

Duchesne County School District Title IV, part A Programmatic Monitoring Highlights

Overview

Duchesne County School District utilized Title IV, part A funds to improve the school climate and mental/emotional health for students. The COVID-19 Pandemic brought new challenges and it was clear that students were struggling. Behavior incidents increased as well as students' abilities to control their emotions. As a result, Duchesne County School District has focused on school-based supports to keep students in school, providing tiered supports to teach students how to control their emotions, and provide school-based mental health services to students as needed.

Goals

Two goals were the focus of the monitoring visit: Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) and Social Emotional Learning (SEL). Duchesne County School District used MTSS to decrease student suspensions. For SEL, curriculum was purchased for teachers to use with students, wellness rooms were created throughout targeted schools, and funds were spent on online safety/social media training for students.

Highlights

MTSS: All administrators have been trained on how each of the three tiers should be implemented in schools. Counselors and teachers have been trained on specific lessons. Middle school teachers give Tier 1 Lessons

To address the unique needs of students returning from COVID-19 shutdowns and learning interruptions, the district is utilizing restorative practices. Even though total behavior instances increased in the 2021-22 school year, individual student behavior improved over the course of the year.

The district also used money to host school-wide assemblies on internet safety and social media use provided by NetSmartz as a Tier 1 intervention. Teachers and staff reported improved behaviors and reduced incidents from students' personal devices after these assemblies and the training.

SEL: The district purchased 360 Focus curriculum and provided all staff and students with daily lessons, videos, and questions related to mental health. The program implemented globally was not successful, however pulling out specific targeted lessons was successful. The district also provided a full-time mental health professional to one elementary school. This school used CASEL standards with elementary students in a weekly lesson. As a result, 26 students were identified as needing targeted (Tier 3) supports and were referred to the school-based mental health program. Without a mental health professional in the school, these students would have been referred to outside resources and would have been pulled from school. By providing school-based services, students are able to remain in the school and avoid suspension or expulsion. The district strongly feels these programs are preventing an escalation of negative student behaviors and that students are learning critical coping skills, emotional regulation, and social skills through their use of SEL curriculum.

Next Steps:

Duchesne County School District plans to continue focusing on Positive Behavior and Intervention through a tiered approach. The district plans to use future funding to hire more mental health professionals to meet the needs of students and their families.