

**HORRY COUNTY SCHOOLS  
MONITORING REPORT – OE-12  
Learning Environment/Treatment of Students**

I certify that the information in this report is true.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date:  
Cindy Elsberry, Superintendent

Disposition of the Board:  
\_\_\_\_\_ In compliance  
\_\_\_\_\_ Not in compliance  
\_\_\_\_\_ Compliance with exception

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date:  
Joe Defeo, Board Chair

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

	Supt	Supt	Bd	Bd
	In compliance	Not in compliance	In compliance	Not in compliance
OE-12 – The superintendent shall establish and maintain a learning environment that is safe, respectful and conducive to effective learning.	✓			

Interpretation: I interpret this policy to mean that the District will establish and maintain a safe learning environment that promotes respect, encourages high student achievement, and works collaboratively with parents and other agencies to support students who may be having difficulty with behavioral issues.

Evidence of Status of Compliance:

We are in full compliance of this policy. Evidence is listed below:

- Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports is a process for creating effective and safer schools. Research has shown that the implementation of punishment, especially when it is used inconsistently and in the absence of other positive strategies, is ineffective. The purpose of school-wide PBIS is to establish a climate in which appropriate behavior is the

norm. The primary focus is to change adult behavior to support a positive learning environment for students.

The four elements of PBIS are:

- Outcomes: academic and behavior targets that are endorsed and emphasized by students, families, and educators.
- Practices: interventions and strategies that are evidence based.
- Data: information that is used to identify status, need for change, and effects of interventions.
- Systems: supports that are needed to enable the accurate and durable implementation of the practices of PBIS.

We had 14 schools implementing PBIS during the 2013-2014 school year. The implementation of the program in most of the schools was modified to meet the needs of students. All schools established school-wide guiding principles or expectations for student behavior. Rewards were provided to students meeting expectations. The focus of the program was on recognizing positive student behavior, positive student feedback and interaction by staff, in an effort to reduce inappropriate behaviors and promote a climate of greater productivity, safety, and learning.

- Comprehensive Guidance Program

Each school in the district implements the Comprehensive Guidance Program developed by the State Department of Education. The guidance program consists of structured developmental experiences presented systematically through individual activities, classroom activities, and small group activities in prekindergarten through grade twelve. The guidance program provides students at all levels with knowledge of personal, social, academic, and career development, to promote their mental health, and to assist them in acquiring and using life skills. School counselors work in collaboration with school and district staff in determining priorities consistent with school and district goals in order to assist with maintaining an effective learning environment for all students. Consultation services are provided for students, parents, teachers, and administrators, concerning student behavior and academic progress. Referrals to other professionals in the school district or to agencies and institutions outside the district are made as required or requested.

Throughout the year, counselors from all three school levels are provided with the opportunity to participate in district and state professional development training.

Beginning with the 2013-14 school year, a 4-year phase-out plan of Global Career Development Facilitator (GCDF) positions was initiated. Over the 4 year period, Horry County Schools with state department approval of Education and Economic Development Act (EEDA) funding utilization will make a shift to replace all GCDF positions with certified guidance counselors who are also GCDF trained. All GCDF staff was made aware of this shift as the 4-year phase-out program was initiated and were encouraged to pursue guidance certification and to apply for the new positions as they became available. Middle school and high school counselors were also given a two-year window of time to obtain the GCDF training for those who were not already trained. Any new hire guidance counselors are informed that they will be required to complete GCDF training within two years of being hired for a position.

- Grief Counseling Team
- The District has a Grief Counseling Team established that incorporates the utilization of school counselors, school psychologists, and Rehabilitative Behavioral Health Services (RBHS) counselors. All school guidance counselors and administrators are given specific contact information and procedures for activating the team in the event the school has a tragedy. The specific number of personnel brought into a school at that time is determined by district staff and school administration. District staff also assist in the organization and supervision as needed during any incident. Counselors are also given specific information in the organization of a school grief kit for the team in the event it is needed.

- Rehabilitative Behavioral Health Services

Students, who have social emotional and behavioral problems which interfere with their ability to learn, may be eligible for Rehabilitative Behavioral Health Services. Based on student needs, services could include behavior intervention, therapeutic groups, and individual counseling to help students learn new skills to monitor and adjust their own behavior and their interactions with others. The program is designed to assist students with modifying negative behaviors and achieving emotional stability as well as academic success. In addition, family support and guidance is provided through therapy sessions and/or meetings with school staff as an additional intervention to promote positive behavioral change.

- Therapeutic Learning Center (TLC)

TLC is a therapeutic educational facility that offers a comprehensive system of individual, family and group treatment services provided within a small and highly structured educational setting. The program operates as a rehabilitative behavioral health services program which is designed to improve a student's ability to function independently as provided for by South Carolina state law. The program serves students with severe emotional needs and students who are capable of benefitting from counseling and complex behavior support systems. The purpose of the program is to provide services to students with challenges that impede their academic progress, despite multiple intensive educational and behavioral interventions. Placement is designed with the expectation that the student will benefit from the program and move towards the goal of returning to the base school. The program presently serves students in grades K-8 with a virtual high school program for those who are working towards a regular high school diploma. Additionally, a limited number of occupational certificate courses are taught at TLC.

TLC also provides Rehabilitative Behavioral Health Services (RBHS) for students who would have required Clinical Day Services and/or out-of-district placement to meet the educational and behavioral/emotional needs of these students. The Therapeutic Learning Center, allows students to remain in district and live at home and be provided a quality education and counseling services that would otherwise have to be provided by outside agencies, typically at the expense of the District.

- Crisis Management Plans

The District and each school have Crisis Management Plans which outline response procedures in the event of an emergency. Included in the plans are roles and responsibilities of the District and school teams when responding to multiple kinds of

emergencies. Plans are updated annually and at least four emergency drills must be scheduled each school year. Two of these drills must be armed intruder/lockdown drills which are to be held within the first three weeks of each new semester. The drills are monitored and discussed in Assistant Principal Safety Meetings. Fire drills are not included in the four emergency drills because schools are required to conduct fire drills monthly.

- Bullying Prevention/Intervention

Each school in the District has a bullying team with one member of the team serving as the Leader. The Leader or the team should investigate, document findings, resolve the problem, and make follow up a part of the solution. Schools have in place and should be able to articulate an effective bullying intervention system that includes the following components:

1. Highly visible administrative leadership and commitment
2. Clearly defined behaviors for direct and indirect bullying
3. Published specific school rules with consistent sanctions for bullying
4. Operational guidelines for staff via training and resources
5. Reporting system with direct and anonymous channels
6. Review of data
7. Supervision enhanced in trouble spots
8. Intensive support to victims of bullying
9. Social skills behavior training for bullies
10. Ongoing system for training and review.

Trainings, as well as resources, are provided to school teams to assist in preventing bullying. Eight schools participated in the South Carolina Association of Schools Administrators (SCASA) Olweus Bullying Initiative. This initiative assists school staff with the prevention of bullying.

- Covey Initiative

The Covey Initiative has been implemented for three years in the Myrtle Beach Cluster. The following activities and events have occurred to support successful implementation.

1. Schools in the MB cluster have Light House Teams. These teams consist of 6-10 staff members who guide the initiative at the school. At the middle and high levels, students also serve on these teams.
2. Leadership Days are incorporated throughout the year to enable students to refine their leadership skills with visitors, including Leadership Grand Strand and other special guests.
3. Professional development is provided throughout the year and new staff members are provided with three days of Covey Leader in Me Training. In the fall of 2013, 79 new administrators, teachers, custodians, cafeteria staff and bus drivers participated in the three-day initial training.
4. Covey Clubs have been developed to encourage students to grow in their self-confidence while developing responsibility, creativity, problem solving and communication skills.
5. Students maintain data notebooks to increase their levels of accountability and to identify their current levels of academic achievement and to set goals to increase their skills. Students lead conferences with family and teachers using these data

notebooks.

6. Myrtle Beach Primary, Elementary and Intermediate obtained Light House status in 2013. This status recognizes schools for their success in achieving transformational results implementing The Leader in Me.
7. In 2012 and 2013, the MB cluster co-sponsored The Leader in Me Symposiums.
8. In 2014, Steven Covey met with members of each of the five schools' Lighthouse Teams at the South Carolina Association of School Administrators conference.

- Quaglia Institute for Student Aspirations Initiative in Conway Cluster Schools

2013-14 was the first year of implementation of the Quaglia Institute for Student Aspirations (QISA) Initiative in three Conway Cluster schools, Conway High School, Conway Middle School, and Whittemore Park Middle School. In partnership with Dr. Quaglia and QISA team members, the schools have undertaken a number of steps to improve school culture, develop strong school-community relationships, and enhance 21<sup>st</sup> century skills such as collaboration, communication, creative problem-solving, and others. Included in these steps are the following:

1. Monthly professional development for staff teams at each school around student voice, systems thinking, and elements leading to improved school culture and increased student achievement (leadership and responsibility, sense of belonging, intellectual curiosity, etc.),
2. Monthly student meetings and learning experiences for student teams at each school,
3. School-wide assemblies at each school to define, explain, and discuss elements of school culture,
4. Four community meetings to build community support, to enhance community perception of schools, and to involve parents and community members in discussions of the relationship between achievement and engagement and the QISA guiding principles of student self-worth, purpose, and engagement,
5. Monthly meetings with the QISA team and community leaders to seek input, discuss the change process, and provide updates,
6. School-wide student surveys at each school with detailed analyses of surveys provided to teams and faculties at the schools,
7. School wide staff surveys at each school with detailed analyses of surveys provided to teams and faculties at the schools,
8. Student focus group meetings at each school to analyze survey results to determine next steps,
9. Staff focus group meetings at each school to analyze survey results for students and staff to determine next steps,
10. Student-staff team observations and collections of anecdotal data at each school to analyze trends and patterns of behaviors and interactions,
11. Monthly school-wide and classroom observations at each school by the QISA team to analyze trends and patterns of behaviors and interactions,
12. Student projects at each school based on QISA's 8 Conditions to improve school culture,
13. Structured discussions conducted at each school by the QISA team to determine school strengths and weaknesses and generate a shared (student-staff) long-range plan to address identified weaknesses for the 2014-2015 school year,
14. QISA team meetings with district staff to report progress and align planning with

- district goals and initiatives,
15. Current research readings and discussions of readings led by QISA team with staff teams,
  16. Community keynotes and an A-Team keynote by Dr. Quaglia,
  17. Meeting between QISA team and HCS assessment staff to prepare for data analyses for the 2014-2015 school year, and
  18. A community celebration and sharing of the work at Conway High, Conway Middle, and Whittemore Park Middle.

In addition, the QISA team has provided detailed monthly feedback to each school's administrator and staff team. These notes include analysis of progress as well as next steps for the team. Other work has included site visits as well as informational presentations at all five Conway elementary schools, long-range planning for elementary school implementation, and planning and arrangements for the elementary school leadership boot camp in June and for a middle school conference (Stand Up! Speak Out!) hosted on the Horry Georgetown Technical College campus in October.

The QISA implementation is a three-year implementation. Year One focuses primarily on collection of data around current practices and culture, collection and analyses of data from a variety of perspectives, and facilitation and enhancement of relationships among and within schools (staff and students) and between schools and the community. Year One also includes the development of a long-range plan addressing identified areas for focus and improvement for implementation in Year Two.

Preliminary feedback and analysis indicate staff and student buy-in as well as strong community support for the initiative. This feedback also indicates the beginning development of a common language and common goals around student aspirations and a school and community culture supporting student aspirations, including increased student achievement and engagement and development of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. Other indicators of success in Year One include upcoming meetings to discuss the K-12 vision for implementation and transitions scheduled at the request of administrators and staff teams from all eight schools

Year Two focus will include implementation of the long-range plan at CHS, CMS, and WPMS, the addition of all elementary schools, continued collection of data to analyze program effectiveness, continued development of community partnerships and support, and continued monthly professional development and student team meetings in all eight Conway cluster schools as well as leadership opportunities for staff and students including the Stand Up! Speak Out! middle school conference.

- Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)

Early College High School and Conway High School continue to implement and sustain certification in AVID, a school-wide College Readiness System focusing on school transformation through leadership, systems, instruction and school culture.

As reported on the AVID Certification Self-Study, both sites report the following:

1. 100% of AVID students' schedules reflect enrollment in rigorous courses, appropriate to the student, and have a plan which enables them to fulfill the sequence of 4-year college or university entrance requirements.
2. At least 50% of AVID juniors and seniors have completed at least one Advanced Placement or dual credit college course.
3. At least 95% of AVID students participated in appropriate college testing in grades 9–

11, such as PLAN or PSAT; in grade 12, at least one college entrance exam such as ACT or SAT.

4. AVID students strategically use and model agendas, calendars, or planners to backward map large projects, create to-do lists, and prioritize tasks to promote academic self-management.
5. AVID students set goals and monitor their grades to ensure that they are on track in high school for college/university entrance requirements.
6. Students in the AVID Elective class receive instruction in writing-to-learn strategies, which are part of a year-long instructional plan based on the AVID Standards, and use these strategies in classes other than AVID.
7. Students in the AVID Elective class receive instruction in the critical reading process to access increasingly more rigorous text in AVID and in other academic courses.
8. AVID students ask higher-level questions during tutorials, class discussions, and problem-solving activities to promote critical thinking in the AVID Elective class.
9. 100% of AVID seniors have completed and submitted one or more applications to a 4-year college/university.
10. AVID students model leadership skills while collaborating in the AVID Elective class, in other academic classes, and in activities on campus or in the community.

- Other Resources

We also maintain an environment conducive to learning by:

1. Utilizing the services of Security Guards, and SROs
2. Utilizing the services of a narcotics K-9 to randomly search campuses
3. Walk-through metal detectors and hand-held wands
4. A visitor management screening system is in effect for all schools
5. Tip Line by Horry County Police Department
6. Security Cameras in all schools and on all busses
7. Keyless locks
8. Ongoing project to enclose school foyers in order to channel visitors to the front office
9. Installation of a remote activated entry system at all school campuses
10. Provision of a proximity card reader override code for first responders during tactical critical incidents
11. Implementation of a false alarm reduction program
12. Mandating monthly safety inspections by each school's administration,
13. Linked resources for students, parents, and educators on the Student Affairs web page which addresses a variety of safety-related topics ranging from anti-bullying initiatives to emergency preparedness.