

Scope of Work: Alternatives to Suspensions - Building Restorative Approaches

Project Overview

ISTE+ASCD will partner with Yonkers Public Schools to implement a comprehensive pilot program focused on developing effective alternatives to suspensions. This professional learning initiative will equip high school administrators and teachers with research-based, restorative approaches that reduce reliance on exclusionary discipline while fostering positive student behavior and academic achievement.

Program Objectives

1. Develop a comprehensive toolkit of suspension alternatives aligned with MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Support)
2. Analyze current suspension patterns and identify intervention opportunities
3. Create a tiered menu of alternatives matched to specific behaviors
4. Implement restorative practices that maintain educational continuity
5. Establish protocols for monitoring effectiveness of implemented alternatives

Professional Learning Structure

Day 1: Effective Alternatives to Suspension within MTSS

- **Audience:** High School Administrators, Teachers, and Central Office Staff
- **Focus:** Building a comprehensive toolkit of suspension alternatives, including:
 - Restorative conferencing techniques
 - Skill-building interventions
 - Structured reflection processes
 - Restitution practices
- **Format:** In-person professional learning session with practical simulation exercises
- **Duration:** Full day (6-7 hours)

Day 2: Data Review and Implementation Planning

- **Audience:** Central Office Staff, High School Administrators, and Teacher Leaders
- **Focus:**
 - Analyzing current suspension patterns

- Identifying intervention opportunities
- Developing a tiered menu of alternatives matched to specific behaviors
- **Format:** In-person professional learning session with collaborative action planning
- **Duration:** Full day (6-7 hours)

Virtual Support: 10 Hours

- **Purpose:** Supporting implementation, refining protocols, and analyzing effectiveness
- **Format:** Virtual coaching sessions (configuration to be determined based on need)
- **Focus Areas:**
 - Troubleshooting implementation challenges
 - Adapting alternatives to specific school contexts
 - Reviewing data and measuring effectiveness
 - Refining protocols based on early implementation feedback

Key Solutions to be Addressed

1. Multi-tiered menu of specific alternatives to suspension matched to behavior types
2. In-school restoration centers as alternatives to out-of-school suspensions
3. Effective behavior contracts with clear, measurable goals and monitoring systems
4. Skill-building interventions addressing root causes of behavior problems
5. Restorative conferencing protocols to repair harm while preserving educational continuity
6. Reflection processes promoting accountability and growth
7. Restitution opportunities connecting consequences meaningfully to behaviors
8. Peer mediation programs as alternatives to administrative discipline
9. Classroom-based de-escalation strategies preventing exclusionary responses
10. Community service learning as an instructive alternative to suspension
11. Data tracking systems to monitor effectiveness of alternatives
12. Communication protocols with families supporting alternatives to suspension

Timeline

This pilot program is scheduled to begin in May 2025, with specific dates to be coordinated between ISTE+ASCD and Yonkers Public Schools.

Deliverables

1. Two full-day in-person professional learning sessions
2. Ten hours of virtual coaching support