



August 2024

Mojave Unified School District Suspension Disproportionality Reduction Plan

Since July 2020, the Mojave Unified School District ("District" or "MUSD") has lowered the suspension rate of all students and specifically the rates of suspension for students with disabilities and African-American students with the help of increased support staff members and improved dedication and fidelity to a number of different intervention strategies and plans.

We have sought ways to improve our outcomes in both academics and behavior interventions. Our progress has been amazing though maybe not as apparent when looking at statistics. The number of high need students in our District along with a large number of students that are moving in and out of our community creates conditions in which we are constantly trying to assist new students to engage in school activities or take advantage of services offered. Here is a summary of the strategies the District has implemented and will continue to implement to address behavioral issues and improve opportunities for student academic achievement:

1. All intervention processes and resources in this Plan are principally targeted at District schools with African-American and student with disabilities suspension rates above the California average.
2. The District will review successful behavior strategies implemented at Robert P. Ulrich Elementary School and other District schools, and will implement them District-wide to achieve a suspension rate for African-American students that is below the California average at District schools where disproportionality remains.
3. **Extended Learning Opportunities Program Field Trips.** MUSD has implemented an Extended Learning Opportunities Program focused on diversifying students' learning opportunities and experiences as a way to promote school connectedness, a sense of belonging, and create more ways for families to become involved in the education of their children. All students are eligible to participate in these experiences. This is not a rewards-based program, and a student's behavioral history does not qualify or disqualify them from attending and participating.

As part of the extended learning program, students and an adult from their families can sign up to attend trips and/or participate in experiences at no cost to the families. Transportation and lunches are provided for all participants. These experiences are connected to literature, for example, and help promote learning and appropriate behavior both in and outside of typical school settings. Attached you will find the list of events for the 2024-2025 school year. (See **Attachment 1.**)



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Through the Extended Learning Opportunities Program, we have developed and improved relationships between families and school personnel through more meaningful interactions permitted by the program and its activities. We have observed a better sense of responsive cooperation between students, staff and families when there are concerns.

4. **Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS).** MUSD has adopted and invested heavily in Positive Behaviors Interventions and Supports (PBIS) as a means to assist with and provide for social, learning, behavioral, and emotional needs of all students both with and without Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs). The District has restructured its oversight of the PBIS program by creating a new position, Director of Student Services. This has allowed MUSD to better coordinate the PBIS team with Child Welfare and Attendance, Behavior support services, special education, nurses, and to more readily respond to and help with any behavior or discipline issues.

The PBIS team includes three District level staff, one social and emotional learning ("SEL") focused counselor at each secondary school, and one intervention coordinator at each elementary school. The PBIS team is constantly on the California City Middle School (CCMS) campus and assists in every aspect of behavior management. They provide direct support to teachers and the administrator and are available to meet with parents regularly. MUSD is currently in year four of PBIS implementation and has been rated Silver (Proficient) by the PBIS rating scale. We have contracted with Placer County office of Education to continue to partner with them. Attached you will find the CCMS PBIS plan (**Attachment 2**), and PBIS budget (**Attachment 3**).

The District and school-site level PBIS teams will conduct a monthly review of disaggregated District and school-site level discipline and achievement data with the purpose of (a) assessing the effectiveness of the current disciplinary responses and consider whether other potential means of correction are more effective or appropriate; (b) assess whether the District's and school's student discipline policies, practices, and procedures are implemented in a nondiscriminatory manner. During each monthly meeting, the PBIS teams will specifically assess whether students of a particular race, color, national origin, or with a disability[ies] are more likely than students of other races, colors, national origins, or without a disability[ies] to receive discipline referral and sanctions, including harsher or longer sanctions from particular teachers or administrators, for similar conduct. The District will use the same Nested data embedded system used for academic analysis for discipline data analysis. The District will utilize the Kern Integrated Data System (KIDS). (Information regarding KIDS is available at <https://kernkids.org/>.)

The District will continue to utilize PBIS in conjunction with our First 5 Days Program and refresher days (discussed in greater detail below). PBIS is refined annually. (Ongoing and Budgeted)

5. **First 5 Days.** Much like the UC/CSU system, the District has dedicated the first 5 days of the school year for student orientation and review of expectations. Attached are copies of the District's First



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5 Days plans, by site. (**Attachment 4.**) The intent is to provide all students, including African American students and students with disabilities, the opportunity to learn about social emotional health, academic services on campus, and how to access them while at the same time learning about the school-wide expectations for appropriate behavior. Activities focus on strategies and coping skills as well as how to conduct yourself in the different areas on campus.

There are also explicit lessons on how to earn points for appropriate behavior and what the points can be used on. Refresher days are also provided at the beginning of second semester, after returning from Winter Break, and upon returning from Spring Break, to assist students with remembering our school-wide rules and behavior expectations. The District has budgeted for and intends to continue with First 5 Days as an effective way to introduce and acclimate students to student services and acceptable behaviors. (Ongoing and Budgeted)

6. **Additional Support Staff: Program Specialists in Special Education Department.** In the 2022-2023 school year MUSD added two new Program Specialist positions to the Special Education Department. With the addition of these two new Program Specialists and the new Special Education Director, the District has begun to establish process and procedures that are more focused on student well-being and academic achievement. Site administrators and staff are now able to consult with our Program Specialists and/or our Director of Special Education more quickly, after there are incidents that might lead to discipline for a special education student and can respond more effectively. The District has budgeted for and intends to continue to maintain these new positions as an effective way to improve the response and services for special needs students.
7. **Additional Support Staff: School Psychologist.** In 2020 MUSD had four full-time school psychologists and during the 2023-2024 school year, employed a total of ten full-time psychologists.

MUSD has gone from four itinerant psychologists that traveled from school to school to now having a dedicated school psychologist at every site. We are particularly proud that now our special populations have separate dedicated service providers. Our foster/homeless youth (private residence), severely disabled students, our age three to PK students, and our students who reside in local group homes all have dedicated school psychologists. We are also currently seeking to employ two more full-time psychologist. One of the additional psychologists will be assigned to provide additional support to CCMS in the area of Social Emotional Counseling, Social Emotional Learning, and monitoring of the implementation of Positive Behavior support plans. The District has budgeted for and intends to continue to maintain this level of psychologist services to meet the diverse and ongoing needs of our special student populations. (Ongoing and Budgeted).



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8. **Additional Support Staff: Board Certified Behavior Analyst (“BCBA”) and Registered Behavior Technicians (“RBTS”).** The District has added a full-time Board-Certified Behavior Analyst (“BCBA”) to address the large number of students in our District with behavior concerns. Since our goal is to support students in their least restrictive environment (“LRE”), the BCBA consults with classroom teachers, administration, and parents about strategies to help to reduce concerning behaviors.

The BCBA works with staff, including paraprofessionals, to implement positive behavior support strategies, monitor data on the effectiveness of the strategies, and revise the positive behavior support plans as needed. Similarly, the BCBA is available to attend IEP meetings and answer questions from families about strategies that can be used at home.

Currently, the District is seeking to employ four full-time Registered Behavior Technicians (“RBTS”) to assist in daily behavior strategy implementation. Once these staff members are hired, they will be assigned to school sites with significant numbers of students who have behavioral needs. More specifically, two will be assigned to CCMS full-time, where we do have a greater need.

9. **Data Driven Student Learning and Alignment For Improved Student Behavior and Engagement.** Over the past four years MUSD has invested a substantial amount of resources to ensure that classroom instruction is aligned and calibrated based on student achievement data at the student group and individual student level. Our teachers have identified the highest impact standards and created a scope and sequence for each grade level. Further they have created assessments based on what is being taught for each unit of study. With our consulting partners, we have implemented systemic processes to review and refine the instructional practices that lead to higher student achievement. While not obviously a behavior support process, there is a definite correlation between student achievement and behavior and engagement.

Over the past four years our students with disabilities and African-America students have grown academically. In particular, our students at CCMS and District-wide have grown in both English Language Art and Math. By no means are the students achieving at their ability levels, but they are improving. As the academic achievement continues to increase, we are confident that suspensions will continue to decrease. Successful students are generally more engaged in school activities and participate in more of the offered programs and services. The District has budgeted for and will continue to invest in data driven student instruction improvements, not only as a means to promote higher student achievement but also as a support to reducing behavioral incidents and improving student engagement.

10. **Paraprofessional Professional Development.** Curriculum alignment includes many different aspects of training and typically leaves out classified staff. In MUSD the majority of our employees are non-teaching classified staff; in particular we have a large number of paraprofessionals. The primary responsibility of our paraprofessionals is to work directly with students. This includes



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redirecting their attention to lessons or tasks, helping them to learn new academic skills, and assisting them in learning appropriate behaviors in different settings.

These services are not exclusive to our special education student population. In the past three years we have increased the number of paraprofessionals so that each classroom Kindergarten through second grade has a full-time paraprofessional. In addition, we have increased the number of full-time paraprofessionals at our secondary sites including CCMS. As a means to ensure that our staff is prepared for their assignments and continue to learn new skills to support academics and behavior, we have instituted a job embedded professional development plan and program. Attached, please find the scope and sequence for the professional development program. (See **Attachment 5.**) The 2023-2024 school year was the first year of implementation after hiring a full time Principal for our Adult School Program. The Adult School Program Principal has put together an outstanding set of topics and retained experts to deliver the instruction. The District has budgeted for this ongoing professional development for paraprofessionals to improve their knowledge and effectiveness in responding to appropriate student behaviors affecting our whole student population.

11. **Restorative Justice** - Beginning with the 2024-2025 school year, the District will find an appropriate and in-person agency to begin training all staff members in Restorative Practices. In partnership with outside agencies, this phase will consist of training administrators and teachers on restorative justice practices during the school year. The second phase of implementation will take place during the 2025-2026 school year and will include training and informal meetings with students, parents, and community members. The aim is to have our Restorative Justice program up and running by the end of the second semester of the 2025-2026 year. The District will contract with a consultant with appropriate expertise to provide Restorative Justice training to District staff.
12. **CCMS Suspension Data Review** – In August 2024, the District reviewed data around CCMS's suspension decisions for African-American students and students with disabilities who were suspended in the 2023-2024 school year due to non-violent offenses. The purpose was to understand (a) whether or not alternative means of correction could have been implemented and/or (b) whether African-American students and/or students with disabilities were treated differently than other students for similar conduct. Through the review, the District identified areas of need and corrective measures to be taken. During the administrators training for the 2024-2025 school year, administrators received training on ways to more accurately record details of any behavior in the District Data Base. Further, some corrections were made in four student records of students who were inappropriately suspended. In addition, special education records are being reviewed to ensure that all procedural safeguards were utilized for students with disabilities.



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Trainings were held with administrators on interventions that will be utilized for students with non-violent incidents of inappropriate behavior and that suspension under 48900 (k) is not permitted, and at what point manifestation determinations need to be held for students with disabilities. Trainings and review will be held with special education providers, administrators, and district staff on an ongoing basis but reviewing regulations and interventions will occur not less than at monthly administrative meetings.

Monthly meetings for suspension data review have been scheduled with appropriate team members. Additionally, suspension data will be presented to the Board on a quarterly basis.

13. **Anti-Bias and Cultural Competency Training:** During the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 school years, the District will again conduct anti-bias and cultural competency training for all District staff. For the 2024-2025 school year, the District-wide employee anti-bias training was held on August 13, 2024 on the CCMS campus.
14. **Trauma Informed Training.** During the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 school years, the District will conduct trauma informed training, inclusive of youth mental first aide, for all District staff.
15. **De-escalation Training.** During the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 school years, the District will again conduct de-escalation training for all District staff. The 2024-2025 training was held for special education, campus safety, and other support staff on August 9 and 12, 2024. Trainings will be held throughout the year for instructional and support staff.
16. Between May 1 and June 15, 2025 and between May 1 and June 15, 2026 the District will provide a report to the Board on the implementation of this Plan.