

CODE OF CONDUCT

A GUIDE TO RESPONSIVE DISCIPLINE



TEACHING
TOLERANCE

A PROJECT OF THE SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER

CODE OF CONDUCT

A GUIDE TO RESPONSIVE DISCIPLINE

ABOUT TEACHING TOLERANCE

Founded in 1991, Teaching Tolerance, a project of the Southern Poverty Law Center, is dedicated to helping teachers and schools prepare children and youth to be active participants in a diverse democracy.

The program provides free educational materials including film kits, scripted lessons and a tool that allows educators to build their own learning plans. *Teaching Tolerance* magazine is sent to more than 400,000 educators, reaching nearly every school in the country. More than 7,000 schools participate in the annual Mix It Up at Lunch Day program.

Teaching Tolerance materials have won two Oscars®, an Emmy® and dozens of REVERE Awards from the Association of American Publishers, including three Golden Lamps, the industry's highest honor. The program's website and social media pages offer thought-provoking news, conversation and support for educators who care about diversity, equal opportunity and respect for differences in schools.

For more information about Teaching Tolerance or to download this guide, visit tolerance.org.

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

In the Spring 2013 issue of *Teaching Tolerance* magazine, we offered “A Teacher’s Guide to Rerouting the Pipeline.” This magazine feature introduced five shifts teachers can apply to their thinking and practice to avoid zero-tolerance disciplinary measures and keep more students in school. (See the appendix at the end of this guide.) *Code of Conduct: A Guide to Responsive Discipline* extends our work in school discipline reform and responsive discipline practice to include other stakeholders.

This guide includes scenarios and questions tailored specifically to teachers, counselors, building and district leaders and school resource officers. It can be used to prompt individual self-reflection or to kick-start conversations among colleagues about beliefs and practices related to student misbehavior. Analyzing the conditions that push students out of school—such as a zero-tolerance disciplinary culture—is an important first step toward making the shifts necessary to end the school-to-prison pipeline.

Find your role, read the scenario and consider the questions. Each question is designed to stimulate thinking about how your thoughts and actions could keep the hypothetical student in the classroom and out of the juvenile justice system. Then, try asking the role-specific questions about real-life disciplinary scenarios that challenge you at your school.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	4
--------------------	---

SECTION ONE

Assess Current Discipline Practices	5
---	---

SECTION TWO

Scenarios and Reflections	7
Teachers	8
Counselors	10
Principals	12
School District Personnel	14
School Resource Officers	16

SECTION THREE

Additional Recommendations	18
Critical Practices	19
Related Resources	20

APPENDIX

A Teacher's Guide to Rerouting the Pipeline	21
---	----

Acknowledgments	24
-----------------------	----

INTRODUCTION

“How does my own conduct affect the school-to-prison pipeline?”

This is a question everyone who works in schools should be asking. We know that teachers make daily decisions about how to respond to classroom misbehavior and that adopting a responsive approach to discipline keeps more students in the classroom and out of the juvenile justice system. But counselors, building and district leaders, and school resource officers (SROs) can also apply responsive discipline practices to common student misbehaviors. Verbal disrespect, dress code violations, lateness, truancy and aggressive behavior don’t have to result in police referrals or even lost instructional time.

A shift in our behaviors can keep more students in school. It requires critical examination of our own “codes of conduct” as adults reacting to juvenile behavior.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Begin by completing the exercises in Section One: Assess Current Discipline Practices. This section will help you identify the current “codes of conduct” among the adults at your school and the areas where disciplinary practices could become more responsive.

Move on to Section Two: Scenarios and Reflections. Find your role, read the scenario and consider the five shifts. Each shift comes with role-specific reflection questions to help you make the shift and keep students in the classroom. Some shifts can happen immediately; others require time, training and planning. Once you work through the hypothetical scenario and decide how you would respond (in both the short term and the long term), try applying the questions to real-life disciplinary challenges you face at school.

Finally, review Section Three for suggestions on how to sustain your learning and extend it to the larger school community.

SHIFTS FOR REROUTING THE PIPELINE

1. Adopt a social emotional lens.
2. Know your students and develop cultural competency.
3. Plan and deliver (or support) effective student-centered instruction.
4. Move the paradigm from punishment to development.
5. Resist the criminalization of school behavior.

SECTION ONE

ASSESS CURRENT DISCIPLINE PRACTICES

Use this questionnaire to examine your own perceptions around fairness and discipline at your school. You can also use it as a professional development activity or as part of larger disciplinary assessment that includes data analysis, interviews, focus groups and reflection.

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being “I strongly disagree” and 5 being “I strongly agree,” indicate the accuracy of each statement in the context of your school.

- _____ Students know the consequences for misbehavior.
- _____ Students trust building leaders and school resource officers (SROs) to act in students’ best interests.
- _____ Students believe the consequences for misbehavior are fair.
- _____ Students feel comfortable reporting if/when rules and consequences are being applied inconsistently.
- _____ Teachers work together to regularly analyze and review discipline data.
- _____ My school uses positive alternatives to suspension and expulsion.
- _____ Teachers, counselors and building leaders are fair.
- _____ Suspension and expulsion are last resorts.
- _____ Suspension and expulsion are never used as threats to correct students’ behavior.
- _____ Teachers, administrators, staff, students and parents work together to determine disciplinary policies and procedures.

*Indicate which of the following incidents have happened at your school in the last three months by responding **TRUE** or **FALSE** to each statement.*

- _____ I’ve seen different consequences given to students for the same or similar misbehaviors.
- _____ I’ve heard a teacher call for security, refer a student to the office or threaten a student with removal from class.
- _____ I’ve heard an SRO threaten to lock a student up.
- _____ I’ve seen our school’s discipline data and reports.
- _____ Our faculty analyzes discipline data and reports.
- _____ I’ve heard a teacher or other adult in the school make disparaging remarks about an individual student or a particular identity group.
- _____ I’ve seen students disciplined in ways that do not match the misbehaviors.

Reflect on the results of the questionnaire. What do you observe about discipline at your school? Which areas are strong? Which areas need improvement? Use these results to guide your thinking in Section Two.

SECTION TWO

SCENARIOS AND REFLECTIONS

Find your role, read the scenario, and consider the shifts and accompanying questions. After you decide how you would respond—in both the short term and the long term—extend your learning by applying the questions to a real-life disciplinary challenge you have experienced. Scenarios can be used for individual or group reflection.

TEACHERS

Teachers have the most face-to-face contact with students and a front-line opportunity to interrupt the school-to-prison pipeline. Instructional practice and discipline structure can keep kids in class or push them out.

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING SCENARIO.

Stephanie is in your third-period class. When she fully participates in lessons and activities, the class runs smoothly and all students remain engaged for the entire period. Today, however, she is defiant, refusing to do her work and disrupting class with inappropriate language. She doesn't respond to verbal redirection.



How could you respond to keep Stephanie in school? How could you shift your practices to support responsive discipline?

Focus on one or two shifts to help formulate your plan.

SHIFT 1

Adopt a Social Emotional Lens

How am I behaving in the moment?

What do I want my behavior to convey to my students?

How do my students react to my behavior?

Do I integrate social emotional learning into my teaching?

SHIFT 2

Know Your Students and Develop Cultural Competency

What personal biases do I have, and how might I overcome those biases?

What do I know about my students' families and cultures?

What do I know about the traumas my students may experience?

What are some trauma-informed strategies I can use with my students?

SHIFT 3

Plan and Deliver Effective Student-Centered Instruction

What identities are reflected in the curriculum? Do my lessons reflect all of my students' identities?

Whose identities are reflected on the walls of my classroom?

Is there a sense of urgency when I teach?

Who does the talking in my classroom?

SHIFT 4

Move the Paradigm From Punishment to Development

Do I send students to the office or call the school resource officer as a consequence for minor disciplinary offenses?

When do I call or communicate with a student's family?

Which do I do more often: praise my students or discipline them?

Do I single out students for negative reasons?

Am I using my role as a teacher to advocate for a shift away from zero-tolerance?

SHIFT 5

Resist the Criminalization of School Behavior

Is the student testing boundaries or committing a crime?

Who is disciplined in my classroom? What infractions are they are disciplined for?

Do the consequences my students receive fit the infractions?

What happens to students after I remove them from class?

My short-term plan is ...
My long-term plan is ...

COUNSELORS

From locating wrap-around services to understanding and uncovering issues that adversely affect students in the classroom, counselors are equipped to interrupt the school-to-prison pipeline through their work with both teachers and students.

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING SCENARIO.

Devyn has worn a skirt to school again. Although her school records identify her as male, Devyn identifies as female. She feels most comfortable in skirts and responding to feminine pronouns. She has been referred to the office numerous times for violating dress code. Each time she is referred to the office she falls further behind in her classes. She is waiting to see you.



How could you respond to keep Devyn in school? How could you shift your practices to support responsive discipline?

Focus on one or two shifts to help formulate your plan.

SHIFT 1

Adopt a Social Emotional Lens

How do I behave in interactions with faculty, staff and students?

How do others respond to my behavior?

What protocols, practices or strategies do I offer teachers that support a positive classroom climate?

How do my interactions with students support social emotional learning and development?

Does my counseling practice foster positive social emotional relationships between adults and students and among students?

SHIFT 2

Know Your Students and Develop Cultural Competency

Who are my students' supports and allies?

What do I know about the diversity of cultures represented in my school?

What do I know about the traumas my students may experience?

What trauma-informed resources can I share with teachers to help them support students from diverse backgrounds?

What resources can I share with students to support their unique identities?

Am I using my counseling role to leverage students' strengths and skills?

SHIFT 3

Support Effective Student-Centered Instruction

Whose identities are reflected on the walls of our building?

How do I encourage teachers to reflect on the identities represented in their curricula?

What instructional practices can I suggest and model for teachers that will help keep students in the classroom?

How is student feedback gathered? Are students given the chance to complete class/teacher evaluations?

SHIFT 4

Move the Paradigm From Punishment to Development

What resources am I able to offer when I contact a student's family?

Does my counseling practice help students control their impulses and advocate for themselves if they experience bias in the classroom?

What building-wide professional development can I offer to shift my school's discipline paradigm from punitive to responsive?

What restorative justice practices can I implement with students and faculty to positively impact school climate?

Am I using my counseling role to advocate for a shift away from zero-tolerance?

SHIFT 5

Resist the Criminalization of School Behavior

Are specific guidelines in place to help teachers make decisions about discipline referrals?

What responsive and age-appropriate consequences can I suggest to my colleagues?

What is my relationship with the school resource officer(s)?

Who is disciplined in my school? What are the infractions they are disciplined for?

Would students sent to the school resource officer for minor disciplinary offenses have benefited from counseling instead?

My short-term plan is ...

My long-term plan is ...

PRINCIPALS

As building leaders, principals can help interrupt the school-to-prison pipeline by modeling responsive shifts for other adults in the school.

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING SCENARIO.

Lisa is frequently absent and often late to her fourth-period English class. You have found her wandering the halls, barred from entering class after the tardy bell. She regularly stays after her third-period class, Academic Language Acquisition, for extra help with her assignments. The classes are on opposite sides of the building, often causing her to arrive for fourth period just moments after the bell. She's been caught in a hall sweep five times.



How could you respond to keep Lisa in school? How could you shift your practices to support responsive discipline?

Focus on one or two shifts to help formulate your plan.

SHIFT 1

Adopt a Social Emotional Lens

How do I work to ensure all students in my school feel welcome and supported?

What building-wide policies can create a school climate that empowers students to advocate for their needs?

What building-wide policies can create a school climate that supports students' social emotional skill development?

Are all school staff required to complete quality professional development about responsive discipline or social emotional learning?

SHIFT 2

Know Your Students and Develop Cultural Competency

What do I know about the diversity of cultures represented in my school?

How often do I invite family and community members into the school?

How visible is our school in the larger community?

Do my students ever see me outside of my office?

How can I involve students, families and community members in improving our school culture?

Are all staff required to complete quality professional development about cultural competency and equity literacy?

SHIFT 3

Support Effective Student-Centered Instruction

When is the last time I observed a class?

What do I know about what teachers in my school are teaching?

Are staff required to complete quality professional development about student-centered instruction?

How is student feedback gathered? Are students given the chance to complete class/teacher evaluations?

SHIFT 4

Move the Paradigm From Punishment to Development

In the past six months, who has been disciplined and for what infractions?

What rewards programs are in place to celebrate student success?

What school-wide policies could help my staff respond to misbehavior with age-appropriate consequences that fit the infraction?

Who is involved in writing discipline procedures?

As principal, do I advocate for a shift away from zero-tolerance discipline?

SHIFT 5

Resist the Criminalization of School Behavior

Do current disciplinary policies outline when to solicit the help of school resource officer(s)?

What behavioral intervention methods can I share with classroom teachers to support their classroom management skills?

Who is disciplined in my school? What are the infractions they are disciplined for?

Is discipline handled consistently throughout the building?

What is my relationship with the school resource officer(s)?

*My short-term plan is ...
My long-term plan is ...*

SCHOOL DISTRICT PERSONNEL

District-wide responsive discipline policies can be critical to stopping the school-to-prison pipeline. When school district personnel become agents for change, they support teachers, counselors and building-level administrators to make these shifts.

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING SCENARIO.

Derrick is repeating basic math. He is returning to class from a three-day suspension for repetitive verbal disrespect in his math class. Upon his return, he finds himself further behind in his studies. He knows if he fails this class he will have to repeat the tenth grade. His teacher calls on him several times to answer questions from the material he missed while suspended. Asked to solve another equation, Derrick gets frustrated and leaves the room, shouldering his teacher as she attempts to block him from the classroom door. Your district policy calls for Derrick to be expelled for this incident.



How could you respond to keep Derrick in school? How could you shift your practices to support responsive discipline?

Focus on one or two shifts to help formulate your plan.

SHIFT 1

Adopt a Social Emotional Lens

How do I model the need for social emotional learning across the district?

Are all school district personnel required to complete quality professional development about responsive discipline or social emotional learning?

How do we sustain learning that happens during district-wide professional development?

What district-wide policies can create a school climate that empowers students to advocate for their needs and supports their social emotional skill development?

SHIFT 2

Know Your Students and Develop Cultural Competency

What do I know about the communities my district serves?

What are the most pressing issues and concerns confronting our students and their families?

What district-wide policies can we put in place to address community issues?

Are district employees required to complete professional development about cultural competency and equity literacy?

SHIFT 3

Support Effective Student-Centered Instruction

Who is involved in selecting the curricula in my district?

Are district employees required to complete any quality professional development about student-centered instruction?

Are the curricula taught in my district student-centered, engaging and enabling? Do they provide windows and mirrors into student experiences?

SHIFT 4

Move the Paradigm From Punishment to Development

How many students leave the school during the year? Where do they go?

Who is suspended in my district? For what kinds of infractions?

How can I partner with teachers and principals to track discipline and formulate strategies to keep students in class?

What district-wide policies could help our schools respond to misbehavior with age-appropriate consequences that fit the infraction?

What types of professional development, training or support do district personnel need to become more effective at responsive discipline?

Am I using my role in the district to advocate for a shift away from zero tolerance?

SHIFT 5

Resist the Criminalization of School Behavior

What disciplinary data does our district collect?

What happens to students after they are removed from school?

What common language does our district use to describe student behavior?

Is discipline handled consistently across the district?

My short-term plan is ...

My long-term plan is ...

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS

School resource officers (SROs) are central to rerouting the school-to-prison pipeline. They can help identify behaviors that require intervention by law enforcement and those that do not. SROs have an important role to play in revising policies that funnel students into the pipeline.

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING SCENARIO.

You find Cooper and Justice fighting in the first-grade hallway after lunch. You physically separate them. Neither student is seriously injured and district policy states that you determine what happens next.



How could you respond to keep Cooper and Justice in school? How could you shift your practices to support responsive discipline?

Focus on one or two shifts to help formulate your plan.

SHIFT 1

Adopt a Social Emotional Lens

Am I supporting a positive school climate with my presence?

Do students perceive my actions as supportive or intimidating?

What do I want my behavior to convey to students?

What do I need to know about social emotional development?

SHIFT 2

Know Your Students and Develop Cultural Competency

What do I know about my students, their families and the surrounding communities?

What interactions do I have with students and their families?

What am I doing to encourage relationships among the school staff, communities and families?

SHIFT 3

Support Effective Student-Centered Instruction

What is my relationship with the teachers in the school?

How can I support teachers and help keep students in the classroom?

What local community resources are available to teachers, students and their families?

SHIFT 4

Move the Paradigm From Punishment to Development

What happens when I interact with a student who has been removed from class?

What responsive and age-appropriate consequences can I suggest to teachers to help keep students in the classroom?

When students misbehave, do I offer students consequences that support their development?

Do I single out students for negative reasons? For positive reasons?

Am I using my role as an SRO to advocate for a shift away from zero tolerance?

SHIFT 5

Resist the Criminalization of School Behavior

Which school behaviors are criminal offenses and which are misconduct?

Which existing building policies result in the most school suspensions?

What happens to students when I remove them from school?

Is this misbehavior best addressed in the juvenile justice system or by school leadership?

What information can I provide to teachers, principals, counselors and school district personnel about criminal and non-criminal behavior?

My short-term plan is ...

My long-term plan is ...

SECTION THREE

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations apply to all stakeholders and can provide a blueprint for making responsive shifts at the classroom, school and district levels.

- Collect disciplinary data. Analyze referrals by infraction, teacher, student demographics (including special education status) and consequence.
- Consult parents and students when drafting district- and school-wide disciplinary policies.
- Push to adopt disciplinary strategies that keep students in the classroom. Make it a school-wide goal to keep students in class unless they are a danger to themselves or others.
- Collaborate with juvenile justice stakeholders, including judges, prosecuting and defense attorneys, and officers of the court, to create policies that keep students who have been referred to law enforcement out of the school-to-prison pipeline.
- Decriminalize minor misbehavior, truancy and lateness. Do not threaten or scare students with the possibility of reporting minor misbehavior to law enforcement, regardless of whether or not they have been arrested previously.
- Contact local, regional and national trauma-response providers, and ask for resources that can help your staff support students, families and the entire school community.
- Inform students and parents of their rights regarding your school's disciplinary policies. Be transparent and always grant students the benefit of the doubt, regardless of prior arrest or referrals.

CRITICAL PRACTICES

Teaching Tolerance's *Critical Practices for Anti-bias Education* lists 20 culturally responsive practices that can help improve school climate, support student-centered instruction and keep students in the classroom. This table indicates how each critical practice is associated with one or more of the five shifts discussed in this guide. (Refer to the full publication for detailed descriptions of each practice. tolerance.org/critical-practices)

	Adopt a Social Emotional Lens SHIFT 1	Know Your Students and Develop Cultural Competency SHIFT 2	Plan and Deliver (or Support) Effective Student- Centered Instruction SHIFT 3	Move the Paradigm From Punishment to Development SHIFT 4	Resist the Criminalization of School Behavior SHIFT 5
INSTRUCTION					
Critical Engagement With Material	X		X		
Differentiated Instruction			X		
Cooperative and Collaborative Learning			X		
Real-World Connections			X		
Values-Based Assessment, Evaluation and Grading		X	X	X	
CLASSROOM CULTURE					
Honoring Student Experience			X	X	
Thoughtful Classroom Setup and Structure			X		
Shared Inquiry and Dialogue			X		
Social and Emotional Safety	X		X	X	
Values-Based Behavior Management		X	X	X	
FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT					
Culturally Sensitive Communication	X	X	X		
Inclusion of Family and Community Wisdom	X	X	X		
Increased Connections Among Families	X	X		X	
Use of Local Resources	X	X	X		
Engagement With Community Issues and Problems	X	X	X		
TEACHER LEADERSHIP					
Self-Awareness and Cultural Competency		X			X
Speaking Up and Responding to Prejudice, Bias and Stereotypes				X	X
Building Alliances					X
Leading Beyond the Classroom					X
Ongoing Reflection and Learning	X	X	X	X	X

RELATED RESOURCES

TEACHING TOLERANCE MAGAZINE ARTICLES AND TOOLKITS

Search for these titles on tolerance.org. Filter the results by “magazine feature story.”

- False Sense of Security (*Summer 2015*)
- Girls, Interrupted (*Summer 2015*)
- Is My School Racist? (*Fall 2013*)
- Learning From the Inside (*Summer 2015*)
- Pushed Out (*Fall 2009*)
- The School-to-Prison Pipeline (*Spring 2013*)

TEACHING TOLERANCE PUBLICATIONS

Search for these titles using the filter found on tolerance.org/publications.

- Best Practices: Creating an LGBT-inclusive School Climate
- Best Practices: Engaging Limited English Proficient Students and Families
- Beyond the Golden Rule
- Speak Up at School
- Teaching *The New Jim Crow*
- Teaching Tolerance Anti-bias Framework

TEACHING TOLERANCE CLASSROOM RESOURCES

To search for student-centered instructional materials, visit tolerance.org/classroom-resources.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

AJ+. American Kids & The School-To-Prison Pipeline. YouTube, May 18, 2015.

American Civil Liberties Union. “What Is the School-to-Prison Pipeline?” ACLU.

Cregor, Matt and Damon Hewitt. “Dismantling the School-to-Prison Pipeline: A Survey from the Field.” *Poverty & Race* 20, no. 1 (January/February 2011).

Laskowski, Kevin. “Turning the Wheels of Justice: Revamping the juvenile justice system through advocacy.” National Center for Family Philanthropy, September 15, 2008.

Losen, Daniel, Damon Hewitt and Ivory Toldson. *Eliminating Excessive and Unfair Exclusionary Discipline in Schools: Policy Recommendations for Reducing Disparities*. Discipline Disparities Series: Policy, March 2014.

Morris, Monique W. *Race, Gender and the School-to-Prison Pipeline: Expanding Our Discussion to Include Black Girls*. African American Policy Forum.

St. George, Donna. “Researchers point to racial disparities in school suspension, spotlight new practices.” *The Washington Post*, March 14, 2014, under “Education.”

Testimony of Donna Lieberman on Behalf of the New York Civil Liberties Union. “The Impact of School Suspensions, and a Demand for Passage of the Student Safety Act.” NYCLU.

United States Department of Education. *Guiding Principles: A Resource Guide for Improving School Climate and Discipline*. U.S. Department of Education, January 2014.

Wilf, Rachel. “Disparities in School Discipline Move Students of Color Toward Prison: New Data Show Youth of Color Disproportionately Suspended and Expelled From School.” Center for American Progress, March 13, 2012.

APPENDIX

A TEACHER'S GUIDE TO REROUTING THE PIPELINE

BY EMILY CHIARIELLO

Principals, school resource officers, probation officers and social workers are typically charged with responding to school discipline problems. But in reality, classroom teachers spend the most time with students. Their daily decisions can help divert students from the school-to-prison pipeline.

MEET MICHAEL

Michael is 15 and repeating the ninth grade. He's in your world history class and habitually tilts his chair back and drums annoyingly on his desk with a pencil. This morning, he was doing it—again—while you were trying to teach.

What do you do? A punitive teacher might take the pencil away, kick Michael out of class, or even refer him for disciplinary action. But there's always the opportunity to reflect and be more responsive.

Responsive teachers shift their reactions in important ways. They adopt a social emotional lens: What does Michael's tapping say about his mood? Is he bored or frustrated? Does the tapping bother other students, or just me?

It's also important to know students and develop cultural competency. Is Michael comforted by percussive rhythms? Maybe you could encourage him to join the band.

The third shift calls for planning and delivering effective student-centered instruction. For instance, what kinesthetic or rhythmic learning strategies might engage Michael?

Move the paradigm from punishment to development by determining what initial expectations—like not drumming for 10 minutes—Michael can meet.

Finally, resist the criminalization of school behavior. Consider the consequences Michael will face if he misses class because he is suspended.

These five responsive shifts in teacher thinking apply even as a student's behavior escalates—and they can be the key to rerouting the school-to-prison pipeline.

A TEACHER’S GUIDE TO REROUTING THE PIPELINE

TYPE OF BEHAVIOR

Verbal Disrespect Michael is defiant and uses inappropriate language when verbally redirected.	Dress Code Violation Michael comes to class without a belt on, pants sagging.	Lateness or Truancy Michael is frequently absent from or tardy to his first-period class and is failing.
--	---	--

A PUNATIVE TEACHER’S REFLECTIONS

Argue with Michael, kick him out of class or refer him for disciplinary action.	Lecture Michael about the dress code in front of classmates, kick him out of class or refer him for disciplinary action.	Lock the door after the bell rings and give Michael zeros with no make-up option for work he missed.
---	--	--

A RESPONSIVE TEACHER’S REFLECTIONS

How can I address Michael’s feelings of powerlessness so he is less defensive when I assert my authority?	Does Michael have a belt? Should I keep an extra one in the classroom?	What personal problems might prevent Michael from getting to school on time?
How might my words, tone and body language make Michael feel disrespected?	How can I affirm that clothing norms are different at school and home but neither is good nor bad?	Are there family problems that might prevent Michael from getting to school on time?
How can I differentiate my instruction to better meet Michael’s needs and tap his strengths?	How does my teaching affect Michael’s self-image?	Is my curriculum relevant to Michael’s identity and lived experiences?
How can I use assertive communication to demonstrate empathy, explain disappointment and set expectations for changed behavior?	Should I sponsor a club where students who consistently meet the dress code get special privileges?	Should I set up a conference with family, teachers and other school staff to design a behavior intervention plan that supports Michael?
What are the consequences for Michael if he misses class because he is suspended?	Does enforcement of the dress code target particular groups of students?	Can our school provide free bus passes to prevent truancy and positively impact Michael’s future?

Aggressive Physical Behavior

Michael shouldered his teacher out of the way when she blocked the classroom door as he tried to leave.

Fighting

Michael got into a fight in the hallway during first period. There were no serious injuries.

Argue with Michael, call the school resource officer, bar him from class or press assault charges.

Avoid involvement or request that Michael not be allowed back in class because he poses a threat.

What clues did I miss that Michael was upset before he tried to walk out?

What social and cultural capital did Michael risk if he had backed down from me in front of his peers?

Michael is most irritable when we read. Can the literacy coach and special education team suggest reading intervention strategies?

Can Michael and I come up with a signal to let me know he is feeling stressed and needs a three-minute cool down?

How can I encourage my administration to consider creative interventions as alternatives to suspension and adjudication?

How can I help Michael deal with his feelings about the fight and help him see school in a positive light?

Who can best help Michael through things I've never experienced?

How can I use our curriculum to increase Michael's ability to nonviolently resolve conflict?

Would training students in peer mediation be a positive intervention strategy for Michael?

How can I encourage my administration to consider creative interventions as alternatives to suspension and adjudication?

SHIFT 1
ADOPT A SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LENS

SHIFT 2
KNOW YOUR STUDENTS AND DEVELOP YOUR CULTURAL COMPETENCY

SHIFT 3
PLAN AND DELIVER EFFECTIVE STUDENT-CENTERED INSTRUCTION

SHIFT 4
MOVE THE PARADIGM FROM PUNISHMENT TO DEVELOPMENT

SHIFT 5
RESIST THE CRIMINALIZATION OF SCHOOL BEHAVIOR

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

PROJECT MANAGER June Cara Christian

CONSULTANTS Vanessa Barbour, Emily Chiariello, Ebony Howard

TEACHING TOLERANCE

DIRECTOR Maureen B. Costello

SENIOR MANAGER, TEACHING AND LEARNING Sara Wicht

MANAGING EDITOR Adrienne van der Valk

TEACHING AND LEARNING SPECIALISTS Jarah Botello, June Cara Christian

WRITER/ASSOCIATE EDITORS Monita K. Bell, Maya Lindberg

TECHNICAL LEAD Scott McDaniel

NEW MEDIA ASSOCIATE Joanna Williams

PROGRAM COORDINATOR Steffany Moyer

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT Cecile Jones

RESEARCH ASSOCIATE Margaret Sasser

DESIGN

DESIGN DIRECTOR Russell Estes

SENIOR DESIGNER Valerie Downes

DESIGNERS Michelle Leland, Sunny Paulk, Scott Phillips, Kristina Turner

DESIGN ASSISTANT Shannon Anderson

ILLUSTRATOR Dan Zalkus

PRODUCTION

ACCOUNTING OPERATIONS MANAGER Regina Jackson

PURCHASING PRODUCTION COORDINATOR Kimberly Weaver



@Tolerance_org



@teachingtolerance.org



@teaching_tolerance



TEACHING TOLERANCE

A PROJECT OF THE SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER
TOLERANCE.ORG