



## **Enhancing Educational Communities and School Climate March 2024**

A primary goal of the Milwaukee Public Schools is to reduce discipline disproportionality during the 2023–24 school year. The following is an update on the activities that support creating a positive and inclusive educational community and equitable school climate. The bimonthly reporting for the 2023–24 school year will focus on the following proactive pathways:

- PBIS tiered interventions
- Mental wellness
- Antiracism and antibias
- Restorative practices

### **PBIS Tiered Interventions**

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is aligned to the MPS Strategic Plan initiatives of *student achievement* and *graduation and postsecondary preparedness*.

During the months of January and February 2024, PBIS offered the following professional development sessions:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Session</b>
January 17, 2024	PBIS/BIT Facilitators	PBIS/BIT Facilitator Training
February 6, 2024	PBIS/BIT Facilitators	PBIS/BIT Facilitator Training
February 20, 2024	Special Education Supervisors	Documenting Interventions for all Students

The District PBIS team continues to focus on supporting BIT-Behavior and PBIS teams, tiered interventions for students with multiple behavior incidents, implementation of the classroom walkthrough rubric and data for the culture and climate section of the Continuous School Improvement Plan.

The annual Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) window is March 1, 2024 -May 3, 2024. The purpose of the TFI is to provide a valid, reliable survey that measures the fidelity across all three PBIS tiers of implementation. All schools take the TFI with their PBIS coach to ensure accurate implementation data is collected at every school. Coaches use this data to make sure the schools with the greatest needs are provided support.

### **Mental Wellness**

Mental wellness activities are aligned to the MPS Strategic Plan initiatives of *student achievement*, *staff—morale*, and *staff—professional learning*.

The violence prevention team continues to focus on the priorities of increasing fidelity of Second Step implementation, supporting implementation of comprehensive mental wellness activities, and promoting proactive classroom management strategies as a means for creating predictable and respectful learning environments.

The violence prevention team has been training schools and departments on a variety of topics related to social and emotional learning and trauma-sensitive strategies. A third full three-day Classroom Organization and Management Program (COMP) session has been completed, increasing to approximately sixty staff trained in research-based practices for room arrangement, rules and procedures, student accountability systems, and managing a variety of instructional formats. The fourth session of COMP began on February 22, 2024, with twenty additional participants attending. Second Step implementation training has occurred at several schools to ensure that staff members have what they need to implement the curriculum. The staff at Milwaukee Spanish Immersion participated in the final two sessions of a four-part series on responsive classroom management strategies, the staff at Riley received an overview of the MPS bullying policy and procedures, and the City Year staff who serve our students received an introduction to trauma-sensitive practices. For our principals, the third and fourth sessions of “Compassion Resilience for School Administrators” occurred during the January and February Principal Leadership Institute (PLI), focusing on operating within your sphere of influence and compassionate boundary setting as a means for fostering compassion resilience. The first of two full-day historical trauma trainings has taken place, raising staff awareness of global and local historically traumatic events and introducing strategies to promote cultural healing. Finally, the violence prevention team has introduced a new PD format in the form of the “Educators Talk Trauma” and “Educators Talk Compassion Resilience” series. These brief PD series are designed to facilitate conversations among staff and allow them to learn practical strategies from one another about being trauma sensitive and promoting compassion resilience.

The implementation phase of the MPS RISE grant is well under way at each of the six grant schools: Clemens, Fifty-Third, Forest Home, Milwaukee High School of the Arts, Milwaukee School of Languages, and Riverwest. At Fifty-Third Street School, staff has engaged in three sessions of a five-part series on relationship-building strategies, focusing this session on developing shared agreements. Staff members at Riverwest have begun to implement regulation spaces in their classrooms, and plans are being developed for an additional focus on staff wellness. Throughout their grade-level planning meetings, teachers at Milwaukee High School of the Arts are participating in ongoing trauma-sensitive schools training. Riverwest and Forest Home have been hosting family events that prioritize mental wellness and how families can support the wellness of their children. Milwaukee School of Languages has trained the entirety of its staff in trauma-sensitive strategies. The first-grade team at Clemens has received training in and begun implementation of the Zones of Regulation curriculum as a precursor to full staff training in future grant years.

### **Restorative Practices**

Activities of the Department of Restorative Practices are aligned to the MPS Strategic Plan initiatives of *student achievement*, *staff—morale*, and *staff—professional learning*.

During the month of January, the department has continued to meet monthly with all exploration and coaching site schools. Coaching visits include sharing out learning from evening cohort training and implementation progress at staff meetings, checking in with principals and completing a school inventory of systems and resources that exist within the school. Sessions at Principal Leadership Institute (PLI) were arranged for principals of schools partnering with Restorative Practices as well as a session for all district administrators. The session reviewed the department vision, mission and values along with foundational elements of creating a restorative ecosystem within schools. Participants got time to reflect in small circle stations with their colleagues and discussed how to bring elements of restorative leadership into their schools.

Six sessions of Racial Justice and Equity: Deep Dive into Restorative Practices was completed between November and January. Day two training, called Cultivating a Restorative Mindset and Environment, has

been created and will focus on cultivating a restorative mindset and fostering a restorative environment by moving participants through four circles: restorative self reflection and regulation, the social discipline window through a restorative lens, restorative communication and fostering a restorative environment. Participants will leave this training with a deeper understanding of navigating bias and privilege, embracing shared power and accountability and effective restorative communication skills, as well as restorative strategies to bring back to their school sites.

The Restorative Practices Department is working with LMS to develop a restorative practices certification for staff who attend the professional development series. Educators will have the opportunity to receive a certification after day 4 and day 6 of training. The first certification will be for all educators focused on proactive practices that encourage racial justice and equity, developing a restorative mindset, fostering a restorative environment, building community, centering students in curriculum and addressing issues. The advanced certification will be for administrators, deans and support staff and focus on responsive practices for repairing and healing harm and reengaging the community after extended absence (Reentry).

### **Antiracism and Antibias**

Antiracism and antibias activities are aligned to the MPS Strategic Plan initiatives of *student achievement*, *staff—morale*, and *staff—professional learning*.

Each month, climate equity liaisons receive best practice training for interrupting bias and addressing discipline disproportionality. In January, additional best practices regarding mindfulness and brain breaks were shared. Strategies include breathing activities such as take five, 4-7-8 breathing, and square breathing, among others. Additional brain break activities were shared that provide examples of allowing for movement in the classroom to help reengage students in their academic instruction. Climate equity liaisons have also received additional examples of validate/affirm and build/bridge from Dr. Sharroky Hollie. This is a two-step process that aims to validate and affirm the cultural knowledge and behaviors of a student while also bridging to the situationally appropriate behaviors for the setting. Best practice examples and scenarios were provided to all schools. A virtual screening of Monique Morris's *Pushout: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools* was offered in February.

Student discipline committees continue to meet monthly at the 30 middle and high schools across the district. These committees are organized as a professional learning community that will be researching an area of concern and gathering additional insight from other students at the school. A midyear analysis of committee minutes in collaboration with the Wisconsin Evaluation Collaborative at UW–Madison indicated that the most common themes of student discussion included relationships between staff and students, students feeling safe at school, school pride/connectedness, relationships between students, school policies, and classroom management and instructional practices. This work is culminating at our Student Leadership Summit in April 2024, where each committee will present its findings and recommendation.

In alignment with Resolution 1920R-005, as of March 1, 2024, we have completed phase one of Courageous Conversations about Race (CCAR) districtwide integration. All employees hired prior to the 2023–24 school year have attended the one-day seminar. We are continuing with phase two of integration, which includes ensuring that newly hired staff members attend CCAR and that all new teachers participate in the New Educator Institute as well as creating additional opportunities for staff to engage in conversation and additional work on antiracism.

Courageous Conversations about Race phase one highlights include the following:

- MPS wins the 2023 Grace Lee Boggs Courageous Conversations Certification Partnership Award
- Six internal facilitators create capacity and realize a savings of over \$700,000
- Courageous Conversations about Race session within New Educator Institute (NEI)
- Courageous Conversations about Race data guide and self-assessment rubric created
- MPS Communications and Marketing creates district signage and posters
- 89.1% of participants agree/strongly agree “have increased passion in addressing racial equity”
- 89.0% of participants agree/strongly agree “have increased persistence in racial equity”
- 88.3% of participants agree/strongly agree “have increased knowledge of how to hold conversations on race”
- 85.4% of participants agree/strongly agree “have greater knowledge of their racial autobiography”
- 89.1% of participants agree/strongly agree “understand how to continue their journey”

In addition, the district equity leadership team has been meeting monthly to utilize Courageous Conversations protocols to discuss district policy, practices, and systems through a lens of race and equity. We hosted a cohort of staff attending the Beyond Diversity two-day seminar in February 2024, with additional cohorts being offered in May, June, and August. Beyond Diversity is the nationally presented seminar from Courageous Conversations about Race. Participants engage in deep-rooted conversations with the Courageous Conversations Compass, Four Agreements and Six Conditions toward addressing racial equity throughout an organization. Additional sessions will be hosted over the summer.

Below are updates on the implementation of Courageous Conversations about Race and the progress toward all staff members attending prior to March 1, 2024.

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Number of Sessions Held</b>
March 2021–July 2021	17
August 2021–July 2022	31
August 2022–June 2023	45
August 2023–February 2024	39
<b>Total for three-year plan</b>	132
<b>Staff who have attended</b>	9,200

### **Next Steps**

Looking forward, we are planning the following activities:

- Student Leadership Summit in April
- Beyond Diversity seminars in May and June
- Additional refreshers and advanced seminars on antiracism and antibias
- Transition to Courageous Conversations about Race implementation phase two
- Networking opportunities
- Professional development on classroom climate and culture

## Monthly Data Review

The use of specific strategies for classroom-managed behaviors are documented within PLP Classroom Behavior notes. Total documented strategies through February 29, 2024, are found below.

Strategy	Total
BB: Brain breaks	922
BC: Behavior contract	843
BR: Rewind/broken record	1,354
BT: Buddy classroom	3794
C: Community service	195
CP: Collect property	1,720
EO: Engagement opportunities	1,020
GO: GoGuardian	398
IW: Independent work	472
M: Mindfulness	621
MS: Move their seat	3,731
OO: One-on-one conversation	37,735
P: Proximity control	6,115
P5: Praise 5:1	213
PC: Parent contact	23,953
PI: Planned ignoring	6,580
R: Redirection	23,190
RA: Recovery area (within room)	2,178
RB: Referral to BIT	439
RC: Restorative conversation	1,763
RE: Restorative circle	116
S: Secret signal	98
SC: Support staff consultation	10,575
SM: Self-monitoring	546
T: Tangible acknowledgment system	981
TS: Reflection sheet	946
V: VABB	34

All schools have a building intervention team (BIT) whose team members ensure that students in need of additional support are offered Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions within the PBIS framework. Below are the number of Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions provided throughout the 2023–24 school year.

Tier 2/Tier 3 Intervention	Students
Check-In/Check-Out (CICO)	1,874
Individualized CICO	612
Social Academic Instructional Group (SAIG)	1,558
Behavior Assessment/Intervention Plan (BAIP)	180
FBA/BIP	253
Educational Wraparound	45
RENEW	69

The following table shows total suspension events by race for year-to-date through February 29, 2024.

Behavior	Hispanic	American Indian	Asian	Black	Pacific Islander	White	Multiple	Grand Total
Total Suspensions	2,274	101	191	12,456	7	388	322	15,739

The following table shows total suspension events by grade level through February 29, 2024.

K4-K5	1st Grade	2nd Grade	3rd Grade	4th Grade	5th Grade	6th Grade
108	185	240	407	543	786	1,528
	7th Grade	8th Grade	9th Grade	10th Grade	11th Grade	12th Grade
	2,022	2,104	4,162	2,092	1,082	480

The following alternatives to suspension were utilized by administrators from year-to-date through February 29, 2024.

Alternatives to Suspension Utilized	Total
Conference	1307
Counsel	9798
Detention	930
Mediation	587
Referral to building intervention team	175
Referral to support staff	246
Repairing harm circle	164
Restorative conference	354

The following charts show district demographics and disproportionality for the 2023–24 school year.

