AN ANALYSIS OF EDUCATOR INSIGHTS REGARDING POSITIVE BEHAVIOR

INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

A Dissertation

Presented to

The Faculty of the Education Department

Carson-Newman University

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

By

Sally Albright

April 2020

# CARSON-NEWMAN

## A CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

**Dissertation Approval**

Student Name:  Sally Albright

Dissertation Title:

AN ANALYSIS OF EDUCATOR INSIGHTS REGARDING
POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS
IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

This dissertation has been approved and accepted by the faculty of the Education Department, Carson-Newman University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree, Doctor of Education.

Dissertation Committee:

Dissertation Chair:  Dr. Steve A. Davidson

Methodologist Member:  Dr. P. Mark Taylor

Content Member:  Dr. Tony Dalton

Approved by the Dissertation Committee:  April 10, 2020

**Abstract**

During the last three decades, public schools have undergone significant shifts in how negative behaviors were viewed, and discipline was determined.  The purpose of this qualitative research study was to examine teacher perspectives concerning the implementation and effectiveness of the Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework in an elementary school setting.  As classroom teachers sought to maximize instructional time, negative student behaviors impeded the learning process.  This study found that teachers' perspectives of the PBIS framework included increased communication and collaboration, along with empowering students with the knowledge to make good choices.  To help schools in the future, additional studies are recommended to provide additional revelations and facilitate broader discussions..

*Keywords:* positive behavior interventions and supports, PBIS, multi-tiered system of support

## Dedication

I want to thank the Lord, who has faithfully seen me through to the completion of this work.  It is my prayer that I will have the privilege to take what I have learned and apply it to help and serve others.

It was with the encouragement and support of my husband, Clark, that I embarked upon this journey.  To Clark, words cannot fully express how grateful I am for you and the inspiration you have been for me to pursue a doctoral degree.  Thank you for the numerous hours of reading, reviewing, and discussing ideas that helped me to focus my efforts and to realize my dream.

I would like to dedicate this work to my husband, children, and grandchildren, with which God has so richly blessed me. Clark, Katie, Bethany, Preston, Blake, and Kenleigh.

**Table of Contents**

# List of Tables and Figures

**Tables**

**Figures**

**CHAPTER ONE: Introduction**

"Kind words can be short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless."

~Mother Teresa

**Introduction and Background of the Study**

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), which may also be referenced to as School-Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS) or Positive Behavior Supports (PBS), was an implementation framework (Sugai & Simonson, 2012) to aid in establishing a positive social culture and behavioral supports needed for schools to maintain an effective teaching and learning environment for all students (Sugai & Horner, 2014).

PBIS offered a prevention-oriented perspective to student discipline focused on defining behavioral expectations, modeling, rewarding, evaluating effectiveness, and integrating supports for individuals, groups, or the school (Warren et al., 2006).  The PBIS framework examined a school's resources and how initiatives were established and calculated according to mission and goals.  Using this method allowed the school an increased ability to prevent negative behaviors by teaching desired behaviors and responding immediately to negative behaviors.  When a student's academic engagement was increased, and negative behaviors decreased, the possibility of improved academic achievement rose (Sugai & Horner, 2014).

This study looked at individual teacher perspectives, beliefs, and actions.  The PBIS implementation framework (Sugai & Simonson, 2012) was designed to enhance academic and social behavior outcomes for all students using a multi-tiered approach designed to improve school culture and increase learning opportunities (OSEP, 2017).  The PBIS framework emphasized the use of data for informing decisions about the selection, implementation, and

progress monitoring of evidence-based resources and systems to improve fidelity (Sugai & Simonson, 2012).

**Statement of the Problem**

The schools' mission was to educate students while encouraging them to fulfill their potential to find success in life.  Educators sought to equip students with knowledge and training, which would aid in developing skills for preparation to be active and productive members of the community.  The educational journey included mastering civic knowledge and skills, which included respecting others and working collaboratively in a way that was fair and just (Cohen, 2012). Administrative and instructional leaders have sought to accomplish this mission while accommodating changing times. Under the influences of changing societal norms, schools were making changes.  One of these changes included the departure from traditional norms involving student behavior.

During the 2015–2016 school year, thirty-seven percent of public schools (31,100 schools) had taken at least one serious disciplinary action—including out-of-school suspensions which lasted five days or more, removals with no services for the balance of the school year, and transfers to specialized schools—for specific offenses (NCES, 2018).   The increased unacceptable student behavior was sparking a call to reexamine current discipline approaches that attempted to address problem behaviors exhibited in schools (NCES, 2018).

**Purpose and Significance of the Study**

During the last three decades, public schools have undergone significant shifts in how negative behaviors were viewed, and discipline determined.  Many schools wanted to address negative behaviors with predetermined punishments, such as zero-tolerance policies, suspensions, or expulsions.  These efforts to address negative behaviors included the use of force

from school resource officers, which may have compounded existing social, economic, or health disparities and led to the denial of educational opportunities (Gonzalez, Etow, De La Vega, 2019). When student behavior would become unacceptable, it naturally collided with the purpose and mission of the school to educate children. The need for safe learning environments and purposeful instructional classrooms was a must in our communities. An essential part of providing a conducive learning environment required establishing behavioral expectations that were taught and adhered to schoolwide. In schools where students perceived an orderly and structured environment along with positive student-teacher relationships, a reduction in problem behaviors have occurred (Wang, Dishion, 2012). School leaders were searching for solutions to improve the school climate while promoting a positive school culture.

The purpose of this study was to discover teacher perceptions regarding Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports implementation and effectiveness. Managing student behaviors in the school setting can bring many challenges. Effective teaching and learning could not take place in a poorly managed classroom. If students were disorderly and clear rules did not exist as a guide for behavior, then chaos would become the accepted norm, which leads to suffering for both the teacher and the students (Marzano, Marzano, & Pickering, 2003). The research was based exclusively on teacher perspectives; the daily interactions teachers had with their students provided views and insights into the PBIS framework.

Children may bring social, emotional, or behavioral problems with them to school that could impact the effective transfer of learning and knowledge each day. Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) was developed to improve the design and policies of schoolwide discipline. The foundation of the PBIS approach began with an emphasis on defining, teaching, and supporting appropriate student actions and behaviors. PBIS was not a

packaged set of courses but a systematic approach that was developed to establish a constructive climate where appropriate and satisfactory behavior was the custom.

**Theoretical Foundation**

This qualitative research study used B.F. Skinner's (1968) operant conditioning theory, which was based on Edward Thorndike's "Law of Effect" as the conceptual framework. Behavioral scientist, B. F. Skinner, believed behavior was learned from the environment, and the best way to understand human behavior was to look at the cause of the behavior and examine the consequences. He based his work on Edward Thorndike's (1898) "law of effect" which found that behaviors which produced a satisfying effect were likely to be repeated, and behaviors which were followed with a negative or discomforting effect were less likely to occur again in that situation (Gray, 2011, p. 108–109; McLeod, 2018). Horner and Sugai (2013) believed, based on principles of behavioral theory and applied behavior analysis, that the SWPBS framework should focus on the school as the "unit of analysis" by considering how resources, activities, and initiatives were organized, implemented, and evaluated.

**Research Questions**

The purpose of this dissertation was to identify teachers' perspectives and practices regarding the successes and opportunities for improvement in the implementation of schoolwide PBIS to promote a positive schoolwide culture of appropriate behaviors that support learning. The following questions guided this study:

1. What are teacher perceptions regarding Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) implementation and effectiveness?

2. From a teacher's perspective, What PBIS practices have a positive effect on the implementation and effectiveness of the PBIS framework?

3. From a teacher's perspective, What PBIS practices have a negative effect on the implementation and effectiveness of the PBIS framework?

**Researcher Positionality Statement**

The researcher had twelve years of classroom experience and two years as a reading interventionist. The researcher had seen the importance of having a classroom environment that was conducive to learning. Attaining a positive culture, required student cooperation, engagement, and acceptable behavioral norms. The researcher interviewed and observed teachers in a PBIS school to obtain a deeper understanding of the implementations, supports, and interventions used to help guide students to make positive behavioral choices during the school day.

**Limitations and Delimitations**

A limitation of this study was access to the population of interest. PBIS requires four years for full schoolwide training and implementation. Due to the small number of schools located in the school district that had implemented the comprehensive program, the sample size for this study was limited. An additional limitation was the time frame in which the researcher had to interview study participants. Educators were employed on a 10-month contract, which limited possible interview times and classroom observation opportunities.

A delimitation of the study was the populace chosen for interviews and observations. The district mental health supervisor assisted the researcher in selecting a school in the district which had completed their full implementation training. An additional delimitation to the study was the limited timeframe available to gather and analyze data. The researcher wanted to complete the study during one full school year.

**Definition of Key Terms**

The following terms were used throughout this qualitative study:

**Positive behavioral interventions & supports (PBIS).** Interventions and supports were designed to improve student behaviors leading to proper behaviors being the norm (Catalano, Berglund, Ryan, & Lonczak, 2004).

**Response to intervention (RTI).** Response to Intervention integrated assessment and intervention within a multi-level prevention system to maximize student achievement and to decrease behavioral problems (Froiland, 2011).

**Fidelity.** The degree to which intervention and support system was conducted as planned (Dusenbury, Brannigan, Falco, & Hansen, 2003).

**Implementation quality.** A multilevel framework of factors that both theory and empirical research suggested may influence the quality with which preventive interventions were implemented in schools (Elliott & Mihalic, 2004).

**Quality of delivery.** Professional development training, teacher self-taught, coach rating, schoolwide emphasis, and district supports (Domitrovich, et al., 2008).

**Organization of the Study**

There were five chapters in this study. Chapter one introduced the purpose and significance of the study. The rationale and organization of the study were explained, and key terms defined. Chapter two presented a comprehensive and current review of literature related to positive behavior interventions and supports. Chapter three contained a detailed research methodology listing procedures, instruments, and methods used to conduct the study. Chapter four described the results and included a discussion of the data analysis. Chapter five delivered conclusions, implications, and recommendations for future studies.

**Summary**

  Innovative programs for addressing negative student behaviors were available. Educational leaders could be proactive to find, learn about, and implement discipline programs which supported healthy learning environments and assisted in developing positive cultures in schools.

**CHAPTER TWO: Review of the Literature**

"School must be a safe and protected environment where students can come to learn without fear" (Wong, 2005).

The researcher used the Carson-Newman research database and conducted a scholarly examination of the literature concerning Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS). Research databases and journals were used to provide supporting documentation and research findings. Online sites such as Sage Publications, EBSCOhost, Gale One-find, and ProQuest were valuable resources for the review of research and scholarly materials. As the researcher reviewed research and journal articles, the importance and value to improve student behaviors as they related to improving school culture and student achievement became evident.

**Conceptual Framework**

This qualitative research study used B.F. Skinner's (1968) operant conditioning theory, which was based on Edward Thorndike's "Law of Effect" as the conceptual framework. Edward Thorndike's (1898) "law of effect" found behaviors that produced satisfying effects were likely to be repeated, and behaviors that were followed with a negative or discomforting effect were less likely to occur again in that situation (Gray, 2011, p.108–109; McLeod, 2018).

B. F. Skinner expounded on Thorndike's theory and believed behavior was learned from the environment. The best way to understand human behavior was to look at the cause of the behavior and examine the consequences. Applied behavior analysis offered a systematic and scientific approach to conduct assessments, design interventions, and implement behavior changes. The structure of Applied Behavior Theory recognized the importance of a clear understanding and use of evidence to evaluate and design interventions (Slocum T. et al., 2014).

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) originated from the science of applied behavioral analysis using a more social and cultural approach. The PBIS framework incorporated the significant elements of a behavioral program at the macro level for the entire school (Dunlap, Goodman, McEvoy, & Paris, 2008).

**School History of Discipline**

As schools in America were established, the Founding Fathers focused on responsible citizenship as the primary goal (Bear, 1998; Bankston, 2010). The purpose of education was self-evident as viewed from Thomas Jefferson's philosophy that a nation of independent-minded, self-governing learners- learners who truly understood virtuous behavior was necessary for the survival and protection of a democracy (Bear, 1998). A student's ability to think, learn, and communicate, as well as the scope and content of their knowledge, affected their prospect of becoming an active citizen and productive adult (Madigan, Cross, K., & Strycker, 2016; Federal Interagency on Child and Family Statistics, 2013).

Appropriate student behaviors and moral character traits were taught in schools, and "habits of virtue" were reinforced in the home, church, and community. Schools were charged with instructing students to practice just and caring behaviors. The primary method for communicating positive behaviors relied on enforcing adherence to strict habits and customary behaviors, especially behavior associated with Puritanism values and work ethic (Bear, 1998).

In the past, school discipline was administered through punitive measures. Finkelstein (1989) and Hyman (1990) discussed how punishments were used many times "too often" in the first schools. While it could be debated whether punitive school measures were effective in the past, they were no longer considered equitable for today's educational settings.

Today's students are influenced by many disruptors, such as the breakdown of the family structure and the increase in abusive living experiences. These potent disruptors can be multipliers of disciplinary practices and contribute to adverse outcomes for students in educational settings. Over the last three decades, many schools have implemented harsh, predetermined punishments to address problem behaviors as they occur (Gonzalez, Etow, & DeLa Vega, 2019).

Cameron and Mitchell (2006) identified a connection between poor academic achievement and psychosocial functioning of students subjected to school disciplinary actions. As teachers seek to inspire and shape student lives to achieve educational success, this task can be daunting if the school climate and student behaviors are unmanageable. Just as the academic transfer of knowledge has changed over time in schools, so has the area of discipline and consequences related to negative student behaviors.

**School Reforms**

In April of 1983, the National Commission on Excellence in Education published a report called *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform*. The report informed the nation about the current quality of education and the need for reforms. The study noted deficiencies in content, expectations, time, and teaching. The document contained recommendations to help improve the quality of education in America and move from producing a mediocre product to an excellent one by establishing "high expectations and goals for all learners" (A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform, 1983).

It has been over three decades since the initial report was issued, and schools were still undertaking the challenge to improve the quality of education. Many people in the educational

field were beginning to look at adopting evidence-based practices as a solution to existing problems (Horner, Sugai, & Anderson, 2010).

Creating a productive learning climate required a system of understanding and guidelines which focused on building and maintaining supportive relationships among teachers, students, and their families. Research demonstrated the positive effects of having a healthy school climate, which was shown to reduce student occurrences of misbehavior and increase student outcomes (Caldarella, Shatzer, Gray, Young, & Young, 2015). Educators realized the need for improved outcomes for a better system to address problem behaviors and improve student conduct. The goal was to address behavioral issues before they happened and to intervene by providing supports to help improve behaviors over time.

While many times it was true that factors influenced negative student behaviors outside of the school day, studies on school and teacher effectiveness showed that schools and teachers had a significant impact on how students behaved, learned, and how they felt about themselves (Darling-Hammond, 1998; Sanders & Rivers, 1996; Utley C., Kozleski, Smith, & Draper, 2002). The roles which adults filled inside of the school building and during the school day were a part of an unseen social networking institution. Each school was distinguished by a set of "internal characteristics" (Caldarella et al., 2015), which influenced the behavior of its members during the school day. In addition, supporting positive student outcomes was the consideration of the students' social and emotional well-being. The schools' social climates influenced psychological and emotional factors, such as student aspirations, optimism, and academic self-esteem (Caldarella et al., 2015).

In 1997, congress reauthorized the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (Sugai & Simonson, 2012). In IDEA, Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports was the only

framework explicitly mentioned to address behaviors. The law was amended again in 2004, and the same emphasis on a positive approach to address problem behaviors remained a vital objective in the law (OSEP,2017).

Congress recognized the importance of having a framework in place to address problem behaviors. Congress allocated funds that could be used to support professional development opportunities for educators. Along with the allocation for professional development funds, Congress set aside competitive grant funds that could be used by general education or special education teachers for pre-service, in-service, or any school personnel to assist in developing and disseminating PBIS models to address behaviors that hinder learning (OSEP, 2017).

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), which may also be referenced as School-Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS), was an implementation (Sugai & Simonson, 2012) framework to aid in establishing a positive social culture and behavioral supports needed for schools to maintain an effective teaching and learning environment for all students (Sugai, Horner, 2014). Because challenging student behaviors could frustrate teachers and disrupt instruction (Madigan et al., 2016), aids were available for schools seeking to address and combat problem behaviors in the school setting.

PBIS gained acknowledgment through the Individuals with Disabilities Act and has continued to secure ground as school administrators and faculty have sought to address and improve negative behaviors and improve school environments. The language used in much of the PBIS framework came directly from the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1997 (Ohio Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports, 2013).

**School Safety**

Throughout the 2007-2008 school year, eighty-five percent of public schools reported one or more incidences of crime had occurred during the school day.  This percentage was estimated to equal about 2 million crimes (Dinkes, Kemp, & Baum, 2009).  The emerging trend demonstrated the elevated mild forms of violence on campus and intensified educator awareness to address antisocial and aggressive youth behaviors (Jimerson, Hart, & Renshaw, 2012).

Antisocial behaviors such as bullying, harassment, victimization, and drug and alcohol abuse revealed themselves in the lives of students at school.  More than any other disability category, students with emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD) had the highest risk for poor school outcomes.  These challenging student behaviors put students at-risk for peer rejection, negative teacher interactions, and isolation from their community (George, Cox, Minch, & Sandomierski, 2018).

During recent years, the rise in incidences of school violence led to increased school disciplinary sanctions and procedures to combat disruptive and violent behaviors (Utley, Kozleski, Smith, & Draper, 2002).  These occurrences also led school authorities to review local policy and increase on-campus security by hiring security officers and installing video cameras and metal detectors to monitor students, staff, and visitors.  The attempts to maintain order and address the rise in negative student behaviors by increasing discipline practices and creating harsher discipline policies led to increased office referrals, suspensions, and expulsion rates for students (Lassen, 2006; Sprague & Horner, 2012).

Research has indicated a significant rise in adolescent behavioral and emotional problems over the past 25 years (Caldarella et al., 2015). The rise in unacceptable behaviors within the school has prompted school administrative leaders to seek ways to combat the adverse outcomes

occurring during the school day, realizing the impact these negative behaviors were having among the student and staff populations.

The Indicators of School Crime and Safety (2019) report was released, which contained compiled data for the 2018 school year and compared current report findings to documented information from previous school years.  The report served to establish reliable indicators as to the current state of school safety and crimes.  The data was updated, monitored, and reported to agencies as a system to track data and an avenue to create awareness with the public.  The report gathered and compiled data from surveys and other agencies which recorded and monitored school crimes and safety.  The report contained information regarding teacher or student injury, personal or electronic bullying, climate and conditions occurring in schools, weapons, fights, availability and use of drugs, victimization and student perceptions of their personal safety at school (Musu, Zhang, Wang, Zhang, & Oudekerk, 2019).

During the 2018 school year, preliminary data reports showed about 827,000 total victimizations.  In 2017, about 20 percent of students from the ages 12-18 reported being victims of bullying situations, and 4 percent of the students age 12-18 reported carrying a weapon onto school property at least one day during the previous 30 days (Musu et al., 2019).  The problem behaviors and the challenges related to them, which were occurring in schools, have generated fears about the personal safety of students, teachers, and others. (Sprague & Horner, Second Edition 2012 ).

The United States Department of Education (2019) stated that the mission of education is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.  Over the years, school officials have sought to accomplish this mission while also accommodating changing times.  Just as the academic

transfer of knowledge has changed over time, so has the area of discipline and consequences. An increase in negative student behavior has sparked a call to reexamine current approaches that deal with unacceptable behavior.

Zero tolerance was enacted to address school discipline situations, which could create or cause harm to students or disrupt the learning environment. This approach was utilized and enacted to protect students and teachers and preserve order. Over the past several years, zero tolerance has come under scrutiny for several reasons. The effectiveness of these policies continued to be carefully examined; some studies found that punishing the student and behavior without addressing the root cause may be leading to increased problem behaviors (Shores, Gunter, & Jack, 1993; Utley C., Kozleski, Smith, & Draper, 2002). When "zero tolerance" policies were enacted for disciplinary purposes in schools, they were intended to reduce school violence and behavior problems but instead could have the opposite effect (Farberman, 2006). Many educational leaders gave attention to the research data and considered alternative solutions.

Assessing discipline approaches were necessary as the change in student behaviors threatened the purpose and safety of students in schools across America. The U.S. Department of Education (2019) stated the mission of the school was to educate and encourage students to fulfill their potential and find success in life. Over the years, school officials have sought to accomplish this mission while also accommodating changing times. Under the influence of changing societal norms and the increase in student victimization, schools were seeking alternative solutions to punitive disciplinary actions. Schools were searching for avenues to prevent and lessen minor and severe antisocial behaviors by turning to the comprehensive and proactive approaches used in the PBIS framework (Sprague & Horner, 2012 ).

An essential part of providing a safe and orderly school environment required establishing expectations, which were commonly called the Code of Behavior and Discipline. This set of known expectations provided the guidelines for all students to follow and prescribed the consequences for not complying.  It covered the actions, behaviors, and student requirements and listed the consequences if an offense occurred. Dealing with school discipline and safety was nothing new; educators continually sought to make use of a variety of techniques used to reduce, prevent, or eliminate behaviors that disrupted the learning process (Madigan, Cross, K., & Strycker, 2016).

Attitudes and policies concerning school discipline have changed throughout history. In the past, school disciplinary practices toward students were reactive and exclusionary; students were removed from instruction and punished (Madigan et al., 2016). Sprague and Horner (2012) suggested that many present-day school procedures unintentionally promoted the development of antisocial behavior and the possibility of violence. Gonzalez, Etow, and De La Vega (2019) created awareness of the correlation between the number of suspensions a student received and their academic disengagement, which could result in the student dropping out of school. Concerned advocates were looking to research data to aid in developing ideas to keep students in school and help lessen the number of discipline infractions that occurred.  While some practices seemed to work, others advocated searching for the root cause would have been a better approach.

In the United States, most schools were safe institutions for students and adults. However, some schools have had severe antisocial behavior and violence issues that must be addressed and solved (United States DOJE, 1999, 2000, 2018).  Any misconduct or wrongdoing could directly disrupt the educational process and impact the students, school, and surrounding

community (Brookmeyer, Fanti, and Henrich 2006; Goldstein, Young, & Boyd, 2008; Robers, Zhang, Morgan, & Musu-Gillette, 2015).  Students who misbehaved and had to be removed from the classroom spent more time in discipline-related interactions than time in the classroom learning core academic content with their peers.

**Effects of Exclusionary School Discipline**

In an article published by the *Journal of Law, Medicine & Ethics* (2019), the authors discussed exclusionary school discipline (ESD) and the correlation between the number of suspensions a student experienced and academic disengagement or becoming a drop-out. Suspensions were just one form of an exclusionary discipline practices that were designed to deter negative behaviors, but research has shown they are associated with an increase of these behaviors (Swain-Broadway, Johnson, Bradshaw, & McIntosh, 2017).  There was a direct correlation between exclusion from school and the ramifications, which occurred later in a student's life (Puckett, Graves, & Sutton, 2019).  Punitive practices were often the least effective approach to teach students more socially acceptable behaviors (Madigan, Cross, K., & Strycker, 2016).

From a public health perspective, students who experienced exclusionary school discipline (ESD) were at-risk for emotional well-being and at an increased risk of long-term effects such as chronic disease, social and economic instability, and low life expectancy (Gonzalez, Etoe, & De La Vega, 2019).  Rather than enforcing negative discipline strategies such as zero tolerance, suspensions, and expulsions, the authors suggested teaching children critical social and emotional skills and utilizing a multi-tiered support system.

School districts were encouraged by the United States Department of Education (2014) to seek out and develop policies that provided alternative measures to address exclusionary

consequences, keeping in mind that the schools' goal should be to keep students in school as active and engaged participants.

**History of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports**

During the 1980s, the educational system began to focus on students with behavioral disorders and called for the identification and design of effective behavioral interventions. Researchers at the University of Oregon started to conduct studies related to students with problem behaviors. Sugai and Simonson (2012) found that more focus should be placed on preventions, research-based interventions, and a school-wide approach to improve behavior disorders (BD).

The Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EHA) 1975-1990 was reauthorized and became the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) in 1990. It was during 1998 that a national center for the study of positive behavior interventions and supports was initially funded. The United States Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) and the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE) funded the Technical Assistance Center on PBIS through a government grant (OSEP Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, 2017).

As a result, partnerships were formed among researchers from the University of Oregon, Kentucky, Kansas, South Florida, and Missouri. The collaboration between the U.S. Department of Education and eleven technical assistance units across the United States was known as the OSEP Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and supports.

The Center was directed by Dr. George Sugai of the University of Connecticut, Dr. Rob Horner from the University of Oregon, and Dr. Tim Lewis from the University of Missouri. It

was successful in communicating and sharing ideas about the PBIS framework by using an on-line platform to share and distribute research-based practices.  The OSEP Technical Assistance Center provided assistance to encourage PBIS implementation, organizational models, and evaluation tools needed to monitor depth and fidelity, along with extensions of lessons learned from the PBIS model framework to support educational reform (OSEP Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, 2017).

Studies have been conducted to document the efficiency of the PBIS framework used in the school-wide setting. Research findings concerning school climate, problem behaviors, and academic achievement have been published in peer-reviewed journals such as the *Journal of Positive Behavior and Interventions, Behavioral Analysis in Practice, On-line Journal of New Horizons in Education, and Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review*.  This literature review used these journals and other forms of information to review PBIS practices, ideas, and share outcomes found in other researchers' works.

Identifying factors that contributed to positive school culture and supported learning objectives for all students was a crucial aspect of school success.  An essential part of this success included reducing problem behaviors that interfered with teaching and learning. Sprague and Horner (2013) emphasized the priority role school discipline should have when considering the school improvement goals.

The subsequent step was the commitment for at least 80 percent of the school staff to participate and support the foundational initiatives. Sugai and Horner (2009) suggested that professional development be continuous, localized, embedded, and team-driven.  Professional development training provided school staff with the knowledge and methods needed to convey lessons that model behavioral norms.  By providing instructional procedures and information on

appropriate behaviors, students could choose to make the right decisions and take pathways that influenced appropriate social norms.

Disruptive behaviors that impacted learning included the use of inappropriate language, defiance, negative attitude, disrespectfulness, tantrums, and being off-task. These disruptive actions were some of the most common reported incidences addressed daily in schools (PBIS World Book, 2012). The school may choose to analyze data and determine the most common negative behaviors occurring. Awareness of the negative behaviors will help the school team to design supports and interventions to utilize if needed. Other more complex behaviors that may have occurred during the school day included bullying, anxiety, impulsiveness, depression, somatic complaints, crying, and poor peer relationships (PBIS World Book, 2012). Having a plan to treat negative behaviors as they occurred helped the school staff to be prepared and ready to intervene with validated supports. There should be several preplanned options the team would have in place to utilize. The team may opt to offer breaks, propose movement from one class to another, or recommend another activity.

The PBIS program was designed to offer praise and acknowledgment of positive behaviors as they happened. It was not always a fix for disruptive student behaviors. When these disruptive behaviors occurred, the school behavior team had other options it could use to help the students improve their behavior. Sprague and Horner (2012) believed punishment alone when it was not accompanied by support could weaken academic outcomes for the student and increase the at-risk status of the student to form an antisocial path. Some options which may be utilized to assist with changing this unwanted path included a note or phone call to the parent, reflection sheets, card flip, privileges taken away, or completion of school work during student's free or unstructured time (PBIS World Book, 2012).

As schools across America discovered the PBIS schoolwide approach system, they found the framework could address the needs of all students by implementing easy to use strategies. More importantly, the practices were appropriate and the "right fit" for the student (Dunlap, Goodman, McEvoy, & Paris, 2008). An essential part of the framework was the affordability aspect as the schools have the resources, staff, and the time needed. By designing individualized supports, the behavioral team had helped to initiate a positive behavioral change within the student, which in turn helped to create a positive school climate, resulting in fewer discipline occurrences and increased student engagement time (Dunlap, Goodman, McEvoy, & Paris, 2008).

**Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Framework**

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) was a system of evidence-based supports designed to help develop all students' prosocial behaviors and academic outcomes while encouraging a positive school climate (Horner, Sugai, & Anderson, 2010; Bradshaw, 2013). The multitiered, proactive framework methodically promoted and recognized desired behaviors while using data to make decisions regarding the types and concentration of behavioral supports which needed to be offered (Sugai & Horner, 2002; Noltemeyer, Palmer, James, & Petrasek, 2019).

National Education Association President, Lily Eskelsen Garcia, discussed PBIS and stated, "Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) programs helped teachers realize the significance of classroom management and preventive school discipline to maximize student success." In 1997, Congress changed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), to include PBIS as an approach to address behavior by utilizing positive approaches and functional assessments to encourage good behaviors (NEA, 2014).

Positive school behavior models have transformed and have been divided into several versions or frameworks over the past two decades. Each of these had similar functions and outcomes with different names and processes for goal fulfillment. Schoolwide Positive Behavior Supports (SWPBS), Positive Behavior Supports (PBS), or Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), were three of the most commonly used schools. Each of these approaches were designed to provide a positive, planned method to increase school climate and safety, improve classroom discipline by expanded classroom management, and offer a continuum of student self-managing techniques when social, emotional, or behavioral challenges occurred (NEA, 2014).

PBIS was based on a framework intended to help participating schools by establishing a positive social culture and behavioral supports for everyone in the school. This objective was vital as it aimed to help schools to maintain an effective teaching and learning environment for all students (Sugai & Horner, 2014). PBIS utilized data to inform the selection of universal, secondary, or intensive intervention strategies to lessen challenging student behavior (Campbell & Anderson, 2008).

The idea of challenging negative behaviors based on motivations, and not what the behavior looked like as it occurred, led educators to reconfigure their approach to assessment and intervention (Dunlap & Fox, 2012). A change in the way problematic behaviors were viewed has directed a change in the way these negative behaviors were addressed using intervention strategies and supports (Dunlap & Fox, 2012).

Student behavior can be challenging to understand; it is contingent on many factors in the home, school, and community (Sprague & Horner, Second Edition 2012 ). PBIS was designed to support all students by increasing acceptable behavioral and social norms. The support model included challenging behaviors that were being looked at through a definitive lens on an

individual case basis.  The PBIS framework design offered a unique three-tiered model.  The tiered model presented support and interventions crafted to meet an individual's needs and behavior goals by analyzing the negative behavior and designing appropriate interventions to correct the adverse action.

**Implementation**

The schoolwide implementation of the three-tiered PBIS model required planning, training, and commitment from the entire school staff.  The model incorporated a commitment from stakeholders, administration, teachers, students, parents, and community partners. Professional staff development was essential to ensure the implementation of PBIS and the behavioral outcomes which the program framework offered (OSEP, 2017; Sugai & Horner, 2009).  This undertaking required school-wide buy-in and participation from all involved stakeholders.  PBIS was not designed as a formal curriculum but a process that allows schools and staff to be trained and implemented one tier per year.  The training process required four years for full implementation.

The steps followed a sequential order of exploration and adoption, installation, initial implementation, full implementation, and continuous improvement and regeneration.  A commitment to sustaining effective practices included a focus on teaming structures, decision-making protocols, funding, and organizational practices (Horner and Sugai, 2015).

**Exploration of Framework and Adoption**

Evidence-based practice (EBP) was a model of professional decision-making that practitioners used to combine evidence and clinical expertise to address issues of need. (Slocum, et al., 2014).  Evidence-based practices required several years to implement because many required complex school-wide initiatives preparations and could take years to achieve

adequate fidelity (McIntosh, Mercer, Nese, & Ghemraoui, 2016). Positive Behavior Supports and Interventions (PBIS) was one of the most widely adopted evidenced-based frameworks used in schools and even entire school districts (Horner &Sugai, 2015; PBIS, 2017). As of 2018, PBIS had been adopted in over 25,000 schools (Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, 2018). Evidence-based practices were both a goal and standard in the fields of education, medicine, and psychology (Horner, Sugai, & Fixsen, 2017).

Educational mandates called for safer schools and higher achievement scores for all students, this has left instructional leaders seeking ways to do more with less time, shrinking resources, and competing and overlapping initiatives. PBIS was a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS), which includes a three-tiered continuum of support (Horner et al., 2017). PBIS materials contained core features and were available to use as guidelines while maintaining the flexibility needed to meet the individual district or school level needs (Horner et al., 2017).

The program required implementation integrity, the continual use of data to make team-based decisions, professional development and training of school leaders and instructors, and continued coaching to help launch and create the schoolwide expectations needed for program success (Horner, Sugai, & Anderson, 2010). Accurate adoption and the sustained use of evidence-based practices were essential for effective results (Sugai & Horner, 2014). Most schools required an 80% staff approval rating before proceeding with the program (Dunlap, Goodman, McEvoy, & Paris, 2008). An emphasis was placed on the following factors: team-based coordination, action planning, decision making based on current data, administration participation, and continuous professional development of key participants (OSEP, 2010).

Most district coaches were trained at the state level and returned to their district to teach and guide the local school teams. It was suggested that during the planning process, the school

staff should complete a survey that assesses the essential elements which are currently in place at the school to help the planning team.  The survey was also utilized to establish a baseline and evaluate the progress of the project (Dunlap et al., 2008).  The PBIS model was designed to provide training to the school behavioral team first, guiding the team through the creation and selection of school expectations.  PBIS allowed schools to maintain the freedom and individuality needed to help integrate the program inside the existing protocols.

The PBIS program was not like a traditional discipline program that waited for students to have a negative occurrence before intervening (Simonson, Sugai, & Negron, 2008).  Three main understandings guided the framework: (a) prevention by proactively addressing student needs, (b) application of evidence-based practices to prevent social and academic failure (Simonson et al, 2008), and (c) systematic implementation (Sugai & Horner, 2006).  The PBIS model emphasized the need to state expectations in positive ways and avoid negative language. An example would be changing from the negative connotation of "Sit down in your seat and do not get up when the bus is moving" to "Be Safe- Remain seated while the bus is moving."  With the negative words removed, the statement becomes a teaching opportunity.  Horner and Sugai (2015) stated, "Applied behavior analysis promises that our understanding of human behavior will have a direct impact on improving social systems."

The expectations of positive behaviors were based on core values such as responsibility, respect, and safety.  The interventions and supports used to reinforce these expectations were taught through direct instruction modeling safety, respect, and responsibility in the classroom and other areas of the school where the student body population might be during the school day (Dunlap et al, 2008).

To adhere to the framework with fidelity, each school followed guidelines designed for implementation ease and continuity of program services. The implementation of systems, evidence-based practices, and associated data-based decision making were embedded and adaptable to the context of the local school culture (PBIS: Implementation Blueprint, 2015).

**Team-Based Implementation**

The PBIS framework has been continually improved since its inception. The OSEP Technical Assistance Center created an Implementation Blueprint to assist districts and schools as they seek to utilize the framework. The establishment of a leadership or behavior team within each school was recommended before beginning with any practice or system to ensure high fidelity of implementation (PBIS: Implementation Blueprint, 2015). Having a team coordinate each aspect of the framework ensured the appropriate structures were in place and being adhered to according to the framework specifications. Practices to monitor included ensuring the fidelity of adoption, establishing schoolwide evidence-based practices, and designing systems that were conducive to the goals and outcomes established by the administration and stakeholders.

Schools designed universal procedures and expectations for behavior guidelines, and these were referred to as the behavior matrix. School-wide expectations were created and stated in a positive voice. It was common for posters to be displayed in all areas of the school to communicate expectations in the classroom and non-classroom settings (Simonson, Sugai, & Negron, 2008). The expectations were taught and displayed throughout the classrooms and areas of the school where children learned and participated throughout the day (Walker & Severson, 2002). The posted expectations appled to all students and were reinforced with fidelity throughout the school day and school year. The school staff promoted core values such as be

responsible, be cooperative, be respectful, be prepared, and be safe. (Lewis, 2010; Warren, 2006).

Lesson plans were developed to teach school expectations and were taught in the same manner as if it were an academic lesson (Simonson, Sugai, & Negron, 2008). Consequences for behavior infractions were consistent throughout the school and seen as opportunities to learn. Consequences were not punitive and did not seek to demean a student but seen as a time to reteach and discuss better choices. To ensure implementation success, each school should have a PBIS consultant or coach who could instruct or be available for staff members for advising or collaborative purposes throughout the process. Collaboration was a vital element required for the successful implementation of the Tier I process (Dunlap et al., 2008). All practices needed to be fully understood by the implementers so they would understand what they look like, where they can be used, how to implement, and what outcomes to expect and why (Horner, Sugai, & Anderson, 2010).

The team would be tasked with creating expectation posters and pamphlets. Posters were designed specifically for each area of the school and communicated the behavior expectations and norms. PBIS focused on the whole-school to be the unit of intervention (Mayer & Leone, 1999; Biglan, 1995; Mayer, Butterworth, Nafpaktitis, & Sulzer-Azaroff, 1983; Horner and Sugai, 2015). All areas in the school should display expectations; this included the gymnasium, cafeteria, art room, band room, technology labs, restrooms, hallways, bus room, and any other places where students would be during the school day.

The premise of posting expectations allows students to be reminded of the expectations their educational leaders have taught and to serve as a visual reminder of their responsibility. In the cases of small children who cannot read, some schools integrated pictures beside the

expectations and created videos to play, and demonstrated examples of positive behaviors and expectations.  Since PBIS utilized a skill-building approach, even if students did not have a significant discipline problem, they would still benefit from using safe, respectful, and responsible behaviors (Dunlap, Goodman, McEvoy, & Paris, 2008).  When students learned a culture of regard for others and how to act responsibly, the school climate improved.

**Interventions and Supports Used within the PBIS Model**

An intervention was an action designed to intervene or help to improve a situation.  The word support refered to giving approval, offering encouragement, and being actively concerned or interested in seeing success (Merriam-Webster, 2020).  The PBIS framework was designed to provide both interventions and supports to help correct negative behaviors.  Employing specific research-based actions needed to be applied to reach goal accomplishment.  Behavioral theory was utilized through the PBIS framework to address the significant social concern of negative student behaviors in schools today (Horner and Sugai, 2015).

Three elements of intervention which were critical to the launch of the PBIS framework included (a) all students will be provided a core curriculum, (b) modifications to the core program will be made for students who are identified as nonresponsive, (c) an intensive and specialized curriculum will be developed for students whose behavior is deemed nonresponsive to the core (PBIS: Implementation Blueprint, 2015).  These guidelines for the intervention and support plan ensured that a student who did not respond to the first level of interventions would receive interventions matched to the level of intensity the behavioral challenges required.

When providing interventions and supports, it was critical to match the needs of the student to the researched-based methods designed to help students learn and overcome negative behaviors (PBIS World Book, 2012).  The same type of interventions may be used in all three

tiers. Tier I interventions were designed to target a class.  However, the same response used in

Tier II or Tier III would be modified for a small group or an individual student with specific

needs or challenges.

There were many myths surrounding interventions.  Educators did not find a solution that

met the needs of every situation.  Not all educators viewed supports and interventions with the

same degree of liking and appreciation of design parameters.  When designing supports and

interventions, it was vital to match the features of the student to the support, which was believed

to establish the most desired outcomes.  In the same way, students were informed about their

academic performance and achievements; the PBIS approach provideed students with timely

feedback on their behaviors and social skills (Sugai & Simonson, 2012).

Types of interventions and supports offered in each tier varied according to student need.

An example of interventions included adult or peer mentoring, establishing a check-in/check-out

procedure, developing a behavior contract, time-limited school to home notes, and student self-

monitoring (PBIS World Book, 2012).  While this list was not all-inclusive, it included several of

the most widely used PBIS interventions.

**Essential Features of the PBIS Multi-Tiered Continuum**

**Tier I.**  Tier I was designed as a universal prevention to support all students and staff

schoolwide (Simonson, Sugai, & Negron, 2008).  Tier I was the primary tier taught during the

first year of PBIS faculty, staff, and community stakeholder professional development training.

This tier was known as the universal tier because it builds the social and behavioral foundation of

the framework.  All students received fundamental preventative instructions and supports

(Horner, Sugai, & Anderson, 2010).

The training emphasized high-quality teaching and learning environments, which promoted social skills, monitors their use, provided opportunities for practice, and gave specific encouragement and recognition to students when applied (OSEP Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, 2015). These were the specific elements of the framework that could be monitored and adjusted to achieve outcomes for the defined population (Horner et al., 2010).

Tier I practices were intended to support and enhance students' social behavior in the school setting (Horner, Sugai, & Fixsen, 2017). Tier I was designed to offer core program elements and academic and behavior instruction to students in all school settings. In Tier I, procedures included identifying and explaining a small set of schoolwide behavioral expectations and a reward system which acknowledged students desired behaviors. This tier also included predictable consequences when problem behaviors occurred (Horner, Sugai, & Fixsen, 2017). Tier I taught culturally relevant social skills, rewarded appropriate desired behaviors, and established learning environments that discouraged negative behaviors (Sugai & Horner, 2006).

A reward system was designed to recognize and acknowledge appropriate behaviors. The reward system was explained to students. Consequences were discussed and clearly defined for problem behaviors. Although PBIS was a "framework," it did not explicitly define specific consequences for negative behaviors. A PBIS feature is that it was designed to match the social and cultural context needed within the school (Horner et al., 2017).

Teachers and school administration collected and used data to make decisions and provided direction for needs that may arise (Simonson et al., 2008). Clear communication of school expectations helped to create positive and acceptable social and behavioral norms awareness for the whole school population. Procedures and guidelines were taught and used

uniformly throughout the school every day.  In Tier I, the school staff offered prevention to all

students in all the school settings (Simonson, Sugai, & Negron, 2008).  The school's goal was to

create a positive school social culture by explicitly teaching and modeling positive school

behaviors.

Tier I established the premise that all students can benefit from effectively taught

evidence-based practices that are designed to make students aware of good behavior choices.

Because Tier I was the foundational tier, approximately eighty to eighty-five percent of the

school's student population would fall into this tier.  This percentage was typically gathered

through the collection of Office Discipline Referral data (ODR) (Dunlap, Goodman, McEvoy, &

Paris, 2008).

**Common Tier I interventions and supports for students.**  Loeber and Farrington

(1998) emphasized that it is never too late or too early to take steps to support youth with the

realization that wrongdoers usually "advance simultaneously" in each problematic behavior area,

beginning with minor behaviors and progressing to more severe infractions.  Early prevention

efforts from school staff were the key to reaching at-risk youth (Loeber & Farrington, 1998).

The steps the school has taken to help make improvements in addressing unwanted behaviors

could be communicated through a phone call or note to the parent.  Increased communication

helped to establish a connection between school and home to keep parents informed about their

child's current behavior. (PBIS World Book, 2012).  As the school constructed a relationship

with the parents, behavioral limits at both school and home could become more constant.

Communication between school and home allowed parents an opportunity to support

school actions and to follow up with consequences and restrictions at home. (PBIS World book,

2012).  Seeking to strengthen communication between school and home narrowed the gap for

miscommunication. It allowed parents the opportunity to share their ideas, which they used in the home to improve negative behaviors. Involving parents and listening to feedback has been utilized as an effective way to improve student behaviors.

Reflection sheets helped students think about the consequences of their negative behavior and how they might have made a better decision. When a student had the opportunity to think and write about what they did and why, an opportunity existed for the child to process what just happened and to ask themselves was there a better way. When a student had time to reflect on their behavior, this could help resolve the infraction. The reflection sheet could be utilized as a communication catalyst for the student and adult to discuss the action. A chance to talk out problems and explain personal reasoning was an essential step for a child when looking to improve behavior. The student needed to take responsibility for behavior change. There were other options in addition to writing; the student may want to draw pictures, talk into a microphone to record responses, or type their responses (PBIS World Book, 2012).

Using a card flip system in the classroom helped to address minor behaviors the student could self-monitor and change. The flip card system was commonly used in early elementary classes. Fred Jones, author of the book *Tools for Teaching*, found ninety-nine percent of typical classroom interruptions came from pupils talking without permission, making noise, wandering around the room, or daydreaming. Using a card flip system was a methodical approach to classroom management. Teachers could use a visual cue to communicate to the student they are using behaviors which annoyed or disrupted the learning of others. The card flip system gave the student control over his or her behavior and allowed the student to manage their behavior. This system was taught ahead of time and used with consistency.

It was recommended that school teams use praise, rewards, and other positive methods to alter negative behaviors. Using recognition to acknowledge wanted actions supported student choice and helped to reaffirm the behavior. Praise should be given frequently, and rewards such as a positive note home or a compliment communicate to the student that their behavior deserved a reward. Rewards came in many forms, and the school team organized the types of approval into categories such as a consumable award, adult approval, peer approval, or an independent award (PBIS World Book, 2012).

As schools wanted to improve the school culture and classroom environments, they were not alone. There were many resources and websites which offered free printable certificates and reward ideas. By working as a school team and sharing information, the task of helping students improved negative behaviors and became less of a challenge and more of a chance to help change a life and guide a student in a better direction.

**Tier II.** Tier II is secondary prevention and was comprised of function-based strategies (Sugai & Horner, 2006; Dunlap & Fox, 2011) to support students who need more targeted social skills instruction (Sugai, 2011) provided in the Tier I model. Approximately 10-15% percent of the school's students would fall into this tier category (Sugai & Horner, 2006; Horner & Sugai, 2015).

The secondary tier was designed for students who did not respond to the universal Tier I support, but needed further interventions and their negative actions did not pose a risk to themselves or others (Simonson et al., 2008). This group needed secondary tier supports, which focused on reducing the number of current problem behaviors. Tier II increased the assistance provided to students who needed additional training, structure, and performance feedback (Horner, Sugai, & Fixsen, 2017).

Students who were receiving secondary supports continued receiving universal supports to reinforce primary interventions. The additional supports were designed to help students accomplish behavioral expectations (Horner, Sugai, & Anderson, 2010).

Analyzing office discipline referrals was an effective way to identify student data trends, which could be referred to as "hot spots" (Dunlap et al., 2008).  By analyzing this data, the behavior team could identify specific students who required more support, an area in the school where more incidents occurred, or a group of students with intercepting disruptive behavior patterns. The additional supports to help students succeed were conceptualized as intervention strategies made up of effective behavior action approaches applied in a similar way across all students receiving the intervention (Horner et al., 2010).

Students in this group may be paired with others in a small group setting to address behaviors or needs.  Some of the problems seen in Tier-II students included inadequate peer relations, low academic achievement, and chaotic home environments (Lewis & Sugai, 1999; Ennis & Swoszowski, 2011).  Students who were targeted for secondary interventions were often at risk of developing severe problem behaviors in the future (Lewis & Sugai, 1999).

At the Tier II level, it was vital to monitor data frequently. If changes in interventions were needed, this could happen more effectively if addressed promptly. Some schools designated an intervention coordinator to monitor the data and lead the team when choosing interventions for students. A designated person who had the time allocated for oversight and management of the tiers helped to ensure accurate progress monitoring and fidelity of implementation (Horner et al., 2010).

Robin Ennis and Nicole Swoszowski (2011) authored an article in *Beyond Behavior* titled "*The Top 10 Things to Consider When Implementing Secondary -Tier PBIS Interventions*" as a

guide to help those tasked with helping students who may fall into the Tier II category. The list below was not all-inclusive, but a summary of their recommendations of things to consider. Reference to the original authors' work may be found in the reference section of this study.

Step 1: Decision Making Team

*Who would be in charge of making decisions regarding Secondary Tier interventions?*

The decision-making team should consist of an administrator or one who had the power to make crucial decisions, a representative from each department or grade level, and an individual who provided student support such as guidance teacher, social worker, school counselor, or special education teacher.

Step 2: Areas of Concern

*What skills did students need to meet the plan expectations?*

When identifying areas of concern, it was essential to gather feedback from all teachers and specialists concerning the area of deficit; social skills (Gresham, Sugai & Horner, 2001; Ennis & Swoszowski, 2011), behavior Hawken & Horner, 2003; Hawken, MacLeod, &Rawlings, 2007; Ennis & Swoszowski, 2011), or character development (Positive Action, 2008; Ennis & Swoszowski, 2011).

Step 3: Entrance Criteria

*What data was used to select intervention participants?*

The most current data used was Office discipline referrals (ODR). Other forms of data such as systematic screeners (Lane, Kalberg, &Menzies, 2009; Ennis & Swoszowski, 2011), the Systematic Screening for Behavior (Walker, & Severson, 1992; Ennis & Swoszowski, 2011), student risk scale (Drummond, 1994; Ennis & Swoszowski,

2011), and the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (Goodman, 1997; Ennis &

Swoszowski, 2011). Data was continually reviewed to catch students as needs become

apparent (Ennis & Swoszowski, 2011).

Step 4: Interventionist

*Who would implement interventions?*

Interventionist would have: (a) demonstrated buy-in to the school-wide PBIS

program, (b) have time during the school day to implement, (c) understand the goal of

secondary interventions.  Adults other than teachers may provide support.  This could

also include adults in the community available to offer care (Ennis & Swoszowski, 2011).

Step 5: Interventions Materials

*What materials needed to be developed? What programs need to be purchased?*

The intervention steps would determine the type of materials decided on earlier in

the previous steps.  For consistency and accuracy, an essential part of planning materials

was ensuring that all staff is prepared to implement all steps of the intervention before

beginning (Ennis & Swoszowski, 2011).

Step 6: Reinforcement

*What reinforcement would students receive for participating*?

It was crucial to acknowledge appropriate behaviors and to provide reinforcement

consistently.  The reinforcement should be immediate and was necessary to provide

students with the motivation to adhere to secondary level interventions and improve

behavior (Ennis & Swoszowski, 2011).

Step 7: Evaluation Procedures / Treatment Integrity

*How will data be used to show how well interventions are implemented?*

An important step was the documentation of treatment fidelity data. The method of choice should be cost-effective and easy to implement.  It may be as simple as a checklist and could be completed by a secondary observer, interventionist, or by the student (Ennis & Swoszowski, 2011).

Step 8: Exit Criteria

*How would the termination of the intervention be determined?*

Deciding when the intervention would conclude may be determined by the school end of term, lessons in a program were completed, upon goal attainment, or maintained a criterion.  Data should be utilized when planning and determination before discontinuing (Lane, 2007; (Ennis & Swoszowski, 2011).  The data, and how and when it would end needed to be shared with the group upfront.  Clear communication was essential to promote buy-in and increase intervention effectiveness from all participants (Ennis & Swoszowski, 2011).

Step 9: Follow Up/Referral

*How would students receive interventions afterward (primary, secondary, or tertiary)?*

The decision-making team should discuss and create a plan for every student as they near the end of their intervention.  The plan included progressing to the next tier, where more individualized support could be provided, or the student may be placed at the primary level and monitored for achievement.

Step 10: Planning for the Future

*What were the short-term and long-term plans for Secondary Tier interventions?*

Utilizing interventions in the Tier II model was essential to the overall PBIS three-tiered model. Tier II was critical because it impacted the future placement of the student; Decision-making teams should monitor and evaluate interventions used and ensure fidelity and proper implementation. It was recommended that school utilize only one to three interventions at a time (Crone et al., 2004; Hawken et al., 2009; Ennis & Swoszowski, 2011) and that interventionist gave the adequate intervention time for success (Hawken et al., 2009; Ennis & Swoszowski, 2011).

As school teams try to find solutions to aid in increasing students' positive behaviors, the above guidelines could be used as a resource to ensure all areas of intervention and processes have been covered to ensure success.

**Common Tier II interventions and supports for students.** The PBIS framework was comprised of several core practices or systems that characterized the interventions and supports. Progress and performance of all students should be reviewed on a frequent and regular schedule. Progress monitoring helped to identify student responsiveness, the adequacy of growth trends, and fidelity of support implementation (PBIS: Implementation Blueprint, 2015). The use of quarterly or annual data was used by the team to adjust interventions and supports as needed.

A typical support designed to improve accountability and increase structure (PBIS World book, 2012) for the student was called Check-In/Check-Out (CICO). This support was useful when a student demonstrated low motivation and effort, was exhibiting a behavior problem, or was not participating or taking part in the learning process (PBIS World book, 2012). CICO was a daily report or folder given to the student during the required check-in upon entering the school building (Horner, Sugai, & Anderson, 2010).

CICO created an opportunity for the assigned mentor to welcome and offer support to the student at the beginning of the day. During the school day, the student would check-in with teachers and receive feedback on his or her performance on following expectations during class and in other areas of the school (Horner et al., 2010). At the end of the school day, the student would check-out with the mentor who provided a time of one-to-one communication and reflection. After the meeting, the student would take the daily report home. The school-based behavior support team made a copy of the daily reports and would utilize for data review and decision making (Horner et al., 2010).

Other additional interventions and supports offered in Tier-II included small group or individual reviews of procedures and expectations, check-ins/check-outs (Campbell & Anderson, 2008; 2017), or the development of behavior contracts. There were several interventions and supports which could be utilized at this level. Depending upon the need of the child, additional interventions could be applied. A mentor who could reinforce positive expectations might be a resource support if the student had a need.

In the secondary tier, school officials and Tier II team members would monitor data, which included office referrals and teacher observations to watch for at-risk students. A fundamental element of the design and implementation of tertiary function-based interventions was making decisions based upon data (Dunlap & Fox, 2012). The team developed a system to gather and link academic and behavioral performance data and ways to keep communication current and open. Data monitoring was critical when addressing problem behaviors and identifying function (Dunlap & Fox, 2012).

**Tier III**

Tier III was directed toward students who may be at risk of failure (Horner et al., 2017) to achieve the desired goals of behavior improvement. This tertiary tier provided individualized interactions for students who required higher intensity supports (Horner & Sugai, 2015; Horner, Sugai, & Anderson, 2010), which Tier II efforts could not meet. These supports would be tailored to the individual student and designed to address and focus on underlying problems, which may have led to inappropriate, harmful, or chronic behaviors.

Approximately one to five percent of the students in the school would fall into the Tier III category. This highly intense method of support was intended for less than 5% of a school's population (Horner & Sugai, 2015). Some of these children may have had emotional or behavioral disorders or could be students who needed additional adult help. Tertiary prevention practices focused on assessment, a support plan design and implementation, and management of support by a team that was prepared to meet the needs of the individual student (Horner & Sugai, 2015).

It was usually at this level of support that a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) was performed to ascertain factors that were influencing the student's negative behaviors (Horner et al., 2010). Supports in the territory tier required a significant amount of time and resources because interventions at this level are individualized and designed to meet each student's unique needs. Support mechanisms were graduated to meet the level of the student's needs. As the intensity of student needs grew, so did the intensity of the support. (Sprague & Horner, Second Edition 2012 ).

The support plan had multiple components in order to influence a broader social context around the student, prevent the frequency of problem behaviors, and to make sure the appropriate

behavior was being reinforced (Horner et al., 2010). As with the progress monitoring of secondary supports, frequent progress monitoring was needed along with planned changes if required.

Sprague and Horner (2012) reported that evidence suggested the continued use of School-Wide Positive Behavior Supports (SWPBS) could change the trajectory of at-risk children toward destructive outcomes. Documentation of supports and interventions, along with student data, should be kept and monitored to ensure framework fidelity.

**Common Tier III interventions and supports for students.** Mentors were positive role models who helped to create an open door of communication. Mentors offered encouragement and guidance to students. Mentors should be competent and have the abilities needed to provide support for students. Mentors created expectations, monitored progress, and provided positive feedback (Conner, 2017). Mentors were aware of the mentee's negative behaviors and had background knowledge of past events. A familiarity with triggers or negative behaviors helped the mentor appropriately plan how to meet the social, emotional, and behavioral needs of the student. Daily conversations between the adult mentor and student kept the student on track to meet behavior goals. A team approach was recommended to review relevant data that was monitored and adjusted weekly.

When students failed to complete daily classwork or assignments, have unorganized work habits that impact achievement or create frustrations, or are defiant and oppositional, a behavior contract could be used as a system of support that communicates student responsibilities and expectations (PBIS World Book, 2012). A behavior contract outlined specific behavioral expectations for a given activity, class, or setting. Behavior contracts generally addressed three distinct areas, such as desired behavior, reward, and recording sheet for data tracking (Chandler,

41

Shuster, Jenkins, & Carter, 2015).  The behavior contract worked best when students helped

design the document and gave input on what would help them improve and be a better student.

The behavior contract held the student accountable and helped to provide structure, routine, and

organization (PBIS World book, 2012; Chandler, Shuster, Jenkins, & Carter, 2015).   When

implemented with fidelity, behavior contracts had the power to hold students accountable for

their actions and decrease undesired behaviors in the classroom (Chandler, Shuster, Jenkins, &

Carter, 2015).

Applying evidence-based behavioral interventions offered schools a theoretically sound

and pedagogically valid way to address problematic behaviors occurring in schools (Sugai &

Horner, 2006).  This method had been emulated after a public health outline that sought to

prevent problematic behaviors and offered more concentrated behavioral interventions for

students who were unresponsive to the general positive supports offered in the school setting

(Sugai & Horner, 2006; 2014).

**Summary**

In today's schools, students bring social, emotional, or behavioral problems that could

negatively impact student engagement and interfere with daily learning initiatives.  Positive

Behavior Interventions and Supports was developed to offer a positive alternative to address

behavioral issues compared to "get tough" strategies from the past (Sprague, Horner, 2012).  The

PBIS approach emphasized defining, modeling, and supporting appropriate student actions and

behaviors, which generated encouraging results in schools today (Sprague & Horner, 2012).

In summary, this literature review utilized information from peer-reviewed journals,

individual and collaborative research studies, and PBIS or state-initiated projects designed as

guides to aid in the implementation of PBIS in local districts and schools.  This literature review

discussed exclusionary discipline practices concerning the PBIS model, the conceptual

framework, history, implementation, collective interventions, impact on culture, climate of the

school, and student achievement.  Many factors influenced the success or failure of the PBIS

framework. Therefore, additional research was needed to help examine teachers' perceptions

regarding the effectiveness and implementation of the PBIS framework.

## CHAPTER THREE: Methodology

This chapter described the methodology and procedures used to present the research design, setting and participants, and the selected instruments for data analysis. The purpose of this study was to contribute to the ongoing research of using Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) in the school setting. PBIS endeavored to enhance school environments by creating improved systems and procedures that promoted positive change in student behaviors by utilizing a proactive school-wide staff approach (Bradshaw, Mitchell,& Leaf, 2010). Through the implementation of the PBIS framework, many schools chose to shift to a proactive approach to school-wide discipline. This approach involved (a) explaining teacher expectations, (b) modeling expectations to the students, and (c) rewarding students who met the expectations.

**Research Questions**

This study aimed to identify teachers' perspectives and practices regarding the successes and opportunities for improvement in the implementation of school-wide PBIS as a framework promoting a positive school-wide culture of appropriate behaviors that supported learning. The following questions guided this study:

1. What are teacher perceptions regarding Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) implementation and effectiveness?

2. From a teacher's perspective, What PBIS practices have a positive effect on the implementation and effectiveness of the PBIS framework?

3. From a teacher's perspective, What PBIS practices have a negative effect on the implementation and effectiveness of the PBIS framework?

**Research Participants and Setting for the Study**

After receiving permission for the study from the Institutional Review Board of Carson Newman University, the researcher obtained permission from the local Director of Schools in the county where the research would be conducted.  Receiving permission from the Director of Schools required a presentation of the purpose and process of the study plan.  The Director approved and signed the proposal to conduct the study (see Appendix A).  The researcher used e-mail to contact the participating school principal to discuss details of the study, which gave the researcher the school level permission needed to proceed with the study (see Appendix B).

The research setting for this study was a city in the Middle Tennessee area with a population of 39,376 (US Census Bureau, 2018).  The elementary school in this study was a prekindergarten through 4th-grade school with approximately 330 students.  The school had an instructional staff of 26 classroom teachers and 12 support staff personnel.  The TDOE report card reported that the school demographics for the 2018-2019 school year were 44% Black, 42% White, 13% Hispanic, and 1% Asian. Eighty-one percent of the full-time teachers at the school had been teaching for three or more years.  The participating elementary school was a participant in the first district training cohort offered in the Spring of 2015.  The school was currently in the fourth year of the PBIS implementation framework.

This study required participants with a willingness to share information and strategies used during application.  Six elementary teachers were selected by the school principal to participate in an interview with the researcher, followed by classroom observation, and a collection of artifacts.  The interview consisted of twelve open-ended questions, which helped the researcher to gain knowledge of the teachers' perspectives and practices implemented in the classroom and schoolwide.

**Research Procedures**

The personal interview was the primary tool used for evaluation. Interviews were used to gather individual teacher responses and views, which included information not easily assessed otherwise. During the interview, the researcher made an audio recording of the conversation and took field notes. After each interview, the researcher analyzed the notes and reflected upon the interview comments by recording thoughts in the researcher's journal notebook. The open-ended interview questions were pre-determined before the interview and were designed to focus on the participants' experiences and perceptions. The questions helped the researcher to gain knowledge of the teacher's perspectives and practices implemented in the classroom and schoolwide. Participants were encouraged to expand and elaborate on their experiences to "elicit the essence" of their perspective (Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen, & Walker, 2014).

The researcher used reduction during notetaking to highlight concurring themes and bring "thoughtful attentiveness" into focus and kept a journal for reflection to record thoughts and comments after each interview (Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen, & Walker, 2014). Notes, which were kept in the journal, provided targets and additional views to ponder. The interview helped the researcher gain insight into current teacher perceptions, methods, and personal experiences.

Direct observations were conducted to check for the fidelity of implementation and to compare what was described in interviews to what was exhibited in the classroom. Conducting observations allowed the researcher to monitor and determine the alignment of actions and behaviors stated during the interview with what was observed occurring in the classroom or school setting. These observations gave insight into similarities and differences that existed between the interview and the actual classroom setting.

Artifacts that were created to support PBIS in the district, schoolwide, and the classroom were collected. The acquired artifacts served as documentation of the PBIS framework and intentions of the teachers and school to participate in the PBIS preventative oriented framework with fidelity.

**Data Analysis and Coding**

After the completion of the six interviews, the researcher had each taped audio file transcribed. Following the conclusion of the data collection phase, the data were sorted through open, axial, and selective coding. This process narrowed the data from common themes into categories that demonstrated a better understanding of the perceptions related to the PBIS framework. The researcher looked for patterns or categories in the gathered data. This included examining for repeated ideas or concepts which occurred during the interview. When a pattern or idea was found, it was named and coded. The findings from the study were divided into three categories.

**Trustworthiness**

This educational research study was a qualitative design relying on the phenomenological research design to help interpret experiences. The researcher chose the phenomenological research type because it was commonly used when interpreting the meaning of a participant's experience. Three strategies were used to promote research credibility and dependability. The researcher used member checks to establish trustworthiness by sharing a copy of the interview transcript to each participant. This provided time for study participants to review their statements, edit their comments, or add more information. The member checks process was an avenue by which the researcher had the opportunity to gather participant feedback and gain

additional useful data or further insight to aid in the research study (Ary, Jacobs, Sorenson, &Walker, 2014).

The researcher used peer debriefing by employing peers who held impartial views to review the study, which included the researcher's transcripts, the general methodology of the study, and the final report to enhance credibility. The researcher relied on peer debriefing to look for vague descriptions, errors in data, biases, or assumptions made by the researcher (Debriefing.com, 2018). This included overemphasized or underemphasized points related to the study, which may have impacted the findings.

The researcher used an audit trail to establish a transparent description of the research steps taken from the beginning of the project through to the report findings to establish dependability. This mechanism helped to document how the study was conducted, including what was done, when, and why (Ary, Jacobs, Sorenson, & Walker, 2014). The researcher used personal interviews, observations, and the collection of artifacts to gather perspectives and experiences about PBIS implementations, beliefs, and effectiveness of the program.

**Summary**

This chapter explained the organization of the study by presenting the alignment of research questions, literature review, methodology, data collection, and analysis. The researcher developed specific questions related to the use of the PBIS framework in schools, which were pertinent to today's instructional leader and administrator.

**CHAPTER FOUR: Presentation of the Findings**

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine teacher perspectives concerning the implementations, beliefs, and effectiveness of the Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework.  The information gathered, and theories developed through this research study provided a clearer understanding of the PBIS framework and practices being used to promote improved school culture and climate.  The school that was analyzed began using the PBIS framework during the 2016-2017 school year. The school behavior team received training from the Tennessee Behavior Supports Project (TBSP).  The TBSP was funded through the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE), which comprised three regional support contracts. Vanderbilt University provided regional support for the Middle Tennessee area and held the contract responsible for supporting Response to Intervention² Behavior (RTI2-B) in the participating school. (Supporting RTI2-B in Middle Tennessee Schools, 2020).

The elementary school in this research study currently had approximately 330 students. The school had an instructional staff of 26 classroom teachers and 12 support staff personnel. The Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) report card reported that the school demographics for the 2018-2019 school year were 44% Black, 42% White, 13% Hispanic, and 1% Asian. Eighty-one percent of the full-time teachers at the school have been teaching for three or more years.  The participating elementary school was a participant in the first district training cohort offered in the Spring of 2015.  The school was in the fourth year of the PBIS implementation framework.  For the 2019-2020 school year, the school was one of three schools in the state of Tennessee to win the Gold Level Model of Demonstration school.  This award was developed to acknowledge schools for exemplary implementation of RTI2-B.  This recognition is given to feature the school's efforts of successfully implementing the framework so their

practices can serve as models across the state (Supporting RTI2-B in Middle Tennessee Schools, 2020).

**Methodology**

The study involved the collection of data from six elementary teacher participants through open-ended interviews. The researcher used twelve interview questions. The teacher participants were also observed in their classroom settings, while field notes were taken. The researcher collected artifacts used in the PBIS framework from the participants.

The school administrator assisted in the selection of instructional leaders to participate in the interview and observational part of the study. Six participants were selected from an instructional staff of twenty-four. The selection of participants by the school administrator was based on choosing instructional leaders who had demonstrated buy-in and had experience using the expectations and procedures of the PBIS framework. The average years in the role of an instructional leader for the participants was 5.3 years. The average years for the teacher participant at the current school in the study was 4.3 years (see Table 4.1).

**Table 4.1**

*Demographics of Interview and Observation Participants*

| Assigned Number | Years as an Instructional Leader | Years at this school | Role |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 4 | 4 | Guidance Counselor |
| 2 | 4 | 4 | Music Teacher |
| 3 | 3 | 3 | Kindergarten Teacher |
| 4 | 6 | 5 | 4th Grade Teacher |
| 5 | 10 | 7 | Librarian |
| 6 | 5 | 3 | Kindergarten Teacher |

**Research Questions**

The purpose of this dissertation was to identify teachers' perspectives and practices regarding the successes and opportunities for improvement in the implementation of schoolwide PBIS to promote a positive schoolwide culture of appropriate behaviors that support learning. The following questions guided this study:

1. What are teacher perceptions regarding Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) implementation and effectiveness?

2. From a teacher's perspective, What PBIS practices have a positive effect on the implementation and effectiveness of the PBIS framework?

3. From a teacher's perspective, What PBIS practices have a negative impact on the implementation and effectiveness of the PBIS framework?

**Data Collection Process**

The researcher utilized a twelve-question interview to gather teacher perspectives connected to the Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework. The interview questions were designed to help answer the research questions. When responding to questions, teachers were asked to reflect on student behaviors and intervention processes currently being utilized during their daily routines. All teachers were asked the same questions during the interview process. Interview sessions were recorded on an audio device then transcribed for each interview.

The researcher conducted member checks to ensure the correct understandings of the responses given by the participants. The researcher shared a copy of the interview transcript with each participant so they could review their statements, edit their comments, or add more

information.  By gathering participant feedback, the researcher gained additional useful data and insight.

The questions addressing the first research question asked participants to recall and discuss the PBIS training process and implementation.  These questions included timeframes, trainings, aspects of the program, and actual usage and practical applications of the framework during the school day.  The questions designed to help answer the second research question focused on school culture and climate, and any impacts which might inhibit individual student social or behavioral success.  Additional questions asked during the interview were describing preparations, relationships, artifacts, and the increase or decrease in learning opportunities.

Direct observations were conducted to check for the fidelity of implementation and to compare what was described in the interviews to what was exhibited in the classroom. Conducting observations allowed the researcher to monitor and determine the alignment of actions and behaviors stated during the interview with what was observed occurring in the classroom or school setting.  These observations gave insight into similarities and differences that existed between the interview and the actual classroom setting.

Artifacts designed to support PBIS expectations and practices which were used schoolwide and in the individual teacher classrooms were collected.  The acquired artifacts served as documentation of the PBIS framework and intentions of the teachers and school to participate in the PBIS preventative oriented framework with fidelity.

**Study Findings**

After completing the data collection phase, the data were sorted through open, axial, and selective coding.  This process narrowed the data from common themes into categories that

demonstrated a better understanding of the perceptions related to the PBIS framework.  The

findings from the study coded into three categories (see Figures 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3).

**Figure 4.1**

Coding Process for Research Question 1

**Figure 4.2**

*Coding Process for Research Question 2*

| Raw Data | Open Coding | Axial Coding | Selective Coding |
|---|---|---|---|

"It doesn't help just the one getting the reward, it gets all the others back on task"

"We see what is working and we try to make that more of a part of everyday"

"Students are motivated to make good choices"

Rewards

Supports

Outcomes

Motivations

Reward Positive Behaviors

"Posters list school-wide Behavioral Expectations for every area of the building"

"Displays"

"Voice-O-Meter"

"Videos"

"Common Lesson Plans"

Informed Practices

Behavior Expectations Posters

Monthly Rewards

Reminder Displays

Supports Provided to Help Students with Positive Decision Making

Positive Practices used for PBIS Implementation Success

"We do Breaks are Better"

"Check-In / Check-Out"

"Mentoring"

"Small group counseling sessions are offered and created to match student needs"

"We have a school behavior team"

"Reminds me to watch for students who need a reward"

"Has helped me to create a more positive environment"

Encouragement

Mentoring

Acknowledge Behaviors

Individualize Interventions

Builds Positive School Relationships

**Figure 4.3**

*Coding Process for Research Question 3*

| Raw Data | Open Coding | Axial Coding | Selective Coding |
|---|---|---|---|

"What do you do with the teachers who do not participate or have buy-in"

"To be really explicit in what it looks like with students versus what it looks like on paper"

"I wish I would have gotten more training"

"Find what works quicker to catch and correct behaviors"

"I was confused with the Office Discipline Referral process"

"Having a plan sooner for the Tier 2 and Tier 3 students would have helped me"

Explicit Training

Professional Development

Need Larger Spectrum of Reactions to Misbehaviors

Insufficient Initial Training

Opportunities for Improvement to the PBIS Framework

"Trying to regulate my ticket giving"

"It can be difficult to find what positive reinforcers work for kids"

"Kids feel like they need to ask for tickets"

"We try to make sure students don't abuse the ticket system"

Extrinsic Motivations

Behavior Management

Response to Preventative Procedures

"Sometimes, I wish there were consequences"

"It cannot be all positive"

"We are training students for a world that does not exist"

Soft on Behaviors

Lasting Behavioral Change

Lack of Consequences for Problem Behaviors

**Perception of Implementation and Effectiveness**

The interview responses, observations of classroom interactions, and collection of artifacts were used to answer research question one: What are teacher perceptions regarding Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) implementation and effectiveness? The following themes developed through data analysis:

1. Increased Accountability

2. Empowers Students

3. Increases Communication and Collaboration

**Increased accountability.** Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) was intended to create a culture of conformity and support within the school. In an ever-increasing climate of accountability, improving student behaviors were paramount for maximizing student engagement and focus. Upon analyzing participant responses, five of the six participants mentioned the PBIS school team's trainings, which established consistent school expectations and schoolwide initiatives for both faculty and students. All members of the school body were held to a higher standard of accountability for their behaviors and actions.

Participant 1 stated, "Our school has common expectations no matter where the students are they know what is expected." A later discussion with Participant 1 brought up the school's behavior matrix, which was designed so all students could be taught appropriate and acceptable school behaviors. During the observation, the researcher received a copy of the school's behavior matrix and viewed the voice-o-meter chart and school expectations poster hanging on the wall in the classroom. Once students know the expectations, they are accountable for following the guidelines. Participant 1 also stated, "I think PBIS gives the teachers a sense of

responsibility and ownership in how they handle things.  The responsibility is back to the teacher to do what you have set up should be the protocol."

Participant 2 reported how the students "knew exactly what the rules were and could explain them back" to an adult or another student in the building.  This shared understanding of the school's expectations was thought to help provide accountability for students to abide by the known correct behaviors.  According to Participant 3, "The consistency between the classrooms, so when students were in different areas of the school or visiting the class next door, the accountability remains the same."  The researcher noted during an observation that the voice-o-meter was hanging on the wall and referred to often by the teacher.

Participant 5 said that because of the work and training provided by the behavior team, "the teachers and students were all on the same page because the expectations were the same throughout the school."  The participant further reported, "We have seen positive growth because expectations are clear."  Participant 6 elaborated on the expectations, "we have a schoolwide understanding which is used from one school year to the next, creates an understanding where everyone is on the same page, and this offers consistency from year to year."

The researcher noted that posters with school expectations were hanging in the hallways and positioned in prominent places throughout the school, such as the cafeteria, bathrooms, and bus room.  This visual example was an additional reminder for students to be accountable for the behavior expectations adopted by the school.

**Empowers students.** Teachers believed that because their school participated in the PBIS program, taught positive behavioral traits, how to handle difficult situations before they occurred, that the students gained a better understanding of how to make good choices at school. Teachers verbalized how this type of front loading of behavioral instruction increased the

students' correct behavior choices.  Participant 2 emphasized the importance of building positive

adult to student relationships at school, "Someone rooting for them, so they feel they have an

adult at school who is on their side."  Participant 3 reported how all teachers have tickets that

they can give to any student at any time for following the school's behavior expectations.  "They

can give students tickets anytime they are ready, safe, or kind."  Participant 4 discussed the ticket

reward system and said, "Their eyes light up when they get a ticket; they really just take

ownership. Just to be noticed, it feels good. It feels good to be praised."

Participant 5 discussed the empowerment the students felt because they knew the

expectations that the teachers and school adults had for them and described how "Kids knew

automatically and were able to pick up what they were expected to do, and it was wonderful and

made a change instantly."  The participant further reported, "They know the expectations. It is

easy to reward kids for being ready, safe, and kind because we only have those three categories.

It is very easy to log every good behavior they exhibit into one of those."

Participant 6 explained how, "The kids have a choice, rarely do I say that you have to do

this right now.  They are given a choice of what they want to do or when they want to do it."

After detailing student choice, the participant then discussed the ticket reward system.  "Once I

give that one positive ticket, the others see what they are doing and follow suit.  And I think it

spreads when I am attentive enough to catch it."

The researcher noted during the observations how the students were empowered to make

good decisions in the classrooms by knowing the school expectations.  The researcher noted how

excited a student was when his teacher gave him a ticket for "being ready" with his materials and

book.

**Increased communication and collaboration.** Many teachers in this primary education community felt a sense of personal responsibility as they discuss their students' strengths and areas for improvement. Many of the teachers acknowledged the increased communication and open discussions to address a student's needs that the PBIS framework had provided. Participant 1 told, "It has created a universality across our school. It allows us to meet the needs of all kids, not just the ones we know need extra supports." As the participant recounted communication, this statement was added, "We continually work on staff buy-in, when you're a collaborative team, your part of a collaborative staff. Teachers work with you and are teachable and willing to learn more."

Participant 2 specified, "I know I have tools that I can always go back to or something to try. It has also helped me with the students who show more behaviors that I have something to pull from." The participant acknowledged increased communications with students, "There is more communication. It helps me talk to those who don't quite understand rules, but they understand ready, safe, and kind so I can always talk with them." Participant 3 asserted, "I think for our kids', consistency is very important because they might not have consistency at home, so it is giving them that consistency at school. Knowing that teachers are on the same page helps them to feel secure."

Participant 5 declared, "We are all working together; we do not need to worry about what someone else is doing in their classroom because I know they are expecting the same things I am." Participant 6 recounted, "Once I give that one positive ticket, the others see what they are doing and follow suit. And I think it spreads when I am attentive enough to catch it." Several components of collaboration and communication were noted during the observation phase of the study.

The researcher observed collaboration from teacher to teacher during the observations and among teachers and students in the classrooms. The artifacts gathered to support increased communication and collaboration were documents created by the schoolteachers to complement each other and each other's classes. It was called "My Compli-mat", each teacher has a bright colored sheet of paper outside of their door, and others in the building are encouraged to come by and write something kind or encouraging on a colleague's mat.

**Positive Impact on Implementation and Effectiveness**

The interview responses, observations of classroom interactions, and collection of artifacts from the participants led to the development of the second category, which answered the research question: From a teacher's perspective, What PBIS practices have a positive effect on the implementation and effectiveness of the PBIS framework? The following themes developed through data analysis:

1. Rewarding Positive Behaviors

2. Supports Provided to Help Students with Positive Decision Making

3. Builds Positive School Relationships

**Reward positive behaviors.** Rewarding students for making good behavior choices was a common theme throughout the interviews. The researcher also noticed student rewards being given during the classroom observation times. Participant 1 indicated, "We do use tickets schoolwide. Anytime students are exhibiting positive behavior, they get a ticket as a reward." Participant 3 described how all of the teachers and staff that they could give to students, "Any time they are being ready, being safe, or being kind. I remind them that we get to spend our tickets at the end of every week or remind them they can save up for the larger incentives."

Participant 4 discussed how students were rewarded based on wanted behaviors,

"Whenever we give it to them, we want them to be able to recognize what they were given the ticket for. It is thanking them for being ready and having materials out and being ready when I'm ready." The teacher further reported, "We recently started to document what they spend their tickets on. It is a good source because I can go back and see what motivates students based on how they spent their tickets." The participant brought attention to motivations to support wanted outcomes, "I find one who is doing right and give a reward, so instead of having to say something, they get it on their own. The participant went on to add, "You compliment the child or draw attention to their good behavior."

Participant 5 made a thoughtful reflection when she said, "There are some kids that aren't going to fit the general mold, figuring out who that is and what we can do instead." The participant further reported, "We have amazing question and answer sessions for faculty to come with questions. How can I fix this? Can I change this? What's working for someone else?" The participant elaborated on the rewards system designed for use at the school, "We have color-coded tickets. Kids are given tickets when we witness them being ready, safe, or kind. It can be anything, and we are really encouraged to not only do kids in our classroom." The participant explained, "We are heavy at the beginning of the year because kids are motivated by good choices. They have classroom treats and things weekly to spend their tickets on, or they can save them to buy the big schoolwide reward." Participant 6 specified how positive behavior can be rewarded,

> I carry my tickets on me all the time, and so anywhere we go, they see my tickets with me. We have a classroom store where they can spend their tickets. They like seeing what other people get and comparing how many they have and things like that. We do

not really have any issues with tickets; it just takes more time and training at the

beginning of school."

The researcher noticed during the observations in the classrooms that teachers gave the rewards

to emphasize positive behavior choices being made by the student. It was given to reinforce the

wanted behavior. The researcher noted during the classroom observations that students were

rewarded with tickets.  The researcher was given a "paws-itivity ticket" as an artifact for the

research study.  The school mascot was a tiger, so the name of the ticket was a play on words

using the combination of paws and positivity.

**Supports provided to help students with positive decision making.** Many of the

students who attended school were coming unprepared with the social and emotional skills

needed to be successful.  Study participants discussed the various ways they used the PBIS

framework and artifacts to teach and reinforce specific actions that align with the school

behavior matrix. During the observations, the researcher took pictures and noted examples that

included posters displayed in the classrooms and hallways, common lesson plans, and monthly

reward reminders posted around the school.  The photos the researcher took of the artifacts were

printed to be used as examples of the ways informed practices were displayed in the school to

help students with positive decision making.  Videos were created by the school behavior team to

be shown at the beginning of the school year and after holiday breaks as a refresher to remind

students of the behavior expectations.  Participant 1 reiterated the importance of common

expectations used to support learners,

[PBIS] has created a common universality across our school with common expectations.

It is laid out simple with lesson plans tied to the behavior matrix.  Every classroom

teacher has lesson plans created by the behavior team that they go over.  We encourage it every

nine weeks, but if they need it more often, refresh those as needed.

The participant discussed professional development, which prepared the faculty to use best PBIS

practices, "We all went through the training together for implementation, we spent an entire day,

each member of the team took a section and presented to the staff." The participant discussed

how each year the trainings were designed to meet current staff needs,  "We do not do it as in-

depth as we did the first year, but every year on one of the back-to-school days, either a half-day

or whole day is dedicated to re-teaching."

Participant 2 elaborated on processes in place at the school to support student decision-

making skills, "We have lessons that are broken down into different areas of the school that build

a framework for us to teach our own RTI-B lessons."  The participant further explained, "We

have flowcharts of exactly what behaviors warrant classroom management versus office

managed.  The flowchart walks us through the process. Also, definitions that break down the

actions of those behaviors and causes."  The participant detailed how essential visuals and

techniques are in the classroom when working with students.  The participant stated, "We do

videos that walks them through the rules of my classroom.  I have a poster that visually reminds

them."

Participant 3 underscored the importance of using supports, "I use prompts, and we had

videos at the beginning of the year to help us remember. Now, I just use visual cues.  We also

have signs and posters hanging up." Participant 5 explained some of the supports used with

students in the classroom,

> We have clear expectations that we go through with our whole student body. Ready.
>
> Safe. Kind.  That is evident throughout the building.  I have a whole bunch of visual

reminders. In here, I have a checkmark symbol. They know that it means to check your

body and check your space. That means you are ready, safe, and kind. They know how

to stand two feet, one square, and be ready to exit. They know about the voice-o-meter,

they know the different voice levels, so they can respond appropriately. I think the more

visual reminders that I can use with them keeps the class flow going. I do not have to

stop and interrupt to say, "Remember the rules, let us get back on track."

Participant 6 detailed the staffs' dedication to provide the supports the students need, "At the

beginning of the year, we all sit down as a faculty and staff and really look at what this looks like

at our school." The participant indicated an optimistic mindset when discussing ways to help

support students in making good behavior choices, "It is always a learning process, and each

year we learn and grow from it."

**Builds positive school relationships.** In a positive school climate, students were more

likely to develop the social, emotional, and behavioral skills they needed to become successful

both in school and life. Participant 1 discussed how teachers are in tune with student needs,

"Knowing when your students need a break and prompting them, we do 'Breaks are Better.'"

The participant explained the process, "You realize a student is starting to get escalated; you

prompt them to take a break before a behavior issue happens and give them time to cool down

and work through it." The participant further elaborated on the positive school relationships,

Our behavior team is a big support for itself. We meet monthly to look at the data and

figure if there is anything we need to do differently. That is how we ended up changing

our cafeteria expectations. We talk if changes need to be made. We had noticed that the

cafeteria is where we were having a lot of behavior issues. We, as the RTI2-B team,

wrote the cafeteria lesson plans, but we were not the ones in there implementing those.

The educational assistants were responsible in there. So, when we were looking to

change the expectations, we got their input. What behaviors were they having the most

issues with, and what gives them the most trouble? We worked to get staff buy-in from

them.

The participant went on to discuss how the PBIS program had impacted building relationships

among the staff, "I think the teachers who have buy-in to RTI2-B it strengthens the relationships.

Our teachers give each other tickets. They have created a menu where teachers can spend their

tickets on things like jeans passes." The participant elaborated, "I think it strengthens

relationships between teachers and students because we do encourage teachers to build those

relationships with their kids."

Participant 2 explained supports commonly used in the school, "All expectations have

helped, having those kids' check-in and check-out helps to build relationships, and they feel like

they have someone they can go to at school. Some have mentorship too; I have seen the positive

side of that." Participant 4 stated, "Mutual trust and respect, I know they know I care about

them." Participant 5 expounded upon how positive relationships were developed between staff

and students,

We were able to create a culture in our school, a positive school culture, not only for

students but also for teachers because we were all on the same page and because all our

expectations were the same. Kids who would normally slip through the cracks, with the

positive feedback they were receiving immediately, we were able almost to stop some

behaviors because we had positive reinforcement. One of the most positive things I have

seen outside of our student behavior is a child who has difficulties with something has a

connection with one person. We see what is working with that one person, and we can

65

make that behavior something that is more regular throughout their entire day with all the

other adults.  We are all working together.

 Participant 6 stated the importance of building individual relationships, "Tweaking it to what

your kids need year-to-year, it is not set in stone.  We have got to learn how to tweak it for each

of the kids."  It was evident to the researcher that the participants cared about their students and

wanted each child to have the skills needed to achieve success in school.

During the classroom observations, the researcher noted the use of the check-in and

check-out system utilized by the school as a support.  The researcher received a copy to be used

as an artifact for the study.

**Negative Impact on Implementation and Effectiveness**

The interview responses, observations of classroom interactions, and collection of

artifacts from participants led to the development of this category, which answered the third

research question: From a teacher's perspective, What PBIS practices have a negative impact on

the implementation and effectiveness of the PBIS framework?  The following themes developed

through the data analysis:

1. Insufficient Initial Training

2. Response to Preventative Procedures

3. Lack of Consequences for Problem Behaviors

**Insufficient Initial Training.**  The implementation of the PBIS framework was different

for every school.  The behavior team members received information and training.  Then the team

established a plan for schoolwide implementation for the faculty and staff. It depended on the

school's needs as to how the aspects of the framework were introduced.  Participant 1 discussed

a negative aspect of PBIS implementation, "You are always going to have that one or two

teachers in the building that just does not quite buy-in or do not do it exactly as they are supposed to." During the interview, the participant thought back about the first year's training. The participant recounted, "The first year, it was trial and error. The second-year, we thought about what worked and did not. We changed things. It is a learn as you go process and depends upon your school."

Participant 2 said, "Occasionally, the path to get the high behavior students exactly what they need is a bit long." The participant thought about what would have helped to implement the framework better. The participant stated, "To be really explicit in what it looks like with students versus what it looks like on paper." Participant 3 stated, "I was confused with the Office Discipline Referral system. I needed more clarification and training on that." When expressing how the implementation could have been improved, participant 4 indicated, "The school having a plan for our more needy Tier 2 and Tier 3 kids earlier on. We might have been able to catch some of the behaviors that are very troublesome quicker."

Participant 5 pointed out how the lack of timely training hindered their ability to help students,

> We did not have Tier 3 training until our third year in, we were frustrated because we wanted to help, but we just did not have the knowledge. If we could have helped our kids faster, we would have felt more that we were making a difference.

The researcher received a copy of the school Office Discipline Referral Form and the Behavior Documentation form to use as an artifact for the research study.

**Response to preventative procedures.** Identifying behaviors and developing methods to help students improve their actions could be a daunting task. Participant 1 acknowledged a downside to the ticket reward system,

67

At times, students will do things for the reward of a ticket. So, there is a aren't you going

to give me a ticket mentality that sometimes comes with it. But, that also goes back to

the teaching of it. You do what is right because it is right.

Participant 3 explained, "Sometimes, kids feel like they need to ask for tickets. It is hard for me

to keep up with who I have given tickets to and not given tickets to. So, just trying to regulate

my ticket giving." Participant 1 reported a reduction in some of the negative behaviors but found

that not all interventions work for every child, "I have used the check-in and check-out for some

of my students who fell into tier 2 based on the screener, and that has helped. But, it does not

always help everyone."

Participant 4 talked about the current ticket reward system and acknowledged, "It does

not affect all kids, some aren't swayed by tickets. It is difficult to find things that work for those

kids. I think that is probably the biggest negative some kids do not respond to the ticket system."

The researcher noted three of the participants discussed the task of trying to design supports and

interventions to meet the students' needs could be challenging.

During the observation of a classroom, the researcher noted how one teacher explained

that she was having trouble making sure all of the students received the appropriate amount of

tickets each week, so a plan was developed to glue pocket charts to the wall for the students to

store their tickets. This method allowed the teacher to do a quick visual check to see who had

tickets and who needed tickets. The researcher took a photo of the pocket chart display on the

wall to use as an artifact for the study.

**Lack of consequences for problem behaviors.** Each school establishes components of

the framework according to the goals and expectations of the administration, school team, and

stakeholders. One aspect that three of the participants felt was missing was what to do when a

student with a problem behavior is unresponsive to the preventative schoolwide and classroom-wide procedures, and there are no consequences for the behaviors.  Participant 3 indicated the need for significances, "Sometimes, I wish there were more consequences when it comes to the bad behavior.  I do not really know what that would look like.  Sometimes, it feels like there really is not a consequence for bad behavior."

Participant 4 spoke of the need for a balance, "It cannot be all positive.  So, I do think that finding appropriate punishment is okay too."  When asked if there were any additional thoughts to add to the interview, participant 6 added, "It would be not having consequences.  If they are not held accountable, that is just not how life is."  Three out of the six participants' perceptions were that they were not preparing children for the real world by providing rewards for good behaviors but no consequences for bad behavior.  This figure represents 50% or half of the participants who contributed to the study.

The researcher used the Office Discipline Referral Form artifact to note the stages of Problem Behaviors.  The categories on the form are staff-managed, office-managed, and administrative decisions.  The researcher collected this document as part of the research study.

**Summary**

The fourth chapter presented the findings of the interviews, observations, and a collection of artifacts from the participants.  The purpose of this qualitative study was to discover teacher perceptions regarding Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) implementation and effectiveness.  Research data was collected from an elementary school in Middle Tennessee.

Data collected from participants were analyzed, and themes emerged.  The implementation and effectiveness of the PBIS framework produced accountability for staff and students, empowered students to make the right choices, and increased communication between

adults and students at school.  Positive effects from the PBIS framework which impacted the implementation and effectiveness of the program was seen in the way students were motivated to make good choices, the reminders being reinforced by adults, and the positive relationships being built into the school culture.  PBIS practices that teachers believed offered opportunities for improvement included the need for improved training and professional development, preventative procedures, and the need for consequences for negative behaviors.

Chapter 5 provides conclusions, implications, and recommendations for future studies.

**CHAPTER FIVE: Conclusions, Implications, and Recommendations**

This chapter was separated into four sections to address the findings of this study. The first section provided a summary of the study. The second section discussed the findings of the study and how they helped to answer the research questions. The third section examined the conclusions that could be made from an analysis of the literature and data gained through this study. The fourth section of the study suggested recommendations for future research to understand and further the implementation and effectiveness of the Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports framework schoolwide.

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the practices and expectations perceived by teachers to be the most effective in helping students when using the Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework. PBIS was gaining more popularity in schools with each passing year. As of 2018, more than 28,000 schools in the United States were using the PBIS behavioral management system (National Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, 2019).

PBIS utilized a proactive approach to teach and train students on how to use positive behavior strategies in the same way other subjects are taught during the school day. George Sugai (2014), a University of Connecticut professor of special education who studies Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports, stated, "You have got to focus on teaching social skills just like you would academics." Schools chose to utilize this framework as a preventative approach to improve and promote positive behaviors. The framework focused on the prevention of unwanted behaviors. It did not use traditional forms of punishment, such as detentions, suspensions, or expulsions.

**Summary of the Study**

The research questions were answered using interviews, observations, and artifacts. These three data sources were used to increase the trustworthiness of the research findings. The personal interview was the primary tool used for evaluation. During the interview, the researcher made an audio recording of the conversation and took field notes. Following each interview, the researcher analyzed the notes and reflected upon the interview comments.

The second source of data came from observations. The observations allowed the researcher to observe for the fidelity of implementation and to determine if what was said in the interview aligned with the actions and behaviors observed in the classroom or school setting. Observations gave an insight into similarities and differences that may have existed.

The final data point was the collection of artifacts that were used to serve as documentation of the PBIS framework and intentions of the teachers and school to participate with fidelity.

To establish trustworthiness, the researcher utilized member checks, peer debriefings, and an audit trail was kept throughout the study. A comprehensive analysis of the data was conducted. The themes that emerged were presented in the Study Findings section of Chapter Four.

**Research Questions**

This study was aimed at identifying teachers' perspectives and practices regarding the successes and opportunities for improvement in the implementation of schoolwide PBIS as a framework to promote a positive schoolwide culture of appropriate behaviors that support learning. The following questions guided this study:

1. What are teacher perceptions regarding Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) implementation and effectiveness?

2. From a teacher's perspective, What PBIS practices have a positive effect on the implementation and effectiveness of the PBIS framework?

3. From a teacher's perspective, What PBIS practices have a negative effect on the implementation and effectiveness of the PBIS framework?

## Findings

**Teacher perceptions regarding implementation and effectiveness.** In answering the first question, the data revealed that the effectiveness of implementation was closely tied to increased accountability for both the teaching staff and students at the school, the empowerment of students to have the knowledge they needed to make better choices and the increased communication between teachers to teachers and teachers to students. These three themes aided in ensuring implementation and effectiveness.

*Increases accountability.* Each day educators had the opportunity to create a learning environment with a positive culture where teachers wanted to come and deliver instruction, and students wanted to come and learn. Participants reported increased accountability for both the teachers and students had been developed through the implementation of the PBIS framework.

The teachers' perceptions were that by using the PBIS evidence-based practices, a schoolwide understanding had been established. Participant 1 expressed, "[PBIS] has created a universality across our school with common expectations. Participant 2 acknowledged," Having the same rules for the whole school helps me in my management." Participant 3 noted the consistency between classrooms.

Participant 5 reported, "We were able to create a positive culture in our school."

Teachers felt that the PBIS framework had established a foundation for appropriate behaviors, which helped to create a more positive school culture. The significance of increasing accountability within the school meant that all stakeholders had the responsibility of using the framework with fidelity. Adults played a significant role in ensuring that agreed-upon systems are being followed with fidelity. It was started by making connections, reliable, and overlapping interactions among all members of the school community (Shafer, 2018). This commitment, by all stakeholders, ensures the degree of appropriate practice is being followed, it also contributed to laying the foundation for improvements in school culture.

*Empowers students.* The PBIS framework was designed to promote positive behaviors. An essential part of this step required teachers to reward good behaviors and recognize students' efforts to make good choices. Participant 4 talked about when the students are rewarded; they are receiving immediate feedback and "that sense of "right" for whatever they have done. "Participant 1 said, "No matter where the students are, they know what is expected. This comment shows the confidence the teacher had in the students' understanding of the behavior expectations and knowing how to make good behavior choices.

Because all the students received Tier I training, they gained the knowledge needed through direct instruction to make the right behavior choices. Participant 5 stated," Kids knew and automatically were able to pick up what they were expected to do, and it was wonderful." The empirical evidence is strong on the impact of PBIS at the universal level (Lewis, McIntosh, Simonsen, Mitchell, & Hatton, 2017).

*Increases communication and collaboration.* The results of the data indicated that effective communication instilled more productive interactions between the teachers and

students, as well as among the teachers.  Participant 1 reported, "This year, our teachers have a better understanding of where the students are coming from and the traumas they are coming in with and knowing how to address those through the behavior process."  Participant 6 indicated that if additional student supports were needed, they would choose "Personnel, people in the building, a person they know."  When asked how using PBIS had affected the relationships from teachers to teachers, Participant 6 declared, "We work very well together; we are very close."  PBIS "has helped to build stronger relationships" between teachers and students.

The data demonstrated the importance of providing clear and concise communications within the school.  Teachers required support as they strived to promote positive behaviors and manage their classroom and school duties.

**Practices that had a positive impact on implementation and effectiveness.**  In answering the second question, the research data revealed three practices that have had a positive impact on the implementation and effectiveness of the PBIS framework.  Teachers shared their perspectives on the use of positive reinforcements for behaviors, applying informed practices to help students make good choices, and building positive school relationships.

*Reinforcement of positive behaviors.*  Throughout this research study, participants had a chance to describe their perspectives of effective practices, which they perceived to increase positive behaviors.  Participant 3 discussed how being a part of the PBIS training had helped to change her mindset toward behaviors, "I focus more on the positive behaviors than the negative."  Participant 4 stated, "It does not just help the ones being rewarded, it gets all of the other students back on track."

The significance of this data pointed to the importance of continually reinforcing positive behaviors once students have been taught how to behave positively.  An important factor for

schools when establishing and implementing was the system of rewards and a continuum of strategies to acknowledge appropriate behavior (Simonson, Sugai, & Negron, 2008).

***Informed practices to help students make good choices.*** In an Education and Supports article (2020), the realization that teachers need the autonomy to make decisions based on a student's needs was confirmed through a collection of research studies reviews. The article discussed how though fidelity was critical to the outcomes, many times; student success was dependent upon how well the intervention was tailored to the need and context of the situation.

The school in the study had designed interventions to help students who may have needed extra time to review the school behavior expectations or needed time to discuss making better behavior decisions. Participant 1 shared, "We offer check-in and check-out, breaks are better, adult mentoring, and small group counseling." Participant 6 reported, "We have a schoolwide understanding; everyone is on the same page. It is consistent from year to year, so it is not confusing for the kids."

The meaning which was gained from the teacher data is the need for both fidelity and flexibility. We are humans working with humans, and not every situation can be accounted for on paper. So, while adhering to the designed framework, teachers also needed the flexibility to make changes and use a common-sense approach when needed.

***Builds positive school relationships.*** One of the most critical aspects of teaching could be establishing and building positive school relationships with students. As teachers were striving to develop trust with their students, a partnership of cooperation began to develop (PBIS Rewards, 2020). This connection helped to improve student confidence and increased student achievement. Participant 5 replied, "I feel like in our school, especially with the work we have done, we have seen starting in Tier I, a positive culture in our school not only for students but

also for teachers." Participant 6 stated, "It has been really good for our kids to have positiveness. It builds them up. Sometimes, we see kids that do not want to go home because they feel loved here." The participant continued as she spoke about how PBIS had made an impact in the teacher-student relationship, "It has helped to build a stronger relationship. It helps me focus on the ones who are always good and can get left out because they always go with the flow."

**Practices that have a negative impact.** The meaning of this data pointed to the importance of building and maintaining strong relationships within the school culture. The school using the PBIS framework wanted to provide the opportunity for educators to develop relationships that sought to build others up and look for the positive in each student every day.

In answering the third question, the data revealed practices that have had a negative effect on the implementation and effectiveness of the PBIS framework were the necessity for improved training before the initial implementation, the need for improved responses being used as preventative measures, and a need for consequences to address problem behaviors. These three categories demonstrated the gaps in the framework in which teachers felt should be addressed in order to improve overall schoolwide outcomes.

*Insufficient initial training.* The data from teacher interviews and observations produced a wide range of perceptions regarding the PBIS framework. As teachers discussed areas that could be improved, comments reflected the need for more specific training and the fine-tuning of some of the interventions. Participant 1 reported, "You are always going to have one or two teachers in the building that just do not quite buy-in or do not do it exactly as they are supposed to." Participant 2 discussed the misunderstandings which were had at the beginning of the implementation and how this could have been improved by "being really explicit in what it looks like with students versus what it looks like on paper." One of the participants spoke of the

frustrations that came with only being able to utilize one level of interventions per year. Participant 5 stated, "We did not have the Tier 3 training until our third year. We were frustrated because we wanted to help, but we just did not have that knowledge." The teachers in the interview felt that they would have been able to implement support quicker if the information had been taught sooner in the trainings.

The significance of this point revealed that the professional development process, requiring three full years for implementation, maybe too long of a process. Once teachers were trained in the framework, and students were identified, teachers wanted to have the additional supports needed as students proved they required more interventions and helps than Tier I offered in the primary stage. The data gathered from the teachers indicated the need for both improved training and the development of more interventions and supports, which would be available for use as the need occurred.

***Response to preventative procedures.*** Because the school mascot was a tiger, the primary reward system used in the school were the "Paws-itivity tickets. The tickets were small 2-inch by 4-inch tickets, which had a place for the teacher's name who was awarding the ticket and the student's name who was the recipient. These tickets could be used weekly for small classroom purchases such as a bookmark, pencil, extra recess time, or items at the school store. Students could choose to save their tickets to make larger purchases, such as lunch with the principal or to be principal for the day. Delio (2008) wanted teachers to recognize that there are two vital components to the PBIS framework; one is establishing the rules; the second is to reward students for adhering to the rules.

Five out of six teachers interviewed liked using the tickets as a reward system but stated that they sometimes struggled with some aspect of the ticket reward system. Participant 1 stated,

"We just try to make sure people do not abuse the ticket system." Participant 2 said, "I am thinking mostly of Tier 3; those students are further along in the process and need to have different structures to help them."

*Lack of consequences for problem behaviors.* The data revealed the need for consequences for negative behaviors. Three participants out of six questioned what to do when a student with a problem behavior is unresponsive to the preventative schoolwide and classroom-wide procedures, and there are no consequences for the behaviors. Participant 6 acknowledged, "[Students] learn what they can do and get away with because there are no consequences for their actions. They are not held accountable, and that is just not how life is." The aspects which made PBIS flexible enough to work with all schools were the Behavior team's ability to craft and mold the framework to fit with what the stakeholders felt was needed and matched the goals and purpose of the school. It was the responsibility of each team to design a predictable consequence system for behavior infractions.

The meaning of this data indicated that participants needed to increase their communication with their school's Behavior Team. Teachers and staff did have an established protocol within the framework to request collaborative discussions about consequences with their behavior team. The PBIS framework was adaptable and could be changed to meet the needs of individual learners or to improve outcomes as needed.

## Conclusions

**Increased accountability.** The findings of this study revealed common procedures and practices used by the school team to implement the PBIS framework with effectiveness. The findings revealed that by utilizing schoolwide behavior initiatives, the accountability for both the

teachers and students increased.  The increase in accountability helped to support consistency and expectations within the school.

**Empowers students.**  The implementation of recognizing wanted behavior and offering rewards helped to empower students to make good behavior choices.  Students learned the routines and were encouraged through positive reinforcements and rewards.  Teachers were aware that as they acknowledged good student behaviors, students tended to take pride in making good choices and wanted to continue and grow in their decision-making skills.

**Increases collaboration and communication.**  Another factor found to be essential was the increase in communication and collaboration among the school faculty and staff.  The increase helped to create a universality across the school when teaching best behavior practices and expectations.  Participants in the study noted how it took time to build strong interworking relationships within the school building.  However, it was rewarding and worth the effort because the students benefited greatly.  Teachers who implemented the PBIS framework with fidelity also noticed a reduction in disciplinary incidences.

**Reinforcement of positive behaviors.**  To influence positive student behaviors, the behavior team had a clear understanding of the results they desired to achieve.  These targeted outcomes allowed the teachers to document what was working and to try to make that more of a part of everyday behaviors.

**Informed practices to help students make good choices.**  While seeking to improve student behavior and school culture, the teachers found using visual aids and tools helpful.  Behavior expectation posters were hung throughout the school.  The posters and visual aids, such as the voice-o-meter, were specific to each area of the building.  These visual reminders served as aids to help reinforce the wanted behaviors in each area.

**Builds positive school relationships.**  All of the participants (6 out of 6) mentioned the positive effects the PBIS framework had added by increasing the positive relationships in the school building.  These relationships covered teacher to teacher, teacher to student, and teacher to administration.  The study revealed the importance of building strong relationships to support both teachers and students.  The study revealed that as collaboration increased, the more shared strategies could be learned from one another and applied to help students with their behaviors.

**Insufficient initial training.**  The need for more specific training and professional development was evident throughout each interview.  The participants had many questions at the onset of implementation and had to work through the trial and error process to figure out solutions.

**Response to preventative procedures.**  Study participants found that the behavior management process to distribute rewards could be difficult.  The significance of examining teacher perspectives revealed the need for increased discussions about behavior management and an increased focus on possible responses to preventative procedures.

**Lack of consequences for problem behaviors.**  Participants expressed the need to increase their communication with their school's Behavior Team.  Teachers and staff did have the choice to hold collaborative discussions about consequences with their behavior team.  The PBIS framework was adaptable and could be changed to meet the needs of both teachers and learners to improve outcomes as needed.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

Recommendations for future research to understand and further the implementation and effectiveness of the Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports schoolwide framework are needed.  There was a lack of research investigating student perceptions of the effectiveness and

use of the PBIS framework.  A future study suggestion would be to interview students who have been participants through the tiers of the PBIS framework to gather their experiences.

Further research could also be conducted to include schools that have had several years of participation and practice using the PBIS framework.  The extended timeframe of implementation may contribute to broader discussions and revelations, which could be helpful to districts and schools in the future.

**Summary**

The findings of this study provided insight into teachers' perspectives and practices regarding the successes and opportunities for improvement in the implementation and effectiveness of the PBIS schoolwide framework.  It was the sincere hope of the researcher that these findings would aid others by providing awareness regarding the promotion of creating a positive schoolwide culture of appropriate behaviors.

# References

The National Committee on Excellence in Education. (1983). *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative*

    *for Educational Reform.* Washington D.C.

Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics. (2013). *America's children: Key*

    *national indicators of well-being.* (2013). Retrieved from

    https://www.childstats.gov/pdf/ac2013/ac_13.pdf

Ary, D., Jacobs, L., Sorensen, & Walker. (2014). *Introduction to research in education, Ed. 9.*

    Belmont: Cengage Learning.

Balingit, M. (2018, May 31). At Betsy DeVos's federal school safety commission meeting,

    lessons from first-graders on friendships and fist bumps. *The Washington Post*,

    https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/education/wp/2018/05/31/at-betsy-devoss-

    federal-school-safety-commission-meeting-lessons-from-first-graders-on-friendships-

    and-fist-bumps/?noredirect=on.

Bear, G. (1998). School discipline in the United States: Prevention, correction, and long-term

    social development. *School Psychology Review 27*(1), 14-19.

Bradshaw, C. P. (2010). Examining the effects of schoolwide positive behavioral interventions

    and supports on student outcomes: Results from a randomized controlled effectiveness

    trial in elementary schools. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions, 12(3)*, 133-148.

Bradshaw, C., Wasdorp, T., & Leaf, P. (2012, November). Retrieved from Pediatrics. 130(5),

    e1136–e1145.: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3483890/

PBIS Rewards. (2020). *Building relationships with students: 8 Ways to connect.* Retrieved from

    https://www.pbisrewards.com/blog/building-relationships-with-students-8-ways-connect/

Caldarella, P., Shatzer, R., Gray, K., Young, R., & Young, E. (2015, August 25). *The effects of schoolwide positive behavior supports on middle school climate and student outcomes.* Retrieved from Research In Middle-Level Education: https://www.tandfonline.com/action/journalInformation?journalCode=umle20

Cameron, M., & Sheppard, S. (2006). School discipline and social work practice: Application of research and theory to intervention. *NASW Children and Schools* 28(1), 15-22. http://cojustice.org/School%20Discipline%20and%20Social%20Work%20Practice.pdf

Campbell, A., & Anderson, C. (2008, August). Enhancing effects of check-in/check-out with function-based support. Retrieved from *Behavioral Disorders*, 33(4), 233-245. https://eds.b.ebscohost.com/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=3&sid=39afbf7f-ab7b-4de5-a8af-5ba81d81e28f%40sessionmgr102

Catalano, R. F., Berglund, M. L., Ryan, J., & Lonczak, S. H. (2004). Positive youth development in the United States: Research findings on evaluations of positive youth development programs. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science 591*(1), 98-124.

Chandler, S., Shuster, B., Jenkins, A., & Carter, E. (2015, January). Using Behavior Contracts. Retrieved from Vanderbilt University, *TN Department of Education.* https://vkc.mc.vanderbilt.edu/assets/files/resources/psibehaviorcontracts.pdf

Conner, J. (2017, April). 10 Tips to mentor youth like a superstar. Retrieved from Dr. Julie Conner [Blog post]: https://www.drjulieconnor.com/10-mentoring-tips/

Delisio, E. R. (2008, August 27). PBIS rules, rewards boost school-wide behavior and academics. *Education World*: Retrieved from https://www.educationworld.com/a_admin/admin/admin535.shtml

Dinkes, R., Kemp, J., & Baum, K. (2009, December). Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2009. *National Center for Educational Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice*. Retrieved from https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2010/2010012.pdf

Domitrovich, Bradshaw, Poduska, Hoagwood, Buckley, Olin, . . . Ialongo. (2008, July). Maximizing the implementation quality of evidence-based preventive interventions in schools: A conceptual framework. *Advanced School Mental Health 1*(3), 6–28. Retrieved from https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4865398/

Dunlap, G., & Fox, L. (2012, January ). Function-based interventions for children with challenging behavior. *Journal of Early Intervention 33*(4), 333-334. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1177/1053815111429971

Dunlap, Goodman, McEvoy, & Paris. (2008). School-wide positive behavior support. *Michigan Department of Education*. Retrieved from http://images.pcmac.org/Uploads/HuronISD/HuronISD/Departments/DocumentsCategories/Documents/MiImpGd.pdf

Dusenbury, Brannigan, Falco, & Hansen. (2003, April). A review of research on fidelity of implementation. *Health Education Research 18*(2), 237-56. Retrieved from https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/12729182

Elliott, D. S., & Mihalic, S. (2004). Issues in disseminating and replacing effective prevention programs. *Prevention Science 5(1)*, 47-53.

Ennis, R. P., & Swoszowski, N. C. (2011). The Top 10 Things to Consider When Implementing Secondary-Tier PBIS Interventions. *Beyond Behavior*, 42-44.

Finkelstein, B. (1989). *Governing the young: Teacher behavior in popular primary schools in the nineteenth-century United States.* New York: Palmer Press.

Froiland, J. (2011). Response to intervention as a vehicle for powerful mental health interventions in the school. *Contemporary School Psychology*. Retrieved from https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ934704.pdf

George, H. P., Cox, K. E., Minch, D., & Sandomierski, T. (2018, May ). District practices associated with successful SWPBIS implementation. *Behavioral Disorders, 43*(3), 393-406. Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0198742917753612.

Gonzalez, T., Etow, A., & DeLa Vega, C. (2019). Health equity, school discipline reform, and restorative justice. *Journal of Medicine, Law & Ethics*; Sage Publications 47(2), 47-50. Retrieved from https://eds.b.ebscohost.com/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=10&sid=218585a1-aa91-4a4a-b999-793c5c8f1b85%40pdc-v-sessmgr03

Gray, P. (2011). *Psychology (6th ed.).* New York: Worth Publishers.

Horner, R. H., & Sugai, G. (2015, May). School-wide PBIS: An example of applied behavior analysis implemented at a scale of social importance. *Behavior Analysis in Practice 8*(1), 80–85. Retrieved from https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5048248/

Horner, R., & Sugai, G. (2015, February 24). School-wide PBIS: An example of applied behavior analysis implemented at a scale of social importance. *Association for Behavior Analysis International*. Retrieved from https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5048248/

Horner, R., Sugai, G., & Anderson, C. (2010, April). Examining the evidence base for school-wide positive behavior support. *Focus on Exceptional Children*. Retrieved from

https://www.pbis.org/Common/Cms/files/pbisresources/horner%20sugai%20anderson%2
02010%20evidence.pdf

Horner, R., Sugai, G., & Fixsen, D. (2017). Implementing effective educational practices at

scales of social importance. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review (20)*, 25-35.

Hyman, L. (1990). *Reading, writing, and the hickory stick: The appalling story of physical and*

*psychological violence in American schools.* Lexington: Lexington Books.

Educational and Community Supports. (2018, August 14). *Implementation Fidelity: It's More*

*than a Score.* Retrieved from: https://www.pbisapps.org/community/Pages/Fidelity.aspx

National Center for Education Statistics. (2018). *Indicators of School Crime and Safety.*

Retrieved from https://nces.ed.gov/programs/crimeindicators/key.asp

Jimerson, S., Hart, S., & Renshaw, T. (2012). Conceptual foundations for understanding youth

engaged in antisocial and aggressive behaviors. In J. Sprague, & R. Horner, *Handbook of*

*School Violence and School Safety* (pp. 3-7). New York: Routledge.

Jones, F. (2007). *Tools for Teaching.* Santa Cruz: Frederic H Jones & Associates, Inc.

Lewis, T., McIntosh, K., Simonsen, B., Mitchell, B., & Hatton, H. (2017, April-June).

Schoolwide systems of positive behavior support: Implications for students at risk and

with emotional/behavioral disorders. *American Educational Research Association 3(*2) 1-

11. Retrieved from https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/2332858417711428

Loeber, R., & Farrington, D. (1998, May ). Serious and violent juvenile offenders. *U.S.*

*Department of Justice*: Retrieved from https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles/170027.pdf

Madigan, K., Cross, R., K., S., & Strycker, L. (2016). Association between schoolwide positive

behavioral interventions and supports and academic achievement. *Educational Research*

*and Evaluation* 22(7-8), 402-421. Retrieved from

https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/nere20

Marzano, R. J., Marzano, J. S., & Pickering, D. (2003). *Classroom Management That Works.*

Alexandria: ASCD.

Mayer, M., & Leone, P. (1999, August). A structural analysis of school violence and disruption:

Implications for creating safer schools. *Education & Treatment of Children 22*(3), 333-

356 Retrieved from

https://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail/detail?vid=5&sid=70d57ac7-19d4-4430-b72f-

7469c1d91929%40pdc-v-

sessmgr04&bdata=JkF1dGhUeXBlPWlwLHNzbyZzaXRlPWVob3N0LWxpdmU%3d#A

N=507646703&db=eue

Mayer, R., Butterworth, T., Nafpaktitis, M., & Sulzer-Azaroff, B. (1983). Preventing school

vandalism and improving discipline: A three-year study. *Journal of Applied Behavior

Analysis* 16(4), 355-369 Retrieved from

https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1901/jaba.1983.16-355

McLeod, S. (2018, January 21). Skinner- Operant Conditioning. *Simply Psychology*. Retrieved

from https://www.simplypsychology.org/operant-conditioning.html

*Merriam-Webster.* (Accessed 4 January. 2020). Retrieved from Merriam-Webster:

https://www.merriam-webster.com/

Musu, L., Zhang, A., Wang, K., Zhang, J., & Oudekerk, B. (2019, April). Indicators of School

Crime and Safety: 2018. *U.S. Department of Education; U.S. Department of Justice

Office of Justice Programs* Retrieved from https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2019/2019047.pdf

National Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports. (2019).

*Center on PBIS*. Retrieved from https://www.pbis.org/about/about

NEA. (2014). *Positive behavioral interventions and supports: A multi-tiered framework.*

Retrieved from National Educational Association:

https://www.nea.org/assets/docs/PB41A-Positive_Behavioral_Interventions-Final.pdf

Noltemeyer, A., Palmer, K., James, A., & Petrasek, M. (2019, March). Disciplinary and

achievement outcomes associated with school-wide positive behavioral interventions and

supports implementation level. *Psychology Review 48*(1), 81.  Retrieved from

http://link.galegroup.com/apps/doc/A582400334/PROF?u=tel_a_carsonnc&sid=PROF&

xid=c802bd01

Ohio Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports. (2013). Retrieved from *Ohio Department of*

*Education.* Retrieved from  http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Student-Supports/PBIS-

Resources

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports. (2017). *OSEP Technical Assistance Center on*

*Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports.* Retrieved from website: www.pbis.org

PBIS World Book. (2012). *PBISWorld.com*. Retrieved from https://www.pbisworld.com/the-

pbis-world-book/

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports OSEP Technical Assistance Center.  (2015,

October). *PBIS: Implementation Blueprint*. Retrieved from:

https://www.pbis.org/resource/pbis-implementation-blueprint

OSEP Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports. (2017).

*Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports.*Retrieved from:

https://www.pbis.org/school/swpbis-for-beginners

Puckett, T., Graves, C., & Sutton, L. (2019). Redefining school discipline: Illinois and other

       states' responses to negative impact. *AASA Journal of Scholarship & Practice, 16*(1), 20-

       47. Retrieved from https://eds.b.ebscohost.com/eds/detail/detail?vid=3&sid=7a2bdc8e-

       257e-4ca2-9647-c2ae8a375434%40pdc-v-

       sessmgr04&bdata=JkF1dGhUeXBlPWlwLHNzbyZzaXRlPWVkcy1saXZl#AN=136234

       708&db=eue

Robers, S., Zhang, A., Morgan, R., & Musu-Gillette, L. (2015). Indicators of School Crime and

       Safety:2014. *National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education,*

       *and Bureau of Justice Statistics, Office of Justice Programs*. Retrieved from

       https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED557756.pdf

Rocques, M., & Paternoster, R. (2011). Understanding the antecedents of the "school to jail"

       link: The relationship between race and school discipline. *Journal of Criminal Law &*

       *Criminology, 101*(2), 633-665. Retrieved from

       https://eds.b.ebscohost.com/eds/detail/detail?vid=3&sid=1a883fb1-f2a1-4522-bf77-

       21f0835b42c1%40pdc-v-

       sessmgr03&bdata=JkF1dGhUeXBlPWlwLHNzbyZzaXRlPWVkcy1saXZl#AN=608700

       07&db=pbh

Shafer, L. (2018, July 23). What makes a good school culture. *Harvard Graduate School of*

       *Education.* Retrieved from https://www.gse.harvard.edu/news/uk/18/07/what-makes-

       good-school-culture

Simonson, B., Sugai, G., & Negron, M. (2008). Schoolwide positive behavior supports: Primary

       systems and practices. *Teaching Exceptional Children, 40*(6), 32-40.

Sloan, W. M. (2012, July). What is the purpose of education*? ASCD Education Update, 54*(7).

    Retrieved from http://www.ascd.org/publications/newsletters/education-

    update/jul12/vol54/num07/What-Is-the-Purpose-of-Education%C2%A2.aspx

Slocum, T., Detrich, R., Wilczynski, S., Spencer, T. D., Lewis, T., & Wolfe, K. (2014, April 29).

    The evidence-based practice of applied behavior analysis. *The Behavior Analyst*.

    Retrieved from https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs40614-014-0005-2

Sprague, J., & Horner, R. (Second Edition, 2012 ). *Handbook of school violence and school*

    *safety.* New York: Routledge.

Sugai, G. &. (2002). The evolution of discipline practices: School-wide positive behavior

    supports. *Child & Family Behavior Therapy, (24),*23-50.

Sugai, G. (2011). Best evidence-based practices for behavioral support. Retrieved from *UConn*

    *University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities*.

Sugai, G., & Horner, R. (2006). A promising approach for expanding and sustaining school-wide

    positive behavior support. *School Psychology Review 35(2)*, 245-259. Retrieved from

    https://www.icareby.org/sites/www.icareby.org/files/spr352sugai.pdf

Sugai, G., & Horner, R. (2009). Responsiveness-to-intervention and school-wide positive

    behavior supports: Integration of multi-tiered system approaches. *Exceptionality 17*, 223-

    237. Retrieved from https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ870486

Sugai, G., & Horner, R. (2014). *Positive behavior support, school-wide.* Retrieved from Wiley

    Online Library: https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118660584.ese1902|

Sugai, G., & Simonson, B. (2012, June 19). Positive behavioral interventions and supports:

    history, defining features, and misconceptions. *Center for PBIS & Center for Positive*

    *Behavioral Interventions and Supports*. Retrieved from http://pbisaz.org/pbis-

overview/pbis-history/

http://idahotc.com/Portals/6/Docs/2015/Tier_1/articles/PBIS_history.features.misconcept

ions.pdf

Tennessee Behavior Supports Project. (2020). *Supporting RTI2-B in Middle Tennessee Schools*.

Retrieved from: https://tennesseebsp.org/

Swain-Broadway, J., Johnson, S., Bradshaw, C., & McIntosh, K. (2017, November). What are

the economic costs of implementing SWPBIS in comparison to the benefits from

reducing suspensions. Retrieved from OSEP Technical Assistance Center.

U.S. Department of Education. (2019). Mission. *U.S. Department of Education*. Retrieved from

https://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/mission/mission.html

Utley, C., Kozleski, E., Smith, A., & Draper, I. (2002). Positive behavior support: A proactive

strategy for minimizing behavior problems in multicultural youth. *Journal of Positive*

*Behavioral Interventions, 4*(4), 196-207. Retrieved from

https://doi.org/10.1177/10983007020040040301

Wang, M.-T., & Dishion, T. J. (2012, March). The trajectories of adolescents' perceptions of

school climate, deviant peer affiliation, and behavioral problems during the middle

school years. *Journal of Research on Adolescence, 22*(1), 40–53: Retrieved from

https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3399661/

Warren, J., Bohanon-Edmonson, H., Turnbull, A., Sailor, W., Wickham, D., Griggs, P., &

Beech, S. (2006). School-wide positive behavior support: Addressing behavior problems

that impede student learning. *Educational Psychology Review*, *18*(1),187–198. Retrieved

from https://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=3&sid=0b4b4b96-

57c0-40da-896a-368645561865%40sessionmgr102

Weber, D. (2004). *Sticks and stones: The power of our words*. Kennesaw: Weber Associates.

Wong, H. K., & Wong, R. T. (2005). *The first days of school.* Mountain View: Harry K. Wong

Publications, Inc.

**Appendix A**

District Informed Consent

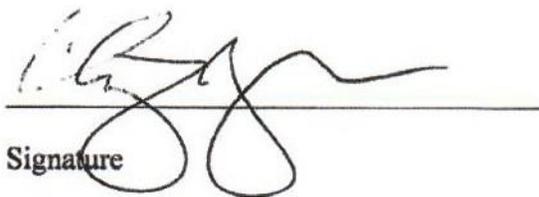l-22-20

Dr. ████████

Superintendent of Schools

████ County

Greetings Dr. ███████,

I am pursuing my Doctorate in Leadership and Administration through Carson -Newman University. I have chosen to focus my dissertation study on "Teacher Perceptions Regarding Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports".

I am a Title I Facilitator/Reading Interventionist at █████ Elementary. I am asking for your permission to conduct research at one of the schools in the ████ County School District.

The study will require six teacher interviews followed by an observation of those teachers' teaching a lesson and a collection of artifacts that demonstrate how rules and procedures are taught and used at the school. All information collected will remain confidential and anonymous and written permission will be obtained from all staff involved.

If you are in favor of approving this study, please indicate by signing below.

_____                    1/22/2020

Signature                                                        Date

Thank you for your time and consideration, I value your support as I complete this journey.

Sally Albright
Title I Facilitator
████████ Elementary

**Appendix B**

School Administrator Informed Consent

2-11-20

██████

██████ Elementary Principal

████ County

Greetings Mrs. ████,

I am pursuing my Doctorate in Leadership and Administration through Carson -Newman University. I have chosen to focus my dissertation study on "Teacher Perceptions Regarding Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports."

The study will require six teacher interviews followed by an observation of those teachers' teaching a lesson and a collection of artifacts that demonstrate how rules and procedures are taught and used at the school. All information collected will remain confidential and anonymous, and written permission will be obtained from all staff involved.

If you are willing to grant permission for me to conduct this study at ██████ Elementary, please indicate by signing below.

████████                                        2/14/2020
                                                    Date

Thank you for your time and consideration, I value your support as I complete this journey.

Sally Albright
Title I Facilitator
██████ Elementary