

Title of Best Practice: Social Worker Interventions

School: West High School

District: Columbus City Schools

Submitter Name: Stephanie Gregory

Position of the Submitter: SIG Project Manager

Submitter Email Address: SGregory5914@columbus.k12.oh.us

Submitter Phone: 614-265-5956

Submission Date: 05-28-2013

My Superintendent/Principal is aware of and approved the submission of this "Evidence-Based Best Practice?" Yes (Yes or No)

1. How many students did this Evidence-Based Best Practice impact? 255
2. Which component of the identified intervention model does this Evidence-Based Best Practice align? Check any that closely align.
 - Replaced the principal (all models)
 - New evaluation system using student growth as a significant factor (transformation)
 - Use locally-adopted competencies to rehire no more than 50% of staff (turnaround)
 - Identify and reward staff increasing student outcomes (all models)
 - Strategies to recruit, place, retain staff (all models)
 - Select and implement instructional model based on student needs (all models)
 - Job-embedded professional development (all models)
 - Continuous use of data (all models)
 - Increased learning time (all models)
 - Social-emotional and community-oriented services and supports for students (all models)
 - On-going mechanism for community and family engagement (transformation)
 - Operating flexibility (transformation)
 - New governance structure (turnaround)

3. Describe the situation before the Evidence-Based Best Practice was implemented. Explain why the improvement was needed. Provide summary of data to illustrate the need.

Before SIG, West HS had a part-time social worker whose primary responsibility was to file truancy on students who had 15 or more absences. Being in the building for approximately 2 days per week, the social worker was unable to regularly provide interventions to students and parents as needed to address non-academic barriers. In addition, the Intervention Assistance Team (IAT) was poorly managed, and ineffectively addressed student non-academic barriers and social-emotional supports. Only one counseling group was offered to students as needed, and a handful of community partnerships were actively engaging our students/parents.

4. Describe the process of implementing the Evidence-Based Best Practice, including a basic timeline of events leading to full implementation, any troubleshooting or course corrections you made, and the evaluation of the Evidence-Based Best Practice.

A full-time social worker was hired to assist the district-provided part-time social worker. The full-time social worker took leadership of the Intervention Assistance Team (IAT) at the beginning of the year and worked closely with staff members through the student referral process to assist students and families in a proactive manner. The social worker also collaborated with the Community Resource Coordinator at the beginning of the year to establish new community partnerships and strengthen others. In mid-September, the social worker created a PLC with all support staff members in the building to coordinate student intervention methods and plans. IAT and PLC meetings occur regularly (weekly in most cases) and are ongoing throughout the year to assist students with non-academic barriers and social-emotional supports.

5. Share the data indicating that this Evidence-Based Best Practice has increased achievement, increased attendance, reduced discipline incidents, or increased graduation rate.

The Intervention Assistance Team (IAT), led by the full-time social worker, has scheduled 110 parent meetings this year to help students who are struggling academically, mostly due to non-academic barriers, and 86% of those families have been referred to community agencies for mental health counseling and material resource assistance. The IAT determined that 8% of the students referred for support were eligible to receive special education services, which will aide student academic success. Additionally, 52% of the students who had IAT conferences prior to Quarter 3 interims, showed academic progress at the end of grading period 3. These students would have been less successful without the individualized support offered through the IAT process. As of April 30th, the full-time social-worker has also provided 503 conferences with students, 498 consultations with staff, and 534 phone calls to parents/guardians to support students and families through, often, severe life challenges.

6. Briefly explain how this Evidence-Based Best Practice will be sustained once SIG funding is no longer available.

Knowing the importance of having a full-time social worker onsite, West has secured alternative funds to continue to employ a full-time social worker.

7. Briefly share any lessons learned and/or advice to other schools wishing to implement this Evidence-Based Best Practice.

Creating a Support Team PLC was vital in providing necessary interventions to students, without repeating the work of another Support Staff member. A list of at-risk students (in the areas of academics, discipline, and attendance) was created, reviewed, and edited regularly by each support staff to document all interventions made. The use of this data was helpful in reducing duplication of work involved with providing interventions, and the documented interventions per student assisted the IAT in providing additional support through referrals to external agencies when needed.