

Critical Incidents in the Sustainability of PBIS in School

Districts Receiving the School Climate Transformation Grant

APBS

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The history of education is littered with the detritus of successful programs that fell out of favor or were just forgotten over time, as evidenced by dusty kits, books, and teachers' guides safely tucked away in school closets all over the United States (p. 408).

- Coffey and Horner, 2012

11 million days

PBIS

PBIS is an evidence-based framework that leads to:

- Reduced exclusionary discipline

- Reduced disproportionality in disciplinary outcomes

- Increased academic achievement

- Improved attendance

- Improved perceptions of positive school climate

School Climate Transformation Grant

The *School Climate Transformation* grant provides support to state and local education agencies to develop, enhance, or expand systems of support for, and technical assistance to, schools implementing an evidence-based multi-tiered behavioral framework for improving behavioral outcomes and learning conditions for all students (U.S. Department of Education, 2014).

“Sustainability: the durable, long-term implementation of a practice at a level of integrity that affords the continuation of important outcomes. This process commonly involves regeneration and adaptation as the process evolves and becomes a way of doing day-to-day business.” (McIntosh, 2008)

Issues with Sustainability

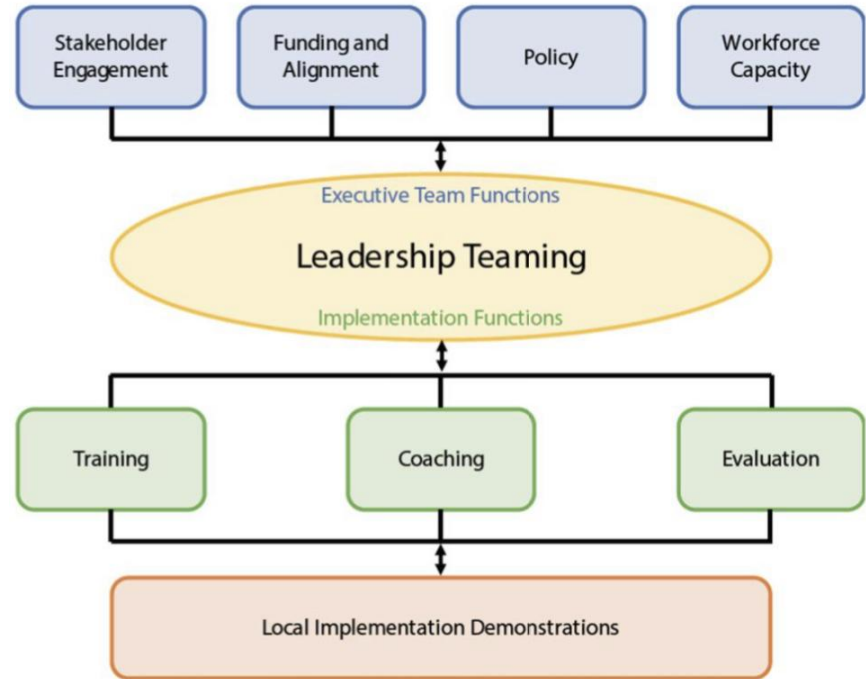
- Educational innovations are often introduced to much excitement only to be abandoned to make room for the new initiative introduced the following year (McIntosh & Goodman, 2016)
- Birth and Death Cycles of Educational Innovations (Latham, 1988)
- Project Mentality - When the grant ends, the effort ends (Adelman and Taylor, 2003; McIntosh, 2022)
- Externally supported initiatives are vulnerable as short-term support is removed (Coburn, 2003)

District Implementation of PBIS

Too often, effective practices are proposed without attention to the systems needed to support adoption and use (Horner, Sugai, & Fixsen, 2017).

District Implementation

- Districts are able to invest in organizational systems to achieve large-scale implementation.
- District support is a critical component of successful school implementation of PBIS.
- Careful planning is required.
- The School-wide PBIS Implementers' Blueprint and Self-Assessment (now DSFI) provides leadership teams a guide to develop systems to support the large-scale implementation of PBIS.



The Blueprint/DSFI establishes 11 implementation elements for school districts

Leadership Team

- Establishing a leadership team is the first and most important activity in implementing PBIS district-wide.
- Responsible for implementation efforts across the district
- Focus on stakeholder participation, data-based decision making, action planning, and practice alignment and integration.
- Composed of stakeholders from several different departments.
- Commit to the expansion and sustainability of PBIS
- Able to make decisions and commit resources

Leadership Team

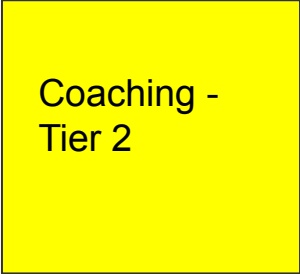
- Funding
- Visibility
- Political Support
- Policy
- Systems Alignment



- Identify additional funding sources and resources to support expansion
- Increase awareness of PBIS activities
- Newsletters, school board presentations, websites.
- Evaluation and revision of policy to align with PBIS
- Alignment of PBIS to other district initiatives

Professional Development/Coaching

- Direct technical support to schools is necessary.
- Ongoing training and access to coaching can decrease the likelihood of abandonment.
- Coaches serve as essential resources to the fidelity of implementation.
- Coaches serve as district trainers providing professional development.
- Depending on the district and resources, coaches can serve in a district role supporting multiple buildings, or within their school.



Coaching -
Tier 2

Sustainability

“Sustainability is the creation of a social norm, the point at which a practice ceases to be a project or initiative and becomes institutionalized” (McIntosh et al., 2009, p.328).

Leadership

- Leadership has been shown to be required at the district and building level in successful widespread adoption of initiatives.
- District support can impact building leadership, which in turn impacts staff buy-in
- Implementation can decrease when district support is removed.
- Lack of school administrator and staff buy-in can increase likelihood of abandonment of initiatives.
- Project leadership and strategic planning shown to increase sustainability.

Planning

- Even with successful outcomes, sustaining practices is difficult when faced with:
 - Competing priorities
 - Changing demands
 - Staff turnover
- Sustainability is difficult when attention and resources are moved to new challenge
- Agencies often lack the organizational capacity to sustain
- Planning, including considering future resources and funding, and alignment to other organizational initiatives can lead to successful sustainability.

Data and Fidelity

- Data can be used to promote the impact of a practice when attempting to shift funding sources after a grant expires.
- Communication of positive outcomes can result in greater buy-in and expansion.
- The frequency of sharing data with school staff has predicted sustained implementation.
- When practices do not produce expected outcomes, abandonment is likely to occur.
- It is essential to determine if the practice itself was ineffective or if it was implemented incorrectly.
- Sustainability does not equate to the continued use of a program, instead the continued use with fidelity (Han and Weiss, 2005).

Sustainability of PBIS

Sustained use of effective practices at the school level is more likely if the implementation process begins with active district-level investment and support (Horner, Sugai, & Fixsen, 2017).

Sustainability of PBIS

Critical Incidents in Sustaining Tier 1 PBIS:

- Continuous teaching
- Positive reinforcement
- Team effectiveness
- Staff ownership
- School administrator involvement
- Adaption
- A community of practice
- Use of data
- Involving new personnel
- Access to external expertise
- Maintaining priority

*Interviews with current/former administrators, district consultants, and special education and general education teachers from one school district.

Sustainability of PBIS

Priority: visibility and importance

Effectiveness: fidelity of implementation leads to desired outcomes

Efficiency: effort required to implement compared to effectiveness

Continuous regeneration: monitoring fidelity and outcomes and adapting practices over time.

Leadership: building and external

District Factors: more influence early in implementation, then predictors are more building-based

Critical Mass: Proportion of schools implementing before Year 1 of study

- Predicted sustained implementation under 5 years, not over 5

Initiative Health: Extent to which the initiative was increasing or decreasing in use across the district

-Change in the proportion of schools newly implementing or abandoning

Community of Practice: The size of the implementation cohort within the district. Larger cohorts were less likely to abandon implementation.

Turn and Talk

Are you currently in a district that implements PBIS district-wide?

What successes or challenges do you see in regards to sustaining District efforts?

Purpose

This qualitative enhanced critical incident technique study aims to describe the experiences and events that school district leaders perceive as helpful and hindering to the sustainability of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) implementation in three midwestern school districts that received a *School Climate Transformation* Grant.

Current Study

Enhanced Critical Incident Technique: consists of a set of procedures for collecting direct observations of human behavior in such a way as to facilitate their potential usefulness in solving practical problems and developing broad psychological principles (Flanagan, 1954)

- The focus is on critical events, incidents, or factors that help promote or detract from the effective performance of some activity or the experience of a specific situation or event. (Butterfield et al., 2009)

Questions

Question 1: What experiences or events do district leaders perceive as having helped and hindered sustaining their PBIS efforts and implementation?

Question 2: What experiences or events do district leaders wish had happened during the implementation of PBIS through the School Climate Transformation grant to support the sustainability of the implementation?

Participants

Three midwestern school districts who received the School Climate Transformation grant in 2014 to implement PBIS district-wide:

Washington School District:

42,000 students, 60 buildings

Adams School District:

11,000 students, 21 buildings

Jefferson School District:

4,700 students, 10 buildings

13 current or former district leaders in the three Midwestern school districts receiving the School Climate Transformation grant.

Findings

Categories:

- Establishing District Ownership
- Increasing Administrator Capacity
- Promoting Building Ownership of PBIS Implementation
- Providing District Coaching Support
- Providing Access to External Expertise
- Establishing District Priority
- Facilitating Annual Events
- Connecting to Communities of Practice
- Providing Access to Data
- Aligning Initiatives
- Providing Professional Development Opportunities and Resources
- Addressing Conflicting Behavioral Programs and Beliefs

Categories

Access to External Expertise

Providing Access to External Expertise:

refers to the support provided to the district by national technical assistance centers (E.g. National Technical Assistance Center for PBIS, Midwest PBIS Network, Missouri School-wide Positive Behavior Support), experts in the field (E.g. Dr. George Sugai, Dr. Tim Lewis, Dr. Kent McIntosh), state department of education personnel, or community partners (E.g. Project Harmony, BoysTown). Support for districts during the implementation of PBIS includes providing professional development to a wide range of staff, building the capacity of district PBIS coaches, sharing research, and providing tools to assist implementation.

Access to External Expertise

Providing Access to External Expertise:



“I think the ongoing resources, you know, the fact that we have the ability for these teams to search for researched resources I think is huge. I think should the TA center ever go away, the National Center or all of those supports go away? You know I would hate to see OSEP pull funding or anything from that because I think that’s critical for the work that we will all continue to do. So I think that’s a huge key to sustainability as now we have the capacity to use the materials or to look for items that have already been vetted”

Establishing District Ownership

Establishing District Ownership:

refers to district leaders' actions that resulted in the transfer of and continued facilitation of PBIS implementation across the district from external sources to district leaders. Critical happenings in this category include establishing a district leadership team to oversee the implementation and facilitate necessary professional learning opportunities. This category also includes the processes in which district leadership analyzes data, adopts/adapts practices, and develops systems.

Establishing District Ownership

Establishing District Ownership:

FPS District MTSS Leadership Team Meeting Agenda

Be Respectful, Be Responsible, Be A Problem Solver

DATE: August 24, 2022 **Time:** 4:00-5:00 p.m.

MSEAC: Tier 1 - Board of Education Room / Tier 2 - A360 / Tier 3 - A357

TEAM ROLES:

Data Systems Coordinator Julie Muller	Tier 1 Subgroup Facilitators: Jennifer Bell, Jayme Bieker, & Kady Maresh	Secretary/Historian: Kady Maresh
Data Managers: Jennifer Bell, Mackenzie Edgar, Julie Gildow, Karie Martin, Kody Christensen,	Tier 2 Subgroup Facilitators: Diane Beninato, Justin Bray	Communication Coordinator: Kate Heineman
	Tier 3 Subgroup Facilitators: Mindy Chandler, Shannon Hansen, Brittney Kuhr, & Christine Morse	Time Keepers: Mike Maxwell, Gina Hoffman
	District Subgroup Facilitators: Kody Christensen, Chris Raasch	Professional Learning Advocates: Brent Cudly, Kady Maresh

“we developed a long term plan and the long term plan was always that we would work with our TA[Technical Assistance] Center to develop our own capacity within to do the training and that it would be more of a partnership as opposed to learning from them”

Establishing District Priority

Establishing District Priority:

refers to the endorsement and emphasis placed on implementing PBIS district-wide by district leadership including the Superintendent, executive team, and the board of education. Critical incidents in this category include buy-in of district administration, visibility and communication of support from the Superintendent, the school board of education support, and prioritization of funding. Further examples of priority for PBIS are establishing discipline-related strategic goals and updating school district policy to reflect PBIS practices being implemented.

Establishing District Priority

Establishing District Priority:

SCHOOL-WIDE MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORT FOR BEHAVIOR

5400

**Principal's Responsibility for
Student Behavior**

**Employees' Responsibility for
Student Behavior**

6. A multi-tiered system of support for behavior shall include the following components in a manner that is systematic and includes regularly scheduled data reviews to guide changes in the system.

Tier 1 – Tier 1 supports are a set of practices and procedures to be used by all staff and students in all areas. The purpose of Tier 1 supports is to teach and support desired behavior to all students. Tier 1 supports include the development of school-wide expectations, a behavioral matrix and an acknowledgement system to reinforce desired behavior.

Tier 2 – Tier 2 supports are targeted, group interventions designed to help students who have not responded to Tier 1 supports. The interventions should be consistent with the school-wide expectations and an extension of the Tier 1 supports.

Tier 3 – Tier 3 supports are specialized and intensive individual supports for students that are not responding to Tier 1 and 2 supports and are exhibiting disruptive behaviors that are impeding academic participation.

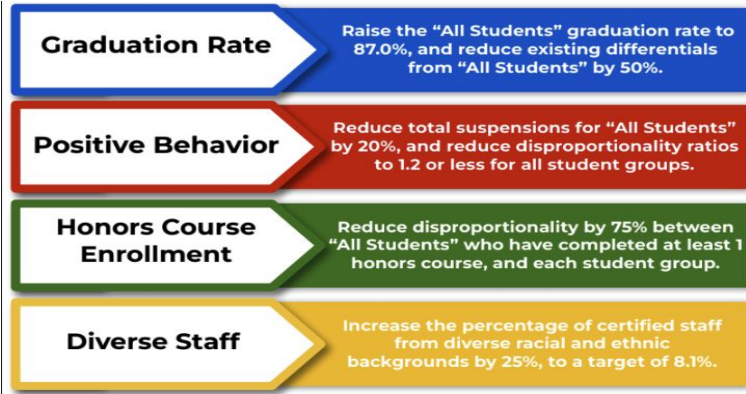
“We could shape new positions around our strategic plan and that PBIS was included. Front and center within that strategic plan”

“He (Associate Superintendent for the district) knew the research coming into his role and was clear that this was the direction we were going and supported it. I just think the things that we felt were important he reinforced and supported”

“We needed to be sure Policy meets Practice”

Establishing District Priority

Establishing District Priority:



"I think prioritizing funding sources is key. It's not like hey, everybody, this is important, but volunteer your time. Like people are respected financially for the commitments that they make as well. And it's work that they want to do, but we realize the importance of it and so paying people in the summer to do this work has been a priority as long as I've been a coach"

Review of 21/22 Bldg Goals and Successes!

- **To improve positive school climate for staff and students. (Tier 1)**
 - The item, "I know an adult that I can talk with at school," was rated the one of lowest (2.94 Mean) on the School Climate Survey by students.
 - Increased to 3.02 Mean on the fall 2022 climate survey
- **Fidelity Checks for Check and Connect Intervention (Tier 2)**
 - Check and Connect will take place with students and mentors with 85% fidelity.
 - Finished the 21/22 school year with **88% fidelity** (in 22/23 we are using monthly observational fidelity checks)
- **In order to best address the success of our MTSS programming, we use a building-wide peer observation system to gather data on Tier I classroom practices. Tier I practices (universal supports) MUST be in place to best decide which students identify as needing more support. (Tier 1)**
 - Increase positive to negative feedback ratio with a goal of 4:1.
 - The item, "Students are frequently recognized for good behavior," was rated the lowest (2.36 Mean) on the School Climate Survey by students. [Increased to 2.45 Mean on fall 2022 climate survey]
 - [FHS SWOM Data Compilation](#)
- **Academic Achievement: Increase English subscore on ACT (Tier 1)**
 - English teachers are engaged in using the John Baylor grammar rules as part of daily instruction. Teachers use a form of the L to J process (preview and review) in order to build student confidence with the John Baylor grammar rules. The district also has had live sessions with John Baylor for several years now.
 - Teachers are also implementing various activities listed in the Instructional Playbook to help strengthen vocabulary skills. Teachers also received training in SIOP to give tips

Providing District Coaching Support

Providing District Coaching Support:

refers to the identified full-time staff dedicated to the district-wide implementation of PBIS. PBIS coaches provide professional learning opportunities and establish building PBIS systems and individual school implementation support. Coaches often collaborate with building PBIS teams, administrators, and teacher leaders of PBIS.

Providing District Coaching Support

Providing District Coaching Support:

November 2019

TEAM GOAL

80%
OF SCHOOLS

Use Tier 2/3 Tracking Tool for All Tier 2 Interventions

Coaches' Corner

bd Keep the Focus!

We are a team that guides and supports others to create safe, successful, and positive learning environments. We believe that establishing multi-tiered systems of support will build a positive culture for everyone.

Reflection

When was the last time each school re-visited/reviewed their action plan?

Coaching: To Think About

Data	Systems	Practices
Each month utilize Tier 2/3 tracking tool	Connect with the liaison: Challenge	Share an article on disproportionately and implicit bias
Are all interventions tracked?	Review annual action plan	What practices and systems need to be boosted based on precise problem statement?
What are schools doing to check fidelity?	Is the tracking tool part of the Tier 2/3 agenda?	

“We had five coaches, and the five coaches were critical. Having them on the ground in the buildings being able to support those teams who were doing this initial work and building their systems that was critical to have that ongoing support”

Aligning Initiatives

Aligning Initiatives:

refers to the communication and promotion of PBIS with other initiatives in the district. This alignment includes embedding areas of focus such as social-emotional learning within PBIS systems and demonstrating how behavioral instruction should be similar to academic approaches. This category also includes collaboration across multiple district departments and incorporating key PBIS elements into existing structures such as administrator and teacher appraisal and new teacher development.

Aligning Initiatives

Aligning Initiatives:

9. The principal shall be responsible to post in conspicuous places in the school building, school-wide expectations that apply to those public areas and where the students and families can access more information regarding the multi-tiered system of support for behavior.

Actively Engaged

:05	:10	:15	:20	:25	:30

Ratio of Interactions

	REINFORCING	CORRECTING	RATIO
Whole Group			
Individual			

“Multi-tiered system of support is part of appraisal for most, if not all certified groups, including and principals and administrators. (We are) trying to make an administrator or a teacher understand that everybody plays a role in behavior and PBIS and so it would make sense to have that be part of a principals appraisal goal. And, you know, similar to teachers as being part of their appraisal goal, but also it's included in the information like an informal observation just so that people can see it, reinforce when they're doing an informal observation as part of the appraisal”

Aligning Initiatives

Aligning Initiatives:

New Teachers

New Administrators

Appraisal

School Improvement



Course Overview

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Relationships Behavior/ Function• MTSS-B Overview• Disproportionality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bullying• Expectations• Routines/ Procedures• Engagement• Active Supervision• Room Arrangement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encouraging• Responding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trauma• Supporting Intense Behavior• Restorative Practices• Systems• Culminating

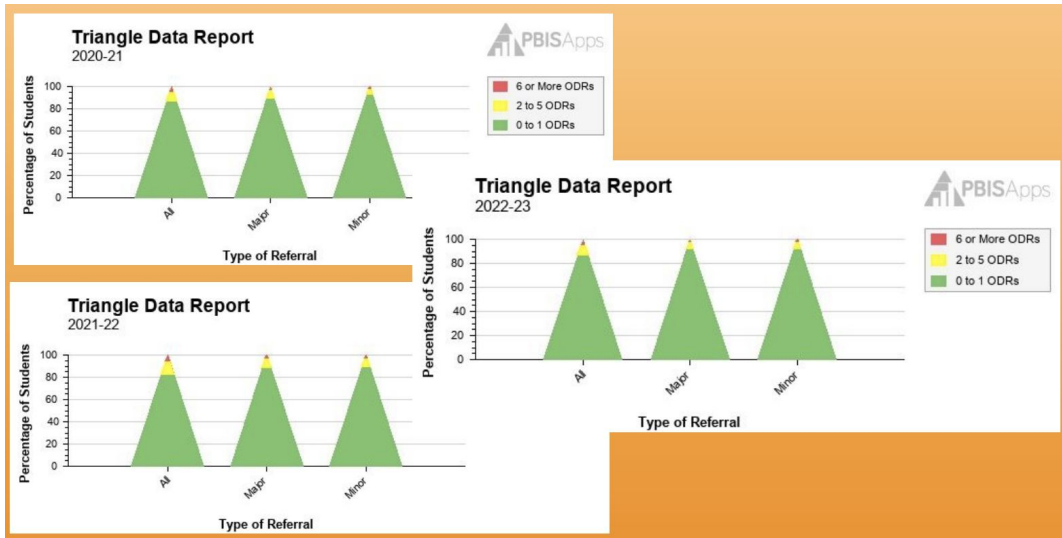
Providing Access to Data

Providing Access to Data:

refers to the efforts made by the district to develop or utilize a system to provide accurate data to buildings for decision-making. This access includes creating a process for inputting and analyzing student behavioral outcome data into the district's Student Information System or utilizing the SWIS information system developed by PBIS Apps (www.pbisassessment.org). Additionally, processes developed for easy access and analysis of PBIS implementation fidelity data through the Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) and Self Assessment Survey (SAS) from the National Technical Assistance Center (www.pbis.org) were mentioned as critical incidents in this category.

Providing Access to Data

Providing Access to Data:



“...it just became part of, of our school improvement process overall to look at behavior and where we were going with fidelity. I think we just wanted Swiss data because well I did at least, to write the charts and the just the way of looking things was was simple. It was easy to decide what intervention did you need when you had that. But it just didn't work with mobility and having to enter, you know, each person. And so we weren't sure at first if it was going to work to have a go through our regular system, but computing services said it would, and eventually, you know, it took some work, but it got there and it's there now and I'm glad that it is because that will be much easier to sustain as well”.

Increasing Administrator Capacity

Increasing Administrator Capacity:

refers to the intentional efforts made by the district to secure building administrator capacity and buy-in of PBIS. Efforts by district leadership to increase understanding with administrators include communicating expectations to Principals of the importance of PBIS, professional development from technical assistance providers, and modeling data collection and analysis for building administrators. Also included in this category is the presence of PBIS at monthly Principal and administrator meetings. Even with the emphasis made by the district, administrator turnover and lack of Principal buy-in for PBIS were identified as hindrances to the sustainability of PBIS.

Increasing Administrator Capacity

Increasing Administrator Capacity:



NEW ADMINISTRATORS STUDENT SERVICES MEETING

What is MTSS-B?

Multi-tiered System of Support for Behavior:

- A systems approach for establishing the **school culture** needed to create effective in learning environments for all students

Common themes:

- Building administrators are key to any initiative (obviously!)
- Ensuring administrators were provided professional learning opportunities
- Preferably that information comes earlier (not the first time the team hears the information)

“He was a huge, huge resistor and now everything he's doing at the new school is all PBIS, everything academically and behaviorally. And just to hear him talk, and in January, we did like a booster for all schools because everyone was kind of drifting from school way expectations and we were seeing our...suspension rates go up. And so we did a deck of slides that everyone had to present and this principal, he was like, talking about how impressive it was, and what a change he saw within school. He would have never done that 10 years ago. Never five years ago, he wouldn't have done it”

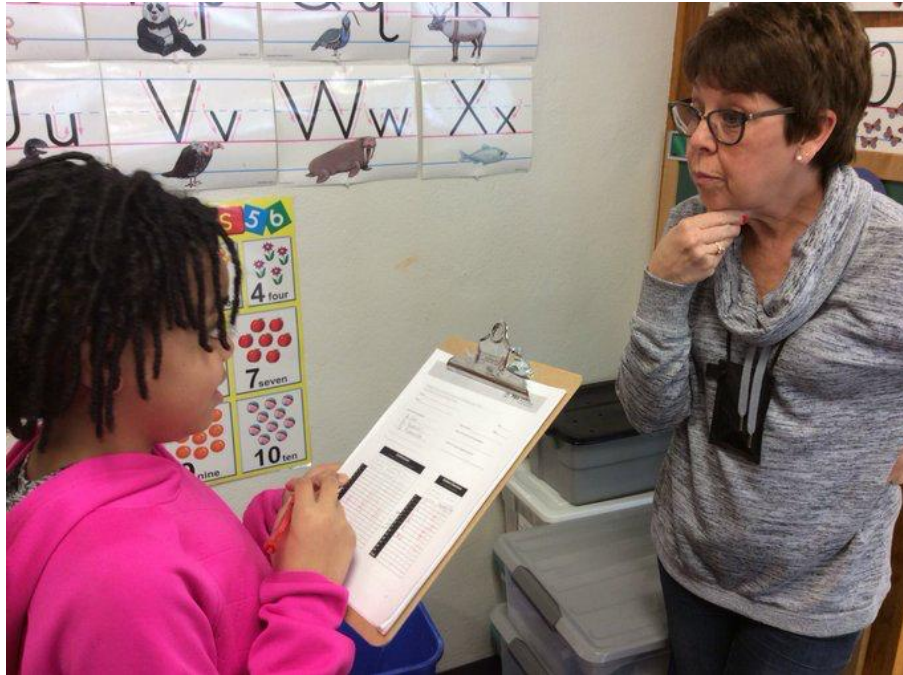
Building Ownership

Promoting Building Ownership of PBIS Implementation:

refers to building teams and teacher leaders taking the lead on PBIS efforts, and the actions district leaders took to empower them to do so. This category includes the collaborative relationships between district PBIS coaches and building teams to support the shared leadership of PBIS. Also included are the resources developed to support building teams in leading the implementation. Lastly, a common theme generated within this category is the importance of teacher leadership in successful and sustainable PBIS implementation and how the district fostered teacher leaders.

Building Ownership

Promoting Building Ownership of PBIS Implementation:



“That’s probably one of the biggest actions from a building level, having building PBIS teams with common members on every team. So every member, or every team has a gen ed teacher, a special ed teacher, a Gen Ed parent, a parent of a student with a disability....So having that core structure, and ensuring that every team has really solid representation is something that helps support sustainability”

Building Ownership

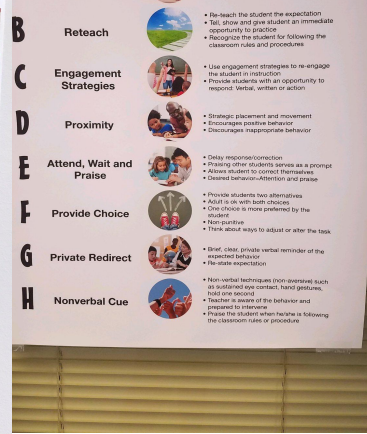
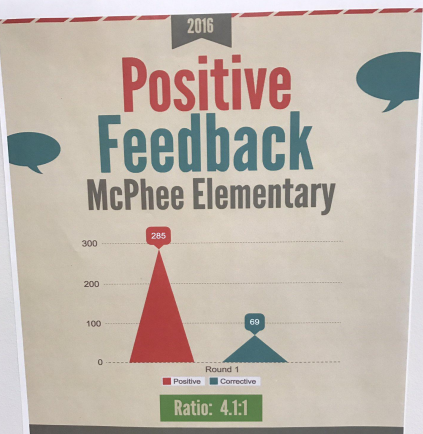
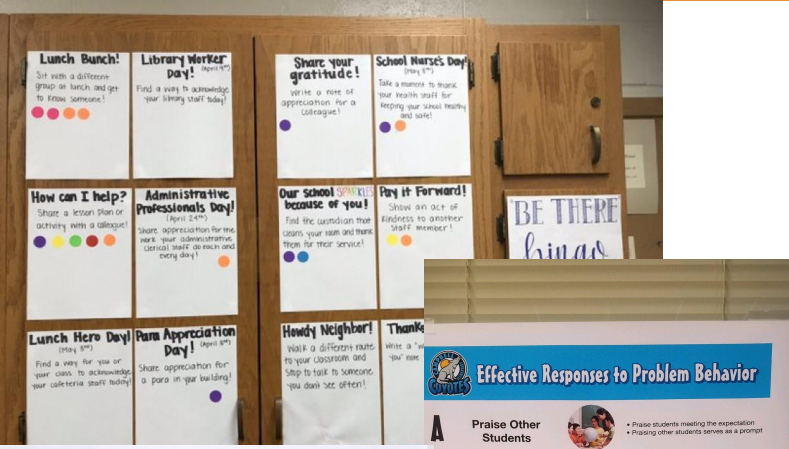
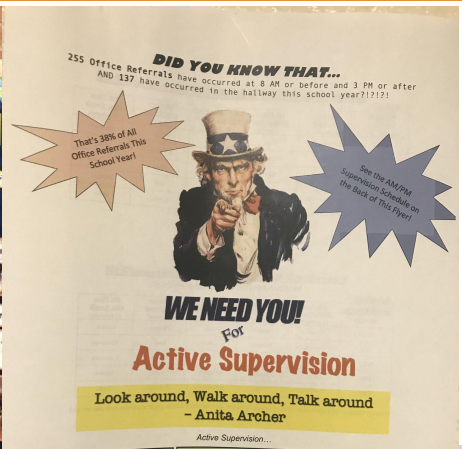
Teacher Leadership



"We've really been able to establish that person as an additional building expert. And even as that role changes, I mean, the person might change occasionally, but there's this consistent structure in place where there's a group of people, there's resources, there's training available to provide another person in the building that's not an administrator"

"So really, it just goes back to if you have a strong team within the building. It's hard to because I mean, it's the same people that get asked to, to be on every single committee. And so it just, you know, I don't have a great answer, but you have to factor in burnout at some point or you have to at least think about a cycle of getting, you know, fresh faces and fresh blood in."

Building Ownership



Facilitating Annual Events

Facilitating Annual Events:

refers to events that are held annually that the district developed to maintain momentum and to support schools in the continued implementation of PBIS. These events include annually assessing fidelity and staff perception of PBIS, annual Tier 1 action planning, annual Tier 2 and 3 action planning, professional development on key components of PBIS, and kickoff events in buildings facilitated by school teams.

Facilitating Annual Events

Facilitating Annual Events:



“Every summer we bring in all of our Tier one teams from all ten buildings and alternative programs. So we bring them all together, and we do a deep data dig and do a district overview of the data. What are we seeing district-wide looking for trends. We review the essentials of PBIS and making sure that we’re all hitting those and so even as teams bring in new members, they lose veteran members. It’s a time where everybody can hear that same message and ground themselves again in our processes or procedures, the background of PBIS and then they review their own building action plans”

SAS Reports: Self-Assessment Survey (all staff perception)

- Items (shows white, tan, red-highest priority)
 - o [All Years](#) (2021-2022 is at the bottom)
 - o [This Year Only](#)
- [Subscale](#) (shows only school-wide items by subscales)
- [Total Score](#) (shows school-wide, classroom, non-classroom and ind. Student—green graphs show "in place", blue graphs show "staff priority level")

Planning Day Resources

- [Planning Day Prep Directions](#)
- [Elementary Planning Resources](#) (general)
- [Secondary Planning Resources](#) (general)
- [TFI/SAS Overview](#) Video (briefly explains each report)

Tier 1/2 Data (Link For Your Building)

- Custom Reports in Synergy
 - o Minor Behavior/Incident Pyramid
- Tier 1/2 Tracking Tool

Facilitating Annual Events



"Then just kind of revisiting it year after year and not really letting up with that expectation for schools. Data changes, and I think systems change. I think that sometimes schools will get some things in place and they become very systematized and it's working but the work isn't ever really done. So it gives them a chance to go back and say okay, we hit this target, we met this goal, but what's our next goal?"

Creating Communities of Practice

Creating Communities of Practice:

refers to the creation of networking opportunities among professionals both within the district and across districts to support PBIS efforts. Helpful events in this category include the development of a Supporting Positive Behavior Conference allowing for professional learning opportunities for districts across the state, an informal network of professionals in districts receiving the School Climate Transformation grant, and the opportunity for connection and collaboration for teacher leaders and administrators within the district.

Creating Communities of Practice

Creating Communities of Practice:



“We continue to consult with our network of Nebraska counterparts because that also has been a huge part in sustainability and that we're not alone in this work in Nebraska because we've developed great partnerships through our time together as the grant and so I think that's been a huge piece”

Professional Development Opportunities and Resources

Providing Professional Development Opportunities and Resources:

refers to the professional development and resources provided by the district to a wide range of staff members. Professional development includes in-person and virtual opportunities for certified staff members and classified staff, such as para-educators and transportation staff. Opportunities for professional learning include structured classes and online resources developed for staff.

Professional Development Opportunities and Resources

Providing Professional Development Opportunities and Resources:

“I think in a district our size, we recognized that one method, one mode, one type, one group was not going to catch all of the people that we wanted to or that we felt like needed the opportunities to engage in that content... So I think it was important to think about all the different people, all the different roles, all the different places that people were at within their knowledge and try and get as many people as we possibly could”

Supporting and Responding to Behavior

Why is this behavior happening?



Function of Behavior

What strategies can I try?



Effective Responses

How else might I think about this behavior?



Challenging Behavior Tips

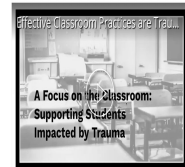


Trauma - Effective Classroom Practices

Description

This session will focus on tier 1 effective classroom practices and how they support students impacted by trauma and the effects of trauma. Participants will learn how unresolved trauma may affect student behavior and understand the alignment of classroom practices and how they are trauma informed.

Video



Activity

There are two activities for this session.

Effective Practices and Trauma

- PDF
- Google Doc

Effective Practices Scavenger Hunt

- PDF
- Google Doc

Addressing Conflicting Programs and Beliefs

Addressing Conflicting Behavioral Programs and Beliefs:

refers to existing practices in schools that conflict with the district's vision for PBIS implementation and personal philosophies or misunderstanding of PBIS components (e.g. PBIS is all about rewarding students). These conflicts led to difficulty securing staff buy-in of the district's plan for implementing PBIS and a divide among some school and district leaders, ultimately hindering sustainability.

Addressing Conflicting Programs and Beliefs

“We had a lot of competing practices going on in our district, and people were kind of tribal about those practices. And it was really challenging to get them to understand that PBIS isn't a practice. It isn't like something that you do in the classroom to change kids behaviors, really like it's a whole series of systems and tiers and supports and interventions, and it has more to do with changing adults than changing kids. And so, and I mean we had schools that were kind of doing their own, you know, like the Wild West version of things and I'm not sure how you say that stuff goes away. This is the new model without really alienating a lot of people, and I just don't know how else we could have navigated that better. I just feel like it got in the way, you know”

“So when we first started having conflicting initiatives, as I'll call it, we really had to do some work to buffer that, to neutralize and to re-teach and re-train. And as that has really shifted, I've personally noticed a big difference like last year and this year. I started nine years ago and last year and this year we saw that the Titanic turned. I really noticed a big difference here recently”

Change takes time and district leaders must continue to communicate the priority of PBIS implementation for it to develop into a way of doing day-to-day business.

Considerations

Promote and establish district priority of PBIS through development of a district leadership team, utilize the School-wide Positive Behavior Support: Implementers' Blueprint and Self-Assessment (Center on PBIS, 2017) and DSFI and establish frequent communication with the School Board of Education and executive team.

Embed PBIS into current district infrastructures such as School Improvement and align PBIS with existing initiatives in order to match policy to practice.

Considerations

Intentionally increase the capacity and buy-in of Principals and other administrators. Consider providing information to administrators before teams participate in training to provide them an opportunity to understand the vision and determine necessary processes needed to support the implementation in their building.

Promote building ownership of PBIS implementation by providing professional learning opportunities and resources to building teams. Identify teacher leaders to facilitate essential components of PBIS in their buildings. Identify clear roles and responsibilities for building teams to combat staff turnover.

Considerations

Develop networking opportunities and communities of practice for teacher leaders, administrators, and other staff to connect and learn from each other.

Facilitate annual events to continue the emphasis of PBIS implementation across the district and allow building teams to analyze and adapt practices, develop goals, and create action plans. Prioritize funding to communicate the importance of the work by paying staff for off-contract time.

"We do a better job now with all of us at the district level, talking about the importance and this is how we do business. And now that we understand it, it's a part of what we do."

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