

The Coalition for Black Student Achievement and the School District of Palm Beach County's Department of Safe Schools provide this concept paper to address disproportionate minority contact with the Juvenile Justice System.

Introduction

The Disproportionate Minority Contact Benchmark Reports for Palm Beach County reveal that the rate of black youth referred was 3.2 times higher than the rate of white youth referred in FY 2006-07. This was a 19% increase from FY 2003-04 and 1.4 times higher than the statewide average (2.5 times more likely). Further for FY 2006-07, black youth in Palm Beach County were slightly more likely than the statewide average to be judicially disposed, detained, committed, and transferred to adult court.

While many agencies work with youth, these youth, for many of the risk factors described below, do not participate in redirecting, capacity developing activities. Hence, what is needed is a strategy that truly engages youth and their caregivers to work to build capacity in the youth and to redirect their life paths. Using research based strategies, provided by known and respected providers with proven track records, is the key.

Identified need

The Children Services Council 2006 Racial and Ethnic Disparity Report, The Palm Beach County School District Gold Report, The Florida Department of Juvenile Justice FY 2007/08 Report, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Report, and interviews conducted by the Coalition for Black Student Achievement, reveal the following factors as the root causes for juvenile arrest in Palm Beach County.

Family factors: These include (a) lack of guidance or parent supervision, (b) large number of single parent, grandparent, and foster parent head of households, (c) concentrated pockets of poverty, particularly in multifamily apartment complexes, (d) high mobility rates, (e) do not know how to connect with family support services, and (f) view education as irrelevant.

- **School factors:** These include (a) attitudes of teachers and other administrators, (b) inability to meet the diverse cultural and learning styles of the students, (c) middle and high schools often have effective procedures in place for dealing with chronic absenteeism, disrespectful, and disruptive behaviors and (d) do not have an effective systems of care in place to link students and families to community-based organizations (CBO).
- **Community influences:** These include (a) community norms tolerant of delinquent behaviors, (b) single-parents homes, (c) parents who hold multiple jobs, (d) inadequate and fragmented social services, and (e) lack of affordable transportation and child care.
- **Law Enforcement factors:** These include (a) zero-tolerance for juvenile crime, (b) perceived increase in gang related activities, (c) lack of awareness to alternatives to juvenile arrest, and (d) lack confidence in the families' ability to address risky adolescent behaviors.
- **Student variables:** These include (a) low academic performance, (b) disrespectful and disruptive behaviors, (c) lack of understanding regarding the negative impact the juvenile justice system could have on their lives, (d) lack of social competence, (e) mental health difficulties, and (f) retained in previous grades.

What will we do to address this problem?

What is needed in Palm Beach County is a more efficient way to connect parents, families and caregivers with agencies and organizations that will help prevent youth from entering the juvenile justice system. A community marketing tool also needs to be developed that can help connect existing community programs and support services to families in need. The Coalition for Black Student Achievement (CBSA) and the Department of Safe Schools are aware of this fact, and have come together to establish Neighborhood Accountability Boards (NAB) in West Palm Beach and Belle Glade, FL. This innovative approach is designed to integrate a grass roots movement, with a systems reform model that can turn the hearts of the community to our children and the hearts of our children to the community.

The purpose of the NAB is not to create another program, but to identify existing community programs and support services and make them available to the community, parents, families, and care givers. It represents a community-based decision-making process aimed at repairing the lives of troubled youth and their families. Instead of focusing on who broke the law, what rule was violated, or how the offender will be punished, this process will focus its attention on what harm was done and what needs to be done to repair the harm, and who is responsible for the repair. The response will meet the needs of the youth, families, and community. It will involve each in the justice process to the greatest extent possible. The NAB provides recommendations to the Schools and the State Attorney's Office and enters into an agreement with the youth outlining their sanctions. This process will provide youth, families, and the neighborhood the opportunity to converse in a safe and productive manner. Finally, it will allow youth an opportunity to take responsibility and make amends to the community and hopefully, redirect their life pathway.

CBSA and the Department of Safe Schools are seeking to secure funding to establish two Neighborhood Accountability Boards and the Care Coordinating Committee

Neighborhood Accountability Boards

CBSA and the Department of Safe Schools will establish a NAB at Palm Beach Lakes and Glades Central High Schools. This initiative will also serve the communities the two schools are located in. The NAB will establish in each community a panel of 7-11 committed and able individuals chosen from a pool of key community stakeholders. All students referred to the NAB program will participate in a hearing with representatives of the school or community in which the infraction was committed. During the hearing the rule violator will be presented with the impact of his or her infraction on any victims, friends, the offender's family, the school, and community. After discussion of the impact of the incident, all participants in the hearing will contribute in a problem-solving process to determine how the rule offender might best address the harm he or she has caused. Hearing participants will sign an agreement outlining their expectations and commitments. The NAB will develop a comprehensive Restitution Case Plan to address the risk factors and needs of the referred student. The individualized comprehensive Restitution Case Plan will include the following components: family training, mentoring, community service projects, academic standards supervision/improvement, victim restoration, and sport/hobby. The offender is monitored by the NAB representative (Safe Schools Case Manager) who ascertains progress and assesses whether further assistance or intervention is needed.

Completed Restitution Case Plans are then put into effect with corresponding deadlines for the youth to follow/comply with. The Restitution Case Plans are then placed within the student's permanent file. The ultimate goal is to demonstrate that the NAB is a cost effective and efficient program that successfully provides early intervention to at risk youth with positive, long-term benefits to the youth and surrounding community by implementing restorative practices.

Proposed Deliverables:

- Identify key stakeholders to serve on Neighborhood Accountability Board (NAB) in West Palm Beach and Belle Glade, FL
- Identify faith and community organizations that will work with families and youth referred to the NAB
- Identify community/school liaison
- Establish sanctions for youth and families (i.e., attending family seminars, mentoring, community service projects)
- Develop community service projects
- Create a database of existing community programs and support services
- Identify gaps in community services and work with community partners to develop the needed programs and services to fill these gaps
- Establish contracted services needs for seminars and trainings
- Hold community events and seminars
- Meet with the youth and parents referred to the NAB, answer questions about the juvenile justice system and the alternative options available
- Work with the Department of Juvenile Justice and other support personnel at the Juvenile Assessment Center (JAC)
- Develop programmatic protocols, policies, and procedures for establishment of NAB, use of alternative options, provision of services, tracking and evaluation

Care Coordination

Neighborhood Accountability Board (NAB) is a community-based strategy that will actively allow the community to play a major role in reducing minority contact. The role the community plays is important, but will not be sufficient to address the needs of students who: (a) do not comply with the terms of their Restitution Case Plan; (b) students transitioning from incarceration back into the School District; and students already engaged with DJJ. In order to address these factors we must engage systems players (i.e., DJJ, DCF, School District, and Law Enforcement) and frontline partners (i.e., police officers, social service providers). Some of the primary reasons we have such a large number of youth having contact with DJJ are: (a) too few community-based services, (b) very little collaboration among child serving systems, (c) very little family involvement, and (d) poor outcomes from existing institutional services, or no outcomes at all. To address this target population, a subcommittee will be developed to coordinate a comprehensive array of mental health and other services.

Proposed Deliverables:

- Develop a Care Coordination and Central Intake function for youth/families needing multiple services
- Implement comprehensive family assessments and case plan development for such families
- Develop client data, tracking, and evaluation mechanisms
- Implement family strengthening programs
- Coordinate services between key related stakeholders
- Provide at-risk and delinquent minority youth greater access to alternatives, such as youth intervention programs, diversion programs, and alternatives to secure confinement
- Provide law enforcement and juvenile justice personnel cultural competency training to increase knowledge about different traditions and values and to address racial and ethnic biases and stereotypes

Services Plan

After completion of the NAB and Core Coordination deliverables, the Services Plan Deliverables begin. Although there might be some minor adjustments to this proposed Services Plan after the NABs are formed and meet, the research-based strategies in this Plan will be carried out as proposed.

Once a student has committed a crime or a serious school infraction, the NAB representative (a Safe Schools Case Manager and/or other NAB member) will explain the judicial consequences or school consequence with student and family. The choice is made to either accept the standard consequences given or to choose to participate in the NAB recommended Services Plan to repair damage(s) caused by the student's action and to build student capacity to follow a more positive pathway.

The Services Plan includes a family/student component to be provided by a contracted agency, such as the Parent Project, to include 6 or more 2 ½ hour sessions (individual and together work) of both student and parent (or caregiver) counseling and coaching.

Another component is the Safe Schools Case Managers Community Services and/or Restitution Plan. This component is provided in partnership with other community groups and organizations.

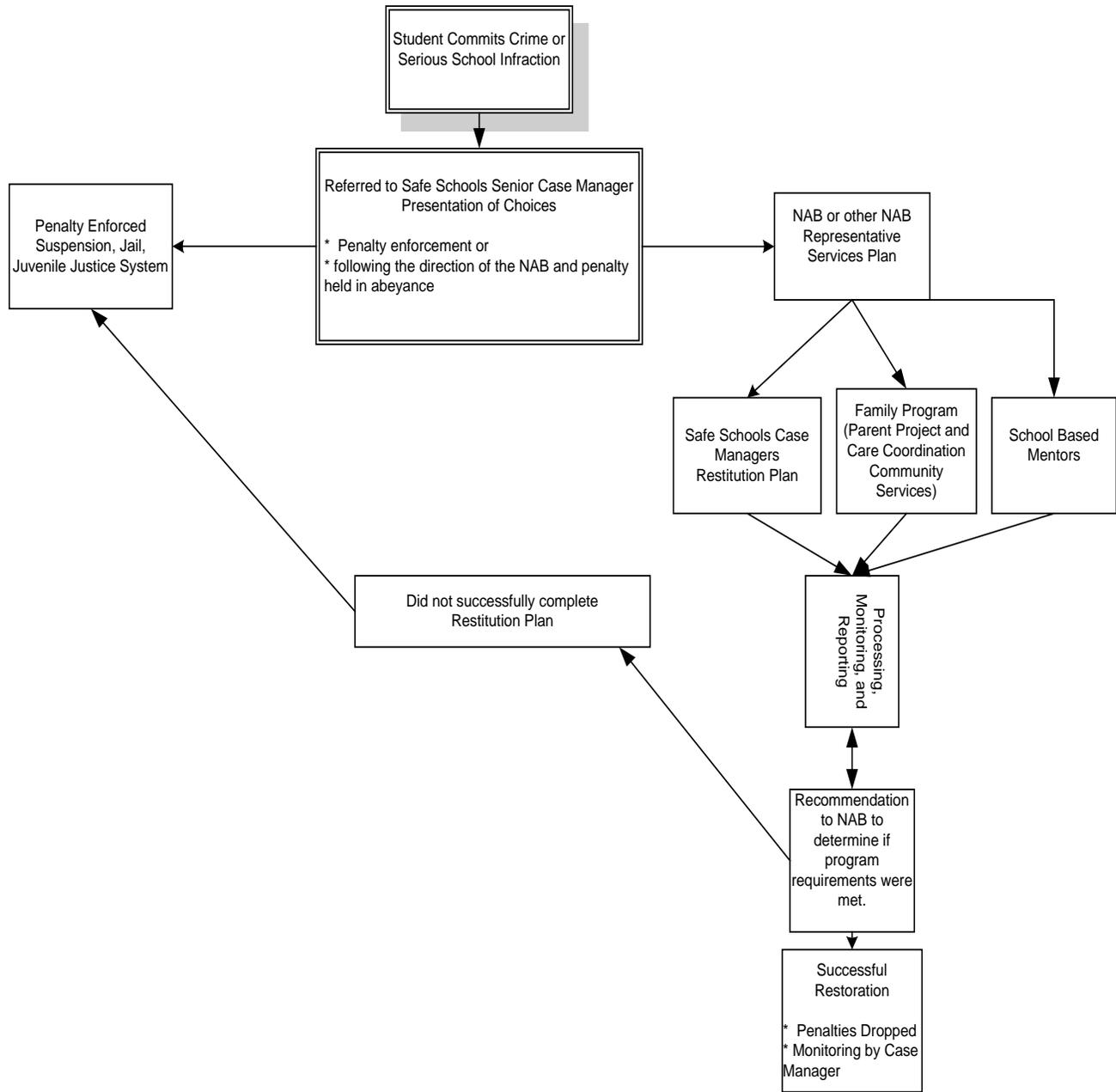
A third component is mentoring provided at each respective high school. The last week in October 2009, staff from each school is being provided training on Restorative Justice at the School District's Safe Schools Institute. Staff will then be able, with Case Manager support, provide expectations-based mentoring to youth participants.

An additional component of the Services Plan is the data processing, monitoring, and reporting system that will be used to track program participation, evaluation, and reporting. The last step is to determine whether the participant completed the Services Plan requirements.

Proposed Deliverables:

- Work with school and court to complete referral requirements to NABs
- Determine representative of NAB who will act as initiator of process
- Contract with Parent Project for family component and utilize identified partners through the Care Coordination process
- Develop Restitution Plan for Safe Schools Case Managers to use with program participants
- Develop a school-based mentoring program encompassing the efficacy work of Jeff Howard
- Develop data tracking and reporting system
- Determine follow-up activities for program completion

NAB Services Plan



Evaluation

1. 75% of program participants will demonstrate a decrease in suspension and behavioral referrals as evidenced by school behavioral records
2. Positive supervision and involvement by parents/guardians will increase as evidenced in pre-post surveys by 40%
3. 75% of participating youth will actively pay their restitution, complete their sanctions, and complete Services Plan requirements for offenses that they have committed in the community or at school
4. Recidivism rates for participants will be less than 25%

Conclusion

The Coalition for Black Student Achievement has been instrumental in moving black students toward proficiency in academics in Palm Beach County. The Department of Safe Schools has earned a national reputation for providing effective evidence-based programs. Together they and their new NABs will serve 60 students whose mistakes could be life altering in a negative way. This combination of community and school-based services will redirect the students through a process of restitution, family coaching and counseling, community services (tailor-made for each family) and school-based mentoring.

The support, encouragement and expectation setting by each NAB will undergird the Services Plan and will modify it as needed. It is anticipated that the sustainability costs will be reduced over time as the NABs working closely with schools and community groups will demonstrate that the results will warrant community-wide support.

Budget Narrative – Department of Juvenile Justice Grant

Neighborhood Accountability Boards and Restorative Justice

<p>Stipend for Safe Schools Senior Case Manager</p>	<p>\$ 5,000.00</p>	<p>The Senior Case Manager, an existing position within the Department of Safe Schools, will oversee the operation of the grant services as follows: serve as the initial point of entry into the program and provide students and families with an overview of available options; serve as the liaison to the NAB; provide supervision of the Case Managers.</p>
<p>Stipend for Social Services Facilitator to identify service providers to fill gaps that currently exist in a continuum of care available</p>	<p>\$ 2,500.00</p>	<p>The Social Services Facilitator, an existing position in the Department of Safe Schools, will focus on developing the Care Coordination partnerships available to program students/families, especially where gaps in services currently exist.</p>
<p>Overtime Safe Schools Case Managers - Average overtime rate \$31.70/hr x 20 hrs/mo x 12 months x 4 Case Managers</p>	<p>\$ 30,432.00</p>	<p>The Case Managers already serve the high schools in the grant target communities of West Palm Beach and Belle Glade. Services provided as part of this grant will expand the work of the Case Managers beyond their normal duty hours entitling them to overtime. The overtime rate, time and a half, is commensurate with the policies of the school district. Services provided will include: providing linkages to social services and direct service to target students/families during non-school hours – evenings and weekends. They will monitor student progress in their Restitution Plan and provide support and coaching.</p>
<p>Part-time In-System - Creating evaluation protocol, student data base and reporting - \$23.50/hr x 4 hrs/mo x 12 months</p>	<p>\$ 1,128.00</p>	<p>This person (s) will work with the Senior Case Manager to: provide documentation of project activities, data entry, order materials needed for each Restitution Plan, and facilitate communication with the Case Managers and the target student.</p>

Benefits @ 29%	\$ 11,327.40	Fringe benefits are based on the rate charged by the School District. Benefits include Medicare, Social Security, group insurance, Workers' Compensation, Unemployment, and retirement. Group insurance costs are distributed to all jobs worked during a pay period. For regular employees working extra jobs in the District, a portion of their insurance cost is proportionately allocated to each job. This allocation method is a common business practice used in cost accounting.
Consultants - Parent Project 6 sessions x \$5,000/session	\$ 30,000.00	The Parent Project will provide direct services to target students and their families. Six sessions will be available for all target students and families. Each session will cost \$5,000
Mileage \$.55/mile x 100 miles/month x 12 months x 5 staff	\$ 3,630.00	The standard mileage reimbursement rate in the District is \$.55/mile. The Case Managers, including the Senior Case Manager, will be reimbursed for mileage driven while implementing this project.
Materials - Community Service and materials needed for Restitution Plan implementation	\$ 6,500.00	Materials purchased will be those required to implement the Restitution Plans created by the Neighborhood Accountability Boards.
Materials NAB Boards Operation - Costs related to Restitution Plans and Service Learning - \$3,000 x 2 Boards	\$ 6,000.00	Materials needed to operate the Neighborhood Accountability Board, such as: developing and printing restitution plans, board guidelines, and flyers as part of a social marketing campaign
Sub Total	\$ 96,517.40	
Indirect Costs @ 3.45%	\$ 3,329.85	The State Board of Education approved Indirect Cost Agreement of 3.45% is effective July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010
Grand Total	\$ 99,847.25	

Department of Juvenile Justice Grant Application - Neighborhood Accountability Boards and Restorative Justice

	Total Project Budget		Funding Request from Grant
Stipend for Safe Schools Senior Case Manager	\$ 5,000.00		\$ 5,000.00
Stipend for Social Services Facilitator to identify service providers to fill gaps that currently exist in a continuum of care available	\$ 2,500.00		\$ 2,500.00
Overtime Safe Schools Case Managers - Average overtime rate \$31.70/hr x 20 hrs/mo x 12 mos x 4 Case Managers	\$ 30,432.00		\$ 30,432.00
Part-time In-System - Creating evaluation protocol, student data base and reporting - \$23.50/hr x 4 hrs/mo x 12 mos	\$ 1,128.00		\$ 1,128.00
Benefits @ 29%	\$ 11,327.40		\$ 11,327.40
Consultants - Parent Project 6 sessions x \$5,000/session	\$ 30,000.00		\$ 30,000.00
Mileage \$.55/mile x 100 miles/mo x 12 mos x 5 staff	\$ 3,630.00		\$ 3,630.00
Materials - Community Service and materials needed for Restitution Plan implementation	\$ 6,500.00		\$ 6,500.00
Materials NABs Operation - Costs related to Restitution Plans and Service Learning - \$3,000 x 2 Boards	\$ 6,000.00		\$ 6,000.00
Sub Total	\$ 96,517.40		\$ 96,517.40
Indirect Costs @ 3.45%	\$ 3,329.85		\$ 3,329.85
<i>Inkind Services - Development of vodcasts and other video supports for social marketing</i>	\$ 5,000.00		
<i>Oversight and Supervision - Case Managers</i>	\$ 2,500.00		
Grand Total	\$ 107,347.25		\$ 99,847.25