

Inhibitory Alignment Plan

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Our Purpose

Empower all students to reach their fullest potential, fostering a safe, supportive, and joyful learning environment that prepares them for success in life and instills a passion for lifelong growth.

Our Values

	Belonging	Family	Love	Hope
Define	Everyone feels noticed, included, and important in the learning community.	We work together to support growth and well-being.	We show care, patience and respect for each other, even when dysregulated.	We feel capable to improve and learning the skills needed to be successful.
Look Like Feel Like	Greeting each other by name, making sure we each feel seen, a part of the school, and able to participate.	We communicate clearly about routines and how to support each other. We feel like we are on the same team and we all work together.	We remain calm, respond in a predictable way, connect on a personal level and offer frequent praise for effort and engagement. We feel cared for, valued, and supported in meeting high expectations.	We work on the skills needed to grow, celebrate small gains and communicate a belief that we all can grow. We are confident in our ability to get better and that my effort makes a difference.

Goal

By the end of the school year, the percentage of 4–8 students who demonstrate inhibitory control (pausing before speaking or acting and choosing thought-driven responses) during classroom learning and transitions will increase as measured by teacher observation tools and student self-reflection.

Over the same period, office referrals and classroom removals coded as “disruption” or “defiance” will decrease from with a particular focus on improving outcomes for students disproportionately represented in current data.

Goal Details

Rationale, Information, etc.	Skills, Knowledge, Dispositions	
	Staff	Students
Teachers report frequent “disruption and defiance” that are often impulsive reactions, not intentional disrespect. Many students lack explicit instruction and practice in pausing, noticing emotions, and choosing responses aligned with classroom norms. Strengthening inhibitory control supports academic engagement, peer relationships, and long-term well-being, aligning with the school’s core values of belonging, family, love, and hope.	- Understand executive functioning and inhibitory control, including how stress and trauma affect behavior. - Explicitly teach and model “pause–think–choose” routines and replacement behaviors across content areas. - Use calm, consistent responses, pre-corrections, and brief coaching instead of power struggles. - Hold dispositions of curiosity, patience, and belief in students’ capacity to learn self-control over time.	- Know what inhibitory control is and why it matters for their goals and relationships. - Use concrete strategies (pause cues, self-talk, breathing, counting, asking for a break) in real situations. - Develop dispositions of self-awareness, responsibility, and hope (“I can learn to respond instead of react”).

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Actions (Alignment: Environment, Engagement, Curriculum)			
Activities/Learning		Processes/Systems	
Teach and post 2–3 schoolwide “Pause–Think–Choose” visuals in every classroom and common area; create calm spaces or visual “reset spots” where students can briefly pause and regroup without shame.		Common adult response routine (“Pause. Take a breath. What are our options?”) used across classrooms; transition expectations (hallway, arrival, dismissal, lunch) include explicit inhibitory-control routines.	
Weekly 5–10 minute advisory/homeroom mini-lessons explicitly teaching inhibitory-control strategies using 4–8-relevant scenarios; embed “think time” and structured “turn-and-talk” before calling on students.		Lesson-planning templates and curriculum maps highlight when and how executive-functioning skills (including inhibitory control) are explicitly addressed in tasks and discussions.	
Students practice pause routines during group work, discussions, and transitions; role-plays of real classroom and peer-conflict scenarios.		Instructional walkthrough tools include look-fors for explicit teaching/modeling of inhibitory control; grade-level teams select common tasks each quarter where all students practice and reflect on using pause strategies.	

Monitoring (Fidelity & Outcome)			
Tool	Who	When	Information
Tier 1 classroom walkthrough form with look-fors for visuals, explicit “pause–think–choose” teaching, structured think time, and calm coaching responses.	Admin/Tier 1 Team	Monthly	% of classrooms consistently implementing core strategies.
Teacher weekly self-reflection checklist on modeling and reinforcing inhibitory control	Classroom teachers	Weekly	Teacher-reported frequency/consistency of practice.
Behavior data reports for “disruption/defiance,” disaggregated by grade, teacher, time, location, and student groups	Tier 1 Team, Counselors	Monthly	Trends and disproportionality in referrals and removals.
Brief student self-reflection survey items about using pause strategies in challenging situations.	Students	Quarterly	Student perception of skill use and growth

Goal Supports	
Reinforcing Feedback	Tier 1 Responsive Intervention
Frequent, specific praise when students demonstrate inhibitory control (e.g., “I noticed you paused before responding—that helped the group stay focused.”).	Use shared routine after impulsive behavior: name behavior, cue pause, prompt breathing/choice, guide student to repair and re-engage in class.
Class and school recognition systems highlighting thoughtful choices and “pause moments” (shout-outs, notes home, community-circle celebrations).	Short in-class coaching conversations (1–3 minutes) focusing on trigger, strategy used/not used, and next time plan.
Communication tools for families with sample language to recognize and reinforce inhibitory control at home.	When removal is necessary, aim for brief time out of class and return with a clear plan and visual reminder (cue card/hand signal) for the student’s strategy.

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Training & Coaching Component (Staff Focused)			
Activity	Who	Resources	Time Frame
Launch PD: “Executive Functioning and Inhibitory Control in 4–8 Learners” (brain basics, “can’t yet” vs. “won’t,” shared language and routines).	Principal, MTSS lead	Slide deck; one-page “Pause–Think–Choose” visual; research summary handout.	Beginning of year or early semester.
Grade-level planning sessions to embed pause routines into routines, lessons, and content tasks.	Grade-level leads, instructional coaches	Lesson-plan templates with EF prompts; sample mini-lessons and scenarios.	Within first 6–8 weeks.
Classroom coaching cycles: observation, feedback, and co-planning focused on modeling and reinforcing inhibitory control strategies.	Instructional coaches, administrators, counselors	Walkthrough tool, coaching notes template, sample scripts for coaching conversations.	Ongoing throughout year (at least one cycle per teacher).

Tier 2 Supports	
What	Who
Small groups (4–6 students) on executive functioning and self-regulation, using evidence-informed lessons and real school scenarios.	Counselors, intervention teachers, behavior specialists
Brief daily or weekly check-in/check-out with a trusted adult focused on an inhibitory-control goal (e.g., “Today I will pause before responding in group work.”).	Designated mentors, homeroom/advisory teachers
Increased pre-correction and individualized visual supports (cue cards, personalized reset plans, seat/transition adjustments).	Classroom teachers with MTSS/counselor support

Tier 3 Supports	
What	Who
Individualized behavior support plans integrating mental health, trauma-informed strategies, and family partnership.	Student support team (administrator, counselor, case manager, teachers, family)
Intensive skill coaching and counseling (school-based and/or outside agency collaboration) with regular review of data and adjustments.	Student support team and relevant providers
Scheduled problem-solving meetings for high-need students to coordinate academic, behavioral, and social-emotional supports.	Student support team