

PEORIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND 7 MINDSETS



Overview

Peoria Public Schools (PPS) embarked on a transformative journey with 7 Mindsets to address their student well-being needs. The following explores the challenges PPS faced, the solutions provided by 7 Mindsets, and the positive outcomes observed since implementation.

The Challenge

With a diverse student body, Peoria Public Schools faced significant challenges related to student well-being and discipline. The district has a high student mobility rate. Despite efforts to support their students, Peoria Public Schools struggled with inconsistent social emotional learning curriculum and rising disciplinary issues, including aggressive behaviors and high rates of office discipline referrals (ODRs).

District Snapshot

Peoria Public Schools serves over **13,000 students** across 29 school buildings/programs, including **8 primary** schools, **5 K-8** schools, **7 middle** schools, **5 high** schools, **1 early childhood** program, and **3 alternative** programs.

Identifying the Need for Change

In early 2023, the district recognized the need for a cohesive and effective mindset-based learning curriculum. Dr. Ann Bond, the Assistant Superintendent of Student Services, led the initiative to explore various programs. The district formed a districtwide SEL leadership team comprised of stakeholders such as teachers, paraprofessionals, social workers, counselors, and parents. This team identified the lack of a solid Tier 1 student well-being curriculum as a major gap and began researching options.

The Solution

After a thorough evaluation, the leadership team recommended the district-wide implementation of the 7 Mindsets program. The decision was driven by the desire for a comprehensive, consistent, and engaging mindset-based learning curriculum that could address the diverse needs of district students and staff.



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Implementation

Peoria Public Schools began its 7 Mindsets implementation in July 2023 with district-wide educator onboarding and training sessions led by 7 Mindsets’ Education Services team members. By September 2023, full implementation was underway, with all district campuses receiving 7 Mindsets’ support services, which included customized calendars, progress reports, and monthly updates tailored to meet the specific needs of each school.

The Impact

Despite the relatively short implementation period, Peoria Public Schools has already observed significant positive outcomes:

- ✓ **Reduction in Disciplinary Referrals:** Schools have seen a notable decrease in ODRs from the previous year and even from the first to the second quarter of the current school year. The district has also experienced a reduction in aggressive behaviors and physical fights, shifting the focus to less severe issues such as not attending scheduled classes and inappropriate language.
- ✓ **Consistent Mindset-Based Learning Language:** The use of common mindset-based learning language, integral to 7 Mindsets’ curriculum, across the district has been crucial, especially given the high student mobility rate. Students moving between schools encounter consistent terminology and lessons, easing transitions and promoting a stable learning environment.
- ✓ **Engagement and Buy-In:** The strong support and engagement from both the 7 Mindsets team and Peoria Public Schools staff have been instrumental. Teachers, principals, and other staff members have embraced the program, contributing to its successful rollout and impact.

Dr. Ann Bond highlighted the importance of the partnership with 7 Mindsets, emphasizing the positive impact on students and staff. She noted that the tailored support, including coaching and on-site events, has been invaluable. “The 7 Mindsets team just stays so connected to us,” said Dr. Bond. “We have seen a decrease in our office discipline referrals and aggressive behaviors, which has been incredibly encouraging.” She also praised the creation of a cohesive and supportive community within Peoria Public Schools, strengthened by the consistent and proactive engagement of the 7 Mindsets team.





Lessons Learned and Future Plans

While Peoria Public Schools has already seen significant improvements, Dr. Bond acknowledges that there is still work to be done. The district plans to continue leveraging the 7 Mindsets program, with ongoing support and adjustments based on data and feedback. Plans include conducting listening tours with students to understand the underlying changes in behavior and correlating discipline data with program implementation fidelity.

Conclusion

Peoria Public Schools' implementation of 7 Mindsets has been a positive journey, addressing key student well-being and disciplinary challenges while fostering a supportive and consistent learning environment. The early successes and strong partnership between the district and 7 Mindsets highlight the program's potential to create lasting positive change in the district.

About 7 Mindsets

Founded in 2009, 7 Mindsets provides mindset-based and mental health learning solutions for schools and districts nationwide. The company offers multi-tiered curricula, professional development, and data measurement tools that empower growth, drive measurable impact, and ensure safe and supportive learning communities. Its highly effective programs have been shown to improve student engagement, behavior, and academic achievement and have been used by over 5 million students and educators in all 50 states.