



Norfolk Public Schools
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Norfolk Public Schools

Sharing Results of the Alternative School & Services Opportunity Review

JANUARY 4, 2017



**DISTRICT
MANAGEMENT
COUNCIL**

Agenda

Project Overview and Methodology

Preliminary Highlights for Discussion

Next Steps

Q & A

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Project Overview and Methodology

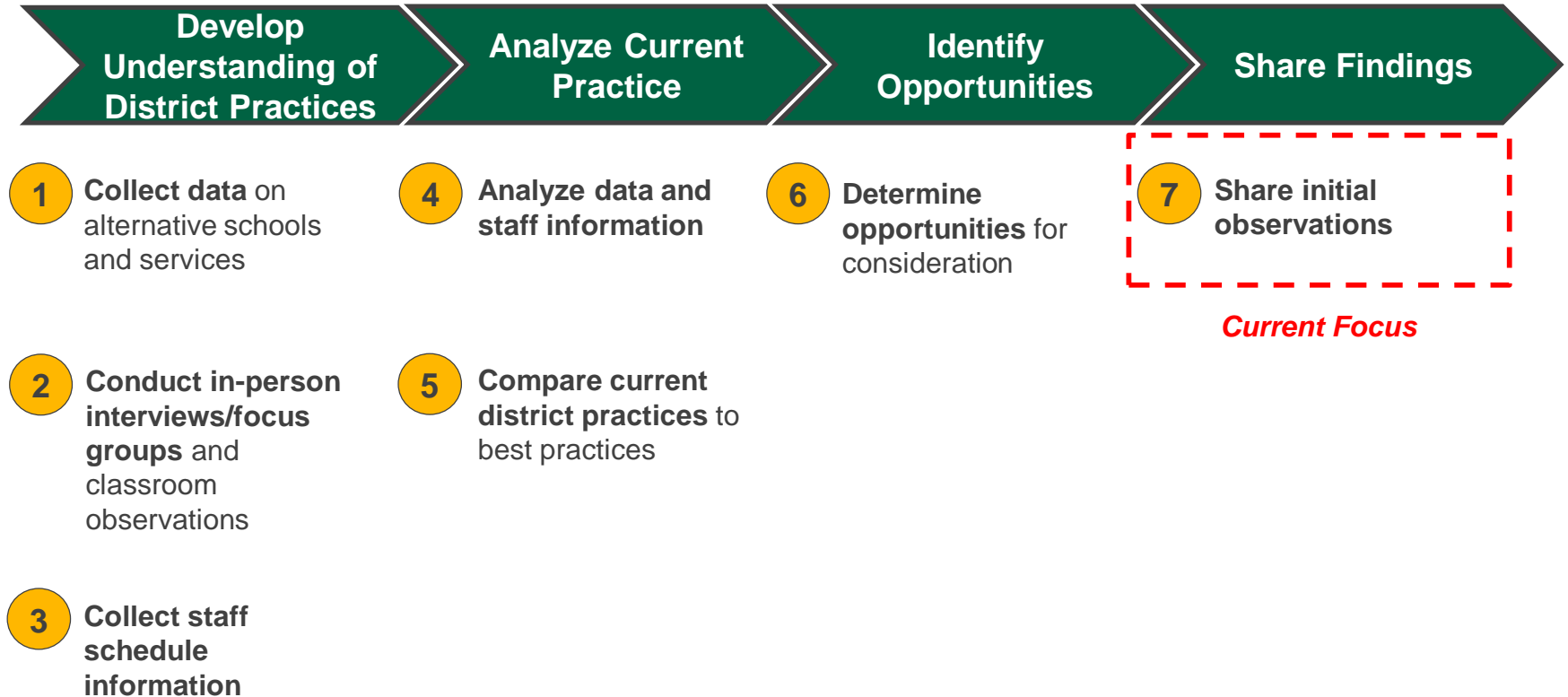
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Over the past few months, extensive data has been collected to inform the review and identify opportunities for the district.

Alternative School & Services Opportunity Review



The diagnostic combined significant qualitative evidence and robust data analysis to build understanding of current service delivery models.

Diagnostic Methodology

Qualitative Evidence

- Interviews with district leaders
- Focus groups with representatives from staff roles that work with students
- Classroom observations

Data Analysis

- Discipline data
- Financial data
- Program-related data
- Staffing data
- Staff schedules shared through dmPlanning

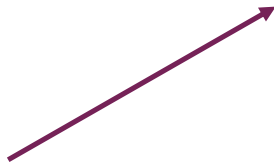
Key Findings:

Highest leverage opportunities

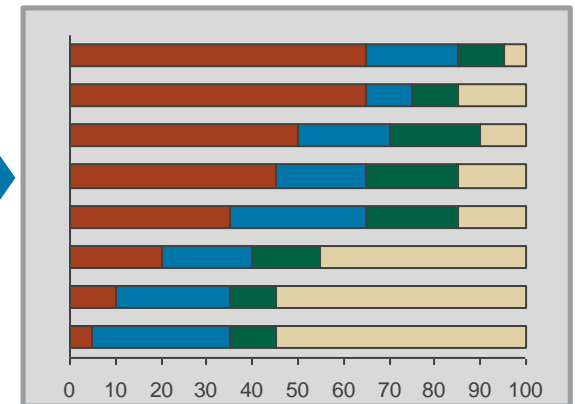
Through DMC's web-based technology system, schedules for a typical week were collected from staff members to understand how students are supported.

Our Methodology – Staff Schedule Sharing

1. Staff entered their typical weekly schedule into the web-based technology tool



2. DMC analyzed schedules, highlights trends, and compares with best practice



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Norfolk Public Schools has many areas of strength to build on.

Commendations

1 The district's staff are passionate and committed to helping students succeed.

2 The district has dedicated programming to support students in alternative setting learning environments.

3 The district has established a foundation to begin meeting the behavioral and social-emotional needs of its students.

4 The district has placed a strong emphasis on anti-bullying.

5 The district has a well-respected teacher development program with a focus on using data for progress monitoring and improving instructional practices.

6 The district has a strong set of community partnerships.

A small number of high-potential, high-impact opportunities for consideration have been identified.

Opportunities for Consideration

- 1** Consider building upon the current Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework to provide a continuum of social-emotional and behavioral supports for students in order to impact the flow of students needing alternative placements.
- 2** Consider refining the current alternative placement programs available at the secondary level to be more tailored to meet the needs of individual students.
- 3** Consider more clearly articulating a process for students entering and transitioning out of alternative placements to maximize the chances for student success.

Opportunities for Consideration

1

Consider building upon the current Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework to provide a continuum of social-emotional and behavioral supports for students in order to impact the flow of students needing alternative placements.

2

Consider refining the current alternative placement programs available at the secondary level to be more tailored to meet the needs of individual students.

3

Consider more clearly articulating a process for students entering and transitioning out of alternative placements to maximize the chances for student success.

A clear and broadly communicated framework and process for PBIS is the first step to ensuring successful implementation across the district.

Benefits to a District-wide Approach to PBIS

1

PBIS

A clearly defined and aligned system may allow for:

- ✓ Prevention of escalation of behavior for some students
- ✓ A more equitable experience for students across the district
- ✓ Central office to better support schools with guidance and training
- ✓ Greater transparency into staffing and resource needs across buildings

An articulation of the district-wide PBIS model should also include the more detailed aspects of the framework.

Staff shared that the district has great variation across schools in the tiers of PBIS services offered to students.

PBIS Services Offered at Each Tier of Support

Implementation has not been effective past Tier 1 supports.

PBIS is superficially implemented; the hard supports with students are not implemented. We know check-in/check-out works, but we don't do that well anymore.

There are not always dedicated staff available to deliver behavioral interventions, aside from therapeutic services from community partners. School counselors do everything related to PBIS.



The PBIS implementation in alternative schools varies and, although well-defined in some cases, does not build off the district's PBIS framework.

PBIS Implementations in Alternative Schools

PBIS Framework

Tertiary Prevention

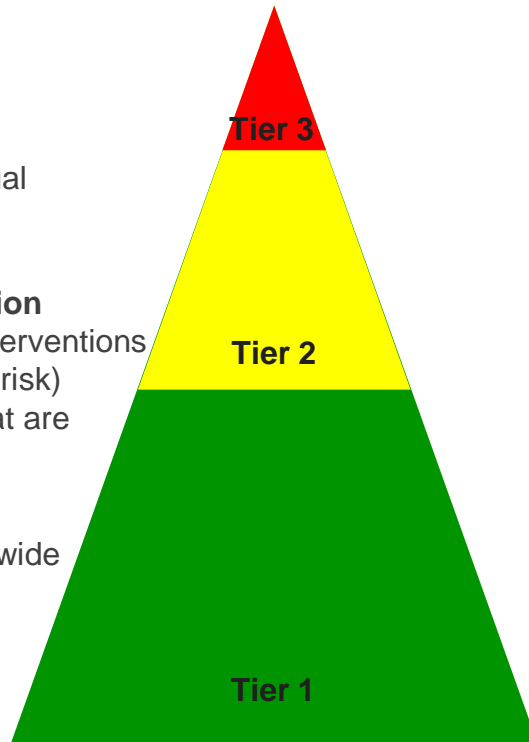
- Intensive, individual interventions

Secondary Prevention

- Targeted group interventions
- Some children (at risk)
- Behavior plans that are monitored daily

Primary Prevention

- Proactive, system-wide interventions
- All children



Bridgescape Learning Academy

Social-emotional supports offered, such as the advisory period and group or individual counseling, are not sufficient to support behavioral change.



Madison Alternative Center

The delivery of Tier 2 and 3 services need more consistency, given the limited number of specialized staff dedicated to providing behavioral intervention to students.

Perhaps there should be a more intensive and purposeful behavior management system in place at Madison, instead of or in addition to the PBIS model.

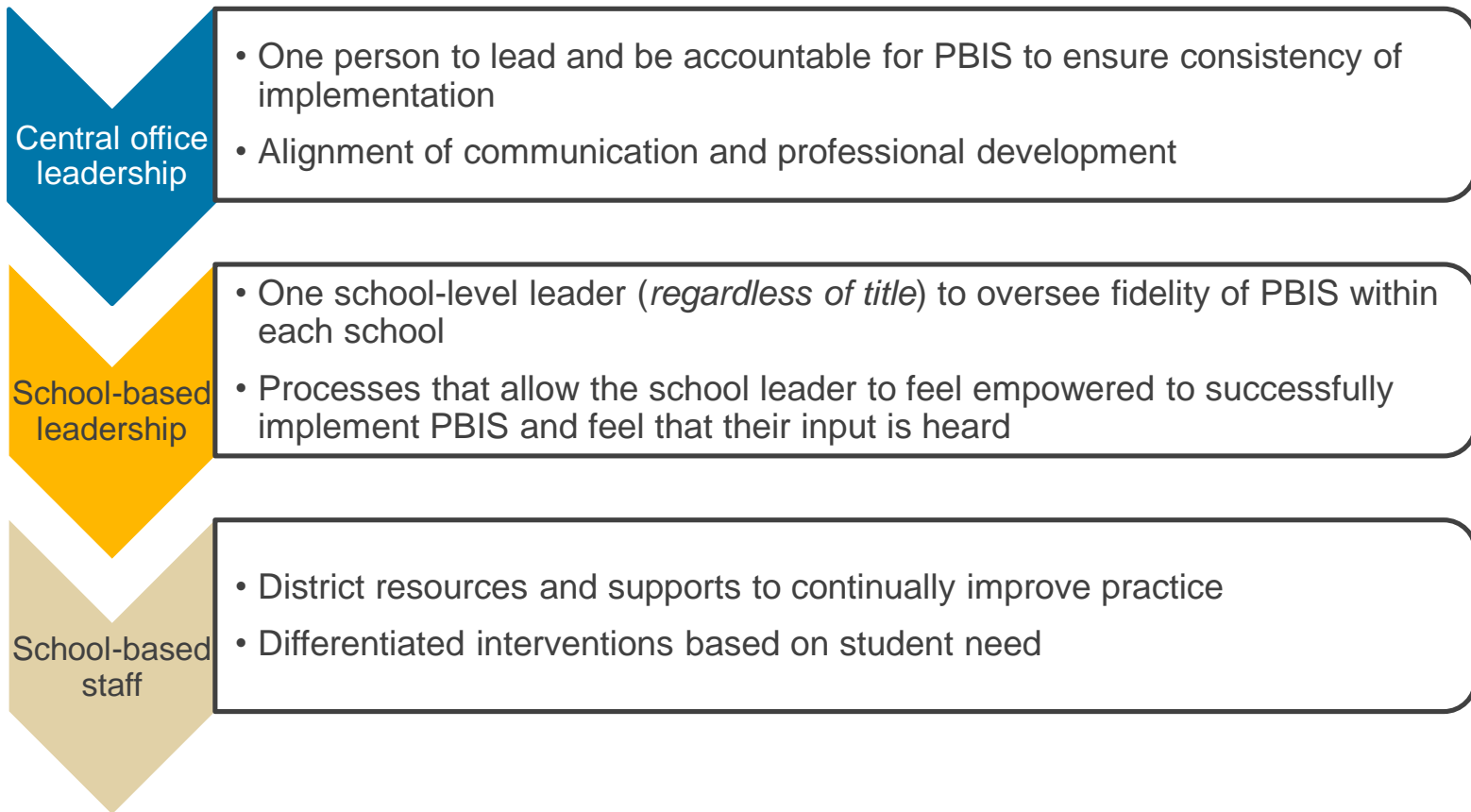


Finally, the district could continue to refine PBIS roles and responsibilities, including having one individual with ownership at the school level.

PBIS Roles and Responsibilities

1

PBIS



In order to impact the flow of students needing alternative placements, the district should consider a few key steps.

Key Steps For Building on the Current PBIS Framework

1

PBIS

- 1 Refine the district's vision related to the role of PBIS and its place within the district's overall system of student supports.
- 2 Refine Tier 2 and Tier 3 social-emotional and behavioral interventions and supports available in schools.
- 3 Clarify PBIS roles and responsibilities.
- 4 Communicate the district vision, framework, processes, and roles and responsibilities that will be used district-wide and establish feedback mechanisms.

Opportunities for Consideration

- 1** Consider building upon the current Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework to provide a continuum of social-emotional and behavioral supports for students in order to impact the flow of students needing alternative placements.
- 2** Consider refining the current alternative placement programs available at the secondary level to be more tailored to meet the needs of individual students.
- 3** Consider more clearly articulating a process for students entering and transitioning out of alternative placements to maximize the chances for student success.

The current alternative placement programs could be refined in several ways.

Opportunities for Consideration

2 Consider refining the current alternative placement programs available at the secondary level to be more tailored to meet the needs of individual students.

a. The Madison Alternative Center has students with a very diverse set of social-emotional/behavior needs and is not always equipped to meet these needs.

b. The Madison Alternative Center has students with a diverse set of academic needs and does not consistently offer rigorous instruction from a content-strong teacher for all levels of need.

c. The facilities at the Madison Alternative Center are perceived as being less than adequate.

d. The Bridgescape Learning Academy could provide more direct instruction and support to students.

Not all students are able to survive and thrive in a traditional school setting.

Traditional vs. Alternative School Settings

2 ALT. PROGRAMS

Traditional School Setting



Alternative School Settings

Students need:

- More support due to significant discipline and/or criminal infractions
- More intensive social, emotional, and/or behavioral supports
- A more structured setting
- A more personalized, smaller setting

Madison Alternative Center has students with a diverse set of social-emotional/behavior needs and is not always equipped to meet these needs.

Current Supports Available vs. Not Available

2a. ALT. PROGRAMS

Supports Currently Available

- Behaviorist
- School Counselor
- Part-time Non-Licensed Social Worker
- Outside Agency Therapeutic Counseling

Necessary Supports

- Full-time Licensed Social Worker
- School Psychologist
- School Nurse

Many staff members expressed a desire for more social, emotional, and/or behavioral supports at Madison Alternative Center.

Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Supports at Madison

2a. ALT. PROGRAMS

Not all students are returned to their home school with their social-emotional needs met.

We have limited training on behavior or mental health trauma support.

We need more programming for supporting students' social-emotional needs and the ability to interface with families.



The social, emotional, and behavioral support resources available often end up spending their time on split or other responsibilities.

Activity Breakdown by Time Behavior Specialist

Activity	% of time spent
<i>Time with students</i>	
Counseling/crisis intervention	32%
Total time with students	32%
<i>Other time supporting students</i>	
Parent communication (email, phone, in-person)	6%
Planning/materials preparation	5%
Paperwork	4%
Data collection	3%
Attend meeting (WrapSAT)	3%
Student observation	1%
Total other time supporting students	22%
<i>Other responsibilities</i>	
Assigned school duties (e.g. bus duty, lunch duty, etc.)	17%
Collaboration with colleagues (email, phone, in-person)	13%
Attend meeting (other than IEP or WrapSAT)	7%
Personal lunch	7%
Underreported time	2%
Total other responsibilities	46%

On average, slightly less than a third of the behavior specialist's time is spent working directly with students

Similar to the behavior specialist, the school counselor is only able to spend a small portion of their week working directly with students.

Activity Breakdown by Time

School Counselor

Activity	% of time spent
<i>Time with students</i>	
Counseling/crisis intervention	19%
Total time with students	19%
<i>Other time supporting students</i>	
Student observation	13%
Paperwork	6%
Parent communication (email, phone, in-person)	3%
Planning/materials preparation	3%
Agency coordination of services and supports	2%
Attend meeting (WrapSAT)	2%
Total other time supporting students	29%
<i>Other responsibilities</i>	
Assigned school duties (e.g. bus duty, lunch duty, etc.)	17%
Collaboration with colleagues (email, phone, in-person)	14%
Attend meeting (other than IEP or WrapSAT)	6%
Personal lunch	5%
Underreported time	10%
Total other responsibilities	52%

Similar to the behavior specialist, 17% of the school counselor's time is spent on assigned school duties

There is a disconnect between perceived academic progress while at Madison and the academic status of students upon their return to their home school.

Madison vs. Home School Perceptions

2b. ALT. PROGRAMS



Perceptions Shared from Madison

- We use the same curriculum and pacing guides as the rest of the district.
- There are efforts made to coordinate with the home school if a student has specific course work (e.g., enrolled in AP course).
- While at Madison, students often see an improvement in their grades and self-esteem.



Perceptions Shared from Home School

- The majority of students return to their home school further behind their peers.
- Many students who return to their home school struggle to pass the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOLs).
- Some students noted that they like attending Madison because it is much “easier” compared to their home school.

Facilities are perceived as being less than adequate, which raises a safety concern and sends the wrong message to students and parents.

Perception of Facilities at Madison

2c. ALT. PROGRAMS



Students at Bridgescape Learning Academy often need more direct instruction and support.

Instruction at Bridgescape Learning Academy

Current Bridgescape Model

- The primary model for instruction is a blended learning approach.
- Students spend the majority of their time working independently through computer-based courses and teachers provide direct instruction one period per day.



Challenges

- Staff members shared that often students struggle to pass their SOLs and question whether students are truly learning the standards from the online courses.



Observation

More targeted and direct instruction from content strong teachers is needed to supplement learning from online courses.

To build upon and expand the current alternative placement options, the district may consider a few key steps.

Further Considerations

2

ALT. PROGRAMS

- 1 Consider developing opportunities to serve students in smaller alternative educational settings that are more tailored to their specific needs, rather than a one size fits all alternative setting.
- 2 Expand social-emotional supports and refine responsibilities of current social-emotional staff at Madison Alternative Center.
- 3 Provide coaching support to core classroom teachers in alternative learning settings.
- 4 Refine the current service delivery model at Bridgescape Learning Academy to better meet the academic needs of students.

Opportunities for Consideration

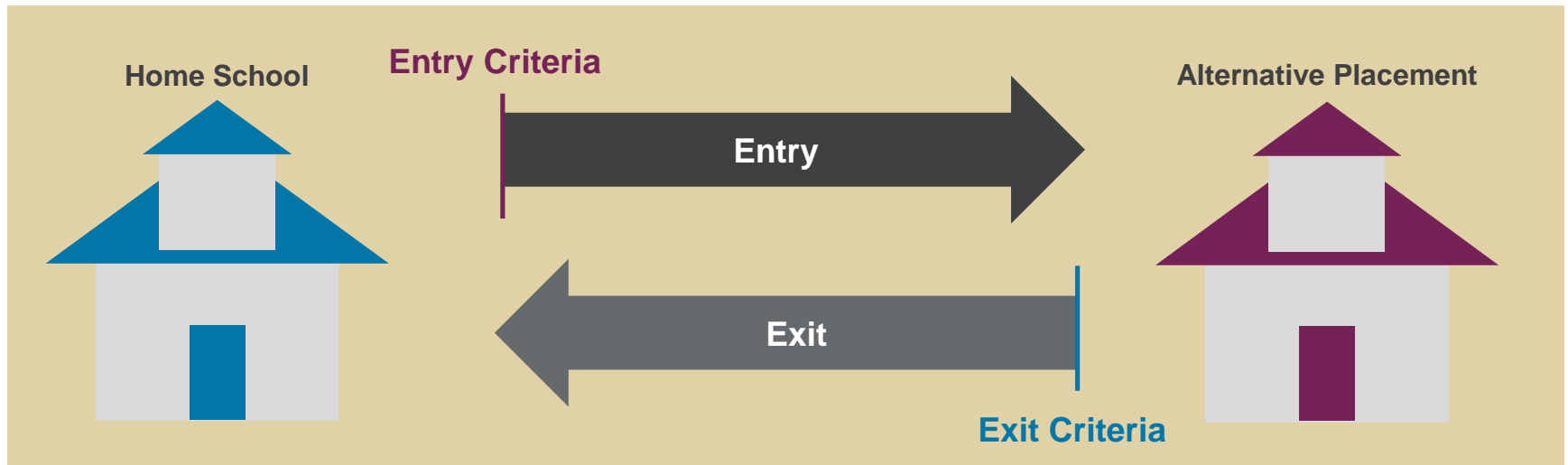
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Well-defined entry and exit criteria enable a school district to provide services to students both equitably and effectively.

Processes to Provide Services to Students

3 PROCESS

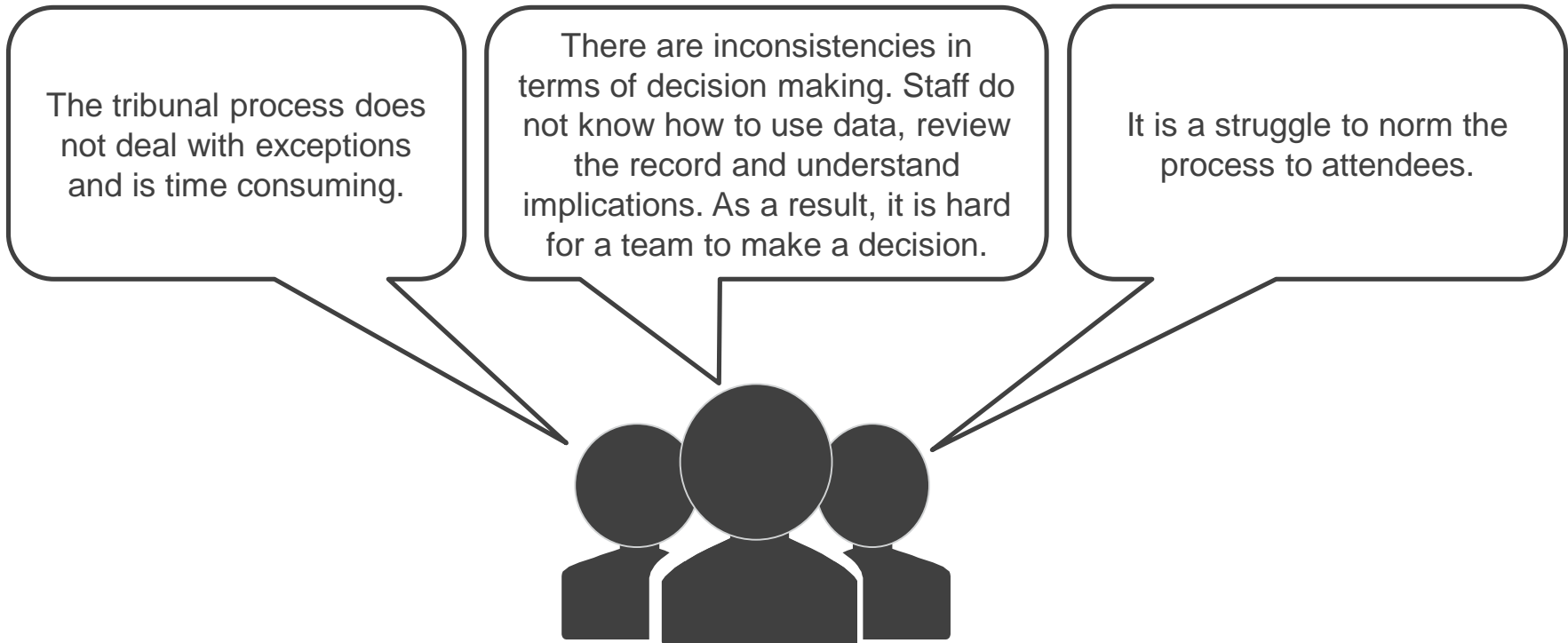
Process for Alternative Placement Services



Determines if services provided to students are equitable and effective

The entry process for alternative placement, called the Tribunal Hearing, is not always well understood or adhered to by staff.

Entry Process for Alternative Placement



Furthermore, sometimes the entry process for alternative placement does not meet the needs of building leaders.

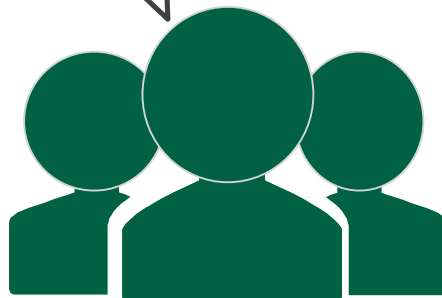
Entry Process for Alternative Placement (Continued)



We should have more discretion in deciding on the outcome of the tribunal hearing. We don't always agree with the decision that is made. We know the students best.



Schools believe a referral automatically means a student will be placed into an alternative setting. That isn't always true.



- There may be multiple issues related to:



Changes to in-school suspension in the district may play a strong role in the reliance on the Tribunal Hearing by school leaders.

Changes to In-School Suspension



Data for discipline in the district further validates that there is no in-between support for students.

Discipline Information

Norfolk Public Schools, SY2015-16



	Incidents	%
Short-term, Out-of-School Suspensions	10,509	97%
Long-term Suspensions (>10 Days)	211	2%
Long-term Suspensions with Special Conditions	71	1%
Expulsions	3	<1%
Total	10,794	100%



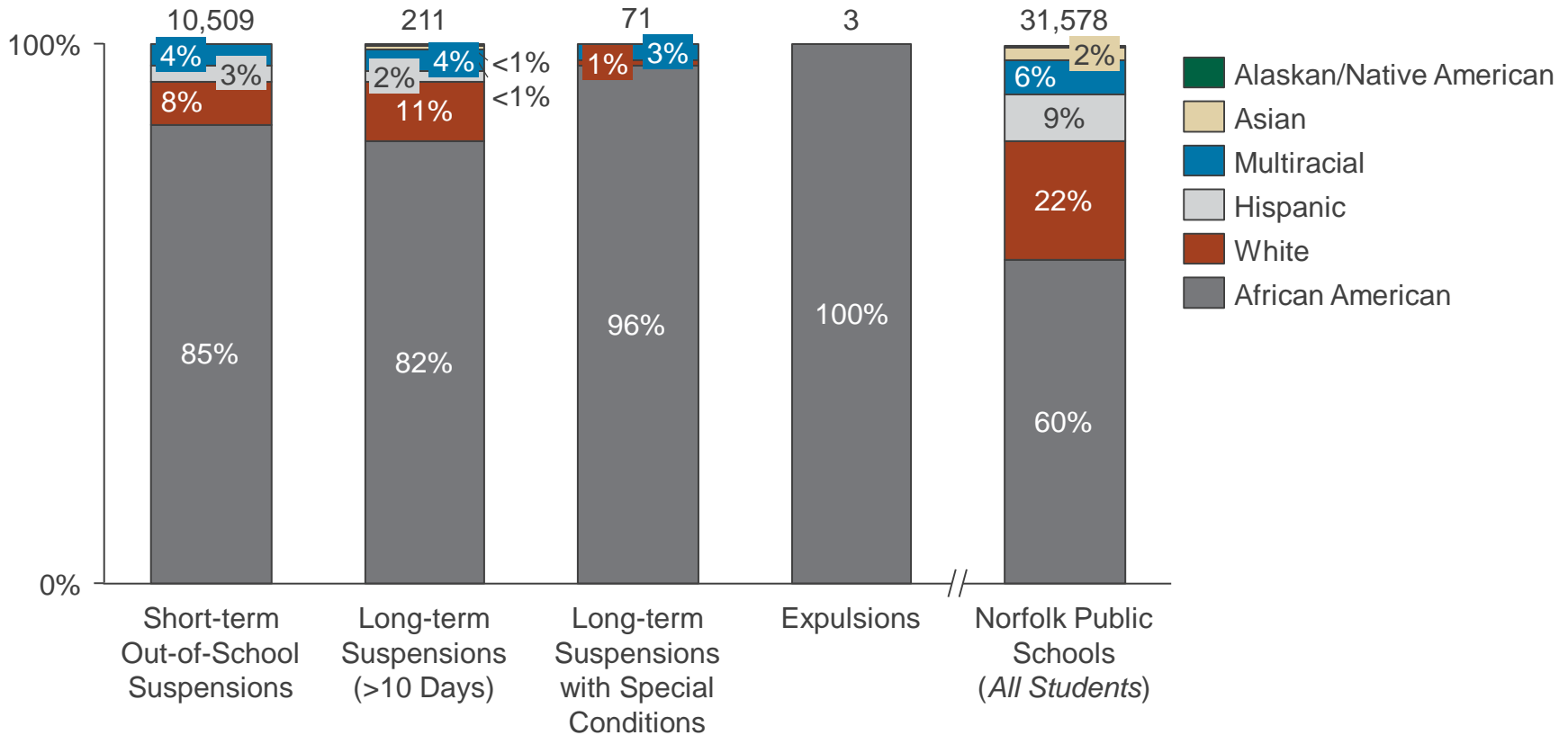
To reduce incidents, the district may want to:

- Institute a step before out-of-school suspension
- Expand and standardize behavioral supports and services for students in Tiers 2 and 3

- Short-term, out-of-school suspensions comprised 97% of incidents for SY2015-16.

Expanding & standardizing behavioral supports may help address concerns regarding African-American students being disciplined at a higher rate.

Discipline Information by Subgroup Norfolk Public Schools, SY2015-16



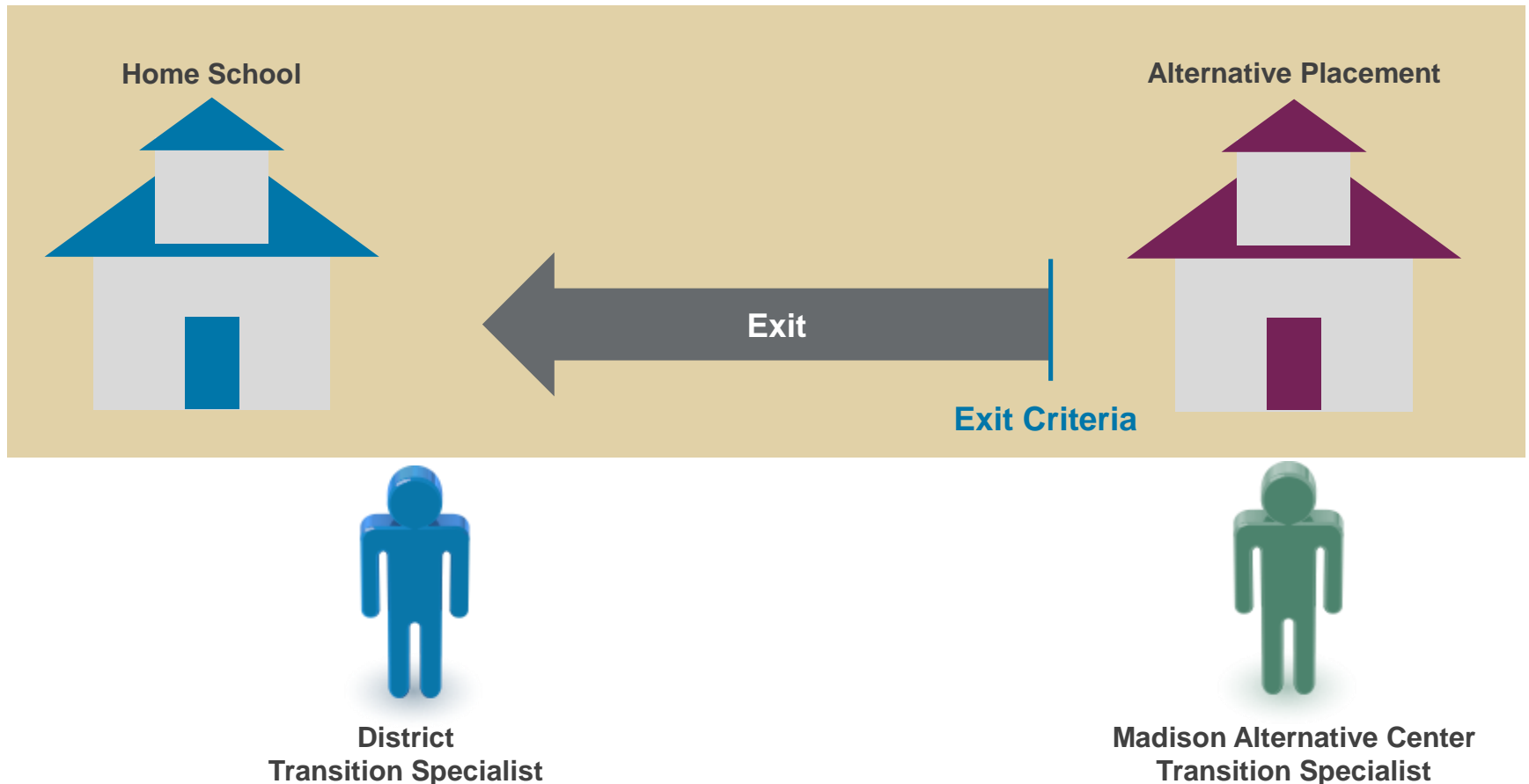
African-American students are disciplined at a higher rate than other student subgroups.

The district has two transition specialists dedicated to creating plans for students' return to their home schools.

Roles Dedicated to Transition from Alternative Placement



Process for Alternative Placement Services



Staff also shared different perspectives regarding what is required of students prior to transitioning back to their home school.

Perspectives on Clear Exit Criteria



Madison Alternative Center

Reported standards needing to be met prior to transition:

- ✓ Behavior standards
- ✓ Attendance standards
- ✓ Academic standards



Home Schools

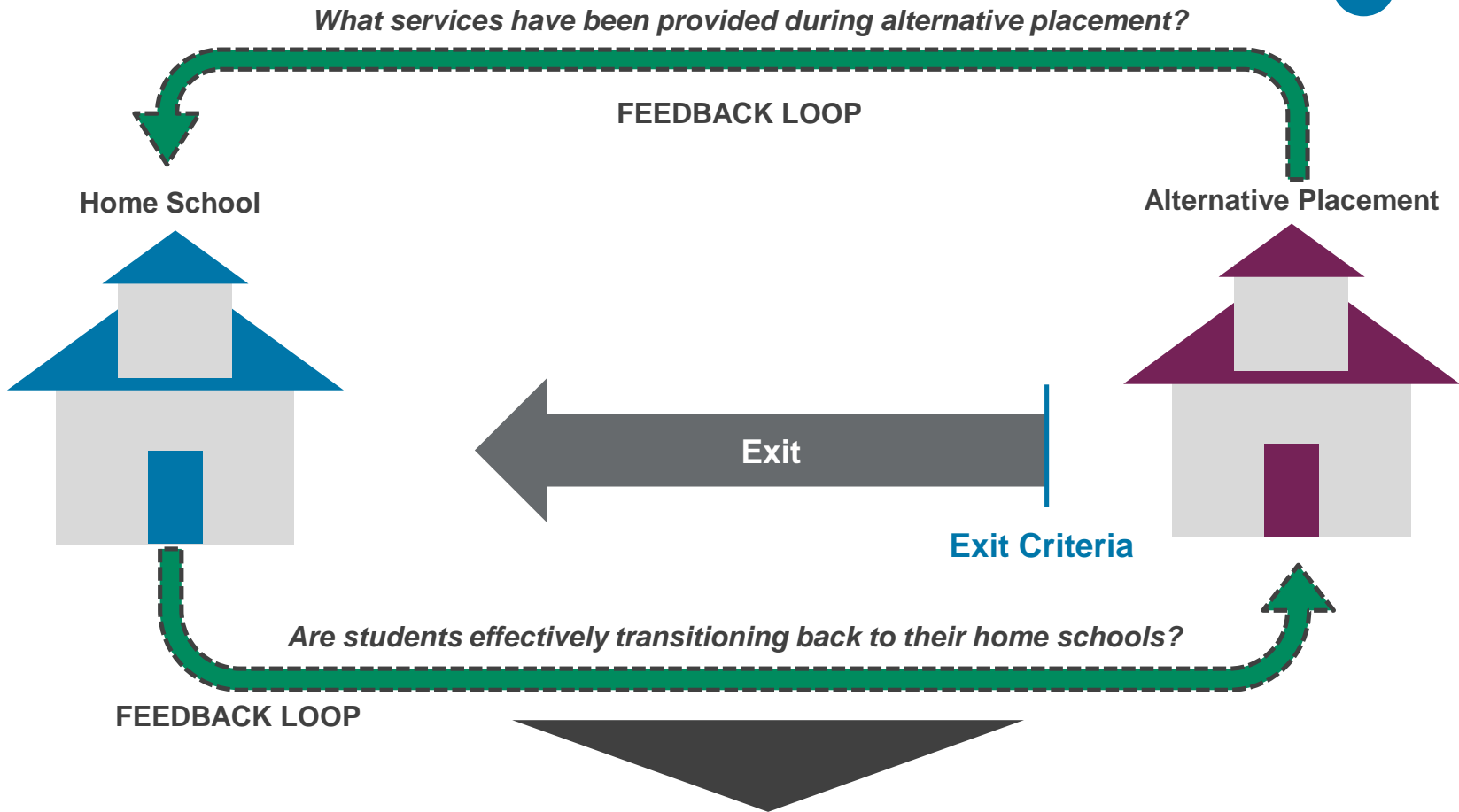
Reported being unsure if standards are met prior to transition:

- ✗ Social-emotional needs met
- ✗ Attendance in alternative program
- ✗ Rigorous academic instruction

Without clear exit criteria, a high percentage of students may end up having additional incidents and/or end up returning to alternative placement.

However, staff mentioned that communication is often missing in transitioning students back to the home school and after transition.

Feedback After Transition Back to Home School

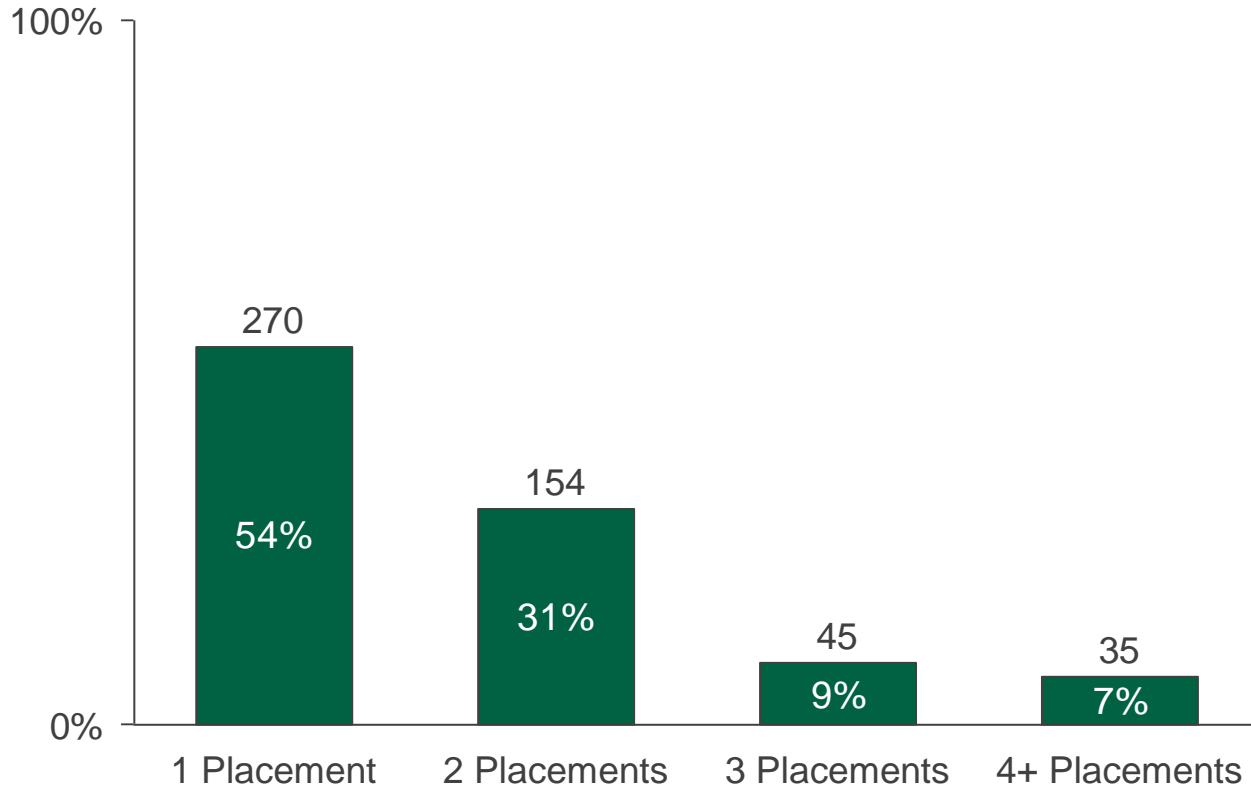


Effective feedback mechanisms may help ensure students do not re-enter into alternative placement.

Data from school year 2015-16 shows that many students are in fact returning to alternative placement.

Repeat Alternative Placement for Students

In-District & Tidewater Regional Alternative Educational Program, SY2015-16



• Clear exit / transition criteria may help reduce the overall number of students in alternative placement

• 46% of students placed in an alternative setting were on their second or more placement.

In order to improve processes for entry into and transition from alternative placement, the district should consider a few key steps.

Key Steps For Processes Into and Out of Alternative Placement

3

PROCESS

- 1 Clarify Norfolk Public Schools' alternative program entry criteria for specific types of alternative settings and define a process for establishing exit criteria based on each students' needs.
- 2 Redesign the Tribunal Hearing and transition processes to facilitate the above.
- 3 Implement the redesigned process, while ensuring the appropriate training and communication for staff.

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Below are two immediate next steps for consideration.

Next Steps

- 1. Analyze categories of student need, identify services and supports for each type of student need and identify entry and exit criteria.**
- 2. Identify and convene a committee to map out a range of Tier 2 and Tier 3 social, emotional, and behavioral interventions that should be consistently available at all schools as a step prior to alternative school placement.**

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The District Management Council



If you have any comments or questions about the contents of this document, please contact The District Management Council:

- **Tel:** (877) DMC-3500
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- **Fax:** (617) 491-5266
- **Web:** dmcouncil.org
- **Mail:** 133 Federal Street, Boston, MA 02110

APPENDIX

DMC has synthesized many years of education research into the best practices.

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General:

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DMC has synthesized many years of education research into the best practices.

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DMC has synthesized many years of education research into the best practices (continued).

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DMC has synthesized many years of education research into the best practices (continued).

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DMC has synthesized many years of education research into the best practices (continued).

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DMC has synthesized many years of education research into the best practices (continued).

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