

External Document Review

Report, May 14, 2015; Documents received as of April 21, 2015

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The Student Engagement project, sponsored by the Nebraska Department of Education, has created documents for school personnel. These documents summarize a variety of potential strategies to increase positive student behavior and graduation rates, while reducing exclusionary discipline and student drop out. The briefs are not intended to be comprehensive reviews, but to provide basic definitions, a summary of the evidence for that strategy, and some initial information about implementation within a three-tiered model of support for practitioners. Most briefs are around six to eight pages in length.

Reviewers

In February and March of 2015, 327 school and education related professionals were emailed and asked to read and review two of the briefs, assigned at random, with a short 10-minute survey. Forty-four documents had been completed by the time the documents were sent out for review. Since then, more documents have been created and will be sent out for subsequent reviews at a later date. Of the 654 requests sent, 184 reviews were received. Each of the 44 documents which had been completed at the time has at least one review, with an average of four reviews per document (range 1-9). Documents that have only one review will be sent out to more reviewers at a later date. Eventually, every document will have multiple reviews. The final pool of reviewers consisted of 98 school practitioners (53%), 47 members of higher education (26%), and 39 reviewers affiliated with a state or local agency or organization (21%). This report includes only documents created and reviews received as of April 21, 2015.

Procedures

All 327 potential reviewers were sent two individual emails through the online survey software, Qualtrics. Each email included: Student Engagement project information, survey directions, a blank copy of the survey for reference, a pdf of the assigned document for review, and a link to the online questionnaire. The questionnaire contained nine questions; including, two fill in the blank and seven multiple-choice questions. The respondents were first asked to identify their primary role and the document they were reviewing. These were followed by questions relating to the degree of accessibility, accuracy, and helpfulness of the document; as well as how well tiers for intervention were specified and overall suggestions for improvement. Each multiple-choice question provided space for qualitative comments, examples, and/or suggestions.

Results

The feedback received from these reviews was largely positive. Ninety-seven percent of the reviews rated the document as practitioner friendly, accessible, and easy to understand. Ninety-eight percent of the reviews rated the information in the document as accurate. Ninety-nine percent of the reviews stated that the document accurately reflects the main ideas and research of the topic. Ninety-eight percent

of the reviews rated that the information would be helpful to school personnel. Eighty-one percent of the reviews stated the document accurately identifies the tiers of interventions to which each document applies (i.e., universal, targeted, intensive). The information obtained from these comments and ratings will be utilized to make the tiers more salient across the documents. Next, 63% of the reviews indicated there were concepts or ideas which were not included in the document that should have been included. Again, these comments and suggestions will be used to improve upon the existing documents when feasible. While most of these suggestions would make great additions to these documents, it should be noted that many of the suggestions are outside the scope of these “brief” documents. See the Table on the next page for a tabulation of these results by document.

Results by Role. Broken down by role, 99% of the reviews by school practitioners, 98% of the reviews by members of higher education, and 92% of the reviews by those affiliated with state or local agencies/organizations indicated the document is practitioner friendly, accessible, and easy to understand. Next, 100% of the reviews by school practitioners, 98% of the reviews by members of higher education, and 95% of the reviews by those affiliated with state or local agencies/organizations stated the information is accurate to the best of their knowledge. Furthermore, 99% of the reviews by school practitioners, 100% of the reviews by members of higher education, and 95% of the reviews by those affiliated with state or local agencies/organizations suggested that the document would be helpful to school practitioners. Next, 88% of the reviews by school practitioners, 70% of the reviews by members of higher education, and 76% of the reviews by those affiliated with state or local agencies/organizations suggested that the document correctly and clearly identifies the tiers in which the strategy could be implemented in. Last, 32% of the reviews by school practitioners, 43% of the reviews by members of higher education, and 42% of the reviews by those affiliated with state or local agencies/organizations stated that there was additional content that could be added to the document.

Results by Document. Furthermore, the review feedback was broken down by document in order to help make specific revisions and make these resources as beneficial as possible. Refer to the table attached below to view review data for each individual brief. Eleven documents were rated as perfect with no changes required or substantial suggestions for improvement (25%). Twenty-five (57%) of the documents were rated by all of their reviewers as being practitioner friendly, accurate, and helpful, but made suggestions about missing concepts or other content suggestions. Thirty-three (75%) of the documents were rated as missing something by at least one reviewer, and of those documents 13 (30%) were rated as missing something by at least half of the reviewers for the brief. The briefs that were indicated as having the greatest opportunity for additional content were involuntary transfer, anger management, bullying prevention, discipline recovery, zero tolerance, and program character counts. The types of content which reviewers thought were missing ranged from minor omissions to a few with more substantive suggestions for additions. Only four documents (9%) rated below 100% on presumed accuracy (conflict de-escalation, reinforcement, staff-student relationships, and program- developmental assets). Three documents (7%) rated below 100% for helpfulness to practitioners (wraparound, program building bridges, and program- developmental assets). Only five documents (11%) rated below 100% on practitioner friendliness, with wraparound and program- developmental assets rated as needing the most improvement for friendliness.

Examples of Suggestions. The following comments are a sample of suggestions we received for each question. For example, a review for the Character Education brief suggested, “I would have liked to have more information about state policy, i.e. what schools are doing to follow this statute”. Further, a suggestion for adding content to the Anger Management document was “Perhaps more specifics on the training needed to implement a successful anger management program.” Next, comments to improve the accuracy of documents were mostly related to technical editing. A suggestion for improving the accuracy of the Conflict De-Escalation document was to look into an updated version of a reference that was used in order to ensure the document stays current and accurate.

Table of Documents with Review Information

Document Title	Total # of Reviewers	# of Practitioners Reviewers	# of Higher Ed Reviewers	# Other State or Local Agency Reviewers	% Rated as Practitioner Friendly	% Rated as Helpful for Practitioners	% Rated as Accurate	% Rates as having no major ideas/concepts missing
Academic Supports & Tutoring	3	2	0	1	100%	100%	100%	100%
Behavior Monitoring	3	3	0	0	100%	100%	100%	100%
Corporal Punishment	1	1	0	0	100%	100%	100%	100%
Family Group Conferencing	5	2	2	1	100%	100%	100%	100%
Mediation	2	2	0	0	100%	100%	100%	100%
Mentoring	1	0	0	1	100%	100%	100%	100%
Parent & Family Involvement	2	0	0	2	100%	100%	100%	100%
Peer Mediation	2	2	0	0	100%	100%	100%	100%
Program Boys Town	5	3	1	1	100%	100%	100%	100%
Project RENEW	1	0	0	1	100%	100%	100%	100%
Youth Courts	1	1	0	0	100%	100%	100%	100%
Out of School Time Programs	9	5	3	1	100%	100%	100%	89%
Program Check and Connect	7	5	1	1	100%	100%	100%	86%
Character Education	5	2	2	0	100%	100%	100%	80%
Truancy Relationships	5	2	2	1	100%	100%	100%	80%
Grade Retention & Demotion	4	4	0	0	100%	100%	100%	75%
Program Check in Check Out	4	2	1	1	100%	100%	100%	75%
Social Skills Instruction	4	3	1	0	100%	100%	100%	75%
Dropout Recovery	7	1	4	2	100%	100%	100%	71%
Alternative Schooling	3	2	1	0	100%	100%	100%	67%
Bullying Intervention	6	3	2	1	100%	100%	100%	67%
Detention	3	1	2	0	100%	100%	100%	67%
Program Second Step	3	2	1	0	100%	100%	100%	67%
Restorative Practices	3	0	2	1	100%	100%	100%	67%
Middle to High School Transition	5	2	2	1	100%	100%	100%	60%
Saturday School	5	3	2	0	100%	100%	100%	60%
Lowering Course Grades	4	2	1	1	100%	100%	100%	50%
PBIS	4	2	1	1	100%	100%	100%	50%
Program 3 Anger Management	5	3	1	1	100%	100%	100%	40%
Program Targeting Bullying Intervention	5	3	0	2	100%	100%	100%	40%
Anger Management	6	2	2	2	100%	100%	100%	33%
Bullying Prevention	3	1	0	2	100%	100%	100%	33%
Discipline Recovery	4	2	1	1	100%	100%	100%	33%
Program Character Counts	3	3	0	0	100%	100%	100%	33%
Involuntary Transfer	4	3	1	0	100%	100%	100%	25%
Conflict De-Escalation	8	3	2	3	100%	100%	88%	63%
Reinforcement	5	3	2	0	100%	100%	80%	80%
Staff Student Relationships	5	3	2	0	100%	100%	80%	80%
Program Building Bridges	5	0	0	0	100%	80%	100%	60%
Restitution	8	5	1	2	88%	100%	100%	38%
Wraparound	5	1	1	3	80%	80%	100%	40%
Zero Tolerance	3	1	0	2	67%	100%	100%	33%
Program Developmental Assets	3	2	0	1	67%	67%	67%	67%
Behavior Contracting	2	1	0	1	50%	100%	100%	50%

A review of the Staff-Student relationship document made a suggestion regarding practitioner friendliness, “The first four pages came across very “researchy”. I would focus more on the benefits instead of what happens should a student fall through the cracks and not establish a solid staff-student relationship.” A reviewer suggested that in order to make the document Program Building Bridges more helpful to practitioners “more information needs to be provided on the specifics of the program. i.e., what is the tools for tomorrow program. More explanation needed” Last, in reference to clearly identifying the appropriate tiers of intervention, one review for Dropout Recovery suggested “It would be helpful to understand why this is concept is linked to Tier 3. The clarity would be helpful. More clarity would be helpful in explicitly identifying fir the reader why this is a tiered 3 concept.”

How Will Results Be Used?

The comments and suggestions will be used to improve upon our existing documents and make them as useful of resources as possible. Some of the suggestions will be relatively easy to fix and others will require more substantial revision. Additional requests will be sent review documents that have undergone substantial revision. Additional reviews will also be made for documents that had only one or two reviewers, and for documents created since the first set of reviews were requested.

Overall, the feedback for the Student Engagement Project's documents were very positive, indicating high accessibility, high accuracy and usefulness. Most suggestions were for additional content, some of which might be beyond the scope of these documents. Several documents will be revised based on these comments.



Recommended Citation

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