



MARCHUS QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT

Quarter: 23-24 Q4

Report date: June 20, 2024

DEMOGRAPHICS

Student demographics

Student enrollment by grade	
Kindergarten	0
Grade 1	2
Grade 2	4
Grade 3	4
Grade 4	2
Grade 5	1
Grade 6	6
Grade 7	3
Grade 8	3
Grade 9	7
Grade 10	7
Grade 11	8
Grade 12	6
Total	53

Student enrollment by group	
Race/ethnicity	Percent of total enrollment
Hispanic	23%
Asian	6%
Filipino	2%
Black/African American	26%
White	36%
Multiple	8%
Disability category	
Autism	21%

Emotional Disturbance	38%
Other Health Impairment	19%
Specific Learning Disability	19%
English proficiency	
ELL	7%
English only	86%
RFEP	7%
Free and reduced-price meals	34%
Foster youth	9%

School staffing

Position/title	Number
Teacher	9
School Psychologist	3
Social Worker	2
Board Certified Behavior Analyst	1
Speech Therapist	1
Occupational Therapist	1
Tutor	1
Paraprofessionals	15

BEHAVIOR SUPPORT CERTIFICATION

The Contra Costa County Office of Education (CCCOE) currently employs a full-time Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA).

DATA & ANALYSIS: PHYSICAL INTERVENTIONS, SECLUSION, SUPPORT ROOM USE, AND CALLS TO LAW ENFORCEMENT

Descriptive data summary

Type of intervention	Number of incidents
Physical intervention	7
Seclusion	0
Support room use	0 In conjunction with physical intervention
	0 In conjunction with seclusion

	9	In conjunction with behavior incidents (not requiring physical intervention)
	0	De facto suspensions
Calls to law enforcement	2	

Summary analysis

Physical intervention

There were seven behavior emergencies requiring physical intervention during 23-24 Q4. All incidents involved elementary students who recently entered the Marchus school during Q3.

Factors leading to physical intervention included peer conflicts which escalated to include physical aggression, and elopement onto or toward a busy road. In each case, physical intervention was used as a last resort after antecedent strategies (i.e., offering appropriate choices, providing breaks, and encouraging the use of learned coping strategies and prosocial skills) and verbal de-escalation attempts (i.e., empathizing with the student, offering support in finding a solution, and redirection) failed. In each instance, staff evaluated the level of risk presented in the moment and utilized physical intervention when they determined the student's behavior put the student or others in eminent danger of serious physical harm.

Calls to law enforcement

There were two incidents requiring a call to law enforcement during 23-24 Q4, each resulting in the students transport to the county mental health facility for further evaluation. In each of these situations, the students voiced they intended to harm themselves and such threats were deemed serious when assessed by school mental health professionals and in one case county mental health professionals who were called to the campus.

Seclusion

There were zero incidents of seclusion during 23-24 Q4.

Support room use

The support room was used in response to a behavioral incident, *not requiring physical intervention* on nine occasions during 23-24 Q4. In almost all cases, the behavioral incidents leading to support room use included social conflicts between peers that quickly escalated to include physical aggression or verbal threats of aggression. School staff use antecedent strategies to prevent peer conflicts throughout the school day. For example, staff maintain a high ratio of positive to negative interactions with students, offer choices for completing activities, provide safe spaces for students who need breaks, and redirect or separate students who are showing indications of conflict. Most

incidents leading to support room use occurred before 10:00am, indicating setting events outside of school are often the precipitating event. For this reason, school staff greet students as they exit the bus or enter campus and make consistent attempts to provide the coping tools or spaces they may need to become regulated. At times, escalations occur quickly and require a reactive strategy to ensure student and staff safety.

When used in conjunction with behavior incidents, the support room is a reactive strategy that functions as a space where the student is required to “cool down” following an escalation to ensure physical and psychological safety before returning to the classroom. When the student enters the support room, they are offered water and a snack. The student is encouraged to communicate with a staff member in the room to share their side of the story. When the student is ready to follow directions necessary to return to class, they are provided with a simple classroom assignment and “think it through” exercise wherein they reflect on the facts of the incident and identify how best to respond if a similar scenario should occur again. This exercise typically requires 10 to 20 minutes to complete once the student gets started. The staff member in the room helps student with their work as needed. This process is a reactive strategy that emphasizes restorative practice and is an important step of the de-escalation process as described by Diane Browning Wright (<https://www.pent.ca.gov/pbis/tier3/escalationcycle.aspx>) and the CPI Non-violent Crisis Intervention therapeutic rapport process.

While the visit to the support room is required for the student, no student is physically forced to enter the room or locked in the room once they enter. In fact, it is not uncommon for students to wander out of the support room and re-enter on their own when they are ready to complete the tasks described above to go back to class.

There were no instances of students being required to stay in the support room for a certain amount of time, resulting in a de facto suspension. The expectation is for the student to complete a task to show readiness for instruction rather than serve a specific amount of time.

Recommendation to decrease the use of physical intervention and support room use

The school is in the early stages of adopting restorative practices as both a preventative and reactive strategy for addressing peer conflicts. The school principal, behavior analyst, and elementary school psychologist attended an extensive, 32-hour restorative practices train-the-trainer program during Q4 as a significant step toward implementing these practices as a school-wide program for preventing and responding to peer conflicts. Staff have had some success in facilitating restorative conversations between peers, and it is recommended that this program be incorporated into the multi-tier PBIS plan.

IMPLEMENTATION OF PBIS AND SEL CURRICULUM

General description and grade-level analysis of PBIS supports

The Marchus PBIS team has implemented a comprehensive, three-tier program, providing evidence-based supports to all students across each grade level (k-12). The PBIS program promotes an atmosphere of positive, prosocial expectations and incentives for active participation, which encourages students to attend school and engage meaningfully with their classroom activities.

The team meets regularly for ongoing planning and data-based decision making, and consists of the BCBA, school principal, teachers, clinical staff, and paraprofessionals representing each grade level. In addition to staff, Marchus students who chose to participate in the student leadership club were involved in determining behaviors to be included in the PRIDE matrices. Parent and student school site council representatives are included in PBIS discussions as they occur during council meetings.

Elementary implementation

Tier 1: Elementary students enjoy earning PRIDE bucks contingent expected behaviors during academic lessons and prosocial interactions with one-another. They exchange their pride bucks for reinforcers that align with their interests and the suspected functions of acting-out behavior. For example, students who frequently elope from the classroom enjoy earning a visit to the school office after participating in a class lesson. Some students also enjoy visiting the high school students as a reward, which is an excellent opportunity for the high school students to provide them with an extra “pep talk” to keep having a great day.

Tier 2: All (100%) elementary students receive *group* counseling. While Tier 2 interventions are typically meant for “some” of the students, Marchus is unique in that it is considered a counseling-enriched program. Therefore, this typically “Tier 2” intervention is provided for all students as a service in their IEP.

Tier 3: Every student at Marchus has an IEP and receives the individual accommodations identified in their document. Approximately 70-80% of elementary students receive *individual* counseling services as a part of their IEP. Currently, all (100%) elementary students have active behavior intervention plans (BIPs) attached to their IEPs. The students typically enter Marchus with a BIP from their district school, and the plans are revised as needed to serve the student as their environments and needs change. Student BIPs are always reviewed in response to behavior emergencies and are updated any time the team determines they do not adequately address the behaviors of concern.

Middle school implementation

Tier 1: Middle school students utilize a Self and Match system, an evidence-based classroom management system, to earn PRIDE bucks based on their self-scoring combined with the teacher’s impression. The students are included in choosing the classroom reinforcers available to them and are empowered to add new ideas throughout the school year. Some of the reinforcers include group

contingencies such as classroom outings to a fun activity. Some middle school students enjoy helping with the elementary classrooms and will choose to earn time to visit and assist in the elementary area, which is always well received by elementary students and staff.

Tier 2: All (100%) middle school students receive *group* counseling. While Tier 2 interventions are typically meant for “some” of the students, Marchus is unique in that it is considered a counseling-enriched program. Therefore, this typically “Tier 2” intervention is provided for all students as a service in their IEP.

Tier 3: Every student at Marchus has an IEP and receives the individual accommodations identified in their document. Approximately 70-80% of middle school students receive individual counseling as a part of their IEP services. As with elementary students, many middle school students have BIPs attached to their IEPs. These are revised as needed in response to changes in student behaviors.

High school implementation

Tier 1: High school students earn virtual PRIDE bucks using an app-based store that is reinforcing for them to use. As with other grade levels, they earn PRIDE bucks for following classroom expectations and use them to purchase preferred items from a classroom store. The high school students provide input regarding their desired store items.

Tier 2: All (100%) high school students receive *group* counseling. While Tier 2 interventions are typically meant for “some” of the students, Marchus is unique in that it is considered a counseling-enriched program. Therefore, this typically “Tier 2” intervention is provided for all students as a service in their IEP.

Tier 3: Every student at Marchus has an IEP and receives the individual accommodations identified in their document. Approximately 70-80% of high school students receive *individual* counseling as a part of their IEP services. Some high school students have active BIPs, however, most high school students’ behaviors can be managed using consistent classroom-management strategies and Tier 1 supports.

General description of the SEL curriculum and implementation by grade level

A social emotional learning (SEL) curriculum is implemented by the three school psychologists during group counseling sessions for all (100%) students across all grade levels, using the MindUP evidence-based program. Parent and student representatives are included in SEL curriculum discussions during school site council meetings. Additionally, leadership club students are involved in promoting messages supported by the MindUP curriculum, including messages of inclusion, safe school environment, and anti-bullying.

The SEL curriculum teaches students to recognize their emotions and identify what they need to do to regulate themselves, thereby diminishing reliance “acting out” behaviors to communicate their needs.

K-2nd grade implementation

The youngest students have been learning about prosocial concepts such as acts of kindness, getting along, and good sportsmanship. The school psychologist also teaches these students about identifying their emotions using zones of regulation.

3rd – 5th grade implementation

Older elementary students are learning about the basic of the structures of the brain related to emotions and learning; the amygdala, hippocampus, and pre-frontal cortex. In this context, the students learn to recognize when their emotions are dysregulated and how that impacts their ability to learn and remember new information. They also learn coping strategies to help them become regulated and ready to learn.

Middle school implementation (6th through 8th grade)

Middle school students learn about the same brain structures as elementary, however, they go further in-depth with this study. They learn additional, more sophisticated coping strategies, and build on their skills of recognizing their own emotional states.

High school implementation

In high school, students are grouped by age 9th and 10th graders in one group, and 11th and 12th graders in another. The school psychologist for this group evaluated a MindUP high school pilot program and determined the level was too advanced to meaningfully engage the students. As such, the middle school version is used in high school and made relevant to the high school students by relating the topics to the context of the students’ real-life and present-day experiences.

Description of how registered behaviorists are engaged

The BCBA is a member of the PBIS team, with a focus on analyzing behavior data collected with the School-Wide Information System (SWIS) suite to evaluate and drive future implantation strategies. The BCBA also recommends evidence-based best practices for implementation of interventions related to the PBIS program, such as token systems, CICO programs, and any individual student interventions.

The BCBA is not directly involved in the implementation of the SEL curriculum program due to the nature of the Marchus counseling and education programming, which includes a robust team of school psychologists and social workers. However, the BCBA consults with these clinical team

members during BIP revisions and FBAs to ensure individual students contact meaningful SEL lessons that align with their replacement behaviors and desired social skills.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In quarters 3 and 4 there seemed to be pattern of students arriving and early morning conflicts before 10:00 am. It sounds like the staff is proactive in these efforts, greeting students and offering coping strategies and safe space. I would love to learn more about this process and see if there are any suggestions I can offer.

I am excited about the restorative justice program you have begun implementing. Do you feel you have the resources, space and staff to effectively implement this program? It sounds like the new leadership has a number of additional support and staff development activities planned for the fall.

Has the social emotional curriculum lead to noticeable changes in student behavior and affect? It may be helpful to align some of the social emotional lessons to the data gathered and used to monitor student behavior. This can help staff remain attuned to changes in students, low level behavior problems that if unaddressed can escalate over time and better aligns lessons with student need.

I was excited to learn that your team has completed Tier 1 of PBIS training and implementation. The tier two component will help your staff go deeper into targeted interventions and the analysis of student data.

Maybe we can talk more in the near future about the process for welcoming new students. Transitioning to a new school is difficult, especially for students with a history of a need for intensive emotional and behavioral supports. It appears the post restraint interventions for students A, B and C have prevented the need for further restraint, which is good news. What is the welcoming and orientation process for new students at Marchus? In many instances investing in a school tour prior or the first day to walk the student around campus, providing some structured interactions with peers, reviewing expectations, the rewards and options available can be a great way to alleviate some of the anxiety many students feel at such a transition.

Over the past two quarters it seems after the second restraint incident, the Marchus staff has done an effective job of investigating the incident and making adaptations that have prevented the need for further use of restraint. In my experience, proactively identifying the escalation cycle of students with a history of unsafe behavior is critical to preventing dangerous behavior. Is there a process of reviewing a new student's records and early observations that could be implemented with new students?