

FIGURE 4. Excerpt from Virginia Beach, Virginia, Troubleshooting Guide

Problem Behavior: Lack of Student Engagement		
What It Looks Like	Why It May Exist (Research and Student Perceptions)	What We Can Do About It (Research and Staff Recommendations)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student is doing something other than task at hand • Absenteeism • Minimal effort applied to a task • Avoidance of challenging work • Incomplete assignments • Distracting or disruptive behavior • Dropping out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student may experience difficulty paying attention during an instructional activity. In an hourlong class, boys' attention span will average about 8 minutes (some of the research says as high as 22 minutes). • Student may experience difficulty adjusting to new teachers every 45 minutes. • Student may not want to appear "dumb." • Instruction may not be allowing for differences between analytical and relational styles of learning. • Instruction may be overemphasizing parts—specific, analytical, and abstract learning. • Instruction may lack student-made creative materials. • Peer group may not be reinforcing positive values. • Student may perceive doing well in school as a sign that one has "sold out" or opted to "act white" for individual gain. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities for cooperative grouping and kinesthetic learning. • Incorporate culturally relevant materials that are purposefully embedded into the curriculum. • Build culturally responsive learning communities by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - affirming students in their cultural connections. - being personally inviting. - creating physically welcoming classroom spaces. - reinforcing students for their academic development. - accommodating instruction to the cultures and learning styles of students. - managing classrooms with firm, consistent, and loving control. - creating opportunities for both individual and cooperative work. • Differentiate instruction by emphasizing variety and flexibility in methods and goals. • Assign homework that is relevant and beneficial to the next day's lesson--that has meaning beyond a check in the grade book.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School may be giving mixed messages about what activities it values.• Black students may be more likely to be excluded from rigorous courses and opportunities that support and encourage them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide multiple resources to address different levels of readiness and interests (such as reading differences or differences in prior knowledge).• Create authentic assessment opportunities that involve inquiry-based projects, emphasizing experience-based or field-based learning.• Provide opportunities for students to showcase talents, achievements, and interests.• Connect instructional content to real-world experiences and 21st century skills.• Use peer group to reinforce academic achievement.
--	--	---

Source: From Virginia Beach City Public Schools, Virginia Beach, Virginia. Used with permission.