

ADDRESSING THE PROBLEM: THE OVERUSE OF SUSPENSIONS, COURT REFERRALS AND ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL PLACEMENTS TO ADDRESS SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

By Ronald K. Lospennato, J.D.

A. The Problem Defined

There are a number of factors that explain why so many disadvantaged, underserved, and at-risk children are pushed from mainstream educational environments into the juvenile justice system, and, all too often, into the criminal justice system. Some of these factors, such as long-term poverty, and underfunded and overcrowded schools, are largely outside the control of school administrators. Other factors, such as the failure to identify and meet the educational needs of children, the implementation of “zero tolerance” policies to address violations of school discipline codes, and the overuse of suspensions and expulsions¹ can be, and are being, addressed by school administrators around the country.

Zero tolerance policies² are “school or district-wide policies that mandate pre-determined, typically harsh, consequences or punishments (such as suspension and expulsion) for a wide degree of rule violation.”³ School authorities have often “rigidly and unnecessarily extended what might have been a necessary, fair, limited, and specific response to school violence into areas not contemplated when such policies were initially conceived.”⁴ All too often, states and local school districts have applied such policies to “frequent and usual student behaviors - minor, disruptive behaviors, such as tardiness, class absences, disrespect, and noncompliance,”⁵ behaviors that years ago would simply have resulted in a detention, a visit to the principal’s office, or a demand that the child’s parents meet with the classroom teacher.

¹ See Avarita L. Hanson, *Have Zero Tolerance School Discipline Policies Turned into a Nightmare? The American Dream's Promise of Equal Educational Opportunity Grounded in Brown v. Board of Education*, 9 U.C. Davis J. Juv. L. & Pol'y 289, 301 (2005).

² Zero Tolerance policies began with federal drug policy of the 1980's, and became part of school district policies with the enactment of the Gun Free School Act of 1994.” *Id.* at 369, 372; 20 U.S.C. § 8921(b)(1). The Act was repealed and re-enacted as 20 U.S.C. § 1751(b)(1) under No Child Left Behind. It mandated that all states receiving Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) funds adopt a policy under which any student determined to have brought a weapon to school would be suspended from school for not less than one year.

³ The National Association of School Psychologists, *Zero Tolerance and Alternative Strategies: A Fact Sheet for Educators and Policymakers*, [http:// www.naspcenter.org/factsheets/zt_fs.html](http://www.naspcenter.org/factsheets/zt_fs.html).

⁴ Hanson, *Have Zero Tolerance School Discipline Policies Turned into a Nightmare?*, *supra*, note 10 at 308-09.

⁵ *Id.* at 321-22 (citing Russell J. Skiba, *Zero Tolerance, Zero Evidence: An Analysis of School Disciplinary Practice*, Ind. Educ. Policy Ctr., Policy Research Rept. #SRS2, 6 (Aug. 2000)), available at [www.indiana.edu/~ safeschl/ztze.pdf](http://www.indiana.edu/~safeschl/ztze.pdf)).

Such policies disproportionately push children of color and children with disabilities out of the public education system and fall far short of achieving their purpose.⁶ All relevant research shows that zero tolerance approaches do not result in safer, more orderly classrooms or a more productive learning environment for other students.⁷ As pointed out in a report by the American Psychological Association:

Schools with higher rates of school suspension and expulsion appear to have *less* satisfactory ratings of school climate, less satisfactory school governance structures, and spend a disproportionate amount of time on disciplinary matters. Perhaps more importantly, recent research indicates a negative relationship between the use of school suspension and expulsion and school-wide academic achievement, even when controlling for demographics such as socioeconomic status. Although such findings do not demonstrate causality, it becomes difficult to argue that zero tolerance creates more positive school climates when its use is associated with more negative achievement outcomes.⁸

B. The Consequences

Despite the overwhelming evidence that zero tolerance policies do not work, school districts continue to use them to suspend or otherwise exclude children from public education in far greater numbers than ever. In 1974, the number of children suspended from school was 1.7 million. In 2001, the number jumped to 3.1 million.⁹ As the recent data we have collected shows, in Kentucky zero tolerance policies have resulted in a staggering number of students excluded from school.

⁶ “It is found with clear and convincing evidence that minority students receive more harsh punitive measures (suspension, expulsion, corporal punishment) and less mild discipline than their non-minority peers, even controlling for socio-economic status.” Hanson, *Have Zero Tolerance School Discipline Policies Turned into a Nightmare?*, *supra*, note 10 at 332-33. It is also well documented that underachieving and low-ability students (including those in special education) are among the groups most likely to be suspended from school. Shi-Chang Wu, William Pink, Robert Crain, and Oliver Moles, *Student Suspensions: A Critical Reappraisal*, 14 *The Urban Review* 245, 247 (1982).

⁷ *A Report by the American Psychological Association Zero Tolerance Task Force, Are Zero Tolerance Policies Effective in the Schools? An Evidentiary Review and Recommendations*, Russell Skiba, Cecil R. Reynolds, Sandra Graham, Peter Sheras, Jane Close Conoley, & Enequina Garcia-Vazquez (hereinafter, “APA Report”) (August 9, 2006). The Report can be found at <http://www.apa.org/ed/cpse/zttfreport.pdf>.

⁸ *Id.* at 4-5.

⁹ Johanna Wald and Daniel Losen, *Defining And Redirecting A School-To-Prison Pipeline*, The Civil Rights Project at Harvard University at 8. The report is located on-line at http://www.woodsfund.org/community/Folder_1036081004377/File_1084877618748.

This is not a good thing for Kentucky. There is a strong correlation between suspensions and expulsions and the school drop-out rate.¹⁰ A suspended or expelled student is more likely to drop out of school.¹¹ The collateral consequences of repeated suspensions, such as course failure or grade retention, are also significant. A student is more likely to drop out if the student has been retained for a grade - an almost inevitable consequence of multiple suspensions.¹² These failures place the student at great risk for involvement in juvenile court and the correction system.¹³

Around the country, the overuse of suspension and expulsion data has led to a number of organizations to come out as opposing zero tolerance policies “that have a discriminatory effect, or mandate either expulsion or referral of students to juvenile or criminal court, without regard to the circumstances or nature of the offense or the student's history.”¹⁴ For example, an ABA committee report concluded that the costs of zero tolerance policies outweigh the benefits:

When the cost appraisal of the impact of zero tolerance includes impacts on an entire community, the financial benefits of suspension and expulsion may completely disappear. If the students who are suspended or expelled do not re-enter school right away, they are likely to fall further behind academically and are at increased risk of falling into criminal activity in the community. Their likelihood of being incarcerated increases accordingly....High recidivism in incarcerated settings urges a long-term view of the costs of initial incarcerations. It may be that keeping a child in school, even in alternative education, may reduce their likelihood of entering a career as a criminal.¹⁵

¹⁰ Costenbader, V., & Markson, S., *School suspension: A study with secondary school students*, 36 *Journal of School Psychology* 59–82 (1998).

¹¹ Russell Skiba *et al.*, *The Dark Side of Zero Tolerance: Can Punishment Lead to Safe Schools?*, 80 *Phi Delta Kappan* 372 (1999), available at: <http://www.pdkintl.org/kappan.kski9901.htm> (last visited May 6, 2008).

¹² Jay P. Heubert & Robert M. Hauser, EDS., *HIGH STAKES: TESTING FOR TRACKING, PROMOTION, AND GRADUATION*, 129 (1999).

¹³ Leone, P. E., Christle, C. A., Nelson, C. M., Skiba, R., Frey, A., & Jolivet, K., *School failure, race and disability: Promoting positive outcomes, decreasing vulnerability for involvement with the juvenile delinquency system*, The National Center on Education, Disability and Juvenile Justice, College Park, MD (2003).

¹⁴ Resolution of the American Bar Association on Zero Tolerance Policies, February 2001. The Resolution can be found at <http://www.abanet.org/crimjust/juvjus/jjpolicies.html#zero>.

¹⁵ Report to the American Bar Association, Criminal justice Section, February 2001. The report can be found at <http://www.abanet.org/crimjust/juvjus/zerotolreport.html>

C. The Solution

Children that are pushed out of schools often end up in Alternative Schools, juvenile courts, juvenile detention, mental health facilities, and, all too often, the adult correctional system. Regardless of the setting in which the child is ultimately found, it is clear that the greatest need for change is the public school system.

In 2005 the Southern Poverty Law Center and the Southern Disability Law Center (SDLC)¹⁶ developed an initiative using the administrative complaint resolution system under IDEA to address systemic issues related to the implementation of zero tolerance policies in Louisiana.¹⁷ The first administrative class complaint was filed against the Louisiana State Department of Education under the IDEA, after a yearlong investigation revealed that there were significant problems with the way in which the Jefferson Parish School System was failing to meet the needs of emotionally disturbed students, most of whom were poor, African-American children. A settlement agreement with the Department of Education was reached in August 2005, requiring the appointment of a special master to oversee a Corrective Action Plan that directly benefits as many as 1,000 children in that district.¹⁸

Shortly after reaching a settlement with Jefferson Parish, similar efforts were initiated to address issues in the East Baton Rouge, Calcasieu Parish, and Caddo Parish school districts. As a result, settlement agreements were reached with East Baton Rouge in September 2006, Calcasieu in October 2007, and Caddo in March 2008. These settlement agreements, involving four of the largest school districts in Louisiana, encompass approximately 25 percent of the state's student population.¹⁹

Since 2005, similar agreements have been reached in Florida, Texas, and Mississippi.

Prior to the settlement agreements, these school districts routinely suspended or expelled students with disabilities for minor offenses related to their disabilities. Jefferson Parish even segregated students with disabilities in self-contained classrooms or trailers in violation of federal and state regulations. Also, the school districts consistently failed to provide appropriate levels of related services (social work,

¹⁶ <http://www.sdcenter.org/index.htm>

¹⁷ See 34 C.F.R. §§ 300.151-300.153. The complaint resolution regulations implement the General Education Provisions Act, which authorizes the Secretary of Education to promulgate regulations "governing the manner of, operation of, and governing the applicable programs administered by the Department [of Education]." 20 U.S.C. § 1221e-3.

¹⁸ The Settlement Agreement can be found at <http://www.splcenter.org/legal/schoolhouse.jsp>.

¹⁹ All four settlement agreements can be found on SPLC's website, *supra* note 31.

counseling and psychological services) and vocational training to emotionally disturbed children. These practices had a pervasive and dramatic adverse impact on these students; the vast majority of whom were performing several years behind their grade level and their peers by the time they reached junior high or high school. This in turn led to abysmal graduation rates, alarmingly high dropout rates, and for all too many students, incarceration in juvenile or even adult correctional facilities.

The settlement agreements reached in Louisiana, Florida, and Mississippi have a number of critical factors in common, including:

- The appointment of an independent third party or individual (or group of individuals) to work with the district to develop a corrective action plan and timelines, and to take primary responsibility for developing and implementing a PBIS training protocol;
- Enhanced data and tracking information relevant to the elements of the settlement agreement, including information in electronic information systems regarding office disciplinary referrals, suspensions and expulsions, court referrals, truancies, alternative school placements, and restraint incidents for students in the district.
- Consultant access to all data and tracking information relevant to the elements of the settlement agreement;
- The implementation of PBIS training for all school district personnel that interact with students (teachers, administrators, cafeteria personnel, bus drivers, etc.);
- The implementation of district-wide use of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (hereinafter, "PBIS");
- Revision of the school district code of conduct in accordance with PBIS principles.
- The implementation of a corrective action plan that set timelines and criteria for
 - ✓ Increasing the frequency and duration of social work, psychological and counseling services;
 - ✓ Improving the students' academic progress at all grade levels;
 - ✓ Eliminating many harsh and illegal disciplinary practices and policies;

- ✓ Increasing access to less restrictive general education environments; and,
- ✓ Expanding access to vocational training.

With these common elements in mind, the importance of several features of the settlement agreements cannot be stressed enough.

1. **PBIS and PBIS Training Protocol**

As the data shows, PBIS is the central factor in all these agreements and is at the forefront of the effort to end the overuse of suspension and other punitive measures to discipline students. PBIS, unlike zero tolerance policies, focuses heavily on teaching children positive behaviors and on changing the way adults interact with children.

PBIS is a research-based method for improving student behavior and creating a safe and productive school climate. It is comprehensive and data-driven.²⁰ In schools implementing PBIS all students are taught necessary social skills. These schools set clear expectations for behavior, acknowledge and reward appropriate behavior, and implement a consistent continuum of consequences for problem behavior.²¹ PBIS should be employed throughout the entire school, including the cafeteria, the buses, and the hallways. All school personnel are trained in PBIS and are continually supported in implementing it.

The school-wide PBIS process emphasizes the creation of systems that support the adoption and durable implementation of evidence-based practices and procedures, and fit within on-going school reform efforts. An interactive approach that includes opportunities to correct and improve four key elements is used in district and school-wide PBIS focusing on:

- Outcomes: academic and behavior targets that are endorsed and emphasized by students, families, and educators.

²⁰ In order to ensure that PBIS is implemented correctly, schools rely on data, tracked most easily in the form of office referrals. PBIS teams use this data to design specific interventions to head off problem behavior before it occurs and to confirm that those interventions were effective.

²¹ PBIS schools implement a range of interventions designed to address the needs of a diverse student body. Tertiary Interventions, which apply to about 5% of the student population, are specialized, intensive strategies used to address the most challenging students' chronic academic and behavioral difficulties. Secondary Interventions (including behavioral contracts, conflict resolution training, self-management strategies, etc), which apply to about 15% of the student population, address the needs of more challenging students who exhibit difficult behavior that limits their academic and social success. Universal Interventions, which apply to all students, prevent the development of problem behaviors through the implementation of activities such as school-wide social skills training curricula and school rule education campaigns.

- 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 PBS.

All effective school-wide systems have seven major components in common a) an agreed upon and common approach to discipline, b) a positive statement of purpose, c) a small number of positively stated expectations for all students and staff, d) procedures for teaching these expectations to students, e) a continuum of procedures for encouraging displays and maintenance of these expectations, f) a continuum of procedures for discouraging displays of rule-violating behavior, and g) procedures for monitoring and evaluation the effectiveness of the discipline system on a regular and frequent basis.

PBIS is currently being implemented in approximately 7,100 schools across the country.²² On a federal level, the IDEA²³ and the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP)²⁴ specifically encourage the use of PBIS to reduce the need to suspend or expel students with disabilities. On a state level, PBIS is recommended or required by statute in three states and is the subject of statewide initiatives or school/university partnerships in all 50 states. PBIS has shown positive effects in elementary, middle and high schools, and has proven to be effective in schools with high percentages of at-risk students.²⁵

The success of PBS has been clearly demonstrated in Jefferson Parish, which has the longest running settlement agreement. After two years of district-wide PBS, the out-of-school suspension rate plunged 51% for Special Education students; the rate dropped 24% for General Education students after one year.²⁶ In-school suspensions have also dramatically decreased.

²² Glen Dunlap, keynote Address, *Positive Behavioral Support: Roots, Ruts, and Recipes*, at the 5th International Conference on positive Behavior Support (Mar. 27, 2008).

²³ See 34 C.F.R § 300.324(a)(2) ("In the case of a child whose behavior impedes the child's learning or that to others, consider the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and other strategies, to address that behavior")

²⁴ OSEP's National Technical Assistance Center on PBIS is found at www.pbis.org

²⁵ Stephen R. Lassen et al., *The Relationship of School-Wide Positive Behavior Support to Academic Achievement in an Urban High School*, 43 *Psychology in the Schools* 701, 712 (2006); Bohanan, Hank et al. *Schoolwide Application of Positive Behavior Support in an Urban High School*. 8 *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions* 131, 145 (2006).

²⁶ The data for suspensions and court referrals was compiled by D. Joe Olmi, Ph.D, the Special Master appointed pursuant to the Jefferson Parish Settlement Agreement. This data also can be obtained

Special education students who were suspended from school for more than ten cumulative days — an important indicator for later dropout — plummeted by 90% after two years of PBS. The number of school-based arrests has also dramatically declined — 26% for Special Education students and 36% for General Education students between the first six months of the 2007-08 school years and the first six months of the 2008-09 school year.²⁷

All available evidence from around the country also indicates that PBIS, when implemented properly, works. Nationwide, schools that have effectively implemented PBIS have shown:

- Reduced office referral rates (and, consequently, suspension and expulsion rates) by up to 50 percent;²⁸
- Improved Attendance and school engagement;²⁹
- Improved academic achievement;³⁰
- Reduced Dropout rates;³¹
- Reduced later delinquency and drug use;³² and
- Improved school atmosphere.³³

by accessing Louisiana's school district Performance Profiles for the 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 school years at <http://www.doe.state.la.us/de/eia/2115.html>

²⁷ *Id.*

²⁸ Jeffrey R. Sprague & Robert H. Horner, SCHOOL WIDE POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL SUPPORTS, IN THE HANDBOOK OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE AND SCHOOL SAFETY: FROM RESEARCH TO PRACTICE (Shane R. Jimerson & Michael J. Furlong, eds., 2007).

²⁹ *Id.* at 18; citing O'Donnell et al, *Preventing School Failure, Drug Use, and Delinquency Among Low-Income Children: Long-Term Intervention in elementary School*, 65 American Journal of Orthopsychiatry 87 (1995).

³⁰ *Id.* at 19.

³¹ Josie Danni Cortez & JoAnne Malloy, new *Hampshire's APEX Model at Work*, 3 BIG IDEAS: DROPOUT PREVENTION STRATEGIES 1 (2006), available at: <http://www.ndpc-sd.org/enews/docs/BigIDEAs-2006-01.pdf> (last visited May 6, 2008).

³² Sprague & Horner, *supra* at 18.

³³ Horner *et al*, School-wide positive Behavior Support: An alternative Approach to discipline in Schools, in INDIVIDUALIZED SUPPORTS FOR STUDENTS WITH PROBLEM BEHAVIORS: DESIGNING POSITIVE

2. The Consultant

Another critical element of the settlement agreements is the appointment of an individual or organization (Consultant) with school-based experience and nationally recognized expertise in the development and implementation of district and school-wide PBIS programs and services to oversee, and provide technical assistance and training regarding, the implementation of the agreement.

The implementation of a district-wide PBIS program, the implementation of a training protocol for all staff, and oversight over the elements of the agreement is complex and time-consuming. It requires someone who is knowledgeable about PBIS, someone with excellent people management and time management skills, and someone's whose primary focus is the implementation and success of the settlement agreement. The person must also have the full cooperation and authority from the school district leadership to do what needs to be done under the agreement.

The involvement of such a consultant is crucial to the success of PBIS implementation. In our most successful agreements, such as Jefferson Parish, the consultant needs to be involved, especially in the beginning, about 6-10 hours a week.

3. Revision of the School District Code of Conduct

Revising the district's code of conduct to be consistent with the principles of PBIS is another necessary element of the settlement agreement. Typically, punishment is the centerpiece of current codes of conduct. Punishment essentially takes the form of a decision to do something that the student does not want done, coupled with a demand for future compliance usually is made, along with threats of harsher punishment if compliance is not forthcoming. As students get older, the primary form of discipline relied upon in codes of conduct is suspension. Indeed, suspension remains one of the most common disciplinary responses for the transgressions of secondary students.

There is a growing body of evidence which shows that the benefits of using punishment are often outweighed by many negative consequences.³⁴ Because

BEHAVIOR PLANS (L. Bambara & L. Kern, eds., in press), available at: <http://www.ici.umn.edu/products/impact/182/over2html> (last visited May 6, 2008).

³⁴ Punishment-based interventions have been shown to be one of the least effective responses that institutions can make to violent problem behavior. See e.g. Gottfredson, D. C. School-based crime prevention, in L. Sherman, D. Gottfredson, Mackenzie, D. J. Eck, P. Reuter, & S. Bushway (Eds.), *Preventing crime: What works, what doesn't, what's promising* (pp. 5-1-5-74). College Park, MD; Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice, University of Maryland (1997). In fact, if punishing problem behavior is used without a system of positive behavior support, increases aggression, vandalism, truancy, tardiness, and dropping out in addition to increases in mental health problems, tend to be observed. Mayer, G. R.. Preventing antisocial behavior in the schools. 28 *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 467-478 (1995); McCord, J. (Ed.), *Coercion*, Cambridge University Press (1995). Study after study has shown that when reactive management is overemphasized, and prevention is

disciplinary procedures, especially school suspension, are associated with dropping out of school, it is not surprising that some concerned professionals refer to extreme disciplinary practices as "pushout" strategies.

By aligning the code of conduct with PBIS principles, discipline practices are designed with the aim of leaving no child behind. That is, the goal of the code of conduct is stopping misbehavior in a way that maximizes the likelihood that the teacher will engage, or re-engage, with the student in instruction and positive learning. The emphasis of code is on positive approaches to reducing misbehavior and enhancing support for positive behavior in and out-of-the-classroom is a step in the right direction.

4. The Development and Implementation of a Corrective Action Plan With Specific Measurable Timelines, Benchmarks and Criteria for Success

Finally, it is essential that a corrective action plan be developed that has measurable timelines, benchmarks, and criteria for success. The whole point of the settlement agreement is to change behavior so as to change outcomes. Clearly, a primary focus of the settlement has to be on reducing the number of suspensions, expulsions, court referrals, and alternative school placements, while at the same time improving the overall atmosphere in the school. At the same time, a corollary to fewer push-outs and improved atmosphere is improved academic performance.

Therefore, once the consultant is on board and a leadership team is established, attention must be directed to the development of an evidence-based plan. This plan should not be based on its logical appeal, newness, innovation, or packaging. Instead, the determination and adoption of an action plan should be based on three decision criteria: (a) relevance, (b) effectiveness, and (c) efficiency.

First, as much as possible, the plan must address the that effect the academic and social development of students. A clear and direct link should be indicated between the goals of the plan and the issues identified. The outcomes should be measurable to assess the extent of the match and the degree to which the outcomes are being achieved. In a review of schooling practices related to making schools safer and less violent,³⁵ cite six factors:

1. Academic failure is a strong predictor of later psychological disturbance, delinquency, substance abuse, and dropping out of school.

underemphasized, students with problem behaviors are the most likely to (a) be excluded from school, (b) drop out (c) prompt teacher requests for assistance and (d) become involved in antisocial lifestyles.

³⁵ Morrison, G. M., Furlong, M. J., & Morrison, R. L., *The safe school: Moving beyond crime prevention to school empowerment*, in A. Goldstein & J. Conoley (Eds.), *School violence intervention: A practical handbook* at 236-264, New York: Guilford. (1997)

2. Lack of attachment, commitment, and bonding to school is associated with school failure.
3. Negative expectations for students by staff.
4. Peer rejection, or association with a negative peer culture, are high risk factors for school failure.
5. Negative school climate, teacher apathy, authoritarian leadership style, and lack of teacher student participation are not associated with effective schools.
6. High student density due to limited space, low capacity to avoid confrontations, and poor building design may promote violent behavior.

Second, the practices proposed in the plan should be evidence-based. A wealth of empirically validated procedures exists for individual student, classroom, and school-wide behavior support. Before non-validated practices are adopted, care should be taken to review alternatives, and ensure a logical fit between the resources and needs of the school, and the processes and outcomes of the practice.

Third, the characteristics of the curriculum, intervention, or practice should match the contextual-specific characteristics of the school, staff, and/or students. To the greatest extent possible, the features of the action plan should be relevant to the demographic, linguistic, and social characteristics of the school's neighborhood, students, staff, and families. The consultant and school teams also should assess the degree to which the curriculum is modifiable .

Last, but certainly not least, in order to develop these timelines, benchmarks, and criteria, collecting, maintaining and evaluating data is a must. This information has multiple purposes: accountability, program effectiveness, program evaluation, communications, etc. The literature is replete with the processes and methods for developing and implementing data collection procedures.³⁶ Common recommendations include the following:

1. Data collection activities should be simple to use, ongoing, integrated into instructional routines and activities, and consume no more than 5% of the teacher's time.

³⁶ See e.g., Alberto, P. A., & Troutman, A. C., *Applied behavior analysis for teachers* (4th ed.) (1995). Repp, A. C., & Horner, R. H. (Eds.), *Functional analysis of problem behavior: From effective assessment to effective support*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Merrill/Prentice-Hall (1999). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth; Sugai, G. M., & Tindal, G., *Effective school consultation: An interactive approach*, Pacific Grove, CA: Brookes/Cole (1993)..

2. Measures should be calibrated to represent behaviors being examined, such as amount of behavior, type of behavior (e.g., latency, duration, frequency), and behavior definitions.

3. Data evaluation procedures should be linked to previously established behavioral objectives and prior and immediate student performance data.