A MODEL CODE
ON EDUCATION AND DIGNITY

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National Economic and Social Rights Initiative (NESRI)

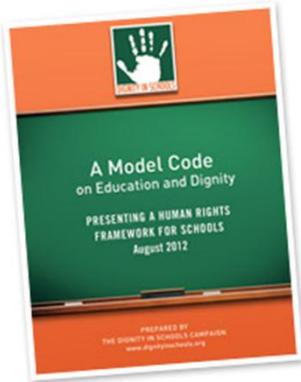Dignity in Schools Campaign (DSC)

Dignity in Schools Campaign (DSC)

- Challenges the systemic problem of pushout and advocates for the human right of every young person to education and dignity

- 77 organizations from 22 states:
  - Youth and parent groups
  - Legal and advocacy groups
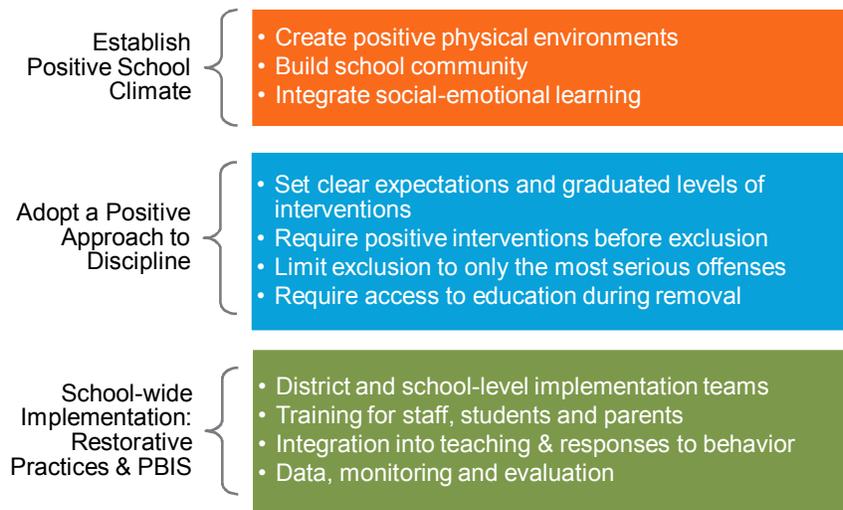 - Teachers and educators
  - Researchers

DSC Model Code

- Model policies for schools, districts and legislators to address school pushout and create safe and positive climates for learning

- Based on research, best practices and on the ground experiences of students, parents and educators

- Rooted in fundamental human rights principle that the goal of education is to develop each young person to their full potential

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Key Elements of School Climate & Discipline Policy

Establish Positive School Climate
- Create positive physical environments
- Build school community
- Integrate social-emotional learning

Adopt a Positive Approach to Discipline
- Set clear expectations and graduated levels of interventions
- Require positive interventions before exclusion
- Limit exclusion to only the most serious offenses
- Require access to education during removal

School-wide Implementation: Restorative Practices & PBIS
- District and school-level implementation teams
- Training for staff, students and parents
- Integration into teaching & responses to behavior
- Data, monitoring and evaluation

Example of Levels of Intervention

Key: Use lowest level indicated first	
Level 1: Classroom support – May be appropriate when the student has no prior incidents and interventions have not been put in place.	**Level 2:** RtI/IEP Team – may be appropriate when supports have been put in place in the classroom to address behavior but the behavior has continued to negatively impact the learning of the student and others
Level 3: TST, Intensive Support Staff, and Appropriate Administration – may be appropriate when school supports are needed to correct behavior	**Level 4:** Suspension (1-3 Days) and Referral – may be appropriate when interventions and supports have been put in place but the behavior is escalating (repeated offenses)
Level 5: Extended Suspension, (1-10 days) Expulsion, and Referral – may be appropriate when student's behavior seriously impacts the safety of others in the school	

Note: On the first instance of an inappropriate or disruptive behavior, use one or more intervention from the lowest level indicated for that behavior, or any lower level. If the same behavior is repeated during the same school year, one or more interventions or disciplinary responses from the next highest level may be used. Lower-level interventions may always be used, but interventions or disciplinary responses from the shaded boxes may never be used.

Inappropriate or Disruptive Behavior	Levels				
	1	2	3	4	5
Classroom Disruptions (e.g., talking out in class or talking out of turn, throwing objects, and other behavior that distracts from student learning)	●	●	●		
Dress code violation	●	●			
Fighting ➤Physical aggression - No injury(e.g., pushing and shoving) ➤More serious fighting (may include incidents involving minor injuries)		●	●	● ●	●

Using the Model Code

➤ Identify which sections of the Code are most relevant to your community or school

➤ Compare the Model Code to the existing law or policy

➤ Use "recommended language" from the Code to help shape policy changes

➤ Use guidelines in the Model Code to assist with implementation

Breakout Session

- James Payne, Alliance for Quality Education and Citizen Action of New York, will share his experience reforming Buffalo's Discipline Code

- Walk through the DSC Model Code Comparison Tool

Questions about what is in your local Code of Conduct:	Is the Code followed?	What does the DSC Model Code say about it?	Follow-up questions/ changes you want
1. Can you easily get a copy of your District's Code of Conduct? Is it available on-line? Do students and parents receive a copy at the start of the school year?		Districts and schools must ensure that students, parents or guardians, and teachers know and understand all of the school norms, expectations, rules and disciplinary processes. (Pg. 22 3.1.a.D.2)	
Guidelines for Suspensions and Expulsions			
2. Are there guidelines for when a school can and cannot suspend or expel a student? Are suspensions and expulsions limited to only serious and dangerous offenses?		Suspension or expulsion may only be considered for the most serious and dangerous offenses and only if absolutely necessary to protect the safety of the school community. (Pg. 32 3.1.c.B)	
3. Does your district list alternatives to suspension? Does your district require that alternatives be used before suspension/expulsion?		Suspensions or expulsions may only be used after non-exclusionary discipline alternatives (like counseling, mediation, etc.) have been carefully considered, tried and documented. (Pg. 32 3.1.c.B.1.a)	
4. Can a student be expelled or suspended for a first time offense?		No student can be suspended or expelled for a first-time offense (unless required by federal or state law or in an emergency). (Pg. 33 3.1.c.D.1)	
5. Are there different rules for students of different ages or grade levels? (For example, different suspension policies for elementary and middle school students vs. high school?)		No student under the age of 10 may be excluded from school for disciplinary reasons. (Pg. 33 3.1.c.D.2) No student under the age of 15 may receive a suspension of more than 3 days. (Pg. 33 3.1.c.D.3)	

Resources for Using the Model Code

http://www.dignityinschools.org/our-work/model-school-code

- Executive Summary and Model Code by Section

- Discipline Code Comparison Tool (breakout session)

- Community Toolkit and Workshop Exercises
  - Tips for sharing the Code with policy-makers, students, parents, educators and communities
  - Sample activities for holding workshops on the Code
  - List of resources (reports, model laws and policies, etc.) to help in implementing the Code

- Participate in Model Code Webinars or Hold a Training
  - Email liz@nesri.org