

Safe and Supportive Schools Planning Guide

- 1. What is the Safe and Supportive Schools Project?** The Safe and Supportive Schools Project (S3) is a national discretionary grant funded project, awarded to 11 states, that runs from the 2010-11 school year, through the 2013-14 school year. State departments of education, which are recipients of these grants, are required to invite participation from a sample of Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and the high schools that they operate. The selected LEAs must enroll a minimum of 20% of the state's school age population. Initial participation requires State Education Agencies (SEAs) to collect student survey data, as well as behavioral incident data from high schools in the select LEAs. The data collected must be used to determine a "school safety score" or Index of Student Behavior and School Environment that will be used in the selection of high schools during the intervention or implementation phase (Years 2-4 of the project), and help measure project progress.
- 2. What are the projects' goals and objectives?** The broad goal of the Safe and Supportive Schools project is to improve conditions for learning in selected high schools. The measurable objectives, also known as Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) measures, that have been established for the project are as follows:
 - The percentage of participating schools that experience either an increase or a decrease in current (past 30 days) student use rate of alcohol.
 - The percentage of participating schools that experience either an increase or a decrease in student self-reports of bullying or personal harassment on school property in the current school year.
 - The percentage of participating schools that experience either an improvement or a worsening in their Index of School Behavior and School Environment.
 - The percentage of participating schools that experience either an increase or a decrease in the number of suspensions for violent incidents without physical injury.In addition, as part of their annual program plans, participating schools must establish student-specific outcome objectives.
- 3. What is the timeline for the project?** The SEA is required to identify the participating districts, collect survey and behavioral incident data from high schools operated by those LEAs, calculate the Index of Student Behavior and School Environment, and determine ongoing involvement of select high schools (based upon the Index of Student Behavior and School Environment) by the end of the initial project year (September 30, 2011). In the subsequent three years, following identification for participation in the intervention or program implementation phase of the project (2011-12 through 2013-14), LEAs will implement program plans. Participating LEAs must coordinate annual collection of similar data sets (student surveys and behavioral incident data for each high school involved in the project). High schools that were not selected for ongoing participation in the interventions or program implementation phase must submit the requisite data for Year 4 of the project, the 2013-14 school year. For additional information on the 2011-12 timeline, see the calendar on the next page.

**Calendar of Safe and Supportive Schools Events
2012/2013**

September

September 17 – S3 Grantee Live Meeting

October

-October/November – Site Monitoring Visits to All Districts

November

-November 12 – S3 Grantee “Live Meeting”

December

-December 6,7 – Building the Hearts Conference – Kalahari Resort and ConventionCenter in Wisconsin Dells

January

-January 21 – S3 Grantee “Live Meeting”

February

-February 18 – S3 TA call

March

-March 18 – S3 Grantee “Live Meeting”

April

-Administer Online YRBS in Participating High Schools with at least 70% of the 9th and 11th grade

-April 15 – S3 TA call

May

-May 1 - Submit Discipline Data as of March 31st. (out of school suspensions, expulsions, and school enrollment)

-May 13 – S3 Grantee “Live Meeting”

June

-June 30 – S3 End of the Year Report due

What data is required to be collected and reported each year? Each participating high school involved in the project is required to administer the On-line Youth Risk Behavior Survey (OYRBS) in the spring semester, during each year of the project. All 9th and 11th grade students are to participate in the survey unless parents prohibit (in writing) their inclusion in the survey or students specifically opt out. Schools may opt to include students in grades other than 9th and 11th in the survey sample. A minimum of 70% participation rate is expected for students in these two grades. If a school lacks significant numbers of students in grades 9 or 11, contact the DPI for alternative ways to meet the requirements. All high schools must report the number of out-of-school suspensions and expulsions, along with their building enrollment, as of March 31st of each year. This data is to be submitted by May 1st of each year.

4. What additional data should we review and use in developing our annual plan?

School teams should review a variety of data in development of their annual plan and budget submissions. In addition to the YRBS and discipline (suspension and expulsion) data, they should also review data on attendance, truancy, course completions, grades, graduations, dropouts, all office discipline referrals and other pertinent records related to student behavior and conditions for learning. For example, pupil records may indicate behavioral issues and needs to be addressed. School-wide student surveys on school climate may describe conditions for learning. Data must be disaggregated by gender, grade, race, ethnicity, disability status, sexual orientation, and other appropriate demographic variables.

While these data sets are ones that schools collect and maintain, there should also be an effort to collaborate with partners outside of schools to examine data that they collect and maintain. Data such as arrests, court dispositions, and AODA assessments or treatment admissions might be secured. While some of these data sets might be confidential and will not identify individual students, general statistics might be available to signal patterns or major needs related to conditions for learning.

5. How might these data sets inform us as to interventions to be adopted in our plans?

Cursory reviews of the data sets can advise as to major needs related to conditions for learning and related behaviors, attitudes, or perceptions of students. A deeper review might reveal where interventions might be effective. For example, a general review of student attendance patterns might reflect the numbers or percentages of students who become “habitually truant.” A closer examination of attendance data may link students who become habitually truant with those same students who had higher numbers of absences (excused or unexcused) at a much earlier age. Additionally, attendance patterns of incoming freshmen in the first month of their high school careers might signal a pattern that could be interrupted if intervened upon early.

Another example of data review and how it may advise us could come from examination of office discipline referrals. Is there a disproportionate number from specific grades, groups of teachers, wings, or departments within a school or at certain times of day or location? Careful review of which subgroups of students are routinely being bullied may lead to selection of intervention targeted to a subgroup. Mining down more deeply into available data may yield clearer directions for program interventions or approaches.

These answers may in turn drive the type of professional development or policy avenues you choose to pursue.

Development of the Collaborative Plan

- 6. Who should be involved in coordinating the Safe and Supportive project at the local level (LEA)?** Each LEA with implementation schools is to have a project coordinator that is an employee of the district. In addition, each LEA will be required to utilize an existing, or develop a new, project advisory group that may include parents, teachers, students, principals, pupil services staff, business representatives, local human services, local law enforcement, and others as appropriate. This group should convene at least twice per year to review data, advise intervention selection, review progress, and recommend additional actions to accomplish project objectives. It will provide diverse perspectives on project operations.
- 7. Who should be involved in the Safe and Supportive Schools Project in each school and what are their roles?** The building-level team should include a wide representative group of people, including administrators, pupil services staff, teachers, special education staff, and members of other teams involved with collaborative projects such as PBIS or RTI. The building-level team will:

 - Provide the leadership and resources for the school to make data driven decisions,
 - Determine the highest needs and select appropriate evidence-based interventions in all three tiers (universal, select, and targeted) to improve conditions for learning,
 - Review student outcome data (e.g., discipline, attendance) at least monthly to monitor project impact,
 - Determine new placements in interventions based on student needs, and
 - Evaluate project results.
- 8. Who are the partners from outside of the school that should be involved?** The LEA will coordinate with appropriate community systems, such as law enforcement efforts to reduce youth violence and drug use, and human service system-based drug and violence prevention and mental health or other social services efforts. The exact nature of this coordination will vary among LEAs. Participating schools must work with local community partners in the development, implementation, and evaluation of their intervention plans. This will leverage local resources to maximize the project impact, increase the diversity of perspectives in all aspects of the project and enhance efforts to sustain project strategies beyond the grant period. The nature of these partnerships and the roles must be described in the section of the application entitled “collaborative plan.” Additionally, the specific assurances of the application address program requirements related to participation in collaboration, monitoring and other evaluation activities should be reviewed and thoroughly understood before submitting the plan and budget.
- 9. What should school team and partners do to prepare for success?** It is essential to have the “right” people at the table. The building-level team will develop a detailed

implementation plan based on the data collected, and will need the knowledge, skills and authority to implement this plan. To prepare for success, local data in addition to YRBS survey results, as well as suspension/expulsion data should be reviewed, (e.g., climate surveys, police reports, etc.). An inventory of district discipline policies, school level procedures and programs in place that address these issues, may be helpful. Invite collaborative partners to participate in the planning process and align with already existing plans that may be in place.

Development of Implementation Plan:

- 11. How should we develop objectives from the data?** Based on a careful analysis of local data on discipline, attendance, student self-reported behavior and perceptions, including disaggregation of data on various demographic variables, weaknesses and strengths can be determined. With the gaps/weakness identified from the local needs assessment, objectives can start to take shape. Each high school team must determine their school's needs and student outcome objectives. Both process and outcome objectives provide the framework by which the purposes and goals are met. Clearly written objectives provide the basis for evaluation activities. Note that the project plan within the application requires that the project objectives be measurable, realistic, time-limited, logically related to the purpose of the grant, achievable, and describe outcomes for students. The latter may include school-wide student objectives and those for specific subgroups of students.
- 12. What are the types of strategies/activities schools are allowed to include?** Individual high school plans can include any DPI recommended, or other evidence-based, strategies that align with the local needs of the school, based on a thorough review of local data and directly related to the student-outcome objectives. Strategies can include environmental, policy, or new or enhanced strategies that result in the desired student outcomes, specified in the application. It is helpful to analyze what strategies or policies already exist and what improvements are needed. Strategies can be determined also by using the three tiered approach with universal, addressing all students; selective interventions that address small groups of students for whom universal interventions are not effective; or targeted interventions for high need individuals.
- 13. Are there any limitations or restrictions with the use of funds?** When using funds for salary or personnel, positions funded at 0.50 FTE or more require that a position description specifying the duties related to the Safe and Supportive Schools Project be submitted with the application. The duties that are part of the Safe and Supportive School Project should align with the level of funding for the position allocated to the grant and directly relate to the individual school objectives. Security personnel and/or security equipment that are purchased with Safe and Supportive Schools funds must be limited to 20% of the allocated funds for that year. Incentives that are purchased with Safe and Supportive Schools funds must be limited to 2% of the allocated funds for that year.
- 14. What are the funding periods and amount?** Pending availability of funds from the federal government, funding periods are from July 1 through June 30 each year. The amount awarded in 2011-12 is expected to remain the same in future years. Future

awards are also dependent on careful and complete data submission and satisfactory progress towards student outcome objectives.

15. How do I make budget changes? Budget change requests are required for any change over 10% per line item. Budget changes can be made anytime throughout the school year prior to May 1st. The budget change form (PI 1824) can be obtained on the DPI's Safe and Supportive Schools Website. Give a brief explanation for the budget change, the amount changed, and sign the form. Submit it to your Project Officer/Grant Manager at DPI by fax (608-266-3643), email with a scanned copy, or by mail.

16. Is carryover allowed? It is expected that the great majority of your funds for a given year, will be obligated during that same fiscal year. If funds cannot be exhausted within the year, the district can request carryover. Carryover may be granted, but is contingent upon funding the following fiscal year. If carryover is granted, it (the carryover total) must be spent by end of the following fiscal year.

17. What are the evaluation requirements? Evaluation is defined as a continuous process of systematically gathering, analyzing, and interpreting data and information upon which decisions can be made relative to the effectiveness and efficiency of the project. Evaluation procedures should be aligned with the objectives and activities outlined by each individual high school, and help determine whether they are being met throughout the year. In regards to the Safe and Supportive Schools Project, evaluation requirements are in place with the online YRBS, submission of annual discipline data with current enrollment figures, and their use in calculation of the Index of Student Behavior and School Environment. Each individual high school must also measure their project processes and outcomes described in their school's goals and objectives. Review of student-related data by each school team must occur at least monthly. Verbal program reports on these and program progress must be provided to DPI monthly. Written program reports must be provided two times per year to DPI. Further project evaluation will be reported during the onsite monitoring visits by DPI staff.

18. What are the special assurances? The special assurances that are requirements for the Safe and Supportive Schools Project exceed the standard "boiler-plate" assurances for DPI issued grants. These requirements must be addressed each year. **Failure to comply with these assurances may result in loss of funding.** The special assurances are:

A. The District will participate in on-site monitoring visits conducted by the DPI or its contractors. Specifically the district will:

- Complete a self-assessment in advance of the monitoring visit,
- Participate in interviews with monitors,
- Make records and other program materials available for review, and
- Arrange for observations of project funded activities.

B. District will conduct a student behavioral survey for all schools selected for ongoing participation in the project. Survey completion will consist of the following:

- Separate coordination of the Online YRBS for grades 9 and 11 during the targeted S3 survey administration.

Completion of the survey by a minimum of 70% of enrolled students in targeted grades during the annual survey administration period.

- C. District will submit discipline data consisting of out of school suspensions and expulsions, along with school enrollment as of March 31 by May 1 of each year.
- D. District agrees to participate in all report submission and technical assistance events, developed for Safe and Supportive Schools project grantees, including the following:
 - Mid-year all-grantee meeting/conference.
 - Submission of project interim report.
 - Submission of year-end project report..
 - Participate in monthly, regularly scheduled, distance-learning events via teleconference, web-casts, or Live Meeting.

19. What are the DPI-recommended strategies? DPI recommends use of the three tier framework used in Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) as an organizer. Similarly, we recommend a data driven decision-making model, similar to PBIS, for assigning students to various interactions based on needs. More information at www.pbis.org.

Because the transition to the freshman year is a critical time for many high school students, we recommend a strong focus on successful freshman transitions. Various strategies such as those outlined by the George Washington University's Freshman Transition Institute (www.freshmantransition.org) are recommended, as are Individual Learning Plans, a part of the Wisconsin Comprehensive School Counseling Program Model (<http://dpi.wi.gov/sspw/counsel1.html>).

Because purely punitive approaches to discipline have been proven ineffective, DPI recommends a positive approach to student behavior. This includes alternatives to suspension and expulsion, positive behavioral supports, and a discipline policy supporting these.

20. Will the Index of Student Behavior and School Environment be posted? It is a grant requirement that the DPI post the individual Index of Student Behavior and School Environment compiled by the data collection process. It is not the intent for the individual schools' scores to be compared to one another. The Index of Student Behavior and School Environment will be posted annually on the DPI Safe and Supportive School Web Site by September 30..

21. Who do schools contact for more information? See the list below.

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