

Friday, April 8, 2016 | 10:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.  
Washington Court Hotel | 525 New Jersey Ave, NW | Washington, D.C.

# THE SOCIAL SIDE OF EDUCATION:

## How Social Aspects of Schools and School Systems Shape Teaching and Learning



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**ALBERT SHANKER INSTITUTE**

# **Albert Shanker Institute**

## **Education Reform: From Policy to Implementation**

April 8, 2016

Karen Webber, Director  
Education and Youth Development



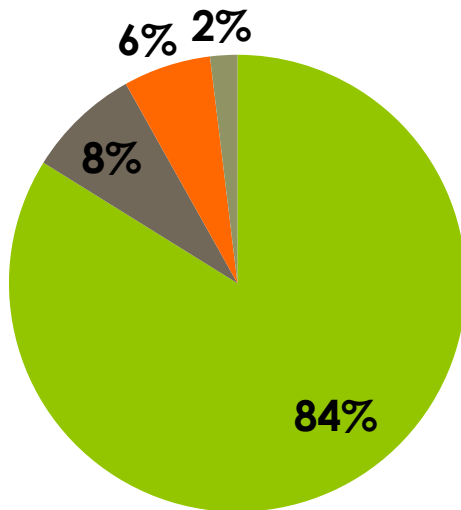
**OPEN SOCIETY INSTITUTE-BALTIMORE**

## Race/Ethnicity and Percentage of Students Living in Poverty

SY 2015/2016 Student Enrollment: **84,730** total

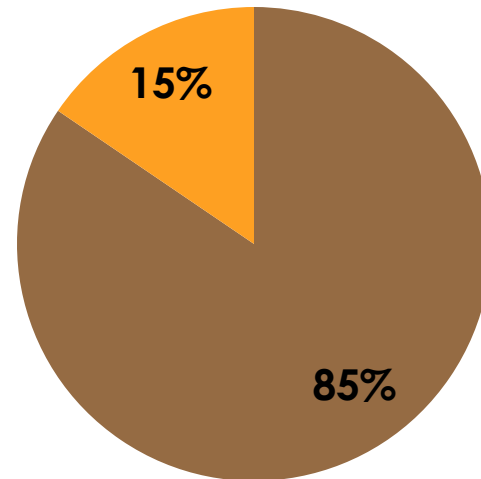
Schools and Programs: **188** total

### Race/Ethnicity



■ African American    ■ White  
■ Hispanic/Latino    ■ Other

### Low Income



■ Low Income    ■ Non-Low Income



# Urban Poverty: Exposure and Effects

## Urban Poverty - Exposure

- Trauma/Chronic stress
- Violence, neglect, abuse, drug addiction
- Lead paint, other toxins
- Family mobility - homelessness
- Poor health/nutrition

## Effects on Behavior

- Attention Deficit
- Impulsivity
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Impulse Control
- Aggression

# Racial Threat

## What is it?

- Direct correlation between racial composition and discipline utilized
- Majority Black Schools = Harsh Discipline

## What does it look like?

- Armed Police
- Metal Detectors
- Zero tolerance
- Expulsion
- Suspension
- Detention

Explanation for intensified punitive and social control when there is a concentration of African Americans. Based on perceived social, economic, criminal or other threat. *Payne and Welch*

# School Discipline Reform

## Progressive Policies Issued

- Baltimore City Code of Conduct
- Maryland State Discipline Policy
- US DOE and DOJ Discipline and School Climate Guidelines

## Overly Broad/Harsh Sanctions Removed

- Reduction of “zero tolerance”
- Maximum suspension “sentences” reduced
- School Climate highlighted
- Alternatives to suspension encouraged

# Implementing Policy - School Climate

## Proven Benefits:

- Student Achievement
- Graduation
- Suspension Reduction
- Increased Attendance
- Overall sense of belonging and wellbeing



# Leadership



- ❑ Vision which includes *happiness* and success
- ❑ Modeling the behavior expected
- ❑ Constant messaging





# Positive Relationships



**Adult  
to  
Adult**

ALL adults model the behavior they wish to see in students



**Adult  
to  
Student**

Mutual respect should guide this relationship  
Student missteps as teachable moments



**Student  
to  
Student**

Same expectations for Student to Student interactions – Helps prevent bullying



# Engaging Classrooms

- Feature *student voice*
- **Relevant** lessons and materials
- Reduction in student misbehaviors



# School Environment

- Reflects degree to which students and staff are regarded
- Clean, welcoming and attractive – at a minimum



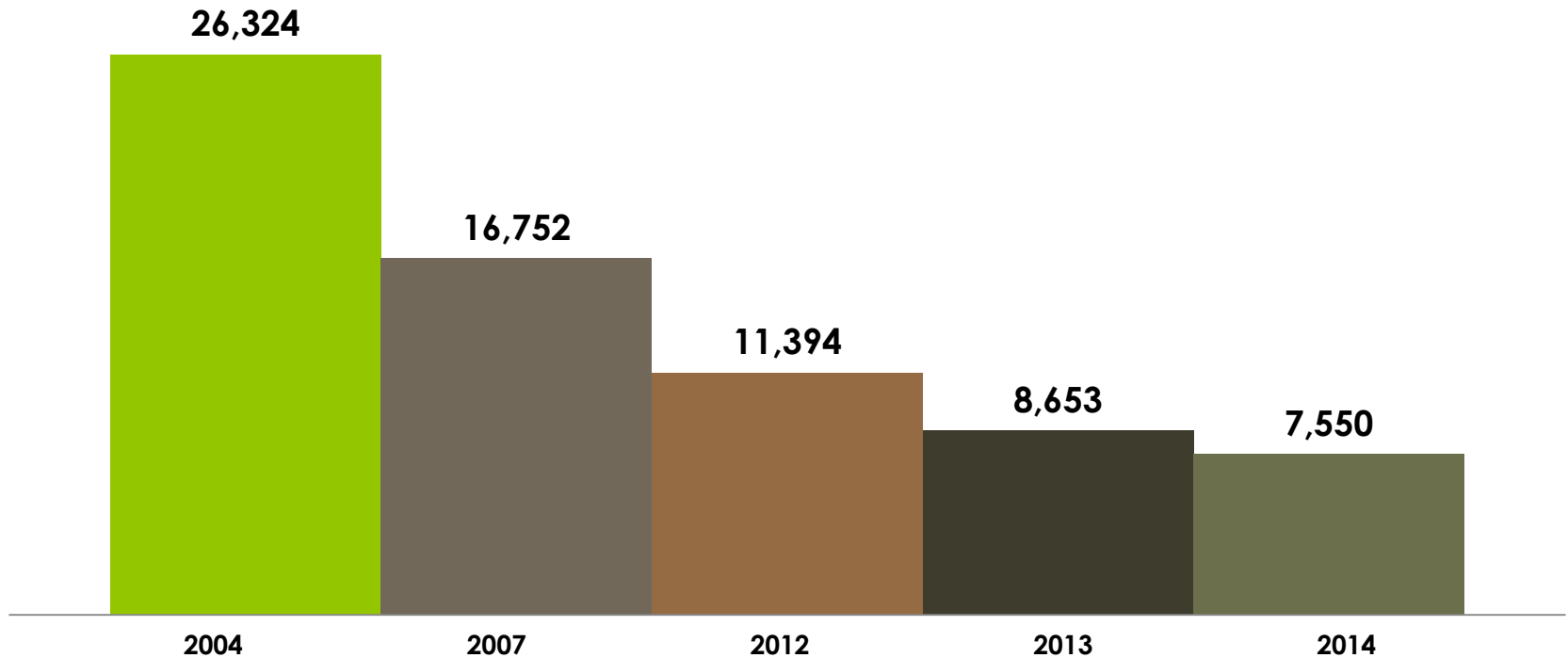
# School Safety

- Safety is physical *and* emotional
- Security personnel - properly trained clearly defined roles
- Invested in student success



# Baltimore City Historical Suspension Data

Source: Maryland State Department of Education Data Files





## Shifting Mindsets to Create Positive School Climates

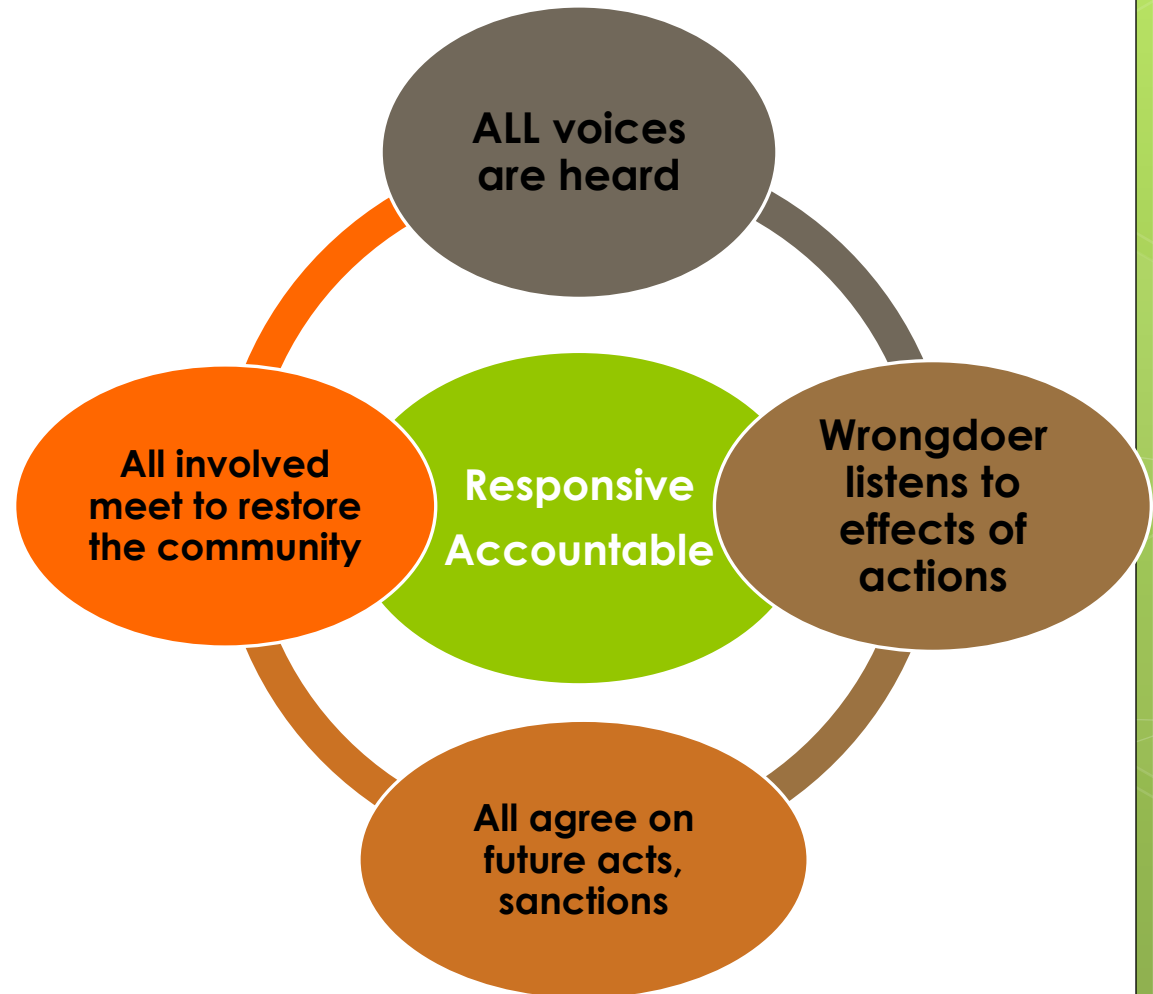
Punitive



Restorative



# Restorative Solutions: Restorative Practices



## Restorative Solutions: Mindfulness

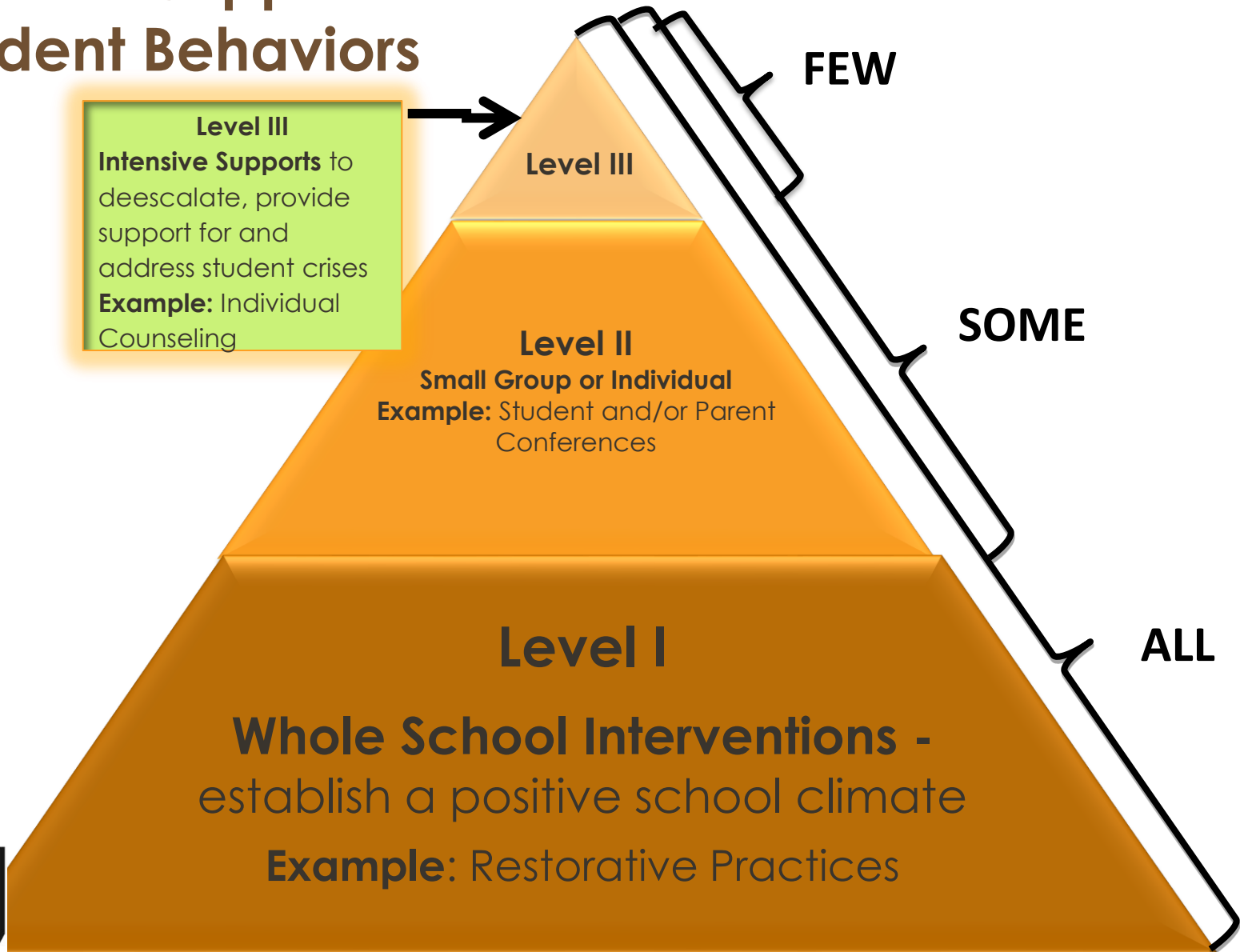




# APPENDIX



# Leveled Supports for Student Behaviors



## Examples of Leveled Supports in Baltimore City Schools

**Restorative  
Practices**

**PBIS  
Positive Behavioral  
Interventions and  
Support**

**Mindfulness**

**Student Support  
Team Meetings**

**Mental Health  
Referrals**

**Check and  
Connect**

**Community  
Conferencing**

**Peer Mediation**

**Peer Group  
Connections**



## Restorative Practices

- RP can take various forms such as student conferences; peer mediation; and student court, but they aim to restore the community rather than to simply punish the wrongdoer.
- RP focuses on repair of harm rather than harsh punishment of the student
- RP creates individualized solutions to holds actor accountable and repair harm to victim
- Uses student missteps as teachable moments for all parties

# Mindfulness

- Practice of teaching participants to focus thoughts in the present moment: deep breathing, relaxation, visualization are among techniques used
- Can be used as a whole school practice or leveled support
- Beneficial to all participants – students and staff
- Easily compliments existing school wide practices
- Research indicates: improved attention, emotion regulation, stress and depression reduction

# Targeted Training for School Climate Improvement

- Cultural competency/implicit bias
- Classroom Management
- Youth Development
- Childhood Trauma
- Adult and student de-escalation practices
- Conflict resolution and restorative questioning
- Anti-bullying training and sensitivity – including protecting the rights of students with disabilities, and LGBTQ students



# Tools: School Climate Walk

“The Climate Walk observation tool offers a unique, qualitative and timely appraisal of the overall functioning of a school on any given day and provide opportunities for regular collaboration between district staff and school leaders. This useful process should be pursued as often as is feasible.” (JHU Baltimore Education Research Consortium)

## BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

### SCHOOL CLIMATE WALK

School Name & Number \_\_\_\_\_ Network # \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time of Visit \_\_\_\_\_ Time of Departure \_\_\_\_\_ Staff Name \_\_\_\_\_

### Twenty focus areas:

- School Entrance
- Physical Environment
- Student/Staff Relationships
- Transitions
- Classrooms

Observation		Observed	Not Observed	No Opportunity to Observe	Comments
School Entrance	1. Visitors (including yourself) are greeted by staff, provided with a visitor's pass, and directed to the appropriate location upon entering the building.				
	2. The main office is an orderly and well-managed environment.				
	3. The main office had students seated during instructional time. Note in the comments if the same students were in the office when you departed, and what the students were doing.				



## Tools: School Climate Plan

- The School Climate Plan is a companion document to the School Climate Walk.
- It is used to create an data driven plan for school climate improvement.

### SCHOOL CLIMATE PLAN

BALTIMORE CITY  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SCHOOL ENTRANCE – QUESTION 1		
Visitors (including yourself) are greeted by staff, provided with a visitor's pass, and directed to the appropriate location upon entering the building.	Relevant Climate Walk Information:	<i>Plan of action:</i>
	Relevant Data:	
	Other Relevant Information:	
SCHOOL ENTRANCE – QUESTION 2		
The main office is an orderly and well-managed environment.	Relevant Climate Walk Information:	<i>Plan of action:</i>
	Relevant Data:	
	Other Relevant Information:	





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