

Safe & Responsive Schools Project
Summary of Involvement
Beatrice Public Schools
1999-2000

Five schools in the Beatrice Public School district participated in the Safe and Responsive Schools Project during the 1999-2000 school year. These participating schools included four elementary schools and the high school. The Beatrice Middle School participated in the project for approximately one month and then suspended their involvement due to their previous commitment to another project (the middle school is invited to re-join the project at any time).

In October, teams began to form at each of the levels, with the elementary schools pairing with each other to form two teams. A total of 27 school personnel, representing general educators, special educators, administrators, counselors, nurses, and school psychologists, participated in the project across the five schools.

For the first several meetings, team members individually completed the Safe and Responsive Schools Needs Assessment and then discussed as a team their responses to questions addressing Creating a Positive Climate, Early Identification and Intervention, and Effective Responses. Each team then prioritized their concerns, or areas in which they wanted to improve, and began to formulate the plans to address each area.

Beatrice Senior High

The high school team identified increasing parental involvement (Creating a Positive Climate) and establishing a building-wide behavior/discipline program (Effective Responses) as top areas to address. The team desires to involve parents more in the daily workings of school life and is in the process of exploring two possible avenues to achieve this. These avenues are Parent Council Coordination through which parents may monitor students during faculty meetings, before/after school, in the gym at lunch time, and during the day in the student lounge; the second is Parent Software Training which would utilize a parent web-based communication module. The high school team also wishes to evaluate and possibly revamp the high school's current discipline system. The team is looking into a plan developed by Dr. Dixon of Junction City, Kansas. The plan involves significant changes to the current discipline system including implementation of an "after-school school" in lieu of out-of-school suspension, and changes to the building's in-school suspension program. The Discipline Committee and the SRS team will combine to facilitate the implementation of this plan. Additional changes the team has been involved with include a revision of the office referral discipline procedures, which attempts to more appropriately match the consequence with the student's offense, and the use of a "time-out" strategy for students which allows them to problem solve on their own and resolve the conflict without an office referral.