The Student Assistance Program (SAP)

1547(g) of the Public School Code of 1949

Agenda

- **Opening Discussion Questions**

- **Substance Use & Mental Health Data**

- **Overview of SAP**
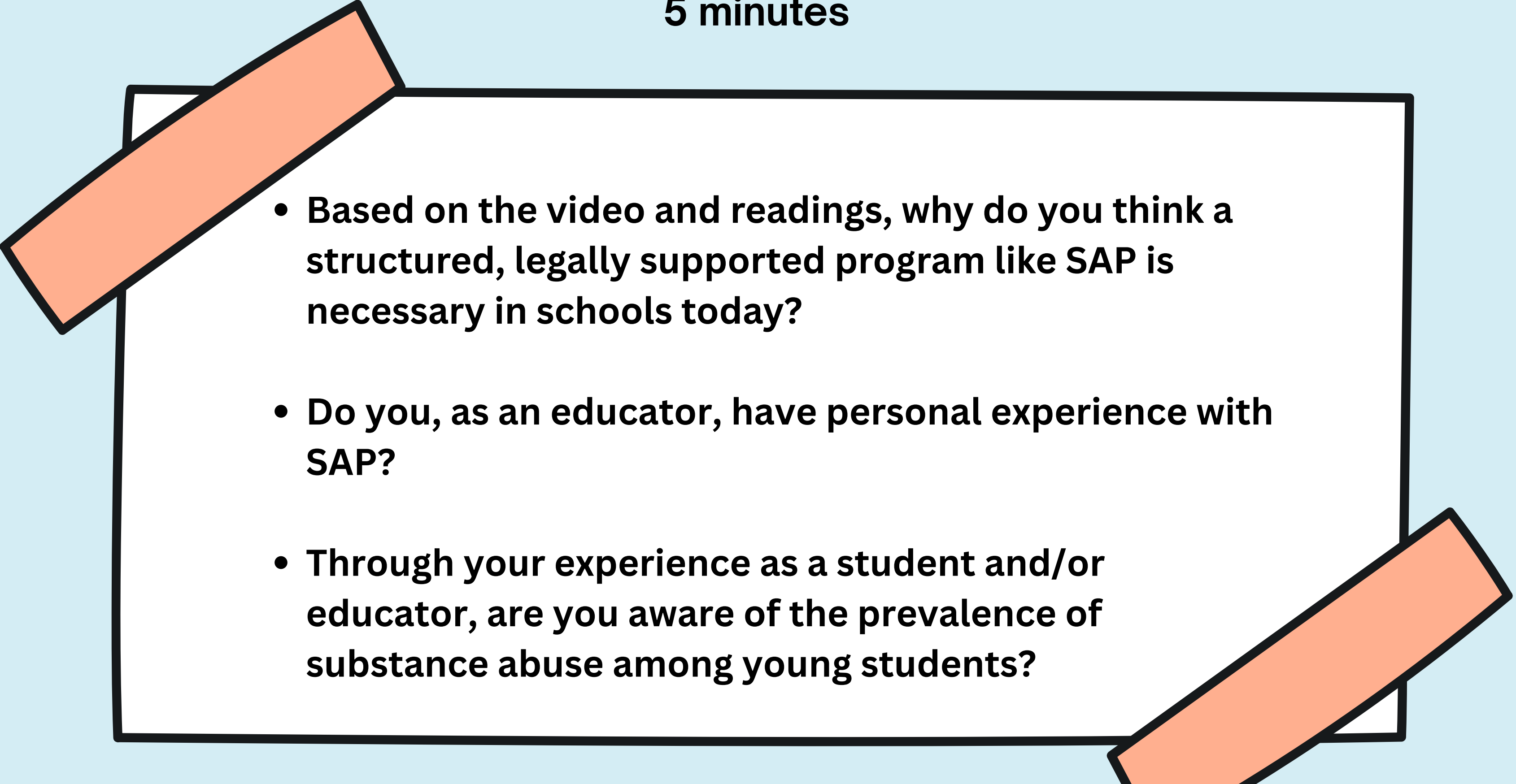
Activity #1
Case Study

Activity #2
Examination of Laws Pertinent to SAP

- **Closing Remarks**

- **Questions?**

Partner Discussion Questions

With those around you, discuss any or all following questions and prepare to discuss with the class.
5 minutes

- **Based on the video and readings, why do you think a structured, legally supported program like SAP is necessary in schools today?**

- **Do you, as an educator, have personal experience with SAP?**

- **Through your experience as a student and/or educator, are you aware of the prevalence of substance abuse among young students?**

2023 Pennsylvania Youth Survey (PAYS)

Table ES-3

Alcohol Use: Lifetime, Past-Month, Binge Drinking

Grade	Alcohol (Lifetime Use)				Alcohol (30-Day Use)				Binge Drinking			
	State 2019	State 2021	State 2023	MTF 2023	State 2019	State 2021	State 2023	MTF 2023	State 2019	State 2021	State 2023	MTF 2023
6th	16.7	13.9	13.7	n/a	3.2	3.1	4.3	n/a	1.2	1.0	1.0	n/a
8th	32.3	26.9	21.5	20.1	8.4	6.9	6.4	5.9	2.9	2.0	1.8	2.0
10th	52.0	42.7	32.5	35.8	21.6	16.1	11.4	13.7	8.4	5.3	3.7	5.4
12th	63.0	55.2	46.9	52.8	33.9	27.4	23.8	24.3	17.2	11.8	9.5	10.2
All	41.0	34.8	28.9	n/a	16.8	13.4	11.5	n/a	7.4	5.0	4.0	n/a

PAYS 2023   ES-6

Table ES-4

Tobacco Use: Lifetime and Past-Month Cigarette and Smokeless Tobacco Use

Grade	Cigarettes (Lifetime Use)				Cigarettes (30-Day Use)				Smokeless Tobacco (Lifetime Use)				Smokeless Tobacco (30-Day Use)				E-Cigarettes (30-Day Use)			
	State 2019	State 2021	State 2023	MTF 2023	State 2019	State 2021	State 2023	MTF 2023	State 2019	State 2021	State 2023	MTF 2023	State 2019	State 2021	State 2023	MTF 2023	State 2019	State 2021	State 2023	MTF 2023
6th	2.3	2.0	1.7	n/a	0.5	0.3	0.8	n/a	1.1	0.7	0.9	n/a	0.3	0.2	0.4	n/a	3.8	2.8	2.4	n/a
8th	6.9	5.4	4.1	5.8	1.9	1.4	1.4	1.1	2.6	1.8	1.6	4.5	0.9	0.4	0.7	1.6	12.5	9.2	5.5	7.0
10th	12.2	9.6	6.4	9.4	4.0	2.9	2.9	2.3	6.4	3.9	3.2	5.5	2.1	1.3	1.3	2.3	26.5	16.2	8.4	11.9
12th	21.9	15.3	11.6	15.0	7.5	4.5	4.5	2.9	11.8	7.4	6.0	7.8	5.0	2.2	2.7	2.5	33.1	23.7	14.9	16.9
All	10.8	8.1	6.1	n/a	3.5	2.3	2.3	n/a	5.5	3.5	3.0	n/a	2.1	1.0	1.3	n/a	19.0	13.0	7.9	n/a

Table ES-5

Marijuana Use: Lifetime and Past-Month

Grade	Marijuana (Lifetime Use)				Marijuana (30-Day Use)			
	State 2019	State 2021	State 2023	MTF 2023	State 2019	State 2021	State 2023	MTF 2023
6th	1.3	1.2	1.7	n/a	0.5	0.4	0.7	n/a
8th	7.4	5.7	5.6	11.5	4.0	2.7	2.7	4.7
10th	22.4	14.8	12.4	22.5	12.9	8.0	6.8	10.3
12th	37.5	30.4	26.2	36.5	20.8	16.8	14.6	18.4

Alcohol

6th grade:
13.7% have ever tried alcohol
4.3% drank in the last 30 days
1.0% engaged in binge drinking

8th grade:
21.5% lifetime use
6.4% past-month use
1.8% binge drinking

10th grade:
32.5% lifetime use
11.4% past-month use
3.7% binge drinking

12th grade:
46.9% lifetime use
23.8% past-month use
9.5% binge drinking

Marijuana

6th grade:
1.7% lifetime use
0.7% used in the last 30 days

8th grade:
5.6% lifetime use
2.7% past-month use

10th grade
14.8% lifetime use
6.8% past-month use

12th grade:
26.2% lifetime use
14.6% past-month use

2023 Pennsylvania Youth Survey (PAYS)

Mental Health Statistics

Emotional Distress

- 37.3% of students felt depressed or sad most days in the past year.
- 24.4% sometimes felt that life is not worth it.
- 36.0% felt "I think I am no good at all."
- 23.6% felt that they were a failure.

Self-Harm

- 14.8% of students reported self-harming at least once in the past year

Sleep & Fatigue

- 35.7% slept less than 7 hours a night on school nights.
- 64.4% felt tired or sleepy during the day every day or several times in the last 2 weeks.

Stress & Adversity

- 34.8% experienced the death of a close family member or friend in the past year.

Stress related to food insecurity increased significantly:

- Worrying food would run out: 9.1% ('21) → 20.7% ('23)
- Skipped meals due to lack of money: 10.7%

Suicide Ideation/Suicidal Thoughts

- 16.1% of all students considered suicide in the past year.

- 12.5% created a suicide plan in the past year.

Grade-level breakdown:

6th grade: 10.6%

8th grade: 12.8%

10th grade: 12.8%

12th grade: 13.7%

- 5.2% of all students attempted suicide in the past year.

Reflection Question

Do any of these data points surprise you in any way?

What is SAP?

"SAP is designed to assist in identifying issues including alcohol, tobacco, other drugs, and mental health issues which pose a barrier to a student's success."

- **History**
  - The Student Assistance Program (SAP) began in Pennsylvania in the mid-1980s.
  - Formally mandated statewide in 1990 by the PDE
  - Created in response to the rise in youth alcohol and drug use during the 1980s.

- **Mandate**
  - SAP is required for all public elementary, middle, and high schools in PA.
  - Mandated by Section 1547 of the School Code

- **What SAP actually *does:***
  - Identifies barriers to learning through observable behaviors.
  - Connects students to school-based and community supports.
  - Monitors progress and adjusts interventions as needed.
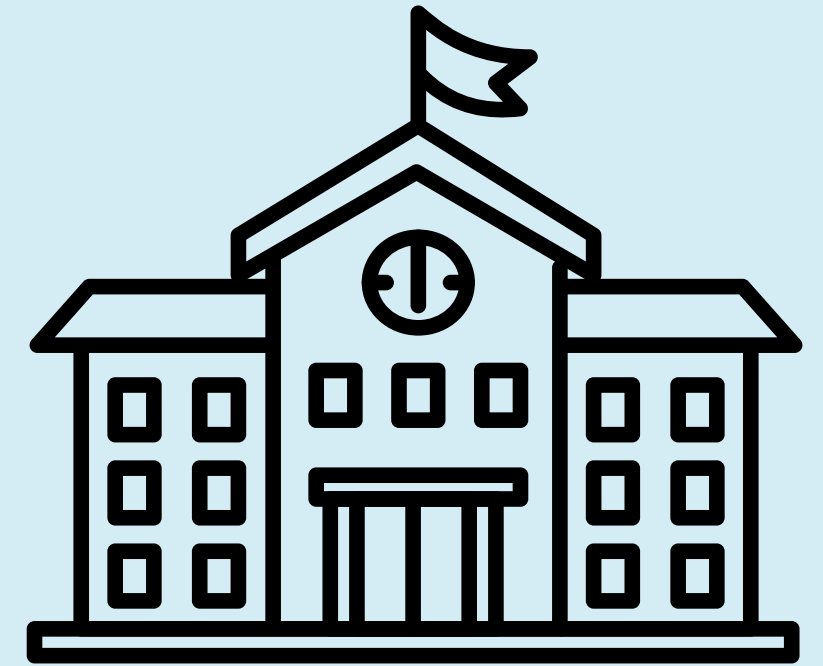
Student Assistance Process
SAP (Individual Student Level)

Team Planning

Phase 1
Referral

- Observe behavior concern
- Receive SAP referral
- Team initial review of referral
- Assign a SAP Team Case Manager

Phase 2
Data Collection

- Distribute and collect behavior checklists
- Gather other relevant data
- Complete parent/ guardian conversation and obtain written permission for SAP
- Conduct student conversation
- Review and summarize data

Phase 3
Action Planning

- Engage student and family to develop an action plan
- Identify appropriate school and community resources
- Consult with SAP Liaison to determine the need for a screening or assessment
- If screening or assessment is recommended, obtain written consent
- Ensure the action plan is data-driven, measurable, and achievable

Phase 4
Follow-Up

- Monitor and review the action plan through check-ins with student, family, and referral source
- Track progress data and adjust the plan as needed
- Close case when appropriate
- Complete PDE 4092 form

Activity #1: Case Study Referral

1. Everyone will be assigned a case study at random (*Celi, Nora, Logan, Carter*)

2. Once you have read your case study, form a group with those of the same number

3. Fill out the referral form based on the student your group was assigned
-For #6, as an educator, what preliminary steps would you take to assist that student?

4. Use the reading (found on Blackboard) titled ***Pennsylvania Student Assistance Program*** to assume the resources the SAP team would likely recommend for your case. (***In-School Student Supports, Section 2***).

In-school supports that may address student academic, social-emotional, behavioral, mental health, vocational, etc. needs include the following:
- Academic supports (e.g., tutoring, educational support groups, speech/language supports, Title 1, etc.)
- School Team supports (e.g., MTSS)
- One-to-One Counseling with School Counselor and/or School Psychologist
- Services by/from School Social worker
- One-to-One Follow-up with Team Member or other school personal (e.g., mentoring, check-in-check out, etc.)
- Crisis Intervention

Prepare to share!

SAP Team (Schoolwide)

- **Members of a SAP Team**
  - SAP teams should consist of at least four members
  - members should be representatives from any or all of the following groups:
  -district/school level administrator
  -teacher
  -school counselor
  -school psychologist
  -school social worker
  -nurse

- **Training**
  - All team members are required to complete SAP K-12 training conducted by a Pennsylvania Approved SAP Training Provider (PASTP).

- **Treatment**
  - SAP team members do not diagnose, treat, or refer for treatment, but they may refer for a screening/assessment for treatment.
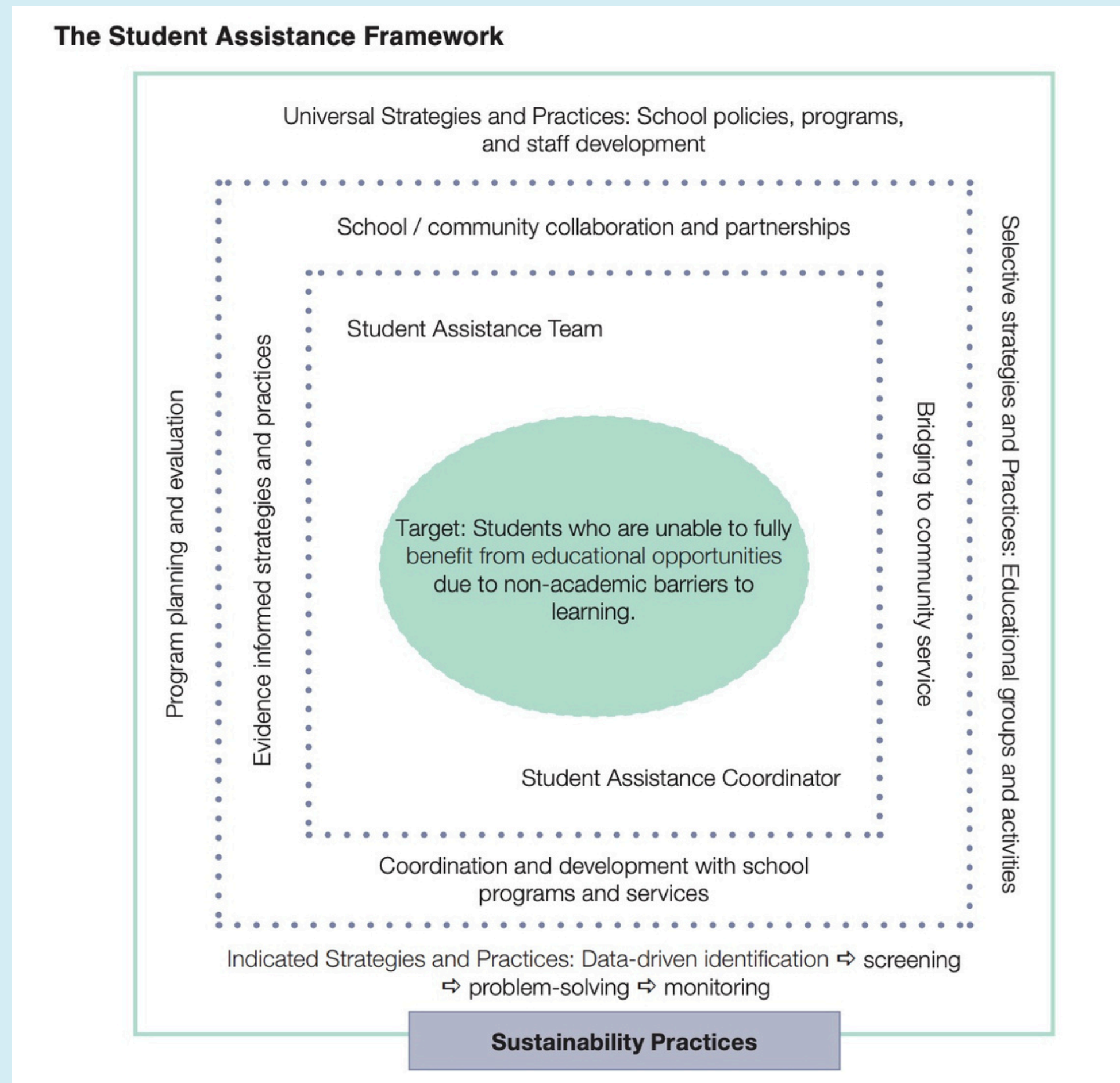
- **Purpose**
  - Identify and support students with non-academic barriers
  - Promote a safe and healthy school environment
  - Ensure every student receives the level of support they need.
  - Use data to guide decisions and planning

How Schools Build and Maintain Their SAP Program

- **Needs assessment:** A needs and resource assessment identifies student challenges and the supports needed to address them.

  - Archival data
  - Survey data
  - Key stakeholder interviews
  - Electronic and live forums
  - Resource Assessment

- **Program planning:** developing a plan that defines goals and the specific supports to be used at each SAP level.

  - Universal Level (100% of population)
  - Selective Level (10 – 15% of population)
  - Indicated Level (5 – 8% of population)

- **Implement schoolwide supports:**

  - Finalizing referral forms
  - providing staff training
  - sharing program information
  - putting interventions into action.

- **Evaluate SAP effectiveness:** SAP teams are ethically responsible for evaluating whether their strategies are effective.

  - Formative or Process Evaluation
 - Summative or Outcome Evaluation

The Student Assistance Framework

The Student Assistance Framework

Universal Strategies and Practices: School policies, programs, and staff development

School / community collaboration and partnerships

Student Assistance Team

Target: Students who are unable to fully benefit from educational opportunities due to non-academic barriers to learning.

Student Assistance Coordinator

Program planning and evaluation

Evidence informed strategies and practices

Bridging to community service

Selective strategies and Practices: Educational groups and activities

Coordination and development with school programs and services

Indicated Strategies and Practices: Data-driven identification ⇨ screening ⇨ problem-solving ⇨ monitoring

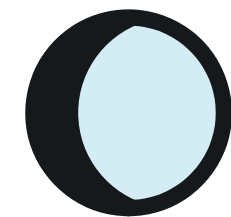**Sustainability Practices**

Activity #2: Examining The Reading "*Laws Pertinent to SAP*"

- Reading titled: *Laws Pertinent to SAP* (Found on Blackboard)

- Groups will be assigned a specific section of the reading (Confidentiality, Parent/Guardian Consent, or Behavioral Health)

- Groups will discuss the following questions and report their findings back to the class.
  - **What are the strengths of this area of SAP law** (What does it do well or effectively?)

  - **What are the weaknesses, pitfalls, or assumptions?** (Where could it cause issues, confusion, or problems?)

  - **What would you add, change, or remove to improve it?** (How could this law or guideline be better?)
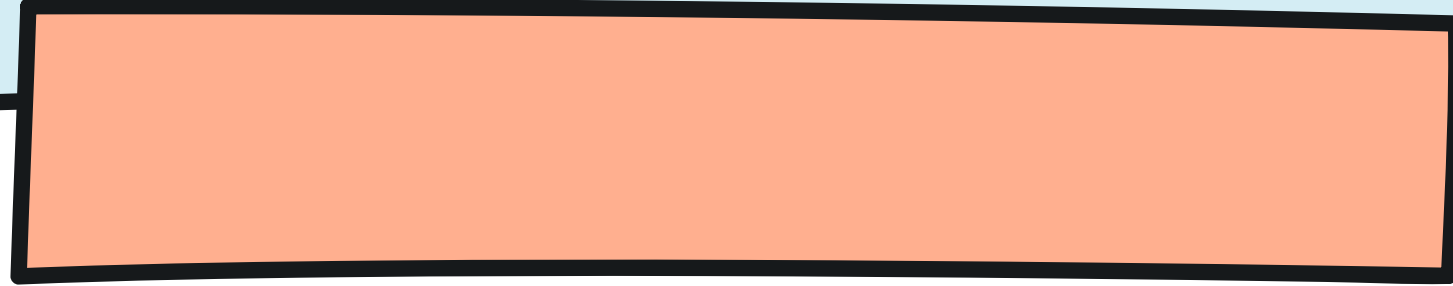
"One cannot assume that a student who comes to school comes ready to learn. Nor can one ignore the students who do not attend school by simply applying a truancy policy."
-STUDENT ASSISTANCE CENTER

Thank you!