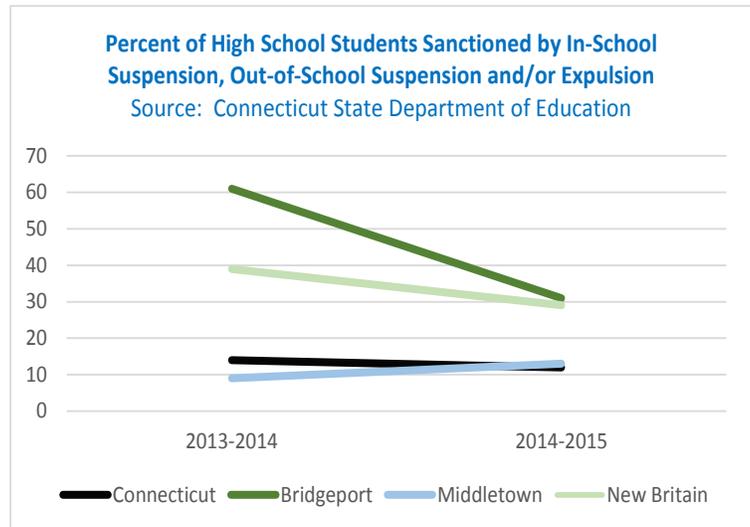


FEATURE: Creating Safe and Violence Free Schools

Learning involves making mistakes and using constructive feedback to improve. Across home, school and community settings, adults and children can build relationships that create safe and civil environments and that facilitate learning, problem solving, and conflict resolution. Restorative practices embrace a belief that *“human beings are happier, more cooperative and productive, and more likely to make positive changes in their behavior when those in positions of authority do things with them, rather than to them or for them.”* This inclusive and positive approach reduces shame and stigma associated with making mistakes as well as facilitates quick and productive re-engagement with the social group.

The Safe School Healthy Students initiative encourages use of restorative practices and principles that strengthen relationships between students and caring adults. This means a more positive school climate, fewer physical fights on school property, higher attendance because students feel safe at school or on their way to and from school, and fewer suspensions and expulsions. Visit www.ctserc.org/index.php/new/item395-restorative to learn more about Connecticut’s restorative practices.



FOCUS: SSHS School Districts

Each SSHS school district and their community partners implement many strategies to create safe and violence free schools.

Boys Town in Bridgeport



Special education classrooms implement the Boys Town model to teach children and family members

life-changing skills, build healthy relationships, and promote responsible decision-making. The Boys Town model impacts behavior in the classroom, reduces student suspensions, and improves the climate within the classroom and in the school. Contact Nekita Carroll-Hall for more information (nhall@bridgeportedu.net).

PBIS in Middletown



Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) creates clear expectations of

behavior within school settings. Students receive classroom instruction on these behavior expectations. School staff develop incentives to strengthen good behavior and to create a culture and climate that reinforces good decision making. Contact Rachel Sadlon for more information (Sadlonr@mpsct.org).

Well Managed Schools in New Britain



Teachers and administrators create stress-free environments for students and teachers by

focusing on: student engagement; clear expectations; effective time management; and positive work environment. This culture of caring between adults and students travels with students across classrooms, between schools, and into their homes and communities. Contact Ryan Morgan for more information (morganr@csdnb.org).

About the Connecticut Safe Schools Healthy Students (SSHHS) Diffusion Initiative

The Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction (DMHAS) receives federal funding from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to improve the behavioral health outcomes of students. Community Management Teams in Bridgeport, Middletown and New Britain implement evidence-based strategies. A SSHS Management Team promotes sustainability and diffusion of successful strategies across school districts and communities. Visit <http://www.ct.gov/sde/sshs> or contact SSHS Project Director Carol Meredith (carol.meredith@ct.gov).