The Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Quality Data Management Project

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The Project

Ultimate Goal:

to ensure safer school environments and communities and more effective prevention programs for youth throughout the State of Florida by means of the better use of higher-quality data to assess the specific prevention needs of the communities in which they live
The Project

Macro-Objectives:

- To assess the local-level information management and reporting systems currently in place in Florida,
- To develop protocols and recommendations for improving those systems, and
- To train personnel in the revised methods of data collection and reporting and in the use of empirical evidence to evaluate and improve their drug and violence prevention programs
Project Overview

- FDOE awarded grant of almost $1.5 million over three years (one of 11 states awarded)

- Purpose is to support state agencies in development and testing of strategies for developing or improving the capacity to collect, analyze, and use data to improve the quality of drug and violence prevention programs

- Help SEA, LEAs, other state agencies, and community-based agencies in this capacity
QDM Projects

Include activities designed to expand the capacity of LEAs and community-based agencies receiving SDFSC funds to use data to:

- Assess needs;
- Establish performance measures;
- Select appropriate interventions;
- Monitor progress toward established performance measures; and
- Inform public about drug and violence prevention programs.
Uniform Management Information and Reporting System (UMIRS)

States must collect data on:

(1) Truancy rates (school level)
(2) Frequency, seriousness, and incidence of violence and drug-related offenses resulting in suspensions and expulsions (school level)
(3) Types of curricula, programs and services provided by the CEO, the SEA, LEAs (state level)

and...
UMIRS

States must collect data on:

(4) Incidence and prevalence, age of onset, perception of health risk, and perception of social disapproval of drug and violence by youth in schools and communities.
The Uniform Dataset: Data Elements for the UMIRS

- Data element = “the lowest level of information to be collected from a specific source”

- Measure = the combination of “one or more data elements to represent a specific construct”

- Item = specific to self-report surveys; e.g., a survey question is a survey item
The Uniform Data Set: Data Elements for the UMIRS

- Objectives of report:
  - To propose measures designed to meet requirements for each UMIRS topic
  - To specify the data elements required for each measure and to identify the appropriate collection requirements for them
  - To outline potential implementation challenges and caveats to consider for each of the four UMIRS topics
Indicators of truancy should permit identification and monitoring of problems at both the school and student levels.

Issues in Collecting and Reporting Truancy Information

- Variable state definitions of truancy
- Differences in definitions of truancy between LEAs within states
- Utility of information on truancy
- Meaning of Truancy
TRUANCY

- **UDS proposed definition**: unexcused absence from compulsory education.
  - The threshold should be set at a minimum of 5 unexcused absences per year (Currently used by at least ten states).
  - An absence includes an absence for part of a school day (at least one class period).
  - It is recommended that states and localities compute truancy rates in real time or, at a minimum, on a quarterly basis.
TRUANCY

Preferred Measure:

Truancy Rate = \( \frac{\text{number of truants}}{\text{Count of student membership}} \times 100 \)

- Data components needed
  - Total number of truants as defined using threshold definition
  - Count of student membership
TRUANCY

Interim Measure:

Truancy Rate = \textit{number of unexcused absences} \times 100
\textit{Count of student membership}

- Data components needed
  - Total number of unexcused absences
  - Count of student membership
  - Days in session
Violent and Drug-Related Incidents Leading to Disciplinary Action

- UDS Definition of Disciplinary Action: Removal from the regular classroom for a period of at least one day (regardless of action as suspension or expulsion)

- Issues in collecting and reporting suspension and expulsion information
  - Variation in definitions and enforcement of suspension and expulsion
  - Accuracy of incident information related to suspension and expulsion
  - Consistency in the definition of incidents
  - Possible resistance to collecting incident data
Violent and Drug-Related Incidents Leading to Disciplinary Action

Preferred Measure

Incident Rate = number of incidents X 100
               count of student membership
Violent and Drug-Related Incidents Leading to Disciplinary Action

Interim Measure

Discipline
Rate = \frac{\text{number of students disciplined}}{\text{count of student membership}} \times 100
Violent and Drug-Related Incidents Leading to Disciplinary Action

Types of Incidents

- ATOD
  - Alcohol
  - Marijuana and cannabinoids
  - Other illicit drugs
  - Inappropriate use of medication – Prescribed or OTC
  - Tobacco
Violent and Drug-Related Incidents Leading to Disciplinary Action

Types of Incidents

- Violent Incidents without physical injury
  - assault
  - fights
  - robbery
  - Sexual and non-sexual harassment
  - School Threat
Violent and Drug-Related Incidents Leading to Disciplinary Action

Types of Incidents

- Weapons
  - Firearm possession
  - Other weapons
Violent and Drug-Related Incidents Leading to Disciplinary Action

Types of Incidents

- Violent Incidents resulting in physical injury
  - assault
  - fights
  - robbery
  - Sexual assault
  - Homicide
Violent and Drug-Related Incidents Leading to Disciplinary Action

Types of Incidents

- Other
  - Bullying, threats, intimidation
Violent and Drug-Related Incidents Leading to Disciplinary Action

Inconsistencies with Current Data Collection:

- ATOD – need to break out marijuana and other cannabinoids from other illicit drugs need to add category for “inappropriate use of medication”
- Violent incidents/no injury – need to add a category for physical altercation/minor
- Weapons – need to distinguish between firearms possession and other weapons
Prevalence of Violence and Substance Abuse

- Issues in collecting and reporting prevalence of violence and substance abuse:
  - Generality and resulting ambiguity in the UMIRS requirement
  - Limitations of current studies
  - Avoiding duplication with other federal data requirements
  - Effective use of survey data.

- To meet the UMIRS requirements, many states will need to substitute, add, or expand existing surveys
Prevalence of Violence and Substance Abuse

**Recommended Content Area**

- **Substance Use Behavior** – lifetime and past 30 day use; amount; use on school property (*4 Major categories: alcohol, marijuana, other illicit, and tobacco.*)

- **Substance use Attitudes and Perceptions** – Perceived prevalence of use by school peers, referred to as “social norm” measures. (*Recommended multi-item scales.*)

- **Violent Behavior** – Measures violence and violence-related safety.

- **Violence Attitudes and Perceptions of safety**.
Prevalence of Violence and Substance Abuse

Missing from piloted FNAS:

- Substance Use Behavior – missing “use on school property” items
- Cigarettes – no item for “cigarettes smoked per day”
- No items to measure of perception of disapproval
- Perceptions of safety – no items regarding “clarity of rules” or bullying/violence as a problem at school
- No items to measure perception of neighborhood safety
- No items to measure perception of peer use
The interventions subject to data collection are those funded with federal SDFS dollars, including programs and other activities implemented by the offices of the chief executive officer within states and territories, SEAs, and LEAs.

Issues in collecting and reporting information on programs and other activities

- Variation in types of programs and other activities
- Data collection and reporting on planned or actual implementation
- Utility of information on programs and other activities.

For purposes of the UDS, it is recommended that reporting is focused on activities directly related to “programs,” which are defined as “coherent sets of activities that are intended to prevent or reduce problem behavior.”

Furthermore, it is recommended that the UDS only cover actual activities and not planned activities.
Reporting on SDFS-Funded Programs and other Activities

Recommended Program Typology

- Prevention curriculum, instruction, or training programs
- Behavioral programming of behavioral modification programs
- Counseling, social work, psychological, or therapeutic programs
- Mentoring, tutoring, coaching, apprenticeship, or other programs involving individual attention
- Recreational, enrichment, or leisure programs
- Programs involving improvements to instructional practices
- Programs involving improvement to classroom organization or management practices
- Programs to change or maintain the culture or climate of the school, alter or maintain expectations for student behavior, or secure commitment norms
Reporting on SDFS-Funded Programs and other Activities

Recommended Program Typology

- Programs focused on inter-group relations or interaction between the school and the community, or among groups within the school
- Programs related to youth roles in regulating or responding to student conduct
- Programs involving a school planning structure or process or a method of managing change
- Security or surveillance programs
- Programs or services for families or family members
- Programs that limit access to alcohol and tobacco
- Programs that influence the culture and contexts of alcohol and tobacco use
- Community awareness and education programs
Reporting on SDFS-Funded Programs and other Activities

- In addition, two other dimensions on which the above interventions might be categorized are
  - the research support for the effectiveness that underlies them (proven, promising, or neither) and
  - the kinds of problems on which they focus (substance abuse, school crime/violence, both, or other)