



Collins Lane Elementary School's Shift to Student Responsibility

Improved Behavioral Data

Collins Lane Elementary School
Frankfort, KY



Classroom Removals to Solution Space Averaged



Case Study

Collins Lane Elementary School in Frankfort, KY, transformed its approach to student behavior by implementing Responsibility-Centered Discipline™ (RCD™). This strategic shift moved them from an exhausting, reward-based system to one focused on empowering students, resulting in a more sustainable and effective school culture.

Introduction

Collins Lane is a vibrant elementary school serving approximately 500 students from preschool through 5th grade. With 60% of its student population coming from low socioeconomic backgrounds, the school is dedicated to providing a supportive and enriching educational environment. As one of seven elementary schools in its district, Collins Lane is committed to equipping students with academic knowledge and essential life skills.

The Problem

Before adopting RCD, educators at Collins Lane faced significant challenges with their behavior management system. The school's approach was heavily reliant on external rewards to encourage students to follow expectations. This created a cycle where staff members were constantly managing complex reward systems and processes.

Principal Beth Lodmell described the situation as leaving the staff "very tired and overworked." The constant effort to maintain these systems was leading to burnout and exhaustion. It was clear that while the adults were working incredibly hard, the system itself was unsustainable and wasn't achieving the desired long-term impact on student behavior. The school's leadership knew they needed a different approach—one that would build intrinsic motivation rather than a dependency on external rewards.

The Solution

The turning point for Collins Lane came after the school's leadership team saw RCD creator Larry Thompson speak at the Innovative Schools Summit in 2024. The principal admitted that the RCD philosophy initially "sounded too good to be true," but it resonated deeply with the school's core beliefs and the administration's aspirations for students. Leaders wanted to cultivate skills and practices that students would carry with them far beyond elementary school.

Feeling "exhausted and burnt out" with their current reality, the decision to implement RCD was made swiftly. The school embraced the new model, with the principal leading the charge to set clear expectations for how staff would support students in developing their social skills and taking ownership of their actions.

RCD provided a structured framework that shifted the focus from adult-managed rewards to student-led responsibility. The staff received the training and tools needed to feel more confident in handling challenging behaviors and supporting students in a variety of situations. The implementation was intentional, with a school-wide commitment to helping students learn how to take genuine responsibility for their choices.

Result

After one full school year of implementing Responsibility-Centered Discipline, Collins Lane is already seeing significant positive changes. The new approach has empowered staff, who now feel “much more comfortable with dealing with challenging behaviors.” This increased confidence has created a more positive and less stressful environment for educators.

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Improved Behavioral Data:

Behavioral referrals dropped from 229 in September 2024 to 152 in April 2025 – a 34% decrease.

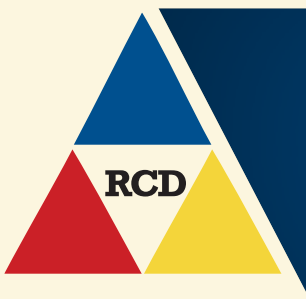
Average classroom removals to solutions space declined from 12 per day to 1 per day – a decrease of 92% in just 8 months.

The success achieved in the first year has solidified the school’s commitment to the RCD model. The positive momentum is clear, and the school is moving into its second year with continued intentionality, confident that they are on the right path.

Conclusion

Collins Lane Elementary School’s implementation of Responsibility-Centered Discipline has marked a pivotal transformation in its approach to student development. By moving away from a draining, reward-based system, the school has successfully cultivated a culture where students learn to take ownership of their actions. This has alleviated staff burnout, decreased behavioral referrals by 34% in 8 months and equipped students with invaluable life skills.

As Collins Lane enters its second year with RCD, the foundation for long-term success is firmly in place. The school’s story is a powerful testament to how a shift in perspective—from managing behavior to building responsibility—can create a more effective and empowered educational community.



Learn How to Bring Responsibility-Centered Discipline to your School or District

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