

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON STUDENT BEHAVIOR & DISCIPLINE

FACT SHEET

BACKGROUND

The Louisiana Advisory Council on Student Behavior & Discipline (ACSBD) was created by Act 522 of 2016. The purpose of the ACSBD is "to provide advice and guidance to the state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) and the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) regarding best practices in providing support to public school governing authorities in the adoption and implementation of each school's master plan for student behavior and discipline."



What are School Discipline "Model Master Plans"?

Each local public school board is required to develop and submit a master plan based on the model master plan developed and approved by BESE. These plans require districts to revise zero tolerance policies, provide mental health services, report more data, and coordinate between agencies.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Per Act 522 (2016), the ACSBD shall "annually submit a written report to the committees on education and BESE regarding its findings and recommendations with respect to the implementation of master plans for improving student behavior and discipline."
- In 2018, Act 600 directed the ACSBD to "review current state laws, policies, and regulations and submit its findings and recommendations to the Senate Committee on Education, the House Committee on Education and the state senator who represents Senate District No. 4."

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE

In 2018, Act 600 was passed to expand the Council from twenty-four to twenty-nine members. The act also mandated that the ACSBD elect a new chair by February 15 of each year. Members include the superintendent of education, Louisiana Association of Principals, a local school superintendent, a child welfare and attendance officer, a safe and drug-free schools coordinator, a director of special education, a pupil appraisal coordinator, Three parents "of a child who presents challenging behavior," and various groups representing teacher, systems, and community organizations, including FFLIC.

THE WORK

In accordance with its statutory duty, over the past several years, the ACSBD has developed recommendations for state-level policy changes to improve school discipline and published end-of-year reports. It has also put forth principles to guide improvements to district-level school discipline policy.

In 2021, after previous legislative attempts, the ACSBD helped successfully pass Act 473, which encouraged school districts to address student misbehavior with in-school, "evidence-based interventions and supports."



THE ISSUE

- The Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education created a model master plan as required by Act 1225; however, the LDOE has not required the regular submission of master plans from school districts.
- There is little record of which districts have adopted master plans, and implementation may be lacking on the school district level.
- Implementation information is not accessible.
- The LDOE has not collected adequate data on school discipline to inform the board's decisions. Such data includes the budgetary amounts provided for School Resource Officers vs. restorative measures.
- The data provided often lacks integrity.
- Changes in ACSBD membership and staffing of the organizations/agencies have made continuity a challenge.
- Due to challenges in meeting in-person during a pandemic, at 2021 ACSBD meetings, quorum was not met. LDOE has continued to maintain that public meeting laws do not allow for virtual meetings, despite other public bodies doing so. Therefore, the board was unable to make binding decisions and approve meeting minutes.

SOLUTIONS

- The ACSBD must hold virtual meetings in order to increase attendance of the ACSBD, and it must find ways to ensure continuity of the work while members transition in and out of the work.
- The LDOE and ACSBD must work together to update, maintain, and make accessible the Model Master Plan.
- The ACSBD must work with LDOE to require that school districts develop and submit their own Master Plans and provide accountability mechanisms to ensure compliance.
- The ACSBD must work with LDOE to center PBIS in the development of its Model Master Plan and its guidance of school districts.
- The ACSBD must better coordinate with and integrate its work into the Juvenile Justice Reform Act Implementation Commission (see JJRAIC one-pager).