & Service Groups
- Youth Activity Groups
- Parent Groups
- Student Organizations



It Takes A Village...

- Local Municipal Governing Bodies and Boards of Education Must Collaborate
- Community Response/Resource Team
- Parent Academies
- Spiritual/Clergy Community
- Local Service Groups
- Youth Activity Groups – arts, sports, etc.
- Local Businesses- especially those that kids use like convenience stores, fast food, gaming and activity related centers





New Jersey School Boards Association

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Building a Foundation for Hope



**Draft Report of the New Jersey School Boards Association's
Task Force on Mental Health Services in the Public Schools**

July 1, 2019



The NJSBA Task Force on Mental Health Services in the Public Schools *will study the impact of the effective delivery of mental health services and early intervention strategies on student health and wellness, school climate, and school security.*

The Task Force will consult with mental health practitioners and other experts. It will issue its final report, including recommendations for further action and information on best practices, by June 2019.



TF Membership

- Board of Ed Members from:
 - Asbury Park
 - Boonton
 - East Amwell
 - Fort Lee
 - Hamilton (Atlantic County)
 - Lindenwold
 - Montclair
 - Wanaque
 - Washington Twp. (Gloucester County)
 - Watchung Hills
- Resources from:
 - NJSBA Staff
 - Superintendents (Howell, Highland Park, Ocean City, West Windsor-Plainsboro)
 - Director of Special Services
 - Director of Student Personnel Services
 - HS Principal
 - Teachers
 - NJ Assoc. School Psychologists
 - District SEL Coordinator
 - Rutgers Health: School/Community Based Programs, University Health Care
 - Traumatic Loss Coalition



The 3 Supportive Legs of Suggestions for Boards of Education to Consider

- Proactive **Prevention** Programs
- Proactive **Intervention** Programs
- Proactive **Response**, Support and After-Care Programs



How Are We Addressing the MH of Adults Who Work with Students?

*If the adults in the lives of kids are
not healthy,
what is the mental health impact
on those kids
who interact with
less than healthy adults?*



2nd to 4th Industrial Revolution

Today's HS Model: 1894

- What's New is Old!
 - The Affective Domain of the 1970s
 - Values Clarification
 - Emphasis on Team Building & Social Skills
 - Collaborative Professional Adult Relationships
 - SEL – 21st Century
- *From a Primary Emphasis on **Accountability** to a Balanced Focus on the **Whole Child** including **Student Learning** and progress to being **independent citizens***



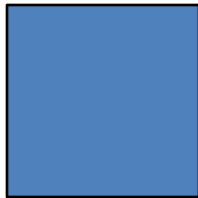
How?

- Are the adults feeling healthy?
 - Address the climate, morale, emotional and mental health of the staff
 - Teambuilding, Socials-throughout the year
- Does the staff feel Supported, respected and valued professionally? Personally?
- Employee Assistance Programs?
- Effective Professional Learning Communities
- Teacher / Distributed Leadership
- Collaborative Decision Making
- Connected Action Roadmap (CAR)
- NJ Labor Management Collaborative: NJSBA, NJASA, NJEA, NJPSA, AFT-NJ, RU School of Labor

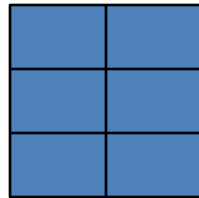


How? It's OK for Learning to be Fun!

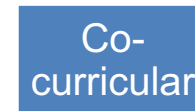
- Kids of all ages need opportunities to learn how to interact with each other and adults
- Teambuilding, social events, collaborative learning structures for all N-12
- Building on the Nurturing Elementary Classroom N-12 so EVERY child feels the adults in the school know him/her!



Elementary



Middle School



High School



Programs & Practices For Kids

- Adopt with fidelity a Whole Child Approach to All Aspects of School
- Opportunities to socialize with peers and the adults with whom they work- ON GOING
- SEL practices embedded in every lesson
- Team building & Cooperative Learning
- Respectful Student Management Practices
- WINGMAN – Dylan’s Wings of Change: Everyone has a Buddy
- “Start with Hello” 1 week program (Sandy Hook Promise Foundation)
- Every child is know by at least one adult
- Every child has at least one positive adult contact /week
- Every child is greeted individual daily by at least one adult
- Advisor/Advisee, Peer Leadership, Peer Mentors, Adult Mentors
- A Familiarity with the Search Institute’s 40 Development Assets that are the foundations of youth healthy decision-making



4th Industrial Revolution

“Information Age”

- Begin to relieve Student (and parent STRESS) about their futures!
 - College is not for all: a college degree is not a requirement for success by any definition!
 - Collaborative Work Places require school experiences in Cooperative Learning N-12 that also builds social and communication skills
 - Re-invent HSs to reflect today’s world – the 4th Industrial Revolution!
 - Internships, Paid Apprenticeships, Stacking Credentials
 - Earning Professional Certificates, Earning Credits towards a higher level cert or a Degree, or an Associates with a HS Diploma
 - Career Awareness in Elementary (Community Helpers) and Middle Schools



4th Industrial Revolution

“Information Age”

- Mindfulness Rooms
- Respectful Student Management, Restorative Justice, teach resiliency : Discipline: to teach
- Develop a funded, comprehensive district-wide action plan that would ensure long-term success of a social-emotional learning (SEL) program that includes social-emotional learning part of every course to increase academic performance
- Climate surveys: Staff, students, and their families
- Inform parents of the unique stages of development of each age group so that they understand what their children are experiencing and can adjust their parenting styles.
- Ensure the role of law enforcement in schools are known: Cops are not there for discipline
- Alternative Learning Structures: technology, reversed classroom, independent learning, etc



Programs & Practices For Staff

- Professional Learning Communities
- Teacher Leaders
- Connected Action Roadmap (CAR)
- NJ Labor Management Collaborative (NJSBA, NJASA,, NJPSA, NJEA, AFT-NJ, RU School of Labor)
- Distributed Leadership
- Distributed Decision Making
- Teambuilding- ON GOING



Community

- Schools are reflective of the Communities they serve...
 - Schools cannot address these challenges in isolation
 - Local Governing Body
 - Municipal Alliance
 - Community Response Team
 - Recreation & Culture
 - Health Department
 - Social Service
 - Your Activity Groups (recreation, arts, spiritual, etc.)
- Parent Involvement: When can they be included on Committees, Task Forces, etc.



Support

- Mental Health First Aid
- SACs, Child Study Teams, Safety Teams
- School Based Counseling Partnership
 - During & beyond school day
 - Family and Student Counseling
 - 1978
- Parent Academies
- Health & Wellness Events for All
- Staff and Family PD: Developmental Needs of all Age Groups



Mission Creep: Evolving Responsibilities

- High Academic Expectations and Practices that Consider the “Whole Child” are not mutually exclusive
- We must educate & include parents and the community in efforts to support kids
- Let’s Give Permission to Educators to Incorporate Healthy Practices in Classrooms:
 - Time Invested in Social Emotional Practices Benefits ALL students



NJSBA Report Links

- Special Education: <https://www.njsba.org/news-information/research/njsba-task-force-on-special-education-report-2014/>
- Health & Wellness: <https://www.njsba.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Wellness-Task-Force-Final-Report-revised-april27.pdf>
- Student Achievement: <https://www.njsba.org/news-publications/school-board-notes/april-4-2017-vol-xi-no-33/njsba-issues-major-report-student-achievement-2/>
- Educational Opportunities for the Career Focused/Non-College Bound Learner: <https://www.njsba.org/news-information/research/projects/final-report-educational-opportunities-for-the-non-college-bound-learner/>
- Mental Health in Schools: <https://www.njsba.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/MHTF-Report-Final-Revised-7.17.19-USE-THIS-FILE.docx.pdf>
- School Safety: <https://www.njsba.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/FINAL-REPORT-October-24.pdf>



Above all else, **ACT.**

***Institutionalize and Formalize
the Incorporation of Practices
and Procedures that Support
the Healthy Emotional and
Mental Health for All.***



Reflection

- How are school structures, policy, organization, curriculum, etc. contributing to the overall emotional, mental, and physical health of the students, their families and all staff in your district?
- What is the status of collaboration among and between the BoE and local governing body on challenges including mental health?



Contact Information

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To access the NJSBA Reports:

www.njsba.org



Examples of Suggested Recommendations

- Recommendations for the Education Community, especially Boards of Education to Consider from the **NJSBA Mental Health Task Force Report** and the NJSBA Reports on :
 - **School Safety & Security**
 - **Special Education**
 - **Health & Wellness Impact on Learning**
 - **Education Opportunities for the HS Career-Focused Learners**



NJSBA's Suggested Recommendations for Consideration

A RESPONSIVE STRUCTURE

- **Local school boards should ensure that policies and protocols are in place to help the children most at risk in a timely and effective manner.**

1) Create a Community Response Team (CRT). (This report discusses how to create an inclusive team that includes government, police, experts in trauma care and the faith-based community.)

2) Develop a CRT action plan so that all members understand their role.

3) Develop a funded, comprehensive district-wide action plan that would ensure long-term success of a social-emotional learning (SEL) program.

4) Ensure that the plans include a climate study and restorative justice-based student management, while incorporating SEL through the curriculum.



Suggested to Consider

- **SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING**

- **Local school boards should implement social-emotional learning (SEL) programs and preK-12 character education programs to improve school climate, academic performance and the health of students and staff.**

11) Ensure that SEL programs are a district priority and that they emphasize empathy, collaboration, communication, and critical thinking — skills that not only enable academic achievement, but also success in college, career and family life.

12) Teach resiliency and help students understand that there are many acceptable pathways in life.

13) Find ways to make social-emotional learning part of every course to increase academic performance.

16) Advocate for legislation: S-2861/S-3081, A-4592/A-4446- districts provide age-appropriate instruction on mental health for students in grades kindergarten through 12 as part of the district's health curriculum



NJSBA's Recommendations for Consideration

ASSESS SCHOOL CLIMATE*

- School districts should conduct emotional climate surveys.

17) Analyze survey data and discuss what is needed to ensure an optimum climate is being nurtured throughout the district.

18) Assess current activities that address the social-emotional learning needs of students and staff.

19) Consider the development of action plans for each individual school organization, as well as an overarching plan for the entire district. Respond to data reported through climate surveys.

****Don't Forget to include students and their families***



IMPROVE SCHOOL CLIMATE

- **Boards of education should adopt policies that help improve school climate while encouraging programs and activities that nurture and strengthen all children.**

24) Develop protocols in each school organization that ensure each child is known by at least one school employee (teacher, support staff member, administrator) and has a trusted adult to turn to for help.

25) Make sure every student has at least one positive contact with an adult employee during the week.

26) Strategize ways for all staff to maintain empathy for, and communication with, all students, especially those whose home situations are less than ideal.

27) Foster team building with staff to build trust and collegial, collaborative relationships throughout the year.

28) Teach students how to form collaborative relationships.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH/COMMUNICATION

- **School leaders should ensure that the district's strategic plan includes goals for two-way communication with all stakeholders.**

30) Convene parents, teachers and students to find ways to relieve the pressures that many students experience while maintaining academic standards.

31) Inform parents of the unique stages of development of each age group so that they understand what their children are experiencing and can adjust their parenting styles.

33) Develop a plan to inform the community about activities, initiatives and issues in the schools. Seek the community's input in the creation of the plan.

35) Ensure that all stakeholders understand the role of law enforcement officers assigned to the schools – that is, security, counseling and education, not student discipline or management. Consult NJSBA's 2014 report, *What Makes School Safe*, and the 2018 supplement for a discussion of the effective and proper use of law enforcement in schools



NJSBA's Recommendations for Consideration

HEALTH, WELLNESS AND SAFETY

- **Boards of education should adopt policies and approve programs that enable access to counseling and mental health services, build mindfulness, enable collegial and collaborative relationships among staff and students, and enhance student safety.**

37) Establish the “Wingman” program from the **Dylan’s Wings of Change Foundation**.

38) Conduct a one-week, “Start with Hello” program in conjunction with the Sandy Hook Promise Foundation.

39) Strategize ways for staff to maintain empathy and contact with all students throughout the year.

40) Encourage staff to create opportunities for positive social interaction so that students feel supported in class throughout the year.



NJSBA's Recommendations for Consideration

HEALTH, WELLNESS AND SAFETY (cont'd.)

41) Stage wellness events to build goodwill with the school and community at-large.

42) Create a “wellness room,” a safe space where students can go when stressed or if they have been bullied.

43) Ensure that certified mental health support personnel (counselors, social workers, school psychologists, nurses, substance abuse coordinators) are available to consult with students, families and staff.

44) Prepare students for success, but also teach them how to cope with, and learn from, failure.

45) Support the emotional health of staff by providing structures and opportunities to build collegial relationships through professional development and team building.

47) Consider the use of trained therapy dogs in wellness programs, especially for younger students.



CURRICULUM

- **School districts should adopt practices that ensure the mental health and emotional needs of students are met.**
- 50) Adopt the “whole child approach” to educating students, training teachers and staff to recognize that mental health is an important part of preparing a child for future success.
- 51) Provide professional guidance on the Maslow developmental theory so that teachers anticipate children’s needs as they mature. Make parents aware of the stages of development so that they can understand what their children are experiencing.
- 52) Incorporate cooperative learning structures, where students have the opportunity to work together and help each other understand academic materials, while building relationships.
- 53) Augment district curriculum to stress the importance of teacher-student relationships, school-to-student connectivity and respect.
- 54) Make mental health as important a part of the health curriculum as drug and alcohol abuse prevention.



CURRICULUM

55) Require communication among teachers and administrators to ensure that workloads and testing do not create unhealthy levels of stress.

56) Consider the adoption of service learning projects that, research indicates, enhance self-esteem and learning.

57) Review district definitions of success and how students should prepare for future success. Consult NJSBA's 2018 report, Educational Opportunities for the Non-College-Bound Learner (www.njsba.org/Non-College-Bound-Learner).

58) Review the recommendations of the 2017 report of the NJSBA Task Force on Student Achievement (www.njsba.org/student-achievement2017).

59) Consider adopting student support programs, such as Advisor/Advisee, adult mentor and peer mentor.



EQUITY

68) Adopt research-based approaches, such as restorative justice principles, to ensure that all students and cultures are respected, and that students and families understand and participate in student management practices.

69) Give all students the opportunity to build social-emotional learning skills and receive an educational experience that is personalized, culturally relevant and responsive.

70) Ensure that infractions of school discipline code are handled by the administration and professional staff, and not by law enforcement officers assigned to the schools.

71) Consider adopting Positive Behavior Support in Schools (PBSIS), a comprehensive climate building and student empowerment initiative...

72) Review common social and community problems affecting disadvantaged students and design solutions to address these problems.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- **Boards of education should adopt policies that enable professional development of all staff who interact with students — from school principals to bus drivers — to ensure they contribute to a healthy climate, where all students are treated with dignity and respect.**

Provide professional development suggestions:

60) In the unique needs of age groups.

61) Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets to ensure that school policies and procedures support healthy self-esteem.

62) NJ Social-Emotional Learning Competencies

63) That ensure all educators know their roles and responsibilities in student anxiety, depression, suicide ideation, substance abuse, etc.

64) To all staff members who interact with students –from the food service worker to the teacher to the administrator – to ensure that they help create a healthy, encouraging school climate.

65) Incorporate cooperative learning into professional development and teacher performance appraisals.

66) Support the emotional health of staff through various means



NJSBA School Security TF Report - October, 2014

II. SCHOOL CLIMATE

Local School District/Community

9. Local school districts should engage in school climate assessments and develop and implement plans to ensure that students have safe, secure and supportive learning environments that provide meaningful communication and involvement with caring adults on the school staff. (A list of climate assessment resources is found on page 30 of this report.)

10. Not all student groups experience school safety and the school climate in the same manner. To enable students to learn in supportive environments at each grade level, local school boards should adopt policies that recognize the importance of social-emotional learning, character development, restorative practices and community building.



School Security TF- October, 2014

10. (cont'd.) In addition, the Task Force recommends that school boards review the information on social-emotional learning, supportive practices, and authoritative disciplinary structures in Section II of this report, School Climate.

11. To build a respectful school climate that enables the advancement of student achievement, local boards of education and school administrators should ensure that the principles of social-emotional learning and character development skill-building are infused into academic instruction in a coordinated manner and that there is a consistent application of discipline.

12. Local boards of education should ensure that the School Safety Teams, required by the Anti- Bullying Bill of Rights, are not only reviewing reports of harassment, intimidation and bullying, but are also focusing on practices and processes related to school climate, so as to inform the school boards in their periodic review of HIB and related policies.



2015 Task Force Report: Impact of Health and Wellness on Student Achievement

Health Services: These services are designed to ensure access or referral to primary health care services or both, foster appropriate use of primary health care services, prevent and control communicable disease and other health problems, provide emergency care for illness or injury, promote and provide optimum sanitary conditions for a safe school facility and school environment, and provide educational and counseling opportunities for promoting and maintaining individual, family, and community health. Qualified professionals such as physicians, nurses, dentists, health educators, and other allied health personnel provide these services.

Counseling, Psychological, and Social Services: Services to improve students' mental, emotional, and social health including assessments, interventions, and referrals. Counselors and psychologists contribute not only to the health of students but also to the health of the school environment. Professionals including certified school counselors, SACs, psychologists, and social workers provide these services.



2015 Impact of Health and Wellness on SA

Health Promotion for Staff: Schools can provide opportunities for school staff members to improve their health status through activities such as health assessments, health education, and health-related fitness activities. These opportunities encourage staff members to pursue a healthy lifestyle that contributes to their improved health status, improved morale, and a greater personal commitment to the school's overall coordinated health program. This personal commitment often transfers into greater commitment to the health of students and creates positive role modeling. Health promotion activities have improved productivity, decreased absenteeism, and reduced health insurance costs.

Family/Community Involvement: An integrated school, parent, and community approach can enhance the health and well-being of students. School health advisory councils, coalitions, and broadly based constituencies for school health can build support for school health program efforts. Schools actively solicit parent involvement and engage community resources and services to respond more effectively to the health-related needs of students.



2017 Student Achievement TF Report

3. Advocate for school-based counseling and mental health services that address the needs of students and their families.

4. Through collaborative efforts, ensure student access to healthcare through School-Based Health Centers, School-Linked Health Centers, and Coordinated School Health Programs.

8. At the end of every school year or semester, give students the opportunity to evaluate their learning experience in every class. Such information should prove useful to school leaders—especially, principals—in identifying professional development and other efforts to improve teacher effectiveness.

10. Develop and administer a survey at the beginning of each school year to assess the physical and mental health needs of the school population. School nurses and guidance counselors should be involved in developing the surveys, and also in conducting the surveys and making recommendations based on the outcome.



Student Achievement

11. When determining the support a child needs to be successful, consider the whole child—not just his or her academic needs but also the social-emotional needs that should be addressed. Educators should know the social, emotional, health, and basic needs of their students and their families. District leaders should identify how the school community and the community at-large can address these needs.

12. Ensure that every board decision considers the academic, social and health needs of students and that the community is aware of this belief. At all regular meetings, board members/trustees must affirm this priority. Every decision—from the adoption of curriculum to the colors of classroom walls—should be founded on the question: “*What is best for all children?*”

50. Involve the municipal government, faith-based community, service organizations, local industry and small businesses, as well youth-service organizations, in a comprehensive plan to promote student achievement and healthy decision-making.



Student Achievement

65. Review current activities that address the social-emotional learning needs of their students and staff and strive to ensure that an optimum climate is being nurtured throughout the district.

69. Provide teachers with professional development in the importance of social climate in schools.

72. Pay special attention to middle school practices that fall short of supporting students' social and emotional needs.

73. Augment district curriculum to enhance the importance of increased expectations from teachers, teacher-student relationships, school-to-student connectivity, and student-to-student relationships and respect.

74. Review the social emotional learning models available through the organizations listed in the “SEL/Character Development: Resources and Models” section of this chapter to gain insight about various approaches to integrating social-emotional learning into the education program.

76. Consider the positive impact that adopting formal labor-management collaboration practices could have on student achievement and school climate.(NJ Labor Management Collaborative)



The Challenges Include:

- **16%** of students: seriously considered suicide.
- **12%** of children & **25%** of teens: have diagnosable anxiety disorders.
- **20%** of students between the ages of 13 and 18 live with a mental health disorder.
- **50%** of youth aged eight to 15, who have a diagnosed mental illness, **did not receive mental health services in the previous year.**



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