



Washington Office of Superintendent of  
**PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

*Behavior Menu of  
Best Practices and  
Strategies Brief*

**2020**

# BACKGROUND

The Strengthening Student Educational Outcomes Act ([ESSB 5946](#)) passed the state Legislature in 2013. It required OSPI to convene a panel of experts to develop a menu of best practices and strategies for use in the Learning Assistance Program (LAP) to provide additional support to students who have not yet met grade-level standard and are enrolled in LAP. The same legislation also required OSPI and school districts in Washington to significantly revise discipline policies and practices.

The [Menus of Best Practices and Strategies](#) provide Washington State educators with identified practices and strategies that best help students grow and succeed academically. The behavior menu provides best practices for LAP students in grades K-12 and focuses on addressing behavior needs to improve student academic outcomes. The practices and strategies in the behavior menu reflect research-based guidance from education practitioners, researchers, and policymakers on how to improve school climate and discipline. The best practices and strategies were identified for use by a panel of experts representing a wide range of educational experience and expertise.

## Authorizing Legislation:

RCW 28A.165.035



## Key Points and Practices

### Background and Content Philosophy

- The practices and strategies contained in this menu align with an overall philosophy that equitable educational opportunities and student outcomes are more attainable when learning environments and support services contribute to the social-emotional well-being and academic achievement of all students.
- Behavioral expectations, interventions, and services should be developmentally appropriate, [culturally responsive](#), and data-informed.
- Within a multi-tiered system of supports, educators use data-informed practices to support student social emotional, behavioral, and academic learning, and data-informed assessment results to make intentional decisions, utilizing a team structure.

### Implementing Menu Practices

School staff must design and deliver practices and interventions with fidelity, or as they were intended, to maximize outcomes for students. The menu provides information on implementation science, including [Active Versus Passive Implementation](#), to help districts and schools implement their LAP interventions and supports as intended.

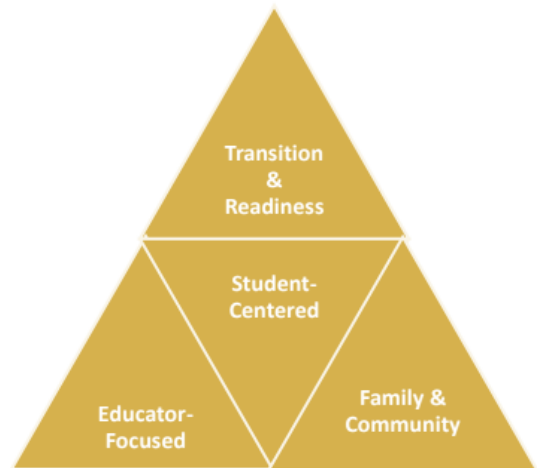
During active implementation, schools participate in rapid improvement cycles, such as [Plan-Do-Study-Act \(PDSA\)](#), to continually improve the delivery and impact of their LAP interventions and supports. The main questions schools ask in this improvement cycle are as follows:

- What is the specific problem are we trying to solve?
- What changes might be introduced and why?
- How will we know if the change(s) is(are) an improvement or not?

Prior to using a proposed practice or program, implementation teams assess whether it is an appropriate fit for the need, context, and capacity of the school. The [Hexagon tool](#) guides teams through this exploration with six indicators: evidence, usability, supports, need, fit with other initiatives, and capacity to implement. The implementation section in the menu provides additional resources, including links to modules and short courses, to increase team efficacy and understanding of the implementation process.

## Menu Entries

Practices are organized into four broad categories of interventions: *Student-Centered*, *Transition & Readiness*, *Educator-Focused*, and *Family & Community*. Each practice has been analyzed by the Washington State Institute of Public Policy ([WSIPP](#)) and designated as evidence-based, research-based or promising practice in the [WSIPP LAP Inventory](#) (RCW 71.24.025). Each entry describes the practice or strategy, ideas and resources to support planning, demographic considerations, strategies for successful implementation, and supporting research and references.





	<p><b>"Evidence-based"</b> means a program or practice that has been tested in heterogeneous or intended populations with multiple randomized, or statistically controlled evaluations, or both; or one large multiple site randomized, or statistically controlled evaluation, or both, where the weight of the evidence from a systemic review demonstrates sustained improvements in at least one outcome. "Evidence-based" also means a program or practice that can be implemented with a set of procedures to allow successful replication in Washington and, when possible, is determined to be cost-beneficial.</p>
	<p><b>"Research-based"</b> means a program or practice that has been tested with a single randomized, or statistically controlled evaluation, or both, demonstrating sustained desirable outcomes; or where the weight of the evidence from a systemic review supports sustained outcomes as described in "evidence-based" portion of this section but does not meet the full criteria for evidence-based.</p>
	<p><b>"Promising practice"</b> means a program or practice that, based on statistical analyses or a well-established theory of change, shows potential for meeting the evidence-based or research-based criteria, which may include the use of a program that is evidence-based for outcomes other than those listed in the "evidence-based" portion of this section.</p>


### ***Student-Centered Practices and Strategies***

	
Behavioral health Behavior support and monitoring practices Mentoring Social skills instruction	Peer mediation Restorative justice

### ***Educator-Focused Practices and Strategies***

	
Behavior consultant teacher/instructional coach Targeted professional learning	De-escalation Professional learning communities Trauma-informed approaches

### ***Transition & Readiness Practices and Strategies***


Credit retrieval and mastery of high school standards Grade 8 to high school transitions Kindergarten transitions

### ***Family & Community Practices and Strategies***


Family engagement School-community partnerships

\*Note: The definitions of evidence-based, research-based, and promising outlined above are separate from the Tiers of Evidence defined by the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). WSIPP and ESSA Tiers of Evidence share common criteria for determining classifications (e.g., programs must be tested in similar populations; study shows a statistically significant effect on a relevant outcome). While definitions sometimes overlap, they are not perfectly aligned ([WSIPP 2020](#)). For more information on ESSA Tiers of Evidence, see the U.S. Education's guidance on Using Evidence to Strengthen Education Investments.



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*All students prepared for post-secondary pathways,  
careers, and civic engagement.*



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