



Improving and Expanding Social, Emotional, Counseling and Behavior Supports

Preliminary Findings

April 9th , 2019



District Management Group | Helping Schools and Students Thrive

Our work focuses on understanding and improving upon current social, emotional, counseling and behavior supports.

Project Goals

- ✓ **Develop an understanding of current practices** related to social, emotional, counseling and behavior supports
- ✓ Explore **alignment of current practices with best practice research** in order to identify what supports are going well and what supports could be improved
- ✓ Identify opportunities for **possible paths forward to further support students'** social, emotional and behavioral needs



DMGroup gained a deep understanding of current services by conducting interviews, focus groups, and data analyses.

Components of Analyses

Step	Purpose
Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gain an understanding of the district's goals for providing effective social, emotional, counseling and behavior supports to students• Begin to collaborate with the district as valued thought partners
Focus Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hear directly from staff supporting students about their work• Gain an understanding of current systems and practices
Data Analyses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gain insights into trends related to the many responsibilities of staff supporting students through the schedule sharing tool• Understand similarities and differences between schools within the district



Franklin Public School District has many areas of strength to build on.

Commendations

- 1 Staff members across all roles demonstrated a strong desire to effectively support students' social, emotional and behavioral needs.
- 2 The district has created a culture of collaboration for supporting students' social, emotional and behavioral needs.
- 3 The district has expanded social, emotional and behavioral supports for students through in-district programs and outside partnerships.
- 4 The district is committed to ensuring that social, emotional and behavioral supports are key priorities across the district.



Franklin Public School District has six potential areas for growth.

Opportunities for Consideration

1

Strengthen Tier 1 and 2 social-emotional supports by increasing supports for classroom staff, ensuring fidelity of implementation, and consistently measuring effectiveness.

2

Rethink how 504s are used across the district by developing targeted school-based, on-demand services to meet a range of student needs.

3

Increase the time mental health experts spend supporting students by streamlining meetings and paperwork.

4

Clarify roles and responsibilities so that all staff can play to their strengths and support students as effectively as possible.

5

Ensure transparent and equitable staffing by thoughtfully establishing the right mix of staff expertise at each school.

6

Define clear procedures for placing students out of the district and ensure well-planned transitions back into the district.



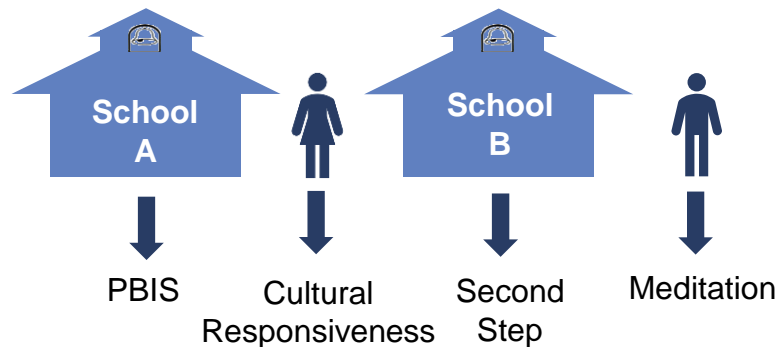
A unified approach enables a district to better support schools and provide staff and students with the resources they need.

Best Practice: A Unified Approach

1 TIERS 1/2

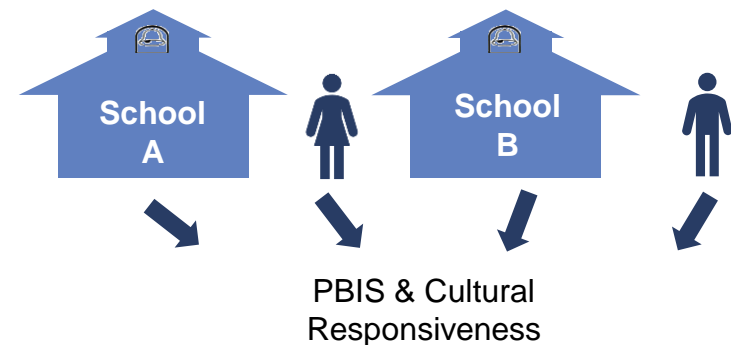
Typical Approach

- SEL efforts operate in silos across classrooms and buildings



Recommended Approach

- SEL efforts are coherent and coordinated district-wide



Resources like money, staff, and time can be deployed **efficiently and effectively** when there is **one plan** in place.



The district might consider creating a short list of supports at each tier and focus on depth of implementation, not breadth of offerings.

Future Considerations

1 TIERS 1/2

The district might consider:

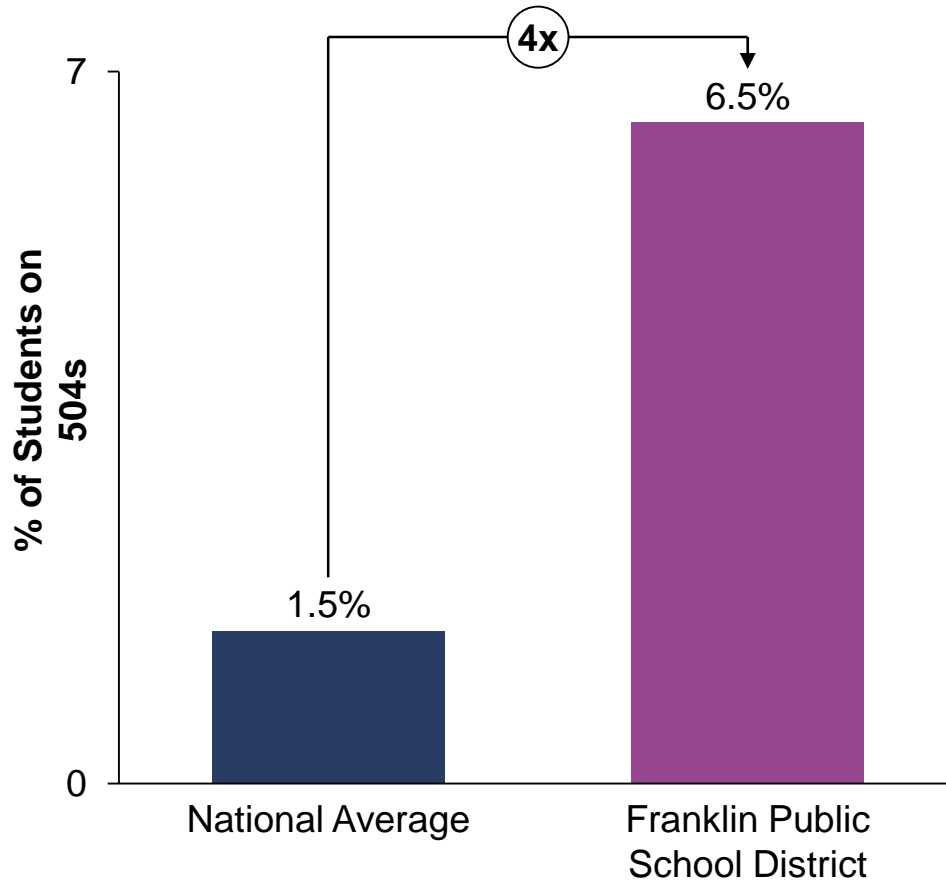
- Examining student behavior, school climate and other data to identify the greatest social-emotional needs district wide and focus efforts on supporting two to three areas, with discrete plans for each level
- Examining which schools are having the best success using various initiatives addressing the two to three areas of greatest need and scaling these.
- Developing a focused, district-wide approach to SEL that prioritizes the implementation or expansion of a few, effective district initiatives
 - Within this, specify which, if any, initiatives will be decided on at the school level.
 - Ensure consistent classroom teacher and principal feedback mechanisms are in place to provide information on what is working well and what needs tweaking.
- Providing classroom teachers with ongoing coaching supports, so they can effectively implement Tier 1 and some tier 2 social-emotional supports in the classroom



Currently, Franklin Public School District has over 4x as many students on 504s compared to the national average.

Current Practice: Students on 504s

2 504S



Grade Level	# of Students on 504
Elementary	69
Middle	103
High	165
Total	337

This district's slightly lower than typical identification rate only explains a small portion of the high number of 504 plans.



Source: The Advocacy Institute; RADAR

District Management Group

The district might consider increasing automatic access to other interventions and refining the criteria for placing students on 504s.

Future Considerations

2 504S

The district might consider:

- **Developing a district-wide toolbox with possible interventions and accommodations that can be offered to any student that may need them**
 - As a part of developing this toolbox, seek input from schools on what resources are already available and what needs are most commonly addressed through 504s
- **Refining and codifying the SST process with:**
 - Clear criteria for placing students on a 504
 - Ensure schools consistently identify and implement alternative interventions and accommodations before moving to a 504
- **Providing district level oversight of the process:**
 - Ensure consistency
 - Support alternative supports
 - Clearly communicate a student centric message for the change




Mental health staff spend approximately 21 – 47% of their time with students.

Current Practice: Breakdown of Time

3 MEETINGS AND
PAPERWORK

Responsibilities	BCBA	Guidance Counselor	School Adjustment Counselor	School Psychologist
Time with students	21%	42%	47%	25%
Meetings, IEP process and paperwork	60%	42%	44%	62%
Planning	11%	6%	6%	3%
Other	8%	10%	3%	10%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

- 
- On average, mental health staff spend 37% of their time with students
 - On average, mental health staff spend 50% of their time on meetings, the IEP process and paperwork



A structured approach to process mapping could expand services and improve staff morale.

Key questions for process mapping

3 MEETINGS AND PAPERWORK

1

Who is in the room?

a

Are there meetings some staff members **don't need to attend**?

b

Are there meetings some staff members can **attend occasionally**?

c

Are there meetings some staff members can **leave after their part**?

2

Process efficiency

a

Are there steps in the process that can be **eliminated or streamlined**?

b

Are there steps in the process that can **occasionally be skipped**?

c

Are there steps in the process that certain **staff members are better at**?

3

Dispel myths

a

What **myths or historical practices** are guiding parts of the process?



The district has made a strong commitment to hiring staff with mental health and counseling skills

Current Practice: Mental Health Staffing

4

ROLES AND
RESPONSIBILITIES

Role	FTE
School Psychologists	9
BCBAs	3
Guidance Counselors	11
School Adjustment Counselors	9.8
Total	32.8

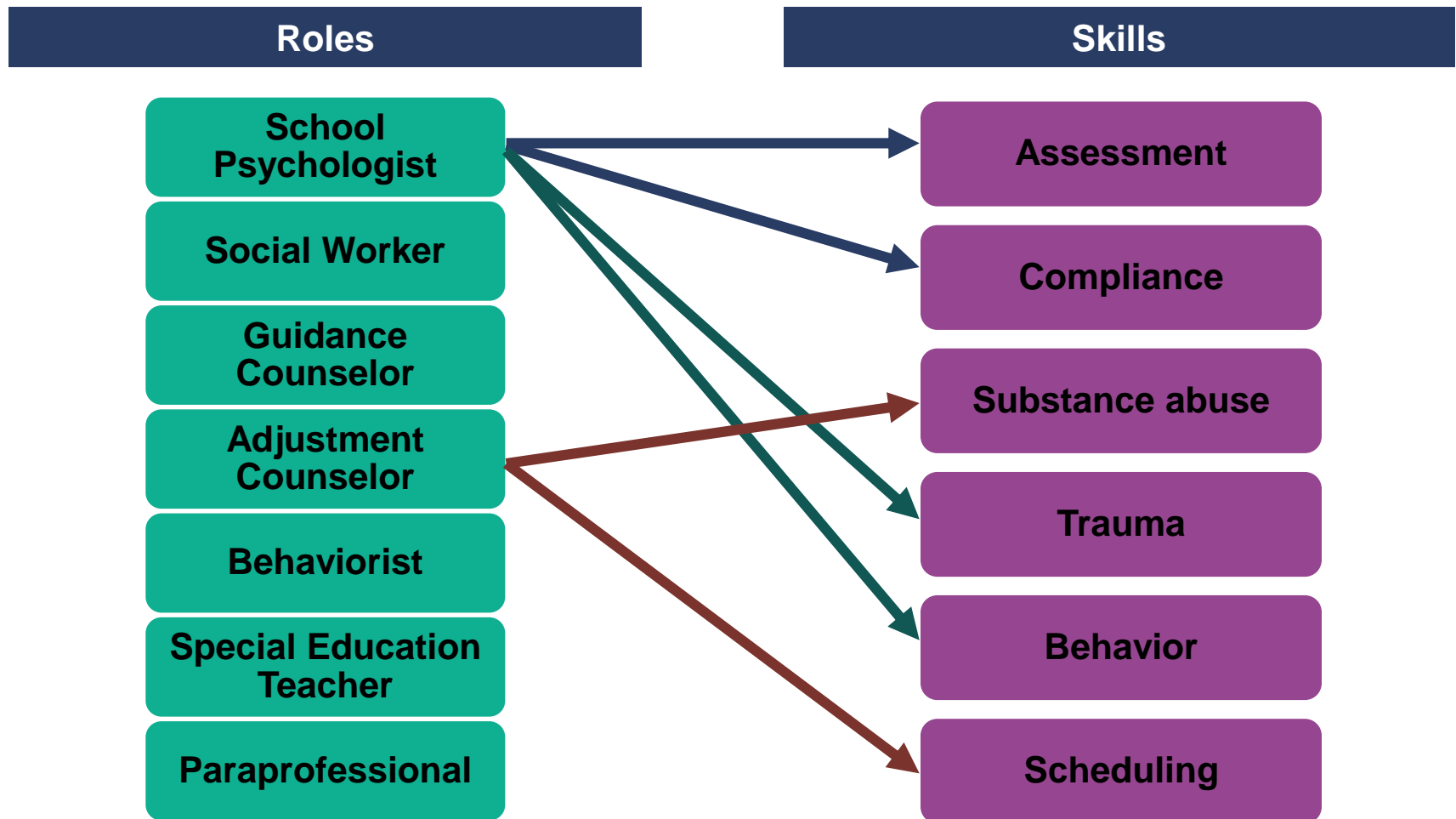


A person's title or role does not indicate their skills.

Best Practice: Roles vs. Skills

4

ROLES AND
RESPONSIBILITIES



The district might consider identifying staff strengths and clarifying roles to build on identified strengths.

Future Considerations

4

ROLES AND
RESPONSIBILITIES

The district might consider:

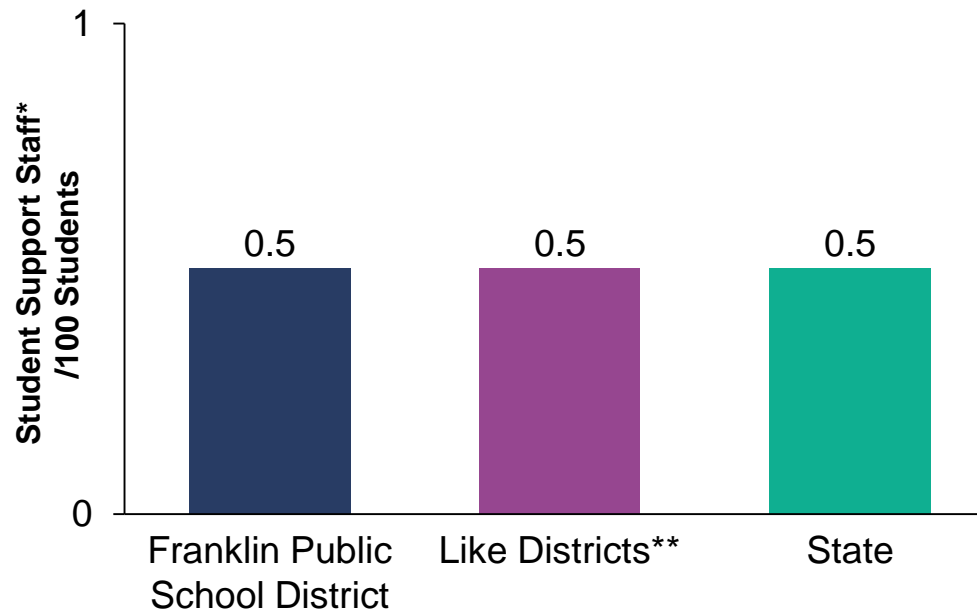
- **Identifying strengths and expertise within current staff in order to better leverage them within the context of the district's tiered system of supports. Identify strengths by:**
 - Surveying staff to understand where their strengths and interests lie
 - Review the details of their training and experience
- **Clarifying desired roles and responsibilities for key staff**
 - Collaborate with staff in development of updated roles and responsibilities to encourage buy-in
 - Clearly communicate the newly defined roles



However, compared to like districts and the overall state average, Franklin Public School District has typical staffing levels.

Student support Staff to Student Ratio

5 STAFFING MIX



*Support staff includes: guidance counselors, school adjustment counselors, social workers, and psychologists

**Like districts included districts with similar income, property values, and student demographics

Source: DESE RADAR data



As next steps, the district might consider exploring opportunities to alter the staffing mix at each school with input from principals.

Future Considerations

5 STAFFING MIX

The district might consider:

- **Establishing overall FTE staffing levels at each school based on enrollment (excluding special programs) and allow principals to have say in the mix of roles and skills within the allotted FTE**
 - Ensure allotments are shared with enough time for principals to seek out staff with needed skills
 - Changes should be phased over time
- **Seeking or expanding outside partnerships, such as local counseling agencies or universities, to augment district resources**
 - Ensure there is a dedicated (part time?) manager for outside partnerships to facilitate communication and problem solving for these partners as issues arise
 - As a part of facilitating these relationships, the manager could:
 - Identify and address any concerns or frustrations
 - Ensure appropriate space is available
 - Communicate weekly to flag any upcoming schedule shifts such as PD days or holidays
 - Introduce partners to school staff
 - Invite partners to relevant faculty meetings or other planning times



Staff shared that there aren't consistent criteria for placing students out of district, which may lead to higher rates of outplacement than like districts.

Current Practice: Out of District Placement

6 OUT OF DISTRICT
PLACEMENT

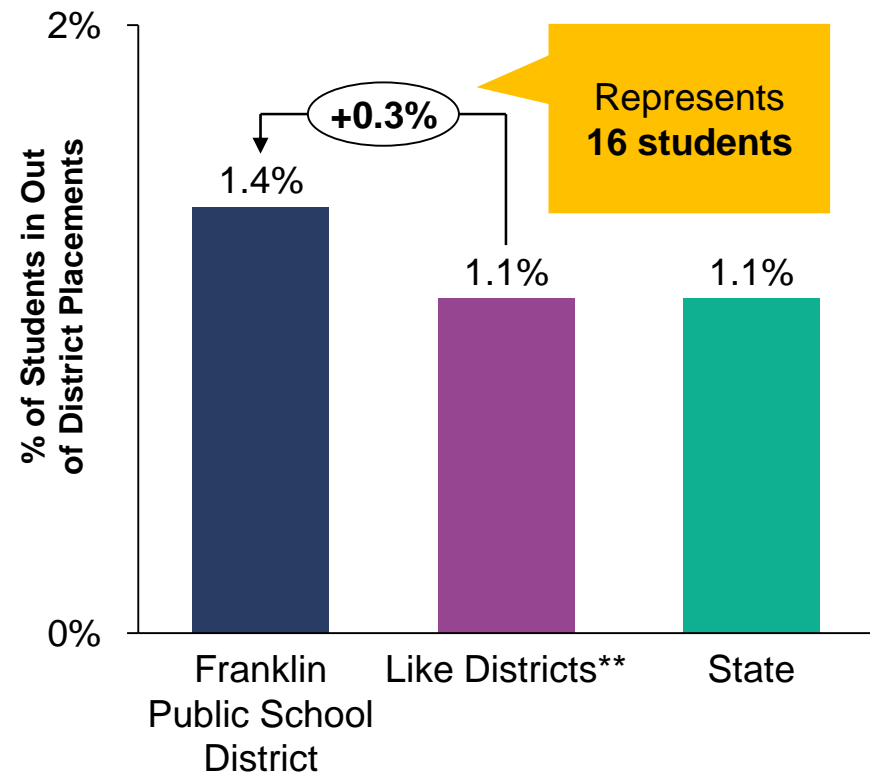
Lack of consistent criteria



"Some students have been out placed prematurely. And if you send a kid out in elementary, the chances of getting them back are slim."

"The needs of students are definitely rising, but we have too many students that aren't properly placed in outside programs."

Higher rates of outplacement*



*Source: RADAR

**Like districts included districts with similar income, property values, and student demographics



District Management Group

The district might consider developing consistent systems and supports for transitioning students in and out of district.

Future Considerations

6

OUT OF DISTRICT
PLACEMENT

The district might consider:

- **Developing a consistent system for supporting staff and students as they transition back to school**
 - Select a designated point person to act as a case manager for student transitioning back
 - Create an intake document for outside provider to fill in with important considerations for the student as they transition back
 - Engage school staff in developing and implementing a return transition plan
- **Exploring the possibility of expanding the REACH program to reduce the number of students sent out of district**
- **Developing consistent process and criteria for placing students out of district**
 - Having a centralized person or team involved in all such decisions

