Lafayette (LA) Parish Schools implemented a system-wide policy, curriculum, and behavioral plan to equip and empower all persons involved to ensure a safe environment for everyone by reducing the use of restrictive techniques throughout the parish schools. The results of the CPI training have included a significant reduction in the frequency and number of classroom incidents and a corresponding decrease in the number of student suspensions. Key staff believes the implementation of these policies and practices have had a material impact upon improved student achievement scores as well.

SITUATION

In her 28 years with the Lafayette Parish Schools, Carleen Doucet has seen many attempts to introduce meaningful education reform. As the school system’s Crisis Intervention Specialist, she has experienced a marked increase in the attention schools must pay to disciplinary issues and the impact of class disruptions in the learning process. “I became frustrated with the incidence of students and teachers involved in physical altercations.” She now oversees the Special Education Alternative Site School for at-risk youth coming from among the district’s 26,000 students where she sees students ages 5 to 22.

Out of that frustration has emerged a comprehensive program to train virtually anyone with student contact in how to safely manage aggressive behavior through verbal interventions, techniques, and strategies. Individuals also learn non-harmful restraint techniques to reduce the risk of injury to everyone involved in a potentially violent situation. The district has 5 CPI trainers, Carleen Doucet, Leah Arceneaux, Mary Landrave Meche, Lorna O’Connor, and Vanessa Adamson.

Using a CPI’s Nonviolent Crisis Intervention® training program, the Lafayette Parish School System has trained nearly 5,000 individuals over the last four years from throughout the district’s 45 schools—from parents to bus drivers to teachers to custodians. “We want to build a relationship with anyone who has contact with the child,” Doucet indicated.

RESULTS

Lafayette Parish has seen measurable results since instituting the training. Preliminary analysis indicates: a clear reduction (estimated at up to 30%) in the number of restraints employed, a significant reduction in the number of school suspensions due to assault on teachers, and a decrease in Workers Compensation claims arising out of classrooms injuries.

Doucet also believes the training has positively impacted student achievement levels. “I see a correlation between the recent gains in student achievement and the implementation of the CPI training. You can’t learn in a classroom where there is tension and conflict. The de-escalation skills keep everyone on an even keel and allow teaching to proceed uninterrupted.”

The Lafayette Parish School System leadership has endorsed a policy of providing a safe environment for students, faculty, and staff through use of CPI training materials. The plan has given staff added confidence to successfully and safely handle and assist students in a personal crisis situation.

“The training we provide is a missing component in teacher’s college curriculum,” Doucet noted. “Many teachers have acknowledged that they would have had a far more difficult time making it through confrontational situations if they had not been properly trained. Teachers emerge from the training with a greater sense of confidence that translates into more successful teaching and learning.”

ABOUT CPI

CPI was established in 1980 for human service professionals to address the need for crisis prevention and intervention training in safe, respectful, noninvasive methods. CPI remains on the forefront of critical issues and best practices in behavior management based on its founding philosophy of providing Care, Welfare, Safety and Security℠ for everyone involved in a crisis moment. More than 6 million people across the globe have been trained in CPI’s Nonviolent Crisis Intervention® program.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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