

## Student Behaviour Management - Position Paper - 5th May, 2009

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**Background:** Student Behaviour Management in NSW public schools is a complex issue for many reasons including the following.

- The NSW secondary student school provision encompasses:
  - Secondary schools providing for students in:
    - Years 7 - 12
    - Years 7 – 10
    - Years 7 - 9
    - Year 10 – 12
    - Years 11 – 12
  - Behaviour schools
  - Suspension Centres
  - Juvenile Justice Schools
  - Distance Education Schools
  - Central Schools
  - Community Schools
- Decisions relating to the allocation of student services over many years, in conjunction with staff changes, have resulted in the evolution of unclear methods used to allocate student service resources, including counselling and support teacher behaviour (STB) services, and a need to clarify and simplify information for schools about how to access welfare and behaviour support for students and teachers
- The recruitment of staff in behaviour schools and STB services needs clarification along with the related role statements.
- The inadequate provision of counselling services in secondary schools, particularly in behaviour settings.
- The lack of clarity about the methods used to allocate counsellors in schools, the role of counsellors in schools and the perception that counsellors are required to spend considerable amounts of time on administrative tasks
- The lack of information and consistency relating to pre-service teacher training and the inadequacy of this training
- The lack of research, communication and hence confidence in adopting effective behaviour management practices in schools
- The need to clarify the roles of school staff in behaviour management and intervention and to provide the necessary high quality professional learning
- The complex nature of bullying and its extent across all levels of society
- The interconnections between schools and their communities

### Recommendations:

1. The DET and SPC recognise, with appropriate resources, the importance of providing student leadership and participation opportunities for ALL students as a key strategy in promoting positive student behaviours.
2. The NSW SPC seek precise information from DET about:
  - a. the allocation of counsellors and STBs to regions and schools; and
  - b. the role of counsellors and STBs in schools.
3. The NSW SPC strongly advocates for an allocation of 1.0 counsellor to all secondary and Central schools large enough to have a Deputy Principal appointed. Larger schools and schools with identified social needs may need an additional allocation of counselling services.
4. The SPC and DET seek research findings that identify the most effective behaviour management programs and strategies and advise schools accordingly.
5. The SPC and DET influence the providers of pre-service teacher training to ensure high quality training in student behaviour management is accessed by pre-service teachers.
6. The PLLD directorate identifies and or provides quality professional learning in student behaviour management for all teachers to increase the capacity in schools to manage and shape student behaviours to achieve better outcomes.
7. Governments recognise, with appropriate resourcing, the value of, and need for, social programs to meet basic needs of many students e.g. provision of breakfast and lunch, safe and engaging after school environments, student leadership and participation strategies, etc.
8. DET reviews the recruitment of teachers to Behaviour units and STBs and also considers career pathways for these teachers.