

PBIS, Dropout Prevention, and High School Reform:  
New Hampshire's APEX II Project

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## Thanks to Our Project Partners

- ▶ The NH Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education
- ▶ The NH Center for Effective Behavioral Interventions and Supports at SERESC
- ▶ Main Street Academix, Inc
- ▶ The National Dropout Prevention Center
- ▶ 10 High schools throughout the state

## AGENDA

- Logic Model: Link Between PBIS and Dropout Prevention
- APEX Model in New Hampshire
- Implementation: 10 NH High Schools
- Examples
- Outcomes, Lessons Learned, Challenges
- What teachers and students said
- Discussion

## Characteristics of Dropouts

- Academic failure (Allensworth & Easton, 2005; Balfanz, & Herzog, 2005),
- Problem behavior (e.g. disruption, disrespect, etc.) (Sweeten, 2006; Tobin & Sugai, 1999),
- History of grade retention (Allensworth et al., 2005),
- Poor teacher relationships (Barber & Olson, 1997)
- Low attendance (Balfanz, & Herzog, 2005; Jerald, 2006; Neild & Balfanz, 2006), and
- Diagnosed with a disability (NTLS-2, ; Wagner, Newman, Cameto, Levine, Garza, 2006).

## Student engagement has emerged as the bottom line in preventing dropout

- Dropping out is a process of disengagement
- Keys to engaging students early on
  - Enter school ready to learn/early intervention at the High School Level
- Contextual keys to engaging students
  - Providing effective instruction – evidence based, best practice
  - Creating cultural match/relevance – extend to include strategies that are appropriate to student background and culture

(Alexander, Entwisle & Kabbani, 2001; Christenson, Sinclair, Lehr & Hurley, 2000; Cotton & Conklin, 2001; Cleary & Peacock, 1998; Finn, 1993; Payne, 2005)

5

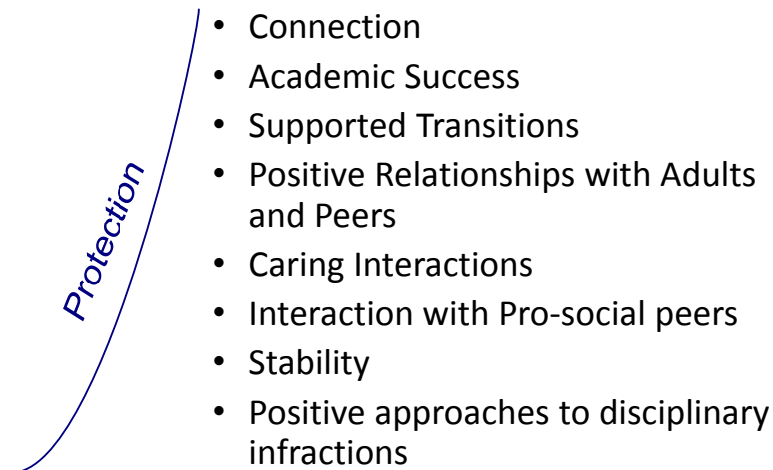
## School as a Risk Factor (Osher, Dwyer, & Jackson, 2004)



- Alienation
- Academic Frustration
- Chaotic Transitions
- Negative Relationships with Adults and Peers
- Teasing, Bullying, Gangs
- Segregation with Antisocial Peers
- School-driven Mobility
- Harsh Discipline; Suspension, Expulsion, Push Out/Drop Out

## School as a Protective Factor

(Osher, Dwyer, & Jackson, 2004)



## LOGIC: From Small Failures to Dropping Out of School

1. If a HS student is late to class or receives a failing grade... then he will receive negative consequences
2. If he receives negative consequences.... then he will perceive HS as negative
3. If he perceives HS as negative.... then he will skip classes (escape aversive environment)
4. If he skips too many classes....then he will fail courses
5. If he fails courses... then he will fall behind in credits
6. If he falls behind in credits... then he will likely fall behind grade-level not be promoted
7. If he falls his grade level and is not promoted....then he will be far more likely to drop out
8. Therefore, we need to intervene when he is tardy, failing assignments, or skipping classes as early as possible

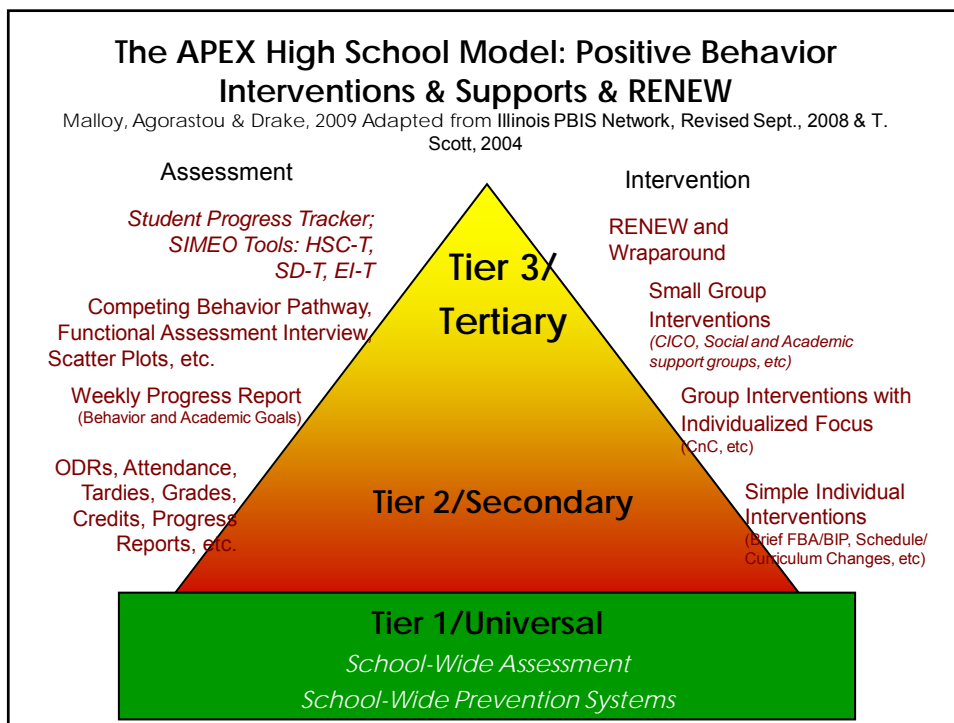
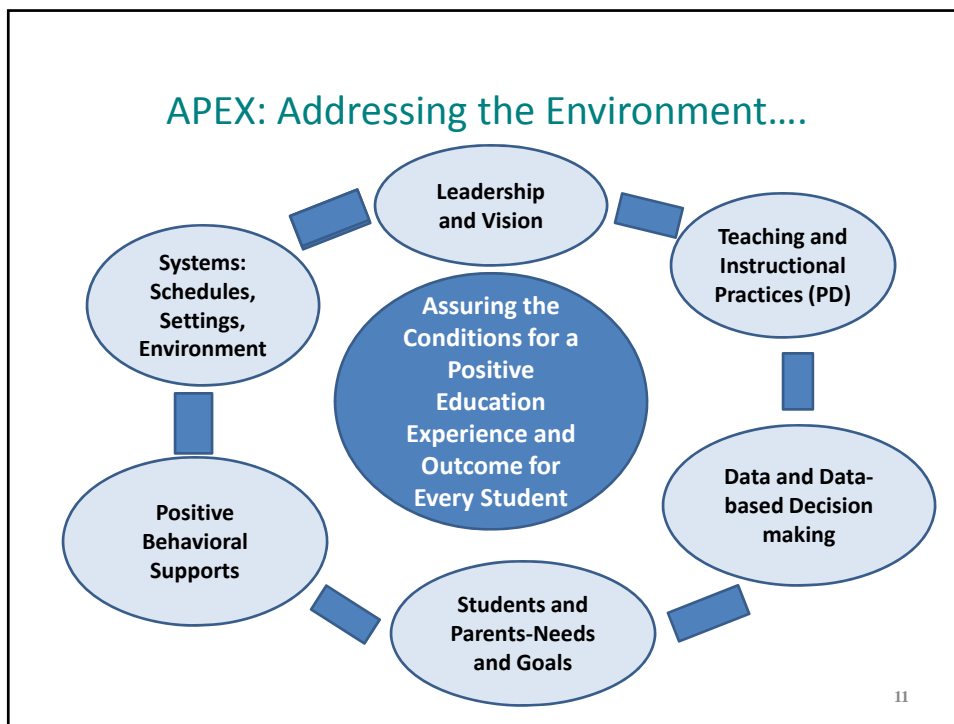
## The APEX Approach Relates Directly to What the Research Tells Us

- ▶ The quality of a school's organizational and systems features is related to dropout rates (school-wide issues) (Gottfredson, Gottfredson & Hybl, 1993; Bryk & Thum, 1989; Lee & Burkham, 2001; Nelson, 1996; Rumberger, 2001; Rutter, 1979)
- ▶ Behavioral problems in school are associated with a likelihood of dropping out – indicator of risk
- ▶ Students with significant emotional or behavioral challenges require individualized, community-based transition services in order to successfully complete high school (Wagner & Davis, 2006)

9

## APEX II Model

- ▶ To address school-based systems/climate issues:
  - Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) (Bohanon, et. al., 2004; Sugai & Horner, 1999)
  - Student Leadership Development
- ▶ To address issues for students most at-risk:
  - Rehabilitation for Empowerment, Natural supports, Education and Work (RENEW) (Bullis & Cheney, 1999 Eber, Cheney, Malloy & Hagner, 1998; Malloy, Sundar, Hagner, Pierias, & Veit, 2010)
  - 8<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> grade transition system and practices
- ▶ To impact school climate and foster change:
  - Student Leadership Development



## Projects

- First APEX Project funded by US DOE as a Dropout Prevention project using PBIS and RENEW – 2 high schools- 2002-2006
- APEX II funded by US DOE as a Dropout Prevention project- using PBIS and RENEW 10 high schools- 2006-2009
- APEX III funded by NH DOE, Bureau of Special Education Services- 6 high school demonstration sites to build a problem-solving capacity at Tiers 2 and 3.
- NH RESPONDS- funded by the Office of Special education Services at the UD DOE to implement RtI- 2 high schools

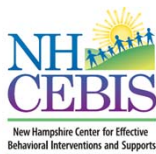
13

## APEX II MODEL ELEMENTS

1. Work with 10 NH high schools with the highest dropout rates and numbers of dropouts by providing intensive and structured training and technical assistance to schools to implement PBIS
2. Work with the same 10 high schools to implement an intensive, developmentally-appropriate school-to-career planning and support process for the highest risk students (the RENEW model)

## APEX II GOALS (cont.)

3. Develop and support the work of student leadership teams in each school to ensure that student voice and participation are part of the school reform effort
4. Work with sending middle schools to develop transition plans for at risk 8<sup>th</sup> graders as they transition to high school



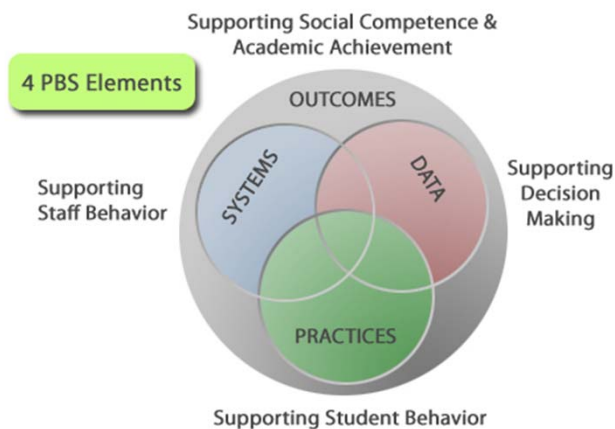
## Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports Defined

Muscott & Mann (2006)

PBIS is a comprehensive 3-tiered evidence-based systems approach to schoolwide discipline that can efficiently and effectively improve social, behavioral, and academic outcomes through the use positive, preventative, and function-based behavior support practices within the context of collaborative teaming and data-based decision-making.



## Features of a Systematic Problem-Solving Model



17

## APEX Features: Universal Tier

- ▶ **Systems:**
  - Leadership Team & Processes
  - Student Leadership/partnership
  - Data-based decision making, decision rules
  - Universal expectations, response system
- ▶ **Practices:**
  - Classroom Management
  - Teach and recognize expected behavior
  - Responding to problem behavior
- ▶ **Data:**
  - Office Discipline Referrals, Attendance, Progress Reports, Course Failures, Credits
  - Universal screening

## APEX Features- Tier 2

- ▶ **Systems:**
  - Targeted Team
  - Early Identification, Decision Rules.
  - Communication with teacher, parents and students.
- ▶ **Practices:**
  - Check In/Check Out
  - Social Contracting
  - Other Targeted Group Interventions
  - Simple Functional Behavioral Assessment and Behavior Support Plans
- ▶ **Data:**
  - Weekly (Bi-weekly) ODRs, Attendance, Progress Reports.
  - Functional Behavioral Assessment, Competing Behavior Pathway

## APEX Features -Tier 3

- ▶ **Data**
  - Individualized Progress Monitoring
- ▶ **Systems**
  - Systematic Screening for Intensive Supports
  - Teacher training and support through Targeted Team
  - Staff time and resources to provide individualized supports to youth
- ▶ **Practices**
  - RENEW Individualized person-centered planning and supports
  - Individualized education planning and supports
  - Intensive FBA and Behavior Support Plans
  - Referral to Community Resources

## RENEW: The “Tier 3” Component of the APEX Approach

- For the most “at risk” students
- Model components:
  - ▶ Person Centered, Student-driven Planning
  - ▶ Individualized academic programming (creative solutions and “Real World Learning” opportunities).
  - ▶ Naturally supported employment
  - ▶ Interagency collaboration and braided funding
  - ▶ School to Career transition articulation, including post-secondary education
  - ▶ Mentoring

## APEX 2006-2009: Implementation of Project Elements

School	SW-PBIS	Voted to Adopt PBIS	Targeted (Tier 2)	RENEW	Student Leadership	8 <sup>th</sup> to 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade Transition	SET (2008)	Changes (+/-) in Dropout Rates (2003-2009)
1. Woodsville*				X	X	X	48/10	-4.9%
2 Berlin	X	X		X	X		95/70	-2.2%
3 Conway	X	X		X			39/40	-4.5%
4 Somersworth	X	X	X	X	X	X	83/70	-5.9%
5 Raymond	X	X			X	X	69/60	-1.9%
6 Central						X	34/10	-5.3%
7 Memorial	X	X		X	X	X	61/50	-0.8%
8 Nashua North		X		X	X		55/40	-3.0%
9 Nashua South*							42/20	-3.1%
10 Rochester		X-Bud Carlson School					N/A	-3.4%

## High School Priorities....

- Size (high schools are often large)
- Content area driven work
- De-centralized decision-making & management
- Credit Accumulation (NCLB Requirements)
- “Us/Them” Mentality
- Characteristics and work of emerging adults
- Career development

## Implementing School Wide PBIS: One High School’s Experience

“If these kids would only behave, the I would be able to teach them”

“We need to recognize that everybody, including you, has worth and brings value to the classroom.”

## Universal Team: Beginning Stages of Implementation

### Became a PBIS school Fall 2006

- Representative team
- Student leadership formed
- Ground rules and Member Roles
- Team process
  - Team checklists, Data present at all meetings, Action Planning
- Defined Expectations for Behavior
  - Published in student handbook for 2007 & school web page
- Clearly defined office referral behaviors, including consequences when feasible
  - Published in student handbook for 2007



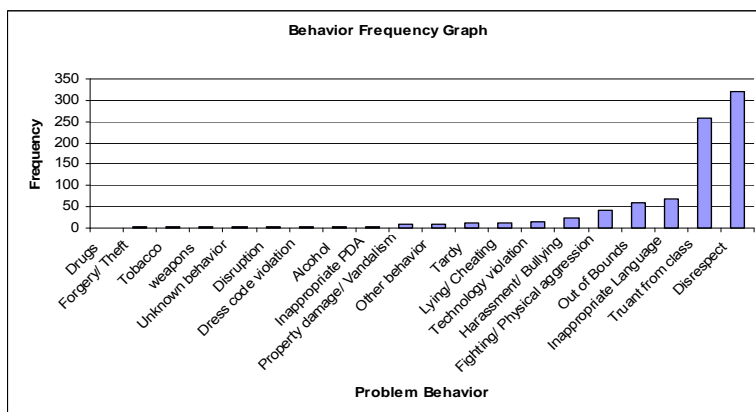
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## Rolling Out SW-PBIS

### Fall of 2007

- First day of school presentation
  - Matrix, definitions, ODR's
- “Be on Time and Be ready” roll-out (October)
  - Recognized students with verbal praise and ice cream social.
  - Recognized teachers with pride pennies
  - Informed parents at open house
- Rachel's challenge (Rachel Joy Scott)
  - CRC begins
    - Student leader on the Universal team
    - Begin random acts of kindness

## The Data- Fall of 2007



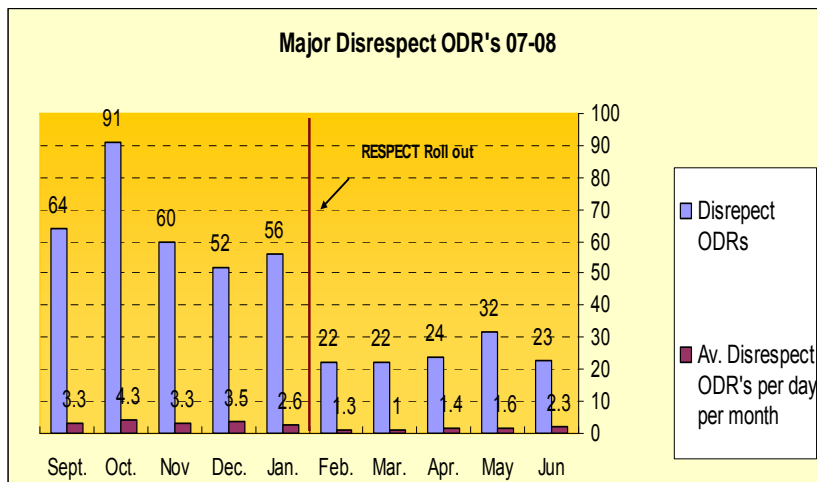
27

## Roll Out on Disrespect-February 2008

- **1. Identify the targeted behavior**
  - Be Respectful in the Classroom
- **2. Identified growth/performance goal**
  - Reduce respect referrals by 25%
- **3. Share with the classroom why the behavior buy-in is important**

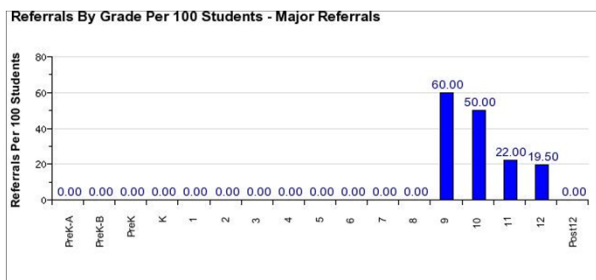
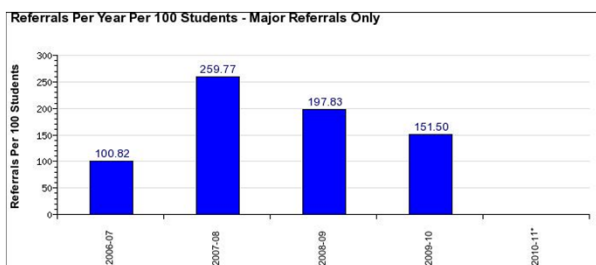
“We need to recognize that everybody, including you, has worth and brings value to the classroom.” Nick Guadagnoli
- **4. Identify and teach learning strategy (Different Skits in all blocks)**
  - Universal team with the teachers
  - Teachers with their students
- **5. Implement Recognition and Reward Program**
  - Praise
  - Caught you doing something right card (Entered into a raffle)
  - Respectful student of the week (treated to lunch with the principal)

### Did it make a difference?



29

### 2006-2010 Universal Data



## Universal Team Vision- 2009

### Developing a “Community of Caring”

- **Community of caring**
  - Care about yourself
  - Care about others
  - Care about your learning
  - Care about your success
  - Care about your community
- **RQQP**
  - Respectfully, Quietly, Quickly and Privately
- **Staff mind set**
  - “What can we do to help you be successful?”

31

## Teaching Plans

Be Respectful, Be Responsible, Be Cooperative and Be Safe

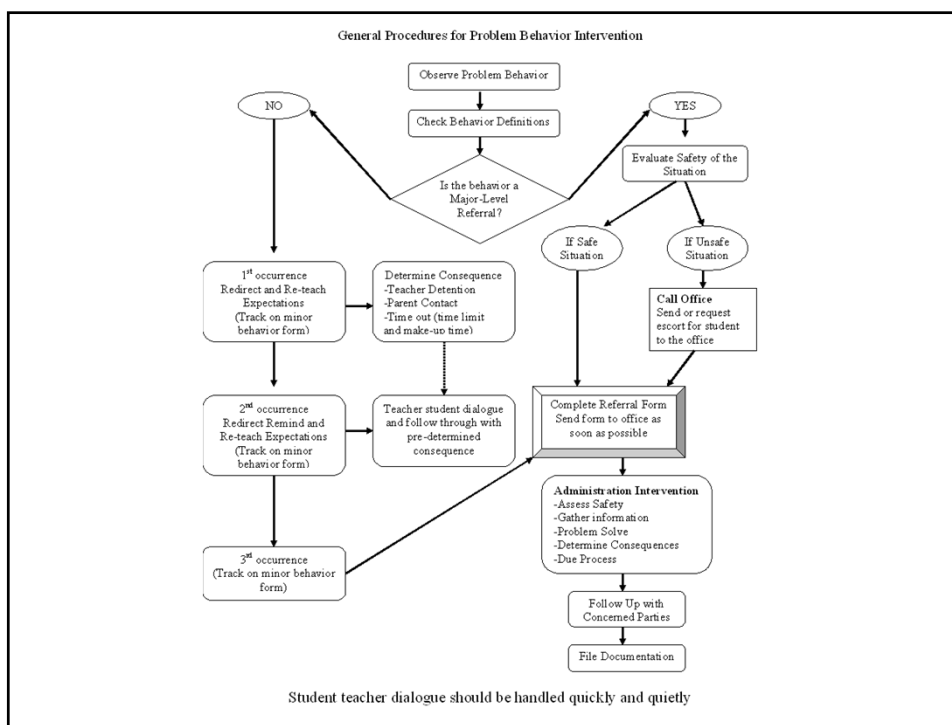
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|----------------------------|--|
| • Eliminating the hat rule | • How to fill out an ODR?              |
| • Welcome Back!            | • Attendance reporting                 |
| • Major minor definitions  | • Administration Failure notifications |
| • Team visible             | • Parent conference extravaganza       |
| • Consistency              | • Celebrating our successes            |
| • Tier 2 interventions     | • Working on—Bell to bell learning     |
| • Announcements            |  |
| • Dress Code               |  |
| • Function of behavior     |  |



## Positive Cultures Happen When...

- Students move through our school and they find:
  - the rules are the same,
  - the cues are the same and
  - the consequences are the same

*We have all felt the repercussions of this not being the practice in our schools*



## Big Ideas

### classroom managed behavior

- Good prevention (teach expectations)
- Good response strategies (re-teach, re-cue, re-direct -3 R's)
- Use *different ways of thinking* When dealing with 'Non-Responsive' students.
  - Do this in September, not in November when you are sick of the behavior
- Kids use what works – Sometimes we need to teach them better ways to get what they need.

### Tier 2 at Somersworth HS: Evolution of Targeted Team

- ▶ Identified a team that already focused on at-risk students (Student Intervention Team)
- ▶ Consensus to re-structure the team (membership and procedures)- Winter 2006
- ▶ Training: received formal training and weekly technical support
- ▶ Began using SWIS data to ID students
- ▶ Began using Functional Behavioral Assessment

36

## Team mission and Objectives

- ***The mission of the Targeted Team is to increase the likelihood of positive behavior and academic achievement of students.***
  - The objectives include:
- To work with students at risk for development of chronic behavioral concerns.
- To identify reliable predictors of students behavior.
- To determine likely function of behavior and recommend function based behavior support plans.
- To assist and support teachers, students, and parents in achieving efficient and effective interventions.

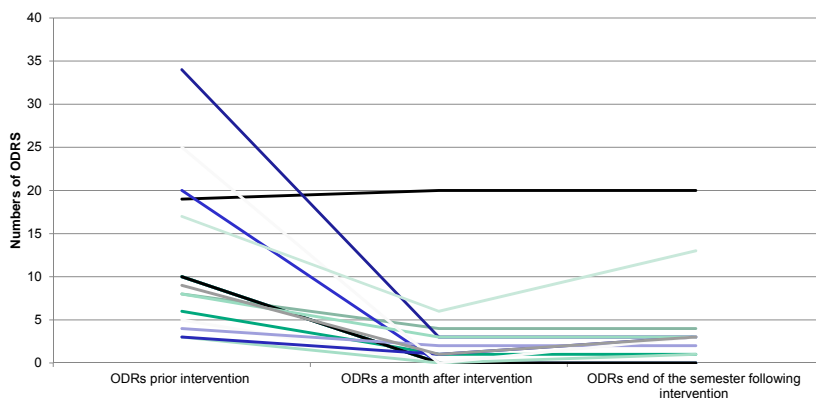
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## Tier 2 Interventions

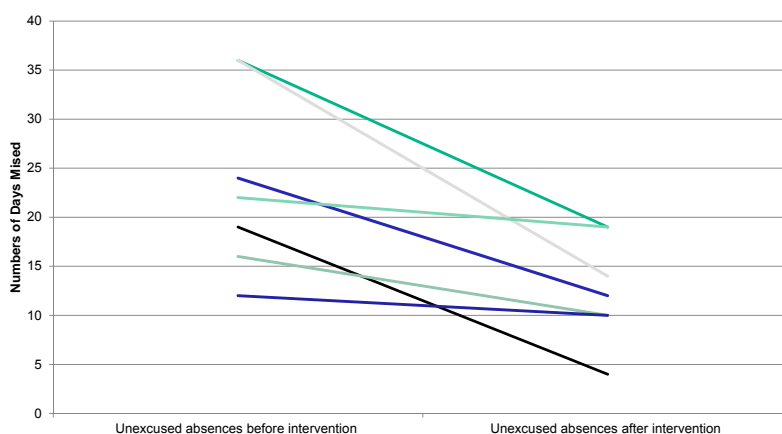
- ▶ Check In Check Out
- ▶ Mentoring
- ▶ Credit recovery
- ▶ Social skills group
- ▶ Home setting involvement
- ▶ Counseling
- ▶ Pass system
- ▶ RENEW
- ▶ Student Leadership Referral.

38

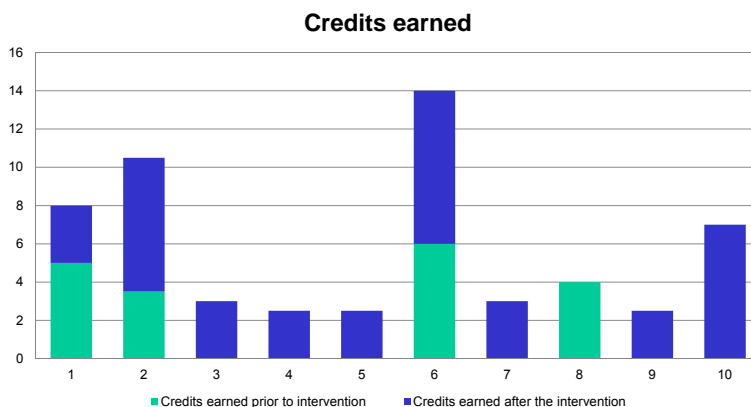
### Somersworth High School Targeted Team Results: Office Discipline Referrals



### Example: Somersworth High School Targeted Team Results: Unexcused Absences



### Example: Somersworth High School Targeted Team Results: Credits Earned

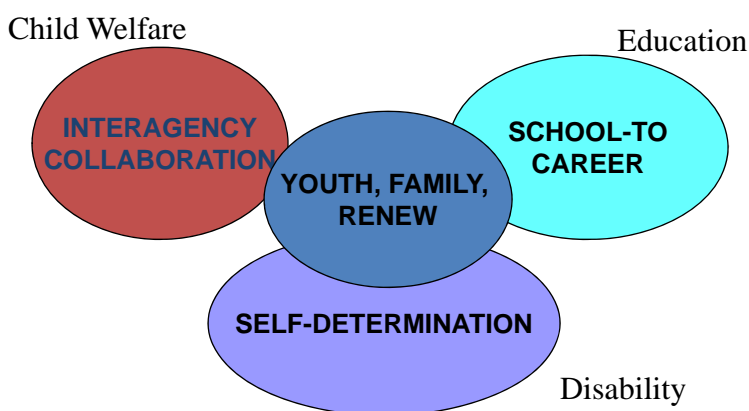


## Tier 3: RENEW

Rehabilitation, Empowerment, Natural supports, Education and Work (RENEW), an intensive individualized school-to-career service for the most at risk students

- APEX II grant provides facilitator and training for mentors
- Goal is to develop individualized, student-directed school-to-career plan for high risk students
- Research Based

## Tier 3 In the High School: RENEW: Conceptual Framework



## RENEW PRINCIPLES

- ▶ Self-Determination
- ▶ Unconditional Care
- ▶ Strengths-Based Supports
- ▶ Flexible Resources
- ▶ Natural Supports-Community Inclusion

### RENEW IS....

- ▶ A flexible, person-centered planning and support service (a developmentally-appropriate wraparound model for adolescents)
- ▶ Driven by the student's expressed needs, interests, and goals
- ▶ A "manualized" practice (Malloy, Drake, Cloutier, & Couture, 2010)

### RENEW IS NOT....

- ▶ A program
- ▶ A classroom or school

### RENEW Goals

- ▶ High School Completion
- ▶ Employment
- ▶ Post-secondary Education
- ▶ Community Integration

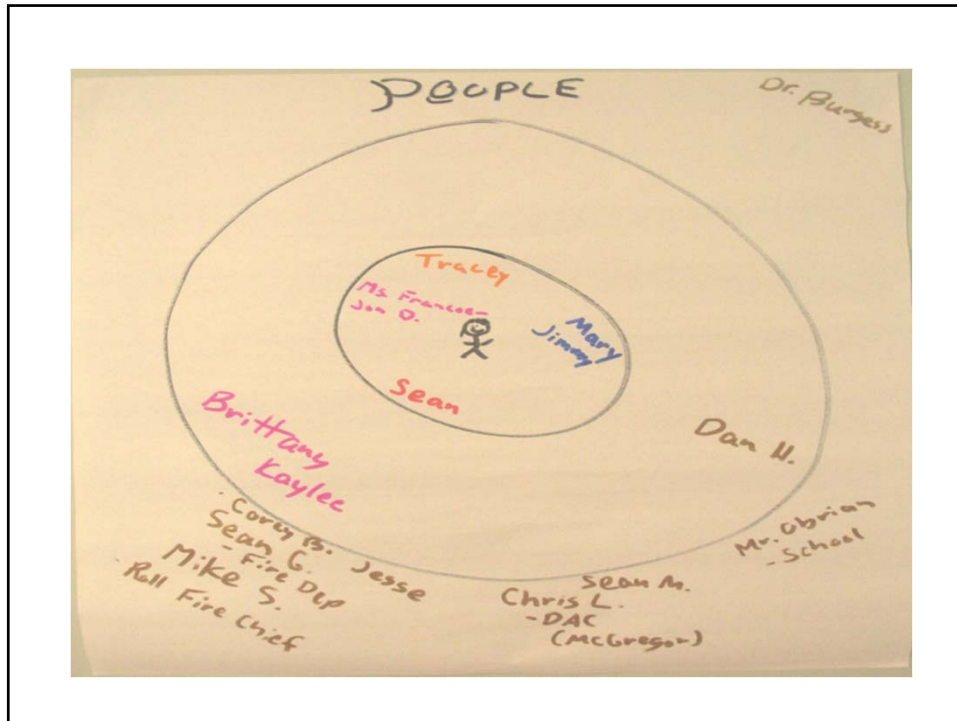
## RENEW Strategies

1. Person Centered Planning
2. Individualized Team Development and Wraparound services
3. Braided Funding (Individualized Resource Development)
4. Flexible Education Programming
5. Individualized School-to-Career planning
6. Naturally supported employment
7. Mentoring
8. Sustainable Community Connections

47







College

Meet with Admissions

Financial Aid

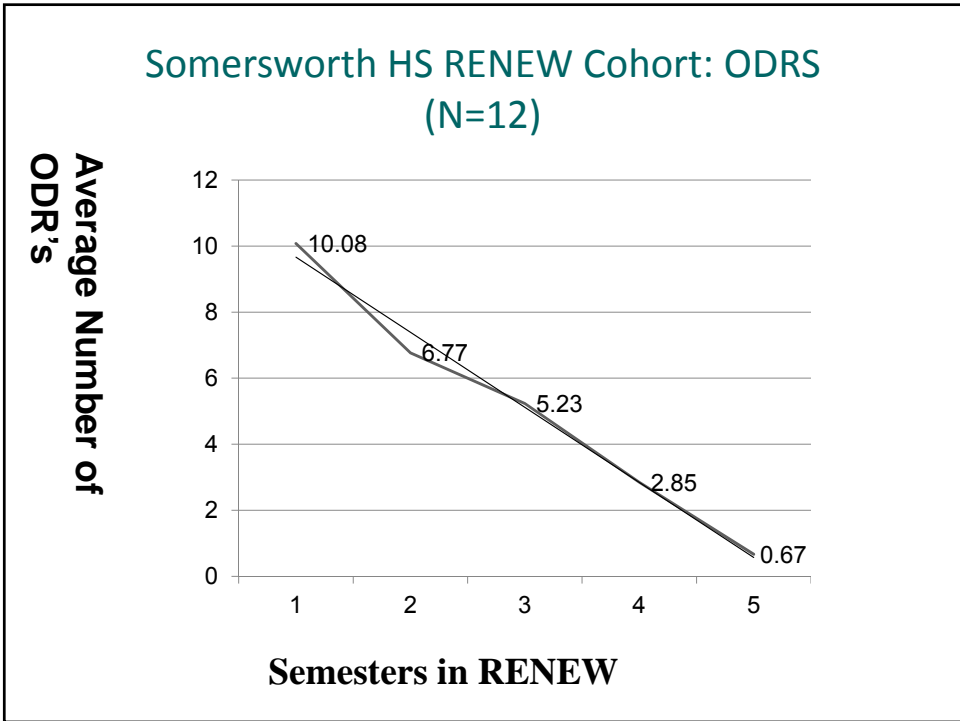
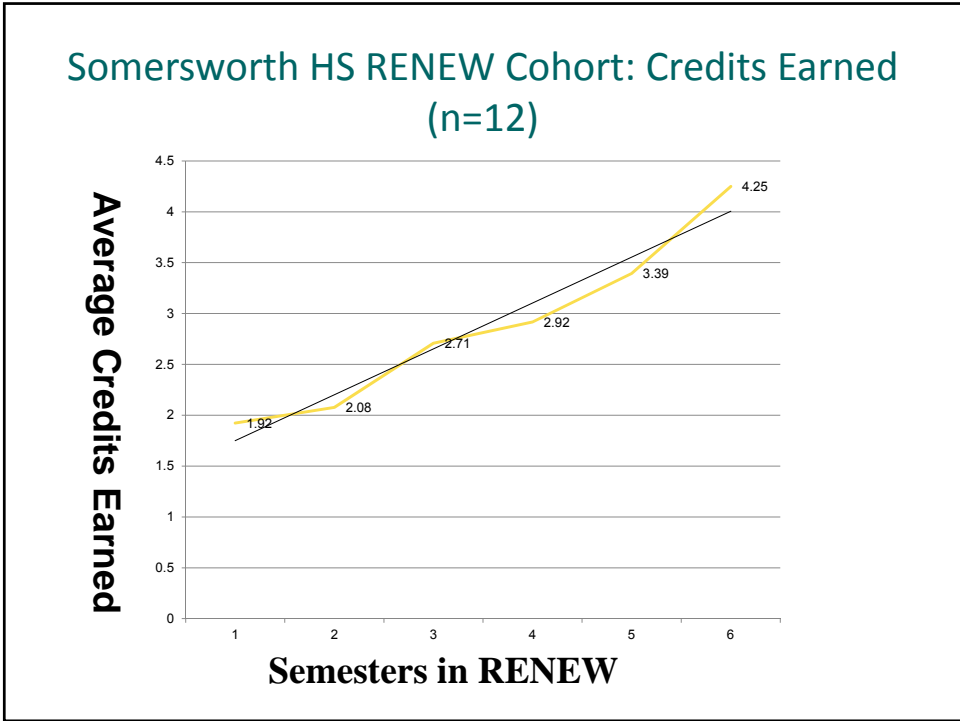
Transportation to college

Job to pay for college

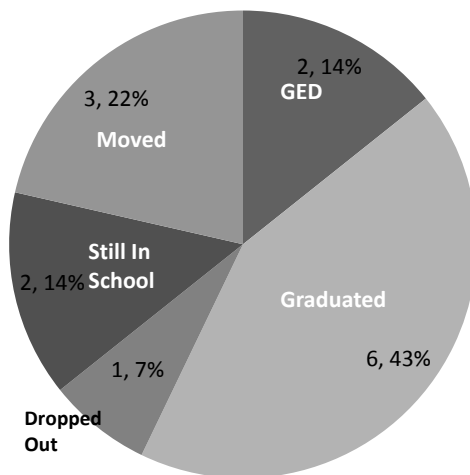
- Financial Plan
- Finding Cost for College

Grants & Scholarship

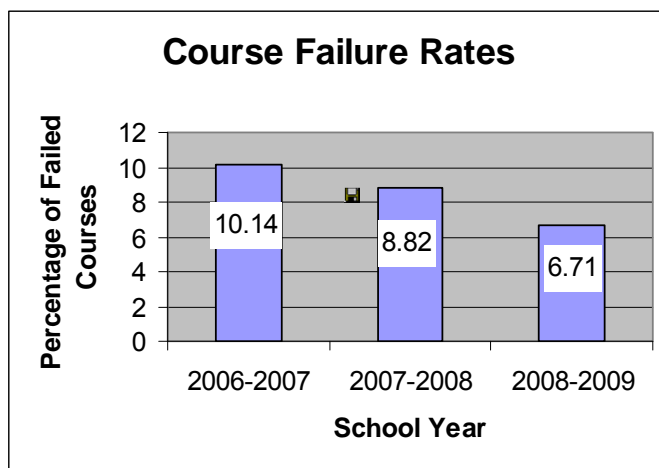
- learn about careers in crim

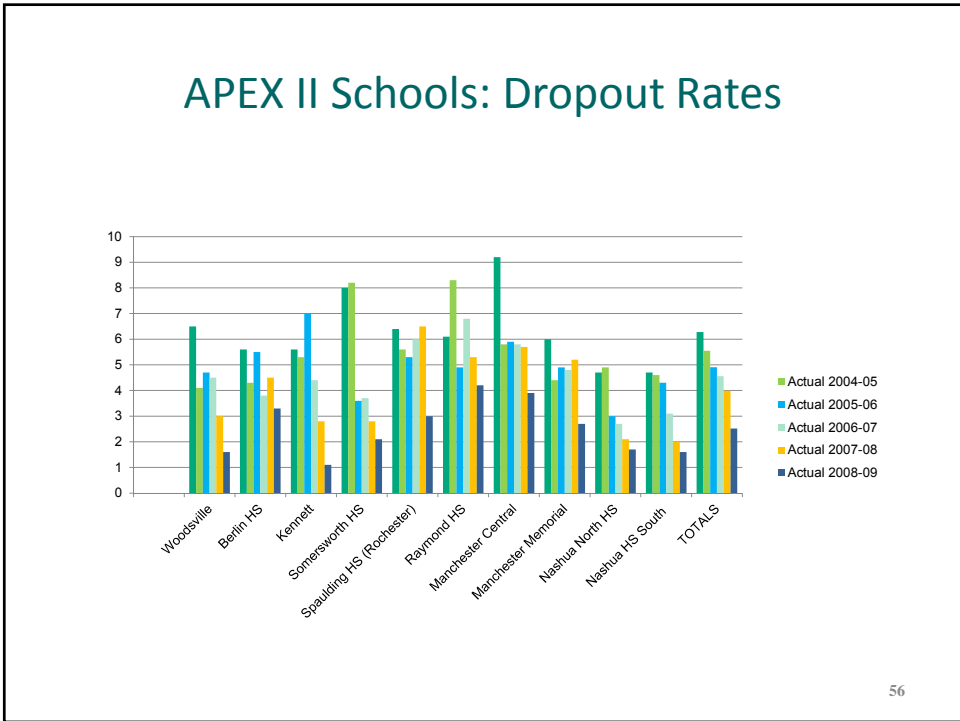
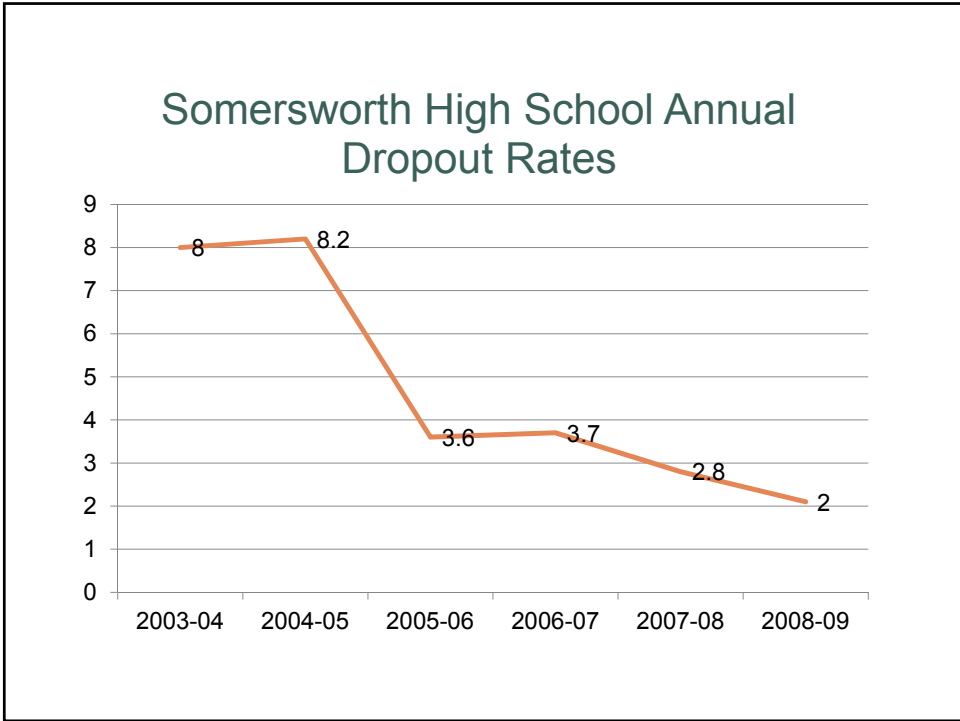


### RENEW Cohort: Graduation Rates: (n=14)

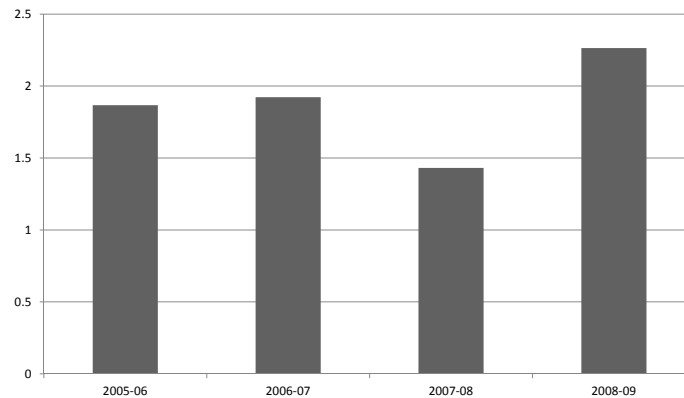


### Somersworth HS: Academic Impact





## APEX II High Schools ODRS/Student Population



## Why was there an impact?

- Implementation was uneven, but most schools started to:
  - Use data
  - Critically review their discipline systems, rules, response, and services
  - Streamlined their rules
  - Partner with students and parents
  - Improve communication

VIDEO

Feedback from the teachers implementing BSP  
from the Targeted team

Was the plan easy to follow? If not, what are some of  
the areas that you thought needed to change?

- They have become easier to follow. There are often different formats depending who wrote it- having one format would make them easier to follow
- Yes, everything was very straightforward. The plan listed the students strengths and weaknesses and also gave advice on how to help the student be successful.

### Were the outcomes of the plan achieved?

- Yes for most, 5/6 of the plans have lead to improvement and the outcomes have been achieved, about 70% of students meet some level of success, 30% not showing much improvement. Might be good to coordinate plans with IEPs, have someone from targeted team check in on how the plans are being implemented.
- Sometimes yes and other times no. I think that unless teachers are continually reminded of the goals of the targeted students in their classrooms that them reaching their goals can become lost in all of the other "paper work"
- Yes, I was successful last year with a certain student in integrated math 2. I followed the plan and used the advice and it worked great! I think the student would have dropped out otherwise!

### What advice you would give to other teachers in their efforts to implement a BSP?

- The process is slow and does not work for all students. Changes sometimes don't hold but with effort, students can make progress it has been extremely helpful for many students. Don't get discouraged and talk to other teachers who have used the process. Don't be afraid to tell a TT member and ask for further
- Don't resist, ask to talk to teachers who have used the plans, they are really helpful for lots of students and some of the recommendations can be generalized to other students.

## RENEW Mentor/Teacher:

“we try to help or assist other people we would have helped ourselves, so that’s probably one my biggest things ...the growth that I have achieved ...what I could be doing as... a better teacher”

“...now I realize that even though it’s a reading lesson ...actually (it) would be a brick you add to this wall or to this building --- that’s a that’s a very nice feeling you know --- small things- you know do (make) a big difference”

## Lessons Learned

- 7 out of the 10 schools attempted to implement schoolwide PBIS- it is a comprehensive systems change model that requires the full support of leadership and faculty
- The change/transformation happens over years and is incremental (4-5 years)
- High school data must include attendance, progress reports and academic monitoring
- PBIS creates “durable change”



## Lessons Learned (cont.)

- Students are key stakeholders and need to be involved in all phases of implementation
- Academic and behavioral needs are highly intertwined at the high school level
- There needs to be an emphasis on post-high school goals and career development
- Emphasis must be on efficiency and effectiveness- there are numerous specialized programs and services at the high school level

## Going Forward

- RTI
- High School Reform and Redesign

## Resources

- [iod.unh.edu](http://iod.unh.edu)
  - APEX project page
- [pbis.org](http://pbis.org) (high school pages)
- National High School Center
- National Dropout Prevention Center
  - <http://www.dropoutprevention.org/publications/effective-strategies-series>

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