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METHODS SEQUENTIAL EXPLANATORY DESIGN**

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USING A SYSTEMATIC APPROACH TO ESTABLISH NEED AND BUY-IN PRIOR
TO SELECTING A SCHOOLWIDE MODEL:
A MIXED METHODS SEQUENTIAL EXPLANATORY DESIGN

A Dissertation Presented

by

KELLY ANN CARRIERE

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

May 2018

College of Education

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By

KELLY ANN CARRIERE

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DEDICATION

To my understanding husband, supportive mother, encouraging sister, and proud father.

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I would like to thank my advisor, Michael Krezmien, for guiding me through this seven-year journey. Michael has done more for me than I am able to express. He has been there when life was good and when life was bad. Michael never gave out too many “good job” or “atta girl” compliments but when he did he would always say he never worried about me. He always said I would achieve my doctorate and do great things. Thank you Michael.

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ABSTRACT

USING A SYSTEMATIC APPROACH TO ESTABLISH NEED AND BUY-IN PRIOR

TO SELECTING A SCHOOLWIDE MODEL:

A MIXED METHODS SEQUENTIAL EXPLANATORY DESIGN

MAY 2018

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School personnel throughout the United States are rapidly adopting Schoolwide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS). School administrators and staff members are implementing SWPBIS without the implementation of a needs assessment to measure preparedness and buy-in prior to a schoolwide initiative. The current research on SWPBIS lacks rigorous evidence for an established level of need and buy-in. The purpose of this study was to measure need and buy-in of a school climate by using a systematic approach within a mixed methods sequential explanatory design (MMSE). The MMSE design used determined the level of need and buy-in towards a SWPBIS model for a rural school district. The MMSE was used in a two phase process: phase one was a survey on school climate and phase two was a series of focus group interviews. This study provides evidence of a school districts high level of need within the current negative school climate and its reduced rate of buy-in. Implications for future research using an MMSE design prior to SWPBIS are discussed.

Keywords: Schoolwide Positive Behavior Interventions and Support, SWPBIS,
buy-in, level of need, systematic approach, school climate

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GLOSSARY

School Climate: is the quality and character of school life (National School Climate Council, 2007).

ODR: Office Disciplinary Referrals are communication documents between parents, teachers, students, and administrators when a student does not follow expectations.

SWPBIS: “School Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports is a framework or approach for assisting school personnel in adopting and organizing evidence-based behavioral interventions into an integrated continuum that enhances academic and social behavior outcomes for all students” (Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports U. S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, 2017).

Staff Buy-In: when the staff members commit to and or believe in the goal or mission.

MMSE: Mixed Methods Sequential Explanatory is a research design that encompasses quantitative research and qualitative research in sequential order through which explanatory discovery is sought when analyzing both measures.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

“Schoolwide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS) is a framework or approach for assisting school personnel in adopting and organizing evidence-based behavioral interventions into an integrated continuum that enhances academic and social behavior outcomes for all students” (Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports U. S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, 2017). Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports better known as PBIS was identified directly from the 1997 reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and was formally stated in Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2016. The terms PBIS and School Wide Positive Behavior Supports better known as SWPBS are used interchangeably. School Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS) and PBIS are based on principles of applied behavior analysis and the prevention approach and values of positive behavior support and are also used interchangeably. School Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS) is a means for supporting schools through a proactive approach to school discipline reform.

Overview of SWPBIS

A Behavioral Theoretical Framework has been constructed from Baer, Wolf, and Risley (1968) through applied behavior analysis procedures. Their theories on behavior address three areas: analysis of socially important behavior that is specifically defined, altering behavior and generalizing it, and employing procedures that are well established. Baer, Wolf, and Risley (1968) defined behavioral principals and practices using the three

areas of behavior to form behavioral interventions combined with behavior-environment relationships.

Through the Behavioral Theoretical Framework of Baer, Wolf, and Risley (1968) researchers Sugai and Horner (2002) were able to develop a whole school behavior intervention approach. In 2002, Sugai and Horner identified this approach in a step-by-step model of School Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS). The model of SWPBIS has been implemented within countless schools across America. In 2012 more than 16,000 schools received support from The National Technical Assistance Center for SWPBIS (Sugai and Simonsen, 2012).

There are four elements of SWPBIS as defined by Sugai and Horner (2002). These elements consist of outcomes, data, practices, and systems. Outcomes are the academic and behavior targets of students, staff, and parents. Practices are the interventions and strategies. Data is the information of the current areas of need and the results of the intervention. Systems are the supports needed to implement the practice. These four elements make up the SWPBIS model.

SWPBIS Research

In 2002, Sugai and Horner constructed the SWPBIS framework outlining the necessary steps needed in order to successfully implement SWPBIS. This framework was developed as a way to help schools understand the process prior to the adoption of SWPBIS. The framework consisted of student data collection, office disciplinary referrals (ODR's), and 80% buy-in from staff. Currently, no research studies have followed all of the steps outlined within the SWPBIS framework for collecting data prior to implementation. No studies have collected all of this data and received buy-in from

staff of 80% or more, as recommended in the SWPBIS frameworks. The current research on SWPBIS lacks baseline data prior to implementation, and only a few studies have identified and collected baseline data prior to implementing SWPBIS. The baseline data collected consists of ODR's, suspensions, established level of need, and stakeholder buy-in (Sugai & Horner, 2002). Currently, no study has consistently collected a level of baseline data prior to the implementation of SWPBIS. No studies have collected the baseline data on school climate, established a level of need, and received 80% buy-in from staff prior to adopting and implementing SWPBIS.

Statement of the Problem

There is a lack of evidence-based practices preceding the implementation of SWPBIS or a model to address School Climate in a comprehensive way. For school districts that are looking to address the needs of their students through a school wide approach or are looking to support their School Climate they are unable to use current research to help them make determinations for the appropriate next steps. Researchers within the field have provided step-by-step processes to help school districts and fellow researchers understand a whole school model such as SWPBIS. However, current research practices have not provided consistent evidence to support the process. One way that future researchers interested in SWPBIS could ensure that they meet the requirements of the SWPBIS framework would be to conduct an evaluation of the current state of school climate.

Overview of School Climate

School Climate is the quality and character of school life (National School Climate Council, 2007). The National School Climate Council (NSCC) in 2007

identified the following areas that make up School Climate: “patterns of students', parents' and school personnel's experience of school life and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures”. The NSCC (2007) has identified four areas to focus upon when measuring School Climate: safety, relationships, teaching and learning, and environment. School Climate is best measured with surveys that address the four areas as outlined by NCSS (2007).

Safety. Safety is defined as feeling safe in school: socially, emotionally, intellectually, and physically, and this includes rules and norms (NCSS, 2007).

Relationships. Relationships are defined as the patterns of norms, goal, values, and interactions (NCSS, 2007).

Teaching and learning. Teaching and learning is defined as school leaders and teachers striving to set goals, norms, and values that shape the environment (NCSS, 2007). Teaching and learning also encompasses social emotional, civic education, ethical education, service learning beyond the classroom, and perceptions of school climate (NCSS, 2007).

Environment. Environment is defined as school connectedness and the physical layout of the school (NCSS, 2007). In measuring for School Climate all areas should be addressed and all stakeholders who interact with the school shape the School Climate and should be included within the process.

In 2012, the NCSS identified a fifth area that should be included within School Climate measures should be the process of how School Climate is evaluated in moving towards School Improvement. The fifth process describes how School Climate is an

important part of School Improvement Reform. They further identified the importance of teacher perception and the effects it can have on school based programs. They specifically identified that the relationship trust is the essential bond that holds things together and makes positive School Climate changes (NCSS, 2012).

School Climate data that is collected from surveys help to identify a current level of strengths and weaknesses. School Climate strengths help school districts know when they are successfully meeting the needs of their stakeholders. School Climate weaknesses help school districts understand where they are not meeting the needs of stakeholders and that they need to improve. School Climate surveys are often used to help school districts determine their current level of need within the four identified areas: safety, relationships, teaching and learning, and environment (NCSS, 2007).

Once School Climate surveys can be administered to all stakeholders such as students, teachers, administrators, and parents the data is collected and analyzed. The data analysis helps school districts and researchers understand the established level of need from all stakeholders involved. Once the level of need is established the school districts and researchers can review ways to address the need. For instance, the need may be met by a specific anxiety focused intervention for middle school students like Coping Power or perhaps a whole school behavioral approach like SWPBIS.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of my study is to examine PBIS preparedness using a mixed methods sequential explanatory design (MMSE) approach to measure school climate through a needs assessment and determine level of buy-in prior to implementation. This model of measuring need in conjunction with buy-in from stakeholders is unique when compared

to the current research of PBIS. Current PBIS research does not include a systematic approach to established need and buy-in prior to implementation. Furthermore, the research reviewed does not provide information on needs assessments with enough replicable data that is consistent with the rigor of an MMSE design.

My study consists of a school climate survey for staff members and administrators within a rural school district. Baseline data gathered from a school climate survey provides detailed information that can then be analyzed for school climate strengths and weaknesses. These strengths and weaknesses were further analyzed for possible trends and shared with stakeholders during focus group interviews in order to understand their perceptions of those trends and buy-in towards SWPBIS.

In order to implement a comprehensive schoolwide initiative to best support the established level of need and buy-in for my study an MMSE design was needed. This design allowed for a consistent methodological approach to be used while strengthening each aspect of the research. The quantitative data collected guided the qualitative research and ultimately provided more clarity to the quantitative data more than the survey findings alone. Final analysis of reviewing the quantitative data through the lens of the qualitative data made connections that might have been determined insignificant if not for the mixed methods approach. The purpose of my study was to establish need and buy-in through a systematic approach of an MMSE design within enough precision and detail that future researchers could utilize this method and generalize the approach further strengthening the research of PBIS.

Research Questions

- 1: How do administrators and staff perceive school climate and specific elements of school climate?
- 2: Are there differences in the perception of school climate between administrators and staff members?
- 3: How do staff members perceive SWPBIS, the need for SWPBIS in their schools, and their role within a SWPBIS model?
- 4: How do administrators describe school climate, changes in school climate, the need for SWPBIS, and their role within all of it?

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Search Procedure

I conducted a review of the current literature on School Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS). I reviewed literature published between the years 2001 and 2016. I selected the year 2001 because it preceded the seminal article on School Wide Positive Behavioral Supports from Sugai and Horner published in 2002. It contributed to widespread implementation of PBS and the development of the PBIS trademark. I did not want to leave out any article that was published simultaneously and therefore selected a year prior for my review. Only peer reviewed journal articles were selected due to their rigorous quality controls from experts and academic relevance.

Studies were selected using the electronic database EBSCOHOST. EBSCOHOST was used to search the online library of the education resources information center, better known as ERIC. Once inside ERIC all databases were selected which includes Academic Search Premier, Agricola, America: History and Life with Full Text, Anthropology Plus, Art Abstracts (H.W. Wilson), Art Index Retrospective (H.W. Wilson), Arte Publico Hispanic Historical Collection: series 1, ATLA Religion Database, Avery Index to Architectural Periodicals, Bibliography of Native North Americans, Biological & Agricultural Index Plus (H.W. Wilson), Book Review Digest Plus (H.W. Wilson), Book Review Digest Retrospective: 1903-1982 (H.W. Wilson), Business Book Summaries, Business Source Complete, CAB Abstracts, CAB Abstracts Archive, CINAHL Complete, Communication & Mass Media Complete, Criminal Justice Abstracts, eBooks Collection (EBSCOhost), EconLit, Environment Index, ERIC, European

Views of the Americas: 1493 to 1750, Film & Television Literature Index with Full Text, FSTA- Food Science and Technology Abstracts, GeoRef, GeoRef In Process, GreenFILE, Health and Psychosocial Instruments, Historical Abstracts with Full Text, Hospitality & Tourism Complete, Humanities International Complete, Index Islamicus, Index to Jewish Periodicals, Inspec, Inspec Archive –Science Abstracts 1898-1968, Left Index, LGBT Life with Full Text, Library, Information Science & Technology Abstracts, Mental Measurements Yearbook with Test in Print, Middle Eastern & Central Asian Studies, MLA Directory of Periodicals, MLA International Bibliography, Music Index, Peace Research Abstracts, Philosopher’s Index, PsycARTICLES, PsycINFO, Public Administration Abstracts, Readers’ Guide Abstracts (H.W. Wilson), Readers’ Guide Retrospective: 1890-1982 (H.W. Wilson), Regional Business News, RILM Abstracts of Music Literature (1967 to Present only), RIPM- Retrospective Index to Music Periodicals, Social Sciences Abstracts (H.W. Wilson), SPORT Discuss with Full Text, Sustainability Watch, The Nation Archive, and Bibliography of Asian Studies.

I searched the following key words: Positive Behavior Support, school climate, evaluation research, stakeholders, positive behavioral supports, and school wide positive behavioral supports. I used all possible pairs of search terms using the Boolean search procedures and the term “AND” to include both search terms. My search yielded a total of 97 articles. I printed and read the abstracts of all 97 articles to determine if they met my criteria for inclusion within the review. My criteria included: (a) a description that identified the beginning stages of PBS, (b) a description that identified the beginning stages of SWPBS, (c) a description that identified PBS intervention, (d) a description that identified SWPBS intervention, (e) the selection of a PBS as a support model, and (f) the

selection of SWPBS as a support model. A total of 40 article abstracts met at least one of my six criteria.

Next, I conducted an ancestral search of all 40 articles. I printed all 40 articles and selected the reference section from each article. I then searched each reference using the title and author or authors. I selected the following parameters within ERIC to conduct my search; year selection of 2001 to 2016, and journal selection of peer reviewed journals and academic journals. An additional five article abstracts met my criteria. All five articles were printed and combined with the 40 articles, for a total of 45 articles. All 45 articles were read and analyzed to see if they consisted of SWPBS implementation. Eighteen out of the 45 articles implemented some form of SWPBS and were therefore selected for the review.

Criteria for Standards

I developed a set of seven quality standards using a combination of quality indicators from Gersten and colleagues (2005), Horner and colleagues (2005), and Odom and colleagues (2005) along with the Implementation Blueprint and Self-Assessment Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports from the Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports U. S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (2010) and Sugai and Horner (2002). All seven quality standards were used to measure SWPBS quality research within each of the 18 articles. The seven quality standards have been listed (1) Student participants, (2) Staff participants, (3) Context and setting, (4) Training and teams, (5) Established need, (6) Systematic evaluation, and (7) Buy-in. Each of the standards were made up of specific

indicators that established and described replicable quality research within special education.

Student participants. The first quality standard, Student Participants, was made up of seven indicators. The seven indicators include (a) student sample size, (b) ethnicity, (c) age range, (d) gender, (e) special education, (f) free and or reduced lunch, and (g) discipline. When I created the standard, Student Participants, and the corresponding indicators I used Gersten and colleagues research from 2005 on *Quality Indicators for Group Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Research in Special Education*. Gersten and colleagues (2005) stated that researchers should provide enough information on student participants in order for results to be generalized to similar populations and therefore should included information such as disability status and demographics such as age, race, sex, subsidized lunch, English Language Learning, special education status, and academic status. I also used Horner and colleagues, 2005 research on *The Use of Single-Subject Research to Identify Evidence-Based Practices in Special Education*. In this article the authors stated that participants were to be described with sufficient detail in order to allow other researchers to select students with similar characteristics. Horner and colleagues (2005) further stated the need for student participants to be described through replicable precision within research. Quality participant description data is essential for replication within special educational research (Horner, Sugai, & Lewis, 2015; Gersten et al. 2005; Horner et al. 2005).

Staff participants. The second quality standard, Staff Participants, was made up of four indicators. The four indicators include (a) staff sample size, (b) ethnicity, (c) gender, and (d) identified role. When I created this standard and it's indicators I used

Gersten and colleagues (2005) and Horner and colleagues (2005) quality indicators that described and provided sufficient information for participants who applied the practice. Gersten and colleagues (2005) and Horner and colleagues (2005) both identified the need for the reader to be informed as to the type of individual who may be capable to administer an intervention or practice in order to generalize the findings. Gersten and colleagues (2005) suggested collecting relevant characteristics on individuals who participate in the administration of the intervention. These characteristics include sex, race, educational background, prior experience with related intervention, professional experience, and the number of children with/without disabilities in their family. I selected fewer suggested characteristics because I was looking for research on the adoption and implementation of SWPBS. Due to my search parameters many schools may be in the initial adoption phase of SWPBS, therefore, many teachers may not have prior experience. I also did not include educational background and professional experience as the Implementation Blueprint and Self-Assessment Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports from the Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports U. S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (2010) does not include this as a prerequisite prior to implementation process of SWPBS. Sugai and Horner's (2002) pivotal article on *The Evolution of Discipline Practices: School-Wide Positive Behavior Supports* does not identify nor require a specific educational background or professional experience prior to SWPBS training and implementation. Based upon both of these supportive articles I did not include age, educational background, prior experience, professional experience and or the number of

children with/without disabilities someone may have within their family as recommended by Gersten and colleagues (2005).

Context and setting. The third quality standard, Context and Setting, was made up of six indicators. The six indicators include (a) state/region, (b) number of districts, (c) number of schools, (d) school level, (e) grades, and (f) setting description. I created all six of the indicators by using Horner and colleagues (2005) research on quality indicators. Horner and colleagues (2005) stated that in order to fully understand the outcomes of a practice, the context in which it was given must be clearly defined. The context and setting must be described in enough precision and detail that it allows other researchers clear understanding for replication (Horner et al., 2005). In 2002, the National Center for Educational Statistics Data (NCES) identified the need for data to be reviewed in within context. I created each of the six indicators in order to gain a full understanding of where SWPBS was being implemented.

Training and teams. The fourth quality standard, Training and Teams, was made up of four indicators. The four indicators include (a) staff training, (b) staff training description, (c) staff teams, and (d) staff team descriptions. I created four indicators for the quality standard Training and Teams based upon the foundational guidelines identified for SWPBS by Sugai and Horner (2002) and the Implementation Blueprint from Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports; Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (2010). The Implementation Blueprint from Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports; Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special

Education Programs (2010) identified training as the primary step within the SWPBS process. Sugai and Horner (2002) identified staff teams under the foundational guideline, systems. Staff teams and staff trainings have been an important part of SWPBS implementation. Descriptive detail of such teams and trainings should have been provided to support replication. It is critical for all who intended to use the research to be provided information that is described with replicable precision (Odom et al., 2005).

Established need. The fifth quality standard, Established Need, was made up of six indicators. The six indicators include (a) need discussed, (b) need operationalized, (c) utilized school data discipline, (d) need identified by students, (e) need identified by staff, and (f) need identified by parents. I created the quality standard, Established Need, and the six indicators based upon the Implementation Blueprint from Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports; Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (2010) and Sugai and Horner (2002). Sugai and Horner (2002) identified the need for SWPBS for all American schools, based upon the increased violence and lack of management for problem behaviors over the past 20 years. The Implementation Blueprint (2010) provided a more narrow scope with an planned action process used to identify the need for SWPBS through answered questions. For example, What problems are you trying to address? What evidence is there to characterize need? What are the contributing factors? How high of a priority is the need? What would the solution look like? These questions established a more personalized approach that was specific to each school. I used these questions as a basis for creating the six indicators. I then incorporated the use of discipline data and stakeholder's input based upon the key

elements of PBS from Sugai and Horner (2002). Schools need to use accurate and reliable data to demonstrate their need and without accurate data it is difficult to take appropriate steps to create conducive educational climates (NCES, 2002).

Systematic evaluation. The sixth quality standard, Systematic Evaluation, was made up of six indicators. The six indicators include (a) systematic evaluation identified prior to SWPBS, (b) systematic evaluation described, (c) systematic evaluation use of school based information, (d) systematic evaluation conducted by staff, (e) systematic evaluation conducted by non-school staff, and (f) systematic evaluation supported identification of SWPBS adoption and implementation. I created the indicators based upon Sugai and Horner's (2002) statement that, data must be collected to evaluate the effectiveness and quality of the implementation of current practices. Systematic efforts have been needed in order to implement and sustain interventions (Sugai & Horner, 2002) and whole school initiatives. I then implemented aspects of the PBS element, data, (Sugai & Horner, 2002) and included the use of school-based information. I also incorporated the use of the PBS element, outcomes, and included school staff members, as they have been the primary stakeholders.

Buy-in. The seventh and final quality standard, Buy-in, was designed with three indicators. The three indicators include (a) specifically identified school staff buy-in, (b) description of school staff buy-in, and (c) evidence of school staff buy-in. I created the indicators based upon Sugai and Horner's (2002) recommendation of at least 80% of staff buy-in for successful adoption and implementation of SWPBS. I incorporated a buy-in description and evidence of such buy-in into the quality standard based upon Odom and colleagues (2005) statement that research should provide information with replicable

precision. Without a description and specific evidence of such buy-in replication would not be possible.

Summary of quality indicators. I have carefully created all seven standards with equivalent indicators based upon quality standards within special education research and PBS elements and recommendations. All seven standards were created to identify quality within SWPBS research. The standards were written with intent to answer the following questions; Have systematic evaluations been implemented based upon the level of need prior to the adoption of SWPBS? Do the systematic evaluations support the need for SWPBS? What evidence is there to support that all stakeholders have been a part of the SWPBS process? Is there evidence of 80% buy-in from all staff prior to the adoption? I reviewed each of the 18 articles to determine how many of them met some, all, or none of the seven quality standards.

Standard 1: Student Participants

I reviewed all 18 articles to determine if they met the quality standard for Student Participants; (a) student sample size, (b) ethnicity, (c) age range, (d) gender, (e) special education, (f) free and reduced lunch, and (g) discipline. I created a description for each of the seven indicators shown in Table 2.1, based upon the same foundational research methods I used to establish the standard (Gersten et al., 2005; Horner et al., 2015; Horner et al., 2005).

Table 2.2 shows that sample size, ethnicity, and FARL were the indicators most consistently addressed by the authors. Age, gender, and SPED were generally left out of the participant descriptions from many of the authors, while discipline was

completely neglected from all but one author (Bradshaw & Pas, 2011). None of the studies met all seven indicators for the quality Standard 1: Student Participants.

Table 2.1: Indicator Descriptions for Standard 1: Student Participants

Indicators	Description
Sample Size	The sample was described with replicable precision.
Ethnicity	All racial or ethnic backgrounds have been identified with replicable precision and ethnicity was included in the analyses.
Age	The ages or age ranges of all participants were described with replicable precision and age was included in the analyses.
Gender	The gender of all participants was identified and gender was included within the analyses.
SPED	The Special Education (SPED) disability status of all participants was identified with replicable precision and SPED status was included within the analysis.
FARL	Free and Reduced Lunch (FARL) status of all participants was described with replicable precision and FARL was included within the analyses.
Discipline	Discipline was identified through suspension rates of all participants, described with replicable precision, and discipline was included in the analyses.

Authors of the two studies (Caldarella, Shatzer, Gray, Young, & Young, 2011; Lassen, Stele, Sailor, 2006) met five criteria for Student Participants. Caldarella and colleagues (2011) and Lassen and colleagues (2006) provided descriptive detail on student participants through student sample size, ethnicity, age range, gender, and percentage of free and reduced lunch. For example, when Caldarella and colleagues (2011) addressed the age criteria they described the treatment and control schools located within one school district that consisted of sixth and seventh grade, and students ranged in age from 11 to 13 years old. When Lassen and colleagues (2006) addressed the ethnicity criteria they described the percentage of participants through ethnic categories such as African American, Hispanic, White, and Pacific Islanders.

Table 2.2: Quality Indicators for Student Participants

Main Author	Sample Size	Ethnicity	Age	Gender	SPED	FARL	Discipline	# Ind. Met
Anderson (2010)	X	X			X	X		4/7
Bradshaw (2008)								0/7
Bradshaw (2011)					X		X	2/7
Caldarella (2011)	X	X	X	X		X		5/7
Eiraldi (2014)	X							1/7
Farkas (2012)	X	X		X	X			4/7
Franzen (2008)	X	X	X			X		4/7
Gettinger (2006)	X			X				2/7
Horner (2009)	X	X			X	X		4/7
Lassen (2006)	X	X	X	X		X		5/7
Nese (2014)	X	X				X		3/7
Nocera (2014)	X	X				X		3/7
Oswald (2005)	X	X		X	X			4/7
Rusby (2011)	X	X				X		3/7
Sailor (2006)	X	X				X		3/7
Scott (2002)	X					X		2/7
Todd (2002)	X					X		2/7
Warren (2006)	X	X				X		3/7
Number of Studies	16	12	3	5	5	12	1	

Note. Ind. = Indicators

Authors of five of the studies (Anderson, Houser, & Howland, 2010; Farkas et al., 2012; Franzen & Kamps, 2008; Horner et al., 2009; Oswald, Safran, & Johanson, 2005) met four criteria for Student Participants. All five studies met the criteria for sample size and ethnicity. Additionally, Anderson and colleagues (2010) and Horner and colleagues

(2009) met the criteria for free and reduced lunch and special education. Anderson and colleagues (2010) provided detail on free and reduced lunch status combined with a description of student households. For example, they reported free and reduced lunch status for students and identified that 77% of families in the district received free lunch services and an additional 12% of families qualified for reduced lunch. They also reported 24.3% of families lived below the poverty line, 28.3% of students parent's had less than a high school education, and 55.5% of students lived in a single family house hold (Anderson et al., 2010). Horner and colleagues (2009) identified special education within treatment and control groups. For example, they reported a total of 27 students with IEP's were in the treatment group, while a total of 22 students with IEP's were on the control/delay groups, with a total 9% of students on IEP. Authors Farkas and colleagues (2012) and Oswald and colleagues (2005) both met the criteria for gender. Farkas and colleagues (2012) combined gender with age range and reported 43.41% boys and 56.59% girls ranged between 11 to 19 years of age. On the other hand Oswald and colleagues (2005) combined gender with ethnicity and special education, and reported that the student population consisted of 98% Caucasian and 2% African American, 47.5% female, and 16.7% receive special education services.

Authors of five of the studies (Nese, Horner, Dickey, Stiller & Tomlanovich, 2014; Nocera, Whitbread, & Nocera, 2014; Rusby, Crowley, Sprague & Biglan, 2011; Sailor, Zuna, Choi, Thomas, & McCart, 2006; Warren et al., 2006) met three criteria for Student Participants. All five authors (Nese et al., 2014; Nocera et al., 2014; Rusby et al., 2011; Sailor et al., 2006; Warren et al., 2006) met the same three criteria for quality Standard 1: Student Participants: student sample size, ethnicity, and free and reduced

lunch. Nese and colleagues (2014) provided the number of students who participated, their different schools, the percentage range of free and reduced lunch for all students, and that the population at all three schools was primarily white with a percentage range for students of color. For example, 508, 511, and 691 students from the three schools participated, 43% - 65% were eligible for free or reduced lunch, and 26% - 32% were students of color. On the other hand, Nocera and colleagues (2014) simply identified a total of 750 students who participated, more than 50% of the students received free or reduced lunch, and 40% are minorities. Sailor and colleagues (2006) provided detail on 4500 students and their ethnic demographic data for each of the four schools through a percent of Latino, African American, Pacific Islander, and Other (non-White). Rusby and colleagues (2011) also provided similar detail on ethnicity and reported, out of 400 students 82% were White, 9% Hispanic or Latino, 1% were Black or African American, 2% were Asian or Pacific Islander, and 3% were Indian or Alaskan. Warren and colleagues (2006) described the student sample size, ethnicity, and free and reduced lunch status similar to the four other authors. Warren and colleagues (2006) identified that approximately 737 students participated and from that 41% were African American Families, 35% were Hispanic Families, 18% were European Families and 80% of all students receive free or reduced lunch. All five authors identified student sample size, ethnicity, and free or reduced lunch in a similar manner.

Authors of four of the studies (Bradshaw & Pas, 2011; Gettinger & Stoiber, 2006; Scott, 2002; Todd, Haugen, Anderson & Spriggs, 2002) met two criteria for Student Participants. Authors Bradshaw and Pas (2011) met the criteria for special education and discipline. The information they provided on special education for example was an

average of 11.81% (5.47 SD) of students in special education out of 810 elementary schools. The information provided on discipline was a suspension average of 4.38% (5.47 SD) out of 810 elementary schools and an average of 6.06% (6.72 SD). Bradshaw and Pas (2011) were the only authors that met the criteria for discipline. Authors Todd and colleagues (2002) and Scott (2002) met the criteria for student sample size and free and reduced lunch. Although, Todd and colleagues (2002) provided a description of free and reduced lunch, for example, 50% or more of students received free and reduced lunch. On the other hand Scott (2002) provided a descriptive twist and reported that 96% of students received free and reduced lunch and therefore this could be characterized as at-risk since no students were reading at a proficient level, per the state standards. Gettinger and Stoiber (2006) met the criteria for student sample size and gender and identified them through different groups within the study. For example, 20 (80%) males and five (20%) females were in the treatment group a total of 25 students.

Authors of two studies (Bradshaw, Koth, Bevans, Ialongo, & Leaf, 2008; Eiraldi, et al., 2014) met one or less criteria for Student Participants. Eiraldi and colleagues (2014) met the criteria for sample size and reported 3900 students participated within the study. Information provided by Bradshaw and colleagues (2008) was not described with enough replicable precision and therefore did not meet the criteria for the quality Standard 1: Student Participants.

Summary of Standard 1: Student Participants

In summary, none of the authors met all seven indicators for Student Participants. Two authors Caldarella and colleagues (2011) and Lassen and colleagues (2006) met five out of the seven criteria. Fourteen of the authors, Anderson and colleagues (2010),

Farkas and colleagues (2012), Franzen and Kamps (2008), Horner and colleagues (2009), Oswald and colleagues (2005), Nese and colleagues (2014), Nocera and colleagues (2014), Rusby and colleagues (2011), Sailor and colleagues (2006), Warren and colleagues (2006), Bradshaw and Pas (2011), Gettinger and Stoiber (2006), Scott (2002), and Todd (2002), met between two and four of the seven criteria for Student Participants. Bradshaw and Pas (2011) were the only authors that met the criteria for discipline. Eiraldi and colleagues (2014) met one criterion and Bradshaw and colleagues (2008) did not meet a single criterion for the quality indicators within Standard 1: Student Participants.

None of the 18 studies met the high quality standard for Standard 1: Student Participants. The research has not provided enough information on Student Participants for successful replication. Limited information on student participants hinders a researchers ability to generalize the findings. For example, Caldarella and colleagues (2011) and Lassen and colleagues (2006) met five out of the seven indicators. Although they met more indicators than 16 of the other authors, they did not provide information on SPED status or disciplinary records. A student's SPED status and disciplinary records are vitally important characteristics when researching SWPBS. Gersten and colleagues (2005) identified that descriptive characteristics on student SPED status allows other researchers to find similar populations of students. Horner and Sugai (2002) identified disciplinary records as part of the documentation review process prior to adopting SWPBS. Therefore, without student SPED status and disciplinary records, researchers were not aware of the exact student population, which resulted in a lack of foundational

documentation that should have been used to establish a level of need prior to the adoption of SWPBS.

Only one author (Bradshaw & Pas, 2011) met the criteria for student discipline. The remaining 17 studies did not include discipline and or did not provide information with replicable precision. Documented student disciplinary records were a foundational component to the implementation of SWPBS (Horner & Sugai, 2002). The research from the 18 studies on the implementation process of SWPBS does not include student suspension rates even though it was an identified primary step within the SWPBS process. Student records should include suspension rate used as a part of the planning process to establish a level of need. If there were a lack of documented information in the initial planned process, how can other researchers decipher if the adoption of SWPBS was appropriate?

Standard 2: Staff Participants

I reviewed all 18 articles to determine if they met the quality standard for Staff Participants. The four indicators that made up Staff Participants include (a) staff sample size, (b) ethnicity, (c) gender, and (d) identified role. I created a description for each of the four indicators as shown in Table 2.3 (Gersten et al., 2005; Horner et al., 2005; Sugai & Horner, 2002).

Table 2.4 shows, that about half of the authors (Anderson et al., 2010; Bradshaw et al., 2008; Caldarella et al., 2011; Eiraldi et al., 2014; Farkas et al., 2012; Gettinger & Stoiber, 2008; Oswald et al., 2005; Todd et al., 2002) addressed the criteria for staff sample size and identified role (Bradshaw et al., 2008; Farkas et al., 2012; Gettinger & Stoiber, 2008; Nocera et al., 2014; Todd et al., 2002).

Table 2.3: Indicator Descriptions for Standard 2: Staff Participants

Indicators	Description
Staff Sample Size	The sample was described with replicable precision.
Ethnicity	All racial or ethnic backgrounds were identified with replicable precision and ethnicity was included in the analyses.
Gender	The gender of all staff participants were identified and included within the analyses.
Identified Role	The identified role was described as the position of the staff members, for example general education teacher, principal, and or guidance counselor. Identified role for all staff were identified and described with replicable precision.

Table 2.4: Quality Indicators for Staff Participants

Main Author	Staff Sample Size	Ethnicity	Gender	Identified Role	Number of Indicators Met
Anderson (2010)	X				1/4
Bradshaw (2008)	X	X	X	X	4/4
Bradshaw (2011)					0/4
Caldarella (2011)	X				1/4
Eiraldi (2014)	X				1/4
Farkas (2012)	X			X	2/4
Franzen (2008)					0/4
Gettinger (2006)	X	X	X	X	4/4
Horner (2009)					0/4
Lassen (2006)					0/4
Nese (2014)					0/4
Nocera (2014)				X	1/4
Oswald (2005)	X	X	X		3/4
Rusby (2011)					0/4
Sailor (2006)				X	1/4
Scott (2002)					0/4
Todd (2002)	X			X	2/4
Warren (2006)					0/4
Number of Studies	8	3	3	6	

A few of the authors (Bradshaw et al., 2008; Gettinger & Stoiber, 2008; Oswald et al., 2005) met the remaining two criteria for ethnicity and gender. Only a couple authors (Bradshaw et al., 2008; Gettinger & Stoiber, 2006) met all four criteria for Staff Participants. A third of the authors (Bradshaw & Pas, 2011; Franzen & Kamps, 2008; Horner et al., 2009; Lassen et al., 2006; Nese et al., 2014; Rusby et al., 2011; Sailor et al., 2006; Scott 2002; Warren et al., 2006) did not meet any of the criteria.

Authors of two studies (Bradshaw et al., 2008; Gettinger & Stoiber, 2006) met all four criteria for Staff Participants. Bradshaw and colleagues (2008) identified the number of staff participants, their identified role within the school, gender, and ethnicity. For example, 2507 staff members participated, 1387 (55.33%) general education teachers, 1220 (44.67%) support staff made up of school psychologists, counselors, teaching assistants and resource teachers. From this description Bradshaw and colleagues (2008) then specified gender and ethnicity. For instance, 91.34% of staff participants were female, 86.48% were White, and 11.21% were African American. Bradshaw and colleagues (2008) continued to provide more information beyond the criteria for Staff Participants and reported on age range descriptions. Gettinger and Stoiber (2006) simply described their participants as 40 female classroom teachers, primarily Caucasian, except for one African American.

Authors of one study (Oswald et al., 2005) met three out of the four criteria for Staff Participants. Oswald and colleagues (2005) met the criteria for staff sample size, ethnicity, and gender. They described staff participants as approximately 60 people, 40 of which were teachers, with 71% female and 29% male. The staff participants were mostly Caucasian with the exception of one African American police officer. Oswald (2005)

identified some of the staff participant roles as teachers and then identified a police officer, however, they did not identify the remaining nineteen participants. Oswald and colleagues (2005) did not provide enough information to meet the criteria for identified role.

Farkas and colleagues (2012) and Todd and colleagues (2002) met the same two criteria of staff sample size and identified role. Farkas and colleagues (2012) identified that all 21 staff members participated in the study and then continued to describe the number of staff by their roles. For example, nine teachers, four supportive staff consisting of behavior management specialists, three social workers, an administrator, a school psychologist, and three paraprofessionals. Todd and colleagues (2002) provided a very similar description of their Staff Participants. They identified staff participants in conjunction with their identified roles, and reported that there were 18 certified classroom teachers, 12 classified educational assistants, and 16 support staff that consisted of office staff, custodial staff, and cooking staff.

Authors of five studies (Anderson et al., 2010; Caldarella et al., 2011; Eiraldi et al., 2014; Nocera et al., 2014; Sailor et al., 2006) met one criterion for Staff Participants. Authors Anderson and colleagues (2010), Caldarella and colleagues (2011), and Eiraldi and colleagues (2014) all met the criterion for sample size. Anderson and colleagues (2010) identified staff participants through selected focus groups and described participants as eight to ten individuals who represent as much as possible males and females, teachers, representational ethnicity, grade levels and support staff. Anderson and colleagues (2010) met the criteria for sample size but was unable to meet the additional three criteria for Staff Participants, as the information was not descriptive

enough for replication. Caldarella and colleagues (2011) provided a clear demographic table for those who participated and included staff and student. The staff participants were under the category of teacher and identified 50 in the treatment group and 56 within the control group. Caldarella (2011) did not continue to describe the term teachers and therefore role identification was not described with replicable precision. Eiraldi and colleagues (2014) provided a similar piece of information with sample size, however the information provided was not descriptive enough for replicable precision and therefore was not included. Authors Nocera and colleagues (2014) and Sailor and colleagues (2006) met the criterion for identified role within Staff Participants. Nocera and colleagues (2014) identified a principal, an assistant principal, and four teachers. Nocera (2014) did not provide enough description about the four teachers in order add identified role. Very similarly, Sailor and colleagues (2006) described the different roles in which staff would participate within SWPBS. However, they did not identify how many people participated or their demographics. For example, special education teachers and general education teachers will implement the Schoolwide Application Model (SAM) and the principal will transfer paraprofessionals to support each teacher.

Authors of eight studies (Bradshaw & Pas, 2011; Franzen & Kamps, 2008; Horner et al., 2009; Lassen et al., 2006; Nese et al., 2014; Rusby et al., 2011; Scott, 2002; Warren et al., 2006) did not meet a single criterion for Staff Participants.

Summary of Standard 2: Staff Participants

In summary, less than half of the 18 studies provided information for Staff Participants. Five of the authors (Anderson et al., 2010; Caldarella et al., 2011; Eiraldi et al., 2014; Nocera et al., 2014; Sailor et al., 2006) met only one criterion for Staff

Participants. Nocera and colleagues (2014) and Sailor and colleagues (2006) identified roles but did not identify, how many participants, or, anything about the participants that would give someone the full understanding of who implemented the intervention.

Authors Bradshaw and colleagues (2008) and Gettinger and Stoiber (2006) met all four criteria, and Oswald and colleagues (2005) met three criteria. These authors provided Staff Participant descriptions with replicable detail that other researchers could use to seek similar participants. Unfortunately, eight of the authors (Bradshaw & Pas, 2011; Franzen & Kamps, 2008; Horner et al., 2009; Lassen et al., 2006; Nese et al., 2014; Rusby et al., 2011; Scott, 2002; Warren et al., 2006) did not provide enough description with replicable detail to meet the criteria for Staff Participants.

Two out of the 18 studies met all four, quality indicators for Standard 2: Staff Participants (Bradshaw et al., 2008; Gettinger & Stoiber, 2006). A majority of the authors provided little or no information for each of the quality indicators. Research that lacks descriptions on staff participants consequently limits other researchers ability understanding their role within the SWPBS process. Researchers that withhold this information negatively impact the quality of their own research. Research should be written with a high rigor of quality standards. As Gersten and colleagues identified in 2005, high quality special education research should include information on staff participants in order to provide a clear picture as to the type of personnel implementing the intervention. Unfortunately, much of the current research on SWPBS did not consistently detail descriptions of staff participants. Although two authors met all four, quality indicators, a majority of the authors provided less quality information. The current research on SWPBS needed to provide more information on staff participants in

order for other researchers to understand who implemented the intervention for successful replication purposes.

Standard 3: Context and Setting

I reviewed all 18 articles to see if they met the criteria for Context and Setting. I created the quality standard based upon Horner and colleagues (2005) research of quality indicators. Horner and colleagues (2005) stated that Context and Setting within research must be described with enough precision and detail that it allows other researchers to replicate. The National Center for Educational Statistics Data (NCES) (2002) identified the need for data to be reviewed in within context. Using the research from Horner and colleagues (2005) combined with the recommendation from the NCES (2002) I created six indicators for the quality standard Context and Setting. There six indicators include (a) state/region, (b) number of districts, (c) number of schools, (d) school level (e) grade, and (f) setting described. I created a description for each of the six indicators as shown in Table 2.5.

Table 2.6 shows, authors of all 18 studies (Anderson et al., 2010; Bradshaw et al., 2008; Bradshaw & Pas, 2011; Caldarella et al., 2011; Eiraldi et al., 2014; Farkas et al., 2012; Franzen & Kamps, 2008; Gettinger & Stoiber, 2008; Horner et al., 2009; Lassen et al., 2006; Nese et al., 2014; Nocera et al., 2014; Oswald et al., 2005; Rusby et al., 2011; Sailor et al., 2006; Scott 2002; Todd et al., 2002; Warren et al., 2006) met the criterion for state/region within Context and Setting. This was the only criterion within all seven quality standards that was met by every author. Most of the authors met the criteria for the number of schools (Anderson et al., 2010; Bradshaw et al., 2008;

Table 2.5: Indicator Descriptions for Standard 3: Context and Setting

Indicators	Description
State/Region	The state was identified and described. Region describes a division of the United States. The state/region was described with replicable precision.
Number of Districts	The number of school districts was described with replicable precision.
Number of Schools	The number of schools was described with replicable precision.
School Level	School levels were described as Elementary, Middle, or High.
Grades	Grades were described with replicable precision.
Setting Description	The setting description was described as urban or rural.

Table 2.6: Quality Indicators for Context and Setting

Main Author	State Reg.	# Districts	# Schools	School Level	Grades	Setting Des.	# Ind. Met
Anderson (2010)	X		X	X			3/6
Bradshaw (2008)	X	X	X	X			4/6
Bradshaw (2011)	X	X	X	X			4/6
Caldarella (2011)	X	X	X	X			4/6
Eiraldi (2014)	X	X	X	X			4/6
Farkas (2012)	X	X		X	X		4/6
Franzen (2008)	X	X	X	X	X	X	6/6
Gettinger (2006)	X	X	X		X		4/6
Horner (2009)	X		X	X	X		4/6
Lassen (2006)	X		X	X			3/6
Nese (2014)	X	X	X	X	X		5/6
Nocera (2014)	X	X	X	X	X		5/6
Oswald (2005)	X	X					2/6
Rusby (2011)	X		X	X	X	X	5/6
Sailor (2006)	X	X	X	X			4/6
Scott (2002)	X		X	X	X		4/6
Todd (2002)	X	X	X	X	X		5/6
Warren (2006)	X		X		X		3/6
Number of Studies	18	12	16	15	10	2	

Note. Reg.= Region; Set. = Setting; Ind. = Indicators

Bradshaw & Pas, 2011; Gettinger & Stoiber, 2008; Horner et al., 2009; Lassen et al., 2006; Nese et al., 2014; Nocera et al., 2014; Rusby et al., 2011; Sailor et al., 2006; Scott 2002; Todd et al., 2002; Warren et al., 2006) and school level (Anderson et al., 2010; Bradshaw et al., 2008; Bradshaw & Pas, 2011; Caldarella et al., 2011; Eiraldi et al., 2014; Farkas et al., 2012; Franzen & Kamps, 2008; Horner et al., 2009; Lassen et al., 2006; Nese et al., 2014; Nocera et al., 2014; Rusby et al., 2011; Sailor et al., 2006; Scott 2002; Todd et al., 2002). Some of the authors met the criteria for the number of districts (Bradshaw et al., 2008; Bradshaw & Pas, 2011; Caldarella et al., 2011; Eiraldi et al., 2014; Farkas et al., 2012; Franzen & Kamps, 2008; Gettinger & Stoiber, 2008; Nese et al., 2014; Nocera et al., 2014; Oswald et al., 2005; Scott 2002; Todd et al., 2002) and grades (Farkas et al., 2012; Franzen & Kamps, 2008; Gettinger & Stoiber, 2008; Horner et al., 2009; Nese et al., 2014; Nocera et al., 2014; Rusby et al., 2011; Scott 2002; Todd et al., 2002; Warren et al., 2006) while very fewer of authors met the criteria for setting description (Franzen & Kamps, 2008; Rusby et al., 2011), More authors met more indicators for Context and Setting than any other quality standard.

Franzen and Kamps (2008) were the only authors that met all six criteria for Context and Setting. They stated SWPBS took place within a charter school located in an urban mid-western city. The elementary charter school served students from kindergarten to sixth grade within one district. Franzen and Kamps (2008) described both the school and the direct setting in which the study takes place. For example, the description of the schoolyard allowed the reader to visualize an “L” shaped playground nestled within a busy city block.

Authors of four studies (Nese et al., 2014; Nocera et al., 2014; Rusby et al., 2011; Todd et al., 2002) met five out of the six criteria for Context and Setting. All four of the authors met the criteria for state/region and the number of schools. Authors Nese and colleagues (2014), Nocera and colleagues (2014), and Todd and colleagues (2002) met the criteria for state/region, number of schools, number of districts, school level, and grade. Nese and colleagues (2014) described the Context and Setting as three middle schools that consisted of grades sixth through eighth located in two Pacific North West school districts. Nocera and colleagues (2014) provided similar information for example, one middle school in a central city school district within Connecticut that consisted of grades seventh through eighth. Todd and colleagues (2002) were not any different for instance, one elementary school that consisted of grades kindergarten through fifth and was located within a district in Springfield Oregon.

Rusby and colleagues (2011) met five out of the six criteria for state/region, number of schools, school level, grade, and setting description. Rusby and colleagues (2011) were one of the authors who provided information on setting description. They stated their study took place within Oregon and described the location as a small to medium sized set of communities. Eighteen middle schools participated in the study. Fourteen of the schools consisted of grades sixth through eighth and four of the schools consisted of grades seventh through eighth. Rusby and colleagues (2011) described the settings of the schools as having an entry/exit way where the students arrived to school or waited for the bus, hallways where students transitioned between classes, the lunchroom where students staggered in for lunches, break rooms that consisted of outdoor areas,

game rooms, the gym and library, and finally the classrooms. Rusby (2011) also stated that observations did not take place in any space smaller than 20 x 15 feet.

Authors of nine of the studies (Bradshaw & Pas, 2011; Bradshaw et al., 2008; Caldarella et al., 2011; Eiraldi et al., 2014; Farkas et al., 2012; Gettinger & Stoiber, 2006; Horner et al., 2009; Scott, 2002; Sailor et al., 2006) met four criteria for Context and Setting. Authors Bradshaw and Pas (2011) Bradshaw and colleagues (2008), Caldarella and colleagues (2011), Eiraldi and colleagues (2014) and Sailor and colleagues (2006) met the criteria for state/region, number of districts, number of schools, and school level. Scott (2002) and Horner and colleagues (2009) met the criteria for state/region, number of schools, school level and grades. Farkas and colleagues (2012) met the criteria for state/region, school level, school districts, and grades. All authors provided similarly brief statements about the location of their study and the number of schools that participated.

Authors of three of the studies (Anderson et al., 2010; Lassen et al., 2006; Warren et al., 2006) met three criteria for Context and Setting. Anderson and colleagues (2010) and Lassen and colleagues (2006) met the criteria for state/region, number of schools and school level. Warren and colleagues (2006) met the criteria for state/region, number of schools, and grades. Lastly, Oswald and colleagues (2005) met two out of the six criteria for state/region and number of school districts.

Summary of Standard 3: Context and Setting

In summary, all authors of the 18 studies met the criteria for state/region within Standard 3: Context and Setting. Sixteen of the studies met the criteria for the number of schools and 15 of the studies met the criteria for the school level. Twelve of the studies

met the criteria for the number of school districts and 10 of the studies met the criteria for the identified school grades. However, only two studies met the criteria for setting description. Authors Franzen and Kamps (2008) met all six criteria for quality Standards 3: Context and Setting.

Franzen and Kamps (2008) met all six criteria and described the setting briefly and yet with vivid detail. Rusby and colleagues (2011) were the other authors besides Franzen and Kamps (2008) to meet the criteria for setting description. The setting description provided, was less detailed than Franzen and Kamps (2008) however, enough information was provided, which enhanced the readers understanding of the setting. Although the remaining authors provided most of the other relevant information such as state and region, the number of school districts, the number of schools, the school level, and the grades of students, they did not provide a small description of the context and setting. It may be a small detail added but it is a powerful one. A description of the setting culminates all of the other components and allows the reader to better understand the context in which SWPBS took place. Each school setting can be structured differently therefore added detail enhances other researchers ability to generalize such findings.

Standard 3: Context and Setting had the most indicators met out of all standards. All 18 studies identified the state or the region where their study took place. All studies took place within the United States of America. A majority of the studies added detail beyond the state and region level and identified a combination of the number of schools, or the number of districts, or the level of the schools or the grades of the students. All authors met at least two or more of the indicators for Context and Setting. More criteria

for quality standards were met within Context and Setting than that of Student and Staff Participants. Although more information was added in regards to Context and Setting authors continued to struggle with a lack of consistent replicable and descriptive detail.

Standard 4: Training and Teams

All 18 articles were reviewed to see if they met the quality Standard 4: Training and Teams. I created the fourth quality standard Training and Teams based upon the foundational guidelines identified for School Wide Positive Behavioral Supports (SWPBS) by Sugai and Horner (2002). In 2002, Sugai and Horner created SWPBS teams made up of various school personnel: administrators, general education teachers, special education teachers, related service providers, school psychologists, and parents. Teams coordinated and implemented SWPBS trainings for all school staff. School trainings consisted of organized procedures, established measured outcomes, and were used to teach SWPBS practices. Trainings were to be considered school specific however could include external trainers (Implementation Blueprint from Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports; Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, 2010). I created four indicators for Training and Teams; (a) staff training, (b) staff training description, (c) staff teams, and (d) staff team description. I created a description for each of the four indicators as shown in Table 2.7.

Table 2.8 shows, a few of the authors (Bradshaw et al., 2008; Gettinger & Stoiber, 2006; Nocera et al., 2014) met all four criteria for Training and Teams. A majority of the authors (Bradshaw et al., 2008; Bradshaw & Pas, 2011; Eiraldi et al., 2014; Farkas et al., 2012; Gettinger & Stoiber, 2008; Horner et al., 2009; Lassen et al., 2006;

Table 2.7: Indicator Descriptions for Standard 4: Training and Teams

Indicators	Description
Staff Training	Staff training was identified with replicable precision.
Staff Training Description	Staff training was described with replicable precision.
Staff Teams	Staff teams were identified with replicable precision.
Staff Team Description	Staff teams were described with replicable precision.

Table 2.8: Quality Indicators for Training and Teams

Main Author	Staff Training	Staff Training Description	Staff Teams	Staff Team Description	# Indicators Met
Anderson (2010)					0/4
Bradshaw (2008)	X	X	X	X	4/4
Bradshaw (2011)	X		X	X	3/4
Caldarella (2011)			X	X	2/4
Eiraldi (2014)	X	X	X	X	4/4
Farkas (2012)	X	X			2/4
Franzen (2008)			X		1/4
Gettinger (2006)	X	X	X	X	4/4
Horner (2009)	X	X		X	3/4
Lassen (2006)	X	X			2/4
Nese (2014)	X				1/4
Nocera (2014)	X	X	X		3/4
Oswald (2005)	X		X	X	3/4
Rusby (2011)			X	X	2/4
Sailor (2006)	X				1/4
Scott (2002)	X	X	X		3/4
Todd (2002)	X	X			2/4
Warren (2006)	X				1/4
Number of Studies	14	9	10	8	

Note. # Indicators Met = Number of Indicators Met

Nese et al., 2014; Nocera et al., 2014; Oswald et al., 2005; Sailor et al., 2006; Scott 2002; Todd et al., 2002; Warren et al., 2006) met the criteria for staff training, while half of the

authors (Anderson et al., 2010; Bradshaw et al., 2008; Bradshaw & Pas, 2011; Caldarella et al., 2011; Eiraldi et al., 2014; Gettinger & Stoiber, 2008; Horner et al., 2009; Oswald et al., 2005; Rusby et al., 2011) met the criteria for staff team description. All of the authors that provided a staff training description provided information on staff training. All but one of the authors (Horner et al., 2009) that provided a staff team description provided information on staff teams.

Authors of the three of the studies (Bradshaw et al., 2008; Gettinger & Stoiber, 2006; Nocera et al., 2014) met all four criteria for Training and Teams. Bradshaw and colleagues (2008), Gettinger and Stoiber (2006), and Nocera and colleagues (2014) met the criteria for staff training, staff training description, staff teams, and staff teams descriptions. For example, Bradshaw and colleagues (2008) stated that each school that received Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) formed internal school teams made up of five or six school personnel and consisted of teachers and administrators. The SWPBIS teams attended two full-day trainings provided by an expert in the field. The description of the training highlighted seven areas; collaboration within a team, technical assistance, clear expectation for behavior, defined behavior for students, developed school wide systems of PBS, create an agree upon a system, and the development of formal data collection. Bradshaw and colleagues (2008) continued to describe additional trainings for high implementation of fidelity throughout the school year and each summer over the course of four years. Gettinger and Stoiber (2006) identified staff teams that consisted of a classroom teacher, a school psychologist, a school building principal, and an additional related service provider. Trainings were identified and broken down into nine phases. Each phase was matched with an objective,

a description, and an estimated time interval. Nocera and colleagues (2014) identified two levels of data teams; district data teams and school data teams. District data teams consisted of a teacher, a parent, union, and Board of Education representatives. A description of the school data teams was not provided although it was referred to numerous times throughout the study. District data teams were described and therefore Nocera and colleagues (2014) met the criteria for staff team descriptions. Nocera (2014) provided trainings and training descriptions. Their training descriptions included the building principal conducting trainings that consisted of several in-services on logical and natural consequences with a review of case studies on individual students. Teachers also participated in a two-day seminar on improved school climate through the support of student behavior and achievement. Continuums of trainings were held along with and professional development on student discipline and the cycle of conflict.

Authors of four of the studies (Bradshaw & Pas, 2011; Oswald et al., 2005; Eiraldi et al., 2014; Scott, 2002) met three of the criteria for Training and Teams. Bradshaw and Pas (2011) and Oswald and colleagues (2005) both met the same criteria for staff training, staff teams, and staff team description. Bradshaw and Pas (2011) identified staff training from a statewide initiative within Maryland. They reported schools were considered trained if they had four staff, and one of the four staff members was a school administrator who attended the states initial two-day training event. The schools teams were then responsible for training the rest of the school personnel. Bradshaw and Pas (2011) stated that schools were identified as having a SWPBIS team if they had a coach. The coach was defined as a school psychologist or a guidance counselor. Oswald and colleagues (2005) provided more detail within the staff teams for

example; each team consisted of grade level representatives, three special education teachers, a building principal, a school psychologist, and a behavior specialist. The teams met twice a month after staff meetings for approximately 45 minutes, each member of the team represented a specific role such as a timekeeper, facilitator, or recorder. The team assessed current routines, determined if changes needed to be made, and identified expected behaviors within specific settings. The team assisted in teaching teachers and students expected behaviors throughout the school. The training consisted of making posters specific to areas within the school and roleplaying situations in order to exhibit expected behaviors.

Authors of two studies (Eiraldi et al., 2014; Scott, 2002) met three criteria for Trainings and Teams. Eiraldi and colleagues (2014) and Scott (2002) both met the criteria for staff training, staff training description, and staff teams. Eiraldi and colleagues (2014) described the staff teams as being made up of 48 teachers, administrators and parents. A subcommittee within the leadership team was also identified and was made up of school counselors and administrators. The staff training and implementation of SWPBIS came from the leadership team and the subcommittee. The staff trainings were broken into stages. The initial trainings on the Coping Power Program were for the school counselors. After the initial trainings, coaches conducted one-hour trainings and onsite consultation visits on an as needed basis. Eiraldi (2014) continued to describe the second stage of staff trainings which was made up of 14 two hour weekly sessions with counselors specific to trouble shooting, up coming sessions, student observations, and implementation protocols. Scott (2002) described staff teams that consisted of a representative from each fraction of the school along with the

principal and a school based student service coordinator. The staff teams agreed to meet monthly and review data, report back to the whole school, and discuss any changes. Scott (2002) uniquely described staff trainings through a process of obtaining the commitment of all staff. All staff agreed to participate in a one day, eight hour training that took place at the University of Kentucky. The training was run by the author who facilitated groups and consisted of a mix of all staff and personnel within the school. The group's responsibility was to list problems within the school and conditions that they happen. All staff then listed possible solutions. The groups then had to agree with 70% of staff in agreement on the way to correct the problem and the processes in which to do it.

Eleven authors (Anderson et al., 2010; Caldarella et al., 2011; Farkas et al., 2012; Franzen & Kamps, 2008; Horner et al., 2009; Lassen et al., 2006; Nese et al., 2014; Rusby et al., 2006; Sailor et al., 2006; Todd et al., 2002; Warren et al., 2006) met two or fewer criteria for Trainings and Teams. Authors Caldarella and colleagues (2011) and Franzen and Kamps (2008) both met the criteria for staff teams and staff teams descriptions. Authors Farkas and colleagues (2012), Horner and colleagues (2009), Lassen and colleagues (2006), and Todd and colleagues (2002) all met the criteria for staff training and staff training descriptions. Four authors (Nese et al., 2014; Sailor et al., 2006; Warren et al., 2006; Rusby et al., 2006) met one criterion for Trainings and Teams. Authors Nese and colleagues (2014), Sailor and colleagues (2006), and Warren and colleagues (2006) all met the same criterion for staff training while Rusby and colleagues (2006) met the criterion of staff team description. Lastly, Anderson and colleagues (2010) did not meet any criteria for Training and Teams.

Summary of Standard 4: Trainings and Teams

In summary, authors of three studies (Bradshaw et al., 2008; Gettinger & Stoiber, 2006; Nocera et al., 2014) meet all four criteria for Trainings and Teams. All authors met the criteria for staff teams, however, the teams did not consist of the same staff members or the same number of staff members. The authors Bradshaw and colleagues (2008), Gettinger and Stoiber (2006), and Nocera and colleagues (2014) identified and described staff training differently. Bradshaw and colleagues (2008) and Gettinger and Stoiber (2006) provided detailed trainings that highlighted multiple foundational areas of SWPBS, while the information was detailed it was not as connected to the foundational concepts of SWPBS. Unfortunately, 14 of the authors (Bradshaw & Pas, 2011; Caldarella et al., 2011; Eiraldi et al., 2014; Farkas et al., 2012; Franzen & Kamps, 2008; Horner et al., 2009; Lassen et al., 2006; Nese et al., 2014; Oswald et al., 2005; Rusby et al., 2006; Sailor et al., 2006; Scott, 2002; Todd et al., 2002; Warren et al., 2006) met three or fewer criteria for Trainings and Teams which did not provide the reader or fellow researcher with enough information needed in order to recreate the same findings. Additionally, the authors who did not meet all four criteria did not adhere to the foundational guidelines for SWPBS (Sugai & Horner, 2002) or Implementation Blueprint from Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports; Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, 2010). Anderson and colleagues (2010) were the only authors that not meet any criteria for Trainings and Teams.

Seventeen out of the 18 studies met at least one quality indicator for Standard 4: Trainings and Teams. Although most of the studies met one or more quality indicators,

the information provided did not consistently meet SWPBS guidelines. When authors provided information on Trainings or Teams they did not consistently provide matching descriptions. The research on SWPBS has provided inconsistent information on Trainings and Teams. Inconsistent information should not be interpreted as a lack of progress within the field of SWPBS. Seventeen of the authors (Bradshaw et al., 2008; Bradshaw & Pas, 2011; Caldarella et al., 2011; Eiraldi et al., 2014; Farkas et al., 2012; Franzen & Kamps, 2008; Gettinger & Stoiber, 2006; Horner et al., 2009; Lassen et al., 2006; Nese et al., 2014; Nocera et al., 2014; Oswald et al., 2005; Rusby et al., 2006; Sailor et al., 2006; Scott, 2002; Todd et al., 2002; Warren et al., 2006) met the criteria for either staff trainings or staff teams, which means these authors identified part of the foundational guidelines. The progression toward documented SWPBS guidelines and replicable quality research has been slow and inconsistent. Unfortunately, without a replicable description the information provided cannot be generalized.

Standard 5: Established Need

I reviewed all 18 articles in order to determine if they met the criteria for the quality standard, Established Need. I utilized the questions identified within the Implementation Blueprint, which were aimed to personalize the SWPBS approach (Implementation Blueprint from Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports; Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (2010); Sugai & Horner, 2002). I used the questions and the key elements of PBS from Sugai and Horner (2002) to create the six indicators. The six indicators of Established Need consist of (a) need discussed, (b) need operationalized, (c) utilized school discipline data, (d) need identified

by students, (e) need identified by staff, and (f) need identified by parents. I created a description for each of the six indicators as shown in Table 2.9.

Table 2.9: Indicator Descriptions for Standard 5: Established Need

Indicators	Description
Need Discussed	The need for intervention was discussed with replicable precision.
Need Operationalized	The need was used to determine the adoption of SWPBS and was described with replicable precision.
Utilized School Discipline Data	School data discipline was utilized to operationalize the need and was described with replicable precision.
Need Identified by Students	The need was identified by students and was described with replicable precision.
Need Identified by Staff	The need was identified by staff and was described with replicable precision.
Need Identified by Parents	The need was identified by parents and was described with replicable precision.

As shown in Table 2.10, close to half of the authors did not meet a single criterion for Established Need while the other half met the criterion for need discussed (Bradshaw & Pas, 2011; Eiraldi et al., 2014; Farkas et al., 2012; Franzen & Kamps, 2008; Nocera et al., 2014; Oswald et al., 2005; Scott 2002; Todd et al., 2002; Warren et al., 2006). Very few authors met the criteria for need operationalized (Eiraldi et al., 2014; Nocera et al., 2014; Todd et al., 2002), need identified by students (Nocera et al., 2014), staff (Franzen & Kamps, 2008; Nocera et al., 2014), and parents (Nocera et al., 2014). Only one author (Nocera et al., 2014) met all six criteria for Established Need.

Nocera and colleagues (2014) met all six criteria for Established Need. They reported the target school had experienced significant behavior problems, ODR's, and suspensions. The school had not made adequate yearly progress for five consecutive years and had been identified by the district as needing improvement. Students were surveyed on school climate and student resiliency. The results of the survey indicated

that students did not feel empowered and responded to questions stating adults did not listen to them at school and they have no say in their education. A school data team then

Table 2.10: Quality Indicators for Established Need

Main Author	Need Disc.	Need Op.	Data	Stud.	Staff	Par.	# Met
Anderson (2010)							0/6
Bradshaw (2008)							0/6
Bradshaw (2011)	X						1/6
Caldarella (2011)							0/6
Eiraldi (2014)	X	X					2/6
Farkas (2012)	X						1/6
Franzen (2008)	X		X		X		3/6
Gettinger (2006)							0/6
Horner (2009)			X				1/6
Lassen (2006)							0/6
Nese (2014)							0/6
Nocera (2014)	X	X	X	X	X	X	6/6
Oswald (2005)	X						1/6
Rusby (2011)							0/6
Sailor (2006)							0/6
Scott (2002)	X		X				2/6
Todd (2002)	X	X	X				3/6
Warren (2006)	X		X				2/6
Number of Studies	9	3	6	1	2	1	

Note. Need Disc. = Need Discussed; Need Op. = Need Operationalized; Data = Utilized School Discipline Data; Stud. = Need Identified by Student; Staff = Need Identified by Staff; Par. = Need Identified by Parents; # Met = Number of Indicators Met

reviewed the survey and comprised another survey at each grade level. The data team then generated possible solutions. One solution was to review research based practices on behavioral supports. Parent input was then collected through a needs assessment. The data and information was collection process started district wide, then went school wide,

and then made its way down to instructional data teams and teachers. Nocera and colleagues (2014) established a need for SWPBS at the target school through a series of data collected from students, staff, and parents combined with at-risk determined measures identified by the school and the school district. Nocera (2014) met all criteria for established need through a cohesive and sequential description that allowed for possible replication.

Authors of two of the studies (Franzen & Kamps, 2008; Todd et al., 2002) met three criteria for Established Need. Franzen and Kamps (2008) and Todd and colleagues (2002) met the criteria for need discussed and utilizing school discipline data. Franzen and Kamps (2008) identified the need by staff while Todd and colleagues (2002) identified the need through an operationalized method. Todd (2002) stated that school administrators and University staff collected all ODR's and hand tallied the average number of referrals per day, per month, by frequency of location, by student, and by behavior type. This system was completed over the span of one year and was used as an operationalized method for using school discipline data to establish a need. Todd (2002) was one of the few authors who operationalized the need of the school. Authors Franzen and Kamps (2008) stated that prior to year one of SWPBS, 1,962 ODR's were recorded and this number decreased to over 900 after the first year of SWPBS. The authors stated that the school selected SWPBS due to the high rate of behavioral problems. Franzen and Kamps (2008) started their study after year one of SWPBS because the teachers continued to have concerns about problem areas within the cafeteria and the playground. Franzen and Kamps (2008) were one of two authors who stated that the need of the school was identified by staff.

Authors of three of the studies (Eiraldi et al., 2014; Scott, 2002; Warren et al., 2006) met two criteria for Established Need. Scott (2002) and Warren and colleagues (2006) met the criteria for need discussed and utilized school discipline data. Scott (2002) determined that the selected school met the need for SWPBS based upon the school data. The school ranked 275 out of 285 schools in Kentucky, 96% of the students receive free or reduced lunch and were not reading at a proficient state standard, in comparison to school district numbers the selected school has the most behavioral problems and engages in seclusion disciplinary actions more than any other school in the district. Warren and colleagues (2006) identified the need of the school as a school within a community characterized by crime, poverty, and limited resources. The selected school had already started year one of SWPBS and continued to give five ORD's to 42% of the students and a total of 81% of the students had received at least one ORD. The numbers and rates for ODR's remained elevated, even after year one of SWPBS. Eiraldi and colleagues (2014) met two criteria for need discussed and need operationalized. They discussed the need of the schools due to socio-economic break down. The need was operationalized through data collection on a needs assessment, assessed symptom profile, mental health service utilization, investigated risk and protection factors, a collection and a review of all evidence based interventions, pilot tested SWPBS, and evidence based interventions for externalized behaviors and anxiety. Eiraldi (2014) was one of the few groups of authors who met the criteria for need operationalized. Eiraldi (2014) utilized the most in-depth approach to operationalizing the need.

Authors of four of the studies (Bradshaw et al., 2008; Farkas et al., 2012; Horner et al., 2009; Oswald et al., 2005) met one criterion of Established Need. All four authors

Bradshaw and colleagues (2008), Farkas and colleagues (2012), Horner and colleagues (2009), and Oswald and colleagues (2005) met the same criterion for need discussed. Authors Bradshaw and colleagues (2008) and Horner and colleagues (2009) both identified a need through a statewide initiative. Farkas and colleagues (2012) and Oswald and colleagues (2005) both established an over all need for discipline and unified actions. Unfortunately, the rest of the eight authors (Anderson et al., 2010; Bradshaw et al., 2008; Caldarella et al., 2011; Gettinger & Stoiber, 2006; Lassen et al., 2006; Nese et al., 2014; Rusby et al., 2011; Sailor et al., 2006) did not meet the criteria for Established Need.

Summary of Standard 5: Established Need

In summary, one (Nocera et al., 2014) out of the 18 studies met all six criteria for Established Need. Nocera and colleagues (2014) met all criteria for Established Need with a thorough description detailed enough for possible replication. Authors of two studies (Franzen & Kamps, 2008; Todd et al., 2002) met three out of the six criteria for Established Need. Franzen and Kamps (2008) and Todd and colleagues (2002) met two criteria for need discussed and utilized school discipline data. Todd and colleagues (2002) were one of the few authors who operationalized the need by the school. Seven studies (Bradshaw et al., 2008; Eiraldi et al., 2014; Farkas et al., 2012; Horner et al., 2009; Oswald et al., 2005; Scott, 2002; Warren et al., 2006) met two or less criteria for Established Need. The remaining eight studies (Anderson et al., 2010; Bradshaw et al., 2008; Caldarella et al., 2011; Gettinger & Stoiber, 2008; Lassen et al., 2006; Nese et al., 2014; Rusby et al., 2011; Sailor et al., 2006) did not meet a single criterion for Need Established.

Nine (Bradshaw et al., 2008; Eiraldi et al., 2014; Farkas et al., 2012; Franzen & Kamps, 2008; Nocera et al., 2014; Oswald et al., 2005; Scott, 2002; Todd et al., 2002; Warren et al., 2006) out of the 18 studies met the criterion for need discussed. This was the most met criterion. Three (Bradshaw et al., 2008; Farkas et al., 2012; Oswald et al., 2005) of nine studies did not meet any other criteria. The three authors (Bradshaw et al., 2008; Farkas et al., 2012; Oswald et al., 2005) discussed that there was a need for their schools but did not identify how this information was known and through what methods they used to collect such information. Three different authors (Eiraldi et al., 2014; Nocera et al., 2014; Todd et al., 2002) out of the nine studies that met the criteria for need discussed also met the criteria for need operationalized. They described an approach to collecting information to support the need. Two of the studies (Nocera et al., 2014; Todd et al., 2002) met the criterion; utilized school data discipline. These studies connected the need of the school with an operationalized approach to student ODR's. One study (Nocera et al., 2014) used more than ORD's and provided information to support a need established by the students, by the staff, and by the parents. Nocera and colleagues (2014) were the only authors to meet all six quality indicators for Standard 5: Established Need.

The research has not demonstrated a strong approach to include students, staff, and parents through a process of collective need. The limited number of studies that met the criteria for operationalized need also emphasized this shortfall. With respect to one study (Nocera et al., 2014) the research provided lacks significant strides toward a supported and identified need within schools. If an established need has been identified without a collected need from all stakeholders, then that need has not been accurately

assessed. Foundational guidelines for SWPBS outlines that a need has been established through documented ODR's and student disciplinary actions records. However, Bradshaw and colleagues (2011) were the only authors that documented student discipline data within quality Standard 1: Student Participants with enough descriptive detail for possible replication. Even though some of the authors met the criteria within Standard 5: Established Need for utilized school discipline data the documentation about student discipline has not been met by many authors within Student Participants. In review of the current research I have uncovered a significant discrepancy between implemented SWPBS foundational guidelines and quality research standards.

Standard 6: Systematic Evaluation

Each of the 18 articles have been reviewed for a Systematic Evaluation of collecting information to document an established need. The five criteria for the quality Standard 6: Systematic Evaluation include; (a) systematic evaluation identified prior to SWPBS, (b) systematic evaluation described, (c) systematic evaluation use of school-based information, (d) systematic evaluation conducted by school staff or by non-school staff, and (e) systematic evaluation supported the identification of SWPBS adoption and implementation. I created a description for each of the five quality indicators as shown in Table 2.11.

As shown in Table 2.12, a majority of the authors did not meet the criteria for Systematic Evaluation. Four (Bradshaw et al., 2008; Nocera et al., 2014; Oswald et al., 2005; Todd et al., 2002) out of the 18 studies met the criteria for systematic evaluation identified prior to the adoption of SWPBS and the systematic evaluation was conducted

by school staff. Only authors of two studies (Nocera et al., 2014; Todd et al., 2002) met all six criteria for Systematic Evaluation.

Table 2.11: Indicator Descriptions for Standard 6: Systematic Evaluation

Indicator	Description
Systematic Evaluation Identified prior to SWPBS	The systematic evaluation was identified prior to the adoption of SWPBS with replicable precision.
Systematic Evaluation Described	The systematic evaluation was described with replicable precision.
Systematic Evaluation use of school based information	The systematic evaluation uses school based information with replicable precision.
Systematic Evaluation conducted by staff	The systematic evaluation conducted by school staff with replicable precision.
Systematic Evaluation Conducted by non-school staff	The systematic evaluation conducted by non-school staff with replicable precision.
Systematic Evaluation supported identification of SWPBS adoption and implementation	The information from the systematic evaluation was used to support the adoption and implementation of SWPBS with replicable precision.

Authors of two of the studies (Nocera et al., 2014; Todd et al., 2002) met all six criteria for Systematic Evaluation. Nocera and colleagues (2014) established levels of assessments over the course of two years prior to SWPBIS. A detailed description of how the assessments were collected was described and completed by students, staff, and parents. For example, a survey was administered to students in grades seventh through eighth from an unrelated research study. The survey is used exclusively by the Iowa Department of Education. The survey addressed school climate and student resiliency and the results of the survey showed that students did not feel empowered. Over the course of the next school year a data team was established, grade level teams completed a school climate strengths and weakness summary, parents completed needs assessments,

and all participants signed a compact to agree to support each other for the purpose of supporting each others roles.

Table 2.12: Quality Indicators for Systematic Evaluation

Main Author	Identified Prior	Described	School Info.	Staff	Non-Sch. Staff	Supported SWPBS	# Ind. Met
Anderson (2010)							0/6
Bradshaw (2008)	X	X	X				3/6
Bradshaw (2011)							0/6
Caldarella (2011)							0/6
Eiraldi (2014)							0/6
Farkas (2012)							0/6
Franzen (2008)							0/6
Gettinger (2006)							0/6
Horner (2009)							0/6
Lassen (2006)							0/6
Nese (2014)							0/6
Nocera (2014)	X	X	X	X	X	X	6/6
Oswald (2005)	X		X			X	3/6
Rusby (2011)							0/6
Sailor (2006)							0/6
Scott (2002)							0/6
Todd (2002)	X	X	X	X	X	X	6/6
Warren (2006)							0/6
Number of Studies	4	3	4	2	2	3	

Note. Identified Prior = Systematic Evaluation Identified Prior to SWPBS; Described = Systematic Evaluation Described; School Info = Systematic Evaluation Use of School Based Information; Staff = Systematic Evaluation Conducted by Staff; Non-Sch. Staff = Systematic Evaluation Conducted by Non-school Staff; Supported SWPBS = Systematic Evaluation Supported Identification of SWPBS Adoptions and Implementation; # Ind.Met = Number of Indicators Met

School personnel were given various options of supports to choose from and selected SWPBIS. Nocera and colleagues (2014) seamlessly linked their repeated assessments

directly to an established need, which supported the adoption and implementation of SWPBIS.

Todd and colleagues (2002) identified a need for supports through a state initiative. The selected elementary school implemented school improvement goals and the authors Todd and colleagues (2002) helped to assist. Students were tracked and monitored through ODR's. The ODR's were very specific and consisted of the students name, their behavior problem, date, time, location, referring person, and administrative consequences. University staff tallied the average number of referrals, frequency by location, frequency by student, and frequency by behavior type. Fighting and aggressive behavior on the playground was discovered through a review of ODR's. Through staff meetings, discussions, and a review of ODR assessment results, staff agreed to focus on defining and teaching playground rules and expectations.

Authors of two of the studies (Bradshaw et al., 2008; Oswald et al., 2005) met three criteria for Systematic Evaluation. Bradshaw and colleagues (2008) and Oswald and colleagues (2005) both met the criteria for a systematic evaluation identified prior to SWPBS and systematic evaluation use of school based information. Bradshaw and colleagues (2005) met a third criterion for describing a systematic evaluation. Bradshaw (2005) used the Organizational Health Inventory (OHI) prior to the initial PBIS trainings. Although OHI was given to staff prior to SWPBIS, all staff knew PBIS would be implemented as Maryland Public School District volunteered to participate within the trial. A detailed description was provided, for example, all OHI's were bulk mailed to the schools and the principals administered them to all school staff. All participation was voluntary and written consent was provided. All staff members were given a small

incentive within their OHI packet, which included a disposable pen or a bookmark along with a self addressed and stamped envelope for return. Oswald and colleagues (2005) met the criteria for systematic evaluation identified prior to SWPBIS, systematic evaluation use of school based information, and the systematic evaluation supported the identification of SWPBS adoption and implementation. Oswald (2005) provides this information in a very clear and matter a fact way by stating there is a need at the selected school and to get started. Staff were asked to complete a needs assessment called the Effective Behavior Support Survey (EBS). The results of the survey helped the University consultants facilitate discussions with staff. Results of the survey and discussion groups were calculated. Staff members were then asked to develop a set of school-wide rules followed by behavioral expectations for each setting. A PBIS team was the formed and SWPBIS was implemented.

Summary of Standard 6: Systematic Evaluation

In summary, four (Bradshaw et al., 2008; Nocera et al., 2014; Oswald et al., 2005; Todd et al., 2002) out of 18 studies (Anderson et al., 2010; Bradshaw & Pas, 2011; Caldarella et al., 2011; Eiraldi et al., 2014; Farkas et al., 2012; Franzen & Kamps, 2008; Gettinger & Stoiber, 2008; Horner et al., 2009; Lassen et al., 2006; Nese et al., 2014; Rusby et al., 2011; Sailor et al., 2006; Scott 2002; Warren et al., 2006) met the criteria for Systematic Evaluation. Nocera and colleagues (2014) provided the most detailed information for all six criteria. Todd and colleagues (2002) met all six criteria as well, however, the descriptions were not as strong as Nocera and colleagues (2014). Information provided by Oswald and colleagues (2005) was easy to follow and systematically sequential. On the other hand, Bradshaw and colleagues (2008) provided

similarly detailed information when compared to Oswald (2005). Unfortunately, 14 of the remaining studies (Anderson et al., 2010; Bradshaw & Pas, 2011; Caldarella et al., 2011; Eiraldi et al., 2014; Farkas et al., 2012; Franzen & Kamps, 2008; Gettinger & Stoiber, 2008; Horner et al., 2009; Lassen et al., 2006; Nese et al., 2014; Rusby et al., 2011; Sailor et al., 2006; Scott 2002; Warren et al., 2006) did not meet a single criteria for Systematic Evaluation.

The research reviewed does not support a strong use of systematic evaluations prior to the adoption and or implementation process of SWPBIS. A majority of the studies did not meet a single criterion for Systematic Evaluations. The current needs of students, staff, and parents were not assessed using a systematic approach to collect the information prior to the adoption of SWPBIS. There was no documented use of school-based information collected by school staff or non-school staff to support input from stakeholder's prior the adoption of SWPBIS. There was no direct correlations or described intent behind the adoption and or implementation of SWPBS based upon the purpose of SWPBIS. With only two authors (Nocera et al., 2014; Todd et al., 2002) having met criteria for quality Standard 6: Systematic Evaluation, the current research does not support a planned approach, with input from all stakeholders, on the needs of the school and making sure that needs match the supports provided by SWPBIS. Without a systematic evaluation and a process to this approach how can school personnel be sure they need SWPBIS? If SWPBIS is adopted but does not address their need, how can school personnel be sure SWPBIS was an appropriate match to try and address the need?

Standard 7: Buy-in

I reviewed all 18 articles to see if they met the criteria for the quality Standard 7: Buy-in. I created Buy-in based upon Sugai and Horner's 2002 pivotal article on SWPBIS and their recommendations. In the article by Sugai and Horner (2002) they identified that at least 80% of school staff must agree with the adoption and implementation of SWPBIS in order for it to be successful. I established three criteria for Buy-in; (a) specifically identified school staff buy-in, (b) description of school staff buy in, and (c) evidence of school staff buy-in. I created a description for each of the three indicators as shown in Table 2.13.

Table 2.13: Indicator Descriptions for Standard 7: Buy-in

Indicators	Description
Specifically identified school staff buy-in	School staff buy-in was specifically identified with replicable precision.
Description of school staff buy-in	School staff buy-in was described with replicable precision.
Evidence of school staff buy-in	Evidence of school staff buy-in was provided with replicable precision.

As shown in Table 2.14, a majority of the authors did not meet the criteria for Buy-in. A few studies (Nocera et al., 2014; Scott, 2002; Warren et al., 2006) met all three criteria in unique and different ways. All of the studies that described Buy-in met the same criterion for identified school staff buy-in (Caldarella et al., 2011; Nocera et al., 2014; Scott, 2002; Warren et al., 2006).

Authors of three studies (Nocera et al., 2014; Scott, 2002; Warren et al., 2006) met all three criteria for Buy-in. Scott (2002) identified teacher buy-in through a series of one-hour meetings. Scott (2002) met with all school personnel and described the details

such as; the procedures for positive behavioral supports, the level of commitment staff needed to provide, and that the commitment had to be for the whole school year.

Table 2.14: Quality Indicators for Buy-in

Main Author	Identified buy-in	Describe buy-in	Evidence of buy-in	# Indicators Met
Anderson (2010)				0/3
Bradshaw (2008)	X			1/3
Bradshaw (2011)				0/3
Caldarella (2011)	X	X		2/3
Eiraldi (2014)				0/3
Farkas (2012)				0/3
Franzen (2008)				0/3
Gettinger (2006)				0/3
Horner (2009)				0/3
Lassen (2006)				0/3
Nese (2014)				0/3
Nocera (2014)	X	X	X	3/3
Oswald (2005)				0/3
Rusby (2011)				0/3
Sailor (2006)				0/3
Scott (2002)	X	X	X	3/3
Todd (2002)				0/3
Warren (2006)	X	X	X	3/3
Number of Studies	5	4	3	

Note. Identified buy-in = Specifically Identified School Staff Buy-in; Describe buy-in = Description of School Staff Buy-in; Evidence of buy-in = Evidence of School Staff Buy-in; # Indicators Met = Number of Indicators Met

On the third one-hour meeting all staff were asked to vote on whether or not they were willing to participate in SWPBIS. All staff voted unanimously to adopt SWPBIS for the next school year. Warren and colleagues (2006) initially identified that the staff and personnel within their study were not interested in adding something else to their plate. Once Warren and colleagues (2006) discovered such resistance they agreed to establish a rapport with all personnel and built a better relationship so staff felt their school's

challenges and characteristics were understood. Over the course of a year, Warren and colleagues (2006) established a positive relationship by completing the following: supported administrators in the facilitation of school assemblies, meet with groups or teachers to listen to their feelings about the schools challenges, shared data on school based teacher surveys, participated in a student vs. faculty basketball game, and provided behavioral support for a select number of students that were identified as needing special assistance. Once rapport was established, teachers and administrators agreed to support SWPBIS. Authors Nocera and colleagues (2014) described initial resistance from teachers and identified that there was not 100% buy-in from all staff during the beginning stages. However, as SWPBIS grew with success so did teachers acceptance. Nocera and colleagues (2014) provided multiple statements throughout their study that documented teacher's comments during the whole process. Teacher's comments were also collected through interviews and descriptions were provided to support how staff interpreted different aspects of the SWPBS process.

Caldarella and colleagues (2011) met two criteria for identified school staff Buy-in and provided a description of it. In trying to establish teacher Buy-in Caldarella and colleagues (2011) stated there was a need for more teacher trainings in order to fully inform all teachers and further enhance Buy-in. Once teacher Buy-in was identified it was described as being established through presentations on best practices, in-services, professional development and reinforcement, which included funds, behavioral support with students, and teacher gift cards for completing questionnaires.

Bradshaw and colleagues (2008) met one criterion and specifically identified school staff Buy-in. Bradshaw and colleagues (2008) identified school staff Buy-in

simply and stated that a majority of staff had to display a willingness toward SWPBIS as a prerequisite for the implementation within Maryland Public School districts. Therefore the schools within Bradshaw and colleagues (2008) study were willing and used SWPBIS based on a state wide initiative.

Summary of Standard 7: Buy-in

In summary, five (Bradshaw et al., 2008; Caldarella et al., 2011; Nocera et al., 2014; Scott, 2002; Warren et al., 2006) out of the 18 studies identified school staff Buy-in within the components of SWPBIS. Out of those five studies, four of them (Caldarella et al., 2011; Nocera et al., 2014; Scott, 2002; Warren et al., 2006) not only identified Buy-in but also described it with enough detail for possible replication. Out of those four studies, three studies (Nocera et al., 2014; Scott, 2002; Warren et al., 2006) provided evidence to support Buy-in. All three studies provided evidence in different ways. Scott (2002) and Warren and colleagues (2006) gained the support and trust of staff through a process of trainings. Scott (2002) gained support over three, one-hour trainings. Warren and colleagues (2006) went above and beyond to make a strong connect with their identified school staff. They identified that the school staff were not interested and saw SWPBIS as additional work; therefore, the authors worked with them and showed their continued support in various ways over the course of a year. Nocera and colleagues (2014) were the only authors who specifically identified that staff Buy-in was not at 100% when SWPBIS began; although, it did increase the more staff found success with SWPBIS.

Three (Nocera et al., 2014; Scott, 2002; Warren et al., 2006) out of the 18 studies met all the criteria for quality Standard 7: Buy-in. Two (Bradshaw et al., 2008;

Caldarella et al., 2011) studies met some of the criteria and either lacked Buy-in evidence or Buy-in description and Buy-in evidence. The remaining 13 studies (Anderson et al., 2010; Bradshaw & Pas, 2011; Eiraldi et al., 2014; Farkas et al., 2012; Franzen & Kamps, 2008; Gettinger & Stoiber, 2008; Horner et al., 2009; Lassen et al., 2006; Nese et al., 2014; Oswald et al., 2005; Rusby et al., 2011; Sailor et al., 2006; Todd et al., 2002) did not meet the criteria for Standard 7: Buy-in. The recommended staff Buy-in of at least 80% as suggested by Sugai and Horner (2002) in order for SWPBIS to be successful was not supported by the review of research. A majority of the studies reviewed did not provide this information, which disconnects stakeholders and also compromises the implementation process of SWPBIS since most school personnel who implement the bulk of SWPBIS are staff. A lack of documentation around staff Buy-in was consistent with the lack of documentation around stakeholder data for students, staff, and parents on Standard 5: Established Need. A majority of research on SWPBIS does not support staff Buy-in as a part of the SWPBIS process.

Summary

After I reviewed all 18 studies to see if they met the criteria for each of the seven quality standards, I discovered five emergent areas. The five areas were more complex with each added quality standard. The five areas consisted of: the number of studies that met the most criteria for each of the seven quality standards; the number of studies that met the most quality standards; the discrepancy between quality standards met and recommended foundational guidelines of SWPBIS; the lack of stakeholder input prior to SWPBIS, established need, systematic evaluation; and what was needed prior to SWPBIS based upon the current research.

Although a diverse number of studies were able to meet the criteria for each of the seven quality standards, none of the 18 studies met all seven quality standards. None of the 18 studies met all seven criteria for Staff Participants. Authors of two (Caldarella et al., 2011; Lassen et al., 2006) out of the 18 studies met five out of the seven criteria for Student Participants. Authors of two (Bradshaw et al., 2008; Gettinger & Stoiber, 2006) out of the 18 studies met all four criteria for Staff Participants. All authors of all 18 studies met the state/region criterion for Context and Setting. Franzen and Kamps (2008) were the only authors to meet all six criteria within Context and Setting. Three (Bradshaw et al., 2008; Eiraldi et al., 2014; Gettinger & Stoiber, 2006) out of 18 authors meet all four criteria for Trainings and Teams. Nocera and colleagues (2014) were the only authors to meet all six criteria for Established Need. Authors of two (Nocera et al., 2014; Todd et al., 2002) out of 18 studies met all the criteria for Systematic Evaluation. Authors of three (Nocera et al., 2014; Scott, 2002; Warren et al., 2006) out of 18 studies met the criteria for Buy-in.

Three (Bradshaw et al., 2008; Gettinger & Stoiber, 2006; Nocera et al., 2014) out of the 18 studies met the most number of quality standards. Nocera and colleagues (2014) were the authors that met the most criteria across all seven quality standards. They met all criteria for Established Need, Systematic Evaluation, and Buy-in. Nocera and colleagues (2014) met the criteria for five out of the six indicators for Setting and Context but lacked a setting description. Even though Nocera and colleagues (2014) met the most quality standards they did not provide enough information on Student Participants and met only three out of seven criteria. They also did not provide enough information on Staff Participants and met one out of four criteria.

Authors, Bradshaw and colleagues (2008) and Gettinger and Stoiber (2006) both met all criteria for Staff Participants and Trainings and Teams. Bradshaw and colleagues (2008) met four out of six standards for Context and Setting, three out of six criteria for Systematic Evaluation, and one out of the three criteria for Buy-in. However, they did not meet a single criterion for Student Participants or Established Need. Gettinger and Stoiber (2006) met two out of the seven criteria for Student Participants and met four out of the six criteria for Context and Setting. They did not meet a single criterion for Established need, Systematic Evaluation, or Buy-in.

Only one (Nocera et al., 2014) out of the 18 studies was able to meet three out of the seven quality standards for implementing SWPBIS. Even the most detailed study (Nocera et al., 2014) significantly lacked consistent information, which limited its ability to be replicated. For example, Nocera and colleagues (2014) did not provide information on special education eligibility or student discipline. Both of these areas impact the success rate of SWPBIS and must be reported upon. They also did not provide information on the number of staff that implemented SWPBIS, their age, or gender, all of which allows other researchers to understand the personnel who implemented SWPBIS. Out of the 18 studies, the most well documented study was not replicable.

The research on SWPBIS provided inconsistent and scattered information. As a result a discrepancy emerged between quality standards not met and the recommended foundational guidelines of SWPBIS. Sugai and Horner (2002) reported the need to collect data prior to SWPBIS. Part of that data collection included student records. The first quality Standard 1: Student Participants was not met by any of the 18 studies. Student discipline was reported on by only one study (Bradshaw & Pas, 2011). Student

discipline is critical to SWPBIS and must be reported upon during the data collection process as recommended by Sugai and Horner (2002). The data provided on Student Participants was insufficient from all 18 studies.

Sugai and Horner (2002) reported the need for school personnel to devise SWPBIS Teams to support the implementation process and to conduct SWPBIS Trainings for the rest of the staff. Two authors (Bradshaw et al., 2008; Gettinger & Stoiber, 2006) met Quality Standard 4: Trainings and Teams the remaining authors provided scattered data. Information provided was either on Teams or Trainings but not both. More authors reported upon Trainings than Teams. Foundational guidelines of Trainings and Teams for SWPBIS were not addressed consistently.

Lastly, Sugai and Horner (2002) reported that in order for SWPBIS to be successful at least 80% of staff Buy-in was needed. Buy-in was the second lowest quality Standard reported on from all 18 studies, the lowest being Systematic Evaluation. Three (Nocera et al., 2014; Scott, 2002; Warren et al., 2006) out of 18 studies met the criteria for this Standard. A majority of the authors had not even address this within their studies. Without documentation of staff Buy-in it was not clear if staff were included within the process of adopting SWPBIS. A consistent lack of staff input was discovered throughout the entire SWPBIS process and engulfed all stakeholders. Sugai and Horner (2002) recommended a collaboration of input from all stakeholders prior to implementing SWPBIS.

The lack of input from all stakeholders was demonstrated consistently across Standards. Limited information provided on Student and Staff Participants were not the only areas this was seen. In Established Need and Systematic Evaluation, a combination

of three authors (Franzen & Kamps 2008; Nocera et al., 2014; Todd et al., 2002) met the criteria for staff input in both Standards. Nocera and colleagues (2014) were the only authors to report and include student and parent input for Established Need. A majority of the authors did not include input from stakeholders prior to implementing SWPBIS, which was against the recommendation by Sugai and Horner (2002) for a successful adoption of SWPBIS. Without collected stakeholder input documented staff Buy-in would not be possible. Inconsistent information provided by authors continued with Franzen and Kamps (2008) and Todd and colleagues (2002) that previously provided stakeholder input, however, were not able to meet a single criterion for Buy-in. In regards to these studies in particular it was unclear if staff were against the adoption as no confirming or contradicting information was provided. Student, staff, and parent input was consistently absent from a majority of the research on the adoption and implementation of SWPBIS.

The Standards of Established Need and Systematic Evaluation were not consistently met by the 18 studies. Out of the nine (Bradshaw et al., 2008; Eiraldi et al., 2014; Farkas et al., 2012; Franzen & Kamps, 2008; Nocera et al., 2014; Oswald et al., 2005; Scott, 2002; Todd et al., 2002; Warren et al., 2006) studies that met the criteria need discussed within Established Need. Only three (Nocera et al., 2014; Oswald et al., 2005; Todd et al., 2002) of the nine studies met the criteria for identified need prior to SWPBIS within Systematic Evaluation. Which means, although half of the 18 studies were able to identify a need of some sort within their schools, they did not purposefully identify that need through an operationalized approach that included all stakeholders while systematically evaluating everyone in order fully understand the specific level of

need and ultimately allowing all parties to identify a solvable approach or intervention.

Without this approach how would stakeholders know the adoption and implementation of SWPBIS is appropriate?

Based upon the current research an established need must be documented through a systematic evaluation process that includes input from all stakeholders prior to the selection a school wide intervention, such as SWPBIS. In 2005, Odom and colleagues suggested a process approach to determining which factors lead to the adoption of evidence-based practices. The findings from the 18 studies revealed that this process approach is not happening consistently. A compounding part of this is that “most studies...vary in the quality of the evidence they provide” (Thompson, Diamond, McWilliam, Snyder & Snyder, 2005). In order for researchers to accurately understand the true effects of a school wide intervention such as SWPBIS, all stakeholders must be included within the process and evidence must be collected through a systematic way to establish a level of need. Once the evidence is collected it must be evaluated and results must be reviewed with stakeholders to determine if the level of need meets the demand of a whole school intervention.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

The following section includes the purpose and design of the study. The purpose of this mixed method sequential explanatory (MMSE) design research study was to explore the issues of school climate in order to identify a systematic approach that was appropriate to establish a level of need to address school wide interventions. My goal of using a MMSE design was to collect and analyze stakeholder data from surveys and focus groups interviews to inform the development of a systematic evaluation that supported an established level of need. The goal of the evaluation phases of the study was to identify emergent themes within the data and interpret how stakeholders described such themes in relation to school climate. The rationale for applying mixed methods in the study was to gain more insight into how current school climate conditions affected the selections of school wide interventions in order to lead to more effective problem solving solutions.

Research Questions

- 1: How do administrators and staff perceive school climate and specific elements of school climate?
- 2: Are there differences in the perception of school climate between administrators and staff members?
- 3: How do staff members perceive SWPBIS, the need for SWPBIS in their schools, and their role within a SWPBIS model?
- 4: How do administrators describe school climate, changes in school climate, the need for SWPBIS, and their role within all of it?

Research Design

I used a mixed methods sequential explanatory (MMSE) design. Mixed methods research integrates both quantitative research and qualitative research within a single study (Creswell, 2013). A MMSE design implies collecting data through one method first, such as quantitative data, analyzing it, then collecting qualitative data second, and analyzing it or vice versa collecting qualitative data first and quantitative data second. For the purposes of this study I collected quantitative data first and analyzed it, then collected qualitative data second and analyzed it (Ivankova, Creswell, & Stick, 2006). When qualitative data is collected second it explains and compliments the quantitative data within a MMSE design (Creswell, 2013).

Creswell (2013) identified seven basic reasons or rationales for using mixed method research designs. His seven basic reasons were: (1) the need for different or multiple perspective, or a more complete understanding; (2) the need to confirm quantitative measures with qualitative experiences; (3) the need to explain quantitative results; (4) the need for better contextualized instruments, measures, or interventions to reach certain populations; (5) the need to enhance experiments; (6) the need to gather trend data and individual perspectives from community members; (7) and the need to evaluate the success of a program by using a needs assessment and a test of the success of the program (Creswell, 2013). Rationales one and six from Creswell (2013) matched the aim of my study and were supported by the literary review I completed on SWPBIS. I used the following rationales for my MMSE design: the need for different and multiple perspectives of school climate; the need for a complete understanding of school climate;

and the need to gather trend data and individual perspectives from the different school members.

There were four procedural aspects to the MMSE design: timing, weighting, mixing, and theorizing (Creswell, 2009). The timing in an MMSE design study referred to the data collected through quantitative and qualitative methods. The term sequentially within the MMSE design referred to the timing of the quantitative and qualitative data collection. When the data was collected sequentially it was collected in phases. There were two consecutive phases of my MMSE design. The first phase was the quantitative data collection and analysis and the second phase was the qualitative data collection and analysis.

Weighting was a factor used within my mixed methods designs (Creswell, 2009). Weighting means to prioritize or weight either the quantitative research, or the qualitative research, or equal parts to both. In my study the quantitative research was conducted first and the analysis of the quantitative data guided the second phase the qualitative research. The weight or priority was given to the quantitative research.

The quantitative data and qualitative data within my MMSE design were mixed after they were analyzed. The analysis of the first phase of the research was connected to the analysis of the second phase of the research and was considered connected (Creswell, 2009). My MMSE design was connected in a two-phase study, the first phase was the quantitative research data collection and analysis, and the second phase was the qualitative research data collection and analysis. The quantitative data and qualitative data were connected during the phases of the analysis.

Theorizing was part of the procedural aspects of mixed methods research design that encompassed the theories and or lenses that shaped the type of questions I asked: who participated, how the data was collected, and the implications (Creswell, 2009). To develop a theoretical framework, I examined the development of behavior research and PBIS. First, in 1968, Baer, Wolf, and Risley extended their experimental analysis of behavior past behavior principals to the study of human behavior. Their seminal article laid the foundation for changes in adults and children both academically and socially. Their theories on behavior were critical for the reauthorization of, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1997 (IDEA) which, included positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) as a part of practice and discipline within classrooms. This PBIS model was an extension of the original theories of behavior applied in a system-wide practical setting.

In 2002, Sugai and Horner wrote a pivotal article that specifically outlined SWPBIS as a process through a series of elements and foundational guidelines. They identified several factors that were needed in order to make the implementation and or adoption of SWPBIS successful. These factors included teams, trainings, documentation of student's records that included office disciplinary referrals (ODR), and staff buy-in of at least 80% prior to adoption of SWPBIS. The factors were a natural extension of the work of Baer, Wolf, and Risley (1968) and extended the theory of behavior into a theoretical model that consisted of specific required elements for development and implementation in schools. The subsequent 15 years of research on SWPBIS was devoid of multiple factors, specifically the requirement that all stakeholders supported the implementation of a PBIS model prior to adoption. Additionally, the research has not

included the critical baseline data collection that was a fundamental component of the work of Baer, Wolf, and Risley (1968) as well as the extensive body of work from Sugai and Horner (2002) that led to the development of the SWPBIS framework. Currently, the research revealed a fundamental disconnect between the theory and the practice that has lead to an inaccurate and inappropriate implementation of an intervention called SWPBIS that does not meet the theoretical or practical requirements of the model.

Mixed methods sequential explanatory design was an appropriate design for this study because it addressed my research questions. The study was consisted of two integrated strands: quantitative and qualitative. The quantitative data was collected first, from administrators and staff members. The data was collected through a survey on school climate. The goal of the quantitative strand was to identify stakeholder's perception of school climate and to understand differences in their perceptions. The quantitative data was then be analyzed for trends.

Once quantitative data trends were analyzed focus group interviews were held for both groups of stakeholders. The goal of the second qualitative strand was to explain the perceptions of school climate and changes in school climate. I used sequential timing where the quantitative strand was followed by the qualitative strand (Ivankova, 2015). Priority was given to the quantitative strand because participants from the quantitative strand were given a survey and those results were shared with participants form the qualitative strand. The emergent trends from the school climate survey guided the focus group interview questions.

Figure 3.1 demonstrates the conceptual model I used in my MMSE design (Ivankova, 2015). I used an MMSE design study that produced practical knowledge and promoted equitable and sustainable growth in the field of special education.

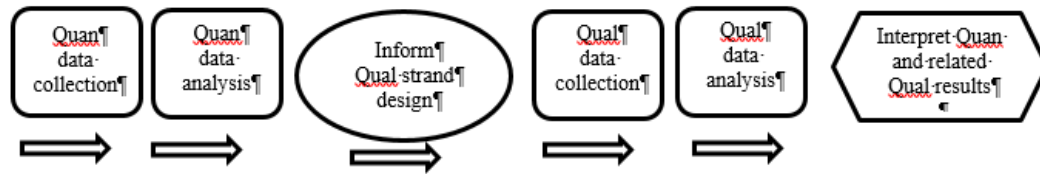


Figure 3.1. A Conceptual Model of a Mixed Method Sequential Explanatory Research Design. This figure explains the Mixed Method Sequential Explanatory Research Design process in sequential stages (Ivankova, 2015).

My study was a unique opportunity to examine a school district that was not implementing any schoolwide behavioral interventions, and had not implemented SWPBIS, which has occurred in nearly all schools nationally. As a result, I examined the school climate, consistent with the theoretical framework of Baer, Wolf, and Risley (1968) and the subsequent SWPBIS model of Sugai and Horner (2002) based on that theoretical framework. I examined the school climate needs of a rural district, examined staff perceptions of SWPBIS and the need for SWPBIS. The findings allowed me to examine the relationship between the perceptions of school climate and the perceptions of the need for SWPBIS consistent with the original theoretical model. This allowed me to examine the feasibility to follow the original theoretical model for SWPBIS in a school district to: (1) understand perceptions of school climate from stakeholders, (2) examine the level of buy-in for SWPBIS from staff, and (3) to understand the rationale for support or rejections of the SWPBIS model, as well as to understand what it took to achieve 80% buy-in, consistent with the theoretical framework of the SWPBIS model. This allowed

me to determine the feasibility of developing a blueprint for school climate and disciplinary reform in the district with or without SWPBIS. This research filled a substantial gap in our existing research, and was designed to demonstrate the current school climate from the perspectives of stakeholders and the gauge of staff buy-in that were critical, but, missing, components of school disciplinary reform. My study consisted of phases spread across two populations of stakeholders: administrators and staff members.

Setting

My study setting was in a town that had a population of 14,929 people located in a North Eastern state (United States Census Bureau. Quick Facts, 2016). The median household income between the years 2011 – 2015 was \$76,881 (United States Census Bureau. Quick Facts, 2016). The rural town consisted of one public school district made up of five public schools (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. School and District Profiles, 2016). The school district had 2,354 students in attendance from pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. School and District Profiles, 2016).

All schools were located within a close proximity to the center of town. The five schools ranged in grades: first school consisted of pre-school – kindergarten; second school consisted of first grade – third grade; third school consisted of fourth grade – sixth grade; fourth school consisted of seventh grade – eighth grade; and the fifth school consisted of ninth grade – twelfth grade. The study utilized stakeholder data from third grade through eighth grade because much of the research on SWPBIS did not target high school students.

School two. School two was an elementary school that consisted of grades first through third. The school design was a one-floor building and was formed in a series of three circles placed in a line with each of the circle edges touching. The building design was unique and the building administrators utilize each circle for individual grade levels. One circle was for first grade, one circle was for second grade, and one circle was for third grade.

School three. School three was an elementary school made up of grades fourth through sixth. This school was the community school that consisted of one floor and did not have a particularly unique or identifiable shape to the building. As the community school it served as an area for public town use: recreational basketball, recreational swimming, after school programs, and after school meetings.

School four. The fourth school was a middle school and was made up of grades seventh through eighth. This school had two floors and was shaped like a rectangle. The school had a small playing field behind it for soccer and lacrosse.

District characteristics. The district was predominately made up of Caucasian students with 89.5% White, 3.9% Hispanic, 2.3 % Multi-Race Non-Hispanic, 2.1% African American, 1.8% Asian, 0.2% Native American, 0.2% Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. School and District Profiles, 2016). The district population consisted of 30.8% high needs students with disabilities, 18% students with disabilities, 18.3% free and reduced lunch, and 0.7% English Language Learners (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. School and District Profiles, 2016). High needs students were those who were at risk; academic failure; in need of special assistance such as living in poverty; far below grade level; at

risk of not graduating; homeless; in foster care with disabilities, or were English learners (Department of Education. Definitions, 2017). Students with disabilities were defined as those who were on IEP's (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. School and District Profiles, 2016).

The student population was 1,157 for grades third through eighth (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. School and District Profiles, 2016). Table 3.2 shows the student demographic information.

Table 3.2 Demographic Information

Student Characteristics	school two	school three	school four
African American	2%	2.60%	2.30%
Asian	1.20%	2.40%	1.50%
Hispanic/Latino	5%	4.00%	1.50%
Native American	0.60%	0.00%	0.00%
White	88.60%	88.40%	92.20%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.00%	0.30%	0.30%
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic	2.60%	2.20%	2.30%
Male	52.09%	50.51%	51.89%
Female	47.91%	49.49%	48.11%
FARL	23.20%	18.00%	19.20%
ELL	2.00%	0.70%	0.30%
Discipline	0.0%	1.9%	6.0%

Note. FARL = Free and Reduced Lunch; ELL = English Language Learner; Discipline = Suspensions (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. School and District Profiles, 2016)

According to state data between 2014 – 2015 the district identified 344 students on IEP's out of which 51.7% were full inclusion, 23% were partial inclusion, 18.9% were substantially separate, and 6.4% were in separate day schools, residential or hospital bound (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. School and District

Profiles). Table 3.3 shows student special education disability data for grades third through eighth in schools two, three, and four.

Table 3.3 Special Education Disability

Special Education	School two	School three			School four	
	3rd grade N = 181	4th grade N =184	5th grade N = 189	6th grade N = 205	7th grade N = 188	8th grade N = 207
Autism	4	4	4	3	1	3
Developmental Delay	15	4	0	0	0	0
Sensory	0	0	0	0	0	0
Emotional	1	0	1	2	2	6
Communication	0	1	3	0	2	4
Specific Learning	4	14	22	17	11	14
Neurological	6	4	6	4	10	5
Health	7	8	7	10	7	11
Intellectual	0	1	1	0	0	0
Physical	0	0	0	0	0	0
Numbers of students	37	36	44	36	33	43

Note. Sensory is defined as hearing, vision, deaf, or blindness
(Data collected through internal district website, 2017)

In 2016 the district was ranked average to above average on statewide assessments (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. School and District Profiles, 2016). The district was ranked 2.4% higher than the state average for English language arts, the district was rated the same as the state average for mathematics, and 3.9% higher than the state average for science (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. School and District Profiles, 2016).

Participants

All administrators and staff members from third grade to eighth grade were asked to participate in a study on school climate. All participation was voluntary and

confidential. Consent from all school staff member participants and administrator participants were obtained prior to participation. Administrators and staff members were be given a survey during the school day and asked if they wanted to participate in a study on school climate. Those who wanted to be a part of the study completed the survey in front of me and I collected them when they are done.

Staff. The district employed 314.2 staff members (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. School and District Profiles, 2016). Table 3.4 shows the district staff member demographics (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. School and District Profiles, 2016).

Staff member participants were recruited from staff members who work at the three selected schools or with the students in any of the selected schools. For description purposes staff members were described as those individuals who worked with students in the selected schools and or were district wide staff members who provided services within each of the three selected schools. The staff members who worked with students in the selected schools were identified by their role such as the nurse, guidance counselors, general education teachers, special education teachers, music teachers, art teachers, gym teachers, reading specialists, and librarians. District wide staff members provided services for students at all of the schools throughout the district (Data collected through internal district website). Since all district wide staff members supported students at two or more schools all district wide staff members were recruited within the staff participants. District wide staff members were described as three speech pathologists and two speech pathologist assistants, two occupational therapists, one physical therapist, one social worker, two behavior specialists, one English language-learning teacher, three

school psychologists, one section 504 coordinator, and three special education team leaders for a total of 19 district wide staff members (Data collected through internal district website).

Table 3.4 District Staff Member Demographics

Staff Characteristics	Number of Staff Members
African American	0
Asian	0
Hispanic	5
White	309.2
Native American	0
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	0
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic	0
Male	56.4
Female	257.8
Under age of 26	8
Between age 26-32	33.5
Between age 33-40	50
Between age 41-48	78.8
Between age 49-56	67
Between age 57-64	63.9
Over age of 64	13
General Education	136.4
Special Education	29.3
English Language Learner	1

School two was made up of 40 staff members. The staff members consisted of one school nurse, two guidance counselors, 23 general education teachers, seven special education teachers, one music teacher, one art teacher, two gym teachers, two reading specialists, and one librarian (Data collected through internal district website). Although

school two was made up of 40 staff members, only the third grade staff members were asked to participate within the survey.

School three was made up of 43 staff members. The staff members consisted of one school nurse, two guidance counselors, 23 general education teachers, 10 special education teachers, two music teachers, one art teacher, two gym teachers, one reading specialists, and one librarian (Data collected through internal district website).

School four was made up of 38 staff members. The staff members consisted of one school nurse, two guidance counselors, 21 general education teachers, eight special education teachers, two music teachers, one art teacher, two gym teachers, and one librarian (Data collected through internal district website).

Administrators. Administrators were a smaller recruited participants group. Administrators were similar to that of staff participants, as they too consisted of administrators who worked at the three selected schools or with the students in all of the selected schools. For description purposes administrators were divided into two groups: designated school administrators and district wide administrators. Designated school administrators were individuals who worked at a specific school such as the principal and the assistant principal. School two had one principal and one assistant principal, school three had one principal and one assistant principal, and school four had one principal and one assistant principal. District wide administrators included one superintendent, one assistant superintendent/special education director, one curriculum director, and one data administrator. A total of 10 administrators were asked to participate in a study.

Phase One Procedures

Phase one was made up of several components. The first component was the instrument section. This section described the survey and where it was derived from. The second component was the steps in which I administered the survey: step one staff members and step two administrators. The third component of phase one was data analysis. This component was made up of different processes: reliability, descriptive statistics, and the Principle Components Analysis (PCA).

Instruments. Phase one consisted of administering a series of school climate surveys. These surveys were administered to administrators and staff members. The surveys were adopted from an evaluation of school climate in a comparable school district in the region. Two researchers with experience in school climate evaluation, school discipline, and PBIS had previously used the survey. Although the data were unpublished, and were not available for dissemination, the instrument was sound for the purposes of this study. I adapted the school climate survey as necessary. The survey was modified to include additional questions pertaining to perceptions of need for a whole school support model, the need for SWPBIS, and the level of buy-in towards the adoption of SWPBIS.

Step one. Staff member surveys consisted of 47 questions answered on a four point Likert scale: strongly disagree, disagree, agree, and strongly agree. The survey included an area for provided feedback on three aspects: comments or information about discipline within the school, comments or information about school wide supports within the school, and any other additional comments. The survey had an area for staff members to identify their position title. I added three additional questions to the staff

member survey. These three questions addressed staff member's perceptions of the need for whole school supports, the need for SWPBIS, and their level of buy-in for SWPBIS.

I administered the staff member survey during the school day at each of the selected schools. At school two I contacted all third grade staff members by email and invited them to participate within the survey during their lunch break. At school three and four I utilized the support of the building administrators and I asked for 20 minutes at the start of their professional development to administer the survey. At each school I informed the staff members who were present that their participation was voluntary. I then passed the consent form and the attached survey out to all staff members. I collected all documents once they were completed.

There were also 19 district wide staff members that were asked to participate in the school climate survey. I utilized the support of the director of student support services and administered the survey to staff members at the start of their district wide professional development training for a period of 20 minutes. Surveys were administered to those staff members who were in attendance on that day. I informed the district wide staff members that their participation was voluntary. I then passed the consent forms and the attached surveys out to all staff members who were in attendance. I then collected all documents once they were completed.

Step two. I administered the administrator's surveys with the support of the director of learning within the first 20 minutes of a district wide administrator staff meeting. I administered the survey to those administrators who were in attendance at the staff meeting. I informed all administrators that their participation was voluntary. I then

passed the consent forms and the attached surveys out to all administrators. I then collected all documents once they are completed.

Data analysis. I entered all Likert scores for each participant into SPSS. I assigned a code to each participant in SPSS and on the corresponding paper copy. For example, the number one, stood for the first survey.

In SPSS I recoded all Likert scale codes into numeric codes. I entered zero for strongly disagree, one for disagree, two for agree, and three for strongly agree. After all survey data was entered into SPSS I then double checked the surveys to make sure that there are no inaccuracies within data entry process. I also computed a total score for all participants by summing the value of their responses.

Reliability. I used Cronbach's Alpha, a measure of internal consistency, to determine the instrument reliability.

Factor analysis. I conducted a Principle Components Analysis (PCA) to PCA to identify underlying components in my survey items. This step helped to validate my survey by helping me to identify how the items loaded into larger categories. I analyzed the items descriptively within the factor structures.

Descriptive statistics. I ran frequencies and means for each item. I examined the distributions, means, and medians for each of the items. I created histograms of each item to see the distributions graphically. This gave me an understanding of the distribution of scores and the relative relationship of perceptions across items. I shared these charts with staff members and administrators during focus group interviews in order to understand their perceptions of the quantitative data.

Phase Two Procedures

Phase two consisted of several components. The first part described the process of the instruments, which were the focus group interviews for staff members and administrators. The process for each group of participants was broken down into steps and described. Step one was focus group interviews with staff members and step two was focus group interviews with administrators. After all interview steps were described I described the data analysis part of the process. This was a description of the qualitative phenomenological approach, which consisted of 15 steps. These 15 steps were (1) transcription, (2) bracketing and the phenomenological reduction, (3) listening to interview for a sense of whole, (4) delineate units of general meaning, (5) delineate units of meaning relevant to the research question, (6) training independent judges to verify the units of relevant meaning, (7) eliminating redundancies, (8) clustering units of relevant meaning, (9) determining themes from the clusters of meaning, (10) writing a summary for each individual interview, (11) return to the participant with the summary and themes: conducting a second interview, (12) modifying themes and summary, (13) identifying general and unique themes for all the interviews, (14) contextualizing of themes, (15) and a composite summary (Hycner, 1985).

The theoretical framework of the SWPBIS model I examined included SWPBIS within the staff member and administration structures. So, I shared the data and responses on SWPBIS with those two groups. For instance, I said, “ A majority of participants reported that the staff members used inconsistent disciplinary practices. What are you’re thoughts?”.

I used the histograms and general summaries of the quantitative findings to present to the administrators and staff members within focus group interviews. I shared the quantitative data results with administrators and staff members as a way to connect participants with the results in the efforts to confirm or deny their own perceptions (Hycner, 1985).

Instruments. Phase two consisted of facilitating focus group interviews and analyzing the data from those interviews. These focus group interviews were offered to all participants; those who participated in phase one and those who did not.

The focus group interviews consisted of myself as the facilitator and the participants. As the facilitator I made sure the settings in which the focus group interviews were held were conducive in all aspects. I made sure there was appropriate seating for everyone, there was ample lighting within the room, and the room and its surroundings were quiet enough to hear all participants. I used a recording device and I recorded all focus group interviews for the purposes of transcription. The locations of the focus group interviews were held in school four and the district's central office.

Focus group interviews consisted of nine staff member participants and five administrator participants. Creswell (1998) recommended up to 10 people for an interview within a phenomenological study. Each of the focus group interviews consisted of one 60-minute period or two 30-minute periods. Based upon the quantitative data trends and I asked participants what their thoughts were on those trends.

Step one. Staff members at schools three and four were asked to participate in focus group interviews. I sent all staff members an email using the building wide email address for both schools. The email invited staff members who were interested in seeing

the results from the survey and were interested in sharing their perceptions on the trending data. The email identified one meeting time at school three and two meeting times at school four based off of teacher lunchtime schedules. Staff members from school three did not respond to the email. I then sent the email two more times to correct for possible error. I confirmed receipt of the emails with administration but had no staff members respond and this resulted in no focus group interviews at school three.

In preparing for staff member focus group interviews I utilized the histograms made within phase one. The histograms were organized based upon the factor analysis and the questions that made up those factors. The identified themes were based off of the written open responses and were provided to participants. These identified factors were supported and tied directly to the questions asked during the interviews. Staff member participants were specifically asked to describe their perceptions on the factors from the survey. I prepared 12 copies of the staff participant survey summary that included histograms and the coded themes from open written responses.

Staff focus group interviews were held at school four in a large conference room. The spaces had a chair for every participant, a recording device, and 12 copies of the survey summary. As the facilitator I used a laptop, interview questions, a sample copy of the survey summary, and I administered the use of the recording device. As the facilitator I started each focus group interview by introducing myself. I then thanked the participants for taking their time to participate and I reminded them that their participation was voluntary. I then informed the participants of the purpose of the focus group interview and I passed out a copy of the consent form to each participant. I reviewed the consent forms and offered to answer any questions. Once all consent forms

were signed I collected each one and then started the focus group interview by handing out the survey summary.

I asked participants within the staff member focus group interview questions based upon the trends from the survey summary. For example I said “A majority of staff members disagreed that they used the same reinforcement of behaviors, do you agree or disagree, and why?”. When I interviewed staff members I used consistent phrase like “so why do you think there were so many people who agreed or disagreed?” Or “why was there such a difference within the chart?” These questions were asked consistently for all graphs and I also asked if they wanted to share anything else that they felt may be relevant.

Step two. Through the support of the director of learning I offered all administrators the opportunity to participate within a focus group interview. Administrators were informed of this offer via email and attended during a 60-minute staff meeting. All administrators were informed that their participation was voluntary. A consent form was given to each participant and I then reviewed the consent. Once all participants signed consent I collected them.

I followed the same routine like that of the staff member participants and I used graphs made within phase one and themes from the coded written responses. These summaries were again supported and tied in directly to the questions asked during the interview. Administrator participants were asked to describe their perceptions on the results of the SWPBIS questions from the survey. I prepared 12 copies of the survey summary.

Administrator focus group interviews were conducted during the school day and were held at central office. In the focus group interview room was supplied just like that of the staff member participant room with chairs for all participants, a recording device, and 12 copies of the survey summary. I used the same materials from the staff member participant focus group interviews. I reminded them that their participation was voluntary and informed participants of the purpose of the focus group interview. I then passed out a copy of the survey summaries to each administrator.

I ran the administrator focus group interview process the same as the staff member process. I asked questions based upon phase one trends. I used the same phrases from the staff member participants. I asked everyone if they wanted like to share anything else they felt may be relevant.

Data analysis. After all focus group interviews were completed I analyzed the data through a phenomenological approach. Phenomenology is the study of pure phenomena, someone's perceptual experience (Hycner, 1985). German philosopher Husserl was known for being the founder of phenomenology and identified his philosophical method a pure science of phenomena, where anything outside of the immediate experience was ignored (Groenewald, 2004). In 1985, Hycner developed 15 specific research steps to a phenomenological approach for analyzing interview data. These 15 steps were (1) transcription, (2) bracketing and the phenomenological reduction, (3) listening to interview for a sense of whole, (4) delineate units of general meaning, (5) delineate units of meaning relevant to the research question, (6) training independent judges to verify the units of relevant meaning, (7) eliminating redundancies, (8) clustering units of relevant meaning, (9) determining themes from the clusters of

meaning, (10) writing a summary for each individual interview, (11) return to the participant with the summary and themes: conducting a second interview, (12) modifying themes and summary, (13) identifying general and unique themes for all the interviews, (14) contextualizing of themes, (15) and a composite summary (Hycner, 1985).

I utilized twelve of the 15 steps structured in which to analyze the focus group interviews and derived contextualized meaning from the data. Because this was a mixed method study, some aspects of the Hycner approach were not aligned with the mixed methodology. Step six required the addition of a second researcher. I used the alignment between quantitative data and qualitative data as the means to verify the units of relevant meaning. Units were relevant when they aligned with the research questions and the survey analysis. I did not follow Steps 11 or 12, as they were part of the phenomenological inquiry process, but did not align with the mixed method approach. For instance, the qualitative data informed the quantitative data. I made the comparisons between the qualitative and quantitative, rather than rechecking the qualitative with the participants. This was particularly important, as there were many participants in the quantitative that were not in the qualitative, and in danger of overemphasized qualitative members' perspectives. Step 12 was a follow-up to step 11, so I eliminated that as a moot step.

Step one. The first step within the qualitative phenomenological design approach was transcription (Hycner, 1985). This step was the process of listening to the interview recordings and transcribing the words into print. This included not only transcribing the literal statements but also noting significant non-verbal communication (Hycner, 1985). I transcribed all recorded interviews by hand using a computer. Every transcribed

interview was labeled with the date of the interview, the participant group, and the number of interviews that day such as 5.12.2017 staff member 2nd interview. As recommended by Hycner (1985) I left a larger right hand margin in the transcribed text in order to allow for later note taking.

Step two. Bracketing and the phenomenological reduction was the next step (Hycner, 1985). Hycner, (1985) identified this step as separating our own response as the researcher within the interview and to hear the interview as a whole response from the participant. Bracketing was the process of listening to the recordings while reading along with the transcription as a way to enter the world of the participant (Hycner, 1985). I listened to the recordings and followed along by reading the transcriptions at the same time. I did this for every interview. I bracketed myself from imposed thought and refrained from thinking what the participants might say and kept an understanding that each piece of data provided was a matrix into the participant's view (Hycner, 1985).

Step three. Listening to the interview for a sense of whole, was described by Hycner (1985) as the process of listening to the recordings several times and specifically listening for the non-verbal and para-linguistic levels of communication such as tone, emphasis, and pauses. As recommended by Hycner (1985) I took notes while listening to the records and I made notes on non-verbal forms of communication on the right hand side of the transcription within italics. I continued to be aware of bracketing myself as to not read into these forms of communication but rather to see them as pieces of a whole unit. I listened to the recordings three times each and I took notes each time within my journal in order to make sense of the whole interview. I did this for all of the interviews. I took notes each time I listened to the recordings so that I did not rely on my previous

notes to follow along with the interview. I needed to listen to the interview each time with openness and preparedness for non-verbal communications. I labeled each journal note with the date of the interview, the interview participant grouping, and the number of interviews that day such as 5.12.2017 staff member 2nd interview, just like that of the transcriptions. I then compared notes to make sure I had not missed any forms of non-verbal communication and combine all notes in italics on the right hand side margin.

Step four. Delineating units of general meaning was defined as words, phrases, and non-verbal communication that expressed a unique meaning that was different from the one that preceded it or followed it (Hycner, 1985). To delineate units of general meaning I read through the transcribed interviews words and or phrases in conjunction with the non-verbal notes in order to constitute the gestalt of the general meaning. I recorded each unit within the right hand margin of the transcription. I identified non-verbal communication within right hand margin of the transcription. For example if the transcription read, ‘Tom was just sort of standing and kinda like stared at me’ then I identified two units of meaning (1) he was standing (2) he stared at her. I numbered the units of meaning within the margin and within the transcribed text. Hycner (1985) recommended that at this stage if the researcher was unsure whether the words or phrase constitute a specific meaning to include it even if redundant to avoid danger by subsuming and obscuring apparent meaning. Through the next additional steps the text became clearer and Hycner (1985) recommended to air on the side of caution within the first delineated units of general meaning. I did this for every transcribed interview.

Step five. Delineating units of meaning relevant to the research question was a critical step. This was the process of noting the units of general meaning and then

addressing the research question to the units to determine if that which the participants stated irradiates the research question (Hycner, 1985). I noted the units of general meaning by highlighting them up with each unit per line. I then saved each transcribed note and I labeled it for example as step five. 5.12.2017 staff member 2nd interview. I then read each unit of meaning to see if it addressed my research questions. If it did then I kept the unit of meaning, but if it did not then I removed it. As recommended by Hycner (1985) I erred on the side of caution and kept a unit of meaning if I was unable to determine its ability to illuminate my research question. I removed each unit of meaning that did not address my research question. I did this for all three interviews.

Step seven. Eliminating redundancies within the units of meaning. This step included reviewing the relevant units of meaning for redundant phrases and removing them. Hycner (1985) cautioned researchers to note if the unit appeared several times it might be significant in meaning and the number of times it was identified should be noted. This may indicate importance rather than redundancy. Weight was given to redundant statements that were coupled with a non-verbal form of communication as it signified a great level of emphasis from the participant. I read each transcribed note from each interview and I looked for redundant phrases. I put an asterisk next to each redundant unit and at the end of each transcribed note I reviewed the asterisks and determined if the phrase was redundant with no meaning, redundant but with weighted meaning, or redundant with a high level, which can indicate a level of importance. If the unit of meaning was redundant with no meaning then I remove it. If the unit of meaning was redundant but weighted I kept it, however, I removed the redundant phrase that were not weighted. If the redundant phrase appeared in high levels and indicated a level of

importance I kept the units and I made a note within the right hand margin. I did this for every interview note.

Step eight. Clustering units of relevant meaning were described by Hycner (1985) similar to that of coding within other forms of qualitative research. Hycner (1985) described clustering as the researchers ability to determine if the units of relevant meaning had any common themes. Units of relevant meaning that shared common themes were then grouped together under the shared theme heading. I did this by reading over the highlighted units of relevant meanings from step seven. I read over the units repeatedly in order for common themes to emerge. As I discovered possible themes I wrote them down on an excel spreadsheet and laid them out so that I was able to visually see all themes. I then continued to read through units and assign them to the themes that have emerged. As I continued to move units around new themes emerged and previously identified themes were consolidated. When this happened I wrote a new theme heading and identify the two previous themes that were merged. This process allowed me to see all the units and themes at the same time for each interview. I completed this process for each interview I then used my digital copies of the units and I reorganized them based upon clustered themes. I did this for all interviews.

Step nine. Determining themes from the clusters of meaning was the process of organizing the themes and determining if there were themes within the themes (Hycner, 1985). I retyped the theme headings onto another document to identify the theme from each unit of relevant meaning. In keeping each interview separate I then used the themes identified and I derived a theme from all of the themes combined. I did this for each of the interviews group of themes.

Step 10. I did write a summary for each individual interview incorporating the themes that emerged from the data. Hycner (1985) recommended that the original interview transcription be reread with the thought of emergent themes in order to produce a summary for each interview. I read through all of the emergent themes and the correlating interview transcription. Afterwards I wrote a summary of the interview making sure to provide a context for the emergent themes. I did this for each interview.

Step 13. Hycner (1985) stated that identifying general and unique themes for all the interviews was a process. This process involved the researcher identifying if there were common themes within all of the interviews (Hycner, 1985). If common themes emerged they were clustered together and the researcher determined if they are actually common in theme or if they were arbitrarily different (Hycner, 1985). If they were common in theme then the themes must be evaluated to determine if they were unique to a specific interview or if it was a minority of interviews that shared a common theme. Hycner (1985) further stated that individual themes were not to be disregarded, as they may be significant.

I reviewed all interview themes and wrote them on to a word document. I then compared themes to determine if there were common themes within the interviews. I then organized the groups of common shared themes. I reviewed each of the groupings and compared the theme within each cluster to determine if they were similar or if they were arbitrarily different. Once themes were grouped I then reviewed the themes and their primary interview that they came from. As I reviewed the theme and their interview I determined if the theme was common or if it was unique to the group of individuals within the interview. In completing this step I looked to see if the theme was similar to

that of other themes and if the interviews were similar to each other which provided more weight to support that the themes were common as opposed to unique to the specific interview group. If the themes gathered were not common and the interview group was different and the feedback was different, this supported that the theme was unique. If the themes were unique then I reviewed the interview again and reread the interview transcript and listened to the interview recording and fully emerged myself within the participant's world.

Step 14. I then contextualize the themes, which Hycner (1985) described as putting the general or unique themes back within the original text. I completed this step by writing a brief summary using the themes back within the context of the interview. This summary helped me to contextualize the themes that merged as general themes or identified themselves as unique to a specific interview. This summary was broken up into parts for different themes and unique themes.

Step 15. Lastly, I wrote a composite summary. The summary was a composite of all of the interviews and it captured the experienced world of the participants (Hycner, 1985). In writing the summary I identified significant individual differences between interviews.

Final Analysis

When Phase two analyses was completed, I re-examined the Phase one findings through the lens of the Phase two findings. This means that I used the general themes and unique themes to verify or contract the findings from the Phase one findings. For instance, if a general theme was “the schools need better support for teachers to listen and to validate student issues and concerns,” I examined the extent that the general theme was

consistent with the factors from the survey, or whether there was an inconsistency. If there was a consistency, I was able to discuss the finding across the analyses. For example, the general theme was consistent with Factor 2, and demonstrated that the focus groups verified and reinforced the attitudes expressed by the staff members in the survey. If there was an inconsistency, I discussed the differences between the general theme and the Factor scores, and interpret the difference from a qualitative and quantitative perspective. For instance, the general theme may have reflected a deeper level of conversation than was possible from the survey. Therefore, the inconsistency may have been the result of a difference in measurement than a difference in underlying perspective of the stakeholders. In the same manner, I interpreted the general themes, the unique themes, and the quantitative findings in a parallel process, which ultimately allowed me to understand the quantitative data in a comprehensive and rich manner, consistent with MMSE research design.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Seventy-nine staff members and eight administrators completed a total of 87 surveys. I examined the psychometric properties, and then analyzed the survey using descriptive analyses, consistent with the MMSE process.

Phase 1: Quantitative Analysis

Survey Psychometric Properties

Reliability. A test of reliability was run using Cronbach's Alpha and the result was a value of 0.862. This reliability was above the standard 0.80, indicating a robust survey.

Factor analysis. I also examined the survey using a Principle Components Analysis (PCA). This served two purposes. First, it helped establish the structural validity of the survey. Second, it helped me to understand if the survey items loaded onto factors. I found that four factors emerged with eigen values greater than 1.0 (See Table 4.1). The four factors accounted for 50.4 percent of the variance in the PCA. The four factors were (1) school climate, (2) rules and discipline, (3) student and differences, and (4) SWPBIS and Student Media Use. The school climate factor consisted of items related to expected student behavior and implementation of the code of conduct. Rules and discipline consisted of items related to consistent disciplinary action and staff member's knowledge of behavioral approaches. Student and differences included just one item related to respect of student differences. The fourth factor accounted for the least variance, and also had two different sets of items. One set related to inappropriate use of social media. The other set related to need for SWPBIS. Initially, I was unable to

understand how factor 4 was a unified factor. An understanding was developed in my qualitative analysis which revealed a strong possibility that these sets of items were related because changes in policies in use of cell phones and cyber-bullying resulted in a major issue of contention between the staff and administration, and were linked by the school personnel as an issue affecting their perceptions of SWPBIS. I then examined the descriptive findings within these factors.

Table 4.1 Factor Analysis

Factors	Items	Factor Score
1. School Climate	29: Work as a team to support pro-social behaviors	0.823
	30: All staff members know appropriate behaviors to expect	0.798
	22: I know and understand our code of conduct	0.733
	31: All staff consistently reinforce appropriate behaviors the same way	0.658
	32: Understand how child development relates to misbehavior	0.65
	40: School-wide commitment to a positive school climate	0.641
	13: Personnel help students understand how their actions affect others	0.588
	35: Students understand behavioral expectations	0.577
	16: Adults in school respect one another's differences	0.574
	3: Adults stop students if they see them harassing each other	0.531
	26: The code of conduct is understood and implemented consistently	0.509
2. Rules and Discipline	41: We have a vision of how to achieve a positive school climate	0.501
	5: Parents trust school disciplinary decisions made by the school	0.727
	37: Administrators discipline in predictable and consistent ways	0.654
	12: Students talk about how their actions affect others	0.632
	1: My school has clearly stated rules	0.6
	43: School administration has a positive relationship with parents	0.564
	45: All staff need to participate in SWPBIS	0.556
	44: All staff know about SWPBIS	0.549
	10: Teachers use the same system to reinforce appropriate behaviors	0.536
	42: Behavior support systems in school are supported at home	0.511
	40: We have a school-wide commitment to a positive school climate	0.508
3. Student and Differences	26: Code of conduct is understood & implemented consistently by all	0.503
	24: All students know and understand the code of conduct	0.5
4. SWPBIS and Student Media Use	15: All students respect each other's differences	0.718
	27: Inappropriate social media posts are major problems for students	0.691
	2: Cellphones and other technologies are a problem in my classroom	0.632
	47: I want to be a part of SWPBIS	0.627
	46: There is a need for SWPBIS	0.523

Descriptive Findings from Survey

I examined the distribution of responses on specific items within the survey. I looked primarily at the separation between (1) Agree and Strongly Agree and (2) Disagree and Strongly Disagree. These data gave me an initial understanding of the perceptions of the school personnel, and also helped me to develop interview questions and understand staff and administrative responses.

Component 1: school climate. School climate was an area participants did not consistently or collectively agree with each other. There was a great deal of variability with respect to perceptions of discipline and behavior management in the school. Participants mostly agreed that the staff knew the appropriate behaviors to expect from students (Figure 4.2) and that they worked as a team to support the development of pro-social behaviors (Figure 4.3). At the same time, the participants mostly disagreed that

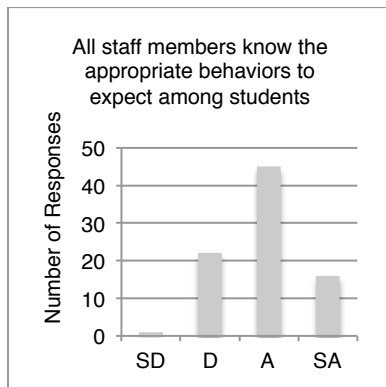


Figure 4.2. Question 30.

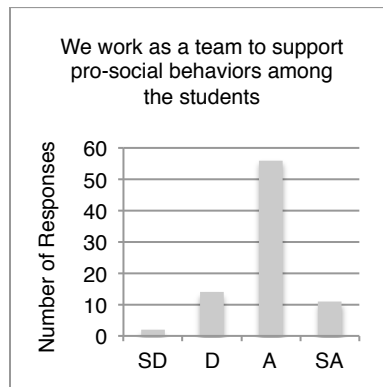


Figure 4.3. Question 29.

the staff understood how child development was linked to school misbehavior (Figure 4.4) or that the staff reinforced behavior in a consistent way (Figure 4.5). These inconsistencies were informed by the near unanimous perception that the staff felt that their own instructional approach supported pro-social behaviors amongst the students (Figure 4.6). The data suggest that participants perceived themselves as staff members

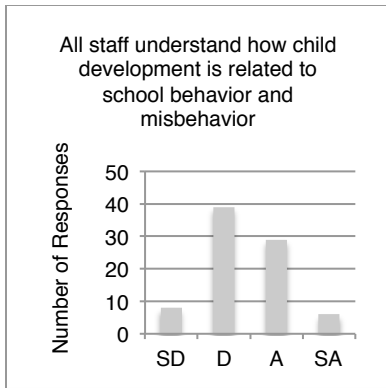


Figure 4.4. Question 32.

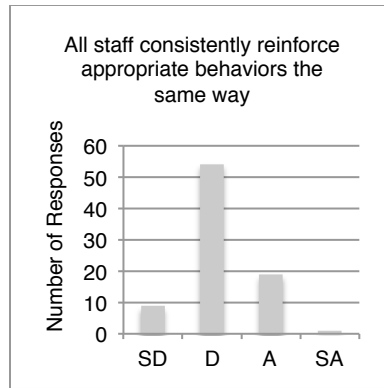


Figure 4.5. Question 31.

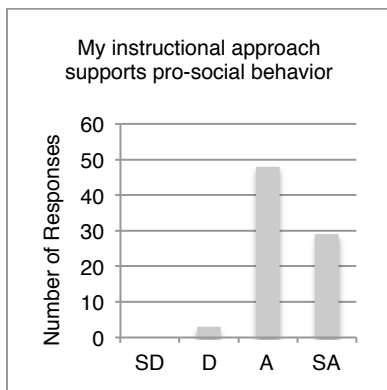


Figure 4.6. Question 33.

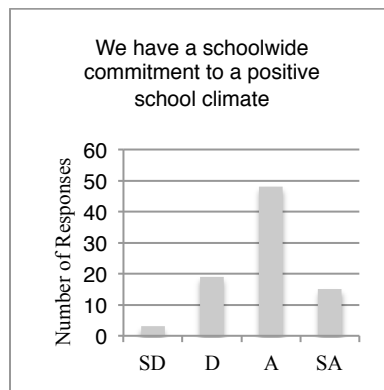


Figure 4.7. Question 40.

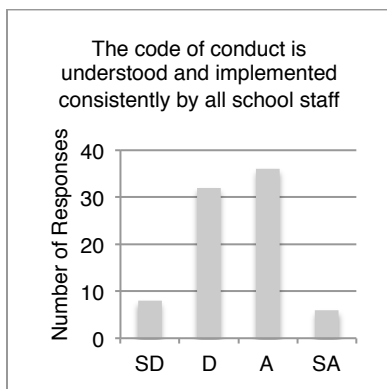


Figure 4.8. Question 26.

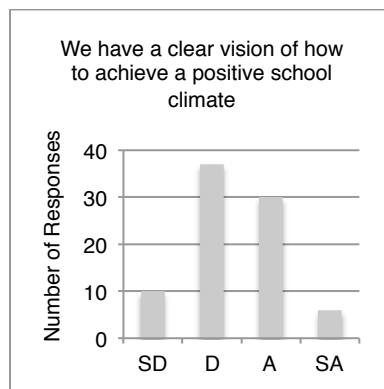


Figure 4.9. Question 41.

who responded to behaviors appropriately, but perceived most of their peers as staff members who did not respond to behaviors appropriately.

A majority of the participants agreed or strongly agreed that their schools had a commitment to a positive school climate (Figure 4.7) and that the code of conduct was implemented and understood by everyone (Figure 4.8). However, a majority disagreed or strongly disagreed that their schools had a clear vision on how to achieve a positive climate (Figure 4.9).

Summary of component 1. There was substantial variability in participant perceptions of school climate. Participants generally agreed on some aspects that impeded a successful school climate. Participant perceptions varied in agreement on consistent behavioral approaches used, implemented code of conduct, and achieved vision for a positive school climate.

Component 2: Rules and discipline. Participant's perceptions varied in regards to discipline, student perceptions, and knowledge of SWPBIS. More than half of the participants disagreed or strongly disagreed that the school administrators handled discipline in a consistent manner (Figure 4.10). A large percentage of participants disagreed or strongly disagreed students know and understand the code of conduct (Figure 4.11).

A majority of participants agreed or strongly agreed that their school had clearly stated rules within common areas (Figure 4.12) and at the same time participants disagreed or strongly disagreed that students felt emotionally and physically safe throughout the school settings and the bus (Figure 4.13).

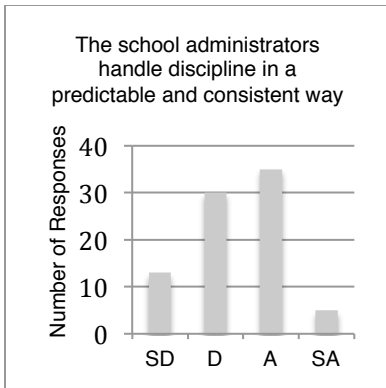


Figure 4.10. Question 37.

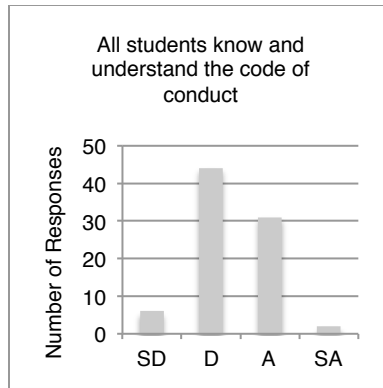


Figure 4.11. Question 24.

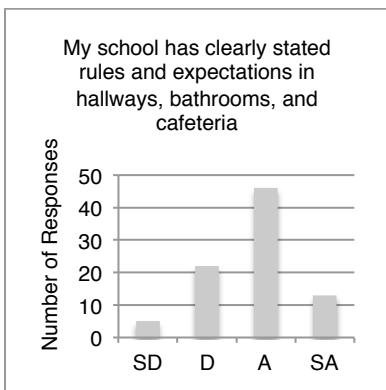


Figure 4.12. Question 1.

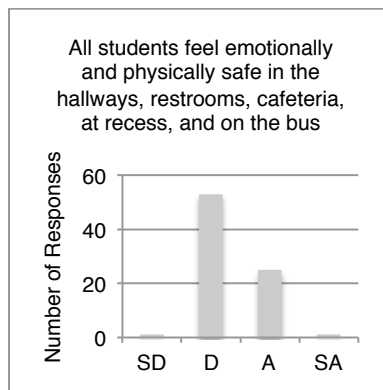


Figure 4.13. Question 28.

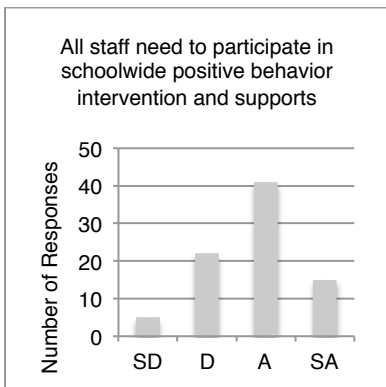


Figure 4.14. Question 45.

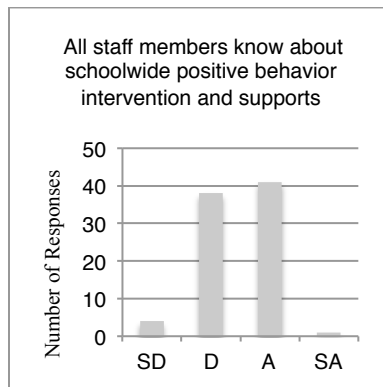


Figure 4.15. Question 44.

A majority of participants agreed or strongly agreed that all staff needed to participant in SWPBIS (Figure 4.14). Participants were divided when half agreed and

strongly agreed that all staff knew about SWPBIS and the other half disagreed or strongly disagreed that staff did not (Figure 4.15).

Summary of component 2. Participants agreed that the schools had clearly stated rules in common areas and that students did not feel safe in them. An additional item (Figure 4.13) was added to Rules and Discipline and provided relevant meaning. There were differences across the items in relation to expected student behaviors. These differences may be related to the varied interpretation and implementation of the code of conduct from administrators and staff members. Most participants agreed that all staff needed to be a part of SWPBIS but that not all staff knew what it was.

Component 3: Student and differences. Participant's perceptions of student differences were consistent. A majority of participants disagreed or strongly disagreed that students respected each other's differences (Figure 4.16). In my qualitative analyses, I learned that staff understanding of individual differences was related to their consideration of bullying. So, although the bullying items were not part of the component, I examined these items to better inform my understanding of perceptions of individual difference. A majority of participants also agreed or strongly agreed that students bully each other (Figure 4.17) and that students formed groups in to exclude others (Figure 4.18). At the same time, participants agreed or strongly agreed that their schools used consistent anti-bullying programs (Figure 4.19).

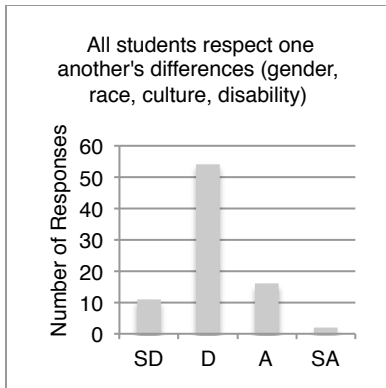


Figure 4.16. Question 15.

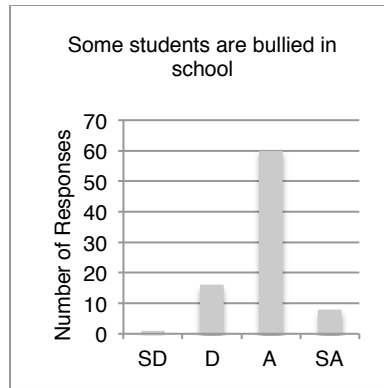


Figure 4.17. Question 8.

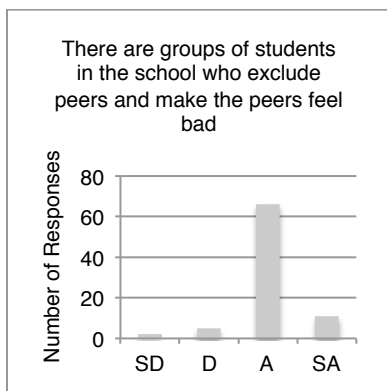


Figure 4.18. Question 9.

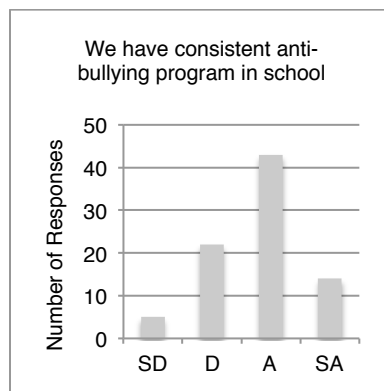


Figure 4.19. Question 7.

Summary of component 3. Additional items (Figures 17, 18, and 19) were included and provided relevant meaning as most participants agreed bullying was an issue. Participants agreed students bullied each other and that their school had a consistent anti-bullying program. Differences may be related to varied interpretation and implementation of the code of conduct from all staff and administrators.

Component 4: SWPBIS and student media use. Participants perceptions varied in regards to how students used media and agreed that was a need for SWPBIS. Participants disagreed or strongly disagreed that cellphones and other technologies were a problem in their classroom (Figure 4.20). Half of the participants disagreed that social media was a major problem for students (Figure 4.21).

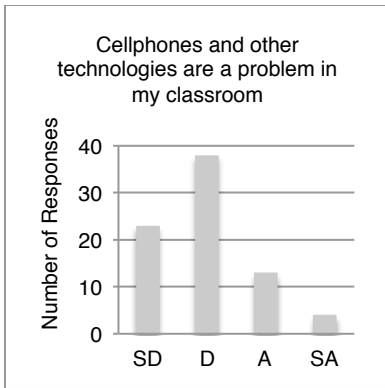


Figure 4.20. Question 2.

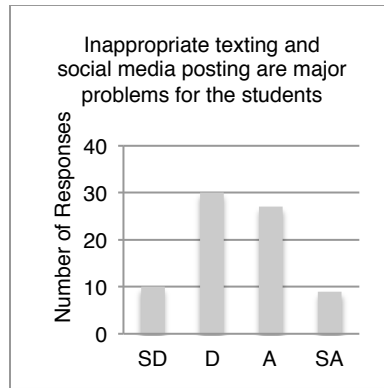


Figure 4.21. Question 27.

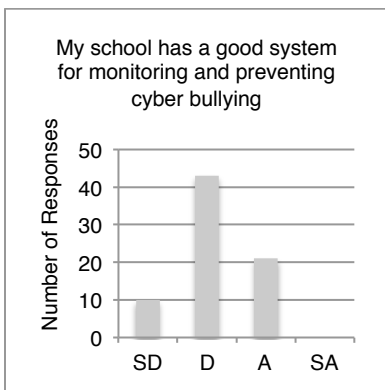


Figure 4.22. Question 18.

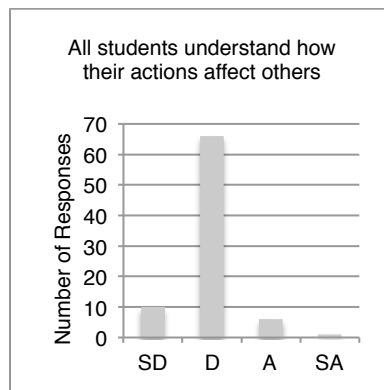


Figure 4.23. Question 14.

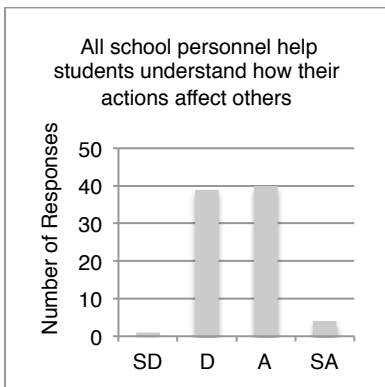


Figure 4.24. Question 13.

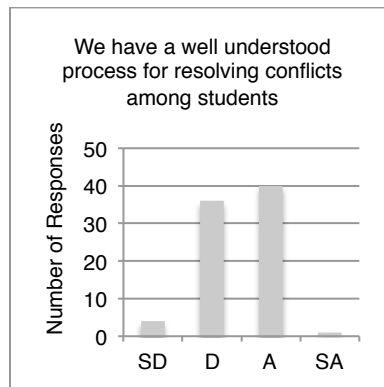


Figure 4.25. Question 36.

At the same time participants disagreed or strongly disagreed that their school had a good way to monitor and prevent cyber bullying (Figure 4.22) and that students understood how their actions affected others (Figure 4.23). Participants were divided as

half agreed and disagreed that personnel have helped students understand how their actions affect other (Figure 4.24) and have helped students resolve conflicts through a process approach (Figure 4.25). A majority of participants agreed that students had been taught ways to solve problems (Figure 4.26) and that students talked about how their actions impacted others (Figure 4.27).

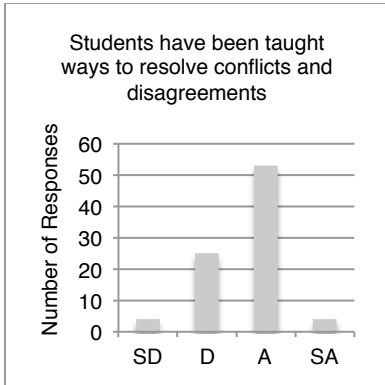


Figure 4.26. Question 12.

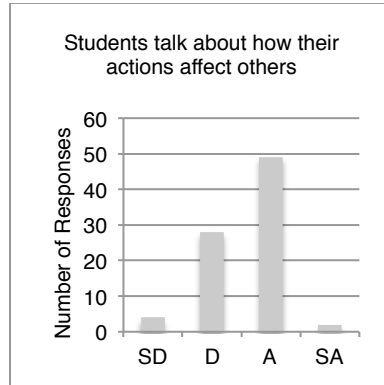


Figure 4.27. Question 11.

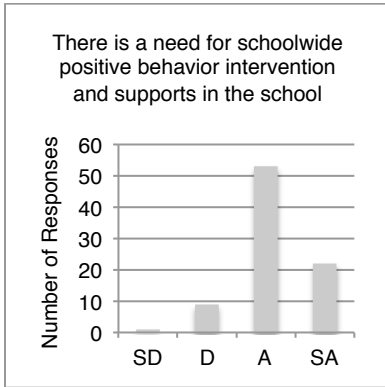


Figure 4.28. Question 46.

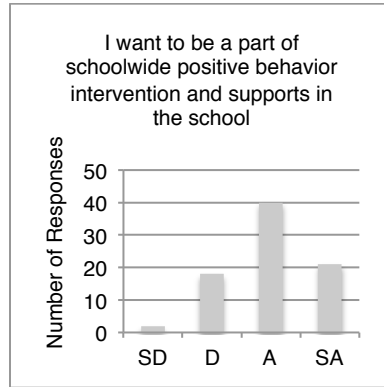


Figure 4.29. Question 47

Differences across items related to social media in the classrooms may be related to varied grade levels and reduced accessibility in lower grades. Perceptual differences were also seen within student preparedness to mediate conflict, lack of cyber bully support, and a unified approach to help students solve problems all may be related to the majority of participants who agreed or strongly agreed there was a need for SWPBIS in

their school (Figure 4.28). A majority of the participants agreed there was a need for SWPBIS and they wanted to be a part of it, but a smaller majority reported that they wanted to be a part of the initiative (Figure 4.29).

Summary of Component 4. Participants perceptions of social media used by students and SWPBIS varied. A majority of participants disagreed that cellphones were a problem in class but agreed they lacked a good system to detect cyber bullying. Additional items (Figures 4.22, 4.23, 4.24, 4.25, 4.26, and 4.27) were included and provided relevant meaning. Participants disagreed they used a process that helped students resolve conflicts, and that students understood how their actions impacted others, but then agreed that students were taught how to resolve conflicts. Differences within perceptions may be related to participants who agreed there was a need for SWPBIS in their school and that they wanted to be a part of it or may be related to the participants who did not want to be a part of it.

Summary

The results from the survey yielded varied perceptions from participants. Participants agreed in several areas; inconsistent communication from everyone, inconsistent behavioral approaches used, students get bullied, bullying was an issue, the code of conduct has not been followed, everyone has addressed student's behaviors differently, teachers used different approaches with students, instruction used supported pro-social behaviors, they worked as a team, they had a positive school climate, there was a need for SWPBIS, and they wanted to be a part of SWPBIS. Participants were divided in several areas; the code of conduct, administrative consistency, a shared vision, knowledge of SWPBIS, knowledge of child development, and the approach used to

resolve student conflict. Perceptual differences may be related to the variance amongst three schools, different administrators, and or different building policies. Differences may also be related to a lack of consistency and unified approach from the district as a whole.

Phase 2: Qualitative Analysis

Focus group interviews were analyzed and revealed four major themes. The four major themes were (1) staff perceptions of support, (2) staff perceptions of their emotions (3) staffs forward approach, and (4) administrative perceptions of the district climate. Each theme was made up of one or more subthemes (see Table 4.30). Subthemes were made up of units of relevant meaning that revolved around the four research questions:

- 1) How do administrators and staff perceive school climate and specific elements of school climate?
- 2) Are there differences in the perception of school climate between administrators and staff members?
- 3) How do staff members perceive SWPBIS, the need for SWPBIS in their schools, and their role within a SWPBIS model?
- 4) How do administrators describe school climate, changes in school climate, the need for SWPBIS, and their role within all of it?

Theme 1: Staff Perceptions of Support

The first major theme was defined by the nine subthemes and the subsequent definitions of those themes. In several of the subtheme areas staff members and administrators agreed there were inconsistencies, mixed messages, and a lack of definitive guidelines. Although both agreed these challenges existed, their perceptions of

them were different. This difference was part of the problem within the climate of the district.

Table 4.30 Themes and Subthemes

Theme	Subtheme	Definitions
Staff Perceptions of Support	administration support	inconsistent follow through
	policies interpreted	no consistent or clear guidelines
	behaviors addressed	lack of consistent pro-social responses
	responses to students	inconsistent student expectations
	staff taking initiative	making decisions without admin.
	SWPBIS	need it, want it, too tired, no support
	social media	inconsistent policy, lack of support
	code of conduct	interpreted, implemented differently
Staff Perceptions of Emotion	student differences	students do not support diversity
	staff feelings	frustrated, unable to create change
	staff beliefs	good intention, want to help, fear of union
Staffs Forward Approach	staff excitement	SWPBIS, SWPBIS trainings
	staff wants	SWPBIS, change, support, common ground
Administrator Perceptions of the District	teachers	criticized, blamed, poor decisions
	themselves	do things right, need inconsistency
	the district	not a team, finger pointing, mixed priorities

Subtheme 1: Administration support. Staff members perceived their administrators had no follow through with respect to consistent communication, support, and policy implementation. For example, one staff member stated, “don’t pass some sort of policy that you want me to reinforce within the school but that I’m not going to be backed up on.” This staff member was referring to the policy change within the middle school in which the building administrators decided to allow students use cellphones within common areas, but failed to provide administrative support to implement this new policy. Another staff member stated, “I think there is a perception and I will speak about me, that there is a lot of rhetoric from the administrators but not the support behind it.” The statement supported that notion that administrators talked about doing things and or

changing things, but had not actually supported staff members through the process necessary to make the associated changes.

Staff members believed that the lack of support was creating a divide between them and administrators. For example, one staff member stated,

“there’s this divide between administration and teachers and that there is not an open door policy just like with the cell phones. Where they just passed the stuff they didn’t talk to you and this is what we’re doing but then they’re not backing it up they’re like it’s like there’s this gap this this divide”.

This divide was not just within the middle school, but appeared to be district wide. One staff member confirmed this, stating, “it doesn’t feel like there is a consistent or cohesiveness to the district.”

Administrators also reported that they didn’t follow through with staff members consistently. One administrator reported, “I don’t necessarily always follow through with them.” This administrator was referring to his/her lack of follow through with his/her own teachers. Another agreed to this position, stating “aside from things that we ask teachers to do we don’t always have a follow through....inconsistency”. This administrator paused after the word through and then muttered the word inconsistency. This mutter indicated hesitancy to admit there was inconsistency on their part too. The administrators did not agree that there was a divide between themselves and staff members or a gap caused by the different perspectives. This appeared to be a central issue facing the school district as they attempted to create a positive school climate. Administrators reported that there were two kinds of teachers “some teachers care and some teachers don’t” and another administrator described staff members as “they’re just

all self absorb” and “the irony is that they’re really good at judging other people but they don't always see it themselves”. Administrators did not see the gap or the disconnect between them and staff members nor did they recognize their own lack of consistent communication and policy support. Administrators perceived that the issues stemmed more from teachers and staff members who they felt only cared about themselves. One administrator stated, “they have to blame someone else and they blame an inconsistent administrator”. This administrator failed to accept any responsibility to the issues, and relieved the administrative inconsistencies as part of the problem, their perception of why staff members would perceive there have been inconsistencies in the district.

Subtheme 1: Quantitative findings revisited. The findings from the focus groups did help me to better understand and interpret the findings from the survey. Specifically, the lack of shared understanding among the staff and administrators appeared to be a major reason for the lack of a consistent understanding or commitment to a positive school climate or to SWPBIS. Furthermore, the clear barriers between the staff and administrators helped me to reinterpret why there was such a divide between the participants regarding their perceptions of student perceptions of emotional safety. If the staff and administrators do not have a shared understanding of how to create and support a positive school climate, it is logical that they will not agree on how well the students are supported in that climate that does exist. Additionally, the lack of support felt from staff in regards to an administrator’s execution of a new cellphone policy helped me to decipher why the items within factor four were associated. If administrator created cellphone policies impacted staff and student’s schoolwide then the connection of SWPBIS and media usage is consistent with the lack of support felt from staff

schoolwide. With a lack of support felt from staff and the diminished perception of staff held by the administrators helped me to understand that the amount of participants that disagreed with being a part of SWPBIS were impacted from this relationship and were resistant to another policy that would not be supported in the future.

Subtheme 2: Policies interpreted. Staff members perceived that there were no clear guidelines or agreed upon rules to govern school expectations and school discipline. Guidelines and rules were different from school to school, and teachers believed that administrators regularly changed the policies. This was especially true with respect to disciplinary actions outlined within the code of conduct policy. Staff members described inconsistent guidelines and policies throughout the district. One staff member stated,

“we have an interesting situation we’re we have a student on the spectrum who was recently assigned a para and the para hasn’t been a consistent para over the course of say three or four weeks that he or she has been assigned. They have received no training each one of them handles the situation with the student differently, which is why I was such a stickler at that IEP meeting today. Don’t just throw in some random person and hope that it works and set the kids behavior off. So if you want to talk about the lack of or need for training in support for our staff or a lack of consistency even just in terms of the paras assigned for at risk students.”

This statement encompassed much of the feelings of the staff in the focus groups, that they lacked a clear vision or support from the leaders. Another staff member stated, “I also feel like things are not ignored that should be you know that so that big deal is made out of things that shouldn’t be made a big deal out of”. A third staff member clarified the

point, “so what you’re saying is that there’re no clear guidelines overall”. This was a pervasive feeling among the staff. They were concerned with the lack of consistent guidelines and the impact it had on the school climate, and ultimately on the students. One staff member stated, “understanding that your policy and procedures will affect a students self-concept”. This resonated across the staff who felt that the inconsistent guidance and support resulted in direct and negative impact on the students well-being.

In contrast, administrators perceived that the inconsistency problem was due to different procedures in each classrooms and the variance that they as administrators have had to interpret in the code of conduct. In other words, the administrators believed that the problems with consistent behavior management and school discipline were due to the teachers. One administrator described his/her perception of classroom differences, “I’m handling it this way in my classroom but every time they come from his classroom I’m dealing with it takes me five minutes to readjust with the kids”. The same administrator perceived differences within the building as a known variance to be expected,

“there is a difference in procedures within the building around expectations in the classroom....so there is a level of interpretation and of adjustment that is required so if there is a known variance we can’t be surprised that there are going to be differences.”

Another administrator confirmed that they too have interpreted of the code of conduct differently in different circumstances, stating, “it is inconsistently consistent because it is situational. Because it’s so individual you’re looking at all of these factors and in each situation they’re not going to be identical.” He/she also reported the problem was that teachers didn’t understand that policies aren’t a one size fits all model and require

administrators to apply different approaches to students based upon individual needs. Administrators also believed that staff had no clear definition of minor vs. major behaviors. In fact, the administrators themselves were unable to discriminate between the two, which reinforced the beliefs of the staff members of no clear guidelines. For example, one administrator identified that there were no clear guidelines regarding disciplinary infractions within his/her building and remarked a conversation questioning the assistant principal, “it hasn’t just been this year, has it ever been made clear by administration of like what are the minor things and what are the major things?” This same administrator stated,

“yes there are things yes you cannot do certain things there is a hard line you can’t do this but you have to kind of think about the whole circumstance and like where kids coming from and like how you decide to deal with that situation.”

This administrator could not describe the line between minor vs. major situations.

Overall, I found that the staff and the administrators all agreed that there was a lack of consistency with discipline policies and implementation of the code of conduct. However, each of the groups pointed at the other group when describing why the situation was so inconsistent. Staff reported that administrators didn’t present clear guidelines, and didn’t implement practices in a consistent way. Administrators reported that teachers didn’t apply policies consistently, creating an inability to handle the resulting disciplinary issues. Neither group was able to accept responsibility except in a cursory way. In other words, each group identified their own inconsistent practices, but each group felt that they were forced into inconsistent practices because of the other

group. This inconsistency and failure to accept a role in the inconsistency was central to the district's current climate issues.

Subtheme 2: Quantitative findings revisited. The focus group interview findings helped me to reinterpret the findings from the survey and this was especially true for the perceptions of staff and administrators about consistent policy and practice. Staff members and administrators perceived there was a lack clear guidelines and agreed upon disciplinary rules, which appeared to be the reasons why mixed perceptions about the code of conduct and shared vision for school climate were seen. If rules used to regulate the school have not been implemented with consistency and some have followed them and some staff have not it is reasonable that perceptions were mixed since the code of conduct has not been implemented consistently by all school personnel. Furthermore this helped me to reinterpret the quantitative results and find deeper meaning to the mixed perceptions from participants for a shared vision for school climate.

Subtheme 3: Behaviors addressed. Staff members and administrators perceived classroom behaviors have been dealt with differently in every classroom and that teacher expectations have been too high. For example one staff member stated, "I feel like one, behaviors are dealt with differently in every classroom". Another staff member stated,

"it feels at times when I talk to teachers their expectation of the behavior is advanced to the developmental stage. Its almost like we have high school teachers expecting high school students when we are dealing with 12, 13, to 14 year olds."

This perspective reflected much of the staff's views. They generally felt that teachers and administrators alike did not understand or respond to behaviors from an understanding of

child development. They felt that they applied practices based on pre-existing assumptions or on a code of conduct, but that they didn't seem to consider the context of the environment or the developmental level of the students. Consequently, each staff member applied different criteria to behavior, resulting in different approaches to social and emotional situations. Nonetheless, the staff agreed the different approaches they took to student's behaviors and social emotional learning resulted in an absence of effective behavioral and emotional supports for the students.

Administrators perceived that student behaviors were handled differently because teachers were unable to identify minor problems vs. major problems. One stated, with respect to teacher responses to students, "how am I supposed to pull the kid aside like and have a conversation with them so I just send them down". On one hand administrators agreed that teachers and staff members handled behaviors differently, resulting in increased problem behaviors. On the other hand, the administrators also agreed that they did not measure behaviors and establish behavioral baselines there were no clear baselines for behaviors established or shared with the staff. For example one administrator stated,

"I agree that there isn't a real clear baseline but I think we give a lot of mixed messages about what that might mean because we talk about behaviors and conduct and it's also sometimes very individualized."

This position was consistent among the administrators, who also agreed that there was a need to start identifying minor vs. major problems because there was no clear baseline for understanding discipline and behavior. With respect to a principal who referenced a conversation he/she had with an assistant principal,

“we are taking ownership of and I said to her like maybe we need to devote a staff meeting of talking about what’s minor what’s major and we actually we sent out a form recently with the descriptors and we said that we’re going to talk more about it this year.”

While these systems do begin, it also appears that they do not have follow-up. In fact, I found that the administrators felt that an action like sending out the form was sufficient to make a change. It appeared that the administrators felt that the form was now the responsibility of the teachers, as was anything that occurred afterwards.

One administrator stated that at their school they started to identify expected behaviors “a better word is expected behaviors so I think when you look at this you have to strongly believe what is the culture of your building what are expected behaviors and define those”.

One of the major problems with respect to behaviors and discipline was a lack of establishing a common nomenclature for behaviors and a consistent set of interventions and supports for the respective behavioral issues. This was evident in a statement by one administrator who was trying to change the understanding away from problem behaviors into an understanding of expected behaviors:

“a better word is expected behaviors so I think when you look at this you have to strongly believe what is the culture of your building what are expected behaviors and define those”

However, the schools didn’t have a consistent set of behavioral expectation by which to evaluate students as they attempted to meet those expectations. Staff members and administrators perceived students’ behaviors differently because there was a lack of

behavioral baselines to use as yardsticks for understanding expected and aberrant behaviors. The administrator from School 2 was trying to define student behaviors through terms of expected vs. unexpected behaviors, but administrators from other schools were taking different approaches. The inconsistency between schools confirmed staff member's perceptions of large differences between schools within the district and not all schools have addressed behaviors or policies in the same way.

Subtheme 3: Quantitative findings revisited. Perceptions of how student's behaviors have been addressed were different amongst administrators and consistent amongst staff members, both of which allowed me to better understand the varied perspectives from the survey. Staff members were consistent and agreed that all staff members address students behaviors in different ways that were not consistent with developmental expectations. If behavioral approaches from staff were not commensurate with student's developmental stage it is accurate that staff members would disagree that staff understand how developmental stages related to a development. Some administrators started to attempt to measure behavioral baseline of students and other administrators were satisfied giving teachers the list of behaviors to have them establish it. Furthermore, if behavioral baseline is not measured collectively than it is likely seen as another duty of a teacher and why some participants did not agree that all participants needed to be part of a SWPBIS implementation.

Subtheme 4: Responses to students. Staff members perceived that everyone (staff and administrators) addressed student expectations, reinforcements, and guidelines differently. Administrators perceived that teacher's responses to students were

inconsistent, and believed that teachers struggled to accurately identify problematic behavior. With respect to how staff respond to students, one staff member stated,

“the way in which we deal with students has to do with their emotions... how we affect their self concept with the way that we talk to them and the way we address behaviors, so for me that is the that is the difference I see”.

The staff member highlighted that working with students requires an involvement beyond just looking at the behavior, but trying to work with the student. However, such an approach results in inconsistent responses to students that may be based on the student teacher relationship more than on the behavior. Another staff member reiterated this and stated, “all staff consistently reinforces appropriate behaviors and everyone disagrees almost everyone”.

Administrators agreed not all students have been responded to in the same way and have used their judgment and responded with less punitive measures. One administrator stated, “when you see it, good behaviors aren’t always necessarily rewarded” and “bad behaviors are not necessarily responded to the same way”. Another administrator stated, “maybe it’s not that they need to be disciplined and the detention but maybe they need to be provided them some support”. Administrators have also fallen to the idea of flexible student support and without a behavioral baseline to measure against gave chance to less punitive measures as a form of in the moment support from them as apposed to consistent and structured support from everyone.

Although staff members and administrators had similar insight to support student’s behaviors through engaged social emotional learning, which has resulted in an inconsistent approach. Staff perceived they were better abled to support student’s needs

compared to administrators and administrators identified they were better able to support student's needs than teachers. Staff and administrators blamed each other for the lack of consistent student support.

Subtheme 4: Quantitative findings revisited. Responses to students were inconsistent from both staff members and administrators, which helped me to better understand why a majority of participants disagreed that appropriate behaviors were supported in the same way. If appropriate behaviors are not supported in the same way and child development is not considered in conjunction with behavior then it is logical that participants agreed there was a need for SWPBIS.

Subtheme 5: Staff taking initiative. Staff members determined that due to the lack of administrative support they had to make their own decisions with respect to student behavior and misbehavior. They felt they needed to support each other and they went to great lengths to give each other positive feedback. One staff member stated, "we are feeling as a staff that we need to support and encourage innovation among ourselves because when we go to administrators it falls on deaf ears or doesn't get responded to". Another staff member described how staff were instituting innovative ideas to best support students need,

"so we've instituted a peer tutoring model and I have an extension group of at-risk kids you know we've got academic support that rotates among the teachers. We are just doing things, we are not waiting for permission because if we waited for permissions we would either be talked out of it or we would never get it. It would just sit and nothing would be done. So we have sorta taken things into our own hands."

A third staff member stated,

“You know people are saying to each other that was a really great job the other day the way you the way that you worked with that child that was a really tough kid. I think people are going beyond to tell people that. I just think that they’re such a gap and it’s like we are all in this together and then its like you guys are over there.”

This staff member described the support that other staff members have provided to each other due to the support gap between them and administrators. Staff members perceived that their current administration hadn’t supported them. Administrators did not mention or identify any initiatives or supports taken by staff members due to administrative lack of support. This suggests that the administrators don’t know what practices are currently taking place, and likely contributes to some of the reasons that administrative dictums or directives felt inappropriate or inconsistent by the staff.

Subtheme 5: Quantitative findings revisited. Staff described the additional supports they have provided for one another and how they helped to support each other through the perceived lack of support from administrators. It was from staff members and administrator focus group interview that I was able to connect why a majority of participants agreed they worked as a team to support pro-social behaviors. From these interviews staff stated the lack of support felt forced them to create a sense of team that went entirely undetected by administrators which suggest that staff were reason for the agreed response.

Subtheme 6: SWPBIS. Staff members perceived they needed SWPBIS although they were too tired to buy-in to it. Their exhaustion was much deeper than mere physical fatigue and extended into defeat with a lost sense of morale. One staff member stated,

“this is the worst morale I have ever witnessed or experienced in this building.

People are so discouraged, hopeless. Like nothing you do or say is going to have any impact. I mean that is what I experienced.”

Another staff member stated, “frustration is the tip of the iceberg”. Staff member’s morale negatively impacted their desire to buy-in to SWPBIS. This lack of support for buy-in existed at the same time as staff members’ excitement for and during trainings on SWPBIS, which resulted in their desire to have common expectations within common areas. It appeared that the staff were capable of getting excited about the possibilities, but that the lack of administrative support or follow-through resulted in a sense of dejection around any initiatives. This was consistent with administrators’ practice. They all reported having differing stages of behavioral supports within their buildings, but none of them stated there was a need for SWPBIS or that they wanted to be a part of SWPBIS. They were skeptical of staff members who desired to do more. One administrator stated, “I like to see that they wanted it but it also means that they’re going to have to have an active role in.” But, the administrators didn’t appear prepared to support a process for implementing a process that supported the staff members’ active role. This was exemplified by one administrator who was surprised to see that some staff members wanted to be a part of SWPBIS. The administrator appeared surprised stating, “they really want to be apart of it” with an air of disbelief.

Staff member expressed negative feelings around buy-in and the idea of doing more. For example, one staff member stated,

“I would answer that the same way you found these answers, I think there’s a need but I think that people are so tired of being squashed that to even find the term that we use the term buy-in a lot.”

This staff member referenced the findings from the survey and described why a limited number of staff members didn’t want to be a part of a SWPBIS. The same staff member further described the lack of buy-in,

“you know we’ve tried to do a lot of things in the past and it’s needed we’ve tried it and I’m tired of banging my head against the wall so yeah we need it but I’m not going to do this anymore.”

Another staff member stated,

“So this Mass legislature said, ok schools you now have to have this designed program in your school we spend hours researching it. Pick peace builders and then it was just that there was no support or follow through from upper administration and it sort of fell a part.”

This staff member further described that they tried things that failed in the past and this was another reason why they were exhausted. A third staff member stated,

“yeah but I think people are frustrated to the point of fed up. People are, negotiations kind of dug into everybody’s well to the point and then we kind of settled and then we came back and it’s like wrrrruuu wraaaaa its like one thing after another that’s what it felt like for me anyway at the beginning of the year. I think people are yeah they’re checked out.”

The staff member described coming back to school and having different policies implemented with inconsistent or non-existent follow through by the administrators. This contributed to an endless cycle of pointless directives.

Although staff members identified the worst morale ever witnessed, they continued to believe in the concept of SWPBIS. For example, one staff member stated, “we have the commitment but it does not come through in practice”. The staff felt they could not single handedly implement a schoolwide initiative because they did not have the authority to do it, and that was why they needed the support from administration. One staff member stated, “I don't have authority to start SEL stuff in the building”. The same staff member further described the lack of school wide initiatives in the building, “when it comes to schoolwide administrative initiatives in terms of how do we deal with discipline etc. We really haven't done that.” Staff members believe there's a need for SWPBIS but that “it needs to come from administration”. Consistent with prior findings, it was clear that the staff and the administration did not have a shared vision, and were often at cross purposes.

Nonetheless, staff members remained generally excited when talking about SWPBIS trainings and their perceptions of what's needed. However, this excitement was tempered or countered when it was time to implement SWPBIS. One staff member described this, stating:

“I can only go back to the amount of enthusiasm that followed those trainings in each and again this is the third year we have posted and wanted committees and wanted to implement it and it was just, it didn't happen.”

Another staff member described their feeling when returning from SWPBIS trainings as “pumped”. A third staff member stated, “we want to implement some of the ideas and that's for me the sigh of uhhhhhhh because that is where it is. It ends because there isn't the administrative buy-in.” The feelings of defeat were palpable among the staff. They viewed the trainings as a real mechanism for change, but felt defeated when they returned to school and realized there was no plan or support for implementation.

In contrast, administrators perceived that they were already implementing some aspect of a schoolwide behavioral approach. Two administrators discussed how they were attempting to use behavioral supports schoolwide. Although administrators previously agreed there were inconsistencies within the district, they were hesitant to identify their role in these inconsistencies. They recognized staff members' enthusiasm, “clearly we have recognized whether it is inconsistency or whatever, folks say that this is the issue and I want to do something about it and that is heartening”. But, they failed to see that the enthusiasm can only be maintained with strong and consistent leadership.

One administrator described why consistency was so important within a SWPBIS model,

“It starts to show to students the culture of the building that some teachers care and some teachers don't so the student gets that reaction as well and they start to think well you know. But that's why the word consistently is very important in the sense of the building and how the building addresses those expected behaviors.”

But, the administrator did not describe what role they had in reaching or maintaining that necessary consistency.

One administrator clearly expressed his/her lack of belief in the staff and in their capacity to implement SWPBIS, “I agree with that a bunch of schoolwide stuff is a component of all the classrooms.” This administrator saw the aspect of a schoolwide system more as the function of all individual classrooms. It was unclear if the administrator disapproved of a SWPBIS model or their own staff members. She/he stated, “that’s what I mean sometimes you end up seeing the differences of implementation within and fidelity with doing it and there are variances even with some of our best people”. The same administrator added,

“well I think that whether they like to admit it or not some people are not comfortable. They’re avoiding certain levels of social exchanges even though you would think that inherently they wouldn’t be. Hey I was thinking a, you have that one teacher and you’re like do you actually like kids ...and it’s hard to give them positive reinforcement all the time in the classroom so I think that there’s a rate of variance that that I have to remind myself of that that there sometimes when I’m with a teacher that I’m like maybe I’m not renewing you. Seriously like are you seriously really this bad and you can’t even see what you’re doing right now.”

This administrator had a negative perception of their staff member’s abilities, but seemed to believe staff member’s avoided a lot of the necessary work because it made them uncomfortable. This mixed perception of the abilities of the staff resulted in a sense that SWPBIS would inevitably fail, consistent with the staff’s sense that nothing could ever be implemented. The difference is, both groups see the other group as responsible for these inevitable failures.

There were differing views and levels of interest of SWPBIS amongst administrators. The views ranged from one administrator supporting foundational pieces of a SWPBIS model, to another administrator who adopted a token economy for the whole school with little consistency in the implementation, to another administrator who blamed their staff members for not feeling comfortable enough to work in a schoolwide network. The administrators had a range of perceptions and practices, but fundamentally, there was no consistency in the schools or across the schools with respect to SWPBIS readiness or implementation.

Subtheme 6: Quantitative findings revisited. The focus group interviews helped me to better understand the quantitative results in regards to staff and administrators perceptions of SWPBIS. Staff members described their desire for SWPBIS coupled with hesitation of another initiative that excited them but would eventually go by the wayside because it hadn't received enough support from administration. In contrast, administrators were not as forthcoming with their desire for a SWPBIS initiative and instead described their skepticism of staff's ability to fully participate in the process. If participants hesitated to say yes to SWPBIS based upon concerns of participation it is logical that some participants disagreed that all staff needed to participate in SWPBIS. Furthermore, if administrators viewed SWPBIS as fragmented behavior descriptions created by teachers who were then too intimidated by large scale initiatives then it is consistent that some participants disagreed that all staff needed to participate in SWPBIS and there was a commitment to a positive school climate.

Subtheme 7: Social media. Staff members and administrators both perceived there were more issues with students around cellphones and social media in the middle

school than students in the lower grades. Staff members were concerned with the current system of cellphone use and administrators' stances. Administrator's attitudes toward cellphone and social media use amounted to an "if you can't beat them join them" mentality. They allowed students to bring their own devices to school and allowed free use of them during the day with the exception of times teacher refused use within classrooms.

Staff felt that the decisions on technology and cellphone use lacked clear guidelines, and the process had set teachers up to fail, as they were only able to make rules within their classrooms and were not able to police all students all the time in common areas. One staff member stated,

"classroom teachers were tasked with you can have whatever policy you want in your classroom. So I think teachers feel more in charge and in control in the classroom. Teachers feel more in control of cellphone use within their classroom. I think where if you ask a general question, are there issues and concerns regarding cellphones use would probably be in the unstructured settings you know hallways the music assembly the cafeteria because there aren't any real rules."

Another staff member stated,

"we have been told repeatedly that taking a picture and posting it or a video and posting it of the staff as well as a student without permission is not illegal therefore it is nothing that they are going to handle."

Staff members worried about student's video taping them and posting the videos without their knowledge or permission since administrators did not provide clear guidelines or rules around allowable use. One administrator stated,

“we would rather allow it to happen knowing it does to a certain percentage anyways but we can educate and respond to it within our control. So if we have better access than we have we have a more of we have it open and available to us then when it’s closed and restricted. And then we have educated and help deal with the issue because what’s scary about it is that not only when it is hidden but the severity and level of that when it is hidden without our knowledge”.

This administrator repeatedly identified being able to educate students on the use of social media and cellphones, but there were no such procedures or practices in place. From the perceptions of staff members no one was teaching students about acceptable cellphone use within the hallways and cafeteria. The views from the administrator did not match the views from staff members,

“so even if kids are allowed cellphones if we can teach them the school appropriate us versus what you do at home and in the mall or in the backyard but this is school but this is technology in school. That would be a great start starting place”.

In contrast, a staff member stated,

“so what you’re saying is that there’re no clear guidelines overall but you have clear guidelines in your classroom. And it sounds like you have since day one you can use it when at this time and that’s probably why there is a mutual respect then when it’s you within the general population”.

Another staff member stated,

“there is no cellphone policy etc. No agreed upon rules and this is what a SWPBIS says common expectations in common areas. And that we’re all on

board we have kids that are literally bringing laptops and they're not eating lunch they're having dueling you know videogames back and forth across the table so is not any pro social they're not talking they're not eating with polite manners".

A fourth staff member then stated, "and you don't really know what's going on inside of them some teachers let them do whatever and others teachers are very strict and have a lot of classroom management skills". The issues with respect to cell phone use and technology created a major rift among the staff and between the staff and the administration. The staff were not able to monitor all students all the time and were expected to teach students how to use cellphones and social media within the school without any training or support.

A clear example of a disagreement occurred in the middle school where the administrators and the staff disagreed on what was defined as acceptable use of such technology. The different perspectives on this issue continued to support the staff member's perceptions that there was a divide between them and the administrators. Nonetheless, despite the staff feeling too tired to participate in SWPBIS, they repeatedly expressed their concerns for common rules within common areas in regards to cellphone and social media use. However, they failed to get adequate guidance or clarity on acceptable use.

Subtheme 7: Quantitative findings revisited. Focus group interviews help me to better understand staff members and administrators perceptions in regards to social media concerns that were generally seen within the middle school. Although concerns felt were discussed more within the middle school the district lacked clear guidelines around students use of social media and cellphones that resulted in inconsistent practices

throughout the district. If staff members felt the need for SWPBIS based upon their perception of need for common rules within common areas as a way of protection from unwanted social media posts, then it is reasonable that their perceptions of students safety within those areas were also seen as unsafe and resulted in a majority of participants who disagreed that students felt emotionally and physically safe in common areas. Additionally, if administrators perceived open cellphone use for students as an enhanced opportunity for them to learn during non academic times without clear guidelines structured around unwarranted or solicited posts, then it is reasonable why participants agreed cellphones and technologies were not problems in the classroom but that a majority disagreed their school had a good cyber bullying system.

Subtheme 8: Code of conduct. Nobody in the schools had common knowledge or understanding of the code of conduct. Administrators reported staff interpreted the code differently, and applied the code in inconsistent ways. They felt the staff's inconsistent approach was the reason staff felt that the administrators gave mixed messages on the code. However, the administrators also believed the language of the code of conduct was inconsistent. Administrators blamed the removal of the previous language within the code of conduct as part of the present mixed message problem. An administrator described, "it's not necessarily the understanding of the conduct and expectations but possibly infractions and enforcement of those expectations and what are then perceived differences". The same administrator stated, "there is a level of interpretation and of adjustment that is required". It is clear that the administrator understands that there is subjectivity, which requires individual interpretation. Staff also found inconsistencies. One staff member stated,

“I think there is an understanding of the code of conduct, but its it’s interpreted differently by some staff for with kids who have conduct issues so they are given a wider birth where as I am not sure if that's appropriate.”

This perspective summarized the views of all staff, and reflected the broader lack of a shared understanding in the school.

Subtheme 8: Quantitative findings revisited. The findings from the focus groups provide clear insight into what I found in the survey. It is clear that the staff and the administrators lacked a consistent understanding of the code of conduct, which is why the code was implemented differently and inconsistently. This lack of a clear and shared understanding was why the participants generally reported a poor understanding of the code and of student behavioral expectations. Furthermore, if the code of conduct was not understood by staff and administrators then their perceptions of how student perceived it were consistent with their perception because almost every participant disagreed that students know how their actions affect others. In addition participants were divided in their responses when asked if they helped student to understand their actions and if their school had a process that helped student resolve conflicts. This division amongst participants in regards to the code of conduct policy was seen within both survey and focus group interviews and further substantiated the results from both.

Subtheme 9: Student differences. Staff members and administrators both perceived that the district was not ethnically diverse. Although the district was primarily white and what worked for one student did not work for another. One staff member stated, “other kids of different backgrounds stand out”. This staff member described their perception that when students differ from the majority they had a harder time interacting

and engaging with others. Another staff member stated, “the biggest area we deal with is making fun of because your different”. One administrator stated, “I feel like the conversations that we have with students almost always stem from them not respecting someone else”. This administrator struggled to understand the underlying cause. He/she initially stated that race was not an issue (“its not always rooted in gender, race, culture, disability but its just a general respect”) but subsequently stated, “I feel like sometimes it is kids just being kids but there is an undertone it has come out and another place its about the race to race issue”. Another administrator’s reported “instead of everybody gets what they need fair is not everybody getting the same thing and people inherently have difficulty with that”. This underscored a lack of sophistication with respect to understanding the complex issues associated with race and individual difference, and underscores how the administration struggles with implementing a cohesive process in the schools. These struggles arise as the application of the code of conduct has multiple responses to student bullying around race, gender, disability, and socio economic status. Staff members were frustrated with the lack of support from administration when implementing and following through on programs adopted to support a pro-social school culture and climate. The school culture and climate has negatively affected students and staff members through the lack of support and differing views from administrators on schoolwide and district wide positive behavior interventions and supports.

Subtheme 9: Quantitative findings revisited. How staff and administrators responded in the focus group interviews about student differences and racism helped me to better understand their perceptions from the survey. If administrators perceived some situations with students involved race issues and at the same time they agreed that the

district is predominately white then it is accurate that participants agreed students don't understand how their actions affect others. In addition, if staff and administrators identified that student's actions towards each other were motivated from individual differences, as supported by the results from survey that some students were bullied, then the fluidity in which the code of conduct has been interpreted enabled practices of social inequality and created a platform for racism.

Theme 2: Staff Perceptions of Emotion

The second major theme was defined by three subthemes: staff feelings, staff beliefs, and staff excitement. Staff member's feelings were negative but their beliefs and excitement showed great possibilities for changes within school culture and climate.

Subtheme 1: Staff feelings. Staff members felt frustrated with the lack of support from administrators, which has caused their feelings of negativity to grow. For example one staff member stated,

“there is no passion in middle school any more there is no passion for the leadership for how we are going to work together to make these children successful. And in the meantime we are having kids who aren't successful and that is what is stressful to me.”

Another staff member described their perception of morale, “This is the worst morale I have ever witnessed or experienced”. A third staff member started to cry and stated, “it's just been really hard this year”. Staff members felt weighed down by their frustrations and feelings of hopelessness due to the lack of administrative support not only for themselves but also for their students.

Subtheme 2: Staff beliefs. Staff members perceived they had good intentions and tried to help students, but negative influences such as administrative changes to practice, and pressure felt from union negotiations impacted their approach. One staff member stated, “We have the commitment it does not necessarily mean it comes through in the practice. The commitment is there.” They also believed that administrators had stopped doing things that were helpful for students. One staff member described, “there were things that we were doing and we stopped doing all of these things and even the things we are doing aren’t really working”. Staff members described how union negotiations were long and stressful and how it impacted them. A third staff member reiterated, “I think negotiations took a lot out of people”.

Staff members believed they were trying to help students within the conditions that administrators created. Student supports were limited and because of that staff members perceived students were not successful. Staff members knew they were able to do what they could in their own classrooms but the level of dedication for students was not coming through in practice. The level of effort and drive from staff members was negatively influenced from other staff members who strongly supported union efforts and discouraged others from going above and beyond because it was considered past practice. Tension among staff members impacted the gap between them and administrators.

Subtheme 3: Staff excitement. Although staff members identified their feelings of frustration and hopelessness they were also excited after they attended trainings on SWPBIS. One staff member stated, “we have had three consecutive summer trainings and I think maybe a third of the staff and again we come back from that trainings and we want to do a committee”. This excitement did not last as staff members continued to

perceive that they lack the authority to implement SWPBIS. They were under the impression that SWPBIS needed the support from their administrators. For example one staff member stated, “I think that there is a lot of ideas and a lot of energy but we don’t, we are not at the level where we can make decisions”. Staff members were excited about SWPBIS and expressed a desire to start committees to begin the process.

Theme 3: Staffs Forward Approach

The third major theme staffs forward approach, was defined by one subtheme, staff wants. Subtheme staff wants connected well with the subtheme of staff excitement from the second major theme staff perceptions.

Subtheme 1: Staff wants. Staff members wanted to start SWPBIS. They wanted a SWPBIS committee, they wanted to be a part of it, and they wanted to help implement it. Staff members referenced trainings on SWPBIS and the how excited they were when they came back from those trainings. As one staff member stated, “we come back from that trainings and” and suddenly another staff member interrupted with the words, “pumped”. Both staff members expressed excitement in their voices when they talked about the trainings. Another staff member stated, “we want to do a committee”. This staff member referred to a SWPBIS committee that they wanted to start. The staff members wanted SWPBIS and the more trainings they attended the more they bought-in to the approach.

Theme 4: Administrators Perceptions of the District

The fourth major theme administrators perceptions of the district, was defined by three subthemes: teachers, themselves, and the district. Administrators perceived that teachers were critical of others and lacked information, which was part of their problem.

Although administrators held negative views against teachers they were aware and acknowledged that they themselves gave mixed messages but believed they were justified in doing so because it was for the right reasons. Administrators also perceived that there were problems within the district because everyone was not working as a team with the same shared priorities.

Subthemes 1: Teachers. Administrators perceived that teachers had narrow minded perceptions and that they based all of their information off of what was happening in their classrooms. For example one administrated stated,

“I think that that’s a lot of dialogue between teachers you know I’m handling it this way in my classroom but every time they come from his classroom I’m dealing with it takes me five minutes to re-a-just with the kids or these comparatives that are always. The irony is that they’re really good at judging other people but they don’t always see it themselves”.

Another administrator stated, “like going back to what you said they don’t have all of the answers or information like sometimes though sometimes they’ll see only what they’ve seen in the class”.

Administrators perceived that teachers were good at judging others and were always looking to blame someone else. For example, one administrator stated,

“I’m assessing it based upon what I and bouncing off the wall and presume is what I’m doing right but I would love for the teachers to have the kids tell them if they actually are because I think that some point to this it’s a perceived act not necessarily that being as effective as they may think. So therefore they have to

blame someone else they blame an inconsistent administrator they blame lack of parent support there's always something to blame".

Administrators also perceived that teachers were not able to accept blame for things that went wrong in or outside of their classrooms. It was because of the inability to accept blame that they believed teachers kept a narrow scope on things and therefore were quick to blame inconsistent administrators and or unsupportive parents.

Subtheme 2: Themselves. Administrators perceived that they were ultimately doing the right things. They knew they gave mixed messages but perceived it they were interpreting situations and responding to them differently based upon need. They believed they were constantly trying to evaluate their decisions to make sure there was consistency. For example one administrator stated, "I think we believe as administrators we are doing the right thing." Another administrator stated,

"for me I think as an administrator we are constantly trying to evaluate our actions to make sure that we're hitting baselines and that there is consistency. I think with those issues consistency is it's always an inherent challenge because you're making individual judgments on a case-by-case basis. There's always like the kind of checks and balances system where you're trying to regulate if you're truly doing that or if you're biased against something intentionally or not. I think if that's true with a coworker as an assistant principal and dealing with that with behaviors responses we are constantly trying to evaluate but I think that there can be variances that we try and regulate and take corrective action".

Although administrators identified they consistently addressed issues based upon students needs they also knew they gave their staff mixed messages by addressing situations based upon different needs.

Subtheme 3: The district. Administrators perceived that everyone in the district did not work as a team but that they wanted to perceive that they did. This perception was mixed with the thought that they believed people were doing things right and that if there were still problems it must be because other people were not doing things right. Administrators also believed that if there were problems within the district was it because only certain things were expected and everything else went by the wayside. For example one administrator stated,

“so that the whole right column fascinates me to say that we are not consistent but then to say yes we are yes we are, which is really interesting. Is it the perception or is it that you want to answer yes we work as a team and yes we have a positive school climate but when you get to the nitty-gritty of it we’re not actually doing those things.”

This administrator described their perception of the survey data they were reviewing. They identified the mixed views that participants wanted to work as a team combined with the discrepancy of things being handled in a consistent way. Another administrator described their interpretation of the data, “I see it as I’m doing it and I know some of the people that I’m working with are doing it but clearly if there’s still a problem it must be because other people are not doing it right”. A third administrator stated, “I think that this is a pretty accurate reflection of what exists”.

Administrators were aware they gave mixed messages and justified it as they were interpreting the code of conduct with every situation. They interpreted each situation differently based upon different factors they had to prioritize. For example one administrator stated,

“to a certain extent I do agree with that it becomes priorities of working on this because this is rising to the level of needing more direct attention and whether we like to admit or not it can come at the expense of other things”.

Administrators knew their vast range of interpretation of policies came at the cost of other people or things within the district.

Summary

Staff members and administrators held negative perceptions of each other. They perceived that the problems and struggles each other have faced were directly related to one another. Staff members viewed the administrators as the roadblock that has impeded their ability to consistently support students because they have not received the supports they have needed. The lack of support provided from administrators has ultimately created a negative morale amongst the staff members. The low morale has resulted in a reduced team approach from staff members when they need work with their administrators. The top down model of support, with its perceived inconsistencies, provided by the administrators has impacted the administrators’ relationships with the staff members and created the divide that only staff members have perceived.

Unfortunately the administrators at the top did not recognize this divide although they were able to agree with staff members that they have been inconsistent supports and responses in the area of school climate and school discipline. They were not able to

accept blame for their actions and when they did discuss their inconsistencies further they rationalized them with the notion that they had to make different choices and they were right to do so because it was for the greater good. Administrators also perceived that staff members to have a sense of entitlement and when not kept in the loop they have lashed out and blamed others for their shortcomings.

Staff members and administrators agreed that was a need for SWPBIS. Staff members were very excited about wanting to start a SWBPIS committee. Administrators were pleased to hear that staff members wanted to be a part of SWPBIS. The initial aspects of excitement from staff members and pleasant surprise from administrators soon ended when they both reverted back to their negative perceptions of each other. Staff members soon after remarked that they could not implement something of this magnitude without the support from administration, which did not seem possible. While administrators soon stated that staff members needed to play an active role in SWPBIS. The level of mistrust from both sides was apparent again. Although mistrust was present within the responses from both staff members and administrators they both perceived SWPBIS as a possible solution that would address the challenges they have faced as a district.

Review of Quantitative Data from Qualitative Lens

The qualitative data was informed by and informed my interpretation of the quantitative data, as already described. It is important to note that my qualitative data revealed a parallel to my Factor Analysis. The themes that emerged from the qualitative process were consistent with the factors. The staff and administrators generally focused on factor 1 and factor 2 as their described challenges were school climate and policy

based. In my initial review of factor 1 it was not apparent why participants perceived they worked as a team. This perception seemingly opposed another item in factor 1 that most participants disagreed that all staff work together. Had it not been for focus group interviews where staff made it clear that they perceived the support they provided to each other as the reason why staff agreed they worked as a team, this concept may have been missed.

After I initially reviewed factor 3 it was not evident as to why student differences was uniquely separated. However, after focus group interview staff spent substantial amount time discussing individual differences, which led to ways that staff thought about bullying and race. Staff members discussed that other students bullied each other because students different from the norm had a harder time fitting in and this is often seen of students from different ethnic backgrounds. Administrators supported this notion within their focus group interview and although were more hesitant to specifically state it was a racial issues they danced around the topic and stated that the community was predominantly white and that was seen more as kids being kids. The Factor Analysis further supported the statements of bullying and a majority of staff agreed that some students were bullied, groups of student excluded others and students were not supported in a consistent way to help resolve conflicts.

The focus group interviews provided further input to items in factor 1 and factor 2. This input helped me to better understand why staff members and administrators were divided on their perceptions in regards to the code of conduct and shared vision. As I discovered from the focus group interviews staff perceived inconsistencies as a result of improper follow through from administrators and administrators perceived it as a lack of

knowledge from teachers around behavioral baseline. The perceptions from both groups continually informed my interpretation of why there was a lack of shared vision and division about the code of conduct. Furthermore, it indicated why participants disagreed that they used a consistent approach to support students. The repeated threads of inconsistent practices were noted throughout all of the focus group interviews and provided a better understanding as to why staff members perceived a need for SWPBIS and at the same time did not fully agree they wanted to be a part of it. If I had only reviewed the quantitative portion without the qualitative then I would have missed reasons behind the inconsistencies, which resulted in why staff were seeking a common practice and common language as apposed to yet another school system throughout the United States that wanted to implement SWPBIS for the sake of implementation.

One of the most interesting findings was related to Component 4 from my factor analysis (SWPBIS and Student Media Use). Initially, that factor seemed uninteruptable because it combined cell phone/social media use with perceptions of SWPBIS. The qualitative data provided important insight on this. At the time of my study, the rule changes on cell phone use and social media created a major issue related to consistency, rules, and, fundamentally, the need for guidelines consistent with SWPBIS practice. Qualitative results connected the items within the factors and provided perspective. Had it not been for the qualitative lens in which I was able to view the factor I might have discarded it.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

I conducted a MMSE study to investigate the school climate, perceptions of school climate, and readiness for implementation of SWPBIS in one school district. I used survey data and focus group interviews from a broad spectrum of stakeholders in the school. My study provided conclusive answers to each of my research questions, and also yielded three important and compelling implications for the district and for researchers and practitioners interested in an evaluation of school climate consistent with the PBIS guidelines.

The research on PBIS has not displayed the same areas of novel findings consistent with my study. The course of my study utilized a sophisticated approach of measurement targeting PBIS preparedness through a needs assessment of school climate and the level of buy-in for a schoolwide initiative from staff and administrators. The scope of the PBIS literature collected and reviewed was not written in the same methodical way. Therefore the findings revealed within my study were novel under the specific realm of PBIS.

First, I found a divide between staff members and administrators' perceptions of their schools' climates and their approaches to student behavior. Staff members described this divide as a lack of administrative consistency that affected communication, follow through, policy, and interactions with students; all elements targeted through the PBIS blueprint (Sugai & Horner, 2002). The staff consistently articulated a lack of leadership and guidance on issues of climate, and behavior management, consistent with prior research of Warren and colleagues (2006), and authors Franzen and Kamps (2008)

who identified need from staff members concerns. Staff described their worries of endlessly adding another thing to their plate that would not be supported from administration, also consistent with Warren et al. (2006).

Administrators did not acknowledge the divide between themselves and staff members, which was not expected and inconsistent with previous research. Administrators agreed they did not have a consistent approach to behavior and discipline, and reported that the problems they faced were the result of (1) the language within code of conduct, (2) teachers' inabilities to accurately assess students' behaviors, and (3) staff tendency to blame others for their own problems. Each of these were novel findings for the research of PBIS.

Fundamentally, the data revealed a general negative opinion toward school climate and school discipline, but that negative opinion created a set of "fingers pointing in opposite directions" from the staff and administration. This "finger-pointing" was also evident between the staff who often identified the failures of the other staff as a major issue confronting school climate and was a novel finding. The negative views and the focus on what the "other" was not doing well significantly impacted the culture of the district and each school's climate. At the same time, these issues revealed a larger systemic problem within the schools and the district with respect to the professional community. This level of mistrust between staff members and administrators was a new finding, but the negativity and skepticism seen from staff members about new initiatives was similar to that of Warren and colleagues (2006). Warren and colleagues (2006) spent a year with staff members and administrators trying to rebuild relationships and trust for the foundation of a successful SWPBIS initiative.

Second, I found that the district and the schools within the district were not ready to implement SWPBIS consistent with the PBIS guidelines (Sugai & Horner, 2002), this was a new and novel finding. In order to effectively adopt SWPBIS four elements must be functional so the school climate can move towards school improvement (Sugai & Horner, 2002). The school personnel must consistently collect data on student behaviors and review it in a predictable and routine way in order to use such data to enhance practice (Sugai & Horner, 2002). The district's staff members and administrators agreed they did not see student behavior in the same way and that there were no agreed upon definitions for what constitutes minor or major behaviors. The schools did not have the necessary lines of communication or feelings of trust necessary to begin the process of adopting SWPBIS, as previously found with Warren and colleagues (2006). While the schools identified a need for SWPBIS, as seen from a previous study by Franzen and Kamps (2008), the survey data and the focus groups revealed a lack of shared interest and an incapacity to engage in the initial planning of SWPBIS. The different types of data used to assess need were consistent with a previous study by Eiraldi (2014).

The district and the schools also lacked the capacity to collect and review data, a fundamental guideline of SWPBIS, which articulates that student data must be reviewed in a consistent, and predictable way in order to tailor current behavioral practices to best support the outcomes of students (Sugai & Horner, 2002). The tailoring of these outcomes must be systematic in order to consistently support the three tiers of student needs. The practices of the district administrators did not support this part of the guidelines for two reasons. First, administrators believed the code of conduct was uninteruptable even with current policies and procedures in place. Administrators felt

they could change the rules as they deem fit in order to justify their response to individual incidents. Second, administrators were reluctant to share with their own teachers the reasons why they make decisions on students' behavior which full disclosure of this process must be provided for all team members to review in a systematic and consistent way, also a novel finding. Similarly, the teachers didn't understand the code of conduct, and believed that they were responsible for interpreting the code of conduct differently for each situation. This finding was previously seen within the study from Todd and colleagues (2002) where staff members expressed concerns of behavioral inconsistencies. Staff members also reported that the administrators did not provide follow-up or follow-through on disciplinary matters. The district personnel need the benefits that a SWPBIS model could provide, but they lack the structures, communication, and trust necessary to begin the SWPBIS process.

Third, the process approach of SWPBIS is cyclical and relies on consistency throughout the entire process, supported through trainings and implementation by teams that operate in a unified and self-reflective system (Sugai & Horner, 2002). The district and the schools within the district were not ready to work as a unified and consistent team for many reasons. Staff members and administrators did not rely on each other for support. Staff and administrators did not have a basic foundation of trust either professionally or personally. The schools currently lack an understanding of the importance of responding to student behaviors in consistent manners, found in previous findings from Todd and colleagues (2002). The existing behavioral programs were not supported by the administration or implemented by the staff. I found that the specific issue related to cell phone use and social media use was a meaningful way to consider the

districts readiness for SWPBIS. None of the schools had a shared understanding of the policies, which was a novel finding. The principals and the staff lacked a shared understanding of how to implement the cell phone / social media policies. The staff within the schools lacked an ability to implement policies with any consistency across classrooms or public spaces. Fundamentally, the district and each school lacked the percentage of buy-in from staff to start SWPBIS consistent with the framework (Sugai & Horner, 2002). The findings were both consistent with prior research and different from prior research because Nocera and colleagues (2014) also identified a reduced level of buy-in but at the same time continued to support the implementation of SWPBIS.

Research Question One

My first research question was, “how do administrators and staff perceive school climate and specific elements of school climate?” I found that administrators and staff members mostly perceived that they had a commitment to a positive school climate and they truly believed what they were doing were helping students. On the other hand, there was extensive disagreement about what the vision for the school climate was, or how the schools would get there. I found that stakeholders had different priorities and views on what’s needed. These differences occurred across the groups (staff and administrators) as well as within the groups. Nobody consistently supported each other in predictable ways, resulting in a negative impact on the feelings of safety and security of students, staff, and administrators. The stakeholders disagreed on the rules, the code of conduct, and the student behavioral expectations, consistent with previous findings (Todd et al. 2002). I found the schools to have a poor school climate, evident in inconsistent expectations in common areas and the decline of student relationships, consistent with previous findings

(Nocera et al., 2014). It was clear that the staff identified that all students did not feel emotionally safe, and that there was evidence of in-person and cyber-bullying occurring without a clear response of intervention in place. The school environment was negatively impacted by administrations inconsistent approaches to address, define, and intervene with behavioral and disciplinary issues, consistent with previous findings (Nocera et al., 2014). The schools lacked clear norms and expectations, and the school personnel had no capacity to establish a set of values within their respective schools. Staff members and administrators were not teaching students expected behaviors, but were instead blaming each other for not continually supporting students in these areas.

I found the divide between staff members and administrators to have the greatest impact that greatly reduced their relationship with each other and as a result has lowered the morale the district to the lowest its ever been, a novel finding. Although administrators did not perceive there was a divide between them and staff members I did find that their attitudes towards staff members were condescending and filled with disdain. Perhaps this was why only staff members felt the divide, as the administrators did not recognize their own attitudes towards staff.

Research Question Two

My second research question was, “are there differences in the perception of school climate between administrators and staff members?” I discovered that the answer to this question was both yes and no. Yes, I found a difference between administrators and staff members in regards to their perceptions of practices and policies. I found that administrators believed they were justified in making spontaneous changes to practice and policy and conversely staff members wanted practices and policies that were

predictable and reliable. I discovered that the flexible interpretation of the code of conduct from administrators created a discrepancy of school climate perceptions, a novel finding. Staff members saw this interpretation as a lack of rules. Staff members and administrators did not agree on each other's perceptions of school climate. I discovered that staff members were frustrated and felt beaten down with little hope for change, a novel finding. Staff believed administrators lost their passion for education and had no desire to help students and instead did things that were easy but not helpful. I found that the administrators saw teachers caring less and making more bad decisions around judgments of minor vs. major behaviors for students that resulted in administrators being involved, a novel finding.

Staff members and administrators agreed on some areas of school climate. I found that they both agreed upon bullying, differences in behavioral approaches, and a lack of follow through from administration. Staff members and administrators both acknowledged that students were mean to each other, picked on one another for being different, and lacked a general sense of respect for others. I also discovered that although staff members and administrators were aware that students made fun of each other because of their racial differences they both equated this type of bullying to the predominantly white community and lack of awareness for racial diversity. Neither took responsibility or identified the need to further educate students on racial diversity.

Additionally, I found that staff members and administrators both agreed administrators were inconsistent in communication and practice, a novel finding. Staff members believed that administrators were inconsistent in follow through in regards to student disciplinary actions and in keeping teachers abreast of any changes that resulted.

Administrators agreed they were inconsistent in follow through with teachers. They also agreed they handled matter differently with each student and used their own judgment to best support student needs. Furthermore, administrators acknowledged their inconsistent follow through has resulted sending mixed messages and has caused confusion amongst students and staff members.

The perceptual difference I found between staff members and administrators on school climate were greater than their similarities. The difference between them has muddied their approach to students, which was conflicting as both groups agreed that student bullying was a problem. The fact that both staff members and administrators agreed that administrators had inconsistent follow through in communication and behavioral approaches with no admitted acceptance of the need to change, emphasized staff members concerns that administrators had lost their passion for education.

Research Question Three

My third research question was, “how do staff members perceive SWPBIS, the need for SWPBIS in their schools, and their role within a SWPBIS model?” I discovered staff members wanted SWPBIS, consistent with previous findings (Franzen & Kamps, 2008). I found out that they wanted common language, common expectations, and more importantly they wanted everyone to do the same thing. Staff members saw the need for SWPBIS within their schools. They believed that SWPBIS would help to unify the ways in which students were addressed and ultimately improve how students treated each other. Although staff members were interested in the possible positive outcomes of a PBIS model they did not think that everyone wanted to participate in it, consistent with previous findings (Warren et al., 2006). I found that staff members worried about three

things 1) doing more with no support from administrators 2) doing more and getting flack from union members and 3) feeling too burnt out to do more. Staff members knew that most staff needed to be a part of SWPBIS but not everyone was willing to make the commitment, consistent with previous findings (Warren et al., 2006).

Research Question Four

My fourth research question was, “how do administrators describe school climate, changes in school climate, the need for SWPBIS, and their role within all of it?” I found that administrators described the current school climate to be positive and changes they saw were due to changes in policy and teacher attitudes. They believed that even some of the best teachers were inconsistent and there were simply teacher who cared and those who did not. I discovered that administrators believed there was a need for SWPBIS, although were not as forth coming about their role but were clear they believed teachers needed to play a major role. They were surprised to hear that teachers believed SWPBIS was needed and that some of them wanted to be a part of it.

Summary

I was interested in understanding a district’s school climate, the district’s interest in SWPBIS, and the districts capacity to implement SWPBIS. Fundamentally, the district had major issues with school climate, and has specific challenges with consistent expectations, use of social media, bullying, student feelings of safety and security (both physically and emotionally), and positive relationships in school, together was a novel finding. There was a lack of cohesion in the staff, which resulted in poor communication, distrust, and pointing fingers at different stakeholders, a novel finding. The district did not meet the guidelines for the NSCC (NCSS, 2007); safety, relationships, teaching and

learning, and environment. The district had needs that could benefit from SWPBIS, but they lack the necessary cohesion and buy-in necessary to support a successful implementation, a novel finding. The participants believed that SWPBIS could address or even fix the issues of inconsistency and lack of guidelines and policies, which diminished the school's climate. However, SWPBIS alone will not resolve fractured district policies and practices or repair mistrust created by inconsistencies from administrators. The SWPBIS model requires districts to self-examine and then to determine the level of shared buy-in. My study revealed that this district did not meet those criteria necessary for implementation. The district will need to work to resolve the staff issues, especially the feeling of distrust and finger-pointing if they are going to get to the necessary 80% buy-in of SWPBIS models.

Implications for Practice

The systematic process I used to assess school climate to determine the level of need and buy-in is a necessary component if schools districts are going to implement SWPBIS. This approach was consistent with guidelines set for PBIS as outlined in the blueprints designed by Sugai and Horner (2002). This approach utilized all the steps needed to identify districts preparedness within all four areas of school climate as established through the National School Climate Council and how those areas were measured to establish a level of need for SWPBIS. As outlined in the PBIS blueprints, prior to adopting a PBIS model districts and schools must ensure they have gathered student disciplinary data, determined a level of need for SWPBIS, and established 80% buy-in from participants. The school district I examined was discussing the implementation of SWPBIS. There is a strong possibility that they will adopt a SWPBIS

model. This practice is typical of the practice implemented nationally. In other words, districts move to adoption without examining the need, the preparedness, and the buy-in. To implement SWPBIS in the district I examined would result in another failed intervention that aligns with the staff's current perspective that this is just another thing to put on their plate that will not be supported through training, administrative support, or leadership, consistent with staff perceptions from previous findings of Warren and colleagues (2006) and more trainings and support from Caldarella and colleagues (2011). The failure to utilize the process I utilized may be one of the reasons that troubled schools are unable to experience success from SWPBIS implementation. They likely implemented without the preparedness necessary to do so.

Implications for Research

Current research on SWPBIS has not consistently provided quality evidence to support a systematic approach to establish need and buy-in prior to the adoption of SWPBIS, consistent with previous findings (Anderson et al., 2010; Bradshaw et al., 2008; Bradshaw & Pas, 2011; Caldarella et al., 2011; Eiraldi et al., 2014; Farkas et al., 2012; Franzen & Kamps, 2008; Gettinger & Stoiber, 2008; Horner et al., 2009; Lassen et al., 2006; Nese et al., 2014; Nocera et al., 2014; Oswald et al., 2005; Rusby et al., 2011; Sailor et al., 2006; Scott, 2002; Todd et al., 2002; Warren et al., 2006). Many researchers identified the guidelines set forth from Sugai and Horner (2002) however they provided almost no evidence to support the two critical areas needed prior to adoption; established need and buy-in. These two pieces were essential to the success of SWPBIS and must be established prior to such adoption. While few studies provided pieces of evidence on these areas no one collected and reported this data through a systematic approach that

measured both need and buy-in, like I did. My approach will allow future researchers the ability to consistently and systematically collect evidence to determine need and buy-in for school districts through the use of limited personnel, time, and monies in order to report quality information consistent with PBIS guidelines.

Furthermore, the MMSE design I used validated the instructions generated from Sugai and Horner (2002) to fully understand the current climate of a school prior to adoption of SWPBIS. The survey used to assess school climate should really be used in concert with a qualitative approach such as focus groups interviews to best compliment the quantitative findings. Without the secondary analysis method I might have missed essential components needed to determine the districts level of preparedness for a successful SWPBIS initiative.

The Mixed Methods Sequential Explanatory Design (MMSE) that I selected enhanced my quantitative and qualitative findings. If I had chosen one method over the other I would not have discovered why each of the four factors were critical to the data and possibly discarded important information. The factor analysis provided me the data needed to present at my qualitative focus group interviews, however, the findings alone were not sufficient enough to explain factors 3 and 4. Qualitative findings provided further explanation to factors 1 and 2 and identified why factors 3 and 4 were important. Phenomenological qualitative data analysis methods alone were not specific to identify variance and were not able to prioritize critical matters of school climate. The MMSE design strengthened the quality of my study and elaborated on each methodological approach.

Limitations

I encountered several limitations within my study. The first was within the MMSE design I selected. The findings in the study were not causal, by evaluative and investigative. These findings were specific to the context of the setting and participants, and should not be generalized. However, the method of my study can be used by other researchers to investigate these questions in other settings. Second, I had a small sample size. The limited number of participants reduced my ability to make inferences based upon the findings for similar populations and it decreased the power to generalize the results. Third, I had issues establishing focus groups within all schools. Nonetheless, I found a saturation of my data. While focus groups conducted in the other school might have revealed a novel or different issue about that school, I don't believe it would have changed the overall findings of my study. Fourth, the district selected was in a rural area with a predominantly homogeneous middle class and upper middle class population. The make up of the district population and location limited the study from being generalized to larger urban areas with more diverse ethnic populations.

Conclusion

In conclusion I discovered the MMSE design used established a high level of need for the district and a low level of buy-in. The data collected was used to determine the school district and the schools within the district were not prepared for SWPBIS. Improvements upon the four foundational areas of school climate (safety, relationships, teaching and learning, and environment) within the district should be addressed prior to the adoption of SWPBIS. More broadly, I found that the use of this process unveiled the

underlying needs, capacity, and interest in SWPBIS, consistent with the SWPBIS framework (Sugai & Horner , 2002). Such a process should be included in any future studies on SWPBIS in order to fully comply with the framework guidelines.

Additionally, I believe that a simplified version of this process could be used by districts and schools to evaluate their own readiness and buy-in prior to implementing a large SWPBIS model. If schools, districts, and researchers are going to continue to implement SWPBIS, there should be a basic requirement that the needs assessment and buy-in assessment are done thoroughly. Without this process, it is very likely that school are unprepared to implement SWPBIS as designed, which may reveal why schools, districts, and the research do not demonstrate the benefits of PBIS.

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