



# Lessons learned From An Integrated Approach to Student Academic and Mental Health Needs

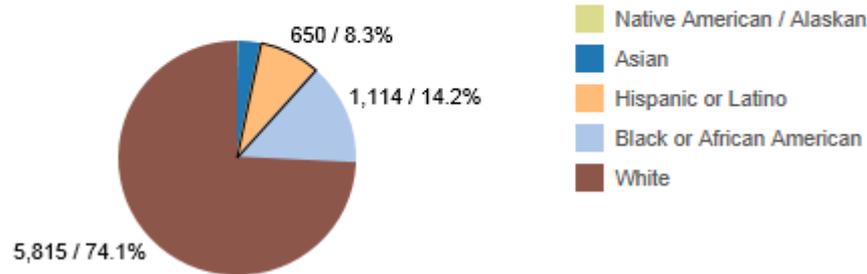
# Johnson City Schools RTI <sup>2</sup>

- James Jacobs, Principal, Indian Trail Intermediate School
- Greg Wallace, Supervisor of Safety and Mental Health
- Roger Walk, Supervisor of Response To Intervention

**Why are we here?**

# Johnson City Schools RTI 2

## Student Ethnicity: Johnson City, All Schools



## Students & Teachers: Johnson City, All Schools

Teachers	508
Administrators	27
Students	7,849
English Learner Students	377
English Learner Student Percent	4.8%
Economically Disadvantaged Student Percent	50.8%
Students with Disabilities	1,066
Students with Disabilities Percent	13.6%
Per-Pupil Expenditure	\$9,391.90

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- In 2005, we began an initiative to individualize classroom instruction and provide interventions for struggling learners
  - A plan at the elementary level that included academic coaches, small group instruction, and periodic assessment (skills and standards)
  - Academic interventions at the elementary level

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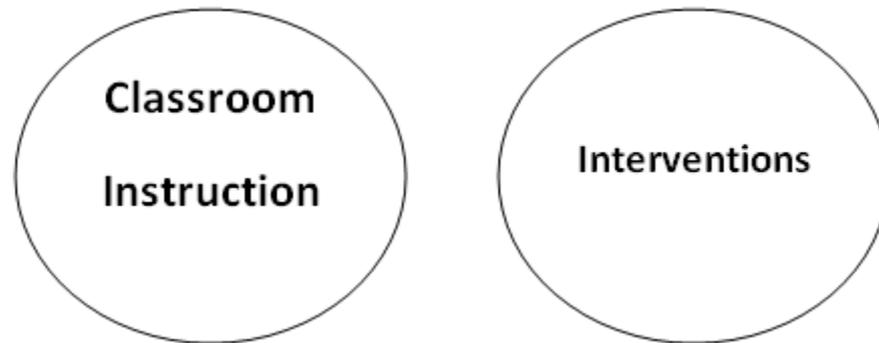
## Key lessons learned

- Tier 1 instruction in the classroom is first priority
- Work on reading first
- Invest in people first, then programs...maybe
- Be very careful with canned programs
- Our experience with a canned program

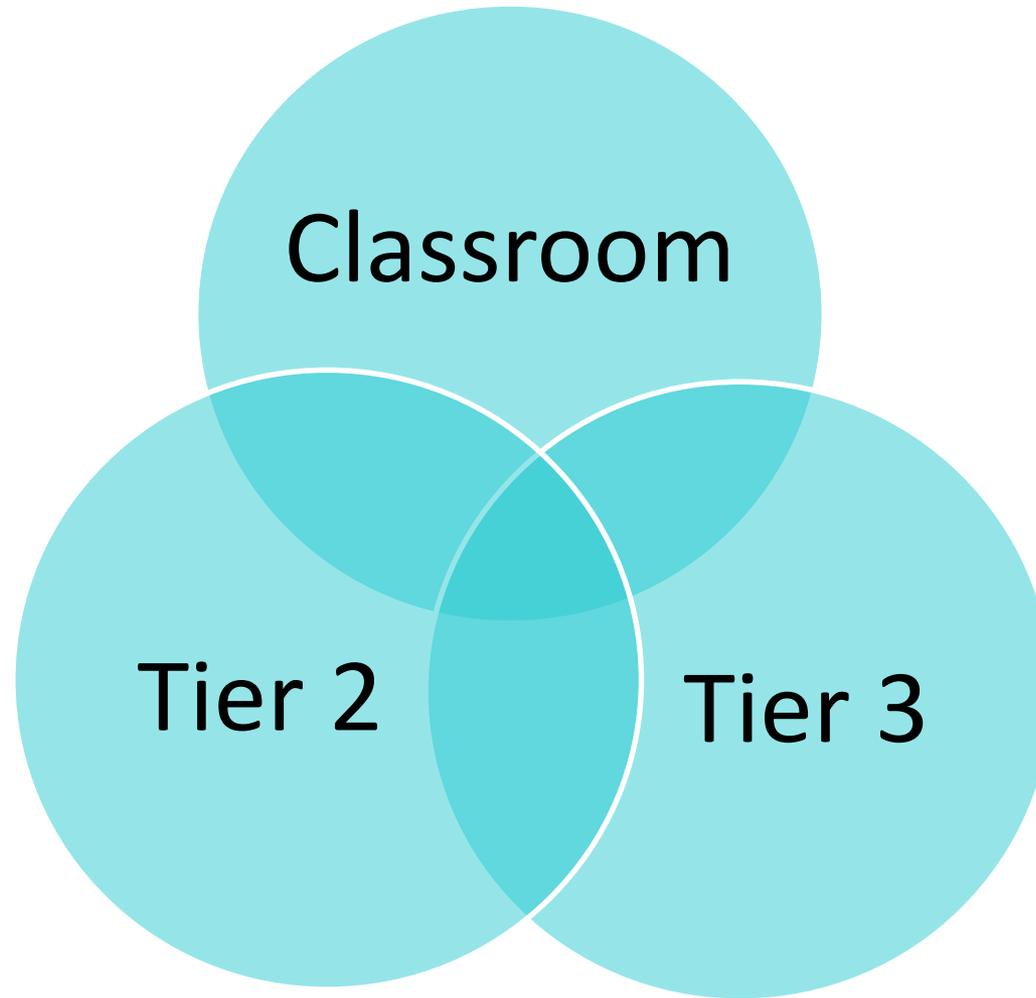
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- We transferred what we learned in tier 1 into tiers 2 and 3 (slide)
- Helping students become capable readers is complex
- Groups have a focus skill, however we instruct many skills.
- Teaching entirely to a basic skill may improve student performance on that basic skill but it may not produce capable readers
- Don't interfere with tier 1 to enhance tiers 2 and 3...money and time
- Ongoing support for students as they progress from elementary through high school

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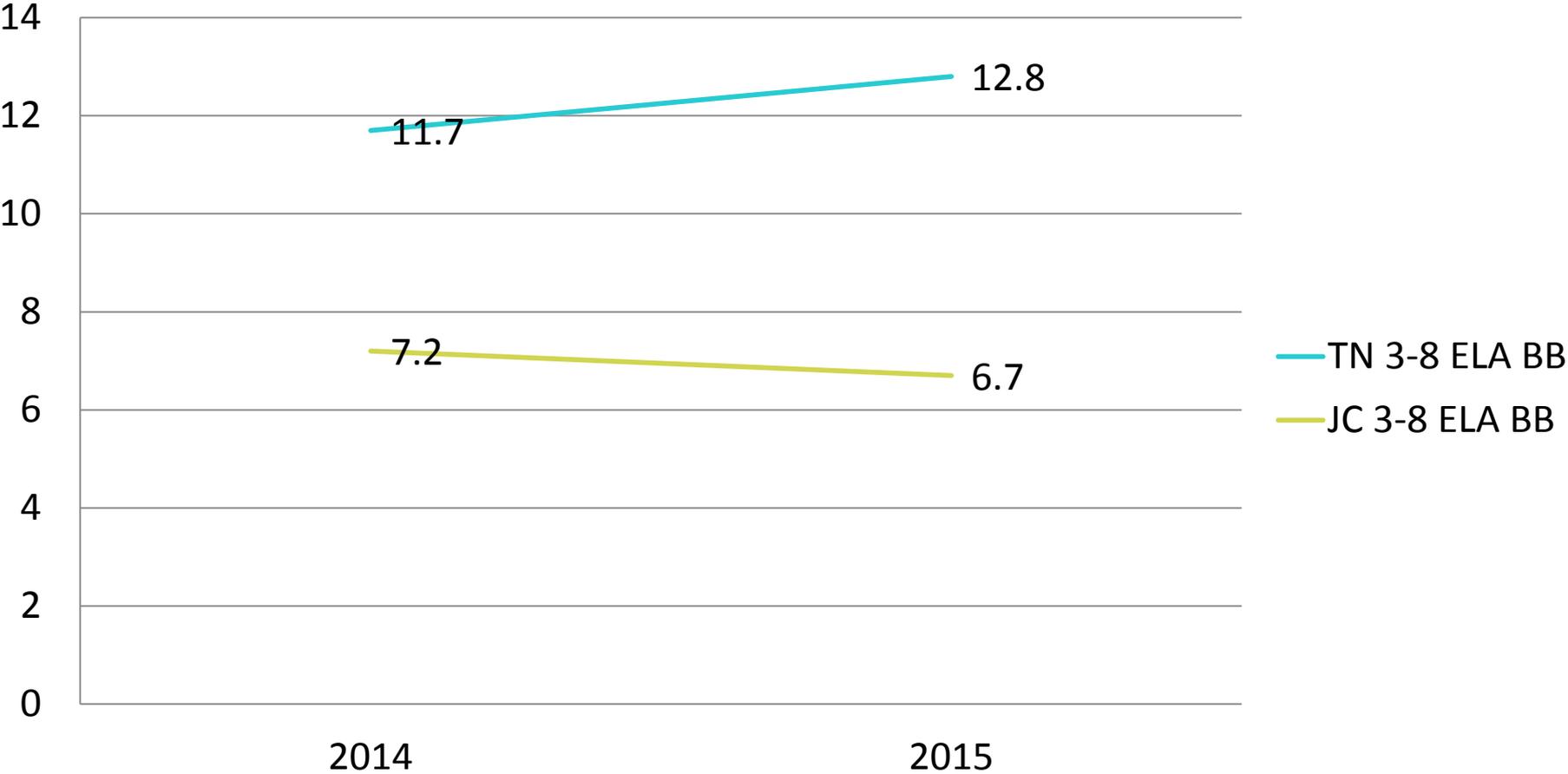
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- What gets measured, gets done
- Assess basic skills...often
- Use these results to identify tier 1 needs and build specific interventions for students
- Multiple data points can guide but not replace the information provided by a group of knowledgeable and concerned individuals in the life of a student---RTI school teams

## Evidence of our students' success

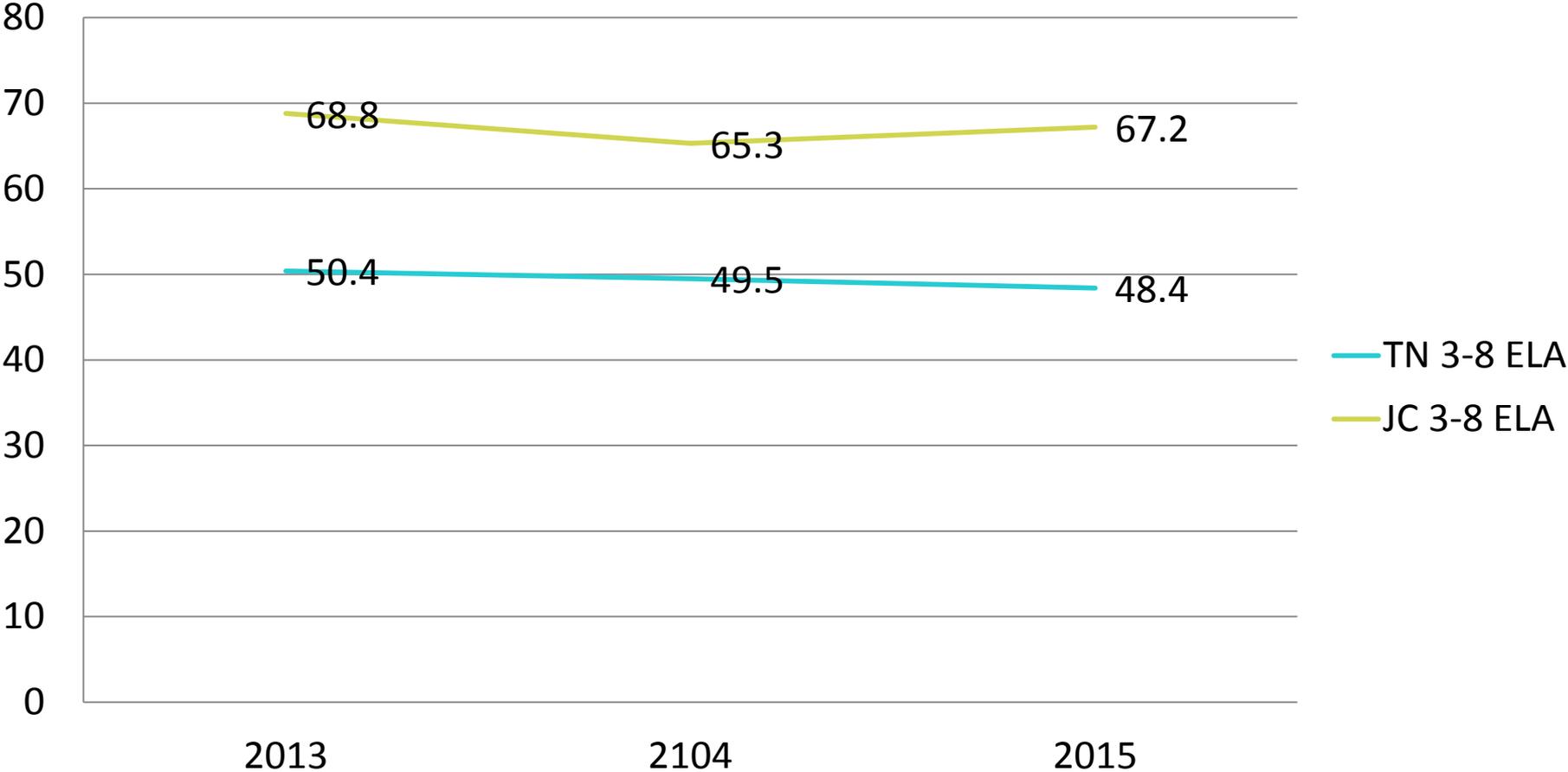
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### % Below Basic 3-8 ELA



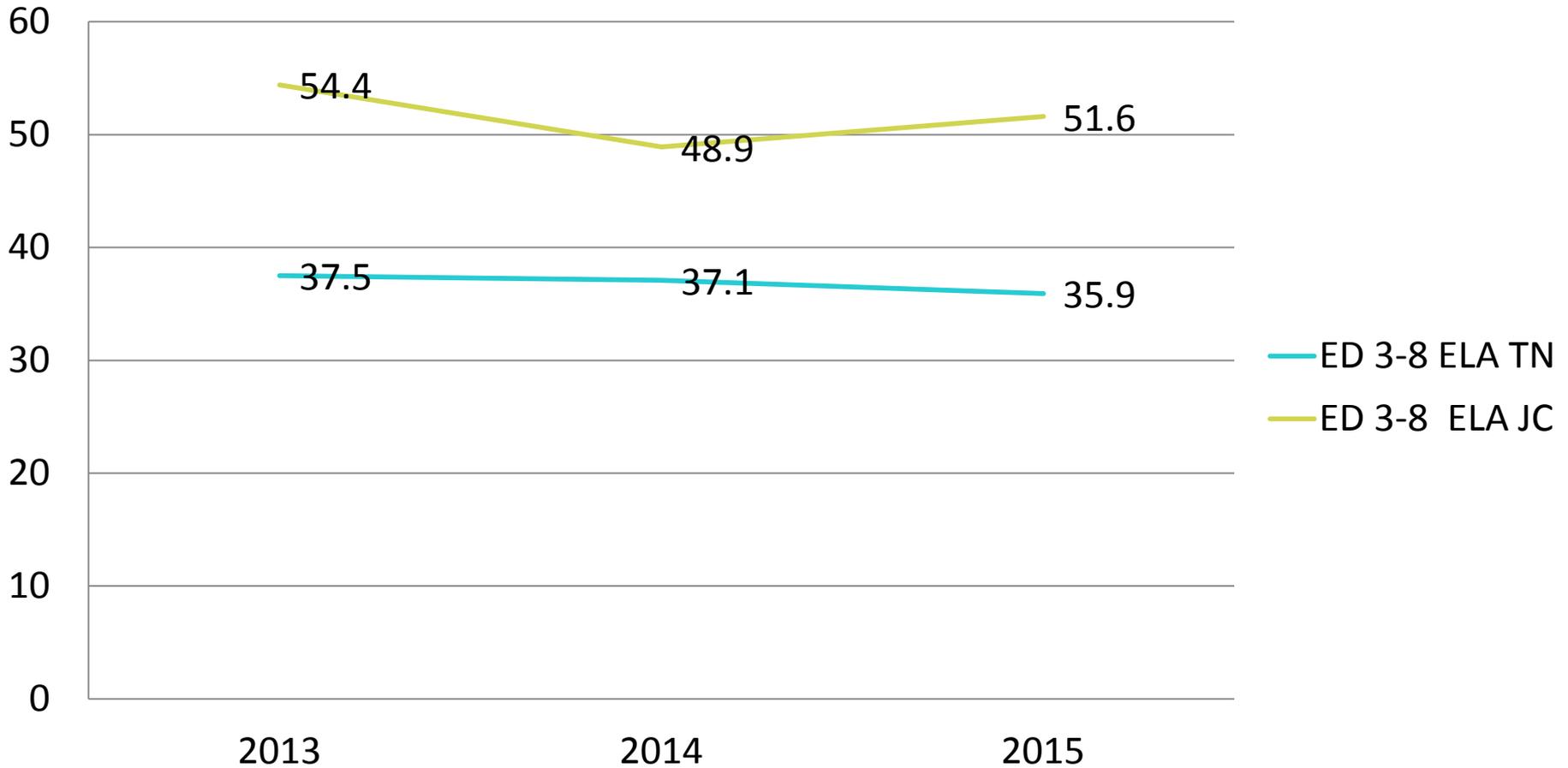
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% Passing 3-8 ELA



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## % Passing Economically Disadvantaged ELA 3-8



Our continued challenges and areas  
for improvement

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- Students with an IEP
  - Our numbers have decreased
  - More accurate determinations---Is this a student with a learning disability or a student who has not been taught to read
  - A change of mentality---No longer err on the side of referral
  - Those identified have great needs

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- English Learners
  - Constantly changing reporting group---new students who speak little or no English while successful students exit the reporting category
  - Individualized plans for each EL
  - Very thoughtful considerations of interventions and referrals

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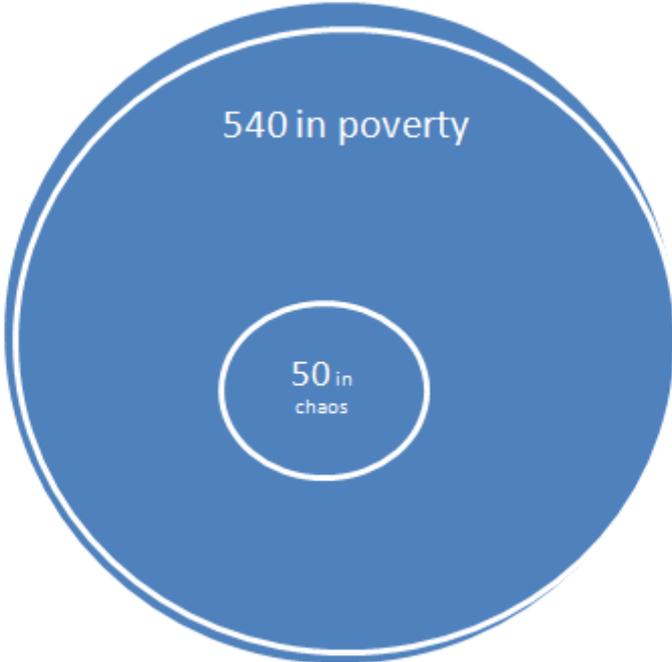
- Opportunities

- Tennessee's waiver request for NCLB
- The new district accountability systems include many incentives for moving students from below basic to basic status
- Opportunity for students---The difference between *below basic* and *basic* abilities will have tremendous influence on the lives of our students

## Serving students with mental health needs

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550 students



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- Behavioral Support
  - In 2014/2015 we provided over 1500 unduplicated services, 15,518 different services, and 64 crisis interventions.
- How we arrived here
  - Safe Schools/Healthy Students 2008 but we began building capacity in the 1990s
- State Project AWARE
  - (Anderson County, Lawrence County, Lauderdale County)

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- Crime and Punishment
- Teachers get academic differentiation but miss behavioral the need for behavioral differentiation

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Students would rather be praised than punished but they'd rather be punished than ignored

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- Lesson learned...what is important to you
- While sustaining our mental health programming, we were making tough choices
- Including \$135,000 in various cuts
- 1.5 million in reallocated funds

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- Start Small-Dream Big
- Pick the school, the demographic, or issue you want to address and do it well
- Choose your partners carefully
- Have a disciplined roadmap
- Be flexible about the realities on the ground

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- Reimagine your work of the school counselors
- School Counselors are vastly different today in preparation and competence
- Where do they meet the needs of your student population most effectively
- Chart effective strategies
- Put the right people in place

## The experiences of a school principal

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## My Experiences

- T. A. Dugger Junior High School (ECS) all discipline for 2 years...@ 300 referrals a year
- Sevier Middle School (KCS): 6<sup>th</sup> grade discipline, 20+ OSS referrals
- GWES (KCS) K-5
- Indian Trail Intermediate School (JCS)
- Consistently at each school I would spend 80% or more of my time with a small population of students

# What Was I Trying To Accomplish?

## What was I trying to Accomplish?

- Correcting behaviors
- Assigning punishment that is fair for everyone
- Make sure students are learning
- Serve justice
- All of the above

## Problem of Practice

ISS/OSS/Detention did not work for the 10-15% of students that live in chaos

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## An Opportunity in JCS

- JCS Schools offered the HEROES program

## Creating An RTI for Behavior Team

- Combining administration, counseling, and Frontier Health.
- Setting Goals:
  - Become proactive not reactive
  - We are an action oriented team
  - No student fails or falls through the cracks
  - We do what it takes to support teaching and learning
  - Meeting the needs of all students
  - Using the excuse ***we are too big*** is unacceptable
  - Build relationships but have high expectations for behavior and grades

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## Creation of the Menu of Interventions

- Finding multiple interventions
- Formulation of a master document for students, interventions, and grades
- Identify the top 15% of behavior students
- Set weekly meetings
- Present students of concern
- Assign interventions
- Create actions plans for individual

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## Our Challenges

- Fighting the ***crime and punishment*** mentality
- Reality...the home life of our students
- Blaming and excuses...***It's the families' fault, If I had those kids***
- Refocus...what we do is important and it matters
- Counselors with ***other responsibilities, cafeteria duty, teaching, and testing***

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## Our Successes

- Students are staying in class longer, less ISS and OSS time
- Our school improved our effect score from a 2 to a 5 in growth... Where do you get the most growth
- Positive school to community relationships
- More families came in for meetings
- Quick identification of high needs behavior students
- Create actions plans for high needs behavior students

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## Where Are We Now

- We have a plan for students when they walk through the door at the beginning of the year
- Zero referrals/ISS through the first mid-term
- I hear more of ***I love this school*** as opposed to ***I hate this school*** from students

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- The classroom teacher has the greatest impact upon student performance
- The principal establishes the expectations within a school and they must be the instructional leaders
- You establish the vision for your school district
- Working together, great things can happen for students

Questions?

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