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Teachers and Learners
Collaborating for Success
2007-2008

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TEACHERS AND LEARNERS COLLABORATING FOR SUCCESS (TLC PROGRAM) 2007-2008

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Goal/Strategy

- Goal 3: Strengthen Organizational Culture
- Strategy 7: Address Disparities in Student Outcomes

Program Description

- The purpose of the Teachers and Learners Collaborating for Success (TLC) program is to assist elementary teachers with children who have issues with learning related to behavior. The program is a collaborative model intended to assist the classroom teacher in addressing instructional and behavioral needs for children. The goal is for the classroom teacher and the collaborative teacher to plan together to assist children who have issues with learning related to behavior.

Students Served

- There were 10 schools that had TLCs (Atkinson, Camp Taylor, Crums Lane, Layne, Minors Lane, Portland, Roosevelt-Perry, Smyrna, Semple, Watson Lane). In general, TLCs work with the entire school, however, approximately 400 students were served with more intensive services.
- Criteria for selection of the school site consisted of the following data: suspensions, referrals for BEST services, POPS referrals, attendance, free/reduced lunch, student needs (i.e., mobility, single parent households, poverty), academic index, reading index, novice in reading of African Americans on free/reduced lunch, and math index.

Outcomes

- Suspensions: Since the baseline year (2003-2004), suspensions have increased by 1% at the TLC schools. In comparison, the district's suspensions at the elementary level increased by 8%. Outcomes widely varied by school. While 7 of the 10 schools have decreased their number of suspensions, 3 of the 10 schools significantly increased their number of suspensions.
- When examining the 399 students that were given more intense services by the TLCs, data were mixed. Targeted students decreased in their number of suspensions from the first semester of 2007-2008 to the second semester of 2007-2008 by 2%. However, absences for the students served by the TLCs also increased from first to second semester in 2007-2008.
- Principal surveys showed there was variation in the effectiveness of their TLC program. While many have found their TLC vital to their school and attribute their improvements in behavior to their TLC, some have recognized there have been challenges in the success of their program such as turnover in staff.

Cost

- Total General Fund: \$620,000
- Cost Per Student: Approximately \$1500

BACKGROUND

The purpose of the Teachers and Learners Collaborating for Success (TLC) program is to assist elementary teachers with children who have issues with learning related to behavior. The program is a collaborative model intended to assist the classroom teacher in addressing instructional and behavioral needs for children. The goal is for the classroom teacher and the collaborative teacher to plan together to assist children who have issues with learning related to behavior.

The TLC program involves the collaborative teacher working in the classroom with small groups of targeted children to provide instructional support and behavior interventions. The collaborative teacher also models instructional behavioral interventions for the classroom teacher.

The following elementary schools were selected with input from JCPS to participate in the TLC program: Atkinson, Camp Taylor, Crums Lane, Layne, Minors Lane, Roosevelt-Perry, Portland, Semple, Smyrna, and Watson Lane. The requirements for school participation were that:

- schools must agree to participate and implement the program,
- program must be collaborative,
- selected program model must occur in the regular classroom setting,
- selected program model must focus on and ensure student success,
- common planning times must be established for the participating staff in order to successfully implement and evaluate the effectiveness of instruction and behavior interventions designed for identified students,
- school must have a fully functioning SST,
- school must implement the JCPS Student Management Plan, and
- Principal and Counselor will participate in the implementation of the program in the school.

Criteria for selection of the school site consisted of the following data: suspensions, referrals for BEST services, POPS referrals, attendance, free/reduced lunch, student needs (i.e., mobility, single parent households, poverty), academic index, reading index, novice in reading of African Americans on free/reduced lunch, and math index

The criteria for selection of the TLC Collaborative teacher were: knowledge and experience in effective teacher collaboration, a master's degree and 5 years experience implementing differentiated instructional practices, knowledge and experience in behavior management techniques, and knowledge and experience working with community agencies to help support students and families.

More specific information on the TLC program was given by 8 of the schools (shown below). Two schools, Atkinson and Smyrna, had TLCs that vacated after the 07-08 school year.

Camp Taylor (Traci Durbin): The TLC works closely with classroom teachers, principal, counselor, FRC, parents, and other agencies to establish interventions within the classroom to address individual student needs. The TLC is also the Administrative Facilitator for the Student Recovery Program which allows additional collaboration with individuals to provide intensive Social Skills classes to groups of "At-Risk" students in our building.

Crums Lane (Peggy Brown): The TLC worked with each teacher in the building to troubleshoot behavior problems as they happened. Teachers, in particular new teachers, were given suggestions on how to handle the situations in their classroom to lessen the student's time out of the classroom. The TLC also worked with parents and counseled students throughout the day. When needed a behavior plan or student contract was formulated to address behavior issues. In addition, the TLC collected bus referrals daily (if there were any) and addressed the sanctions for bus referrals daily in collaboration with the principal. The TLC was also the Building Assessment Coordinator and thus, handled all assessments that come into the building.

Layne (Cheryl Bush): The TLC works on 1) collecting and analyzing data and maintaining up-to-date records of student programs, 2) implementing appropriate interventions and individual success plans regarding behavioral issues, 3) collecting, tracking, and analyzing data to determine student needs and direct grouping to assure student mastery/success, 4) assisting and supporting teachers in classroom management strategies 5) conferencing with students that receive misconduct referrals. In 2008-2008, the TLC will also be teaching social groups to small groups.

Minors Lane (Greg Youngblood): The role of the TLC is described in-depth on the TLC Performance Expectations at Minors Lane Elementary. The specific activities related to the TLC include: 1) maintain clear documentation of student behaviors using designed template, 2) monitor student reflection and provide coaching fostering self-discipline, 3) maintain contact log documenting continuous communication, 4) co-chair culture and climate committee, 5) utilize student behavior data to modify existing discipline plan and provide possible functions specific to targeted students, 6) distribute good news postcards to parents/families, 7) conduct walkthroughs with behavioral emphasis, 8) provided continuous CHAMPS training with modifications supporting specific needs of school community, 9) manage "red folder" system (parent/family communication log), and 10) provides administrative support.

Roosevelt-Perry (Chris Connelly): The TLC program at Roosevelt-Perry is a collaborative model to assist the classroom teachers in addressing instructional and behavioral needs for students who have learning issues related to behavior. The responsibilities of the TLC collaborating teacher included modeling instructional behavioral interventions for classroom teachers, working in the classroom with small groups of targeted children to provide instructional support and behavior interventions, developing individualized plans with classroom teachers for identified students to ensure continual success, serving on the Instructional Leadership

Team, Student Intervention Team, and the Student Behavior Response Team, providing training to teachers in behavior management, caring discipline, and building classroom community, maintaining Safe Crisis Management certification, working with small groups of students to develop social skills (anger control, impulse control, problem solving/conflict resolution, organization skills, responsibility, etc.).

Portland (Kevin Garner): The TLC implements the school-wide discipline program, CHAMPs, with monthly in-service updates along with weekly emails to the staff regarding positive discipline in the classroom. All student discipline referrals are submitted to the TLC who supports the students' with social skills related to the offense. The referral information is given to the administrator before any disciplinary action is taken. Students who receive social skills are referred by the teacher and administrator. Students who continue to display discipline problems in school (bus, classroom, etc) are given contracts to try and improve their decision making. Students are grouped according to their grade to help nurture their team building skills. A meeting with the parent, student, teacher, TLC and Administrator is requested when there is lack of progress in student behavior. All discipline referrals are logged on a monthly basis. Students who exceed 3 referrals within a week are red flagged and the principal is notified immediately. The TLC, the student and principal have a meeting regarding the behavior. A plan is implemented including parent notification. Teachers who struggle with classroom discipline, student behavior, and disrespect are given strategies, goals and discipline plans through the TLC. All new students who arrive at Portland are introduced to CHAMPs via the TLC. The TLC greets the student and explains in detail "Portland Elementary" student expectations. The idea is to help students adjust to their new school and help them understand how to be successful at Portland.

Semple (Rhea Butler): The TLC program at Semple focuses on targeted students performing in the novice to low apprentice level in the areas of reading and/or math and also struggle with behavior. The students are all involved in focus groups, have a staff mentor, and receive social skills and or character education lessons based on their individual needs.

Watson Lane (Barbara Starr): The TLC collaborative teacher is assigned to classrooms as needed to help establish a positive culture, rituals and routines that support student learning, including development of school wide proactive support programs. The focus shifts as needed to flexibly scheduling the collaborative teacher to support classrooms based on identified students with the greatest needs regarding social and academic development as well as conducting whole class social skills lessons and counseling support.

EVALUATION

The evaluation of the TLC program was comprised of collecting the following data:

- Number of suspensions (identified students and whole group)
- Number of referrals for POPS
- Number of referrals for BEST services
- Attendance for identified students
- Reading and Math Assessment information for identified students
- Staff surveys regarding program effectiveness

Although most TLCs work with a variety of students throughout the year (e.g., bus referrals, day-to-day disruptions), they also worked with smaller groups of students with higher behavioral support needs. These identified students were extracted from TLC records in August 2008. All but 1 school (due to TLC turnover) was able to provide the names of students who received more intensive services. The following data depict the data for the TLC schools as a whole and for their identified TLC students.

Number of Suspensions, Referrals for POPS, Referrals for BEST services

The table below depicts the trend data for the number of suspensions at each TLC school. The TLC program began in 2005-2006. From the baseline year, 2004-2005, to the latest year of data, 2007-2008, most schools made improvements in their number of suspensions. A total of 7 of the 10 schools decreased their number of suspensions, while 3 of the 10 schools increased their number of suspensions. As a whole, there was a 1% increase in the number of suspensions at the TLC school. In comparison, the district's elementary schools increased by 8% during that same time.

	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	Change in Suspensions Since Baseline
Atkinson	16	45	87	85	+69
Camp Taylor	18	4	5	8	-10
Crums Lane	5	0	0	11	+6
Layne	25	9	9	9	-16
Minors Lane	35	11	16	6	-29
Roosevelt-Perry	9	12	26	48	+39
Portland	11	9	9	7	-4
Semple	26	38	39	11	-15
Smyrna	21	0	6	0	-21
Watson Lane	20	0	0	2	-18
All TLC schools	186	133	192	187	+1 (1% increase)
District Elementary	1026	868	1175	1112	+86 (8% increase)

The following table depicts the number of students referred to POP and BEST at each school. The Positive Outreach Program (POP) provides students with additional support services such as individual mentoring, counseling, incentive improvement plans, and family and community supports, with the ultimate goal of improving student behavior and reducing the likelihood of an ECE referral. The Behavioral Education Support Team (BEST) provides educational support and behavioral interventions to identified ECE students (or students in the referral process) who are experiencing a behavioral crisis in the classroom setting. The goals of BEST include stabilizing and improving behavior, and avoiding a more restrictive placement for the student.

The data show there was wide variation in the number of referrals to BEST and POP depending on the school.

	Number of POP Referrals 2007-2008	Number of BEST referrals 2007-2008
Atkinson	8	6
Camp Taylor	0	0
Crums Lane	6	3
Layne	4	4
Minors Lane	0	0
Roosevelt-Perry	0	2
Portland	6	4
Semple	2	2
Smyrna	2	2
Watson Lane	0	2
All TLC schools	28	25

The data below depicts the demographic data for students who were targeted by the TLC program. Examining the 399 identified students, demographic data show they are mostly Black (56%), overwhelmingly male (72%), and on free/reduced lunch (91%). About 1/3 of students had a diagnosed disability. When looking to see where the K-4th grade students in the TLC program attended school in 2008-2009, it was shown that there was a 33% mobility rate. In other words, about 1/3 of TLC students in K-4th did not return to the same school the following year, reducing the possibility that they would be served by the TLC program again.

Variable	Frequency	Percent
<i>Race</i>		
Black	217	55.50
Hispanic	2	0.51
White	159	40.66
Other	13	3.32
<i>Gender</i>		
Female	110	28.13

Male	281	71.87
<i>Grade</i>		
K	20	5.12
1	45	11.51
2	57	14.58
3	81	20.72
4	109	27.88
5	79	20.20
<i>Lunch</i>		
Free/Reduced	354	90.54
Paid	37	9.46
<i>Retained</i>		
YES	6	1.50
No	393	98.50
<i>ECE</i>		
Yes	135	33.92
No	263	66.08
<i>Mobility (K - 4)</i>		
Yes	106	33.13
No	214	66.88
<i>KCCT Reading</i>		
Novice	58	22.57
Apprentice	99	38.52
Prof/Dist	100	38.91
<i>KCCT Math</i>		
Novice	75	29.18
Apprentice	77	29.96
Prof/Dist	105	40.86

The table below depicts the Fall and Spring suspension and attendance data for the identified students served by the TLC program. Overall, targeted students slightly decreased in the number of suspension from fall to spring, but increased in average number of days absent from fall to spring.

	Number of Suspensions for TLC Students Fall 2007	Number of Suspensions for TLC Students Spring 2008	Average Number of Days Absent for TLC Students Fall 2007	Average Number of Days Absent for TLC Students Spring 2008
Atkinson	12	11	6.8	9.2
Camp Taylor	12	3	5.3	7.0
Crums Lane	6	6	3.4	5.2
Layne	2	6	6.0	7.4

Minors Lane	4	6	4.9	7.4
Roosevelt-Perry	19	19	5.4	7.6
Portland	5	6	3.8	5.3
Semple	2	6	4.5	6.6
Watson Lane	2	0	6.9	9.7
All TLC schools	64	63	5.0	6.9

Finally, principals of each TLC school were surveyed for their perceptions of the impact of their TLC program on school climate, teacher/staff satisfaction, student behaviors, academic outcomes and relationship between teachers and students. The average ratings are shown below.

Perception of TLC Impact on...	Average Rating Scale: 1 = Not at all...5 = A Great deal
School climate	4.33
Teacher/staff satisfaction	4.67
Student behaviors	4.5
Academic outcomes of students	4.5
Relationship between teachers and students	4.5

Principals were also surveyed about what aspects of the program were effective and what aspects of the program were difficult. General comments regarding effectiveness were:

- Interaction of TLC with classroom teachers to redirect student misbehavior to increase academic achievement
- Consistency in support of students and teachers
- Positive relationships with families
- Reductions in suspensions and referrals
- School climate has become a safe, caring environment that recognizes student success (both academic and behavioral).
- Peer mediation program and training
- Implementation of student tracking system for targeted students,
- Home visits
- Acquisition of community resources to support students through mentoring and counseling
- Sharing of strategies with classroom teachers, and parent/guardian conferences
- Provide small group instruction in academics and social skills

General comments regarding challenges and/or most difficult aspects of the TLC program include:

- Prioritization of needs to be addressed by TLC
- Continuing to work on coaching strategies and implementing individual behavioral plans for most challenging student
- Overall discipline problems not decreasing as much as expected
- TLC turnover- getting to know our students and staff took time

Summary and Conclusions

Overall, the 2007-2008 data demonstrate mixed results from the TLC program. Perceptual data are positive, with many schools reporting their TLC is critical to the success of their students, particularly in the behavioral domain. However, several schools have had to deal with turnover in the TLC position, resulting in the challenge of introducing new staff to their students and faculty.

Data on suspensions and attendance are mixed. The schools as a whole have not decreased their number of suspensions during the course of the program, but when compared to the district's increase in the number of suspension during the same period, the TLC schools fared relatively well. Looking at the data from targeted students show that they are slightly decreasing in suspensions during the course of the program, but increasing in absences.

Recommendations for future evaluations are the following:

- 1) Develop a standardized data tracking procedure of students who are receiving the additional TLC services. The participating schools widely varied in how their data were being tracked. For the upcoming school year, a standardized template was developed for TLC staff to utilize in tracking their students.
- 2) Track longitudinal data on students who participate in the TLC program, especially those that receive a combination of services such as TLC, SRP, POP, and BEST. It is important to examine the long-term results of students who receive the more intensive services.