Section 1: Initial Steps

School Climate Team

Identify members of a School Climate Team (consider a representative selection of members). The team meets initially to examine equity concerns and data and to develop the Schoolwide Positive Behavior Plan. The team should then meet monthly (minimum quarterly) to assess the effectiveness of the SWPBP on an ongoing basis.

Valerie Adelung, Matt Biedermann, Lori Brewer, Zachary Chandler, Joe Cypressi, Paul Diem, Tom Dissinger, Andrew Freeburger, Allyson Haley, Bill Johnstone, Mike Loverde, Rebecca Mlinek, Alastair Palmer, Maria Royals, Wendy Snyder, Lori Turner, Alison Becker, Tim Arrington, Jessica Duhala, Kat Fleshman, Christina Stetler-Rodriguez,

Equity Lens

Through an equity lens, identify what the data indicate about the social-emotional needs of students and the support provided by staff members relative to disproportionality between student groups, especially for African Americans or students receiving special education. Also consider the school’s population with regard to ELL, Latinx, and/or other student groups. (Information may be from School Data Story)

At Carver Center, our 2021-2022 September 30th enrollment indicates that we have 1003 students, and our demographics are as follows: 37.5% Black/African American, 43.1% White, 6.4% Hispanic, 6.9% Asian, 0.6% American Indian, 0.4% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (56.9% Students of Color). The proportion of students eligible for receipt of special services are as follows 0.1% English Learner, 19.46% Free and Reduced Meals, and 2.29% Special Education. The overall enrollment count has increased since 2017-2018.

Carver Center’s suspension rate peaked in 2009-2010 with 6% of the students being suspended at least one day. Males were the majority of the suspensions (11.59%) even though females were the majority of the school (64.75%). African American males composed 20.4% of the suspensions and African American females composed 8.2% of the suspensions. Through a proactive and preventative approach based upon recognition and analysis of individual student’s adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and their social emotional support needs, the number of suspensions has steadily decreased (2010-2011 5.1%; 2011-2012 3.9%; 2012-2013 1.5%; 2013-2014 1.7%; 2014-2015 1.9%; 2015-2016 0/8%; 2016-2017 1.14%; 2017-2018 1.21%; 2018-2019 0.85%) resulting in 0.73% in 2019-2020 and 0% in 2020-2021. With the
return to instruction after pandemic virtual learning the suspension rate rose to 2.09%. Males remain the majority of the suspensions (66.6%) while females compose a large percentage of the overall population (72.1%). White males composed 23.8% of the suspensions, while African American males composed 38.1% of the suspensions.

Carver Center represents every middle school in BCPS and many independent schools in and near Baltimore County. While Carver Center has standards for admission in each prime area, academic standards for admission do not exist. Therefore, there is always a dramatic range in academic abilities from students, depending on their prior skills and the strength of their previous schools. Students from underserved middle and elementary school entering Carver Center are not on the same playing field as students from higher achieving middle and elementary schools.

When students arrive at Carver Center these gaps between student achievement become apparent to students and teachers. In some cases, students may have done very well in their middle school then come to Carver Center and realize that they were not well prepared for the rigor and standards at Carver Center. The standards here are higher than they were at their middle school. This can be very discouraging and disheartening. A student who feels like they are not measuring up to the ‘standard of excellence that is Carver Center’ will seek validation elsewhere. In the prime areas there are certainly avenues for these students to succeed. Unfortunately, students who are low achievers in their academics may also be low achievers in the primes. Then motivation becomes a factor in all their classes.

Students who are not receiving validation for their efforts in the classroom are going to look elsewhere. There are clubs and social groups which can help, but these may not help with academic motivation. They might start thinking, “I’m not smart”, “There is no way I can take an AP course” “It’s too much work.” I see some struggling students banding together, deciding that we don’t want them to succeed and that we are working against them. I see them not attending coach class, not wanting to study, not doing any homework and getting further and further behind. We have put in place many vehicles for student improvement, but those may not speak to an unmotivated student. All students have access to Wildcat Time, but some avoid going to coach classes in areas where they need help. That is a culture in itself and it spreads among students who have struggled and failed. Why should I try? I’d rather go to ‘time out’ or hide in a bathroom.

It is important that students have faculty and staff members they can turn to who they feel comfortable with and who are models of what we can aspire to. We have been fortunate that we have been growing in the number of people of color on the faculty but our teacher demographics still does not align with our student demographics. In 2005 we had four faculty members who were people of color, 4.3% of our faculty. At the start of 2021-2022 we had twelve faculty members who are people of color, 15.58% of our faculty. Some amazing faculty members have been promoted, some have retired, and some have relocated over the years. It’s a step in the right direction but it is not enough, and it is going slowly. This directly impacts the students. Some students are less likely to seek help from teachers if they don’t feel the teachers care about them or understand them. Compound this with biases and structural racism embedded in the dominant culture and thus within the teaching community, makes for
a challenging environment for students. Previous student surveys indicated that many students did not feel connected to an adult in the building. This would make them trust less and be less likely to confide in or reach out to any adult at Carver Center. Although surveys conducted recently indicate that student confidence and connection with adults at Carver Center has improved some students are already quite far behind their peers. It is very challenging to dig out of a hole.

**Data Analysis**

*Summarize what the data tell about the school climate. (Information from School Data Story)*

Our 2021-2022 September 30th enrollment indicates that we have 1003 students, and our demographics are as follows: 37.5% Black/African American, 43.1% White, 6.4% Hispanic, 6.9% Asian, 0.6% American Indian, 0.4% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (56.9% Students of Color). The proportion of students eligible for receipt of special services are as follows: 0.1% English Learner, 19.46% Free and Reduced Meals, and 2.29% Special Education. The overall enrollment count has increased steadily since 2007-2008 (2007-2008 enrollment data: 41.4% students of color; 58.9% non-students of color; 63.7% female; 36.3% male).

The 2018-2019 suspension rate was 0.85%, lower than 2017-2018 (1.21%). For the 2018-2019 school year, all student group suspensions resulted in the loss of 27 instructional days. This loss of instructional time particularly affects groups most often suspended: 0 Asian, 1 Black/African American, 1 Hispanic, and 6 White; 4 Male, 4 Female; receiving (not applicable) English Learner, 2 Free and Reduced Meals, and 4 Special Education services.

In 2019-2020 suspension rate was 0.73%, lower than 2018-2019 (0.85%). For the 2019-2020 school year, all student group suspensions resulted in the loss of 21 instructional days, a decrease from the prior year. This loss of instructional time particularly affects groups most often suspended: 1 Asian, 1 Black/African American, 1 Hispanic, and 4 White; 6 Male, 1 Female; receiving 0 English Learner, 2 Free and Reduced Meals, and 2 Special Education services.

In 2020-2021 suspension rate was 0%.

With the return to instruction after pandemic virtual learning, the 2021-2022 suspension rate rose to 2.09%. All student group suspensions resulted in the loss of 85 instructional days, three (3) suspensions to the student hearing officer account for 30-days. This loss of instructional time particularly affects groups most often suspended: 12 Black/African American, 1 Hispanic, and 6 White; 14 Male, 7 Female; receiving 0 English Learner, 1 Free and Reduced Meals, and 2 Special Education services. Males remain the majority of the suspensions (66.6%) while females compose a large percentage of the overall population (72.10%). White males composed 23.8% of the suspensions, while African American males composed 38.1% of the suspensions.

The 2018-2019, 762 students completed the Stakeholder Survey. Stakeholder Survey domain values were 69.01 for Academic Aspirations, 68.23 for Belonging, and 66.08 for Student Support. These results indicate that student perception has improved for Academic Aspirations, Belonging, and Student Support since 2017-2018. In 2018-2019, fewer than ten
percent of students indicated that they were bullied, and over a quarter of students reported witnessing bullying. Students reported most frequently experiencing bullying in the classroom and witnessing bullying online or by text. Across all domains and measures, where there are data for the non-binary student group, their perception of climate, specifically Belonging, are notably unfavorable than their peers.

The 2018-2019 Academic Aspirations domain results indicate the most favorable results for the Black/African American student group. In contrast, the Two or More Races student group reported the highest as unfavorable among racial groups. In 2020-2021 Academic Aspirations continued its upward trend to 70.4% of respondents reported positive perception of teacher expectations, their interest and engagement in class, and belief that their education will allow them to succeed in the future.

The 2018-2019 Belonging domain results indicate the most favorable results for the Black/African American student group. In contrast, the Hispanic/Latino student group reported the highest as unfavorable among racial groups. Based on analysis of progress, overall belonging has continued to increase, from 69.4% in 2019-2020 to 70.6% in 2020-2021. In 2020-2021, 100% of Black/African American student respondents stated “favorable” (82.6%) and “very favorable” (17.4%) for Belonging. Male (95%/20 students) and female (91%/66 students) expressed similar satisfaction (“favorable” and “very favorable”) in Belonging.

The 2018-2019 Student Support domain results indicate the most favorable results for the Asian student group. In contrast, the Two or More Races student group reported the highest as unfavorable among racial groups.

In 2020-2021, 91 students completed the Stakeholder Survey. Stakeholder Survey domain values were 70.4 for Academic Aspirations, 70.6 for Belonging, and 72.8 for Student Support. Student Support continued its upward trend with 72.8% of respondents have social supports and positive relationships with teachers and other adults at Carver Center.100% of male student respondents stated “favorable” (60%) and “very favorable” (40%) for Student Support. All subgroups expressed “unfavorable” and/or “very unfavorable” for Student Support except males:

- Black/African American 8.7%
- White 10.2%
- SG 15.8%
- Female 12.1%

SG (19 students) indicated “unfavorable” or “very unfavorable” responses on both Belonging and Student Support: Belonging (15.8 + 5.3 = 21.1%) and Student Support (10.5 + 5.3 = 15.8%)

In 2021-2022, 492 students completed the Stakeholder Survey. Stakeholder Survey domain values were 69.4 for Academic Aspirations, 69.0 for Belonging, and 69.4 for Student Support. These values have remained consistent since 2018-2019.

The 2021-2022 Academic Aspirations domain results indicate the most favorable results for the Multi-race student group (92.0%). This is in contrast to the 2018-2019 and 2020-2021
results in which this student group had the highest unfavorable responses. In contrast, the White student group reported the highest as unfavorable among racial groups (13.1%). In 2021-2022 of respondents reported positive perception of teacher expectations (93.7%), their interest and engagement in class (78%), and belief that their education will allow them to succeed in the future (78.9%).

The 2021-2022 Belonging domain results indicate the most favorable results for all of the student groups: Asian (100%), White (92.8%), Multi-race (90%), Hispanic (90%), and Black/African American (88.9%). Based on analysis of progress, overall belonging has continued to increase, from 69.4% in 2019-2020, 70.6% in 2020-2021, to 91.5% in 2021-2022. Male (90.7%/140 students) and female (91.9%/295 students) expressed similar satisfaction (“favorable” and “very favorable”) in Belonging.

The 2021-2022 Student Support domain continued its upward trend with 86.7% of student respondents reporting “favorable” and “very favorable”. 84.1% of respondents have social supports and positive relationships with teachers and other adults at Carver Center. 81.4% of male student respondents stated “favorable” (66.4%) and “very favorable” (15%) for Student Support while 89.8% of female student respondents stated “favorable” (73.9%) and “very favorable” (15.9%). All subgroups expressed “unfavorable” and/or “very unfavorable” for Student Support including:

- Black/African American 16.9%
- Hispanic 16.7%
- Multi-race 16%
- White 11.4%
- Asian 2.9%
- Male 18.5%
- Female 10.2%

### Climate Goals

*Identify the school’s goals in improving the social-emotional climate of the building.*

(Information from School Progress Plan)

Identification of Carver Center’s goals in improving the social-emotional climate on campus is reflected in the Climate Goals of the School Progress Plan. All students will experience belonging and support at Carver Center as indicated on the BCPS Stakeholder Survey.

### Section 2: Developing and Teaching Expectations

#### Expectations Defined

*Identify a School Code of Conduct with 3-5 positively stated school expectations. Develop a way to communicate the identified rules, based on the schoolwide expectations, for specific settings within the school building. Expectations should be clearly stated, communicated, taught, and frequently referenced.*

The Carver Center Cornerstone states:
RESPECT
For Self
For Others
For Your Work
For Their Work

These schoolwide expectations have been reviewed to assure cultural relevance and sensitivity to the needs of our students, faculty, and staff. A visual representation of the schoolwide behavior expectations has been created for the learning spaces and an updated design is being developed by Visual Arts prime students. The expectations are posted in the learning spaces to show what the schoolwide expectations look like in the learning spaces, Dining Hall, and Media Center. All teachers will reference the specific language of the expectations and will teach the schoolwide expectations to their students. An introduction to the schoolwide expectations has been specifically developed for Grade 09 students for use during CarveRising and Orientation Day. The principal incorporates the schoolwide expectations into each Grade 09 Prime Talk in September. The Advisory facilitator has developed specific lessons for the faculty and staff to use when teaching the schoolwide expectations during their advisory meetings. The lessons are distributed to the faculty and staff at the beginning of the academic year.

Classroom Plan for Teaching and Reinforcing Expectations, Routines, and Procedures

Teachers develop visuals to communicate culturally relevant classroom expectations, routines, and procedures based upon the schoolwide expectations. Educators explicitly teach expectations, routines, and procedures. The school staff recognize and reinforce expected and positive behavior. Teachers identify encouraging procedures and corrective procedures for their classrooms.

Faculty members will be provided time and guidance through their Department Chairs during Teacher Orientation Week to develop culturally relevant expectations for their classrooms, routines, and procedures based on the schoolwide expectations. They will be encouraged to consider their behavioral expectations for the components of their instruction such as group instruction, small group instruction, independent learning, etc. Faculty members are encouraged to teach these expectations, routines, and procedures from the first day of school and to have visual representations of them. They are encouraged to recognize and reinforce expected behavior through behavior specific praise and/or tangible reinforcers. Examples of reinforcers include morning announcement celebrations, the Kudos List, Good News Postcards, emails to students and families to recognize specific student achievements. Faculty members are encouraged to develop their own menu of reinforcers. Additionally, faculty members are encouraged to develop their own procedures for encouraging expected behaviors as well as to develop their own corrective procedures should students need more guidance. Resource materials will be provided for teachers to assist them in expanding their toolbox of strategies to address problematic behavior in the classroom.

Family/Community Engagement
Identify how the Schoolwide Positive Behavior Plan, the schoolwide expectations, and/or interventions will be communicated and shared with families. Consider how to include family and student voice in the initial plan and in evaluating the plan throughout the year.

The schoolwide expectations will be shared with families on Back to School Night, at Carver Center Foundation new academic year meetings, via the website, and on Schoology. It will be described and explained in The Mosaic, the school newsletter, and faculty and staff members will explicitly explain the Carver Center Cornerstone and the schoolwide and classroom expectations in their Back to School Night presentation.

It is important that our Schoolwide Positive Behavior Plan reflect the needs of our Carver Center community. A concerted effort will be made to engage families and students in the shared decision-making process. While a deliberate effort was made to be culturally responsive, parent and guardian voice will be solicited regarding the Schoolwide Positive Behavior Plan and the schoolwide expectations through surveys and/or group sessions throughout the school year.

Informal surveys will be developed to obtain student voice about the practices and interventions that the school has initiated. The information obtained from students and families will be used to inform any changes that may need to be made mid-year and/or for next year’s Schoolwide Positive Behavior Plan.

Section 3: Developing Interventions and Supporting Students

Resource Mapping of MTSS

Identify the evidence-based practices and interventions offered at Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 to support all students. Consider what culturally responsive interventions the school requires to meet the specific needs of the students.

At Tier 1, Carver Center practices include proactive classroom strategies implemented by the faculty and staff members. The School Leadership Team analyzes data, determines appropriate and culturally relevant evidence-based practices for the school and monitors the implementation and effectiveness. There are structured and consistent schoolwide and classroom behavioral expectations. Faculty and staff have received training on Restorative Practices from the University of Maryland School of Law C-DRUM. Teachers implement circles, affective language, and solution driven strategies. Advisory is provided to all students during Wildcat Time. Interdisciplinary Grade Level Teams monitor students and check-in and connect with students to provide supports, as necessary.

At Tier 2, Student Support Teams and IEP/504 Teams meet to discuss supports for individual students. There are small group opportunities provided by school counselors, school social worker, Learning Resource Center, and faculty/staff members (via Wildcat Time) to focus on a specific need. Check-In and Connect is provided by selected teachers. Teacher – student mentoring opportunities are provided as appropriate.

At Tier 3, individual supports are provided to students that require intensive intervention. These supports include FBA/BIPs, behavior contracts, personal crisis response plans, and individual sessions with the school counselor, school social worker, or school psychologist.
The Student Support Team monitors students receiving Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports. The team meets regularly to design and refine strategies personalized to each student with the goal of preparing the student to move to fewer intensive support when they are ready.

The School Climate Team will continue to review data throughout the year to determine if these interventions are sufficient or if other practices and interventions are needed by our students. The Carver Center Behavior Crisis Response Team will continue to monitor the entrance criteria and exit criteria for Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions as well as the progress of the students accessing these interventions.

### Social-Emotional Learning

*Identify the specific evidence-based social-emotional learning skill development practices the school will implement during the school year. Consider the importance of trauma-informed care, mental health awareness, level of students’ coping skills, etc. Determine how the social-emotional learning and the SEL competencies will be integrated into the school’s programming. Consider the need for any training the staff members may require.*

At Tier 1 many faculty and staff members use the SEL 3 Signature Practices (Welcoming Ritual, Engaging Practices, Optimistic Closure) to foster supportive environments and build SEL skills. Faculty and staff have received training on Restorative Practices from the University of Maryland School of Law C-DRUM. Many teachers implement circles, affective language, and solution driven strategies. Carver Center is committed to trauma-informed practices, restorative practices, and conscious discipline at all grade levels. Carver Center also applies the basic principles of PBIS such as providing clearly defined expectations that are taught, practiced, and reinforced as well as specific behavioral praise. At Tier 2 the school counselors and the school social worker provide small group counseling. The school staff are encouraged to complete the *Personal Assessment and Reflection – SEL Competencies for School Leaders, Staff, and Adults.*

### Character Education

*Determine how specific evidence-based character education learning will be infused into the school’s programming to promote positive behavior and ethical decision-making. Character education will be culturally responsive and co-created with diverse stakeholders. Consider the need for any training the staff members may require.*

Character Counts! (charactercounts.org) will be implemented. The Advisory facilitator will be the facilitator of CharacterCounts! and will provide training to the faculty and staff at the beginning of the year. After the kick-off of the program, the Advisory facilitator will identify a specific pillar to focus on for each month. There will be lessons and follow up activities to promote learning and application of that pillar throughout the month that faculty and staff are able to use in the classroom and in their Advisory sessions.

### Professional Development for Staff

*Identify the professional development that will be offered to staff members throughout the year in order to support their knowledge, skill development, and implementation of the interventions selected, the character education learning, and social-emotional learning practices. Specify the schedule for professional development and how to obtain teacher*
feedback during the year to address their concerns and areas in which they want/need more information. (Information from School Progress Plan.)

Interdisciplinary Grade Level Team planning and re-set meeting to prepare for re-establishing teams in-person on-campus and to develop consistency across the process.

Using FOCUS to support interdepartmental communication around concerns and supports for students.

Advisory Refresher Training.

Restorative Practices Refresher Training.

Equity Training

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<tr>
<th>Section 4: Supporting and Responding to Student Behavior</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recognitions/Incentives</strong></td>
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<td>Identify a variety of positive consequences, acknowledgements, recognitions, and/or incentives that are linked to the behavioral expectations and rules. Develop a system for implementing the positive acknowledgements consistently in school settings. Consider how to monitor who is being recognized and who is not being recognized and whether explicit or implicit biases may be occurring.</td>
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Faculty and staff are trained on the importance of using positive reinforcement to build a sense of student efficacy and achievement and to bring about a change in behavior when appropriate. Faculty and staff are encouraged to use a variety of tools to positively reinforce students for demonstrating expected behaviors including:

- Morning announcement celebrations
- Kudos List
- Good News Postcards
- Encourage students to use the Friday Kudos list to acknowledge the success of others including their peers
- Emails to students and families to recognize specific student achievements

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<tr>
<th>Hierarchy for Behavioral Referrals and Consequences</th>
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<tr>
<td>Identify the behaviors that are teacher-managed, behaviors referred to resource staff, and behaviors referred to administration. Refer to the BCPS Student Handbook for teacher and administrator-led interventions. Consider how unsafe behaviors will be addressed.</td>
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Positive disciplinary action is teaching students how to make good choices by using good decision-making skills and known consequences when students choose to behave inappropriately. The goal is to continue to maintain safe, orderly, and nurturing learning environments that are conducive to positive learning experiences so that all students will reach
high achievement standards. The focus is to prevent and/or modify unacceptable student behavior with support services and appropriate interventions. The discipline process is proactive with the emphasis on teamwork – student, parent, staff, faculty, administration. It is generally agreed that the faculty/staff member is in the best position to render positive disciplinary action; the faculty/staff member is expected to make reasonable efforts toward the solution of such problems.

Classroom Expectations are set by the faculty member to ensure order, safety, and a positive learning environment. These expectations will be made clear, specific, fair, and equitable to the students by the faculty member. A flow chart has been developed to detail the expectations for the management of lateness to school, lateness to class, excessive absences, academic dishonesty, unacceptable student behavior, and overt misconduct and has been provided to faculty and staff members via the Carver Center Faculty and Staff Notebook.

Below is a list, not all inclusive, of additional interventions, supports, and disciplinary responses that may be used to teach students how to behave and to encourage students to behave appropriately in school. Before referring a student to the office for unacceptable student behavior, faculty/staff will note those steps taken on the discipline referral form.

- Proximity control to keep student on task
- Pre-correct individual student behavior
- Use of non-verbal cues/signaling
- Conduct in-class conference with student
- Teach, practice, and reinforce positive replacement behaviors
- Provide special work assignment
- Provide movement breaks between low energy activities for individual student as appropriate
- Require student to complete a written reflection/apology for misbehavior
- Use student behavior strategies, progress reports, behavior contracts, and/or behavior point sheets
- Use goal setting paired with acknowledgement of improved behavior for individual students
- Individual student behavior plans
- Peer mediation support
- Conflict resolution support
- Peer mentoring support
- Faculty/Staff mentoring support
- Student/teacher conference
- Telephone call to parent/guardian
- Teacher/parent/student conference
- Teacher/student/school counselor conference
- Teacher assigned detention
- Referral to Student Support Team (SST)
- Functional behavior assessments
Faculty and staff members will document interventions and outreach in FOCUS notes section for administrators to be apprised and to provide additional support.

When all efforts to address the situation have been exhausted, faculty and staff will submit a completed *Disciplinary Referral and Feedback Form* to the grade level administrator. These forms are distributed to the faculty and staff at the beginning of the academic year and are available in the main office as well. The grade-level administrator will make arrangements to see the student as promptly as possible. If the problem is of such a nature that immediate support is need, the faculty/staff member is to call the main office.

Each student referred to an administrator will complete a *Student Statement*.

The faculty/staff member referring the student will be advised of the disposition of the matter and both the faculty/staff members and student’s statements will become a part of the student’s discipline folder.

**Response for Intensive Behaviors**

*Identify a hierarchy of responses to intensive behaviors (i.e., emergency/crisis management/threat assessment/unsafe behaviors) including interventions and supports.*

*Indicate which school staff members will respond as well as procedures and training as needed.*

A flow chart has been developed to detail the expectations for the management of lateness to school, lateness to class, excessive absences, academic dishonesty, unacceptable student behavior, and overt misconduct and has been provided to faculty and staff members via the *Carver Center Faculty and Staff Notebook*.

Carver Center has identified members of two teams: *Carver Center Behavior Crisis Response Team* and *Carver Center Behavior Threat Assessment Team* These team members meet on a regular basis to address procedures regarding students who present with threats to harm themselves or threats to harm others or property or who have presented with signs of distress. The teams meet monthly and maintain ongoing communication with administrators. Team members follow up with students who have been assessed because of threat, address treatment options, and monitor their progress.

Carver Center maintains a plan that is implemented should a serious situation occur, and the students need to vacate a classroom due to a student’s extreme behavior. Carver Center maintains a good working relationship with our Safety Manager, School Resource Officer, and the Towson Precinct, and all have a clear understanding about the role each plays when dealing with student disruption.
RECOGNIZING DISTRESSED, SUICIDAL, OR POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS STUDENTS

Faculty and staff members who interact with students may become aware of or be exposed to a student’s thoughts or behaviors that are concerning. It is important to “trust your gut” in these situations and to take action. Kind words, expression of concern and referral to a competent professional can make a significant difference in the life of the student, their friends and family, and our entire Carver Center community. We want all distressed, suicidal, or potentially dangerous students to receive assistance before concerning behaviors escalate.

While you are not responsible for assessing or treating mental or behavioral health issues, you should be able to identify students experiencing distress, know how to best respond, and be aware of appropriate resources that are available to assist you and these students.

RECOGNIZING A STUDENT IN DISTRESS

Some of the more common forms of psychological distress observed in students include:

**Depression.** While just about everyone gets depressed from time to time, individuals suffering from significant levels of depression exhibit an array of symptoms:

- insomnia or change in sleep patterns
- inability to concentrate
- change in appetite
- loss of ability to experience happiness or pleasure
- apathy
- sloppiness
- crying
- poor personal hygiene
- feelings of worthlessness
- no desire to socialize
- loss of self esteem
- preoccupation with death

Having only one symptom is usually not enough to describe someone as severely depressed. When several of these symptoms occur for an extended period of time, however, a person may be experiencing a depressive episode.

**Anxiety.** Students suffering from anxiety problems can experience panic attacks or extreme fear about specific situations (e.g., being in public places). Exposure to a traumatic experience can also cause a student to develop anxiety problems, symptoms of which include flashbacks, avoiding things associated with the traumatic event and being easily startled.
**Unusual acting out.** A student in distress may exhibit behavior that differs significantly from normal socially appropriate behavior, including being repeatedly and excessively disruptive or overly antagonistic, and acting in a bizarre or peculiar manner.

**Other signs of distress.** It is important to observe changes from a student’s previous behavior that may signal distress. These signs of distress include a drop in class attendance or a drop in the quality of class work; a more generally tense, sad or disheveled appearance; and the development of inappropriate or bizarre responses, such as talking off the subject and rambling or laughing inappropriately. The more symptoms observed, the more likely it is that the individual is truly distressed.

**HELPING A STUDENT IN DISTRESS**

**Talk to the student.** Let the student know of your concerns and ask if he or she feels distressed.

**Be accepting and non-judgmental.** Help the student determine what the problem might be, without minimizing his or her feelings or judging him or her for feeling distressed.

**Reinforce the student’s choice to confide in you.** Acknowledge your recognition that he or she hurts and has sought your help.

**Know your limits as a helper.** While talking to the student, you may find you are unable to provide adequate assistance or do not feel comfortable trying to help someone cope with his or her problems. If this is the case, it is important that you indicate in a gentle but direct manner that professional assistance is free and available, and that you will assist the student in finding competent professionals.

**Use the resources available to you.** Know the resources that are available to you such as the grade level administrator, school counselor, school social worker, and school psychologist. Don’t hesitate to contact these resources for consultation if you are not sure how to proceed.

**REFERRING A STUDENT IN DISTRESS**

Suppose that a student comes into your office and begins to describe problems that are interfering with their academic work. At a break in the discussion, you might say:

"It sounds as though you have been under a lot of stress lately, are not doing very well, and would like to talk to someone about this. I suggest that you see someone in the School Counseling Office, as I know they are well-qualified to help and often work with students with similar concerns. I would be very happy to call and make arrangements for you to talk to someone.”
You should then immediately contact the School Counseling Office. The School Counseling Office will activate the Carver Center Behavior Crisis Response Team as appropriate:

- Assistant Principals
- School Social Worker
- School Counseling Department Chairperson
- School Counselor for Mediation
- School Nurse
- Learning Resource Department Chairperson
- Other school counselors as appropriate

RECOGNIZING A STUDENT WHO MAY BE SUICIDAL

A student in serious distress may consider doing harm to their self. Many suicide attempts are preceded by messages that the person is considering suicide. Verbal messages can range from “I wish I weren’t here” to a very direct “I’m going to kill myself.” Some non-verbal signals include giving away valued possessions; putting legal, financial, and school affairs in order; a preoccupation with death; withdrawal or boredom; a history of depression; and poor grooming habits. Each type of message about suicide should be taken seriously and may require immediate intervention.

HELPING A STUDENT WHO MAY BE SUICIDAL

If you are worried that a student may be considering suicide, it is all right to ask directly if they are thinking about killing their self. Mental health professionals assess suicide potential, in part, by asking:

- What is your plan for suicide; exactly how will you do it?
- Do you have access to a means, such as pills or a weapon?
- When and where do you intend to carry out the plan?
- Have you ever attempted suicide before? If so, how and when?

The more specific and lethal the plan, the more recent a previous attempt and the greater the ability to carry out the plan, the higher stands the risk for a successful suicide. Note: Many people consider suicide from time to time in passing. The less specific and lethal the plan (e.g., "I guess I'd take a couple sleeping pills sometime"), the less likely a suicide attempt.

REFERRING A STUDENT WHO MAY BE SUICIDAL

You should then immediately contact the School Counseling Office.

Suppose that you have been talking with a student and are so concerned that the student is at risk for suicide that you would feel uncomfortable if he or she simply walked out of your office. In such a case, you should indicate to the student that you need to immediately contact
the appropriate School Counselor for advice on how to be of assistance. Once you have contacted the school counselor, you can arrange for school counselor to come to your office or classroom to meet the student or for you to escort the student to the school counselor’s office.

Once you have contacted the School Counseling Office they will:

• Follow the BCPS Threat Management Matrix (see graphic in Carver Center Faculty and Staff Handbook).
• Utilize the BCPS established threat management process.
• Implement local school system policies and rules in an effective manner for the assessment of and intervention with individuals whose behaviors pose (or may pose) a threat to their, including, where appropriate, referrals to community providers for evaluation and treatment as required.

RECOGNIZING A STUDENT WHO MAY BE POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS

Unfortunately, we live in a time in which a student may decide to cause injury or even death to others. You should take action to protect the student and others if you become aware of any of the following:

• Physically violent behavior
• Verbally threatening or overly aggressive behavior
• Threatening email or letters
• Threatening or violent material in academic papers or exams
• Harassment, including sexual harassment and stalking
• Possession of a weapon, particularly a firearm

RESPONDING TO A STUDENT WHO IS POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS

If you perceive a threat, contact the main office immediately and the Carver Center Behavior Threat Assessment Team will respond.

• Assistant Principals
• School Social Worker
• School Psychologist
• School Counseling Department Chairperson
• School Nurse
• School Resource Officer
• Additional school counselors as appropriate to the situation
• Learning Resource Department Chairperson as appropriate
• Pupil Personnel Worker

This team will:
• Follow the BCPS Threat Management Matrix (see graphic in Carver Center Faculty and Staff Handbook).
• Utilize the BCPS established threat management process.
• Provide guidance to students and staff regarding recognition of threatening behavior that may represent a threat, broadly disseminating relevant information and ensuring access to consultation from the Behavior Threat Assessment Team.
• Implement local school system policies and rules in an effective manner for the assessment of and intervention with individuals whose behaviors pose (or may pose) a threat to the safety of school staff or students, including, where appropriate, referrals to community providers for evaluation and treatment as required.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Clear and concise consequences have been established:

a. 1st Offense – The teacher handles this offense, and the student receives a zero for the assignment. They should call the parents and submit an account of the offense to the class administrator.

b. 2nd Offense – The student receives a zero of the assignment. Offense goes to the administrator to handle. Since it is a Category I offense, the student will get at least a call home and probably a required parent conference with the appropriate administrator.

c. 3rd Offense – The student receives a zero for the assignment. Offense goes to the administrator to handle. This is a Category I offense; therefore, possible administrative interventions and supports include: parent, student, assistant principal conference; assign administrative detention (parent contact mandatory); refer student to Student Support Services staff for support; refer student to Student Support Team (SST); conduct Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) and, if student is eligible, develop a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP); refer to Focus Room.

BULLYING/HARASSMENT/INTIMIDATION (BHI)

• When a report of bullying, harassment, and/or intimidation is made, it is not up to the person receiving the report to verify if the reported incident meets the criteria to be labeled bullying. The report should be entered in FOCUS and then investigated.
• The grade-level Assistant Principal will investigate all victim reports filed.
• Once the investigation is completed, the Assistant Principal findings from the investigation is entered in FOCUS.
• Students who have been the alleged targets of BHI may need special protection to ensure their emotional and physical safety and security during investigations and/or after sanctions have been imposed on aggressor students. The Assistant Principal will convene a team to create a Student Safety Plan.
• The team will be composed of the staff who are best suited to consider the needs of the student in collaboration with the parent/guardian and the student. The team may include:
  • Assistant Principals
  • School Social Worker
  • School Counseling Department Chairperson
  • School Counselor for Mediation
  • School Nurse
  • Prime Teacher
  • Academic Teacher
  • Learning Resource Department Chairperson
  • Other school counselors as appropriate

• Once the plan has been developed, the grade level Assistant Principal will see that it is implemented with the student and the student’s family. The grade level Assistant Principal will also share this plan with all necessary school staff emphasizing the need for confidentiality, consistency, and subtlety.

OVERT MISCONDUCT

In the event of overt misconduct (fighting, use of profane language, deliberate destruction of property, possession of a weapon, suspected student impairment) a faculty or staff member will call the main office to request immediate administrator assistance. The administrator will activate the Carver Center Behavior Crisis Response Team, Carver Center Behavior Threat Assessment Team, and/or the School Resource Officer as appropriate.

Possible interventions include but are not limited to:
  • Administrative conference and call home
  • Detention
  • Required Parent Conference
  • Develop and sign Behavior Contract
  • Student Support Team
  • Referral to PPW
  • Restitution
  • Focus Room - The Focus Room is an intervention used to teach student responsibility and accountability for their behaviors. A team of faculty and staff (LRC, grade level administrator, school counselor, school psychologist, PPW, Social Worker, referring teacher, etc.) work with the student on behavior goals intended to help the student learn to manage their own behavior and to process through disruptive behaviors so that they can return in a timely fashion to their scheduled classes. There is only one student assigned to the Focus Room at a time. The general schedule includes student reflection on their actions, setting goals to change behaviors, academic support, a meeting at the end of the day with the Focus team, the student, and the student’s parent(s)/guardian(s). Teachers are notified in advance when their student will be in the Focus Room. As an important piece of the Focus Room is for students to stay on track academically, it is
important that requested work be sent to the LRC by the beginning of the school day. After the Focus Room experience the coordinator checks in and connects with the student weekly to address any issues/concerns and monitor progress.

- Short Term Suspension – the exclusion of a student from the student’s regular program for up to but not more than 3 school days by the principal
- Long Term Suspension – the exclusion of a student from the student’s regular program for a time period between 4 and 10 school days by the principal
- Extended Suspension – the exclusion of a student from the student’s regular program for a time period between 11 and 45 days (suspension to designee)
- Expulsion – the exclusion of a student from the student’s regular program for 45 days or longer (suspension to the designee)

Use of extended suspension or expulsion is limited to the student having engaged in chronic and extreme disruption of the education process that has created a substantial barrier to learning for other students across the school day, and other available appropriate behavioral and disciplinary interventions have been exhausted.

A student returning from suspension attends a meeting with the grade-level Assistant Principal, parent/guardian, and appropriate support personnel. A Behavior Contract is developed and signed by all. Teachers are notified of the Behavior Contract and its provisions. The student is given a Reinstatement After Suspension form by the grade-level Assistant Principal at the time of the reinstatement conference. The student takes the form to each of their teachers. The teacher is to sign the form and the student is to return it to the grade-level Assistant Principal. A copy of the signed form is to be placed in the student’s file.

### Monitoring the Schoolwide Positive Behavior Plan/Data Analysis

*Identify the data that will be collected and reviewed by the School Climate Team in order to identify behavior trends, patterns, action steps, and interventions using a problem-solving strategy. Consider having a uniform referral form for staff to complete to document referrals to administration. Consider how teachers should document classroom-managed concerns/behaviors/difficulties.* *(Information from School Progress Plan.)*

The School Climate Team discusses data, practices, and systems at monthly meetings. There is an efficient method for reviewing data at monthly meetings. A process has been identified for collecting the following data: FOCUS Student Intervention Data, Interdisciplinary Grade Level Team Support Tracking forms, Wildcat Time Data – activity counts and student counts, suspension rate, attendance rate, chronic attendance rate.

Each grade-level Assistant Principal takes turns presenting the data at the team meetings. Additionally, the team reviews the interventions and practices, discusses the effectiveness of implementation, and suggests professional learning opportunities for faculty and staff.

#### Section 5: Miscellaneous Content/Components