

Surveying and Planning to Enhance Efforts to Address Barriers to Learning at a School Site

The following resource aides were designed as a set of self-study surveys to aid school staff as they try to map and analyze their current programs, services, and systems with a view to developing a comprehensive, multifaceted approach to addressing barriers to learning.

In addition to an overview Survey of Learning Supports System Status, there are self-study surveys to help think about ways to address barriers to student learning by enhancing

- Classroom-based Approaches to Enable and Re-engage Students in Classroom Learning
- Crisis Assistance and Prevention
- Support for Transitions
- Home Involvement in Schooling
- Community Outreach for Involvement and Support
- Student and Family Assistance Programs and Services
- School-Community Collaboration

About the Self-Study Process to Enhance the Component for Addressing Barriers to Student Learning

This type of self-study is best done by teams.

However, it is *NOT* about having another meeting and/or getting through a task!

It is about moving on to better outcomes for students through

- C working together to understand what is and what might be
- C clarifying gaps, priorities, and next steps

Done right it can

- C counter fragmentation and redundancy
- C mobilize support and direction
- C enhance linkages with other resources
- C facilitate effective systemic change
- C integrate all facets of systemic change and counter marginalization of the component to address barriers to student learning

A group of school staff (teachers, support staff, administrators) could use the items to discuss how the school currently addresses any or all of the areas of the component to address barriers (the enabling component). Members of a team initially might work separately in responding to survey items, but the real payoff comes from group discussions.

The items on a survey help to clarify

- C what is currently being done and whether it is being done well and
- C what else is desired.

This provides a basis for a discussion that

- C analyzes whether certain activities should no longer be pursued (because they are not effective or not as high a priority as some others that are needed).
- C decides about what resources can be redeployed to enhance current efforts that need embellishment
- C identifies gaps with respect to important areas of need.
- C establishes priorities, strategies, and timelines for filling gaps.

The discussion and subsequent analyses also provide a form of quality review.

Crisis Assistance and Prevention: A Self-study Survey

Schools must respond to, minimize the impact of, and prevent school and personal crises. This requires school-wide and classroom-based systems and programmatic approaches. Such activity focuses on (a) emergency/crisis response at a site, throughout a school complex, and community-wide (including a focus on ensuring follow-up care), (b) minimizing the impact of crises, and (c) prevention at school and in the community to address school safety and violence reduction, suicide prevention, child abuse prevention, and so forth.

Desired outcomes of crisis assistance include ensuring immediate emergency and follow-up care so students are able to resume learning without too much delay. Prevention outcome indices reflect a safe and productive environment where students and their families display the type of attitudes and capacities needed to deal with violence and other threats to safety.

A key mechanism in this arena often is development of a crisis team. Such a team is trained in emergency response procedures, physical and psychological first-aid, aftermath interventions, and so forth. The team also can take the lead in planning ways to prevent some crises by facilitating development of programs to mediate and resolve conflicts, enhance human relations, and promote a caring school culture.

Crisis Assistance and Prevention

Yes	Yes but more of this is needed	No	If no, is this something you want?
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Indicate all items that apply.

I. Ensuring Immediate Assistance in Emergencies/Crises :

- A. Is there a plan that details a coordinated response
 - 1. for all at the school site?
 - 2. with other schools in the complex?
 - 3. with community agencies?
- B. Are emergency/crisis plans updated appropriately with regard to
 - 1. crisis management guidelines (e.g., flow charts, check list)?
 - 2. plans for communicating with homes/community?
 - 3. media relations guidelines?
- C. Are stakeholders regularly provided with information about emergency response plans?
- D. Is medical first aid provided when crises occur?
- E. Is psychological first aid provided when crises occur?
- F. Other? (specify) _____

II. Providing Follow-up Assistance as Necessary

- A. Are there programs for *short-term* follow-up assistance?
- B. Are there programs for *longer-term* follow-up assistance?
- C. Other? (specify) _____

III. Crisis Team to Formulate Response and Prevention Plans

- A. Is there an active Crisis Team?
- B. Is the Crisis Team appropriately trained?
- C. Does the team focus on prevention of school and personal crises

IV. Mobilizing Staff, Students, & Families to Anticipate Response Plans and Recovery Efforts

With respect to planning and training for crisis response and recovery, are the following stakeholders, are there programs to involve and integrate

- A. learning supports staff?
- B. teachers?
- C. other school staff?
- D. students?
- E. families?
- F. other schools in the vicinity?
- G. other concerned parties in the community?

V. Creating a Caring and Safe Learning Environment Through Programs to Enhance Healthy Development and Prevent Problems

Yes	Yes but more of this is needed	No	If no, is this something you want?
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- | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| A. Are there programs for | | | | |
| 1. promoting healthy development | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 2. bullying and harassment abatement? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 3. school and community safety/violence reduction? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 4. suicide prevention? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 5. child abuse prevention? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 6. sexual abuse prevention? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 7. substance abuse prevention? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 8. other (specify) _____ | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| B. Is there an ongoing emphasis on enhancing a caring and safe learning environment | | | | |
| 1. school-wide | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 2. in classrooms | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |

VI. Capacity Building to Enhance Crisis Response and Prevention

- | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| A. Is there an ongoing emphasis on enhancing a caring and safe learning environment through programs to enhance the capacity of | | | | |
| 1. learning supports staff? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 2. teachers? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 3. other school staff? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 4. students? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 5. families? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 6. other schools in the feeder pattern? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 7. other concerned parties in the community? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| B. Is there ongoing training for learning supports staff with respect to the area of crisis assistance and prevention? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| C. Is there ongoing training for others involved in Crisis response and prevention? (e.g., teachers, office staff, administrators)? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| D. Which of the following topics are covered in educating stakeholders? | | | | |
| 1. anticipating emergencies | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 2. how to respond when an emergency arises | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 3. how to access assistance after an emergency (including watching for post traumatic psychological reactions) | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 4. indicators of abuse & potential suicide & what to do | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 5. how to respond to concerns related to death, dying, and grief | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 6. how to mediate conflicts and minimize violent reactions | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| 7. other (specify) _____ | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| E. Indicate below other things you want the school to do in responding to and preventing crises. | | | | |

Crisis Assistance and Prevention (cont.)

- C Indicate below other ways the school responds to and prevents crises.

- C Other matters relevant to crises response are found in the survey on student and family assistance.