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PBIS Implementation Toolkit

by

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Project Abstract

The purpose of this curriculum project is to create a Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) toolkit for staff members of a middle school campus to successfully implement PBIS systems onsite. The toolkit consists of six lessons/in-service activities for developing school wide or classroom expectations, teaching expectations, and interventions for students who find themselves at the second or first tier of the system. The methodology for developing this project consisted of a literature review on PBIS, a review of PBIS materials, and the development of PBIS lessons. The benefit of this project is to help educators implement PBIS within their own classroom with focus on improving student social skills, including student voice, and shifting from a punitive system of discipline to one of prevention.

Keywords: IDEA, implementation, K-12 education, Positive Behavioral Supports, PBS, Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, PBIS, social skills

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
.....	
ABSTRACT.....	2
Chapter I: Definition of Problem	6
<i>Guiding Questions</i>	7
<i>Purpose of the Project</i>	7
<i>Literature Review</i>	8
<i>Methodology</i>	8
<i>Significance of the Project</i>	9
<i>Summary</i>	9
<i>Definition of Terms</i>	10
Chapter II: Literature Review	11
<i>The History of PBIS & Nation wide Implementation</i>	12
<i>PBS Transforms into PBIS</i>	13
<i>Implementation of PBIS Programs Nation-Wide</i>	15
<i>Critique of PBIS</i>	22
<i>Summary</i>	26
Chapter III: Methodology	28
<i>Design</i>	29
<i>Target Audience</i>	30
<i>Instrumentation</i>	31
<i>Project Timeline</i>	32
<i>Summary</i>	34

Chapter IV: Project Presentation	35
<i>Project Cover Page</i>	36
<i>Project Table of Contents</i>	37
<i>Project Overview</i>	38
<i>Project</i>	39
Chapter V: Recommendations	52
<i>Lessons Learned</i>	52
<i>Educational Recommendations</i>	56
<i>Project Implementation Plans</i>	56
<i>Limitations</i>	57
<i>Future Research</i>	58
<i>Summary</i>	58
References.....	60

Chapter One: Definition of Problem

School discipline policies are changing. Evidence shows that throughout the first decade of the twenty-first century “more than 3 million students were suspended from school, or double the level of suspensions in the 1970s” (Flannery, 2015). The zero-tolerance policies of the late twenty-first century that dominated discipline procedures are harming students’ growth academically, rather than improving. More urgently, students who are the most common recipients of zero-tolerance policies are “children [with] learning disabilities or histories of poverty, abuse, or neglect, and would benefit from additional educational and counseling services” (ACLU, 2014). The evidence reveals a stark reality—the development of the school-to-prison pipeline in school districts where students face the most challenges. As educators we are faced with a growing problem: how do we encourage students to succeed academically and socially? How do we promote continued success? New strategies have recently flooded the academic field, taking the lead to reform disciplinary policies across the state of California. Teachers are receiving professional development on trauma informed practices, the power of restorative justice, and implementing culturally responsive curriculum in the classroom. It is important to consider the commonalities between these strategies as well as the stark differences between the previous strategies found within zero-tolerance policies. There is a shift from dealing out fierce, punitive consequences to students to promoting and fostering a more reflective process that is built on the ideas of creating a positive school culture. This shift targets the creation of a learning community where students feel safe and can grow socially, as well as academically. A system that schools have successfully—or attempted to—implement is that of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). PBIS grew from the ideas established within positive behavior supports (PBS)—a program that works to reinforce positive student

behavior instead of punitively punishing negative behaviors. PBIS supports schools and districts nationwide in implementing a multi-tiered approach to supporting students with social, emotional, and behavioral development [and] improve social, emotional, and academic outcomes for all students (PBIS, 2017).

Guiding Questions

Having participated in a school committee that created and implemented PBIS school wide, I watched the systems crumble without proper school wide maintenance. From this experience a few questions come to mind. How could such an effective system that fosters a positive school culture barely withstand two academic years with high teacher turnover? What additional information do educators need to fully understand the purpose and outcomes of PBIS? How can PBIS be implemented fully to provide not only academic support, but also teach social skills? It is with these questions in mind that I intend to create a toolkit staff could use to lay the foundation that would let the positive school culture of PBIS flourish and withstand the hardships that occur in education. Students want to learn. Students want to do well. We as educators should provide an environment where they can do both.

Purpose of Project

The purpose of the project is to create a toolkit for staff members of a middle school campus to successfully implement PBIS systems onsite. The toolkit provide lessons that can be used within the classroom or school wide to develop a PBIS system. In this toolkit, there will be strategies for developing school wide or classroom expectations, teaching expectations, and creating interventions for students who find themselves at the second or first tier of the PBIS continuum.

Preview Literature

I review three main areas of PBIS specific literature: creation of PBIS, PBIS implementation, and PBIS critique. First, I explore the creation of PBIS. Where did PBIS start? Why was PBIS started? Why the deviation from the traditional disciplinary policies of the mid-twentieth century? To do this, I analyze the work of Robert Horner and George Sugai who created PBIS in the 1980's and currently run the federally funded PBIS.org website.

Second, I analyze how PBIS is implemented through a multi-tiered system. The multi-tiered system provides targeted support for students with various social and academic skills. I follow up with a case study of implementing PBIS at a school site. I explore how a school district and a specific school site have worked with the school staff in creating a foundation for successful PBIS systems, implementing PBIS through best practices, maintaining systems, collecting student data for target intervention, and reflecting on the process.

Third, I identify the critiques and criticism of PBIS in the field of education. I note the backlash from other PBS programs when PBIS received federal funding and how PBS programs voice claims of mainstreaming support systems instead of providing more diverse options of support for students. In addition, I share claims of PBIS marginalizing students by promoting expectations of the social majority. Finally I assess how PBIS is implemented and the effectiveness of the systems put in place with or without essential components.

Preview Methodology

I create a toolkit that will help develop school staff, student, and community buy-in for a new disciplinary system. I also create lessons that assist in setting-up a PBIS system that will work for individual schools based on their various needs. There are six lessons that build upon each other to create a system of PBIS that will teach students' social skills and work towards decreasing the amount of office referrals and suspensions. Lastly, I share the toolkit with fellow educators during a ninety-minute, in-service session. In this session, I explore and discuss key components of PBIS and the importance of teaching social skills in addition to academic content.

The in-service session provide participants an idea of how to implement PBIS and begin to teach social skills in the classroom by providing resources that can be used.

First, I research the various methods used by schools to cultivate buy-in between all parties. In addition, I research how schools created lessons and activities that could be used to start the process of implementing PBIS at a school site. I also note the criticism of PBIS to avoid any challenges that may occur during implementation

Second, I create a series of lessons that can be used to help a school site explore the advantages of PBIS, create school wide expectations, provide examples of how teach the expectations to students, and explore how to teach social skills to students who struggle in tier two and three of PBIS.

Third, I lead an in-service session to share the lessons with fellow educators and provide resources that can be used in their own classrooms.

Significance of Project

This project can improve education in several ways. First, it can help to create a school culture where each student can find personal and educational success. It can help administrators decrease the amount of disciplinary actions, such as office referrals, as well as help teachers productively redirect behavior. With this toolkit, teachers and students can move towards achieving learning goals set throughout the year, instead of spending valuable time managing the various behaviors that disrupt learning. Ultimately, this project effectively blends strategies that teach students social skills and improve emotional literacy through a PBIS lens. The project builds upon previous literature by aiding in developing systems that will ensure that PBIS can withstand throughout the changing years of an education system. Through this project, students who are viewed as behaviorally challenged and ‘unreachable’ can have a voice to achieve success.

Summary of Chapter One

In this chapter, I identified issues with previous disciplinary policies and introduced PBIS as a possible replacement. I also explored how I could assist educators in implementing PBIS at their own school sites and the significance of taking on such a project.

Definitions

PBS

PBS refers to Positive Behavior System, which is a behavioral management system that focuses on students to change behavior through positive reinforcement.

PBIS

PBIS refers to Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, which stems from PBS with the added addition of an intervention system that is powered by prevention through the establishment of expectations and constant positive reinforcement.

IDEA

IDEA stands for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, which was a law, passed in Congress to provide support for students and their academic and emotional needs.

No-tolerance Policy

No-Tolerance Policy is a school disciplinary policy that developed from a similar policy within the judicial system. No-Tolerance refers to the punitive consequences that students receive based on unwanted behaviors or actions.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

California's introduction of the new California School Dashboard last year places the shifting methodology of discipline into the spotlight. The newly improved dashboard replaces California's older school accountability system that relied heavily on standardized testing. With the new dashboard, school climate becomes a main indicator for school accountability by tracking suspension rates in the state (Washburn, 2018). Recent focus on education is beginning to shift from a sole focus on instructional practices to a perspective that incorporates the learning environments that foster not only student's ability to internalize content, but also that of obtaining and using social skills that will provide useful as an adult. This shift has made it possible for various Positive Behavior System (PBS) programs to emerge and provide a framework for schools and districts to teach social skills and citizenship within a classroom. With such a wide variety of PBS programs, Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) leads the pack by providing an additional system of intervention. The system of intervention blends together in a continuum that relies on a base of prevention. Through the combination of prevention and intervention, there is a focus to help students develop social skills and emotional literacy so that they can achieve academic success.

With this continuum in mind, I have chosen to focus on PBIS instead of other PBS programs. I taught in a school that attempted to implement PBIS for three years, I watched the system fail for numerous reasons that could have been easily corrected. The experience left me with questions that guide the project that I am creating. First, what systems would need to be established in order to help staff fully understand the purpose of PBIS? What about students? How could a school continue to monitor PBIS through the years, in order to promote continued

success? How could PBIS be used to not only stop behaviors that hinder learning in the classroom, but also help students learn social skills and improve emotional literacy? How could PBIS aid students in finding success within school and once they leave school?

With these questions in mind, I want to explore the following themes of PBS. First, I want to analyze the beginnings of PBS. What encouraged teachers, schools, and districts to focus on positive behavior systems rather than continuing with the disciplinary procedures already in place? What does that foundation of PBS look like? What are the characteristics of the various PBS programs that exist today? Second, I will explore how schools implement PBIS and the outcomes the program had on staff, students, and the community at large. Third, I will examine recent criticism of the larger shift to implement PBIS programs nation-wide, along with analysis of its' effectiveness.

The History of PBS and the Beginning of Nation-Wide Implementation

Educators in primary and secondary classrooms have undoubtedly heard of PBS during some point in their career. PBS has become a fixture in the twenty-first century classroom—yet where did PBS begin? What led educational researchers and professionals to explore the importance of positive behavior support? In 1975, Congress passed legislation called Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EHA) to provide support for students with special needs. In 1997, Congress revised the EHA, renaming it Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Before the passing of IDEA in Congress, PBS was mostly unknown to the education world; afterwards, it became a staple in special education programs around the country. “Positive behavior support (PBS) developed in the 1980s and 1990s as an approach to enhance quality of life and minimize challenging behavior” (Tincani, 2007, p. 492). During the 1980s, the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) identified traditional school-wide discipline procedures as

non-constructive and reactive—with an emphasis on punishment and poor implementation leading to limited effects (Sugai, 2011).

As the 1980s progressed, key educational researchers, such as Robert Horner of University of Oregon and current co-director of the OSEP sponsored PBIS, noted that educators began to realize the focus on an instructional culture—such as direct instruct or teacher led conversations—would not endure and they would not produce the kind of change that we call quality of life or more informally referred to as social skills (2016). PBS gain national attention when, Congress modified the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to include amendments that states “almost 30 years of research and experience have demonstrated that educational of children with disabilities can be made more effective by—providing incentives for whole-school approaches, scientifically based early reading programs, positive behavioral interventions and supports, and early intervening services to reduce the need to label children as disabled in order to address the learning and behavioral needs of such children” (1997).

PBS Transformed to PBIS

At the amending of the IDEA, positive behavior support transformed into it’s referenced name in the bill—positive behavior intervention and supports (PBIS). With the addition of intervention into its name, PBIS became more than just a prevention program to support positive behaviors. PBIS became a program that offered interventions to support social and emotional growth. PBIS began to take hold of how educators and school districts approached discipline policies in the first part of the twentieth century.

The additional passing of IDEA in Congress in 2004 is not the only reason educators begin to include PBIS in classrooms and led administrators to initiate school-wide implementation of PBIS. During the 1990s, many school districts began to implement *no*

tolerance policies. No tolerance is a policy that stems from an approach to drug enforcement and spread throughout schools nation-wide. No tolerance policies work along the assumption “that removing students who engage in disruptive behavior will deter others from disruption and create an improved climate for students who remain” (American Psychological Association Zero Tolerance Task Force, 2008, p. 852). Schools continued throughout the 1990s and early 2000s with no tolerance discipline policies and with twenty years of such policies, disruptive behavior did not decrease or increase—instead it remained static. According to American Psychological Association (2008) almost 20% of students in grades 9-12 consistently reported being in a physical fight during the past 12 months this did not change with the implementation of Zero-tolerance policies.

In the twenty years of Zero-tolerance discipline policies, one fact began to become crystal clear—this disciplinary policy did not work. Students were continuing to display disruptive behaviors, hindering not only their own educational but also that of their peers by creating a hostile learning environment. Instead of improvements, startling trends began to appear. “Students suspended in 6th grade are *more* likely to receive office referrals or suspensions by 8th grade than students who had not been suspended” (Skiba & Spargue, 2008, p. 39). Evidence also suggests that schools with higher suspension rates have higher dropout rates, lower academic quality, and receive lower ratings on standardized testing and school government measures (Skiba & Spargue, 2008).

The most startlingly trend of no tolerance policies was the creation of the collectively referred to School-to-Prison Pipeline. According to Emily Owens, “the School-to-Prison Pipeline is a social phenomenon where students become formally involved with the criminal justice system as a result of school policies that use law enforcement, rather than discipline, to address

behavioral problems” (p. 11). The effects of the School-to-Prison Pipeline flourished as no tolerance policies progressed through the 1990s. Suspension rates more than doubled, from approximately 1.5 million students suspended in the beginning of the decade to more than 3.1 million students towards the end of the decade (McCarter, 2017). By the turn of the century, educational researchers suggest “even just one suspension increased student’s likelihood of repeating a grade, dropping out, and coming into contact with the juvenile justice system” (McCarter, 2017, p. 53).

The bleak evidence above lead to the sobering realizing that the education system was failing almost seven percent of the student population in the United States (McCarter, 2017) instead of helping students achieve academic success. Such evidence and research laid the foundation for educational researchers, like Robert Horner and George Sugai, to begin to question and theorize how educators could better service the youth of the nation to consider not only the instructional culture, but also how critical the social culture of a school was to making an effective learning environment (Horner & Stonemeier, 2016).

Implementation of PBIS Programs Nation-Wide

Once major and minor members of the national educational community began to realize the faults of the disciplinary policies of the twentieth century, there was a shift to include more PBIS systems nation and district-wide. These shifts continue and as the twenty-first century proceeds on, various PBIS programs have been created to address negative behavior and focus on teaching students social skills in the classroom. Each PBIS system provides a unique approach to addressing behaviors that dismantle the learning environment as well as strategies to teach students social skills for successful participation inside and outside the classroom. Yet, the questions to ask of these systems are; what are the struggles during implementations? What

defines successful implementation? What does school staff need to do to promote successful implementation? How do PBIS programs find continued success at school site for years to come? With these questions in mind, I will explore the implementation of the PBIS programs and assess the process of implementation. I will also look at how well the programs change school culture through the collection and analysis of data. This analysis will allow me to reflect on the various experiences of implementing a PBIS system. I will be able to identify how PBIS programs can provide an opportunity to improve school culture for students and staff members alike. This will allow me to create a toolkit for teachers at my school site to implement PBIS.

The largest and most popularly referred to PBIS system is the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) sponsored and funded PBIS. Leading PBIS educational researchers, George Sugai and Roy Mayer are co directors of the program. PBIS focusing on helping districts implement “a multi-tiered approach to social, emotional, and behavior support” (PBIS, 2018). Currently, PBIS is implemented at over 25,911 schools nation-wide (PBIS, 2018). With OSEP funding, PBIS has a vast amount of resources to provide participating districts with. PBIS focuses on developing a small number of school-wide expectations for students to adhere by. Behaviors that meet the expectations throughout various school areas are used to create a behavior matrix that PBIS schools generally make into a school wide poster outlining the expectations for how to respect ourselves, others, and property in different settings such as hallways, playgrounds, cafeteria, and library. For example in the hallway setting to respect ourselves the expectation is to walk, to respect others is to use normal inside voices and to walk to the right, and to respect property the expectation is to pick up litter and maintain physical space (Sugai, 2011, slide 19).

After expectations and a behavioral matrix is created, PBIS encourages faculty to develop a referral system where staff identify behaviors that need to be dealt within the administrative office and behaviors that can be dealt with in the classroom. Seemingly, the most important aspect of implementing PBIS is that a school site should have at least 80% of school staff buy-in. 80% staff buy in is essential to creating any school-wide expectations or changing referral policies and for the program to succeed and make a difference in student learning experiences (PBIS, 2018). Without 80% buy from faculty, it seems that the fidelity and implementation of PBIS is at risk of failing. Along with support from a majority of the staff, it seems that that routine collection of data and review of the data is important. The collection and review inform the implementation process and promotes continuous success of PBIS.

For one school district in Illinois, a need to implement PBIS grew urgent as district officials begin “recognizing that different levels of intervention were needed for different students” rather than the traditional no tolerance policy of past years (Netzel & Eber, 2003, p. 72). A single school-site was chosen as a pilot site, where “problem behavior was addressed on a case-by-case and after-the fact basis, clearly a ‘putting out fires’ approach” (Netzel & Eber, 2003, p. 72). PBIS is the proverbial Smokey the Bear of school disciplinary policies, working towards preventing any behavioral issues and intervening before a climatic behavioral episode occurs. Once chosen as a pilot site, the school-site sent a “team including grade-level representation, administration, and support staff” to receive training from the PBIS Coaches Network (Netzel & Eber, 2003, p. 73). It seems that PBIS encourages training of various members of school staff, such as teachers, administrators, and supportive staff members. Such make-up, suggests that in order for successful implementation of a PBIS system, a school-site and/or district needs to consider other important staff members on site to increase buy-in with

new discipline policies that PBIS will create. The exclusion of supporting staff and classified staff may jeopardize the validity of the PBIS system.

PBIS training focusing on a three-tiered system, where the majority (around eighty percent) of students require primary prevention that includes school and classroom systems that all students are expected to follow. For example, schools with PBIS in place usually have school-wide expectations for students to follow, providing exemplar behaviors that meet the expectations through a behavior matrix. Some students (around fifteen percent) require secondary prevention. Secondary preventions include, but are not limited to, small group instruction that may specialize in an academic or emotional support. Usually, students who fall within the secondary prevention tier are considered at risk for developing high-risk behavior and additional systems are put into place for these students. Lastly, a few students (around five percent) require tertiary prevention. Tertiary prevention includes individualized and specialized support since students within this tier are students with high-risk behaviors. As in tier two, systems are put into place for these students. This previous tiered system was envisioned as a pyramid divided into three tiers with distinctive strategies for each part based on what level the student was identified.

“In 2007, a blended continuum was developed to reduce the focus on static tiers and tiered labeling and to increase the emphasis on prevention logic” (PBIS Blueprint, 2015, p. 5). The figure provided in the PBIS Blueprint uses color to show how the tiers blend, with the top of the pyramid for tertiary prevention being red and as you go down the pyramid toward the secondary prevention the color blends into orange and then yellow, and then blends from yellow to green for the primary prevention ([PBIS Power Point \(https://www.pbis.org/.../pbisresources/PBIS%20Part%201%2018%20Oct%202015%2...\)](https://www.pbis.org/.../pbisresources/PBIS%20Part%201%2018%20Oct%202015%2...)). The

move toward the blended continuum was purposeful in stepping away from an image that PBIS is a series of steps that educators and administrators take to decrease negative behaviors on campus. PBIS should be seen as a fluid, ever changing program that fits the diverse needs of a student population over time. Educators need to choose strategies at different points of the continuum to meet the student needs and that can mean choosing in one moment a primary prevent, and in the next a secondary or tertiary and then back again if necessary.

Once the team of various school staff members has completed training, the process of implementing PBIS can begin within the school site. Implementing PBIS in its entirety can take anywhere from 3-5 years. With this in mind, the Illinois school took the first year to focus on educating the staff members about PBIS by focusing on three global concepts (Netzel & Eber, 2003). The rest of the school year was spent on developing the individual components of the PBIS program.

First, staff worked collaboratively to create the behavioral matrix and keystone document of PBIS. After creating three to four school-wide expectations, school staff needs to identify three examples of each expectation in various locations around school. For example, if a expectation is *be respectful*, staff will need to identify what being respectful looks like in the classroom, hallways, or bathrooms. The school in Illinois choice to focus on classes, assembly/field trips, playground, special classes, cafeteria, bathroom, bus, hall, emergency situations, and library (Netzel & Eber, 2003). After the behavioral matrix is created, it should be brought “back to [the] whole staff to ensure 80% buy in from the entire staff on what expectations are taught in each area” (SWPBIS for Beginners, PBIS.org, 2018, paragraph 2). This changes the focus from creating and identifying positive behaviors and towards teaching the positive behaviors to students. For the school in Illinois, “the team chose to break the behavior

matrix into 12 lessons, each composed of a teaching component, a student activity, and suggestions for how to continuously practice the lesson for the rest of the week” (Netzel & Eber, 2003, p. 74). It is important to note that in order to promote continued success of a PBIS system, a school site needs to develop a plan to teach the expectations and positive behaviors throughout the year.

Second, the PBIS team work to shift the school staff’s “perspective on discipline from reactive to proactive” (Netzel & Eber, 2003, p. 74). By initiating the shift through various presentations on suspensions and the benefits of proactive discipline policies, the school was able to create an “office referral form [that] served not only as a referral but also as a visual prompt for administrators to choose from a continuum of consequences for misbehavior, as opposed to suspension alone” (Netzel & Eber, 2003, p. 74). Seemingly, PBIS does not focus on a top down approach to changing school culture. Throughout the process of implementing a PBIS program, the school in Illinois has shown that school staff should be included in almost every part of creating the systems of PBIS. Education is a rewarding, but sometimes an exhausting career. Burnout occurs frequently among educators. To provide educators with an opportunity to create a system that will improve job satisfaction, such as creating and implementing a PBIS program, it is likely that the amount of burnout that teachers experience can decrease. Just as when students are part of their learning through hands on activities, adults take ownership in a system that they help create. Staff members’ well being is an important component of school culture and having a sense of ownership and belonging will foster a positive climate that will trickle down to students.

Finally, with the all systems created and taught to students continuously throughout the year, the Illinoisan school implemented the last component of PBIS: data collection. The school

did not only collect data such as office referrals, they also collected data on the incentive programs that were put in place when students meet expectations. By collecting data, it provided the leadership team the ability to focus its problem-solving activities on the “hot spots” that were shown in the data. The leadership team was able to “identify students with multiple referrals/suspensions whose needs should be addressed through classroom environment modifications, a phone call home from the social worker, a referral for wraparound [services]” (Netzel & Eber, 2003, p. 77). Collection of data allows for the continuous support of PBIS programs and also to ensure that the supports and systems in place are affective. The school in Illinois also used data to create the needed wraparound services and “to provide targeted small-group interventions for students identified as ‘repeat offenders’ via analysis of the school’s discipline data. “ (Netzel & Eber, 2003, p. 77). It seems that collection of data should not only be considered for disciplinary measures, such as referrals and/or suspension, but also to gauge the effectiveness of incentive plans. The Illinoisan school did not provide examples of data collected on its’ incentive plans. By implementing PBIS at the school site, the school claimed to:

experience a 22% reduction in overall successions” along with “less easily quantifiable changes include increased positive staff and student attitude and overall schools climate, a decrease in staff turnover (although turnover still exists), and a feeling of staff investment in implementation of PBIS. (Netzel & Eber, 2003, p. 77)

The implementation of PBIS at the school provides promising results of success. The school was able to decrease suspension rates and it seemed that school climate also improved. Success was promoted by the continuous input and collaboration of staff members throughout the whole process of implementation. As seen in at the school in Illinois, staff was included in creating the expectations and behavioral matrix, along with creating lessons to teach the expectations to

students. It seems that the struggles of implementing PBIS is the challenge to change staff perspective of disciplinary policies and the purpose of suspensions.

Critique of PBIS

PBIS is one of many PBS programs that are available to schools. Yet, what led to the majority of schools towards implementing PBIS instead of other programs? What does PBIS have that other programs lack? Or, better yet, through investigation of PBIS criticism, can I maneuver my way to successfully implementing PBIS at a school site and within a classroom? With these questions, I explore the various critiques of PBIS that range from a lack of diverse methodology for diverse student population to the complications of fully implementing of PBIS.

A vocal and reliable critic of PBIS is the Arkansan based Project ACHIEVE. Project ACHIEVE is a PBS system created by Howard M. Knoff that promises “through the use of seven interdependent components deemed to address the comprehensive needs of a school or school district...the academic and social progress and development of at-risk, if not all, children” (Knoff & Batsche, 1995). The seven components of Project ACHIEVE are “(a) student-focused, intervention-based problem solving, (b) assessment and intervention techniques for students' academic and behavioral problems, (c) classroom-based social skills training, and (d) data-based evaluation of student outcomes” (Knoff & Batsche, 1995). Project ACHIEVE suggests a three year implementation process compared to the three to five year implementation process of PBIS.

In the late twentieth century, PBIS came to the forefront of positive behavior support programs by receiving funding from the OSEP in 1998. In October 2013, a new five-year funding cycle was launched (OSEP Tech Assistance, PBIS.org, 2018, paragraph 1). Interestingly enough, a year before given a new funding cycle, a letter of criticism was given to the Inspector General of the U.S. Department of Education. Howard Knoff, director of Project ACHIEVE,

wrote this letter. Within this letter Knoff claims “ the U.S. Department of Education...engaged in a systematic effort to promote, advocate for, fund and support the implementations a singular approach to PBIS to the conscious exclusion of other (even evidence-based) PBIS (or Positive Behavioral Support—PBIS) approaches” (Knoff, 2012). Knoff goes so far as to express that the constant advertising of PBIS by the federal government has caused PBIS to become synonym for PBS programs in general.

Howard Knoff also explores how “advocacy of a single PBIS approach [can result] in policy and practice recommendations that are not based on research or effective practice...[and might] potentially [harm] students” (Knoff, 2012). With this statement of concern, Knoff suggests that since receiving continuous federal funding, PBIS might not provide effective strategies that would guarantee a decrease of disciplinary referrals and suspension rates. He comes to this conclusion, arguing that PBIS has not been able to provide evidence nor data to refute this claim because PBIS is not based on effective research practices to improve school climate and decrease school discipline issues.

The letter concludes by stating, “my purpose here is not to suggest, identify, or allege wrong-doing—and it is not to gain a competitive advantage in the ‘PBIS marketplace.’...My purpose is to ensure that all students, staff, school, and systems across this country have equal access to evidence-based PBS information...so that they...can make informed decisions” (Knoff, 2012).

Knoff’s concerns are worth a pause for consideration. He articulates several logical restrictions of PBIS that might develop at a school site or within classroom during implementation. First, because of federal funding, does PBIS promote a one-version-fits-all program for the United States increasingly diverse student population? Research provides

educators with facts that there are a variety of learners within our classrooms, so could we expect that students across the nation find behavioral and social success with one PBS program?

Second, questioning PBIS's validity as a disciplinary policy by stating that PBIS uses limited research practices to support claims of improved school culture, strikes a chord as an educational researcher. Is there research that proves PBIS claims of success for diverse student populations? More importantly, is there *enough*? Lastly, Knoff stresses the importance of providing school sites with a choice to choose a PBS program that provides the appropriate support and structures for their unique student populations. This creates doubt on whether a system like PBIS—which stretches from coast to coast—can actually help students be successful academically and socially. As a nation, we do not use one single social science curriculum for all of 8th grade, should not we consider behavioral management plans and disciplinary policies in the same manner?

While Howard Knoff's criticism of PBIS is from an educator's perspective, PBIS is also critiqued from a behavior analyst's perspective as well. Studies suggest that PBIS "appears to have limitations regarding sociocultural values and behavioral data collection practices" (Wilson, 2015, p. 92). These limitations have been discussed steadily throughout PBIS's growth during the late twentieth century. A major sociocultural concern "is the nature of a top down systematic approach" (Wilson, 2015, p. 93). For example, administrators or a specially trained task force choose the school-wide expectations and identify behaviors and actions that meet those expectations. While eighty percent staff buy in is encouraged, the student body is completely left out of the development process. This not only would decrease the sense of student ownership of the expectations, but it would also decrease their buy in to abide by the school-wide expectations. Also, "administrators...select behaviors to coincide with the broader culture of the

school, which may or may not necessarily represent the culture of the student body” (Wilson, 2015, p. 92). Such claims raise questions about how PBIS fits within a multicultural or culturally responsive curriculum that many schools are in the process of starting onsite. PBIS is the go-to program for numerous Title I schools across the country, but with this information in mind, do educators provide a disciplinary policy that would truly promote academic and social success? Or are educators promoting an idea of success that students cannot culturally identify with?

Behavioral analysis research also suggests that PBIS struggles to provide students with mental health services until they reach the higher tiers of the program. “Students must engage in maladaptive behaviors to get access to additional mental health services” (Wilson, 2015, p. 93). This suggestion questions the viability of PBIS creators’ claim that PBIS is a prevention system. It reinforces the idea that students must act out in order to receive help, instead of focusing on how to teach student to self-identify their needs and ask for help in a more constructive manner.

Wilson makes one final observation in how the data collected on student behavior may not provide a proper insight to student behavior. “The PBIS system appears to react maladaptive behaviors rather than assess and analyze positive behaviors as suggested” (Wilson, 2015, p. 93). PBIS might, in reality, provide administration and data collection teams a skewed version of the facts. PBIS recommends tracking disciplinary referrals and suspensions—completely ignoring the spectrum of positive behaviors that are observable at the school. If a school site or classroom teacher implementing PBIS were to also include positive behavior data, a more defined and complete picture of student behavior and social skills can be seen. This information would be invaluable to creating a more positive culture at school and reinforcing school-wide expectations.

Lastly, implementing PBIS is examined through a lens of implementation quality theory. Implementation quality refers to a program being implemented to fidelity with all require

components and identifying components that are considered active ingredients. Active ingredients of any given program refers to the components that are necessary for successfully implementing a program with viable data. In one study, statisticians discovered that “two of three ‘active ingredients’ of PBIS were also found to be two of the most poorly implemented components” (Molloy, Moore, Trail, Von Epps, & Hopfer, 2013, p. 603). This information is important to consider for an educator. Educators are skilled masters at identifying components of a curriculum or program that can work within the classroom and with the demographic of students seated in the class. If educators choose components of PBIS that they deem reasonable to implement in class and those components are not considered active ingredients, it will affect the quality of implementation and effectiveness of the program. Ultimately, failing to implement these active ingredients is failing to provide support for students who need it the most.

With these critiques in mind, I need to be considerate of the various aspects of culture in my classroom and onsite. I need include student voice in creating a set of expectations and rewards systems that all members of a school site—including teachers, administrators, *and* students—can abide by. I will also need to consistently gather data, both from disciplinary referrals and examples of positive behavior around the school. Lastly, I need to assure that I am implementing all components of PBIS and not exclude active ingredients that can lead to successful implementation. By keeping the following criticisms in mind, I can help students improve behavior and learn social skills.

Summary of Chapter Two

In this chapter I discussed the history of PBS and PBIS. I analyzed the shift from no tolerance policies and identified the impact of these policies on students. I provided an overview of how PBS became a common phrase in the world of education and how it led to PBIS being

written and described in federal legislation. I explored how to implement PBIS at a school site, focusing on the inclusion of all staff to create systems such as school-wide expectations, lessons to teach expectations, and incentive programs. Lastly, I identified critiques of PBIS and how PBIS these criticisms can aid creating an implementation toolkit that will avoid these criticisms.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Throughout the 1980's and 1990's, discipline policies relied heavily on a no tolerance philosophy and an even heavier reliance on school suspensions and school expulsions. After several decades of no tolerance, the numbers of office discipline referrals, suspensions, and expulsions became increasingly stagnant. The promise of decreasing negative behaviors by committing to a zero tolerance policy was unfulfilled. This led several academic researchers to look for different disciplinary procedures that would not only keep students in the classroom, but also teach students appropriate social skills that they would use once they leave the classroom.

Along with the passing of IDEA by the United States Congress and the research of George Sugai and Roy Mayer, Positive Behavior Support Intervention (PBIS) was established. PBIS focuses on establishing school wide expectations, teaching them to students, as well as highlighting the positive behaviors or actions that students may perform; rather than the negative behaviors and consequences of that are commonly seen in zero tolerance policies.

Using the research of Richard Villa, Jacque Thousand, & Ann Nevin from *Collaborating with Students in Instruction and Decision Making* and Ross Greene's work in *Lost at School*, the purpose of this project is to create a toolkit for educators to implement PBIS at their school sites. The expectations and systems in place should help students develop "skills that contribute to students' current future quality of life" (Villa, Thousand, & Nevin, 2010, p. 179). The toolkit will assist educators in creating school-wide expectations, developing lesson plans to teach students those expectations, and formulate common language to highlight and promote positive behavior. Ultimately this project will aid teachers in understanding the purpose of PBIS and how to implement the system and provide to teachers strategies to teach students social skills. This project should help keep the PBIS system effective throughout a single academic school year and

the following years. This project will work to identify social skills that staff members feel students are lacking. The lack of these social skills generally leads to negative interactions and behaviors in the classroom and correlate to the high office discipline referrals.

Lastly, this toolkit will provide a survey to create buy in for PBIS from key sections of a school population. It will allow educators to reflect on the process of teaching expectations to students and the importance of including teaching social skills and emotional literacy in the classroom. This reflection is essential to allowing teachers to constantly review PBIS and assure that it continues to work for the following academic year.

Design

This project has two important aspects. First, there is the implementation toolkit. The toolkit consists of six lessons that work together to implement PBIS and create staff buy in throughout a school site. The toolkit has the following lessons; the first lesson plan will explore current school culture. Afterwards, staff takes a survey that is used to create school-wide expectations. The next lesson explores what the new expectations mean to the staff, working to show how the definitions vary between adults and the importance to teach students a clear definition of the expectation for them meet it. The following lesson works to identify behaviors that meet the expectations and identifies those that do not meet the expectations throughout various aspects of a school. The work done in this lesson will create the PBIS behavior matrix that is used as a poster around school. The fourth lesson gives time to teachers to develop lessons to teach the expectations to students and to collaborate and decide how and when to teach the expectations. The next lesson explores how current discipline policies are not helping students improve or necessarily teaching them anything, instead they offer punitive consequence after punitive consequence. In the last lesson, educators identify how to address tier two students'

needs by teaching lagging skills—such as the ability to transition from one activity to another or collaborate with peers.

These lessons provide support for the fundamental aspects of implementing and creating a successful PBIS system at school site. In the first lesson of the toolkit, an important factor is included; the inclusion of school staff voice in creating the systems of PBIS. By including staff voice in the process of picking and creating the expectations, it will create the eighty percent buy-in that PBIS suggests for successful implementation. School staff will also have a sense of ownership in the expectations and gain a better understanding of how to teach the expectations to students.

The second aspect of this project is an inservice day to present implementation materials to graduate students. During this inservice day, participants were able to participate in activities that focus on the changing disciplinary policies and the history of PBIS, and the use of Ross Greene’s Assessment of Lagging Skills and Unsolved Problems (ALSUP) to identify lagging skills in student vignettes. Additional resources for educators include a space to share PBIS implementation strategies or lessons that have been used in the classroom.

Target Audience

Potential users of this toolkit will be school staff looking to implement PBIS and teach social skills to students. Possibly, the toolkit will also be useful for the educators that participated in the inservice day.

The toolkit is beneficial for teachers and supporting staff members because it can be used to implement a system that would decrease negative behaviors that may occur in the classroom and in other areas around school. These negative behaviors can take away from the learning environment and help create a school culture that fosters bullying and hostility.

The toolkit is beneficial for students because it would decrease the amount of office referrals, suspensions, and expulsions, allowing students to stay in the classroom and focus on learning. It also would assist students in learning social skills that can be challenging for many. Without social skills, students can become frustrated in the classroom because they do not understand how to transition from one task to another, or work with other students. This frustration manifests into outbursts that take away from the learning environment of the classroom.

In order to help teachers understand the needs of students—and how it might not just include academic needs—the toolkit has a variety of templates to help educators create expectations that will work for their students and their school site.

Instruments

The materials and instruments that are used to create this toolkit are provided by *PBIS.org*—the department of special education sponsored website run by George Sugai and Roy Mayer. These materials are used to assist in the creation of school-wide expectations and help educators plan lessons to teach students the expectations. The PBIS website also provides reflection tools that can be used during the data collection process to identify if teachers feel confident using the systems in place, or assess if things need to change for the following year.

The templates and checklists to identify potential social skills that students struggle with come from *Lost at School: Why Our Kids with Behavioral Challenges are Falling Through the Cracks and How We Can Help Them* by Ross W. Greene. In addition to these materials, conversational prompts are available for teachers to use when holding a conversation with students to create a plan to improve social skills. Ultimately the expectations and systems in

place should help students develop “skills that contribute to students’ current future quality of life” (Villa, Thousand, Nevin, 2010, p. 179).

The combination of a simple set of expectations, that hold students accountable for their actions and behaviors, will lead to a decrease in classroom disruptions and students in administrative offices. This differs from previous systems where wrongdoing and inappropriate behaviors are highlighted and punished. In addition to the focus on positive behaviors, the inclusion of identifying social skills that students may lack and teaching students these skills will foster a positive school climate. A positive school climate will lead to a decrease in the amount of suspensions and expulsions. With such a system, fostered by the toolkit, students will begin to feel safe and wanted at school. Students will learn the social skills needed to be successful in class and future endeavors outside of class.

Timeline

To create this toolkit, I took many necessary steps. First, I researched several different ways that PBIS has been implemented in the past. My research included surveying my previous school site to identify if the site was ready for PBIS. This survey was taken during the first semester of the 2017 academic year. Staff and students took this survey anonymously, identifying challenges in and outside the classroom. The staff survey had questions about areas of disciplinary concern, areas of important disciplinary measures to focus on, and preferred disciplinary policies. The data from this survey identified that classroom implementation would be an appropriate first step to take. I would spend a year familiarizing myself with teaching and maintaining a PBIS environment in the classroom. My experiences inside the classroom provided valuable data to create the toolkit.

The second step I took was creating the lessons of the toolkit that would create staff buy in and help implement PBIS. I researched and created the lessons for the toolkit during the summer months during my independent study with my supervising faculty member Anne René Elsbree. It was during my independent study that I found materials to use to create school-wide expectations, incorporating staff input, plans for implementing, lessons used to teach students school-wide expectations, and how to maintain expectations throughout an academic year. When analyzing case studies of implementation, I focused on challenges that occurred during the implementation process, suggestions, and reflections on implementations. By focusing on the challenges, I was able to prepare materials that would weather similar challenges that could occur during implementation of PBIS. For example, originally I planned to provide staff with expectations. After researching, I found that by including staff voice in choosing the expectations, it would increase their buy in and ownership of expectations, and the overall PBIS system.

The final step I took was to create an inservice day for fellow graduate students about the materials within the toolkit. To do this, I reflected on my research, identifying important articles that would help educators understand the shifting disciplinary policies of today's schools. I chose three to five articles that participants analyze and had them identify important facts about PBIS. The analysis of the articles would prompt a discussion about discipline. I chose lessons from the toolkit that highlighted key components of implementing PBIS and graduate students participated in the activities. After the activities, there was time for participants to share resources and lesson plan ideas on a Google Doc—even sharing challenges that some have experienced in the classroom. I planned this share-out experience with the intention to provide resources and a space for educators to get advice for implementing PBIS or other ways to teach

students social skills. I spent the majority of October creating the materials for the inservice day and it took place at the beginning of November.

After taking the steps listed above, I created a PBIS implementation toolkit to help educators use PBIS school-wide. I use this toolkit to implement PBIS within my own classroom. By presenting my materials to fellow educators through an inservice day, I was able to share materials, successes, and challenges so they can begin their journey to implement PBIS to change school culture and climate.

Chapter Three Summary

This methodology chapter provided a description of the design of the PBIS Curriculum, Target Audience of educators, Instruments for the curriculum, and Project Timeline. Chapter 4 contains the curriculum with lesson plans and materials for an inservice for educators on how to implement PBIS.

Chapter Four: Project

My project can be used for a multi-day training to implement PBIS school-wide. The disciplinary policies of the past few decades have left our most vulnerable student population struggling and failing in school. A majority of students are receiving punitive punishments for the result of behaviors, instead of being taught how to act, or even react, to a situation with appropriate social skills. This project blends PBIS prevention and intervention techniques with the work of Ross Greene to aid teachers and school sites in implementing new discipline policies. The toolkit focuses on improving emotional literacy and social skills. With these improvements, office referrals and suspension rates should decrease through data collection. The lessons within this toolkit will work towards creating a school climate where children can thrive academically and emotionally, learning content and social skills.

Each lesson within this toolkit builds on the previous lesson, so they are best done chronologically. Yet, the lessons can stand alone to address a need to teach educators how to address lagging social skills or to create school-wide expectations.

PBIS Implementation School Kit

Table of Contents for Curriculum

	Page
Curriculum Overview	38
Lesson One: Identifying School Climate.....	39
Lesson One: Identifying School Climate Materials.....	40
Lesson Two: Exploring PBIS Expectations.....	41
Lesson Three: Identifying PBIS Expectations.....	42
Lesson Three: Google Form Template	43
Lesson Four: Planning to Teach PBIS Expectations	44
Lesson Four: Poster Template/Example	45
Lesson Five: Changing Discipline.....	46
Lesson Five: Sample Student Biographies	47
Lesson Six: Addressing Tier Two Students (Lagging Skills)	49
Lesson Six: Sample Student Biographies & ASLUP	50

Curriculum Overview of Implementation Toolkit

The following toolkit includes six lessons and activities to implement PBIS school-wide. The first lesson allows teachers to explore their own school site's climate and participate in deciding what the four PBIS expectations will be. The second lesson will allow educators to analyze what each expectation means to those at the school. The third lesson places educators in groups to identify what the expectations look like around campus, gaining a deeper understanding of what they should expect from students. This lesson can be used to create the PBIS behavior matrix that traditionally has been used as a poster with input from the whole staff. In fourth lesson, educators work through a possible lesson that can be used to teach students the expectations and the behaviors that meet expectations. There is time allotted at the end of this activity for educators to collaborate and create a variety of lessons and activities to teach the expectations to students. The fifth lesson explores the need for a change in discipline policies by having educators use the current school policies to give consequences for students. The final lesson included in this toolkit explores the importance of teaching social skills to students by having the educators review the same student biographies from lesson five with Ross Greene's ALSUP.

Lesson Plan One: Identifying School Climate

Overview: By completing this activity, staff will gain a better understanding of the topic of school climate, what type of school climate they have on site, and what type of school climate they wish to achieve.

Objective: Staff will be able to identify the various definitions of school climate before exploring the important factors of school climate on site and taking an anonymous survey to assist in building the foundations of implementing PBIS.

Activities:

1. Around the meeting place, place the following four posters up with the following questions:
 - a. What is school climate?
 - b. What is *our* school climate like?
 - c. How do you feel after a day of teaching?
 - d. How do you think a student feels after a day of teaching?
2. Each staff member will receive four sticky notes to answer the questions posted around the room. (5-10 minutes)
3. Staff will please answers on the corresponding poster. (2 minutes)
4. Staff will receive four stickers. Staff will walk around the room, reading the various answers for the questions before choosing the answer they agreed with the most. (5-10 minutes)
5. Staff will be able to share out/reflect on activity. Use prompting questions if needed: (5-7 minutes)
 - a. What surprised you?
 - b. What did you agree with?
 - c. What questions did you have after reading the answers?
6. Staff will view short presentation of PBIS and how it can address school culture and academics. (5-10 minutes)
7. Staff will take an anonymous survey. (10-15 minutes)

Evaluation: Survey results will provide data on what expectations staff will feel comfortable teaching and using in and outside the classroom.

Materials

- 4 blank posters
- Sticky notes (4 for each staff member)
- Stickers (4 for each staff member)
- Writing utensils
- PBIS Survey

PBIS Survey

Please take the survey below about your understanding of PBIS, important student expectations, and school wide incentives.

- 1. What is your understanding of PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention Support)? (Circle a choice below)

Strong Understanding Good Understanding Some Understanding No Understanding

- 2. Do you feel supported at school?

Always Somewhat Rarely Never

- 3. Out of the expectations below, what four are the most important for students? (Circle four)

Respect	Responsibility	Safety	Reliable
On-Task	Kindness	Dedication	Integrity
Preparedness	Honesty		Excellence

- 4. Why types of reward systems do you use in your classroom?

- 5. What type of behavior intervention programs do you use in your classroom?

Lesson Plan Two: Exploring PBIS Expectations

Overview: By completing this activity, staff will gain an understanding that the PBIS school-wide expectations may mean something different to students and other staff members and the staff will need to define the expectations before teaching them to students.

Objectives: Staff will be able to define each school-wide expectation and explore other definitions and identify that expectations will need to be taught explicitly to students.

Activities:

1. Around the meeting place, four posters with the school-wide expectations will be posted around the room
2. Each staff member will receive four sticky notes to answer the questions posted around the room. (5-10 minutes)
3. Staff will define each expectation. (2 minutes)
4. Staff will walk around the room, reading the various definitions for the expectations. (5-10 minutes)
5. Staff will be able to share out/reflect on activity. Use prompting questions if needed: (5-7 minutes)
 - a. Were all the definitions the same? How were they different? Can you give an example?
 - b. How will our students define these expectations? Are they the same as yours?
 - c. What do we need to do to assure our students understand the expectations as we understand them?

Evaluation: This activity will allow staff to gain an understanding that the expectations will need to be taught to students. As adults, these expectations mean different things to us and they will to our students as well. We will need to take time to teach the expectations to students before holding them accountable. This should be assessed during the reflection.

Materials

- Posters for each expectation
- Sticky notes (4 for each staff member)
- Writing utensils

Lesson Plan Three: Identifying PBIS Behaviors

Overview: By completing this activity, staff will gain an understanding of the new PBIS school wide expectations and gain confidence in teaching expectations to students.

Objectives: Staff will be able to work collaboratively in teams to identify the different behaviors that portray the school wide expectations to create a school wide poster for students to see inside and outside the classroom.

Activities:

1. Staff will form groups. Suggested groups: (2 minutes)
 - a. CORE teams
 - b. Department teams
 - c. Grade level teams
2. Staff will be given school wide expectations and locations around the school. Suggested locations: (2 minutes)
 - a. Classrooms
 - b. Hallways
 - c. Bathroom
 - d. Cafeteria
 - e. Fields
 - f. Front Office (e.g Nurses, Counselors)
3. Staff will work together to think of student behaviors that exhibit expectations in these locations. (10-15 minutes)
4. Staff will decide on 1 (one) top behavior for each location and expectation. They will then share in Google Form. (5-10 minutes)
5. Individually, staff will complete a short closing activity where they are given sticky notes and able to express thoughts and feelings through: (5-7 minutes)
 - a. Questions
 - b. Shout-outs
 - c. Pluses
 - d. Deltas
6. PBIS team/Administration goes over closing activity. (5-10 minutes)
7. Staff will take an anonymous survey. (10-15 minutes)

Evaluation: This activity will allow staff to understand how students will act by following the expectations while providing administration with materials to create a school wide PBIS poster.

Google Form Template

Use the following information to fill out a Google Form for the Behavior Matrix

Title of Form: PBIS Expectations around Campus

Question One(Dropdown Menu): PBIS Expectations as choices (will vary based on staff input).

Question Two (Dropdown Menu): Campus locations (can vary).

Question Three (Short answer): Write down a behavior that meets the expectation in desired area.

Lesson Plan Four: Planning to Teach the PBIS Expectations

Overview: By completing this activity, staff will identify one activity that they could use in the classroom to teach the school-wide expectations and have team in their teams to collaborate to create more.

Objective: Staff will be able to work collaboratively in teams with an assigned expectation and school area from the PBIS matrix to define what expectation behaviors are and are not in school area and share work with whole staff before collaborating to create one more activity to teach expectations

Activities:

1. Staff will review new PBIS matrix and compare to previous behavior posters.
 - a. Staff should note that expectations have associated behaviors that students would portray to meet expectation.
2. Staff will form groups. Suggested groups: (2 minutes)
 - a. CORE teams
 - b. Department teams
 - c. Grade level teams
3. Staff will be given school wide expectation and locations around the school. Staff will also receive a poster to work on: (2 minutes)
4. Staff will work together to: (10-15 minutes)
 - a. Define expectation for given location
 - b. Identify three examples of actions/behaviors that meet expectation in school area.
 - c. Identify three examples of actions/behaviors that do not meet expectations in school area.
5. Staff groups will share out poster with whole staff. (5-10 minutes)
6. Staff will be given the rest of the meeting time and next meeting time to work on creating activities to teach expectations to students. Examples and resources will be provided.

Evaluation: Staff will be assessed during the reflection portion of the activity.

Materials

- Posters for each staff team
- Modeled poster to project for staff teams.
- Writing utensils

Poster Template/Example

Expectation:

--

Behaviors/actions that meet expectation	Behaviors/actions that do not meet expectations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• • •	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• • •

Lesson Plan Five: Changing Discipline

Overview: By completing this activity, staff will begin to understand that discipline policies will need to change if we want school climate to change as well.

Objectives: Staff will be able to work collaboratively in teams to analyze a sample student's behavior in/outside class using previous discipline policies and identify if students behaviors and actions change because given consequence.

Activities:

1. Staff will form groups. Suggested groups: (2 minutes)
 - a. CORE teams
 - b. Department teams
 - c. Grade level teams
2. Staff will receive a sample student bio and blank poster paper. Staff will work together, using current disciplinary policies and routines to give students consequence (10-15 minutes)
3. Once consequence has been decided on, one staff member will raise hand to receive the next portion of the student bio based on consequence. (2 minutes)
4. Staff team will give another consequence (if needed) based on new information from the bio using current disciplinary policies and routines. (15-20 minutes)
5. Staff will come back together to reflect on activity. Using prompting questions below if needed: (5 minutes)
 - a. What surprised you?
 - b. What was frustrating?
 - c. Did your sample student lean anything?
 - d. How similar was your sample student to our students?
 - e. How do our students feel when they go through this process? How do the teachers feel? Administration?
6. Small presentation on lacking skills students may have will be given. (10 minutes)

Evaluation: The reflection will help administration identify the various frustrations of staff and students and move on to initiating a change in disciplinary policies.

Materials

- Blank poster for each staff group
- Sample students biographies
- Current discipline policies and routines sheet
- Writing utensils

Student Vignettes for Discipline Activity

When staff has worked through student vignette and raises hand after giving the student a consequence according to school disciplinary policy, staff should get additional copy of the same bio. This will demonstrate that repeating punitive consequences does not address the behaviors and/or lagging skills students may have and that current discipline policies are not helping students.

Student A

Student A is a 7th grade boy. At the beginning of the year he was quite and eager to do well. He struggled to have positive interactions with his peers, especially with male students. He is smaller than his fellow 7th graders and seems to not have the fashionable clothes that other students have. As the year progressed, student A struggled with activities in class. Whenever there was an activity in class that he seemed to not understand, he would constantly disrupt the lesson by talking or getting out of his seat and dancing. On one occasion, after throwing papers on the ground, his English teacher asked for him to pick up the papers, letting him know that if he didn't he would receive a call home. After hearing this, student burst into tears and hid under a desk. He did not leave the classroom when the period was over. The teacher had to call for security to escort him to the administration office. Student A ignored security and additional administration was needed to get student out from under desk. Student A is in a reading support class and has had SSTs in previous years. Student lives with his grandmother and sees his dad on weekends.

Student B

Student B is a relatively quiet student. She is a fifth grade student. The teacher noticed during math lessons that whenever it was time to work in groups to solve problems, student would stand up without speaking and make a squawking noise. Teacher needs to constantly redirect her. She will usually sit back down, but does not work with her group to solve math problems, instead she will gaze about the room or doodle on her worksheet. When teacher begins to wrap up math time or moves to another activity, the student is known to burst into tears or become frantic and inform the teacher that she's not done yet. The teacher has had multiple meetings with her mother and has once sent student B to the office for her squawking. The teacher is surprised that student B has such trouble in class, she had her older brother two years ago and he rarely had in problems in class.

Student C

Student C is a 9th grade boy who is very involved with sports at the school. He is also extremely social and focused mainly on popularity as well as his cell phone. When in class he tries to get the attention of friends in class and use his cell phone to be on social media and listen to music whenever possible. He is constantly walking around the class during work times and disrupting others by talking and dancing. He has a hard time doing any of his challenging work and gives up or becomes distracted when it becomes too difficult. The distractions in class can be distracting to others and cause others to not understand directions or be able to work efficiency. Whenever he is given consequences he believes that it is not fair and he doesn't care about how his performance will affect his ability to play sports or graduate from high school. This student has an IEP that gives him support in the classroom by giving him extra time to complete assignments.

Student D

Student D is a 10-grade girl who refuses to do work in class at all. When she is in class she refuses to take off her hood and does not talk respectfully to students or teachers. When she is asked to complete work, she does not respond. When given a choice to do work or consequences, she usually becomes extremely angry and loses control of her emotions for the rest of the class period. When she does get work done in class it is usually only for a few moments and her attention drifts elsewhere. In addition, she leaves class without asking and has become suspended multiple times for fighting and swearing at teachers.

Student E

Student E is a 7th grade male. He is an only child. He struggles in several classes and teachers have already spoken with mom and met with her several times. He does not do well when working in a group. On multiple occasions in science, he had refused to work on group projects and pleaded to work on assignments individually. When working with a partner in history class, he stood up and screamed at the student, taking his partner's papers and ripping them up before running out of class. He is known to throw pencils across the room when his English teacher has informed him that he's done an assignment wrong and stop working completely. He enjoys math and asks his math teacher if he could eat lunch in her classroom several times a week. When the teacher says yes, he will eat his lunch and draw or sketch on paper.

Lesson Plan Six: Addressing Tier Two Students (Lagging Skills)

Overview: By completing this activity, staff will understand how to address the needs of tier two students.

Objectives: Staff will be able to work collaboratively in teams to analyze a sample student's behavior in/outside class to determine what skills the student is lacking before brainstorming how to teach students skills.

Activities:

1. Staff will listen/watch a short presentation about student skills
2. Staff will form groups. Suggested groups: (2 minutes)
 - a. CORE teams
 - b. Department teams
 - c. Grade level teams
3. Staff will receive a sample student bio and blank poster paper. Staff will work together, using the *Assessment of Lagging Skills & Unsolved Problems* worksheet, to identify skills student is lacking. (10-15 minutes)
4. Staff group will work together to brainstorm three things they can do in the classroom to teach skills. (10 minutes)
5. Staff groups will place information on poster paper and share out. (15-20 minutes)
6. Individually, staff will complete a short closing activity where they are given sticky notes and able to express thoughts and feelings through: (5-7 minutes)
 - a. Questions
 - b. Shout-outs
 - c. Pluses
 - d. Deltas

Evaluation:

The posters will help administrator team evaluate what additional trainings or materials staff needs to assess tier two students.

Materials

- Blank poster for each staff group
- Sample students biographies
- *Assessment of Lagging Skills & Unsolved Problems WKST*
- Writing utensils

Student Vignettes for Activity

Student A

Student A is a 7th grade boy. At the beginning of the year he was quite and eager to do well. He struggled to have positive interactions with his peers, especially with male students. He is smaller than his fellow 7th graders and seems to not have the fashionable clothes that other students have. As the year progressed, student A struggled with activities in class. Whenever there was an activity in class that he seemed to not understand, he would constantly disrupt the lesson by talking or getting out of his seat and dancing. On one occasion, after throwing papers on the ground, his English teacher asked for him to pick up the papers, letting him know that if he didn't he would receive a call home. After hearing this, student burst into tears and hid under a desk. He did not leave the classroom when the period was over. The teacher had to call for security to escort him to the administration office. Student A ignored security and additional administration was needed to get student out from under desk. Student A is in a reading support class and has had SSTs in previous years. Student lives with his grandmother and sees his dad on weekends.

Student B

Student B is a relatively quiet student. She is a fifth grade student. The teacher noticed during math lessons that whenever it was time to work in groups to solve problems, student would stand up without speaking and make a squawking noise. Teacher needs to constantly redirect her. She will usually sit back down, but does not work with her group to solve math problems, instead she will gaze about the room or doodle on her worksheet. When teacher begins to wrap up math time or moves to another activity, the student is known to burst into tears or become frantic and inform the teacher that she's not done yet. The teacher has had multiple meetings with her mother and has once sent student B to the office for her squawking. The teacher is surprised that student B has such trouble in class, he had her older brother two years ago and he rarely had in problems in class.

Student C

Student C is a 9th grade boy who is very involved with sports at the school. He is also extremely social and focused mainly on popularity as well as his cell phone. When in class he tries to get the attention of friends in class and use his cell phone to be on social media and listen to music whenever possible. He is constantly walking around the class during work times and disrupting others by talking and dancing. He has a hard time doing any of his challenging work and gives up or becomes distracted when it becomes too difficult. The distractions in class can be distracting to others and cause others to not understand directions or be able to work efficiently. Whenever he is given consequences he believes that it is not fair and he doesn't care about how his performance will affect his ability to play sports or graduate from high school. This student has an IEP that gives him support in the classroom by giving him extra time to complete assignments.

Student D

Student D is a 10-grade girl who refuses to do work in class at all. When she is in class she refuses to take off her hood and does not talk respectfully to students or teachers. When she is asked to complete work, she does not respond. When given a choice to do work or consequences, she usually becomes extremely angry and loses control of her emotions for the rest of the class period. When she does get work done in class it is usually only for a few moments and her attention drifts elsewhere. In addition, she leaves class without asking and has become suspended multiple times for fighting and swearing at teachers

Student E

Student E is a 7th grade male. He is an only child. He struggles in several classes and teachers have already spoken with mom and met with her several times. He does not do well when working in a group. On multiple occasions in science, he had refused to work on group projects and pleaded to work on assignments individually. When working with a partner in history class, he stood up and screamed at the student, taking his partner's papers and ripping them up before running out of class. He is known to throw pencils across the room when his English teacher has informed him that he's done an assignment wrong and stop working completely. He enjoys math and asks his math teacher if he could eat lunch in her classroom several times a week. When the teacher says yes, he will eat his lunch and draw or sketch on paper.

Assessment of Lagging Skills & Unsolved Problems (ALSUP) can be found in the link below:

[ALSUP](#)

Chapter Five: Project Recommendations

This curriculum project is a toolkit for educators of a middle school campus to use to implement PBIS. The toolkit was designed to provide lessons that can be used school-wide or modified to be used within a classroom. This final chapter includes the lessons learned, project implementation, educational implications, and future research and projects.

Lessons Learned

After creating lesson plans for implementing PBIS school-wide and sharing PBIS strategies with fellow educators, I have learned several valuable things. First, that the need for a system to replace zero tolerance policies and punitive consequences is apparent. Research shows that zero tolerance policies contribute to the School-to-Prison pipeline, increase academic and social gaps for students, and create an overall negative learning environment for teachers and students. Second, it is also clear that discipline policies should work towards teaching students social skills and improving emotional literacy so they can find academic success—punitive consequences lack these essential ingredients and create a vacuum of negativity for school culture.

Through the process of implementing PBIS within my own classroom and sharing those strategies with colleagues, I have learned things that will help refine my implementation process and add to my toolkit of PBIS practices.

Preparation

First, I learned about the importance of preparing for implementation. Implementing PBIS cannot be copied from one school or classroom and pasted to another. The expectations and rewards systems put in place need to work with your unique teaching style and the demographic of students that enter your classroom. A PBIS system might work at a school

somewhere else within the county, but the likelihood of achieving the same success within your classroom or at your school site is unlikely.

Student Voice

With the importance of preparing for PBIS, I learned second, the significance of including student voice in the development process. If students are part of the creation process, they are more likely to abide by any behavioral expectations and take ownership of their actions within the classroom. Also, by including student voice, PBIS becomes more culturally responsive and incorporates student cultural identities in the system. This will allow students to continue to grow in areas of social skills and emotional literacy. It will also decrease negative behaviors and actions in the classroom. I learned that it's rather simple to include student voice in PBIS. For example, instead having only having staff members discuss possible expectations, allow students to join the conversation through surveys or representatives. Student inclusion makes PBIS and its systems more meaningful to the students at a school site.

Teach Behavioral Expectations

Third, I learned the importance of *teaching* the behavioral expectations to students. As educators, we cannot assume that students can define and provide examples of responsibility or integrity. We also cannot assume that they can identify our definition and appropriate behaviors that meet these expectations. If we do this, we assume students' cultural identities and thus already lose their buy-in for any disciplinary system that is put into place. As educators, we need to take the time to discuss with students what each expectation means to them, what it means to others, and what it might look like inside or outside the classroom. Our understanding of the expectations may differ considerably to students' understanding of the expectations. Taking the time to explore the expectations and behaviors that meet or do not meet them will

build a classroom environment where students find social and academic success and a decrease in disciplinary issues.

Importance of Reviewing and Re-teaching the Expectations

Forth, in addition to teaching the expectations, I learned about the *continued* importance of reviewing and re-teaching the expectations and systems of PBIS as an academic year progresses. Just with any academic skills, students need to practice the social skills and behaviors that PBIS relies on throughout the year. I wouldn't simply have students analyze one primary source in class and assume that they will remember how to analyze for years to come. It is the same for any other skills that we are requiring students to learn and continue to learn as they grow emotionally, academically, and physically. Also, by taking the time to re-teach and review the expectations and systems of PBIS, the system itself is more likely to withstand the chaotic whims of an academic year for primary, middle, or high schools.

Data Informed PBIS Decisions

Fifth, I learned that PBIS could not be successful unless there is quantitative data to support the outcomes that are expected. Staff should collect office referrals and track suspension data to determine if PBIS expectations and systems are promoting a positive school culture. Collection of office referrals and suspension rates should be continuous throughout the year. Data should be organized to identify common referral and suspension reasons and used to create a focus for the next academic year. Office referrals and suspension rates should not be the only data that is collected—staff should also collect data that identifies how students are meeting expectations and following the systems put into place. By collecting both positive and negative data, staff will have a more complete picture of how PBIS works as a disciplinary policy. The data collected should be used to inform decisions that occur in the next semester or academic

year. Data is not stagnant, nor is just cold, hard numbers. It is an avenue that educators and administrators can use to create goals for the next year to better help their students learn socially and academically. It is also an important—if not essential—component of PBIS. If a school site fails to collect data pertaining to PBIS, the site cannot determine if the system is successful.

Project Implementation Plans

Originally I planned to lead a middle school team in implementing PBIS with inservice activities. I was unable to implement PBIS school-wide because of a change in employment. I was able to lead a Master of Arts in Education class in Lesson Plan Six: Addressing Tier Two Students (Lagging Skills). I introduced PBIS with a power point presentation, had each team read a article based on PBIS, and then lead the class to work collaboratively in teams to analyze a sample student's behavior in/outside class to determine what skills the student is lacking before brainstorming how to teach the student the lagging skills. The graduate students noted that across all schooling levels—elementary, middle, and high—there is a sense of frustration when dealing with behaviors in the classroom. Multiple graduate students acknowledged that the current disciplinary systems in place do not seem to help students, instead students continue to act and behavior in similar ways as before the punitive consequence were given. The participants agreed that a change needed to happen, but questioned how to go about it. They liked the idea of PBIS, but wanted examples of how it could be implemented in the classroom and also school-wide—also noting the importance of having buy in from a majority of staff members for successful implementation.

After taking the survey from Lesson Plan One: Identifying School Climate, the graduate students of the inservice day discussed why it was important to teach students expectations, instead of assuming that students understood them (this observation was noted several times at

the high school level, where teachers thought that at this age, students would know each expectation). Afterwards, participants were able to collaborate to find, create, and share lessons about teaching expectations to students. Through this collaboration, the graduate students shared challenges and solutions to teaching expectations in the classroom. Finally, the graduate students used Ross Greene's ALSUP to identifying Lagging Skills in student vignettes. In this activity, they were able to identify the behavior and reflect on how to include teaching social skills and emotional literacy in their own classrooms. The participants were also able to take materials with them to use in their practice.

I plan to continue to implement these best practices within my own classroom each and every year. This year I focused on teaching the expectations and behaviors that meet the expectations. Next year I would like to work on including student voice where expectations and reward systems are concerned. Afterwards, I want to create a data collection system where I can track how PBIS is successful and where improvements are needed. As PBIS suggests, implementation is a three to five year process and I am currently in year one of personal implementation.

I would also like to continue to share these best practices with fellow educators who are unsure what systems to implement to replace zero tolerance and punitive consequences with. PBIS provides educators with an opportunity to focus on preventive measures, instead of dealing with the aftermath of behavioral incidents. Sometimes, it can be challenging for educators to take a step back and consider that students are lacking important social skills that allow them to be successful in the classroom. I want to share these strategies to help teachers help the students in their classrooms.

Educational Implications

Implementing PBIS can be impactful for staff and students alike, but there are a few things to consider. I would recommend to any educator who is looking to implement PBIS to have patience. PBIS is a process. It will take time to find expectations that work in your classroom or at your school site. It will also take time for students to understand the expectations and how to work within PBIS systems in place—especially if punitive consequences are fresh in their minds. I would recommend creating a plan to implement PBIS in three or four years and really understand that it *will* take an academic year to smooth out any wrinkles. PBIS is a successful system, but results will not happen overnight or within a year. Lastly, I would recommend that before implementing PBIS expectations or other preventative systems, consider possible data collection measures that will work with teaching, grading, and having time outside of the classroom. It is important to have data collection techniques that will fit with these other pieces, because burn out is a stark reality for educators. Data collection is important because it “identif[ies] the strengths and needs” of a PBIS system that is implemented and “drive[s] decision making to continue, adopt, or modify classroom PBIS practices and systems” (PBIS in the classroom, PBIS.org, 2018, paragraph 2).

Limitations of Project

I would consider the limitations of this project to be the scope. Originally, I planned to create an implementation toolkit for PBIS that could be accessible to educators online. The toolkit could be used for school-wide implementations and the website would house a place for educators to share PBIS lessons and strategies. I could not accomplish these lofty aspirations because of a school site change. If I had endless resources and support, I would work towards creating a website for implementing PBIS. I would focus attention and efforts on creating data collection to track positive behaviors that occur inside and outside the classroom. Tracking both

the positives and negative behaviors would present a better picture of the effectiveness of PBIS as well as constant monitoring of the components to assure success. I would also focus on establishing and maintain the space for educators to share strategies and receive feedback and support.

Future Research or Project Suggestions

I suggest that educational researchers focus on collecting data that demonstrates the effectiveness of PBIS at a school site. PBIS anecdotally seems logical, but because it lacks ample amounts of data to prove its effectiveness, implementation may not provide the results that are promised. It seems that there is large focus on developing and creating of expectations. Yet the bloodline of PBIS is the collection of data to inform instruction. More resources about the data collection process need to be available to educators in order to successfully implement PBIS programs in their classrooms and at a school-wide level. Lastly, research shows that cultural responsive teaching leads to improve school culture, yet PBIS still has expectations that are created by administrators or PBIS teams. Research should explore how cultural responsive teaching and PBIS can intertwine to create benefits for the students academically and socially.

Project Conclusion

In this project, I identified the need for change in school disciplinary policies. Zero tolerance policies currently in used is providing a disservice to students across the nation. PBIS is a viable disciplinary policy that will not only aid students in finding academic success, but also prevent any challenging behaviors while simultaneously teaching social skills. PBIS developed in the late nineteen eighties and grew under the supervision of Rob Horner and George Sugai and Sugai who would later co-direct the federally funded PBIS organization with Roy Mayer. Under PBIS, several school districts implemented PBIS expectations, tiers, and data collection systems.

It is through these implementations, that critiques grew. There were concerns for the monopoly on PBS programs and the lack an ample amount of data to prove that PBIS decreases disciplinary issues and improves school climate. Also the exclusion of student voice and focus on maladaptive behavior is important to consider. Yet, with these considerations in mind, I was able to create a toolkit of six lessons that would include staff and student voice, focus on teaching students the PBIS school-wide expectations, and working towards including teaching students social skills as a means of intervention. When teaching, it is important to consider the whole child—academic ability, social skills, emotional literacy, cultural identify, and so much more—PBIS has the capacity to create a system that does so.

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