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Effective school -wide discipline through Positive Behavior Supports: An analysis of current practice

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EFFECTIVE SCHOOL-WIDE DISCIPLINE THROUGH POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORTS: AN ANALYSIS OF CURRENT PRACTICE

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EFFECTIVE SCHOOL-WIDE DISCIPLINE THROUGH POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORTS:

AN ANALYSIS OF CURRENT PRACTICE

by

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the people in my life who mean the most to me. First, for my beautiful daughters, Sierra Michael and Sonia Maggie, without whom, my heart would not beat. You came home to us in the middle of this journey and there were times when I thought this task would remain undone. Because of your individual and collective spirit and the strength I know each of you have inside, Mommy went ahead and finished this thing, and in so doing wants you to always, always follow the advice of Eleanor Roosevelt and "…do the thing you think you cannot do." You will only be stronger for it. For my husband, Mike – your love and support has kept me going. Thank you for giving me both the freedom and the structure to see this through. For my parents, Bob and Marcy Hollander – thank you for believing in me and for giving me the courage to follow my dreams. Without you, this would not have been possible. Dad, I feel your smile and hope I made you proud. And finally, for Walt Disney and the hours of entertainment your movies provided for my girls while I completed this process – from my princesses to yours, thank you for being there.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

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LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF APPENDICES

EFFECTIVE SCHOOL-WIDE DISCIPLINE THROUGH POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORTS: AN ANALYSIS OF CURRENT PRACTICE

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the implementation status of School-wide Positive Behavior Supports (SWPBS) in selected elementary and middle schools (N = 123) situated within three regions of Virginia. Additionally this study sought to identify and determine the relative impact of specific facilitators and barriers to successful implementation. Finally, this study identified the types of professional development opportunities related to SWPBS available to school personnel. In order to answer each overarching research question, participants were asked to complete the School-wide Positive Behavior Support Systems Implementation Survey, a validated instrument, adapted from the Delaware PBS Implementation Self Assessment. Findings indicate above average levels of implementation on 35 of 36 specific features of SWPBS. Additional findings reveal significant levels of impact related to specific facilitators and barriers on identified critical feature categories of SWPBS. Finally, with regard to professional development, results indicate that a majority of schools offer more than one type of professional development opportunity to school personnel and that most schools use new teacher orientation programs to provide in-service for SWPBS.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

School safety and the elimination of school discipline problems and disruptive behavior are among the highest ranking priorities identified by teachers and parents in the United States (Garnes & Menlove, 2003; Skiba & Sprague, 2008; Utley, Kozleski, Smith, & Draper, 2002). Furthermore, problem student behavior is identified as the single most common reason students are removed from general education classrooms (Cohn, 2001). In light of these facts, educators, as well as the general public, are searching for evidence-based practices that support and maintain school safety and orderliness. Requirements associated with learning standards and student and school accountability increase the importance of establishing and sustaining schools that are most conducive to learning for all students and that minimize major incidents of school violence and significant problem student behavior.

Although not all incidents of school violence may be prevented, the literature is clear regarding the ineffectiveness of traditional, negative consequences for student problem behavior, as well as the utility, value, and success of more positive school-wide approaches to behavioral concerns (Garnes & Menlove, 2003; Safran & Oswald, 2003; Skiba, 2002; Skiba & Peterson, 2000). In Virginia, this positive school-wide approach is referred to as Effective School-wide Discipline (ESD) and the components of the approach include many elements associated with Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) as we

have come to understand them in the area of disability studies and special education. ESD and associated PBS hold promise for all students but particularly for students with disabilities, students with cultural differences, and students at-risk for school failure. The approach is preventative, and preliminary evidence indicates that prevention of this kind not only dramatically decreases incidents of school violence and disruptive behavior, but also increases student academic achievement especially when it is applied systematically and consistently (Cohn, 2001; Korinek, 2008; Skiba & Sprague, 2008; Virginia Department of Education, 2006).

A discussion of several of the issues inherent in traditional disciplinary approaches follows, as well as the need and emerging empirical support for more positive, school-wide approaches to problem student behavior, including the development and maintenance of schools as safe and orderly learning organizations. Practicing school administrators, central office personnel, and university professionals are wise to understand the components of PBS and ESD in order to respond effectively to difficult student behavior. As will be discussed in more detail, current negative and reactive approaches to student discipline do little in terms of decreasing inappropriate behavior and increasing academic successes. Understanding school-wide positive behavioral support systems such as ESD and PBS is critical as perspectives on school discipline continue to change.

Statement of the Problem

According to both the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) of 1997 and the more recently reauthorized Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEIA), positive behavior supports (PBS) are a mandated form of

intervention for addressing problem student behavior for specifically targeted students (Cohn, 2001). Specifically, the law requires that, for students with disabilities whose behavior impedes their own learning or the learning of others, the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team must consider the need for a behavior intervention plan (BIP), including positive behavioral interventions, strategies, and supports, to address the behavior. Furthermore, the BIP must be based on a functional assessment of the student's behavior (FBA). Clearly, federal legislation requires educators to address problem student behavior in proactive ways that lead to more positive outcomes (IDEIA, 2004). As a result of an increased focus on PBS for students with disabilities, specifically, school district professionals are encouraged to shift efforts from reactive and punitive disciplinary measures to those that are proactive and preventative in nature. Such a shift is applicable, in practice, to all students and is fundamental to efforts for understanding and establishing effective school-wide discipline and behavioral support programs. Questions regarding the implementation status of such programs arise, however, related to how localities are currently implementing the legislative requirements associated with PBS and the research-based recommendations associated with it and other forms of ESD. Finally, because considerable school-based administrative support and leadership are integral components to effective programs, information related to current professional development opportunities including any perceived facilitators and/or barriers, is important with regard not only to the current implementation status of school-wide positive behavioral support systems such as ESD and PBS, but also to its possible future in our nation's public schools.

Current Practices in Student Discipline

Increased incidents of violence in our schools have resulted in disciplinary measures intended to reduce disruptive and violent behaviors. As recently as the 1990s, schools across the nation adopted zero tolerance discipline policies mandating suspension or expulsion for student infractions such as drugs, weapons and gang-related activity (Skiba, 2000; Utley et al., 2002). This response was, in part, the result of federal legislation such as the Gun-Free Schools Act (1994), which mandates a minimum one-year expulsion for any student bringing a weapon to school. Clearly, zero tolerance policies were also more directly related to heightened national concern regarding an increase in violence in America's public schools. More recently, the Gun-Free Schools Act has been broadened to include any implement that may be used as a weapon. Likewise, zero tolerance policies have been expanded to include less serious behavioral infractions including smoking, swearing and general school disruption (Skiba, 2000; Skiba & Sprague, 2008).

Although educators and community members are eager for a no-nonsense response to school violence and other safety and order concerns, there is little evidence to support the effectiveness of zero tolerance policies in terms of a reduction in reported incidences of problem student behavior (Safran & Oswald, 2003; Skiba, 2000; Skiba, 2002; Skiba & Peterson, 2000; Skiba & Rausch, 2006). Despite evidence related to the ineffectiveness of consequential strategies such as suspension and expulsion, administrators continue to report heavy reliance on these practices (National Center for Education Statistics, 2004; National Center for Educational Statistics, 2006) seemingly ignoring contrary evidence that over-reliance on "get

tough" zero tolerance policies may actually increase the severity and frequency of the behaviors they are intended to reduce (Lewis & Garrison-Harrell, 1999). Additional problems related to the current over-reliance on such policies surface when considered within the context of zero tolerance structures as generic solutions to the unique problems presented by disruptive student behavior.

As discussed in Hoy and Miskel (2001), and based on the work of Peter F. Drucker (1966, as cited in Hoy & Miskel, 2001), administrators make two kinds of decisions. Those decisions may be classified as either generic or unique. Generic decisions are those that arise from established policies or rules. In contrast, unique decisions are those that result from creative decision-making that go beyond established procedures or structures within the organization. In the context of student discipline, it is important to note that students are individuals and as such, demonstrate unique behaviors that may not be appropriately addressed by overarching and generic policies such as zero tolerance. Instead, problem student behavior more likely requires unique interventions that ultimately control behavior but also support students within the context of school.

General controversy over zero tolerance policies notwithstanding, significant concern has also been raised with regard to disproportionality in suspension and expulsion practices in terms of the overrepresentation of culturally and linguistically diverse and low income students, as well as disproportionate rates of school exclusion for students with disabilities (Butera, McMullen, & Henderson, 1997; Hess & Brigham, 2001; Skiba & Peterson, 2000; Skiba, 2002; Skiba & Sprague, 2008; Utley et al., 2002). The Individuals with Disabilities Act of 1997 (IDEA) resulted in

additional controversy over discipline practices with specific reference to students with disabilities and mandated, for the first time ever, the consideration of positive behavior supports for students whose behavior impedes their own learning or that of others.

Considered the most controversial changes to the law governing special education for school-aged children, the discipline and behavioral provisions of the IDEA of 1997 led many school administrators to believe that they had little to no authority to discipline students with disabilities who violated school conduct codes (Hess & Brigham; Skiba, 2002; National Center for Education Statistics, 2004). Ultimately, the discipline provisions of the IDEA of 1997 gave rise to a perception of disparity with regard to disciplinary approaches for general and special education students (Hess & Brigham, 2001). Proponents of alternative and more positive and proactive approaches to student discipline believe that the former legislation, and the more recently re-authorized Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEIA) are, in fact, an attempt to achieve a balance between the rights of students with disabilities and the need to maintain a safe and orderly learning environment (Bartlett, Etscheidt, & Weisenstein, 2007). Finally, proponents of more positive approaches to discipline believe that emerging practices and system-wide changes associated with effective school-wide discipline and positive behavior supports are in the best interest of all students, not only those with disabilities (Korinek, 2008; Skiba & Sprague, 2008; Sprague & Walker, 2005; Sugai & Horner, 2002; Sugai & Horner, 2006).

Effective School-wide Discipline

At its core, effective school-wide discipline (ESD) refers to a model of behavioral support that is proactive and preventative. Specifically, ESD programs have three basic goals. First, ESD efforts are aimed at reducing the large number of existing behavioral offenses committed by students who are most often compliant. Second, ESD efforts are designed to clearly identify the relatively small number of students who are unaffected by traditional and more general disciplinary approaches and may therefore require more intensive or individualized behavior supports and interventions. And third, ESD is intended to build a school culture among faculty and students where there is abundant clarity related to what is appropriate and what is not. At the very foundation of ESD is the notion that all effective responses to school violence begin with preventing them from occurring in the first place (Horner, Sugai, & Horner, 2000; Sprague & Walker, 2005).

Although the development of ESD is currently receiving significant attention in the literature (Houchins, Jolivette, Wessendorf, McGlynn, & Nelson, 2005; Irvin, Tobin, Sprague, Sugai, & Vincent, 2004; Korinek, 2008; Michaels, Brown, & Mirabella, 2005; Safran & Oswald, 2003; Skiba & Sprague, 2008; Sugai & Horner, 2002; Sugai & Horner, 2006; Walker, Cheney, Stage, & Blum, 2005), Timothy Lewis, professor at the University of Oregon, developed a handbook for educators entitled *Decision Making about Effective Behavioral Support: A Guide for Educators* in 1997. Even then, Lewis acknowledged that the traditionally punitive manner in which schools handled discipline did not eradicate behavior problems or change

student behavior. Instead, he noted that these approaches may actually be exacerbating the problem of school discipline issues (Lewis, 1997).

Throughout the handbook, Lewis refers to discipline as "effective behavioral support," acknowledging the responsibility of educators not only to address student behavior but also to teach students more socially appropriate skills. As Lewis asserts, the very root of the word "discipline" is, in fact, "disciple." A disciple is a student or a learner and as such requires teaching. Approaching student discipline as an opportunity to provide instruction and support is foundational to the ESD model. Several other key features of ESD exist.

According to Lewis (1997) and others (see Table 1), key principles associated with ESD systems include the following:

- Decisions about effective behavioral support systems are made by school-based teams comprised of administrators, general and special educators, paraprofessionals, and related services personnel. School-based teams in an ESD model are intended to be representative of the entire school, not isolated to one subgroup of professionals.
- Desired outcomes are clearly defined as both broad school-based goals and at the individual student level.
- Social, cultural, and ethnic community standards and practices are taken into consideration as ESD programs are developed.
- School and community members embrace ESD efforts and consider it one of the top priorities of the school and neighborhood.

- Significant emphasis is placed on prevention and teaching socially acceptable behaviors versus emphasizing only a reduction in problem behavior.
- On-going monitoring, accommodating, and evaluating occur and changes are made through data-based decision processes by the team.

Table 1

Key principles of effective school-wide behavioral support systems

Principle	Supporting Literature Base
1. Decisions about effective behavioral support systems are made by school-based teams comprised of administrators, general and special educators, paraprofessionals, and related services personnel. School-based teams in a SWPBS model are intended to be representative of the entire school, not isolated to one subgroup of professionals.	Blonigen, Harbaugh, Singell, Horner, Irvin, & Smolkowski, 2008; Freeman, Eber, Anderson, Irvin, Horner, Bounds, & Dunlap, 2006; Safran & Oswald, 2003; Sprague & Walker, 2005; Sugai & Horner, 2006
2. Desired outcomes are clearly defined as both broad school-based goals and at the individual student level.	Blonigen, Harbaugh, Singell, Horner, Irvin, & Smolkowski, 2008; Freeman, Eber, Anderson, Irvin, Horner, Bounds, & Dunlap, 2006; Garnes & Menlove, 2003; Safran & Oswald, 2003; Skiba & Peterson, 2000; Sprague & Walker, 2005; Sugai & Horner, 2006
3. Social, cultural, and ethnic community standards and practices are taken into consideration as SWPBS programs are developed.	Garnes & Menlove, 2003; Skiba & Peterson, 2000; Sprague & Walker, 2005; Sugai & Horner, 2006

(continued)

Table 1

Key principles of effective school-wide behavioral support systems

Principle	Supporting Literature Base
4. School and community members embrace SWPBS efforts and consider it one of the top priorities of the school and neighborhood.	Freeman, Eber, Anderson, Irvin, Horner, Bounds, & Dunlap, 2006; Garnes & Menlove, 2003; Safran & Oswald, 2000; Skiba & Peterson, 2000; Sprague & Walker, 2005; Sugai & Horner, 2006
5. Significant emphasis is placed on prevention and teaching socially acceptable behaviors versus emphasizing only a reduction in problem behavior.	Blonigen, Harbaugh, Singell, Horner, Irvin, & Smolkowski, 2008; Freeman, Eber, Anderson, Irvin, Horner, Bounds, & Dunlap, 2006; Garnes & Menlove, 2003; Safran & Oswald, 2000; Skiba & Peterson, 2000; Sprague & Walker, 2005; Sugai & Horner, 2006
6. On-going monitoring, accommodating, and evaluating occur and changes are made through data-based decision processes by the team.	Blonigen, Harbaugh, Singell, Horner, Irvin, & Smolkowski, 2008; Freeman, Eber, Anderson, Irvin, Horner, Bounds, & Dunlap, 2006; Safran & Oswald, 2000; Skiba & Peterson, 2000; Sprague & Walker, 2005; Sugai & Horner, 2006

Lewis (1997) and others (e.g., Horner, Sugai, & Horner, 2000) further acknowledge that it is naïve to assume that all students arrive at the schoolhouse door

ready to learn. ESD models of behavioral support recognize student diversity and embrace the challenges associated with defining, teaching, and supporting expected student behaviors. Ultimately, ESD efforts not only more appropriately address student behavior than exclusionary strategies, but they provide the foundation for the establishment of a positive school environment for all students and staff. Furthermore, ESD systems provide the model by which schools are beginning to approach effective, positive student behavioral support for *all* students.

Positive Behavior Supports

Positive behavior supports (PBS) are defined as a broad range of systemic and individualized strategies intended to improve social and learning outcomes while simultaneously preventing and decreasing problem behavior (Sugai et al., 1999). Although PBS are not new, the application of such system-wide and individual supports is contemporary in terms of both the context of the IDEIA and the application of PBS to individuals without disabilities (Knoster, Anderson, Carr, Dunlap, & Horner, 2003; Skiba & Sprague, 2008; Sugai et al., 1999). Historically, PBS have been associated with individuals with developmental and other disabilities (Carr et al., 1999) however; within the last decade, PBS have emerged as a significant policy and practice in public schools nationwide (Walker, Cheney, Stage, & Blum, 2005). Reportedly, at least 6,000 schools across the country are actively implementing school-wide positive behavior supports (Kincaid, Childs, Blasé, & Wallace, 2007; Skiba & Sprague, 2008). Additionally, the *Journal for Positive Behavior Interventions* was introduced in 1999, followed by the development of the Association for Positive Behavior Support in 2003 (Knoster et al., 2003). These

newly established resources indicate increased public attention to more effective ways to manage student behavior.

Given not only the legal requirement for the consideration of PBS for students with disabilities but also the empirical reality that traditional disciplinary approaches are ineffective, PBS have recently gotten much attention in the literature related to their application as a scientifically-based intervention for the majority of students with behavioral difficulties (Carr et al., 2002). The United States Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) has published a technical assistance guide on the subject, and at least forty of the fifty states have developed resources intended to assist localities with the development of PBS for schools (Killu, Weber, Derby, & Barretto, 2006). What is less clear is how individual localities are implementing PBS requirements, including to what extent, if any, PBS is applied as part of system-wide supports such as effective school-wide discipline programs for all students.

Although some states do provide state-level technical assistance guides and professional development programs for school-based leaders, the extent to which localities are implementing programs is unclear. The state of Virginia, for example, provides informative literature and technical support to school districts related to school-wide discipline (e.g., ESD, PBS), yet there is little available information regarding the actual implementation status of these types of programs within individual localities across the state.

Purpose of the Study

This study is important to the fields of both general and special education in Virginia because its aim is to provide an in-depth analysis of current practices related

to school-wide discipline within specific localities in the state of Virginia. Study findings are intended not only to increase awareness and knowledge about ESD and PBS exclusively, but also to inform practice with regard to the future direction of other initiatives associated with overarching school-wide positive behavioral supports (SWPBS). A primary purpose of this study was to examine and assess the current implementation status of SWPBS in selected school districts in Virginia. A survey instrument for building level administrators was used as the means by which study-related data were collected. Because the implementation of SWPBS occurs within schools, school-based leaders were targeted for inclusion in the study.

This study additionally intended to extend the work of Killu, Weber, Derby, and Barretto (2006) by providing a description of the resources and procedures available to service providers within selected local education agencies in Virginia, specifically reflecting any relevant professional development opportunities for school personnel. In addition to examining current implementation practices and professional development opportunities for SWPBS awareness and implementation, this study also intended to identify those factors that are perceived by leaders as facilitating or impeding SWPBS implementation.

This chapter includes the introduction, the background and statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, research questions, limitations and delimitations of the study, and operational definitions of terms used throughout the study. Chapter Two contains a review of relevant SWPBS with a specific focus on ESD and PBS literature including the historical, legal, and systems perspectives of both, as well as Virginia's regulatory and procedural context. Chapter Three includes proposed study

methodology including procedures for data collection, data analysis, and ethical safeguards.

Research Questions

State oversight of SWPBS implementation is a relatively new directive (Killu et al., 2006) and although the implementation of such programs is rapidly surfacing as an empirically sound system of support for students with and without disabilities (Carr et al., 1999; Sugai & Horner, 2002), research related to individual localities' implementation of the requirements associated with PBS is limited. Additionally, because PBS in Virginia is directly linked to effective school-wide discipline programs for all students, this study attempted to gather information related to the following research questions:

1. What is the implementation status of formal school-wide discipline and behavioral support programs in selected schools in Virginia?
2. What factors facilitate the implementation of formal school-wide discipline and behavioral support programs?
3. What factors impede the implementation of formal school-wide discipline and behavioral support programs?
4. What professional development opportunities on formal school-wide discipline and behavioral support programs are provided to school personnel?

Limitations

Limitations are defined as restrictions within a study over which the researcher has little or no control (Rudestam & Newton, 2001). This study relied on

the self-report of school leaders via a survey instrument. As such, it must be assumed that participant responses on that instrument accurately reflected their perceptions and knowledge of actual practices within their respective school buildings and districts during the time the survey was administered. Because perceptions and personal opinions are limited to the individual and her unique context, broader generalizations beyond the scope of this study, and the participants include herein, are limited.

Delimitations

Delimitations refer to limitations or restrictions deliberately imposed on a study by the researcher (Rudestam & Newton, 2001). An obvious delimitation of the current study relates to the fact that data collection and analysis was purposefully limited to local school districts within the state of Virginia and further limited to districts in three Superintendent's Regional Study Groups. As a result of the focus on specific school districts, generalizations may not be made outside the localities included within the context of this study. Additionally, this study was limited to elementary and middle schools within identified school districts. As a result, generalizations may not be made beyond these specific school levels.

Definition of terms

Within the context of this study, commonly used terms are operationally defined as follows:

Behavior intervention plan (BIP) refers to a formal, team-developed plan including positive strategies, programs or curricular modifications, and supplementary aids and supports required to address behaviors of concern; elements of the plan are based on

data collected during the functional behavior assessment process (Bartlett et al., 2007).

**Effective School-wide Discipline* (ESD) refers to a program or system of student discipline that is applied to all students within a school and is characterized by positive or proactive strategies and interventions aimed at managing student behavior (Garnes & Menlove, 2003).

Functional behavior assessment (FBA) refers to a "systematic process of identifying problem behaviors and the events that (a) reliably predict occurrences and non-occurrences of those behaviors and (b) maintain the behaviors across time" (Sugai et al., 1999).

General education leadership refers to any designated school-based leader with responsibility for student discipline and facilitating and implementing school-wide discipline through positive behavior supports.

Interim Alternative Educational Setting (IAES) refers to any alternative educational setting for a student with a disability that is different from the student's typical placement as the result of a disciplinary incident. Such settings may include, but are not limited to, home-based instruction, alternative school, half-day programs, and self-contained, or otherwise more restrictive, placements.

Manifestation Determination Review refers to the process required for students with disabilities who may be suspended beyond 10 school days or when an Interim Alternative Educational Setting is considered. The purpose of the review is for the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team to determine whether or not the behavior in question was substantially linked to the student's disability or was the

result of the school's failure to properly implement the IEP. This process may also be known as a "causality hearing," "causal hearing." "manifestation review," "manifestation IEP," "manifestation inquiry," or "manifestation hearing."

**Positive behavior supports* (PBS), also referred to as positive behavior interventions (PBI), are strategies and systems intended to achieve socially important behavioral change (Sugai, et al., 1999).

Resource refers to any written information designed and/or distributed by the local education agency (LEA) that contains procedures, strategies or suggestions on ESD/PBS methodology (Killu et al., 2006).

**School-wide Positive Behavior Supports* (SWPBS) refers to school-wide systems of support that include proactive strategies for defining, teaching, and supporting appropriate student behaviors to create positive school environments. Within the context of this study, this term also refers to principles and practices associated with both positive behavior supports and effective school-wide discipline (as SWPBS is known in Virginia).

Superintendent's Regional Study Group refers to one or more of the eight regional groups of school districts in Virginia. The purpose of the Superintendent's Regional Study Groups is to provide a forum for school district Superintendents within each region to meet a minimum of once per month in order to coordinate regional efforts and programs.

Traditional Discipline refers to any punitive, reactive, or consequential response to student misbehavior that is intended to teach students to obey school rules.

*Indicates that, within the context of this study, the term SWPBS is intended to be all-inclusive, comprised of the principles and practices associated with both PBS and ESD. Though the terms PBS and ESD are initially defined separately, SWPBS, as is used throughout the study, refers to both PBS and ESD collectively.

Summary

Without question, problem student behavior is of significant concern to both educators and parents of school-aged children across our country. Eliminating incidents of student violence and general behavioral disruption continue to rank among the highest priorities of relevant stakeholders in our nation's public education system. As a result not only of the ineffectiveness of zero tolerance and reactionary policies and practices, school-based leaders and practitioners alike, yearn for evidence-based practices that yield positive outcomes in terms of student behavior and the academic environment. School-wide positive behavior supports, that is, programs that are inclusive of both contemporary notions of effective school-wide discipline and traditional concepts associated with positive behavior supports, hold promise for addressing student discipline and establishing learning environments committed to the academic and social development of youngsters.

Because federal mandates call for evidence-based practices, we are required to reconsider our approach to student discipline and school safety. School-wide positive behavior supports offer us an empirically sound approach to preventing, minimizing and appropriately addressing student behavior in school. This study's purpose was to examine the implementation status of such school-wide positive behavior supports (SWPBS) including examining factors identified as facilitators and barriers to

implementation as well as any associated professional development opportunities provided to personnel responsible for implementation.

CHAPTER II

Review of the Literature

This chapter includes a review of the relevant historical and legal foundations of disciplinary approaches for school-aged students, including contemporary disciplinary practices within the current educational environment, the shift toward more preventative and school-wide models of effective discipline, positive behavior supports, and finally, Virginia's context and current implementation status at the state level. Information for the literature review was obtained using current texts as well as empirical and descriptive studies, and resource guides on the topic of School-wide Positive Behavior Supports (SWPBS), Effective School-wide Discipline (ESD), and Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) obtained through several databases and the web-based Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) Center on Positive Intervention and Supports: Effective School-wide Interventions. Specific databases included Dissertation Abstracts, Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC), InfoTrac OneFile, and Expanded Academic ASAP. Database descriptors included, *positive behavior supports, effective discipline, school-wide discipline, positive behavior interventions, school-wide positive behavior supports, disabilities, special education. general education, suspension, expulsion, zero tolerance, student discipline, and professional development.* Additional Virginia-specific information was retrieved from the Virginia Department of Education web-site. The purpose of this review is to

present the historical and current context of the discipline practices associated with students with disabilities and those without, including the most recent focus on improving student behavior and academic achievement for all students by establishing and maintaining SWPBS programs.

Legal Foundations for Discipline Approaches

In the context of student discipline, several legal sources inform the legislative foundation for current practice. Specifically, requirements associated with the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Acts of 1997 and 2004, and the Virginia Code, provide the foundation by which educators develop programs for and respond to student problem behavior. Relevant portions of each of these major pieces of legislation are discussed below.

No Child Left Behind

NCLB is most commonly discussed in relation to student, teacher, and school accountability including increased academic standards within our nation's public schools. Within the context of student discipline, however, under Title IV of NCLB, states are required to establish a uniform management and reporting system on school safety and reported incidences of drug use by students. NCLB requires that this type of information be publicly reported and that continual assessment occur (USDOE, 2006). In addition to the requirements associated with data collection, Title IV also provides states with financial assistance that, in most cases, is awarded to local school districts for use in funding a wide range of drug and violence prevention programs. The purpose of such programs is clearly targeted to the development of safe and drug-free learning environments that support improved academic achievement.

Furthermore, consistent with other NCLB requirements, prevention program interventions must be scientifically-based.

Scientifically-based interventions refer to those strategies and practices that are known to be effective in terms of reliable empirical or descriptive evidence that they actually work. In the context of NCLB, the scientifically-based interventions requirement is intended to move educational practices and programs toward a medical model by which the effectiveness of interventions is based on controlled and systematic scientific research (US Department of Education, 2006). As a part of this new requirement, in 2002, the United States Department of Education (USDOE) established an internet-based *What Works Clearinghouse* (www.whatworks.ed.gov) intended for access by parents, educators, and policy makers who are interested in scientifically-based practices in education. The USDOE maintains the site, updating it regularly with the number of studies conducted in a given topic area (i.e., character education), including the number of studies found that meet evidence standards, meet evidence standards with reservations, and those that do not meet evidence standards.

The evidence-based requirement of NCLB extends beyond only academic interventions to other areas of school as well. Specifically, drop-out prevention and character education are currently included on the clearinghouse site as specifically targeted topic areas. Interventions to reduce delinquent, disorderly, and violent behavior, both in and out of school, were targeted for systematic review during the first year but have not yet been included as a topic area being reviewed. As of September 2008, no information specifically related to the reduction of delinquent, disorderly, or violent behavior is available on the site however, it does maintain

information about character education curricula designed to promote positive social and emotional behavior (i.e., Positive Action, Too Good for Violence, Connect with Kids). Specific ratings are provided in terms of each approach's improvement index, evidence rating, and extent of evidence.

Finally, NCLB mandates that parents of children who have been the victims of a crime at their Title I school or whose children attend a school that is identified as "persistently dangerous" by their respective state, are now legally entitled to school choice (USDOE, 2006). Clearly, it is in the best interests of local school divisions to insure that schools are both safe and drug-free in order to prevent not only a decrease in student achievement, but also potential negative consequences associated with school choice under NCLB.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1997

In June of 1997, significant amendments to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) brought forth many changes in special education law and practice, many of which were controversial. In particular, the discipline provisions of the Act sparked heated debate surrounding perceived notions of a dual system of discipline for special education and general education students (Bartlett, Etscheidt, & Weisenstein, 2007; Hess & Brigham, 2001). Prior to the 1997 amendments, the original legislation that would become the IDEA was silent on student discipline. Educators were forced to rely primarily on litigation and court decisions when responding to discipline issues for students with disabilities (Bartlett et al., 2007).

The discipline provision amendments of 1997 were intended to balance the need for school safety with the need to provide appropriate educational programming

opportunities for students with disabilities as each of these issues were then, and continue to be, significant concerns across the country. Because student discipline had not previously been a part of the legislation governing the education of students with disabilities, new requirements associated with manifestation determination reviews, functional behavior assessments, and behavior intervention plans led schools districts to attempt to organize and develop policies that responded, as mandated, to the legislative requirements.

Disciplinary provisions. As previously stated, the IDEA amendments of 1997 introduced several new concepts, some of which are especially relevant to the education of students who display problem behavior that violates school conduct codes or behavior that is otherwise unacceptable in terms of social norms (Sugai, Horner, Dunlap, Heineman, Lewis, Nelson, Scott, Liaupsin, Sailor, Turnbull, Turnbull, Wickham, Ruef, & Wilcox, 1999). As an initial matter, however, it is important to understand the components of those new requirements in the context of the discipline provisions themselves. This preventative context is critical to understanding the foundations of PBS as an alternative to traditional disciplinary approaches not only for students with disabilities, but for those without disabilities, as well.

Specifically, IDEA (1997) addresses the discipline of special education students by limiting the number of days a student with a disability may be suspended from school without such removal constituting a change in placement. As required by the provisions, students with disabilities may not be unilaterally suspended from school for more than 10 cumulative or consecutive days. The decision to remove a

student with a disability for 10 days or less is allowable without formally consulting parents or other school officials notwithstanding state and local due process procedures. The 10-day rule for suspensions allows school officials some flexibility in responding to serious disciplinary infractions but also protects special education students from unilateral long-term removals that essentially represent a change in educational placement (Bartlett et al., 2007). Because suspensions longer than 10 days may constitute a change in placement, the procedural safeguards of the 1997 IDEA, including access to the general education curriculum and the continuation of special education services, are triggered, and school personnel are cautioned to carefully comply with the legal requirements of the disciplinary provisions (Evans, 1999; IDEA, 1997; Walther-Thomas & Brownell, 1998).

For suspensions that may exceed 10 school days, the discipline provisions of 1997 require that school officials conduct a manifestation determination review (MDR) at which the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team, including the family, determines whether or not a relationship exists between the misbehavior and the student's disability. Because there is a legal presumption that a relationship between the two does in fact, exist, school personnel are required to overcome that presumption by essentially proving, via documentation and any other relevant student information, that a relationship does not exist between the violation and the student's indentified disability. In the event that such a relationship cannot be overcome, the student may not be expelled or otherwise removed from her educational placement (Bartlett et al., 2007). If, on the other hand, a relationship is determined not to exist, the student may be disciplined in the same manner as a student without a disability as

long as access to the curriculum and special education services are not interrupted. The MDR process is required as described in IDEA 1997 for any student with a disability whose suspensions from school would exceed the 10-day rule. MDR requirements also hold if a student is being considered for placement in an Interim Alternative Educational Setting (IAES).

IAES consideration under the IDEA amendments of 1997, result primarily from weapons or drug possession or use. Specifically, students with disabilities who bring weapons to school or who knowingly possess or use illegal drugs may be placed in an IAES for up to 45 school days. Additional provisions related to IAES require that long-term (i.e., beyond 10 days) placement in such a setting for any reason other than drugs or weapons be determined only by the IEP team or by a hearing officer should the student be believed to present a danger to herself or others.

During placement in the IAES, relevant members of the IEP team are further required to conduct an MDR in order to determine whether or not the conduct violation is related to or caused by the student's disability (Bartlett et al., 2007). In the event that a relationship between the misbehavior and the student's disability is not found, the student is subject to the same disciplinary consequences as a student without a disability as long as educational services are continued. If, however, a relationship between the misconduct and the disability is found, and unless the parents and school personnel agree to a change in placement, the student is legally entitled to be returned to the placement to which she was assigned prior to the IAES. In IAES situations, instances of students with disabilities whose suspensions total 10 days, or in the case of a student whose behavior impedes her own learning or the

learning of others, IDEA 1997 further requires that the IEP team address student misbehavior by developing a behavior intervention plan (BIP) based on a functional behavior assessment (FBA). Each of these requirements is discussed below.

Functional behavior assessment and behavior intervention plans. Functional behavior assessment (FBA) and behavior intervention plans (BIP) were not new to either special education or disability studies when they were incorporated into the federal legislation of 1997, however, their inclusion in the discipline provisions of the law indicated Congress' effort to improve the quality of behavior interventions and behavioral support planning (Sugai et al., 1999) for students with disabilities. Specifically, the law requires an FBA and BIP "in the case of a child whose behavior impedes his or her learning or that of others" (IDEA, 1997, Section 614 (d)(3)(B)(i)). The IEP team is additionally required to consider, as a part of the BIP, any positive behavioral intervention strategies and supports required in order to address the behavior of concern. Furthermore, the law states that,

> if the local educational agency did not conduct a functional behavior assessment and implement a behavioral intervention plan for such child before the behavior that resulted in the suspension [that exceeded the 10 day rule], the agency shall convene an IEP meeting to develop an assessment plan to address that behavior (IDEA, 1997, Section 615 (k)(1)(B)(i).

Localities are additionally required to review the BIP of a disciplined student for whom one already exists in order to modify it, as necessary, to address the student's problem behavior. Finally, although FBA and BIP were considered to be major regulatory additions concerning both the discipline and the rights of students with

disabilities, the law is silent on exactly what is meant by FBA and BIP (Bartlett et al., 2007; Bradley, 2003). Educators are essentially left to develop state and local policies and procedures in order to implement and comply with the federal mandates. Despite the best of hopes, the re-authorization of the IDEA in 2004 did little to clarify the regulations or to allay concerns of educators in terms of general disciplinary procedures for students with disabilities, including precisely what is required as part of the FBA and BIP process.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004

Many sections of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEIA) became effective on July 1, 2005 with the final regulations for Part B of that law taking effect on October 13, 2006. The IDEIA, or IDEA, to which it is more commonly referred (Bartlett et al., 2007), not only has a new name indicative of higher expectations for students with disabilities, but it also attempts to provide some confluence between the IDEA as we have come to know it and the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). Although some educators view the laws as incompatible, the relevant features of both laws within the context of this paper relate most directly to the assurance of high expectations for all students, increased access to the general curriculum for students with disabilities, highly qualified teachers, increased use of evidence-based instructional strategies, and increased participation of students with disabilities in state and local testing programs (Bartlett et al., 2007).

Though on the surface these legal assurances may not appear to relate directly to positive behavior supports for all students, the evidence-based instructional requirement mandates educators to implement strategies known to be effective, and it

is well documented that traditional disciplinary approaches such as zero tolerance policies that rely solely on suspension and expulsion are anything but effective for most students (Garnes & Menlove, 2003; Safran & Oswald, 2003; Skiba, 2002; Skiba, 2000; Skiba & Peterson, 2000; Skiba & Sprague, 2008). Furthermore, IDEA simply will not allow school officials to rely exclusively on reactive, exclusionary practices. Although the discipline provisions of 2004 were amended, the substantive majority of the original 1997 legislation remains the law of the land.

Disciplinary provisions. In general, the original disciplinary provisions of the IDEA of 1997 remain unchanged in the re-authorization of 2004. Schools are still held to a 10-day rule regarding the suspension or unilateral removal of students with disabilities from the classroom or school building. The unilateral authority of school officials was extended, however, with regard to a new provision for students who demonstrate misconduct that results in the serious bodily injury of another person at school (Bartlett et al., 2007). Specifically, students who are involved in this type of misconduct may also now be unilaterally removed from their current placement and placed into an IAES for up to 45 school days. This provision is consistent with those that exist for students who bring weapons to school or who knowingly possess or use drugs. Requirements associated with manifestation determination review are still relevant and though there is a perception that it is now more difficult to find a direct or substantial relationship between a student's general misconduct and her disability, the onus is still on the school to properly implement the IEP including the mandates associated with the FBA and BIP process (Zirkel, 2006).

Functional behavior assessment and behavior intervention plans. The majority of the law surrounding the requirements of FBA and BIPs remains intact. One significant change, though, is noted with respect to when an FBA is triggered. Previously, the eleventh day of suspension was considered the benchmark for initiating an FBA. Currently, there is no such requirement. In fact, the requirement for an FBA is now mentioned only within the context of an MDR (von Ravensberg & Tobin, 2006; Zirkel, 2006) when a possible change in placement (i.e., suspension beyond 10 days, consideration of IAES) is imminent. In the case of a student who brings a weapon to school, knowingly possesses or uses drugs, or inflicts serious bodily injury, the FBA and BIP requirements must be followed "as appropriate" (IDEA 2004 § 615 (k)(1)(D)). Again, the law is silent on exactly what is meant by both FBA and BIP, as well as the phrase, "as appropriate."

Clearly, though the requirements for a formal FBA and BIP seem to have relaxed, Congress' intent in keeping the consideration of, "the use of appropriate positive behavioral interventions and supports," in the language concerning the development of the IEP, emphasizes a proactive approach to addressing challenging student behavior. Additionally, because the discipline provisions of IDEA 2004 remain largely unchanged with respect to suspension or other removal from school, educators are wise to adopt proactive and evidence-based practices that are effective for all students, regardless of disability. Positive behavior supports, a viable and proactive alternative to traditional disciplinary strategies, offer promising results not only for students with disabilities, but also for students at-risk for placement in special education programs, students with cultural differences, and students who are

otherwise at-risk for school-related problems (Bartlett et al., 2007; Garnes & Menlove, 2003; Kennedy, Long, Jolivette, Cox, Tang, & Thompson, 2001; Skiba, 2002; Skiba & Sprague, 2008; Sprague & Walker, 2005; Sugai & Horner, 2002).

Code of Virginia

Because this study targets selected schools in Virginia, it is important to address the specific sections of the *Code of Virginia* that reference student discipline. Chapter 14 in Title 22.1 relates specifically to pupils and contains several sections that describe local school board responsibilities associated with the discipline of public school students. §22.1-276.01 contains definitions of terms used within the context of the sections of the *Code* that relate to student discipline. Specifically, definitions are provided for "alternative education program," "disruptive behavior," "exclusion," "expulsion," "long-term suspension," and "short-term suspension."

Consistent with federal law, "short-term suspensions" in Virginia are those that do not exceed 10 school days. Likewise, "long-term suspensions" are those school removals that are more than 10 school days but less than 365 school days. "Expulsion" refers to any disciplinary action imposed by a local school board whereby a student is not permitted to attend school within the local school district and is ineligible for readmission for 365 days after the expulsion date. "Exclusion" in Virginia refers to a local school board's authority to deny admission to a student who has been placed on expulsion or long-term suspension of more than 30 days by another school board or private school in Virginia or any other state, or for whom admission has been withdrawn from a private school in Virginia or other state. "Alternative school program" includes, but is not limited to, night school, adult

education, or any other educational program designed to offer instruction to students for whom a regular program of instruction may be inappropriate. Some local school districts, for example, have identified alternative school programs (i.e., Woodside Academy) to which students are assigned following disciplinary action. Finally, "disruptive behavior" is the term used to describe any violation of the local school board's regulations governing student conduct that interrupts or obstructs the learning environment.

The *Code of Virginia*, in §22.1-276.2, details the procedures required in order for teachers to remove disruptive students from their classrooms. Specifically, local school boards are required to establish guidelines and procedures for reporting incidents, parent notification, guidelines for alternative assignment, procedures for the student's return, and for teachers whose evaluation indicates deficiencies in the management of student conduct, requirements to attend professional development activities designed to improve classroom management and disciplinary skills. Principals are additionally required to ensure that students removed from classes continue to receive an education unless they have been suspended or expelled from school attendance. As referenced in this section, application of these local policies and procedures to students with disabilities must be made in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations.

With specific reference to student short-term suspensions, §22.1-277.04 allows building administrators or, in their absence, a teacher, to suspend a student for not more than 10 school days after the student is provided written or oral notice of the charges against him and, in the event that the student denies the charges, an

opportunity to present his version of what occurred. This section does allow a student to be immediately removed should he pose a continuing danger or threat to persons or property or if his presence is an on-going threat of disruption. Notification may be done as soon as practical following the removal. Oral or written notice to the parent of the suspended student is additionally required. Long-term suspensions also require written notice of the proposed action, including the right of the student to a hearing before the local school board, a committee thereof, or the superintendent or her designee. Decisions may be appealed to the full school board if local regulations provide for a hearing by the superintendent (§22.1-277-05).

§22.1-277.06 details the procedures for student expulsion. Consistent with other school removals, local school districts are required to provide notice to the student and the parent including the right of that student to a hearing before the school board. Appeal procedures must be in place and parents must be notified of the availability of community-based options for education, training, and intervention. Local school boards must notify parents that expelled students may petition the school board for readmission one calendar year from the date of the expulsion. Any costs associated with community-based programs accessed by the student during the time of the expulsion are the responsibility of the parent of the student.

Considerations for expulsion must be based on several factors. These factors include the nature and seriousness of the violation, the degree of danger to the school community, the student's disciplinary history, including the seriousness and number of previous infractions, the appropriateness and availability of an alternative education placement or program, the student's age and grade level, the results of any

mental health, substance abuse, or special education assessments, the student's attendance and academic records, and other such matters as deemed appropriate. It should be noted that students receiving special education services who are expelled from school are required to receive educational services (IDEIA, 2004). This requirement is not in place for students in general education programs.

Consistent with the Gun Free Schools Act of 1994, §22.1-277.07 requires local school boards to expel a student from school for a period not less than one year if it is determined that the student possessed a firearm or destructive device (i.e., explosive, bomb, gun) on school property or at a school-sponsored event. Likewise, §22.1-277.08 requires local school boards to expel students who have been determined to have brought a controlled substance, imitation controlled substance, or marijuana onto school property or to a school-sponsored event. This section does permit local school boards to make a determination that special circumstances existed at the time of the offense and to subsequently determine whether a disciplinary action other than expulsion is appropriate.

With specific reference to students with disabilities, the *Code of Virginia* is largely consistent with federal and state regulations governing the discipline of such students. § 8 VAC 20-80-10 references specific definitions, among others, relevant to the discipline students with disabilities including those as listed above and FBA, BIP, IEP, IAES, and Change in Placement. Definitions found in this section of the *Code* are consistent with those found in IDEA 2004. § 8 VAC 20-80-68 details specific discipline procedures and is, again, consistent with the federal regulations. Of significant importance with regard to the long-term removal from school of students

with disabilities, is that they must continue to receive services "to the extent necessary to enable the child to appropriately progress in the general curriculum and appropriately advance toward achieving the goals set out in the child's IEP" (34 C.F.R. § 300.121(d)(2)(i)(B); 8 VAC 20-80-68(C)(5)(f)(2)). As previously mentioned, school divisions in Virginia are not required to provide educational services of any kind to students without disabilities who have been suspended or expelled from school.

Finally, §22.1-279.9 requires all school boards to develop programs designed to prevent violence and crime, including hazing, on school property. In cooperation with local law-enforcement agencies, juvenile and domestic relations court judges and personnel, parents, and the community-at-large, schools may consider activities and interventions such as instruction relating to Virginia's criminal law, school crime lines, peer mediation, conflict resolution, community service requirements, or any other program focused on demonstrating the consequences of violence and crime.

Proposed Virginia Special Education Regulations

Historically, special education regulations in Virginia have been the same as or more extensive than the federal regulations in terms of student rights and procedural safeguards. Currently (Fall, 2008), Virginia is in the process of developing a set of proposed special education regulations in response to the recently re-authorized federal law. According the Virginia Department of Education website, it is anticipated that the Board of Education will hear the Final Regulations on September 25, 2008, after which time, and based on the Governor's approval, the regulations will be released to school divisions. The process for developing state regulations can

take up to 19 months (Virginia Department of Education, 2006); As a result, it is anticipated that final regulations will be available sometime in early 2009. Because state regulations have not yet been promulgated, educators in Virginia are required to comply with federal regulations. Specifically, mandates associated with the continuation of the services for students with identified disabilities require that alternative disciplinary strategies be considered. Given the legal foundations of the manner in which all students are disciplined, it is important to give some attention to the historical foundations of alternative approaches to suspension and expulsion.

Historical Foundations

Within the context of student discipline, our nation's public schools have evolved from one-room schoolhouses where wooden canes and hickory switches were used to enforce discipline, to the schools of today, where a combination of punitive responses and increasingly more positive approaches are employed. Effective school-wide discipline (ESD) is a disciplinary alternative that is based on positive prevention and behavioral intervention and is primarily a reaction to traditional punitive discipline approaches such as corporal punishment, suspension and expulsion. Although the fundamental goals of either a punitive or positive approach are ultimately to decrease student misbehavior while simultaneously increasing positive and more socially acceptable behavior, the effectiveness of positive interventions is better documented in terms of empirical data when compared to punishment and exclusionary strategies (Safran & Oswald, 2003; Skiba & Peterson, 2000; Skiba & Sprague, 2008; Sugai & Horner, 2006). Because more is generally known about traditional disciplinary consequences, this section will discuss

the historical foundations of both effective school-wide discipline (ESD) programs and positive behavior supports (PBS) given the context that PBS are the foundation upon which ESD programs are built.

Evolution of Effective School-wide Discipline

As described by Lewis in 1997, very few issues in education heighten anxiety or ignite emotions as significantly as the issue of student discipline. Just one year after *Decision Making about Effective Behavioral Support: A Guide for Educators* (Lewis, 1995) was published, for example, Thurston High School in Springfield, Oregon, made headlines after shots were fired by a student with a rifle in the school cafeteria, leaving three students dead and 23 injured. Following this incident, President Clinton directed the Department of Education and the Department of Justice to develop an early warning guide designed to assist school personnel in helping troubled youth. In response to this directive, every school administrator received *Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide to Safe Schools* (Dwyer, Osher, & Warger), in September of 1998. Just one year later, the incident at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado again raised significant concerns about school safety and effective responses to students in trouble.

Because it is essentially effortless to build consensus around the issue of the need to address student behavior, educators began to respond to the need for safe schools by considering alternative and preventative approaches to student discipline. *Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide to Safe Schools* (1998), for example, plainly asserts that prevention and early intervention efforts can dramatically reduce incidents of school violence and make schools safer learning environments for all

students. Included in this early guide are research-based strategies associated not only with the warning signs associated with troubled youth but also with intervention and prevention techniques. Specifically, the guide references the notion that schools must operate as communities of trust and positive relationships and although the term "effective school-wide discipline" as it is being used within the context of this study is not specifically used in the guide, suggested strategies within the manual are consistent with intervention and prevention strategies that are currently commonly associated with ESD and PBS.

Three of the most critical recommendations in *Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide to Safe Schools* (1998), are the need for schools to provide effective instruction and increase academic achievement, the need to treat all students with equal respect regardless of cultural background, disability, gender, or social class, and the need to identify problems and assess progress toward solutions. ESD, as we are beginning to understand it as a model for positive and proactive student behavioral support, is based, in part, on these recommendations and has evolved in the field of education as a response to the need to more adequately address student behavior difficulties (Horner, Sugai, & Horner, 2000).

Zero tolerance policies, our nation's initial response to increased levels of school violence, are not supported empirically as an effective solution for student misconduct (Skiba, 2000). In fact, more literature is surfacing which indicates that zero tolerance strategies such as suspension and expulsion, do not prevent crime and violence at school and may, in fact, make the problem worse as students who are long-term removed from school programs are more likely to engage in additional

anti-social behavior in the community or drop out of school altogether. Furthermore, zero tolerance may unfairly target students from diverse cultural backgrounds and students with disabilities (Holloway, 2001).

Other authors (e.g., Vaidya, 2006) report the overuse of zero tolerance policies with examples including a kindergarten student who was expelled because she arrived late to school 10 times, 700 students in one school district in Texas who were suspended within a single month for violations of the district's dress code policy, an honor roll student who carried mace for protection on her walk to and from school who was expelled after she voluntarily turned it in to the school security officer, and a seventh-grader who momentarily held a fellow classmate's slingshot who was expelled on the basis on the school district's zero tolerance policy. In each of these cases, the students were represented by attorneys who ultimately won the students their right to return to school. Clearly this approach is not benefiting students nor is it creating schools that are positive and effective learning environments. Moving away from exclusionary practices to an approach that is based on reasonableness, early intervention and prevention is the hallmark of the evolution of positive ESD programs.

As ESD systems continue to progress, research indicates that reducing violence in schools is neither simple nor quick (Hartwig & Ruesch, 2001; Horner, Sugai, & Horner, 2000). Developing safer and more productive schools requires a bonafide shift in current thinking about the types of supports students need in order to reduce incidents of problem behavior and change of this magnitude takes time. Contemporary approaches to school discipline can address current challenges by

continuing to increase our investment in the prevention of disruptive behavior instead of maintaining efforts toward consequential strategies in isolation. A unified approach to school discipline is evolving that is based not only on recognition of the ineffectiveness of school exclusion, but also on the realization that today's students are different from students 10 years ago. Expectations for the academic achievement of all students coupled with mandates associated with federal law require the use of effective, evidence-based discipline practices that are preventative and positive in nature.

Evolution of Positive Behavior Supports

Positive behavior supports (PBS) are defined in the literature as an integrated approach of strategies and systems intended to achieve socially important behavior change (Carr et al., 2002; Safran & Oswald, 2003; Sugai et al., 1999). Although the federal law mandating PBS for students with disabilities is essentially silent on exactly what PBS are, including how to effectively implement them, the concept and application of PBS was established three decades ago, the original intent of which was to enhance the lives of individuals with disabilities by reducing problem or interfering behaviors (Carr et al., 1999). In their research synthesis on PBS for people with developmental disabilities, Carr and his colleagues (Carr et al., 1999), acknowledge the increased application of PBS as an alternative to traditional forms of discipline or punishment. Although the focus of their synthesis is based exclusively on individuals with more significant disabilities, findings from their research indicate that the application of PBS, research studies related to it, and conceptual papers and intervention manuals on the subject, have significantly increased since the mid-to-late

eighties. The PBS mandate in IDEA will no doubt lead to further growth and research on PBS as a system of support for people with and without disabilities who demonstrate problem behavior.

In order to fully understand PBS, including what it is and the manner by which it is implemented, it is important to understand the background from which PBS emerged, including its evolution as a system of support for students of all abilities. At the core, PBS derive from three major sources. Specifically, PBS emerged from applied behavior analysis, the normalization and inclusion movement, and the notion of person-centered values. The field of applied behavior analysis is credited by researchers in PBS as having contributed to it educational methodologies of behavior change strategies such as fading, prompting, and reinforcement, as well as functional behavior assessment as a strategy for determining the function or purpose of problem behavior. PBS strategies such as the direct and on-going measurement of behavior and intervention assessment are attributed to the field of applied behavior analysis, as well (Carr et al., 2002; Dunlap, 2006). The methodological structure provided by concepts of applied behavior analysis give PBS research more credibility in terms of its empirical effectiveness and clearly, evidence-based practice is not only required in our schools, but is also connected to the inclusive purpose of PBS.

Normalization and inclusion are foundational to PBS with regard to its general purpose. In its infancy and today, the goal of PBS is to improve the lives of individuals with disabilities by decreasing behaviors that may result in further isolation or devaluing in terms of a person's role in society. As our society has

become more inclusive, from civil rights to the inclusion trend in our public schools, experts and practitioners alike have searched for interventions and strategies that are more likely to increase opportunities for genuine inclusion. Recent literature on PBS suggests that the application of PBS as a system of universal support for all students leads to increased positive outcomes including decreased disciplinary referrals and placement in segregated settings (Bartlett et al., 2007; Kennedy et al., 2001; Safran & Oswald, 2003). Although PBS is continuing to evolve with regard to its application to all students, the notion of person-centered values, the third and final source from which PBS has emerged, provides the foundational component of the philosophy of PBS that is related to issues surrounding which behaviors need changing in specific contexts for all students and when necessary, for students with disabilities who exhibit more challenging behaviors (Carr et al., 2002).

Person-centered values consist of three core processes that undergird the individualized aspects of PBS. First, person-centered values are based on person-centered planning as a process for assessing, identifying, and implementing individualized intervention plans (Kennedy et al., 2001; Safran & Oswald, 2003). In the context of inclusion and normalization, individual needs are considered and interventions are selected based on those needs in order to maximize participation in non-segregated settings. This kind of person-centered planning is additionally concerned with issues related to self-determination, the second core process associated with person-centered values. Because people with disabilities often have decisions made for them, person-centered values focus on enabling individuals to self-advocate, set goals, and problem solve. Finally, person-centered values consist of

supports that are based on the whole person and serve as a wraparound system of care that is based on an individual's needs rather than what services may be available. That is, wraparound focuses on strengths instead of weaknesses and encompasses all areas of an individual's life that may be negatively impacted by problem behavior (Carr et al., 2002).

The evolution of PBS as a viable alternative to traditional disciplinary practices for all students is better understood within the context of the background from which it has emerged. Though PBS was originally introduced as a system of supports for people with disabilities who exhibited challenging behavior, the foundational principles of the approach make it very relevant for a broader group of individuals, specifically, school-aged students. Its inclusion in federal special education legislation provides additional impetus to understand the evolution of PBS including its background in the field and its fundamental foundation. The development of universal supports intended to increase and enhance inclusion at all levels of the schoolhouse that are based on evidence and when required, individual student needs, holds promise for restructuring how schools handle discipline.

Current Educational Context

Given the importance of school responses to student discipline and the rigorous expectations for student academic achievement associated with the requirements of *No Child Left Behind* (2001) it is imperative to understand our current educational context. Specifically, this section will address current discipline data, cultural issues related to student discipline, issues associated with increased academic standards and accountability, and the current perception of a separate

system of discipline for students with disabilities. Each of these contemporary issues provide incentive for re-examining the manner in which students are supported in schools and is highly relevant to the discussion of effective school-wide discipline (ESD) using positive behavior supports (PBS) for all students.

Current Discipline Data

On December 2 of 2007, the National Center for Educational Statistics, in a joint effort with the Bureau of Justice Statistics, web-released *Indicators of School Crime and Safety* (http://nces.ed.gov/programs/crimeindicators/), an annual report which includes the most current national statistics intended to inform the nation about crime in public schools. Data are presented as indicators and are based on the 2003-2004 and 2005-2006 school years and come from the perspectives of students, teachers, principals, and the general population from an array of sources, including results from a study of violent deaths in schools sponsored by the U. S. Department of Education and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Crime Victimization Survey, the School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey, the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, the School Survey on Crime and Safety and the School and Staffing Survey. Of particular relevance to this study are Indicators 2 (from the National Crime Victimization Survey), 6 (from the School Survey on Crime and Safety), 7 (from the School Survey on Crime and Safety), 13 (from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey), 17 (from the School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey), and 19 (from the School Survey on Crime and Safety).

According to results obtained for Indicator Two, *Incidence of Victimization at School and Away From School,* students aged 12-18 were victims of approximately 1.5 million nonfatal crimes (theft plus violent crimes) while they were at school and 1.2 million nonfatal crimes while they were away from school in 2005. Total crime victimization rates of 57 crimes per 1,000 students at school and 47 crimes per 1,000 students away from school were reported. A greater percentage of younger students (12-14) than older students (15-18) were victims of crime at school however, the reverse was true during the same time period when students were away from school. Moreover, students in suburban areas reported fewer incidences of violent victimization at school and away from school than students in urban areas. As denoted by Indicator Two, the victimization rates of students aged 12-18 at school declined between 1992 and 2005. It should be noted, however, that the report further indicates that violence, drugs, weapons, and theft continue to present problems in schools.

Indicator Six, *Violence and Other Crime Incidents at Public Schools and Those Reported to Police*, reveals that during the 2005-2006 school year, 86 percent of public schools reported one or more incidents of serious violence, violence, theft (of items greater than $10), and other incidents. For the purposes of the report, a serious violent incident is defined as rape, sexual battery other than rape, physical attack or fight with a weapon, threat of physical attack with a weapon, or robbery with or without a weapon. A violent incident was defined as a serious violent incident including physical attacks or fights without a weapon or threats of physical attacks without a weapon. Included among these data is information related to the prevalence

of violence by school level and location. Specifically, elementary schools were least likely to experience incidents of violence although 67 percent of reporting primary schools did so. Ninety-four percent of middle schools and 95 percent of high schools reported one or more violent incidents. No measurable difference between the percentage of schools experiencing crime in 2005-2006 (86 percent) and those experiencing crime in 1999-2000 (88 percent) was noted.

Specific information related to reported discipline problems is addressed in Indicator Seven, *Discipline Problems Reported by Public Schools*. Within the context of this indicator, discipline problem refers to the daily or weekly occurrence of student racial tensions, bullying, sexual harassment of other students, verbal abuse of teachers, widespread classroom disorder, and acts of disrespect for teachers in public schools. This indicator additionally includes all reports of gang and cult activities. As indicated in the report, during the 2005-2006 school year, 24 percent of public schools reported that bullying occurred daily or weekly; 18 percent reported that student acts of disrespect for teachers occurred daily or weekly. Other frequently occurring discipline problems in schools (those occurring at least once per week) included nine percent of schools reporting verbal abuse of teachers, three percent reporting student sexual harassment of other students, three percent reporting racial or ethnic tensions, and two percent reporting widespread classroom disorder. Seventeen percent of reporting schools indicated gang activity; four percent reported undesirable cult or extremist activity. A five percent decline in bullying from 1999-2000 was reported; A four percent decline during the same time period was reported for student verbal abuse of teachers.

Larger schools, that is, those with more than 1,000 students, had more reports of discipline problems, and middle schools were more likely to experience various types of discipline problems than elementary schools as well as a higher percentage of bullying and sexual harassment than high schools. Furthermore, schools with fewer than 20 percent of the student population receiving free and/or reduced lunch reported fewer discipline problems than schools where more than 50 percent of students were eligible.

With regard to the disciplinary action taken by public schools (*Serious Disciplinary Actions Taken by Public Schools*, Indicator 19), 48 percent of approximately 39, 600 schools took at least one serious disciplinary action against a student during the 2005-2006 school year. Of those actions, 74 percent were suspensions lasting five or more days, five percent were removals with no services (i.e., expulsions), and 20 percent were transfers to alternative or specialized schools. Offenses included physical attacks or fights, insubordination, distribution, possession, or use of alcohol or illegal drugs, use or possession of a weapon other than a firearm, and use or possession of a firearm or other explosive device. In total, approximately 830,700 serious disciplinary actions were taken against students during the 2005-2006 school year. It should additionally be noted that students reported an increase in security measures at school from 2001 to 2005 (Indicator 20, *Student' Reports of Safety and Security Measures Observed at School*). For example in 2005, 58 percent of students reported an increase in the use of security cameras; this is an increase from 39 percent in 2001. Similarly, 68 percent of students in 2005 reported the presence of a school-based security guard or police officer versus 54 percent in 2001.

Although these data are helpful in terms of providing a general context for school crime and safety, the data come from a variety of sources and do not include specific demographic information related, for example, to students with disabilities and student from diverse cultural backgrounds (other than those indicators dealing specifically with physical fights and fear and avoidance).

Suspension and expulsion of students with disabilities. Each year, the United States Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, provides an *Annual Report to Congress* based on the implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. The most current report, the *27th Annual Report to Congress on the Implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 2005*, was released in September of 2007. The report provides both national and state-level information based on data from the 2002-2003 school year from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Bureau of Indian Affairs Schools, American Samoa, Guam, Northern Marianas, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. Short-term suspension data is not included in the report with the exception of multiple short-term suspensions that exceed 10 school days. According to the report, 74,473 students with disabilities were expelled or suspended for more than 10 days during the 2002-2003 school year. This figure represents approximately one percent of the approximately six million children in the United States who receive special education and related services. This figure is consistent with suspensions reported during the 2001-2002 school year, when just over one percent of students with disabilities were suspended more than 10 days. In Virginia, 4,191 students with disabilities were expelled or suspended for more than 10

days during the 2002-2003 school year. This figure is fewer only to Florida (4,429), North Carolina (4,489), and Texas (16,477).

Interim alternative educational settings. As described previously, students with disabilities may be placed in Interim Alternative Educational Settings (IAES) under specific circumstances as identified in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA, 2004). In addition to reporting the number of students with disabilities who were expelled or suspended for more than 10 school days during the 2002-2003 school year, the *27th Annual Report to Congress*, also reports the number of students with disabilities who were placed in an IAES during that time period. In total, 14,284 students with disabilities were removed to an IAES by school personnel for drugs or weapons in accordance with the law and 1,206 students with disabilities were removed to an IAES by a hearing officer for likely injury. In Virginia, no students were removed to an IAES by a hearing officer during the 2002-2003 school year; 77 students were placed in an IAES by school personnel for drugs or weapons, fewer than 29 other states. With specific reference to suspension or expulsion and placement in an IAES, students identified with high-incidence disabilities including Specific Learning Disabilities, Emotional Disturbance, Mental Retardation, and Other Health Impairments were reported more often than the other nine disability categories (i. e., Autism, Deaf-blindness, Developmental Delay, Hearing Impairment, Multiple Disabilities, Orthopedic Impairment, Speech or Language Impairment, Traumatic Brain Injury, Visual Impairment including blindness). Despite the seemingly low percentage (< 1%) of students with disabilities who are excluded from regular public school programs for

disciplinary reasons, the nation's current focus on higher academic standards and increased accountability requires us to rethink how we approach student discipline and school safety in order to meet the academic and behavioral needs of all students.

Cultural Issues

A focus on our current educational context would be incomplete without a discussion of the disproportionate use of suspension and expulsion with students from diverse racial and economic backgrounds. Studies consistently document over-representation of culturally diverse students regarding the use of punitive discipline strategies, with African-American students being especially at-risk for punitive sanctions (Holzman, 2006; Monroe, 2006; Skiba, 2000; Utley et al., 2002). According to Skiba (2000), race, independent of socioeconomic status and student behavior, contributes to disciplinary outcomes for these students. On average, African-American students are two to three times more likely than their white peers to be suspended from school and often for behaviors that are less severe (Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2000).

A recently published report from the Schott Foundation for Public Education (Holzman, 2006) indicates that across the country, school districts with high populations of African-American students are consistently suspending and expelling more African-American males than their White peers. According to the report, if African-American males were suspended or expelled at the same rate as White males, half a million fewer out-of-school suspensions would be imposed on them and there would be at least 10,000 fewer expulsions from school. In Virginia specifically, both African-American males and females are suspended from school at higher rates than

would be expected. Likewise, African-American males are expelled at higher rates than would be projected given their proportion in the total population. One school district reported only expelling African-American students in 2002. Jones, Caravaca, Cizek, Horner, & Vincent (2006), among others, (Monroe, 2006; Obiakor, 2007; Utley et al., 2002), suggest that much of this disparity exists because students are identified as being "compliant," "respectful," "disruptive," or "insubordinate" based on cultural norms. And, according to Skiba and Peterson (2000), differences in cultural norms may easily lead to disproportionate patterns of student discipline.

As reported by the National Center for Educational Statistics (2006), the school population is becoming increasingly diverse. In addition to a small increase in the African-American population from 1972-2004, the school-aged population of Hispanic students increased during the same time period from six percent in 1972 to 19 percent of public school enrollment in 2004. Furthermore, just over 20 million, or 40 percent, of our country's public school students are non-white (National Center for Education Statistics, 2007). With more than 116,000 schools across the United States and in light of increasing diversity among the student population in terms of race and school readiness, educators are concerned with identifying innovations that are relevant and applicable across a variety of school settings for increasingly diverse groups of students (Jones et al., 2006). Evidence-based practices that do not discriminate based on ethnicity or socio-economic status, but that are culturally responsive to student needs are required in order to respond to educational reform efforts aimed at high academic standards and school accountability for all students.

Standards and Accountability

Since the passage of *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) in 2001, schools are under increased scrutiny for student academic performance. Although the concept of holding schools accountable for student academic achievement and progress has been discussed for more than forty years, few efforts and suggestions prior to NCLB have met success (Bartlett, Etscheidt, & Weisenstein, 2007). Essentially, NCLB combines a number of political forces into one policy that mandates fair and equal opportunity for every student to receive a high-quality education. At the very least, the expectation of NCLB is that all students, including those with disabilities and those from culturally diverse backgrounds, will be minimally proficient on state standards (2007).

As indicated by NCLB, the intent of Congress is to insure that all students, regardless of disability, English proficiency, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status, are afforded a high-quality and rigorous education. In order to achieve this, NCLB mandates adequate yearly progress for students in each of these subgroups and further imposes sanctions for schools that do not meet yearly progress goals. By school year 2013-2014, all students, including those with disabilities, must meet minimum state standards as measured by annual state assessments in order to avoid sanctions such as school choice, mandated provision of special services and programs for students who consistently fail to meet standards over three consecutive years, replacement of school staff or implementation of a new institutional structure after four consecutive years of failure, and ultimately, the state or a contracted agency taking over the management of the school (Bartlett, Etscheidt, & Weisenstein, 2007; NCLB 2001).

Clearly, schools are held accountable for the learning of all students and in order to insure that students with disabilities are being held to the same high academic expectations, the IDEA (2004) mirrors NCLB with regard to requirements for increased access to the general education curriculum, highly qualified teachers, and programmatic emphasis on academic achievement. What IDEA mandates that NCLB does not, is related to considerations for positive behavior supports and interventions for students whose behavior interferes with their own learning or the learning of others. Inarguably, if schools are held accountable for all students in terms of high academic standards, behavioral expectations for all students must be addressed in order to develop school environments that are most conducive to learning. These simultaneous requirements for increased academic success and school safety and order pose challenges for school personnel and further support the need to develop a unified system of support for all students so that academic standards and accountability requirements may be met. This challenge is exacerbated by the perception that special education students, in particular, are held to different discipline standards.

Perceptions of a Separate Discipline System for Students with Disabilities

The 1997 changes in the disciplinary requirements of the IDEA had a significant impact on diverse groups of individuals involved in public education. At the most basic level, the rights and responsibilities of both general and special education administrators at the district and school level have been more clearly defined and some would argue, more limited (Skiba, 2002). Compliance with federal and state mandates regarding short and long-term suspensions, change in placement,

functional behavior assessments and manifestation determination reviews, continues to perplex administrators at both levels and efforts to develop clearly understood disciplinary procedures have proven difficult and time-consuming. Additionally, the misperceptions of school-based administrators regarding the discipline provisions further complicate issues surrounding the challenges of the law's implementation (Taylor & Baker, 2001). The perception of a "dual system of discipline" provides a catalyst for controversy with regard to fair and effective disciplinary practices for students with disabilities (Evans, 1999).

Although not widely represented in the literature on the subject of special education discipline, teachers are often confused or frustrated by the disparity in treatment and consequences for students with and without disabilities, as well (Evans, 1999; Taylor & Baker, 2001). Likewise, parents of students without disabilities often do not have a solid understanding of the IDEA and therefore perceive that their children are given harsher consequences for similar behaviors. Conversely, parents of students *with* disabilities frequently report that their children are singled out by school administrators and teachers and subsequently punished for behaviors that "rarely lead to sanctions for other students" (Hess & Brigham, 2001). This may be especially true for students identified with Emotional Disturbance because their behavior provides the rationale for their eligibility for special education and related services (Butera, Klein, McMullen, &Wilson, 1998).

At the very heart of the special education discipline debate is the perception among school-based administrators that the discipline provisions of the IDEA (1997, 2004) strip from them their administrative authority to discipline students with

disabilities in a manner consistent with their non-disabled peers. The foundation of this perception relates to the right of students with disabilities to a free, appropriate public education (FAPE), including the continuation of services following disciplinary action. Although every public school student has a basic right to due process, the rights afforded to students with disabilities with regard to discipline far outweigh those extended to students without disabilities (Evans, 1999). Procedural safeguards related to the number of days an exceptional student may be suspended beyond 10 school days lead many practitioners to believe that IDEA discipline provisions contradict the mandates of other laws such as the Gun Free Schools Act of 1994, which directly supports safety and order in public schools (Skiba, 2002).

Although school leaders must exercise caution before suspending or expelling a student with a disability, the law does not address time-out or other standard disciplinary consequences. Instead, IDEA mandates considerations of positive behavior supports and interventions. Despite the limited restrictions of the discipline provisions, a study conducted by Butera and his colleagues (1998) found that 99 percent of respondents reported modifying state and local discipline policies for students with disabilities despite their beliefs that students with Individualized Education Programs (IEP) should be subject to the same disciplinary measures as students without disabilities, especially for instances of violent or aggressive behavior.

Resolving the challenge of balancing a student's right to FAPE with standard discipline procedures requires recognition of Congress' intent to disallow school officials from unilaterally removing students with disabilities from the public school

setting for behavioral infractions less serious than drugs, weapons, or infliction of bodily injury. Mandated provisions require schools to be proactive with regard to discipline but do not negate other mandated requirements for the development and maintenance of safe and orderly schools (Hartwig & Ruesch, 2000; Skiba, 2002; Walther-Thomas & Brownell, 1998; Yell, Rozalski, & Drasgow, 2001). The time has come to end the debate over discipline and consider the application of a unified system that is appropriate and positive for *all* students. A move toward effective school-wide discipline based on positive behavior supports represents a shift toward an approach that holds promise for all school-aged students, regardless of disability label, cultural background, socioeconomic status, or academic ability.

School-wide Positive Behavior Support Systems

School-wide positive behavior supports (SWPBS) for school-aged students refer to evolving positive and unified approaches for the management of student behavior. As Garnes & Menlove (2003) note, schools have always used school-wide discipline procedures. Such procedures have typically consisted of negative consequences such as suspension and expulsion. The fundamental difference between SWPBS and traditional approaches to school discipline is its focus on prevention and intervention as opposed to the application of exclusionary consequence-based strategies that are applied after misconduct occurs. As a model for discipline practices, SWPBS are based on the belief that all students do not respond similarly to the same procedures. In response to student differences, it is necessary for schools to develop whole-school preventive discipline systems designed to accommodate individual diversity, regardless of the degree of those distinctions (Barrett, Bradshaw,

& Lewis-Palmer, 2008; Hartwig & Ruesch, 2001). This section will discuss the unified nature of SWPBS, the theoretical framework supporters propose as a process for instituting such programs, and the implications these systems have for educational leaders.

Unified Approach

As a universal approach to improving the safety and social behavior of students in public schools, SWPBS systems have several essential features that are applicable to all students. Sprague, Walker, Golly, White, Myers, & Shannon (2001) identify these features as follows:

- Problem behaviors are defined clearly for students and staff members;
- Appropriate, positive behaviors are defined for students and staff;
- Students are taught these alternative positive behaviors directly and given assistance to acquire the skills necessary for behavior change;
- Effective incentives and motivational systems are developed and implemented to encourage students to behave in socially appropriate ways;
- Staff commit to interventions over time and monitor, support, and coach students in order to maintain behavioral improvement;
- Staff receive training and regular feedback about effective implementation of targeted interventions; and
- Systems for measuring and monitoring intervention effectiveness are carried out.

Each of these essential features of SWPBS is based on the belief that in any school, there are three relatively distinct populations of students. Specifically, there are

typical students who do not exhibit significantly challenging behavior problems, students who are at-risk for behavioral and academic problems, and students who are high-risk in terms of the existing manifestation of serious behavioral and academic difficulties (Sprague et al., 2001). The unified approach of SWPBS systems is intended to address the needs of every student within these three sub-populations and has well-defined benefits for both general and special education students.

Contemporary approaches to school-wide discipline and behavioral support. With regard to practices currently implemented in various schools across the country, SWPBS take many forms. Some states, Illinois, Florida, Maryland, New Hampshire, and Virginia for example, provide statewide technical assistance focused on applying PBS at the school-wide level through a systems approach (George & Kincaid, 2008; Netzel & Eber, 2003; Virginia Department of Education, 2006) whereby identified school district coaches assist in the development, implementation and on-going training for SWPBS. Other examples of contemporary approaches that include elements of SWPBS include specific programs such as the High Five Program (Taylor-Greene & Kartub, 2000) and the Check In-Check Out Program (CICO) (Todd, Campbell, Meyer, & Horner, 2008). Regardless of the specific program, however, current practices typically reflect a comprehensive behavioral intervention system that is based on multiple levels of support including universal interventions (e.g., High Five) that are applied to all students, targeted interventions (e.g., CICO) applied to individual or small groups of students, and intensive interventions meant to support those students whose behavior presents significantly difficult discipline problems (Lane & Menzies, 2002; Luiselli, Putnam, & Sunderland, 2002).

The High Five Program is one such example of a universal, school-wide behavioral support approach. Developed and implemented by educators at Fern Ridge Middle School in Elmira, Oregon during the 1994-1995 school-year, the program is based on all staff and students adhering to the High Fives:

1. Being Respectful;
2. Being Responsible;
3. Following Directions;
4. Keeping Hands and Feet to Self; and
5. Being There – Being Ready.

In response to a negative school culture described by the authors as being primarily reactive, punitive, and exclusionary, the High Five Program was implemented as part of the school's efforts to foster a safe learning environment characterized by consistent expectations and positive, proactive interventions to student behavior (Taylor-Greene & Kartub, 2000). Implementation of the High Five Program at the school-wide level coupled with Behavioral Education Plans for targeted at-risk students, resulted in a 68% reduction in office discipline referrals within the first five years (2000). Consistent with the general characteristics of SWPBS, the success of the High Five Program at Fern Ridge Middle School is sustained as result of administrative support, a team-based approach, consistent positive reinforcement for positive behavior, and data collection and monitoring.

Like the High Five Program, the CICO program, otherwise known as daily report cards, is characterized as proactive and positive in terms of approach. As part of a comprehensive behavioral support system that acknowledges the needs of every

student, the CICO program is considered a targeted intervention for use with students considered to be at-risk for discipline problems (Todd, Campbell, Meyer, & Horner, 2008). As cited in this most recent article, components of the CICO approach have been used in schools for at least 25 years. SWPBS elements are inherent in the program as it involves the structures and prompts students may need throughout the school day, specifically including adult feedback on behavior, visual cues, positive reinforcement, data collection, as well as consistent communication between home and school for those students who require this level of support.

As a designated targeted intervention, the CICO program is readily available to staff, students, and families, and involves students checking with designated school staff in the morning, receiving feedback on behavior throughout the day, and then checking out with school staff before leaving for home. As described by the current authors (2008), CICO programs also typically involve rewarding students with points as a daily reinforcer that may later be used for specified prizes such as stickers, pencils, time with a teacher or other adult, and other such rewards. In their study with four elementary-aged students, Todd, Campbell, Meyer, and Horner (2008) reported a 17.5% reduction in problem behavior following the implementation of the CICO program. Based on their findings as well as previously documented success with other daily report card systems, data support the inclusion of a CICO system with other SWPBS.

Other contemporary and general approaches to SWPBS include such initial practices as obtaining staff commitment, professional development for positive interventions, identification of expected behaviors, identification of proactive

strategies based on the individual and unique needs of the school, and staff consensus with regard to acceptable and viable strategies (Luiselli, Putnam, & Sunderland, 2002; Scott, 2001). Typically, this process occurs with facilitation from state or university-level leaders and may include common strategies such as "Caught Being Good" (CBG) cards that are awarded to students who exhibit exemplary student behavior. Similar to the CICO program, CBG cards are exchanged for prizes and privileges. In a 4-year longitudinal study of a public middle school that implemented SWPBS incorporating the use of CBG cards and other positive reinforcers, Luiselli, Putnam, and Sunderland (2002) reported a decrease in the number of detentions given to students for disruptive-antisocial behavior. Specifically, detentions declined from 1,326 to 599 over the course of the four consecutive school years included in the study.

Clearly, the SWPBS systems described above, as well as others, such as teaching the "3 R's" (respect ourselves, respect others, respect property) and "gotcha" systems (Netzel & Eber, 2003) that reward students for appropriate behavior, have a positive impact on decreasing the number of student detentions and suspensions from school. Such school-wide strategies are not new in terms of their implementation in schools, however, their application to the whole school population, the requirement for teamwork and staff commitment, and the reliance on data collection and monitoring is novel in terms of their use as alternatives to traditional forms of punitive and exclusionary discipline. Each of the studies cited within this context included both students with and without disabilities. Inarguably, these contemporary approaches demonstrate benefits to both populations of students.

Benefits for general education students. As mentioned in previous sections, effective school-wide discipline systems that utilize positive behavior supports as a continuum of care and support were originally intended for individuals with identified disabilities. It is clear however, that not all students who exhibit challenging school behaviors are students with identified disabilities as defined in federal law. Moreover, recent research suggests that the implementation and sustained use of SWPBS as a part of effective school discipline systems has definite benefits for general education students, in general, as well as for students who may be at-risk for placement in special education programs.

A study by Kennedy, Long, Jolivette, Cox, Tang, and Thompson (2001), for example, shows promising results for the application of PBS based on person-centered planning for students in general education settings. Specifically, the application of PBS for targeted students in the study resulted in an increase in general education participation and a decrease in problem behavior. Other research (Skiba & Peterson, 2000; Virginia Department of Education, 2005) further supports the benefits of PBS for general education students with regard to the general purpose of SWPBS as being a comprehensive model of prevention and intervention that leads to safer and more effective learning environments.

While no one strategy is effective for all students, a SWPBS approach to addressing school discipline issues including such features as conflict resolution and social skills instruction, clear and consistent school and classroom rules, parent involvement, data collection and monitoring, and effective instruction, has uncontested positive effects on both general and special education students (Skiba &

Peterson, 2000). More importantly, accountability and an increased focus on positive student outcomes requires that educators move toward a unified system of support that involves effective, evidence-based intervention rather than an over-reliance on ineffective punishment and exclusionary responses that may actually increase negative behaviors.

Benefits for special education students. Because PBS originated as a system of care and intervention for individuals with disabilities, the research on the benefits of PBS for individuals with disabilities is rich and plentiful (Safran & Oswald, 2003; Sugai & Horner, 2002). The implementation of SWPBS as a universal approach to student discipline and problem behavior prevention positively impacts special education students in a variety of ways.

As an initial matter, expanding PBS to students without disabilities minimizes the sustainability of a dual system of discipline for general and special education students and increases the expectations of professionals in terms of what behavior is to be universally expected of all students. The continuum of support inherent in SWPBS systems benefits special education students significantly with regard to the underlying assumptions of SWPBS that are focused on accountability for all students. SWPBS do not discriminate in terms of their application and for that reason, special education students are naturally integrated into a system of care and support services that are applicable to students of all abilities. Students with the most significant support needs are a part of comprehensive SWPBS systems that proactively address the function of challenging and interfering behavior and focus on instructing students in alternative skills deficits (Scott & Caron, 2005). Furthermore, students with

disabilities are not singled out or shifted to special services subsystems as a result of their behavioral or academic limitations. Instead, they are part of a core process that is unified and inclusive of all students (Burrello, Lashley, & Beatty, 2001).

Theoretical Framework

As referenced by Sprague and Walker (2005), the United States Public Health Service (USPHS) has developed a classification system of prevention approaches that provide for the integration of a wide variety of interventions necessary to address the needs of school-aged students at all levels of the behavioral continuum. The USPHS classification system includes primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention approaches. Approaches to discipline at each level of this classification system are further classified as those that prevent the onset of behavior problems, those that reduce emerging problems, and those that reduce or reverse ongoing damage.

In response to the USPHS classification system, Walker, Horner, Sugai, Bullis, Sprague, Bricker, & Kaufman (1996), conceptualized an integrated prevention model for school-based behavior problems that consists of universal interventions, applied at the school-wide level to all students in the same manner and degree, and individualized interventions that are applied to individual or small groups of students who are informally classified as needing secondary or tertiary levels of support. It is from this model that SWPBS systems have emerged. The basic theoretical framework of SWPBS systems is based on this three-tiered approach and consists of school-based teams made up of individual school building representatives who make decisions regarding student discipline (Lewis, 1997). Having a school-wide system of behavior management and social skills instruction that proactively addresses the

needs of all students requires that all staff in all school settings be engaged in active teaching and consistent reinforcement of appropriate student behavior (Sprague & Walker, 2005). SWPBS further requires knowledge on the part of teachers related to evidence-based positive interventions, including when and how to develop and implement them.

Positive Behavior Supports

In their expanded description of PBS, Carr and his colleagues (2002) go beyond simply defining PBS as an integrated approach of strategies and systems intended to achieve socially important behavior change by describing *positive behavior* as "all those skills that increase the likelihood of success and personal satisfaction in normative academic, work, social, recreational, community, and family settings, " (p. 4). Likewise, *supports* are defined as "all those educational methods that can be used to teach, strengthen, and expand positive behavior and those systems change methods that can be used to increase opportunities for the display of positive behavior," (p. 4). Given this expanded description of what PBS actually refers to, it makes sense that PBS has been extended from an approach exclusively for people with disabilities to an approach that is now established for entire schools (Knoster, Anderson, Carr, Dunlap, & Horner, 2003; Sugai et al., 1999). As our schools respond to public expectations that students learn the skills necessary for successful adulthood within the context of ever-increasing student heterogeneity and incidents of school violence, educators are wise to consider PBS as a proactive, evidence-based approach to school discipline. Integrating PBS into ESD systems requires an understanding of its essential features.

School-wide supports. In general, PBS is based on a three-tiered system of behavioral supports that ultimately addresses the behavioral needs of all students within a school (Sprague & Walker, 2005). At the primary prevention level, PBS targets the entire student body and is sufficiently effective for the 80-90 percent of students who do not exhibit serious behavior problems (Lane & Beebe-Frankenberger, 2004). This level of support is considered a universal intervention that is applied at either the school-wide or classroom level. The goal of the primary level of intervention is to reduce the number of new cases of problem behavior that may occur (Sugai et al., 1999). Interventions at this level consist of strategies such as effective instruction, clearly posted school or classroom rules, teaching relevant social skills directly, providing positive reinforcement for expected behavior, student choice, and arranging teaching and learning environments that discourage inappropriate behavior (i.e., supervision in cafeterias and hallways) (Garnes & Menlove, 2003; Sandomierski, Kincaid, & Algozzine, 2007; Sprague & Walker, 2005; Sugai & Horner, 2006).

Group-based supports. A secondary level of prevention is designed to target students who are at-risk for chronic problem behavior. According to Sugai and his colleagues (1999), interventions at this level are meant to be incorporated in conjunction with primary levels of intervention in order to reduce the number of current cases of problem behavior in a school or classroom. These specialized group interventions are typically needed to address between five and 15 percent of the student population who are considered to be behaviorally at-risk for more serious school-related problems (Lane & Beebe-Frankenberger, 2004). Typically, critical

features of PBS at this level are characterized by more intensive levels of supervision and support such as peer mediation, increased adult attention and mentoring, ecological modifications, counseling, and direct instruction in choice-making and negotiation (Garnes & Menlove, 2003; Sandomierski, Kincaid, & Algozzine, 2007; Sprague & Walker, 2005).

Individual Supports. The third and most intensive level of intervention is referred to as the tertiary level of prevention. The goal at this level of behavioral support is to reduce the intensity and complexity of current cases of chronic problem behavior. Individually targeted and highly specialized interventions are designed for individual students and are typically required for one to seven percent of the entire student population (Garnes & Menlove, 2003; Lane & Beebe-Frankenberger, 2004; Lohrmann, Forman, Martin, & Palmieri, 2008; Sugai et al., 1999). As a result of the highly specialized nature of interventions at the tertiary level of prevention, strategies are generally selected and implemented based on data collected as part of a formal functional behavior assessment. At this level of behavioral support, addressing the function of an individual student's problem behavior is critically important in order to change it (Sandomierski, Kincaid, & Algozzine, 2007; Sugai & Horner, 2006). As a result, an essential feature of effective PBS systems at this level is the development of team-based and comprehensive (i.e., wraparound and person-centered) behavior intervention plans that are created by relevant and competent professionals who are trained in behavior assessment and intervention and data collection and monitoring (2006).

As described by Sprague and Walker (2005), this comprehensive prevention model provides the foundation for school discipline that makes it possible for educators to address the behavioral needs of all students in a school. Specifically, each level of support is intended to address the needs of students who are considered to be progressing normally, those who may exhibit early signs of disciplinary problems or otherwise at-risk behavior, and those who require more targeted interventions to address severe or elevated levels of behavioral difficulties. Such a preventative, problem-solving model offers opportunities for educators to address both academic and behavioral problems effectively given varies levels of intensity and support (Sandomierski, Kincaid, & Algozzine, 2007). Adopting the PBS model and applying it as a part of a school-wide discipline system represents a significant departure from the manner in which the majority of schools currently handle discipline problems. As a result, it is important to develop some level of understanding regarding factors perceived as facilitators and barriers of such systems.

Perceived Facilitators and Barriers

Inherent in the adoption of any innovative or systemic change is the notion of perceived facilitators and barriers associated with the implementation of the innovation. As suggested by Horner and his colleagues (2005) and the Office of Special Education Programs Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports' *School-wide Positive Behavior Support Implementers' Blueprint and Self-Assessment* (2004), high-fidelity implementation of SWPBS requires the following factors:

- Team-based implementation, which consists of a representative school-wide team that is organized and engages in problem solving and data-based decision making;
- Administrative leadership, which consists of consistent public support and active involvement in school-wide team planning;
- Documented commitment to the education of all students and to improving the climate of the school;
- Adequate personnel and time for the planning and implementation of SWPBS;
- Budgeted support for activities associated with team planning, staff development, and necessary materials; and
- Information-system development for data management.

Despite this guidance, there is a lack of current research related to the factors associated with the successful implementation of school-wide positive behavior supports in terms of how SWPBS is accepted by school personnel and what facilitates or inhibits SWPBS sustainability (Kincaid, Childs, Blasé, & Wallace, 2007; Lohrmann et al., 2008). In their efforts to identify and understand any perceived barriers or facilitators to such efforts, Kincaid and his colleagues (2007) conducted a case study of Florida's School-wide Positive Behavior Support Project (SWPBS). Specifically, the case study involved 26 schools across 18 districts in Florida who rated themselves as either high-implementing or low-implementing schools (as measured on the *School-wide Benchmarks of Quality* developed and validated by Cohen, Kincaid, & Childs, 2007). Of the 26 participating schools, eight were identified as high-implementers and 12 were identified as low implementers. A

nominal group process was used to ascertain perceived facilitators and barriers to Florida's SWPBS.

Regardless of the level of implementation, staff buy-in was identified as the primary barrier to successful PBS implementation. Additional top-ranking barriers were identified as use of data, inconsistent implementation, rewards systems, time, and communication. With regard to perceived facilitators, participants identified district support, SWPBS Project support, use of data, school-level/team trainings, and communication as factors that positively impacted the implementation of SWPBS. The conclusions of Kincaid and his colleagues (2007) are further supported by the more recent findings of Lohrmann and her associates (2008).

Specifically, Lohrmann et al., (2008) interviewed 14 educational consultants from 10 states who were responsible for providing direct on-site technical assistance for SWPBS at the universal intervention level. Further, participants were required to have provided such assistance to at least one school they considered successful for a period of at least two years, and to a minimum of one school for a period of one year where implementation of SWPBS was hindered by identified barriers. Five common barriers were identified. They were:

- Lack of administrative direction and leadership;
- Staff skepticism that universal interventions were needed;
- Staff hopelessness that implementation would result in change;
- Philosophical differences with SWPBS (staff emphasis on punishment); and
- Staff feeling disenfranchised from one another, the administrator, or the mission of the school.

Despite the fact that the Florida case study is limited to that state, both it and the work done by Lohrmann and her colleagues (2008) provide an initial foundation of what may be perceived as facilitators and barriers by implementers of SWPBS in other districts from other states. Most importantly, this early research lead to the development of strategies and resources designed to assist in the following six critical areas of SWPBS implementation:

1. Obtaining administrative support by coaching administrative direction and leadership;
2. Obtaining faculty buy-in by building a case that change is both necessary and possible,
3. Addressing differences in philosophies by finding a conceptual common ground,
4. Providing staff training and making staff feel a part of the intervention effort,
5. Providing student training, and
6. Developing and implementing a reward system (Kincaid et al., 2007; Lohrmann et al., 2008).

As school-wide discipline efforts move toward more positive behavior support systems, understanding perceived facilitators and barriers allows administrators to better prepare for the effective implementation of such a system, including acquiring and employing available resources that are designed to assist with both early and sustained implementation. Furthermore, a comprehensive understanding of the critical

areas of SWPBS implementation is necessary with regard to developing and providing appropriate and effective professional development for school personnel.

Professional Development for School-wide Positive Behavior Supports

As described by the United States Office of Special Education Programs Technical Assistance Center on School-wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (2007), schools, districts, and states implement SWPBS in the following ways:

- State leadership teams increase training, coaching, evaluation, and policy and funding capacities within their administrative structure,
- District coaches provide technical assistance to local implementers and assist in organizing local personnel and resources for maximal effectiveness and efficiency, and
- Local school implementation teams stay in close contact with coaches to assure consistent implementation and on-going training.

In short, professional development is an integral part of successful programs. Implementing effective SWPBS requires initial and on-going professional development opportunities characterized by a coaching infrastructure. Successful SWPBS programs are not developed following one-shot training opportunities but rather, only function well under the direction of state leadership, district-level coaches, and school-based personnel who understand the importance of the team approach and the notion that effective SWPBS implementation ultimately results in systems change with regard to school discipline.

The model for initial and on-going professional development opportunities for schools either beginning or sustaining SWPBS implementation is consistent with other research-based professional development models. Specifically, effective professional development, that which leads to continuous improvement in both teaching and learning, is characterized by school-based personnel who work in on-going teams, examine and analyze student data, set goals for improvement, and reflect on the effectiveness of identified approaches (DuFour & Eaker, 1998; Sparks, 2004). Furthermore, flexibility and creativity in training are required in order to respond to the unique needs of individual school settings. Specific consideration must be given to issues such as time, resources, personnel, and administrative factors (Dunlap, Hieneman, Knoster, Fox, Anderson, & Albin, 2000). Conversely, professional development is not effective if it consists solely of telling school personnel what to do and when to do it (Sparks, 2004) and is not based on the specific needs of the setting in which it is being implemented.

Because effective discipline through SWPBS requires both individual and collective commitment on the part of school personnel, professional development related to its implementation is of paramount importance. Timothy Lewis (2001), in his description of the essential features of technical assistance, recommends that, at a minimum, SWPBS professional development should involve initial training on the essential skills involved with SWPBS, encourage schools to build local capacity and take ownership of the SWPBS process, and provide on-going support to problem solve and further refine and expand the SWPBS process. Professional development opportunities for SWPBS should move personnel beyond "simple acquisition of

content and skills to fluency and maintenance" (Lewis, 2001). In order to achieve this end, professional development must ensure that personnel understand the critical features and rationale for SWPBS, are provided opportunities to apply their knowledge and implement strategies within their unique settings, receive feedback on their application of newly acquired skills (Lane & Menzies, 2002), and are offered multiple opportunities for additional training and access to coaches and teams committed to the successful implementation of SWPBS.

Finally, proponents of SWPBS as a part of effective school-wide discipline programs advocate the development of a sustainable system of support for personnel. The development of such a support system is based on empirically sound professional development practices characterized by professional learning communities (DuFour & Eaker, 1998; Hayes, 2007; Sparks, 2004) and a coaching infrastructure by which teacher leaders and other district and state-level facilitators are knowledgeable about SWPBS and accessible for on-going technical assistance (Killion, 2007; Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, 2007). Regardless of the additional types of opportunities (e.g., in-service, conference, university-based course) made available to school personnel, professional development for SWPBS must be team-based, on-going, and allow for repeated practice and problem-solving (Lewis, 2001; Sugai & Horner, 2006). School-based leaders who invest in SWPBS as an alternative to traditional disciplinary strategies must acknowledge that successful SWPBS implementation requires professional development opportunities that offer significantly more than exposure and practice

and stand ready to develop and provide the resources and supports for sustained and effective SWPBS implementation.

Implications for Educational Leaders

In this era of accountability when schools are essentially being asked to accomplish more with fewer resources and increasingly diverse student needs, leadership becomes a major consideration in the context of systems-level challenges presented by adopting a positive and unified discipline approach. Ultimately, school leaders must be dedicated to the best possible education for all students and they must be prepared to lead school-based teams through the change process as clear and consistent policies related to SWPBS programs are developed. SWPBS are not strategies in and of themselves. Instead, SWPBS systems represent a process by which school personnel look for ways to improve the social and academic environments of school in order to prevent and address student discipline and problem behavior in a manner that is proactive, fair, and effective for all students. The SWPBS approach is most effective in school environments that have the capacity to identify, adopt and sustain the use of effective policies, practices, and systems, including developing meaningful family and community involvement (Sugai et al., 1999). Developing this type of capacity is the duty of a responsible school leader.

School leaders who consider adopting SWPBS as an alternative approach to student problem behavior must be adept in coaching, training, and evaluating others in SWPBS implementation (Sugai & Horner, 2006). Because SWPBS represents a systems change in terms of school discipline, leaders must also make the adoption and sustained use of SWPBS relevant and efficient. In so doing, attention must be

given to the policies, environments, structures, and practices of SWPBS (Sugai et al., 1999) across all types of students. For example, while consistency is a critical feature at the primary level of support in terms of problem behavior prevention, students presenting more significant behavior challenges may require personnel who are highly skilled in intensive and individualized positive behavior supports and functional behavior assessment. Time, resources, and administrative support are priorities in terms of sustaining the implementation of SWPBS in order to significantly decrease the problem behavior of students with more significant support needs. Also inherent in effective SWPBS leadership, regardless of the level of behavioral support, is the responsibility of school leaders to provide meaningful and effective professional development opportunities for school staff.

Consistent with the literature related to supports for and practices of professional development, adopting and sustaining SWPBS systems requires pre- and in-service professional development that reaches beyond exposure-level presentations provided in one-day workshops (Skiba, 2002; Sugai & Horner, 2006). As previously discussed, one-shot training sessions are insufficient in terms of developing the capacity of professionals within a school to implement school-wide and individual student behavioral support systems. Because the implementation of SWPBS requires significant faculty support, school leaders must provide professional development aimed at the focused and sustained implementation of SWPBS as a system of support for all students. Such professional development must include not only the principles of SWPBS and interventions associated with it, but also the effective use of data to make academic and behavioral decisions, cultural considerations, and other evidence-

based practices that positively impact student performance (Bartlett et al., 2007; Sugai & Horner, 2006; Virginia Department of Education, 2005). A shift to SWPBS further requires professional preparation programs that target effective school-wide discipline through PBS as a system of support for all students so that future educators and administrators are more aware of and open to considering SWPBS as a systematic approach to student problem behavior and school discipline (Skiba, 2002).

Finally, leaders must acknowledge that building SWPBS systems takes time. Horner, Sugai, & Horner (2000) suggest that a reasonable period needed to design and establish SWPBS is between three and five years. Schools with truly effective school-wide systems build them over time and they modify their system based on the unique and changing needs of the individual school. Unlike reading or math curricula, SWPBS are not a set of strategies that may be applied blindly to a school setting. Implementing SWPBS requires a paradigm shift in the way schools approach student discipline including systematic planning and restructuring. Leaders must assume responsibility for establishing competent learning and teaching cultures where students are supported and taught based on both academic and behavioral needs.

Virginia's Context

Virginia Department of Education

As described by Old Dominion University's Training and Technical Assistance Center (T/TAC), "Effective School-wide Discipline (ESD) is a Commonwealth of Virginia initiative to support positive academic and behavioral outcomes for all students" (www.ttac.odu.esu/esd). Consistent with the general principals of SWPBS, the program in Virginia utilizes preventative and proactive

approaches to discipline that are based on extensive research. Ultimately, Virginia's ESD initiative aims to decrease office referrals and increase time spent on teaching and learning by impacting the culture of schools with regard to a shift in focus from punitive measures to one that is based on positive behavioral approaches to student discipline. The following provides relevant historical information and current resources, practices, and programs associated with the ESD initiative in Virginia.

Following the 1997 Amendments to the IDEA, the Virginia Department of Education, in collaboration with the Institute for Positive Academic and Behavioral Supports, published a booklet entitled *An Overview of Functional Assessment and Behavioral Intervention Plans in Virginia's Public Schools* (n.d.). Additionally, the Virginia Department of Education collaborated with The Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice at the American Institute of Research to publish the larger guide, *Conducting Functional Behavioral Assessment and Developing Positive Behavior Intervention Plans and Supports: Promoting Positive Academic and Behavioral Outcomes for All Students* (n.d.). Each of these guides was distributed to local school districts as a means of technical assistance.

During the 2005-2006 school year, the Virginia Department of Education developed a new guide entitled *Functional Behavior Assessment, Behavioral Intervention Plans and Positive Intervention and Supports: An Essential Part of Effective School-wide Discipline in Virginia.* To date, the guide is in its fourth edition (2008). This guide, in conjunction with, *An Introduction to Effective School-wide Discipline in Virginia: A Statewide Initiative to Support Positive Academic and Behavioral Outcomes for All Students* (2008), is used as a part of Virginia's effort to

introduce effective school-wide discipline (ESD) practices to school principals across the state. As of September 2006, more than 60 schools had participated in the training. This training opportunity is being provided by the Virginia Department of Education in collaboration with T/TAC across the state. Approximately two years later, over 100 schools in 33 districts across Virginia are identified as utilizing ESD (www.ttac.odu.edu/esd).

Training and Technical Assistance Centers

Virginia's Training/Technical Assistance Centers (T/TAC) are considered an arm of the Department of Education responsible, through training and technical assistance, for improving the educational opportunities of school-aged students with disabilities aged birth through 22. Each of Virginia's eight Superintendent's regions is served by one or more of five T/TAC centers. Across the state, T/TAC centers are located on-site at various different colleges and universities.

The ESD training is associated with the state department's collaboration with the T/TACs as one of thirteen statewide priorities. Specifically, the goals of the Behavior Assessment and Intervention & Effective School-wide Discipline project is to

> provide training and information on conducting functional behavior assessment and developing behavior intervention plans [as well as to] provide training and technical assistance to schools on the positive behavior support model to address a systematic approach to practices that decrease inappropriate student behavior. (VDOE Projects with T/TAC, August, 2006).

Furthermore, Virginia's ESD model includes the following components:

- Communicating the basic tenets of a positive discipline program;
- Guiding faculty to establish a common vision and school-wide expectations for student behavior;
- Establishing consistent practices to encourage students to exhibit appropriate behavior throughout the school;
- Collecting, summarizing, and interpreting school discipline data that are meaningful and consistent with each school's code of conduct;
- Defining characteristics of student behaviors and identifying positive behavioral strategies for implementation in the schools, and;
- Evaluating behavioral interventions in the schools using discipline data (www.wm.edu/ttac/esd.esd.html).

As described in the background literature related to Virginia's ESD project, ESD reflects many of the components found in the literature associated with PBS (Virginia Department of Education, 2005). Moreover, Virginia's ESD Project is directly based on the accumulated research on PBS. Currently, the T/TAC associated with Old Dominion University is responsible for the ESD initiative including management of the website *Effective School-wide Discipline in Virginia: A statewide initiative that provides positive behavioral and academic support to all students.* T/TAC, in conjunction with the Virginia Department of Education, is hoping to extend ESD opportunities beyond the more than 100 schools already identified as utilizing ESD. Given the recency of the ESD Project in Virginia and the growing number of schools who have participated thus far, very little is known about how

localities are actually implementing the requirements associated with PBS, whether through their participation in the state-level ESD Project, or otherwise. No official data or other information has yet been made available to the public.

Site-Based Initiatives

Although little is currently known related to the specific implementation status of ESD through PBS within school divisions across Virginia, T/TAC is presently providing an on-line technical assistance manual related to the subject entitled, *Effective School-wide Discipline in Virginia: A Technical Assistance Resource Manual* (n. d.). As reflected in the manual, several individuals, including state department personnel, local school district personnel, T/TAC personnel, community agency representatives, and one parent, served on the state project and/or collaborated on it for the development of the manual. Additionally, eight schools representing six school districts provided materials for use as resource materials. Those schools districts are Amelia County (Region VIII), Augusta County (Region VI), Chesterfield County (Region I), Charles City County (Region I), Richmond City (Region I), and Henrico County (Region I). Clearly, research and analysis is needed in order to determine the level of involvement and implementation of ESD and PBS, if any, of other districts around the state. This study attempts to provide such information with a narrowed focus on specific school districts within three selected Superintendent's Regional Study Groups.

Summary

Student discipline and school safety have historically been, and will likely continue to be, two of the most pressing concerns educators and the public-at-large

must confront. Confounding this issue is the perception of dual systems of responding to disciplining students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers. Addressing student discipline in efficient and effective ways is, therefore, important for several reasons. First, disruptive behavior in schools interrupts the learning process and minimizes the likelihood that students will achieve high academic standards and outcomes. Second, issues related to student discipline require a great deal of time on the part of teachers and administrators and the interpersonal conflicts that may arise from disciplinary situations do harm to the overall educational atmosphere of school. Lastly, serious violations of school conduct codes such as aggression, harassment, and weapons or drugs possession create unsafe and dangerous student environments (Luiselli, Putnam, & Sunderland, 2002).

Treating student discipline problems with punitive consequences such as suspension and expulsion is not improving student behavior and cannot, therefore, be considered evidence-based practices. In fact, such reactive and castigatory consequences may be exacerbating the problem (Lewis & Garrison-Harrell, 1999). Emerging evidence indicates that effective discipline through positive behavior supports shows promise with regard to addressing the behavioral needs of all students. To date, at least 40 of 50 states have developed various resources intended to assist schools in implementing more effective and preventative disciplinary systems (Killu et al., 2006). Virginia is one of them. Because there is increasing empirical evidence of the effectiveness of these programs, attention must now be focused on the manner in which individual localities are implementing school-wide

positive behavior support systems, with special attention given to any perceived facilitators and/or barriers that either help or hinder their implementation.

CHAPTER III

Methodology

The implementation of school-wide positive behavior supports (SWPBS) is intended to be a systematic and data-driven process that is based on the individual and unique needs of schools or school districts (Office of Special Education Programs Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, 2004). Furthermore, consideration of PBS is mandated for students with disabilities, but has recently been extended in many localities as an effective system of supports for all students. Effective school-wide discipline characterized by a continuum of positive behavior interventions and supports is critically important to efforts aimed at decreasing student misbehavior and increasing socially acceptable behavior. The extent to and manner in which individual schools are implementing SWPBS is important in terms of understanding the perceived effectiveness of such programs and the potential challenges associated with their implementation and sustainability.

This chapter describes the research methods used in this study and includes the following: (a) a restatement of the research questions, (b) a rationale for the use of a descriptive research design, (c) a description of data collection techniques including the participants, procedures, and instrumentation, (d) a description of data analysis techniques, and (e) a discussion of ethical safeguards.

The purpose of this study was to examine and assess the current implementation status of SWPBS in selected school districts in Virginia. Specifically,

using quantitative methods, this researcher collected data from public school leaders in order to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the implementation status of formal school-wide discipline and behavioral support programs in selected schools in Virginia?
2. What factors facilitate the implementation of formal school-wide discipline and behavioral support programs?
3. What factors impede the implementation of formal school-wide discipline and behavioral support programs?
4. What professional development opportunities on formal school-wide discipline and behavioral support programs are provided to school personnel?

It is anticipated that the results of this study may be used to inform future direction in terms of implementing SWPBS systems, planning for and dealing with those factors that facilitate or hinder implementation, as well as developing a broader understanding of the types of professional development opportunities provided to practitioners who are implementing such support systems.

Design

This study utilized a descriptive research design, incorporating quantitative methods, to answer the above noted research questions. As described by Gall, Gall, and Borg (2003), descriptive studies are primarily concerned with determining "what is" at a given point in time. Because the focus of this study involved the current implementation status of SWPBS, a descriptive study utilizing a specific survey instrument was best suited to elicit answers to the research questions targeted for

inquiry. Although fairly simple in design and execution, descriptive studies in education can yield valuable information and knowledge (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003). This study utilized such a design to elicit useful information related not only to the current implementation status of SWPBS in selected schools in Virginia but also to garner participants' identification of those factors they perceive facilitate or hinder SWPBS implementation, including the types of professional development opportunities currently provided to school personnel involved in SWPBS. Table 2 displays each of the four research questions addressed in this study as well as the data collection tool and data analysis procedures utilized to answer each question.

Table 2

Design summary: Data collection and analysis

Research Question	Data Collection Tool	Data Analysis
1. What is the implementation status of formal school-wide discipline and behavioral support programs in selected schools in Virginia?	Survey (Items 1-36)	Frequency Counts Percentages Descriptive Statistics Factor Analysis
2. What factors facilitate the implementation of formal school-wide discipline and behavioral support programs?	Survey (Item 38)	Frequency Counts Percentages Descriptive Statistics Multiple Regression

(continued)

Table 2

Design summary: Data collection and analysis

Research Question	Data Collection Tool	Data Analysis
3. What factors impede the implementation of formal school-wide discipline and behavioral support programs?	Survey (Item 39)	Frequency Counts Percentages Descriptive Statistics Multiple Regression
4. What professional development opportunities on formal school-wide discipline and behavioral support programs are provided to school personnel?	Survey (Item 40)	Frequency Counts Percentages Descriptive Statistics

Procedures

As indicated above, each of the four research questions comprising this study was addressed through quantitative methods using data reported by participants on the survey instrument. Because no validated instrument for measuring the implementation status of SWPBS existed at the time of this study, a pilot study was conducted prior to engaging in the dissertation phase of the investigation. This process was conducted in order to develop a reliable and valid measure of SWPBS implementation and is described below.

Instrumentation

The survey instrument used to collect data for this study was based on the *Delaware PBS Implementation Self-Assessment* (see Appendix A). The *Delaware PBS Implementation Self-Assessment* was originally adapted, with permission, from the *Effective Behavior Supports (EBS) Self-Assessment Version 1.5* (Sugai, Horner, & Todd, 2000). The EBS assessment was initially developed as a tool for action planning and for the annual evaluation of support systems in schools. Most recently, Stephen Safran (2006) investigated the reliability and validity of the original EBS assessment model. His findings indicate that while initial reliability data were promising with regard to the total scale internal consistency of the instrument in terms of its intended use for action planning, more research is required to further refine the EBS survey.

Modeled after the original EBS assessment, the Delaware assessment instrument consists of 69 closed form items, each embedded within one of 10 "features." Items require respondents to rate each as *in place, partially in place,* or

not in place, as well as, *high, medium,* or *low*, in terms of priority for improvement. Because this study was not concerned with improvement priorities, permission was sought and granted from the authors of the Delaware instrument to adapt and use the assessment. Further, as indicated by one of the Delaware assessment authors (personal communication, 2006), the instrument has not been validated.

As an initial matter, this researcher modified the original instrument to reflect a more manageable number of items in order to increase the rate of return. So doing was meant to avoid "losing" respondents based solely on the length of the original survey. Survey items reflected on the adapted survey used for the initial pilot were included as critical features of SWPBS implementation based on the number of articles whose authors identified the feature as a critical element of SWPBS implementation. For the purposes of this study, a minimum of four directly relevant and current (i.e. less than five years old) articles and/or prominent authors were used as the basis for determining whether or not to maintain or discard individual survey items. Because the original survey was not validated, individual survey items on the adapted survey were not embedded within critical feature categories.

In addition to modifying the number of items to which participants were asked to respond, this researcher further adapted the survey with regard to the development of a new Likert scale. In order to obtain results that could more easily be quantified, the survey scale was adapted to reflect a six-point Likert scale where a "0" indicated that the feature was not in place and a "5" indicated that the feature was in place. The results from these adaptations resulted in the 37-item field test version of the instrument utilized during the "practitioner" phase of the pilot study (see Appendix

B). This field test version was used in conjunction with a second field test version to conduct a principal component analysis whereby specific dimensions of SWPBS could be identified.

A second survey, used for the "expert" portion of the pilot, was developed (see Appendix C) and merely expanded on the 37-item scale by including a cover page seeking demographic information and three additional questions, each of which sought information related to research questions two, three, and four. Specifically, participants responding to this field test version were asked to provide information related to perceived facilitators and barriers to SWPBS, as well as to identify those SWPBS professional development opportunities provided to school personnel in their building/district. For each of these questions, participants were asked to identify any other facilitators, barriers, or professional development opportunities that were not already included on the survey. Further, participants in this portion of the pilot study were asked not only to respond to each of the initial 37 items but also to indicate whether or not each item should be deleted or retained and to provide editorial feedback related to the clarity and wording of each item and the cover page information. The process by which the survey was adapted to its final version and subsequently validated occurred during the pilot study portion of the investigation for which the results of both field test versions were combined.

Pilot study. As described by Gall, Gall, and Borg (2003), the purpose of a pilot study is to conduct a small-scale preliminary investigation in order to develop and test the measures or procedures that will be used in the research study. Including a pilot study within the context of this study was essential in order to add credibility,

reliability, validity, and generalizability to the final results. Within the context of this investigation, the pilot study occurred in two parts simultaneously. The first portion, that which asked a convenience sample of public school practitioners to respond to each of the 37 Likert-items on the adapted survey, was used solely for the principal component analysis. The second part, that which required an expert panel of six practicing school administrators to respond to the 37-item scale as well as to indicate whether or not each item should be retained or deleted, was also used for the principal component analysis. Additional information related to facilitators, barriers, and professional development obtained from these participants was used to develop the final version of the survey.

The purpose of principal component analysis is to ascertain, based on identified features, how given factors may be loaded under distinguishing elements of a specific construct (DiPaola & Smith, 2008; George & Mallery, 2005). A second and equally important purpose of the principal component analysis within the context of this study related directly to the development of a stable and reliable measure of SWPBS implementation. Results obtained from participants in each portion of the pilot study (n = 56) were used to develop a final survey which is, based on this initial analysis, more valid and reliable than the original instrument.

Data obtained from each of the 56 field test versions of the survey were submitted to a principal component analysis using the statistical software program, SPSS. Using an eigenvalue of one or greater, and suppressing absolute values less than .40, results indicated a five-factor rotated solution. One question (26) on the field test version did not load on any factor and was therefore eliminated. Using these

values, 64.90% of the variance was explained. Appendix D provides the final rotated component matrix from the principal component analysis with Varimax and Kaiser normalization for each of the 36 items on the final survey instrument. The five factors, or dimensions, of SWPBS, identified through the analysis were named as:

- Team-based Data-driven Decision Making
- Instructional Environment and Teacher Behaviors
- Prevention through School-wide Practices and Policies
- Universal School-wide Supports for Developing Positive Behavior and Self-discipline
- Disciplinary and Emergency Preparedness

This analysis, editorial feedback provided by the expert panel, and input and direction provided by the dissertation committee, resulted in the final survey instrument used for the dissertation phase of this study, entitled *School-wide Discipline and Positive Behavior Support Programs Implementation Survey* (see Appendix E). An accompanying information and consent form was developed (see Appendix F).

Sample

At the time this study was conducted, the Commonwealth of Virginia's school districts were divided into eight Superintendent's Regional Study Groups. For the purposes of this investigation, a convenience sample of 600 schools selected from 47 school districts situated within three of those Superintendent's Regional Study Groups were identified as the sample population. This sample was selected for several reasons. First, the university for which the research was being conducted is located within close proximity to each region. Second, the number of schools within

the three regions totals exactly 600 schools, well over the recommended minimum of 100 participants for survey research (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003). And third, expanding the study to more than one region was intended to provide a broader picture of the implementation status of SWPBS in school districts situated within a larger area of the state of Virginia.

In order to achieve a reasonable return rate, every elementary and middle school located within each of the three regions were included in the surveyed sample of participants. School principals, or their designees, were asked to respond to the survey. It should be noted that for the purposes of this study, only public elementary and middle schools were selected. Within the three regions selected for this study, there were 450 elementary schools and 150 middle schools. Specialty schools (i.e., Governor's schools), regional technical and career centers, alternative schools, and special education programs housed in separate facilities were not included.

Dissertation Phase

As previously indicated, four research questions represented the foci of this investigation. Attempts to garner answers to each of these four questions were addressed through quantitative inquiry whereby participants were asked to respond to the survey instrument. Given the large number of potential participants, consent and information letters, along with the survey and a self-addressed and stamped envelope, were mailed to every elementary and middle school principal within each of the three targeted regions of Virginia. As evidenced in the information and cover letter, this researcher used the incentive of a $50 gift certificate to a national bookstore chain to entice participants to respond.

In order to track the rate of return, surveys were numerically coded by the researcher prior to the mailing and a spreadsheet was maintained throughout the data collection phase that allowed the researcher to track returned surveys by school. It should be noted that participants were informed, via the information and consent form, that their identity would be known only to the researcher and that completed surveys would be destroyed upon completion of the study. Included in the survey directions was a request to complete the survey within two week's time. Upon completion of data collection, the incentive recipient was randomly selected and notified by the researcher.

In some cases ($n = 5$), school districts contacted the researcher to request that an application be filed with the school district in order to obtain permission to conduct research. In every instance of such a request, the researcher complied and provided the necessary documentation. Two of the original five requesting school districts indicated that a decision could not be made until the fall of 2008, well beyond the data collection time frame and one school district denied permission to query every elementary and middle school principal within the district, requesting that certain schools be selected. Because such a deviation in sampling would have compromised the overall sample, this researcher did not pursue responses from that district. The remaining two districts who had requested that an application be filed granted this researcher permission to conduct research and follow-up surveys were mailed to each of those school district's elementary and middle school principals. Follow-up mailings were provided to schools who had not responded within four weeks time of the original mailing.

Data Analysis

This study utilized quantitative methods in order to analyze current implementation practices related to SWPBS within three Superintendent's Regional Study Groups in Virginia. Data analysis techniques varied and were specific to each research question. As recommended by Gall and colleagues (2003), a minimum target return rate of 100 surveys was designated for analysis. Demographic data was reported based on that which was provided by participants.

A second principal component analysis was conducted and those factor loadings are reported. Again, the analysis was conducted using an eigenvalue of one or greater with absolute values less than .40 suppressed. Using these values, 65.92% of the variance was explained. The five factors obtained during the pilot phase of the study were maintained however, some items loaded under different factors during the dissertation phase. Results from the principal component analysis conducted during the dissertation phase are reported in Appendix G.

Data analysis for the first research question was based on participants' responses to the first 36 Likert-scale survey items. SWPBS implementation status was reported by frequencies, percentages, and means. As indicated on the survey instrument, numerical values were assigned to the range of responses consistent with the six-point Likert-scale. Those values were used to determine the mean and standard deviation for each item on the survey. Additionally, those values were used to determine means, standard deviations and ranges within each critical feature category by collapsing the scores in order to report results for each dimension (as identified by the principal component analysis). Finally, an overall mean

implementation score, given as a Grand Mean, was derived and is reported. A statistical software (i.e., SPSS) program was used to generate all of the outputs as described above.

Research questions two and three were answered based on participants' responses to survey items 38 and 39, specifically. As above, numerical values were assigned to the range of responses on these items such that "High Impact" was worth 3, "Neutral" was worth 2, and "Low Impact" was worth 1. The same statistical software program was used to generate frequencies, percentages, and means for each identified factor. Data was further submitted for multiple regression analysis in order to obtain scores that identify the relative contribution each of the 16 identified facilitating and hindering factors makes to the implementation status of each of the five critical features of SWPBS.

Finally, research question four was answered based on responses to item 40 on the survey. Because respondents could select any professional development opportunities that applied to their specific setting, as well as add any that were not listed, responses are reported by frequencies and percentages as reported for each professional development option.

Ethical Safeguards

Prior to initiating any portion of this study, permission was obtained through the College of William and Mary Protection of Human Subjects Committee. Approval from the Human Subjects Committee was documented on the consent and information form that accompanied each mailed survey (see Appendix E). In addition to ensuring that this study complied with appropriate ethical standards as identified by

the College of William and Mary Human Subjects Committee, further ethical safeguards were considered.

Conducting research of any type requires the investigator to respect certain safeguards and procedures. Relevant considerations within the context of this study included ensuring confidentiality, providing participants' the freedom to refuse or withdraw consent, and guaranteeing each participant protection from mental or physical harm. For the purposes of this study, all participants were over the age of 18 and were known only to the researcher; their confidentiality was protected throughout all phases of the research.

Potential participants were given the option to refuse to participate and they were likewise informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time. Participants were made aware, via the consent and information form, that by completing and submitting the survey, they were providing consent. Finally, completed surveys were maintained only by the researcher and were destroyed upon completion of the study.

Summary

Effective school-wide discipline through school-wide positive behavior supports (SWPBS) remains a relatively novel approach to managing student behavior. Understanding the current implementation status of SWPBS is critical if we are to decrease incidents of student misbehavior and develop schools characterized by positive and nurturing climates. Research to this end is needed in order not only to develop a better sense of what is currently occurring in the field, but also to contribute to the literature in terms of what must be available to schools in order for SWPBS

initiatives to be more successful. This descriptive study, which employed a thorough and detailed survey, is intended to provide practitioners and university professionals alike, with valuable information that may prove useful to school personnel currently implementing SWPBS, those who are considering it, and finally, those who have a desire to increase the likelihood that disruptive student behavior can be prevented positively and effectively.

CHAPTER IV

Data Analysis

School-wide Positive Behavior Supports (SWPBS) are emerging as a viable system of support for school-aged students with regard to preventing school discipline problems. In response to steadily increasing incidents of disruptive student behavior, school districts are seeking effective and efficient structures intended to prevent and address challenging student behavior that interferes with a school's learning environment (Barrett, Bradshaw, & Lewis-Palmer, 2008). As a systems level approach to proactive school-wide discipline, SWPBS is intended to increase the capacity of schools to adopt and sustain positive, proactive, and empirically sound practices meant to decrease negative student behavior and increase behavior that is prosocial and conducive to a safe and effective learning environment. In Virginia, this system of positive support is known as Effective School-wide Discipline (ESD). Grounded firmly in the literature related to SWPBS, over 100 schools across the state are indentified as implementing ESD and other positive behavior supports.

The purpose of this study was to examine the implementation status of SWPBS in selected schools in Virginia as well to garner information related to those factors that may facilitate or hinder that implementation. Further, this study sought to identify the types of professional development opportunities and on-going support provided to school personnel who are implementing positive behavior support systems. Following is a description of the total sample queried for this investigation

as well as a thorough description of the results obtained from an analysis of the data. Each of the four research questions investigated in this study, and the data obtained to answer the question, are addressed in this section.

Rate of Return

As described in Chapter III, in order to obtain a return rate of at least 100 schools, this researcher queried a combined sample of 600 elementary (n = 450) and middle schools (n = 150) from 47 school districts situated within three of Virginia's Superintendent's Study Regions. Following an initial mailing of the consent and information form and survey to all 600 school principals, 54 surveys were received within the first week. This researcher complied with requests from a handful of districts (n = 5) who required additional information prior to conducting research within those districts. Subsequent to this process and follow-up mailings to districts who had not responded within four weeks, a total of 128 were received, yielding a return rate of 21.3%. Five surveys were returned with incomplete data and 1 survey was returned with a photocopied cover page rendering it impossible to classify the survey by region. A total of 85 elementary schools (18.8% of total possible) and 43 middle schools (28.6% of total possible) returned the survey. Table 3 displays return rates by region. Percentages provided are based on the number of responding schools at a given school level out of the total number of schools of that level in the region and the total percentages are based on the number of responding schools out of the total number of schools in the region.

Table 3

Return Rate by Region

	Elementary		Middle		Total	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Region A	27	17.3	13	25.5	40	19.3
Region B	36	15.5	18	25.3	54	17.8
Region C	21	33.9	12	42.9	33	36.7

Note. Elementary (n = 84) includes all elementary schools including those that identified themselves as primary (n = 8), upper elementary (n = 5), and standard elementary (n = 68). Regions "A", "B", and "C" are pseudonyms given by the researcher to protect confidentiality.

Each of the three Superintendent's regions included in this study was made up of a different number of schools districts. Two of the regions included 15 school districts ranging in size from a combined total of one elementary and one middle school to 71 elementary and middle schools. The third region included 17 districts ranging in size from one elementary school to a combined total of 23 elementary and middle schools. Table 4 provides information related to the percentage of represented school districts within each region.

Table 4

Percentage of Responding Districts by Region

Region	Total Districts	Responding Districts	Percentage of Responding Districts
Region A	15	11	73.3
Region B	15	13	86.7
Region C	17	14	82.3

Demographics

Demographic information for this study was obtained from each respondent on the cover page of the survey. Specifically, respondents were asked to identify their title, school level (i.e., standard elementary school, primary school, upper elementary school, middle school or junior high school), total school population, and total special education population. In addition to this basic demographic information, participants were additionally asked to indicate whether or not, at the time of the study, their school was implementing a formal school-wide discipline and/or behavioral support program and, if so, how many years the school had been engaged in the program.

Surveys were mailed specifically to the principal of each school included in the study. As indicated on the cover page of the survey, it was to be completed by the principal or her designee. A majority of respondents identified themselves as the school principal. Table 5 provides frequency and percentage information for the roles of the participants.

Table 5

Respondent Roles

Title	Frequency	Percentage of Total Respondents
Principal	102	82.9
Assistant Principal	12	9.8
Special Education Teacher	2	1.6
ESD Coach	1	0.8
Guidance Counselor	1	0.8
Unknown	5	4.1
Total	123	100

Survey participants were asked to identify their school level as a standard elementary school (i.e., kindergarten through fifth grade), a primary elementary school, an upper elementary school, a middle school, or a junior high school. For data analysis purposes, elementary school data includes all standard, primary, and upper elementary schools and middle school data includes all middle and junior high schools. For demographic information, however, Table 6 displays the frequency and percentage of schools by level based on information provided by survey participants.

Table 6

Respondent School Levels

School Level	Frequency	Percentage
Standard Elementary (K-5)	68	55.3
Primary School	8	6.5
Upper Elementary	5	4.1
Middle School	42	34.1
Junior High School	0	0
Total	123	100

In addition to identifying specific school levels, respondents were asked to provide their total school and special education student populations (see Table 7). A total of four respondents (i.e., two elementary and two middle school participants) did not report information related to total student population and 17 respondents (i.e., 11 elementary and six middle school participants) did not provide special education information. As reported by participants who provided population information, elementary school populations ranged from 186-1100 and middle school student populations ranged from 200-1519. Special education populations at the elementary level ranged from 0.2% to 22.2%. At the middle school level, special education populations ranged from 0.5% to 42%.

Table 7

Student Population by School Level

School Level	Student Population	*N*	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	*SD*
Elementary	Total	79	186	1100	529.08	166.08
	Special Ed.	70	1	126	58.01	29.58
Middle	Total	40	200	1519	702.58	308.29
	Special Ed	36	3	258	85.06	57.37

Finally, study participants were asked to indicate whether or not their respective schools were implementing a formal school-wide discipline and/or behavioral support program. Twenty-three elementary school respondents (18.7% of total sample) indicated that their school was not implementing a formal school-wide discipline and/or behavioral support program and 15 middle school respondents (12.2% of total sample) also indicated "no" to this question. Despite having indicated no, each of these 38 respondents (31.7% of the total sample) still responded to the survey.

With regard to the number of years respondents indicated having been engaged in the implementation of a formal school-wide discipline and/or behavioral support program (see Table 8), a majority of schools reported implementation somewhere between one and five years. One respondent, of those who indicated that their school was implementing a formal program ($n = 84$), did not denote the school's number of years in implementation.

Table 8

Years Engaged in Implementation

Years Engaged	Elementary	Middle
< 1	7	4
1 – 2	26	8
3 – 5	12	9
>5	11	6

Data Analysis by Research Question

Research Question One: What is the implementation status of formal school-wide discipline and positive behavioral support programs in Virginia?

Implementation status was determined based on participant's responses to items one through 36 on the survey instrument. Specifically, respondents were asked to indicate, given a six-point Likert scale, to what degree each SWPBS feature was in place in their school. A score of 0 indicated the feature was not in place and a score of 5 indicated the feature was in place. Appendix H displays implementation status frequencies and means for each of the 36 items on the survey in descending order from the survey item with the highest level of implementation to the lowest.

As evidenced by the data, the survey item indicating the highest level of implementation was item number eleven, "*Procedures are in place to address emergency/dangerous situations,*" (m = 4.76; SD = .68) with only one participant reporting no such procedures. The survey item indicating the lowest level of implementation was item number eight, *"Families are actively involved in the*

development and evaluation of the school-wide program for preventing problem behavior," (m = 1.89; SD = 1.53); only 5% of respondents indicated this feature was in place in their school.

Data obtained from the initial 36 survey items were further analyzed in order to determine the overall implementation status of each of the five critical feature categories identified by the principal component analysis, as well as to determine the overall implementation score of SWPBS, given as a Grand Mean. Table 9 displays the mean implementation score of each SWPBS factor as well as the overall, or Grand Mean, of the entire sample.

Table 9

Mean SWPBS Implementation Scores

Critical Feature Category	M	SD	Grand Mean
Team-based Data-driven Decision Making (11)	3.30	.56	
Instructional Environment and Teacher Behaviors (13)	4.02	.27	
Prevention through School-wide Practices and Policies (5)	4.25	.33	
Universal School-wide Supports for Developing Positive Behavior and Self-Discipline (4)	4.12	.26	
Disciplinary Preparedness and Emergencies (3)	4.62	.17	
Overall Implementation Status			3.89

Note: The number in parenthesis indicates the total number of items loaded under that critical feature category.

By and large, the highest level of implementation with regard to the critical features of SWPBS based on these results relates to the existence and rehearsal of emergency procedures and the monitoring of corrective and exclusionary practices with regard to racial and/or cultural disparity. The lowest overall area of implementation relates to team-based and data-driven decision making, with nearly one-third (31%) of respondents indicating that their school does not have a school-wide behavior support team responsible for the development, monitoring, and evaluation of a school-wide program for preventing and correcting behavior problems.

Research Question Two: What factors facilitate the implementation of formal school-wide discipline and behavioral support programs?

This research question was specifically addressed by question 38 on the survey instrument. Given a comprehensive, research-based list of factors identified as facilitating the implementation of SWPBS, study participants were asked to rank each of eight possible facilitators as having either a "high impact," " a "neutral" impact, or a "low impact" on the implementation of SWPBS. Numerical values of "3," "2," and "1" were assigned to each possible rank, respectively. Means and standard deviations for each of the eight facilitating factors are provided in Table 10. Appendix I provides frequencies and percentages based on participant's ranking of the level of impact for each facilitator. Given participant responses (n = 118), it is evident that support from the state level is perceived as having the least impact on the implementation of SWPBS while administrative support was reported as having the most. Only 17% of respondents identified state level support as having a high impact on the

implementation of SWPBS. Conversely, 91% of participants reported administrative support at the building level as having a high impact.

Table 10

Facilitators: Means and Standard Deviations

Facilitator	M	SD
State Level Support	1.81	.719
District Support	2.30	.788
Administrative Support	2.92	.323
School Level/Team Training (Professional Development)	2.64	.622
Formal Action Planning	2.55	.593
Staff Commitment	2.85	.426
Communication	2.85	.426
Community/Family Buy-in	2.51	.637

Data obtained from participants' responses to question 38 were further analyzed using multiple regression analysis in order to determine the relative impact each facilitating factor may have on the five overarching and critical features of SWPBS. Based on the data obtained from this analysis, School Level/Team Training (professional development) has a significant facilitating impact on the implementation status of Team-based Data-driven Decision Making ($\beta = .249$; $p < .05$) and Communication significantly impacts the implementation status of Prevention through School-wide Practices and Policies ($\beta = .289$; $p < .05$). Similarly, Staff Commitment significantly impacts both Disciplinary Preparedness and

Emergencies ($\beta = .350$; $p < .05$) as well as Prevention through School-wide Practices and Policies ($\beta = -.318$; $p < .05$). No other significant findings were revealed through analysis.

Research Question Three: What factors impede the implementation of formal school-wide discipline and behavioral support programs?

In contrast to those factors identified as possibly facilitating the implementation of SWPBS, participants were asked, via question 39 on the survey instrument, to indicate to what degree each of eight impeding factors have an impact on the successful implementation status of school-wide positive behavior supports in their schools. Again, numerical values of "3," "2," and "1" were assigned to, "high impact," "neutral", and "low impact" rankings, respectively. Table 11 displays the means and standard deviations for each of the eight research-based barriers, as ranked by respondents.

Table 11

Barriers: Means and Standard Deviations

Barrier	M	SD
Faculty and Staff Buy-in	2.34	.882
Inconsistent or Lack of Use of Data	2.10	.781
Inconsistent Implementation	2.33	.832
Rewards System	1.97	.826
Local Zero Tolerance Policy	1.86	.748
Time	2.22	.803
Communication	2.28	.842
Community/Family Buy-in	2.22	.792

Both Rewards Systems and Local Zero Tolerance Policies were ranked as having a relatively low impact on the successful implementation of SWPBS with regard to posing barriers. Conversely, both Faculty and Staff Buy-in and Inconsistent Implementation were reported as having more potential to impede successful implementation. Appendix J displays frequencies and percentages based on participant's ranking of the level of impact for each potential barrier.

As before, these data were further analyzed using multiple regression analysis in order to determine the relative influence of each potential barrier on the successful implementation of SWPBS. Based on this analysis, both Rewards Systems ($\beta = .269$; $p < .05$) and Local Zero Tolerance Policies ($\beta = -.388$; $p < .05$), though ranked as

having a low impact overall, were revealed as having a significant impact on the implementation status of Team-based Data-driven Decision Making.

Research Question Four: What professional development opportunities on formal school-wide discipline and behavioral support programs are provided to school personnel?

Given a list of possible professional development opportunities based on relevant literature, participants were asked to indicate all the opportunities available to personnel within their schools. Additionally, respondents were asked to indicate any "other" available professional development opportunities that were not listed on the survey. Approximately 82 percent of respondents indicated more than one type of professional development opportunity with a majority of respondents (n = 103; 85.8%) indicating that the topic of school-wide positive behavior support systems was covered during their new teacher orientation programs. Assistance provided by a private consultant was reported the least (n = 13; 10.8%). Table 12 provides a summary of both the number and percentage of schools offering each type of professional development.

Table 12

Professional Development Opportunities Available to School Personnel

Type	*N*	Percentage
New Teacher Orientation	103	85.8
Building Level Study Groups (i.e., book study groups, conference attendance, etc.)	78	65.0
State Level Assistance (e.g., ESD Initiative with T/TAC)	30	25.0
Coaching and/or Assistance by Local Coach or Expert	52	43.3
Coaching and/or Assistance by School-based Coach or Expert	54	45.0
Coaching and/or Assistance by Private Consultant (e.g., University, etc.)	13	10.8

Note: $N = 120$ (total number of responses to this item)

In addition to indicating the opportunities available, one respondent wrote, "we have appreciated the support we received!" Several participants identified other professional development opportunities that were not included on the survey. Following is a bulleted summary of those opportunities:

- Staff Discussions
- Mandt training (see www.mandtsystem.com for more information)
- Mentorship Program
- Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (see www.clemson.edu/olweus/index.html for more information)

- Annual review of school plan
- Peer observation and feedback
- Presentations by selected district personnel (e.g., school social worker, attorney, central office personnel)
- Private business partnership
- School guidance program
- Site-based staff development
- Student assistance teams

With regard to providing a menu of professional development opportunities for personnel, the majority of respondents indicated more than one type of professional development opportunity is available. Specifically, 26.7% of schools reported offering three types of professional development opportunities to school personnel, 25% reported offering two, and 18.3% reported offering four types of opportunities. Only 3.3% of respondents indicated that six types of professional development opportunities are available and no participant reported seven or more options.

Additional Findings

Study participants who identified their school as implementing a school-wide discipline and/or behavior support system were asked to give their perception of the system with regard to disciplinary referrals. Specifically, respondents were asked to indicate whether or not, given the system in place at their school, they experienced a decrease in referrals, no change in referrals, or an increase in referrals. Numerical values were assigned to each option such that a "1" meant a decrease in referrals, a "2" meant no change, and a "3" meant an increase in referrals. More than three-

quarters (n = 59; 76.6%) of those who responded to this item (n = 77) indicated that they had experienced a decrease in referrals. Only 4.9% (n = 6) reported an increase in referrals and 15.6% reported no change in referrals. Of the six who reported an increase in referrals (three elementary, three middle), three of the schools reported that they had been implementing SWPBS between one and two years and three reported implementation between three and five years. Of the schools reporting no change in referrals (10 elementary, 2 middle), nine (75%) reported implementing SWPBS for less than two years, and three (25%) reported implementation for more than 3 years.

Summary

The purpose of this study was, in part, to ascertain the implementation status of SWPBS in selected schools in Virginia. Based on results obtained from 123 responding schools from 38 districts in Virginia, 84 schools within three of Virginia's Superintendent's Regional Study Groups report implementing SWPBS to some degree. Specifically, results indicate that the highest level of implementation relates to features of Disciplinary Preparedness and Emergencies (M = 4.62; SD = .17). Most often, schools maintain procedures meant to address emergency or dangerous situations, staff are aware of such procedures and they rehearse them regularly, and consequential strategies, including suspension and expulsion, are nondiscriminatory and monitored across racial and cultural groups. Less frequently, schools are implementing policies and practices associated with Team-based Data-driven Decision Making (M = 3.30; SD = .56). Overall implementation (M = 3.89; SD = .56) is reported as slightly above average.

A second purpose of this study was to identify which factors facilitate and which impede the successful implementation of SWPBS in schools. Based on results obtained from this sample, Administrative Support (M = 2.92; SD = .323), Staff Commitment (M = 2.85; .426), and Communication (M = 2.85; SD = .426) are identified as the facilitators that have the highest impact on implementation while State Level Support, such as that provided by Virginia's Training and Technical Assistance Centers (M = 1.81; SD = .719), has the least impact as a factor that facilitates overall implementation. Further analysis of these facilitating factors additionally reveals that certain factors have a relative but statistically significant impact on specific critical feature categories.

With regard to perceived barriers, respondents indicated that Rewards Systems (M = 1.97; SD = .826) and Local Zero Tolerance Policies (M = 1.86; SD = .748) were least likely to impede the successful implementation of SWPBS and that Faculty and Staff Buy-in (M = 2.34; SD = .882) and Inconsistent Implementation (M = 2.33; SD = .832) have the most negative impact on overall implementation. Despite these findings, multiple regression analysis revealed that both Rewards Systems and Local Zero Tolerance Policies do, in fact, have a relative but statistically significant impact on Team-base Data-driven Decision Making, specifically.

Finally, this study also sought to identify professional development opportunities related to SWPBS that are available to school personnel. Results indicate that most schools (85.8%) provide such preparation as a part of New Teacher Orientation followed by 65% of schools in the sample who offer some type of building-level study group. Results further indicate that 70% of reporting schools

offer two or more types of professional development opportunities for school-personnel, some of which are on-going in terms of the level of support.

The results of this descriptive study are indicative of the emerging nature of SWPBS. Over half (54.2%) of the schools represented in this study have been implementing SWPBS for fewer than two years, yet despite its relative newness in terms of its standing as an empirical approach to discipline and behavior management, more than three-quarters of schools implementing SWPBS report a decrease in disciplinary referrals. Additional findings, including implications for practitioners and recommendations for future research, are discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER V

Findings, Recommendations, and Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to provide a description of the current implementation status of school-wide positive discipline and behavior support programs in selected schools within the state of Virginia. Because Virginia is one of over 30 states identified by the United States Office of Special Education Programs Technical Assistance Center on School-wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports as implementing school-wide positive behavior support (SWPBS), it is highly relevant to ascertain, in quantitative terms, exactly what that implementation consists of, including perceived barriers and facilitators, and professional development associated with sustained implementation. As an initial matter, this study used principal component analysis techniques not only to develop a more valid and reliable survey instrument, but also to determine what, if any, overarching critical features of SWPBS exist. The study subsequently consisted of a descriptive design using quantitative methods to measure the implementation status of SWPBS, to ascertain the relative impact of identified facilitators and barriers, and to identify the types of professional development currently offered to service providers. This chapter presents a summary of the findings, implications for educational leaders, and recommendations for future research. Finally, closing comments are included.

Summary and Discussion of Finding

Four guiding and specific research questions provided the foundation for this inquiry. Each question was answered based on participant responses on the School-wide Positive Behavior Support Systems Implementation Survey (Appendix E). The sample for this study consisted of 123 school-based administrators or their designees, representing 38 school districts situated in three of Virginia's Superintendent's Study Group Regions. A total of 81 elementary and 42 middle schools responded to the survey. Given the limitations and delimitations described in Chapter I, the specific findings of this study are not intended to be generalizable beyond the individual schools and school districts included herein. The results are however, intended to provide a general picture of the implementation status and nature of SWPBS within specific localities and schools in Virginia. Given the representative nature of participants' responses, certain conclusions may be drawn and recommendations made. Specific findings and relevant recommendations are discussed in the following sections.

Implementation Status

The implementation status of SWPBS was derived from participant's responses to the first 36 questions on the survey. Overall, the schools comprising this study reported an implementation status considered to be above average ($M = 3.89$). Based on the Likert scale used for the survey, this result is indicative of implementation that is more in place than not in place. In other words, it is clear from the results obtained in this study with these respondents that SWPBS, whether recognized as formal structures or not, are being implemented across school levels,

districts, and regions. What is less clear however, relates to the specific features of SWPBS, especially when considered both as individual elements and when combined into overarching critical feature categories.

Disciplinary preparedness and emergencies. Consistent with the nature of today's schools with regard to efforts to prevent incidences of school violence, findings from this study reveal that the highest levels of implementation relate directly to emergency procedures and dangerous situations. No doubt, there are probably very few schools across the country that do not claim to have a crisis manual detailing procedures to be followed in the event of any number of crises. That implementation scores for these elements were so high resulted in Disciplinary Preparedness and Emergencies being the most common and fully "in place" feature of SWPBS.

Prevention through school-wide practices and policies. Comprised of five key elements, this overarching feature of SWPBS relates specifically to school-wide practices associated with involving all staff in the development of school-wide interventions meant to prevent behavior problems, maintaining an attractive physical environment conducive to learning, using disciplinary encounters as opportunities to help students develop self-discipline, teaching and reinforcing positive behaviors at the school-wide level, and directly monitoring students during critical periods and in critical places. Not surprisingly, results from this study indicate that the element with the highest level of implementation within this category relates to the supervision of students, and the element with the lowest level of implementation was reported for

teaching and reinforcing positive behaviors at the school-wide level such as in assemblies, school-wide reward systems, or other such opportunities.

Because acceptable behavior is most often simply expected, it is not remarkable that nearly one-third of participants reported that explicitly teaching positive behavior at the school-wide level was not firmly in place. Still, it is promising that better than 70% of respondents reported that positive behaviors are being taught to all students. In contrast however, 84% of participants reported that the physical environment is attractive and conducive to learning. Although clearly an important element of SWPBS, one wonders how much this element relates directly to the implementation of SWPBS and not more to other influences such as the general public perception of the school building or the need to maintain a safe and clean working environment for staff.

Universal school-wide supports for developing positive behavior and self-discipline. Targeted as the primary level of intervention within the construct of SWPBS, universal interventions and supports consist of structures and practices such as clear and reasonable written disciplinary procedures, five or fewer positively and clearly stated school-wide behavioral expectations that are communicated to all students and their families, effective communication mechanisms for families from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and both explicit and indirect teaching of expected behaviors. Essentially, this critical feature category of SWPBS is concerned with those supports that may be universally applicable to the large majority of students in a school. Overall, schools responding to this inquiry reported high levels of implementation across individual elements. Lower levels of

implementation, though still above average, were reported for effectively communicating school-wide behavioral expectations to all families, including those from diverse backgrounds.

Approximately 65% of participants reported that their school is effectively communicating behavioral expectations to all families; conversely, around 35% of respondents are not effectively reaching families. A core value of SWPBS, developing working partnerships with families is critical. With regard to both effective prevention and intervention, communicating with families is truly non-negotiable in terms of implementing successful SWPBS programs. Because behavior is influenced in part by culture and context, it is important that school personnel understand issues related to diversity and demonstrate an openness to partner with parents in order to gain a broader understanding of various values and beliefs, child-rearing practices, and behavioral expectations (Wang, McCart, & Turnbull, 2007). This relationship begins with effectively communicating school-wide policies and procedures for preventing and correcting behavior problems at school, and, when appropriate, including families in the decision-making process with regard to more targeted interventions and strategies.

Instructional environment and teacher behaviors. Because teachers are primarily responsible for implementing SWPBS in terms of day-to-day interaction with students, their behaviors and the environment in which they teach and students learn is significant when considering the implementation of SWPBS. Although still above average (M = 4.02), mean scores for individual items within this SWPBS category ranged from a relatively low implementation score of 3.56 to a high

implementation score of 4.29. Specific elements associated with these scores related to staff recognizing which behavior problems are best handled in the classroom and responding accordingly and consistently, staff recognizing the limitations and negative effects of punishment, and finally, teachers' frequent monitoring of student behavior and subsequent response to signs of misbehavior, respectively.

Other elements of SWPBS reported with relatively low implementation within this category related to teachers' use of evidence-based teaching methods (M = 3.95), routine evaluation of student responses to intervention (M = 3.73), and when used, combining punishment with more positive methods for teaching replacement behaviors (M = 3.82). As stand-alone practices, each of the aforementioned elements of SWPBS may be considered novel or emerging best practices with regard to what is currently required by teachers in their classrooms. Specifically, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) now requires teachers to use research-based strategies as a part of their classroom instruction and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act requires that student responses to intervention, known as RTI, be systematically monitored before a student may be identified as having a specific learning disability that requires special education and related services. Arguably, because teachers have never before been held to higher accountability standards and because there is new emphasis on preventative services in general education (i.e., avoiding the "wait to fail" method of providing assistance), it may be reasonable to expect implementation to be lower for these items. In the very near future however, such features should be implemented at high levels across schools not only because more schools are moving toward positive and empirically sound approaches to behavior support, but because

such practices are mandates required by two separate but related pieces of legislation governing public education in the United States.

Among individual elements reported with high implementation was that teachers demonstrate warmth, caring and a general attitude that all students can succeed academically and socially (M = 4.10), that students who require additional support academically or socially are routinely identified (M = 4.27), and that when used, consequences are fair, commensurate with the offense and consistently applied (M = 4.36). Approximately 88% of participants reported the routine identification of students who require additional academic or behavioral support and 87% reported that behavioral consequences were fair, commensurate with the offense, and consistently applied.

High implementation on these items may be the result of high fidelity with regard to the implementation of SWPBS or they may be resultant from teachers wanting help for students who do not meet expectations. With regard to disciplinary consequences, school-based administrators are generally the individuals responsible for doling out consequences and they were also the individuals responding to the survey – it is unlikely that they would rate themselves low with regard to fairness and consistency. Finally, and sadly, nearly 20% of schools reported that their teachers did not consistently demonstrate warmth, caring, or an attitude that all students can succeed. Although only one participant gave the school a "0," such results lead this researcher to question why teachers who do not believe in students continue to have places in our public schools.

Team-based data-driven decision making. The foundation of SWPBS is rooted in administratively supported team-based implementation that is based not only on a very clear commitment to the academic and social-emotional development of all students, but also on data analysis (Lorhmann, Forman, Martin, & Palmieri, 2008). Within the context of this study, findings reveal that the second lowest implementation score from all 36 survey items was associated with the existence of a school-wide behavior support team that develops, monitors, and evaluates the school-wide program for preventing and correcting behavior problems (M = 2.74). Twenty-one percent of participants reported no school-wide team; another 37% reported this mechanism as being only partially in place. Only half of the schools represented in this study reported having a designated team responsible for the implementation of SWPBS. Similarly, nearly one-third of responding schools reported not having an administrator as an active part of the team (M = 3.57). Results on this question should be interpreted with caution, however, as 83 participants reported that an administrator is an active part of the SWPBS team yet only 51 respondents reported the existence of such a team.

As previously indicated, findings from this study reveal that, based on data provided by schools included in this analysis, this overarching critical feature category of SWPBS had the lowest level of implementation both as a combined feature category (M = 3.30) and also for individual elements. The highest level of implementation for a single feature within this category related to the regular examination of data to identify students with chronic or serious behavior problems (M = 3.81). Because students with chronic or serious behavior problems are generally

known by administrators and teachers alike, further examination of the types of data and data analysis being referred to might reveal more information in terms of any sort of systematic method, other than word of mouth or repeated visits to the office, used to identify these students. In other words, it may be argued that, in many cases, formal data analysis is not required to identify students with chronic or serious behavior problems; on the contrary, those students are known to everyone in the school simply *because* of their behavior.

Results obtained from items within this category further indicate that practices related to the systematic monitoring of interventions was in place just slightly more than it was not (M = 3.23) and that a designated staff member was available to provide problem-solving consultation to teachers or parents, as needed (M = 3.25) by way of a simple process (M = 3.79). Given the number of respondents who reported a lack of administrative leadership and/or school-wide behavior support team, it is not extraordinary that items dealing directly with data collection and analysis were reported at a lower mean implementation status than items relating more directly to universal preventative strategies implemented by individuals. Data collection and data analysis require the support and direct involvement of an administrator; without such support, formal decision-making processes are not likely to occur.

Finally, consistent with results obtained on other items concerning communication and partnerships with families, the lowest scoring element of SWPBS both in this category and overall, dealt directly with families and their active involvement in the development and evaluation of SWPBS. Specifically, nearly 28% of respondents indicated that families were not, even slightly, involved with SWPBS.

Only 5% of respondents indicated that family involvement was fully in place at the time of the study. Although these results are indicative of very little parent involvement in the development and implementation of SWPBS, they do not reveal the reasons for the lack of participation. Whether or not schools are inviting families to participate in the process or whether or not families are choosing not to become involved may be an issue worthy of further exploration.

Facilitating Factors

The second research question this study sought to answer related directly to factors identified by school-based leaders as facilitating the implementation of SWPBS. To date, research addressing this issue specifically, is limited. Most recently, Kincaid, Childs, Blasé, & Wallace (2007) sought to identify facilitators and barriers to the successful implementation of SWPBS in the state of Florida. Their work, as previously reported, identified district support, school-level trainings, communication, and state-level SWPBS support among the principal facilitators to SWPBS implementation. Participants in this study were asked to indicate the degree to which eight factors, including those identified by Kincaid and his colleagues, facilitated the successful implementation of SWPBS in their schools.

Based on results obtained from participants in this study, findings are largely consistent with those of Kincaid and his colleagues, with one exception. Specifically, respondents indicated that administrative support has the most impact on the successful implementation (M = 2.92) of SWPBS, followed by staff commitment (M = 2.85), communication (M = 2.85), and school-level training (M = 2.64). In direct contrast with the findings of Kincaid and his colleagues (2007), results from this

study indicate that, for these participants, state level support has the least impact on successful implementation. Only 18% of respondents reported that state level support has a high impact; this finding may be reflective of the relatively small number of schools that are receiving on-going technical assistance from Virginia's state-level Training and Technical Assistance Centers or it may indicate that respondents do not consider T/TAC an arm of the state department of education. Additionally, the schools included in the Kincaid study were direct participants in Florida's Positive Behavior Support Project. As a result, it may be surmised that only those schools who actually receive state-level support would be able to accurately indicate the degree to which that support facilitates SWPBS implementation. Schools that implement SWPBS without state level support may not see it as critical, especially if their program is successful, or they may be unaware that it is available.

As part of a broader effort to understand the relative impact of each facilitator on the five critical feature categories of SWPBS identified within the context of this study (through principal component analysis), multiple regression analysis was used to make a determination. Findings suggest that school-based professional development opportunities have a significant impact on the implementation of team-based data-driven decision making. Considering this study's findings with regard to the relatively low implementation status of this SWPBS feature, it is reasonable to assume that professional development opportunities at the school-level would significantly impact the school's ability to not only develop a team, but also to ensure the team is equipped to collect and analyze data in meaningful ways.

Additional findings reveal that staff commitment significantly impacts disciplinary preparedness and emergencies. Clearly, staff must be committed to the development and rehearsal of crisis procedures in order to maintain a safe and orderly learning and working environment. Further, staff commitment goes a long way toward ensuring that exclusionary practices are monitored across racial and cultural groups. School-based personnel must be committed to these practices in order for SWPBS to be considered successful.

While results indicate that communication significantly impacts the implementation of prevention through school-wide practices and policies, a negative relationship between staff commitment and the implementation status of that critical feature was also revealed in this study. In other words, a lack of staff commitment impacts the successful implementation of SWPBS elements such as maintaining an attractive school environment conducive to learning, staff involvement in the development of school-wide policies and practices meant to promote positive behavior and self-discipline, including teaching reinforcing these skills at school-wide events and activities, staff supervision of students during critical periods in critical places, and using disciplinary encounters as teachable moments.

Findings related to the identification of facilitating factors are clear. Administrative support, staff commitment, communication, and school-based professional development are essential to the successful implementation of SWPBS; it is further evident from this study that certain facilitators have more relative impact on specific features of SWBPS than others. School-based personnel considering the

adoption, development, and implementation of such practices are wise to consider the condition of such factors prior to initiating a shift toward SWPBS.

Impeding Factors

In addition to quantifying the relative impact of identified facilitators to successful SWPBS implementation, this study also sought to understand its barriers. Like the study before it (Kincaid et al., 2007), this study found that faculty and staff buy-in, inconsistent implementation, communication, time, and community and family buy-in posed the biggest barriers to successful programs. One major difference between these findings and those of Kincaid and his colleagues relates to the use of data. Although participants in this study reported relatively low levels of implementation with regard to the use of data, the lack of data and/or its inconsistent use, did not emerge as a major barrier within the context of this study.

Additional differences between these findings and those of Kincaid et al. (2007), relate to rewards systems. Participants in this study did not perceive their school's rewards system as having a great impact on implementation in terms of their responses on the survey. Upon analysis however, this research revealed that rewards systems do, in fact, have a significant impact on team-based data-driven decision making. Perhaps not initially clear, the nature of effective rewards systems actually does require the consistent use of data in terms not only of monitoring the success of interventions but also with regard to the development of school-based teams with the ability to develop and evaluate the school's program. Simply put, rewards systems are meaningless if they are not consistently monitored for relevance and success.

Finally, a school district's local zero tolerance policy was found to have a negative relationship with team-based data-driven decision making. Specifically, if a school is held to a no-nonsense zero tolerance policy, perhaps it is futile to focus efforts on the elements of team-based data-driven decision making. The policy essentially makes the decisions; there is no leeway. On the other hand, given the absence of a zero tolerance policy, schools are able to consider the development of a school-wide program for preventing and correcting behavior problems. Specific outcomes may be measured for success (e.g., fewer reported incidents of fights on the school bus) and schools can partner with families to develop preventative practices and interventions aimed at keeping kids in school.

Although not exhaustive in nature, findings from this study related to facilitating and impeding factors support existing research and add to the growing body of knowledge surrounding the specific overarching features of SWPBS and the relative impact that identified facilitators and barriers have on its successful implementation. Certainly these findings, coupled with those of others, will prove useful to school personnel interested in beginning the SWPBS development process. Prior knowledge of factors that may facilitate or impede implementation allows practitioners to develop a stronger initial foundation on which to build successful programs.

Professional Development

The fourth and final research question addressed in this study sought to describe the types of professional development opportunities provided to school personnel responsible for the implementation of SWPBS. Professional development is

an integral component of successful SWPBS programs, most often characterized by a coaching infrastructure which provides initial and on-going opportunities for technical assistance. Results from this study are mixed.

A vast majority of participants reported offering school personnel more than one type of professional development opportunity, with nearly 86% of respondents indicating that SWPBS are covered in new teacher orientation. Because new teacher orientation programs generally include both district-wide and school-based programs, the fact that so many schools are including SWPBS information as part of those programs is encouraging in terms of its inclusion with other instructional and procedural information new teachers receive. The problem with including SWPBS as part of new teacher orientation programs, especially without providing on-going assistance, is that it may get lost among other topics; new teachers, whether new to the profession or new to a district, are inundated with information and SWPBS, as a system, is too important to the day-to-day operation of school to "cover" with other introductory matter.

One survey item dealt exclusively with staff development. Loaded as an element under the team-based data-driven decision making critical feature category, on-going staff development opportunities to address school goals such as developing positive student-family-teacher relationships, promoting positive behavior and self-discipline, and correcting problem behavior, was reported by participants as being somewhat in place ($M = 3.44$). Just over one-quarter of respondents indicated that on-going professional development opportunities, based on the needs of staff, are not being implemented at all or are being implemented very infrequently. Given the

importance of analyzing student data, setting goals for improvement, and reflecting on the effectiveness of identified approaches, technical assistance provided by state, district, or school-based coaches is a necessary component for the successful implementation of SWPBS. That less than half of this study's sample reported such opportunities is discouraging in terms of the types of professional development currently being provided to school personnel.

Several participants indicated professional development opportunities other than those identified on the survey instrument. Many of those responses (e.g., site-based staff development, school guidance program, staff discussions) seem to fall under the category of school-based study groups however, as several respondents identified these programs or activities separately, the definition or function of school-based study groups may not have been clear to some participants. Others identified specific commercial programs (e.g., Mandt, Olweus Bullying Prevention Program). Although such programs may be acceptable components of SWPBS, they do not, by themselves, constitute a system of support for students.

The Olweus program, for example, includes school-wide, classroom, and individual anti-bullying interventions (http://www.clemson.edu/olweus/program.html). The model is quite similar in structure to the three-tiered system of supports associated with SWPBS, but the Olweus program focuses specifically on bullying prevention. Certainly, it may be argued that establishing an anti-bullying program accompanied with a subsequent decrease in such behaviors creates a safer and more positive learning environment. SWPBS systems are intended, however, to be broader in terms of the types of

behaviors they aim to prevent. As a result, professional development opportunities related to SWPBS available to school personnel must be designed to include not only initial training, but on-going assistance provided by qualified professionals who are able to build the capacity of schools to successfully implement SWPBS within their unique settings.

Implications and Recommendations

By and large, this study determined that SWPBS are being implemented in Virginia. Although these results may not be generalized across the state, they do provide a starting point in terms of what schools claiming to implement SWPBS are actually doing. Further, three-quarters of schools identifying themselves as implementing SWPBS reported a decrease in disciplinary referrals. Additional study results corroborate previous research related to factors that facilitate or impede the successful implementation of SWPBS and help to paint a picture of the types of professional development opportunities made available to school personnel. Based on the findings of this descriptive study, implications for practice are made clear and recommendations for future research related to SWPBS emerge.

Implications for Practice

Several implications for practice arise as a result of this study and its findings. Because SWPBS are not limited to either the policy or practitioner level, it is important to consider implications within the context of both policy and schools. Perhaps most important to this discussion is recognizing that much of what needs to be done to facilitate a shift from reactive consequences to proactive prevention is already in place.

Policy level. As an initial matter, it cannot go without mention that the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act *requires* the consideration of positive behavioral intervention strategies for children with disabilities whose behavior impedes their own learning or the learning of others. Furthermore, the No Child Left Behind Act requires the use of research-based instructional strategies. What SWPBS systems aim to do is extend beyond the population of students with disabilities to entire school populations in response not only to the need for safer schools, but also to replace this nation's current over-reliance on exclusionary discipline practices that are not supported by empirical evidence of effectiveness. Although zero tolerance policies may give the appearance of a silver bullet in terms of minimizing violent and/or disruptive student behavior, such practices merely act as generic solutions, or band-aids, to the unique problems that arise when individual students present discipline problems.

Perhaps it is just this issue that encouraged President Obama to advocate for these programs when, as a United States Senator, he and Representative Phil Hare introduced the *Positive Behavior for Effective Schools Act* (H.R. 3407, S. 2111). Although not yet a part of the law, this bill would amend the Elementary and Secondary Schools Act (ESEA) by making PBS an allowable use of funds. Simply put, if we believe that behavior is learned, then it must be taught and SWPBS offer an empirically substantiated set of beliefs, policies, and practices intended to teach students self-discipline and pro-social behavior. Likewise, the effective and sustained implementation of SWPBS, "supports the twin goals of schooling for all children – academic achievement and social development," (Sprague & Walker, 2005). In short,

the successful implementation of SWPBS satisfies the requirements of both major laws currently governing education. In the future, it is the hope of this author that the both pieces of legislation merge and the *Positive Behavior for Effective Schools Act* becomes the law of the land with regard to addressing student behavior and discipline. Policy to this end would further insure a truly unified system for the education of all students, not just those with disabilities, those from culturally diverse backgrounds, low socio-economic status, or those who exhibit behavior difficulties.

School level. Results from this study provide a thorough description of the implementation status of SWPBS in selected schools across three regions in Virginia. One of the major implications for educational leaders with regard to these findings relates to the lack of consistency with regard to the development and support of a school-based team. Ideally, the development of a school-wide behavior support team should occur *before* SWPBS are implemented. Furthermore, an administrator should be an active member of that team; these findings suggest that is not the case and lack of administrator involvement, leadership, and support has been identified in the literature as one of the top ten school practices that contribute to the problems associated with antisocial behavior in school (Sprague & Walker, 2005). It is the hope of this researcher that these results prompt school-based administrators to refocus their commitment on SWPBS by ensuring not only that a team-based approach is developed but that they themselves function as integral members of that team.

An important consideration in terms of encouraging schools, and school-based leaders in particular, to develop teams is recognizing that, in reality, SWPBS teams may already exist in schools. Specifically, members of more commonly known teams

such as child study teams and student assistance teams, may function as SWPBS teams. Merely by either adding or identifying a coach or expert in PBS, a well-represented SWPBS team may be formed to address the unique needs of individual schools. Both child study and student assistance teams are generally well-trained and equipped to discuss specific students and to collect and monitor data associated with student progress or lack thereof. Utilizing such an existing framework is less daunting for newcomers to SWPBS and recognizing that we can use existing structures and resources make implementing SWPBS more feasible.

A second, yet major implication for practice based on these findings relates to family-school partnerships in terms of the development of SWPBS systems and communication with families regarding school-based expectations of behavior and the prevention of problems. Because student discipline continues to be among the top concerns of classroom teachers and school safety is a significant national priority, engaging families in the process of developing and evaluating SWPBS is of paramount importance. Families need to understand the rationale for SWPBS and partner with schools in order to develop meaningful programs that work within the unique context of specific schools and communities. Too often, parents are included once behavior has become a significant concern and the interaction is frequently contentious; partnering with families by including them as active partners early in the process is a fundamental and core value of SWPBS that demonstrates a commitment to collaboration and cooperation.

A third, and perhaps less obvious implication of this study, related to the implementation status of SWPBS, relates more specifically to the high percentage of

respondents who reported having crisis plans in place that are routinely rehearsed. Given recent incidents of school violence across the nation, schools must have high levels of implementation with regard to emergency procedures but they must also regularly rehearse those procedures so that in the event of a real emergency, school personnel, and students, know how to respond. Because this issue has been emphasized in the very recent past, it is no surprise that nearly 97% of respondents indicated that these elements are fully or mostly in place in their schools. Embedding crisis planning within the system of SWPBS reminds implementers that emergency preparedness is, in fact, a preventative strategy intended to promote safer schools.

Implications arising from the results obtained from this study also support recent findings related to identified facilitators and barriers to successful implementation. Specifically, in order to support SWPBS efforts, certain factors must be in place. As discussed in previous sections, administrative support is a necessary factor in order for sustained implementation efforts to succeed. Leadership is critical in order to obtain staff commitment, also identified as a facilitating factor. Those planning to initiate SWPBS development and implementation are wise to recognize the importance of faculty and staff buy-in both in terms of its influence as a facilitator and, conversely, as a potential barrier. Ensuring that practitioners recognize SWPBS implementation as a systems approach to student behavior and discipline and not simply an "add-on" or one-shot type of program is vital. SWPBS must become "the way things are done" thereby becoming embedded within the culture of school.

Other implications associated with facilitating and impeding factors have to do with recognizing that systems change such as that associated with SWPBS

requires time and communication. Although certain techniques associated with SWPBS (e.g., explicitly teaching rules, rewards systems, etc.) may be adopted and "tried on," implementing an embedded set of core beliefs and practices requires time for planning, monitoring, analyzing, evaluating, and adjusting. Embarking on such efforts without support from experts such as state or district-level coaches may prove both frustrating and fruitless. Furthermore, it is highly recommended that, as a part of SWPBS implementation, school-based leaders adopt or design program evaluation tools which enable them to measure their progress toward the goals of SWPBS. Expert assistance is one mechanism by which this important component may be addressed.

Major implications related to professional development are reinforced based on this study's findings. Although participants in this study did not report state-level support as a facilitating factor, it should be noted that states like Virginia, which provide comprehensive initial training and on-going technical assistance, are more the rule than the exception. As described by Blonigen and his colleagues (2008), more than 30 states are providing leadership for implementation. Schools interested in adopting and implementing SWPBS need to consider state-level support; schools with high levels of implementation fidelity and decreased disciplinary problems began with assistance from state leadership teams (Barrett, Bradshaw, & Lewis-Palmer, 2008; Mass-Galloway, Panyan, Smith, & Wessendorf, 2008; Muscott, Mann, & LeBrun, 2008). Accepting assistance from state-level leadership teams ensures the development of local coaches thereby increasing the types and frequency of on-going technical assistance.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study provided descriptive information related to the implementation status of SWPBS in selected schools from three targeted regions of Virginia. With regard to this study's findings, that SWPBS are being implemented in these three regions, additional research should focus on investigating the quality of SWPBS initiatives and programs based on the core features of SWPBS including how consistent programs are with literature-based recommendations. Extending research beyond garnering implementation status would allow professionals to gain insight not only into *what* features are being implemented but *how* they are being implemented and the specific data-based results of that implementation. One such manner by which implementation quality may be ascertained would be to collect responses from multiple implementers (e.g., teachers, coaches) per site, including family members and students, as appropriate, and triangulating collected data in order to obtain a quality score. Expanding upon the research foci of this study and collecting data related to implementation quality would further support the case for data-based decision making with regard to implementation efforts.

Additional results from this study also provided information related to factors that facilitate and those that impede successful implementation. Specifically, these findings support previous findings addressing similar issues. Finally, it provided information related to the types of SWPBS professional development available to school personnel. Based on the sample size, the specificity of the regions and school districts included in the sample, and the novelty of the survey instrument, additional research is suggested.

Participants in this study included elementary and middle school principals or their designees. An obvious extension of this research would be not only to include high schools, but also to conduct further analysis based on school level (i.e., elementary, middle and high) and school size. Additionally, it would be useful to expand the targeted area included in this study to the entire state of Virginia. Because Virginia does provide state-level technical assistance and reportedly, over 100 schools from 33 districts are receiving support, it would be beneficial to the field to ascertain how schools are implementing SWPBS, including facilitators and barriers impacting the success of implementation. Additional information may be obtained by comparing school level and implementation status, school size and implementation status, and finally comparing schools receiving state-level support to schools implementing SWPBS that are not receiving state support.

Of particular importance to a discussion of future research considerations relates directly to the notion of shared meaning between and among participants with regard to what SWPBS encompass. Although within the context of this study, the author attempted to clarify via a note on the cover page of the survey instrument that school-wide discipline and positive behavior support programs could refer to any number of positive behavior or school-wide discipline programs, it is unclear whether or not respondents' perceptions of SWPBS or general knowledge of such systems of support were understood. Further, it is unclear whether or not shared meaning of SWPBS exists among practitioners. Ensuring that study participants share meaning in terms of what SWPBS refer to is critical prior to embarking on additional research opportunities.

One final issue impacting the results of the current study related to the size of the sample. Although 600 schools were invited to participate, the return rate was just under one-quarter of those contacted. Clearly, more participation would make a greater contribution to the field. It should be mentioned that a significant difficulty encountered during the course of this investigation was the willingness of school districts to allow the research to occur. In order to gain a broader picture of what is happening in schools with regard to the implementation of SWPBS, school districts must be willing to participate in research, in general. Students and other researchers are forced to follow cumbersome procedures in order to gain permission to conduct studies; this practice, although understandable in terms of protecting school-based personnel from a myriad of surveys and interviews, makes conducting research quite difficult. Future researchers interested in a broader and more comprehensive scope of participants should be aware of local policies and procedures with regard to obtaining permission to conduct studies in local school districts.

Finally, one preliminary but major part of this study was to develop a reliable and validated instrument for measuring the implementation status of SWPBS. Having achieved that goal and given the results of the principal component analyses completed for this investigation, it may be wise to submit the survey instrument to a larger sample in order to achieve an even greater degree of statistical power. Although the second principal component analysis in this study revealed the same five overarching critical feature categories of SWPBS, differences obtained regarding how individual elements loaded under specific categories may be further clarified through additional analysis with a larger sample.

Closing Comments

"We do not tolerate discipline problems. They are addressed and eliminated immediately."

This comment, written by a participant in this study, epitomizes the very reason school-wide positive behavioral interventions and supports are so worthwhile for the sake of our students. Assume for a moment that this comment referred to any other skill deficit; regardless of a student's ability or disability, racial or cultural background, such intolerance with regard to academic learning difficulties would be viewed as an affront to the very reason most of us entered the field of education in the first place. Within the larger context of school, general concerns related to school safety and the desire to "eliminate" school discipline problems are reasonable. What must be understood however, is that behavior, like any other skill, is learned and can therefore, be taught.

Schools are obligated not solely to teach academic skills to students but also to support and reinforce the development of social skills. SWPBS provide a comprehensive system of support for *all* students that de-emphasize questionable reactionary strategies and emphasize capitalizing on student strengths by explicitly teaching behavioral expectations, effectively using data to make decisions, and creating a school climate characterized by respect, responsibility, and cooperation. Evidence suggests SWPBS result in positive outcomes for students, teachers, and schools, in general. School-based leaders must be willing to invest in themselves, in their schools, and in their students, and move in the direction of what works.

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Appendix A

Delaware PBS Implementation Self-Assessment (ISA)

Purpose of the Survey

This survey is used by school staff for initial and annual assessment of effective behavior support systems in their school. The survey examines the status and need for improvement of behavior support systems at both the universal/school-wide (classroom and non-classroom) level, and the targeted/intensive level.

Survey results are summarized and used for a variety of purposes including:

1. annual action planning
2. internal decision making
3. assessment of change over time

History of the Survey

The ISA was developed as a means of internal assessment and action planning for individual school-based PBS teams. Its response format (including directions and interpretation) is adapted from the Effective Behavior Support Self-Assessment Survey (EBS) developed by George Sugai and his colleagues at the University of Oregon. In addition, approximately 25% of the items on the ISA were adapted from items on the EBS. The majority of items, however, were developed by the Delaware state team to assess objectives specific to the goals of Delaware's PBS initiative.

Conducting the Survey

Who completes the survey?

Initially, the entire staff in a school completes the survey. In subsequent years and as an on-going assessment and planning tool, the survey can be completed in several ways:

- All staff at a staff meeting
- Individuals from a representative group
- Team member-led focus group

When and how often should the survey be completed?

Because survey results are used for decision making and designing an annual action plan in the area for effective behavior support, most schools have staff complete the survey at the end or the beginning of the school year.

How is the survey completed?

1. Respondents complete the survey independently. Recommend giving the school and

Kathleen Minke and George Bear
University of Delaware
Delaware Positive Behavior Support Project
Spring 2004

classroom sections only to the first time respondents to complete the survey. At a later date the targeted and intensive intervention sections can be completed separately. Survey should be conducted annually to track changes.

2. Ask respondents to schedule 10 – 15 minutes to complete the survey.

3. Ask respondents to base their ratings on their individual experiences in the school and their knowledge of school practices.

4. Each item is marked two times. First, on the left hand side of the page, respondents evaluate the status of each system feature and mark with an X whether they judge the element to be *in place, partially in place or not in place*.

5. Next, for each element marked *partially in place or not in place*, respondents rate the priority for improvement of this element by placing an X in the box for *high, medium, or low* priority.

Summarizing the Results from the survey

The results from the survey are used to (a) determine the status of PBS in a school and (b) guide the development of an action plan for improving PBS.

Three basic phases are involved: (a) summarize the results, (b) analyze and prioritize the results, and (c) develop the action plan.

Phase 1: Summarize the results

The objective of this phase is to produce a display that summarizes the overall response of school staff for each system on (a) status of PBS features and (b) improvement priorities.

Step 1a. Summarize survey results on a blank survey by tallying all individual responses for each of the possible six choices as illustrated in example 1a.

Example 1a.

Current Status			Feature	Priority for Improvement		
In Place	Partial in Place	Not in Place	Developing Positive Behavior and Self-Discipline	High	Med	Low
√√√√√ √√	√√√√√ √	√√√√	1. A small number (e.g. 3-5) of positively & clearly stated student expectations or rules are defined and communicated to all students and their families.	√√√√	√√√√	√√√√√ √√

Kathleen Minke and George Bear
University of Delaware
Delaware Positive Behavior Support Project
Spring 2004

Step 1b. Total the number of responses by all staff for each of the six possible choices. As illustrated in example 1b.

Example 1b.

Current Status			Feature	Priority for Improvement		
In Place	Partial in Place	Not in Place	Developing Positive Behavior and Self-Discipline	High	Med	Low
√√√√√ √√√ 9	√√√√√ √ 7	√√√√ 4	1. A small number (e.g. 3-5) of positively & clearly stated expectations or rules are defined and communicated to all students and their families.	√√√√ 4	√√√√ 4	√√√√√ √√√ 10
√√ 2	√√√√√ 6	√√√√√ √√√√√ 12	2. Expected behaviors are taught directly (e.g., verbal instruction and frequent reinforcement) and indirectly (e.g., modeling, high expectations) .	√√√√√ √√√√√ 12	√√√√ 4	√√√√√ 6
√√√√√ √ 7	√√√√√ √√√ 9	√√√ 3	3. Expected and prosocial behaviors are reinforced, and linked to the long-term development of intrinsic motivation and self-discipline.	√√√√√ √√√√√ 12	√√√√√ √√ 8	
√√√√√ √ 7	√√√√√ √√√√ 11	√√√ 3	4. Specific social and emotional competencies, including social problem solving, conflict resolution, and empathy, are taught in all classrooms (either through a specific character education or social and emotional learning curriculum or through the integration of such competencies in the regular curriculum).	√√√√√ √√√ 9	√√√√√ √ 7	√√√√ 4
	√√√√√ √√ 8	√√√√√ √√√ 9	5. Positive behaviors are taught and reinforced at the school-wide level, such as in assemblies, school-wide reward systems, peer-mediation programs, student government, or service learning activities.	√√√√√ √√√√ 11	√√√ 3	

Kathleen Minke and George Bear
University of Delaware
Delaware Positive Behavior Support Project
Spring 2004

Step 1c. For each system area A through J (e.g., A = "Developing Positive Behavior and Self-Discipline," B = "Support Systems for School-wide Prevention and Correction of Behavior Problems") calculate a total summary by counting the total number of responses for a column (e.g., In place: 9 + 2 + ...). Then create a percentage by dividing that number by the total number of responses for the row (e.g., In place + Partial + Not in place) as illustrated in example 1c.

Example 1c.

Current Status			Feature	Priority for Improvement		
In Place	Partial in Place	Not in Place	Developing Positive Behavior and Self-Discipline	High	Med	Low
√√√√√ √√ 9	√√√√√ √ 7	√√√ 4	1. A small number (e.g. 3-5) of positively & clearly stated expectations or rules are defined and communicated to all students and their families.	√√√ 4	√√√ 4	√√√√√ √√ 10
√√ 2	√√√√√ 6	√√√√√ √√√√ 12	2. Expected behaviors are taught directly (e.g., verbal instruction and frequent reinforcement) and indirectly (e.g., modeling, high expectations) .	√√√√√ √√√√ 12	√√√ 4	√√√√√ 6
√√√√√ √ 7	√√√√√ √√ 9	√√ 3	3. Expected and prosocial behaviors are reinforced, and linked to the long-term development of intrinsic motivation and self-discipline.	√√√√√ √√√√ 12	√√√√√ √√ 8	
√√√√√ √ 7	√√√√√ √√√√ 11	√√ 3	4. Specific social and emotional competencies, including social problem solving, conflict resolution, and empathy, are taught in all classrooms (either through a specific character education or social and emotional learning curriculum or through the integration of such competencies in the regular curriculum).	√√√√√ √√ 9	√√√√√ √ 7	√√√ 4
	√√√√√ √√ 8	√√√√√ √√ 9	5. Positive behaviors are taught and reinforced at the school-wide level, such as in assemblies, school-wide reward systems, peer-mediation programs, student government, or service learning activities.	√√√√√ √√√√ 11	√√√ 3	

25 + 41 + 28 = 94

25/94 = 27%
41/94 = 44%
28/94 = 30%

94 = 48 + 26 + 20

48/94 = 51%
26/94 = 28%
20/94 = 21%

Complete calculations in the same manner for right side (priority for improvement).

Repeat these calculations for all sections.

Completing Phase 1 provides a general summary for the current status and priority for improvement ratings for each of the ten system areas. For further summary and analysis, follow Phase 2 and Phase 3 activities.

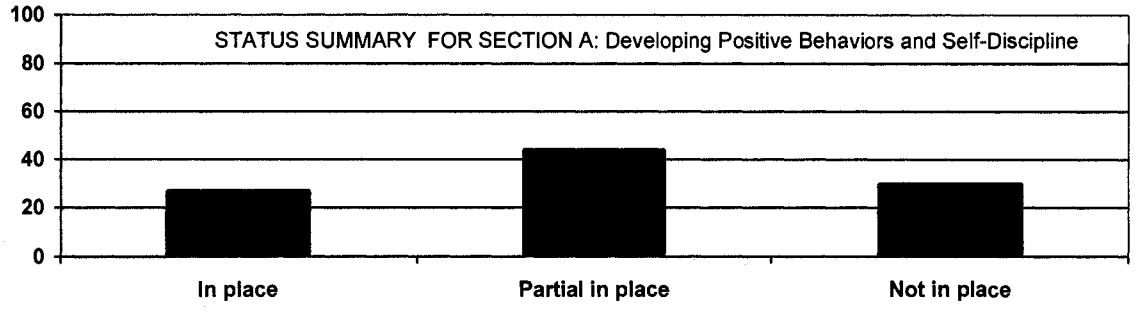
Kathleen Minke and George Bear
University of Delaware
Delaware Positive Behavior Support Project
Spring 2004

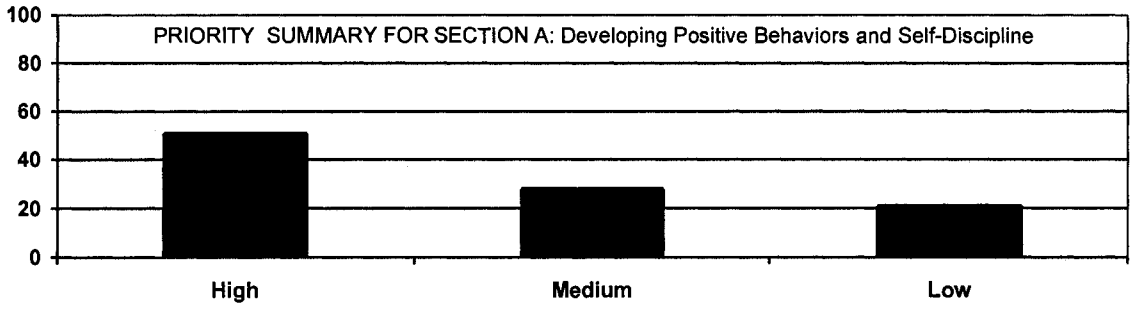
Phase 2: Analyze and Prioritize the Results

The objective of this phase is for teams to narrow the focus of Action Plan activities. Teams also may want to include other data or information (e.g., office discipline referrals, behavior incident reports, attendance) to refine their decisions.

Create bar graphs showing total item summary percentages developed in Step 1c above. Complete the Self- Assessment Summary by graphing the current status and priority for improvement for each of the ten system areas. Example 2a shows the graph for the data presented and summarized in example 1c.

Example 2a.





Phase 3: Use the survey summary information to develop the annual action plan.

The objective of this phase is to develop an action plan for meeting the school improvement goal that addresses positive behavior support. Multiple data sources will be integrated when developing the action plan. The survey Action Planning page is a useful tool when developing the annual action plan.

Step 1. Using the survey tally pages, decide on which features the team will focus, and develop activities to address the improvement of those features. Develop activities that fit the needs of your school.

Step 2. After developing the activities relevant to your needs, break them down into the smaller tasks/task components.

Kathleen Minke and George Bear
University of Delaware
Delaware Positive Behavior Support Project
Spring 2004

Step 3. As a team, decide who will be responsible for ensuring the completion of the component/activity, and choose a target date for its completion.

Kathleen Minke and George Bear
University of Delaware
Delaware Positive Behavior Support Project
Spring 2004

Delaware PBS Implementation Self Assessment (ISA)

Name of school _____ Date _____

Person Completing the Survey:

· Administrator	· Special Educator	· Parent/Family member
· General Educator	· Counselor	· School Psychologist
· Educational/Teacher Assistant	· Community member	· Other _____

1. Complete the survey independently.
2. Base your rating on your individual experiences in the school and your knowledge of school practices.
3. Mark (i.e., "√" or "X") on the left side of the page for current status and the right side of the page for the priority level for improvement for each item:
    a. "What is the current status of this feature (i.e. *in place, partially in place, not in place*)?"
    b. For those features rated as partially in place or not in place, "What is the priority for improvement for this feature (i.e., *high, medium, low*)?"
4. Return your completed survey to: _____ by _____.

Kathleen Minke and George Bear
University of Delaware
Delaware Positive Behavior Support Project
Spring 2004

Delaware PBS Implementation Self-Assessment (ISA)
SCHOOL-WIDE SYSTEMS (INCLUDES CLASSROOM AND NONCLASSROOM)

Current Status			Feature	Priority for Improvement		
In Place	Partially in Place	Not in Place	**A: Developing Positive Behavior and Self-Discipline**	High	Medium	Low
			1. A small number (e.g. 3-5) of positively & clearly stated expectations or rules are defined and communicated to all students and their families.			
			2. Expected behaviors are taught directly (e.g., verbal instruction and frequent reinforcement) and indirectly (e.g., modeling, high expectations).			
			3. Expected and prosocial behaviors are reinforced and linked to the long-term development of intrinsic motivation and self-discipline.			
			4. Specific social and emotional competencies, including social problem solving, conflict resolution, and empathy, are taught in all classrooms (either through a specific character education or social and emotional learning curriculum or through the integration of such competencies in the regular curriculum).			
			5. Positive behaviors are taught and reinforced at the school-wide level, such as in assemblies, school-wide reward systems, peer-mediation programs, student government, or service learning activities.			
			B: Support Systems for School-wide Prevention and Correction of Behavior Problems			
			1. A school-wide behavior support team develops, monitors, and evaluates the school-wide program for preventing and correcting behavior problems.			
			2. An intervention team provides behavior support planning and problem solving at the individual student and classroom levels.			
			3. A school administrator is an active participant on the above teams.			
			4. The school-wide behavior support team has an adequate budget for developing and implementing program activities, including (a) purchasing rewards, (b) staff planning and development, and (c) program evaluation.			
			5. Staff receives regular (monthly/quarterly) feedback on patterns of problem behavior throughout the school.			
			6. Staff receives at least annual feedback on teacher, student, and family perceptions of school climate.			
			7. All staff are involved directly and/or indirectly in school-wide interventions that focus on preventing behavior problems and promoting positive behavior and self-discipline.			
			8. Staff participate, as needed, in ongoing in-service training to address school goals related to developing positive student-teacher-family relationships, promoting positive behavior and self-discipline, and correcting problem behavior.			

Kathleen Minke and George Bear
University of Delaware
Delaware Positive Behavior Support Project
Spring 2004

Format adapted, with permission, from
EBS Self-Assessment Survey version 1.5, 2002

Educational and Community Supports, University of Oregon

			9. Families are actively involved in the development and evaluation of the school-wide plan for preventing behavior problems and promoting positive behavior and self-discipline (e.g., through parent representation on the team; through periodic surveys of families).			
			10. Regular communication occurs between the school-wide behavioral support and intervention teams. Their work is coordinated with any additional academic support teams operating in the building.			
Current Status			Feature	Priority for Improvement		
In Place	Partially in Place	Not in Place	**C: Preventing Behavior Problems with School-wide Policies, Practices, and Procedures**	High	Medium	Low
			1. The physical environment of school is attractive and conducive to teaching and learning.			
			2. The physical environment of the school is welcoming to parents and other visitors (e.g., it is easy to find the office, mission statement is posted in languages represented in the school, visitors are greeted promptly and warmly).			
			3. Supervision and monitoring of students are routinely provided, especially during critical periods (while entering and leaving school) and in critical places (hallways, stairways, playground).			
			4. Physical/architectural features and scheduling of student movement are modified in order to limit (a) unsupervised settings, (b) unclear traffic patterns, and (c) inappropriate access to and exit from school grounds.			
			5. Procedures are in place to address emergency/ dangerous situations. All staff are aware of these procedures.			
			6. School-wide policies, practices, and procedures for preventing and correcting behavior problems are communicated effectively to all families, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.			
			7. In general, the school has created and maintains a positive school climate in which all students are valued and respected and in which deliberate, systematic efforts are made to establish norms of caring, responsibility, and respect.			
			D: Correcting Common Behavior Problems			
			1. The school's written disciplinary policies contain specific rules and consequences that are clear, fair, and reasonable.			
			2. Teachers and staff recognize which behavior problems are best handled in the classroom and not the office, and respond accordingly and consistently.			

Kathleen Minke and George Bear
University of Delaware
Delaware Positive Behavior Support Project
Spring 2004

			3. Corrective practices are non-discriminatory; disproportionate and unfair use of discipline practices, especially suspension and expulsion, are closely monitored across racial and cultural groups.			
			4. Disciplinary encounters are used as opportunities to help students develop self-discipline, and not simply as occasions to punish their behavior.			
			5. Teachers and staff recognize, and are responsive to, the limitations and negative effects of punishment. When used, punishment is always combined with more positive methods for teaching replacement behaviors.			
			6. The above (1-5) practices are applied to both classroom and non-classroom settings.			
Current Status			Feature	Priority for Improvement		
In Place	Partially in Place	Not in Place	**E: Preventing Behavior Problems with Effective Classroom Management**	High	Medium	Low
			1. Instruction and curriculum materials are developmentally appropriate and are matched or adapted to the student's skills and abilities such that students experience high rates of academic success.			
			2. Classroom teachers routinely use teaching methods that enhance student motivation and learning, such as a variety of instructional methods and activities, quick pacing of instruction, appropriate repetition and practice, and frequent opportunities to respond.			
			3. Teachers demonstrate warmth, respect, and caring toward all students, and a general attitude that all students can succeed both academically and socially.			
			4. Students are included in the decision-making processes, where appropriate. For example, class meetings are used to discuss rules, consequences, behavior problems, etc.			
			5. Teachers frequently monitor student behavior and respond immediately to signs of misbehavior.			
			6. Teachers establish and maintain close bi-directional communication with families and use multiple methods to garner their support (e.g., parents are informed frequently about their children's positive behavior and achievements; parents are asked for their views about their children's learning; family-school conferences are used routinely).			
			7. Classrooms are physically attractive and conducive to teaching and learning.			
			8. Procedures and routines are directly taught (e.g., the orderly transition between instructional and non-instructional activities, the use of the bathroom, etc.).			

Kathleen Minke and George Bear
University of Delaware
Delaware Positive Behavior Support Project
Spring 2004

TARGETED AND INTENSIVE INTERVENTION SYSTEMS

Current Status			Feature	Priority for Improvement		
In Place	Partially in Place	Not in Place	***Targeted Interventions*** *are defined as those applied to individual or small groups of students who require supports beyond universal methods for success. The behavior support team uses informal problem-solving consultation to support the student(s); additional team members from the family and community are included as needed.* ***Intensive interventions*** *are defined as specific supports for students who engage in chronic or serious problem behaviors (1%-7% of enrollment). The behavior support team uses formal FBA and involves members from the family, community, and other agencies in planning and evaluating interventions.*	High	Medium	Low
			F: Early Identification and Remediation of Difficulties			
			1. Students who require additional support in developing social-emotional competencies or academic skills are routinely identified.			
			2. Additional supports, as needed, are devoted to the remediation of problems when they first become apparent.			
			3. Students are provided interventions and supports through in-school or community resources as needed (e.g., social skills training, social problem-solving training, anger management, academic tutoring, group counseling).			
			4. Each student's response to interventions is routinely evaluated to determine if more intensive assessment and intervention is needed.			
			G: Identification and Intervention Planning			
			1. Data are examined regularly to identify students with chronic or serious problem behaviors (including students who do not respond to targeted interventions).			
			2. A simple process exists for teachers and families to request assistance.			
			3. The behavior support team or a designated team member promptly provides problem solving consultation to teachers or parents requesting assistance for students with chronic or serious behavior problems (within 2 working days of the referral).			
			4. Members of the behavioral support team, with adequate training and skills, conduct functional behavioral assessments and provide behavioral interventions as needed.			
			5. The behavior support team is provided with sufficient time and resources to conduct in-depth FBAs and monitor intensive interventions for students with chronic or severe behavior problems, as needed.			

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University of Delaware
Delaware Positive Behavior Support Project
Spring 2004

			6. Problem-solving meetings addressing students' severe or chronic behavior problems are conducted collaboratively (i.e., attention is given to developing trusting relationships, respecting all viewpoints, using conflict constructively, blocking blame, building on existing strengths, etc.).			
			7. Intervention planning routinely involves assessment of the individuals' unique strengths, gifts, and abilities.			
Current Status			Feature	Priority for Improvement		
In Place	Partial in Place	Not in Place	**H: Functional Behavior Assessments**	High	Medium	Low
			1. Information is routinely gathered about when, where, and under what conditions problem behaviors typically occur.			
			2. Information is routinely gathered about when, where, and under what conditions problem behaviors typically do NOT occur.			
			3. Information is routinely gathered that helps to determine the purpose, or function, of the behavior (e.g., to gain attention/rewards, avoid punishment). Information is both specific and broad-based, including school, home, behavioral, cognitive, and emotional factors.			
			4. Behaviors of concern are routinely defined in objective, measurable terms.			
			5. Multiple measures and multiple sources are used to gather information (including the review of records; direct observations; parent, student, and teacher interviews and ratings).			
			6. Based on the information gathered, testable hypotheses are generated about the causes of the behavior (e.g., John fights during reading time because the material is too difficult for him OR John fights during reading time because the teacher's attention is often on other students).			
			7. The information gathered and hypotheses generated are directly relevant to the development of interventions.			
			I: Intervention Quality			
			1. Formal opportunities are available, as needed, for teachers to receive training on developing and implementing high quality interventions for students with chronic or severe behavior problems.			
			2. Interventions (targeted and intensive) are monitored & adjusted as needed to support student success.			
			3. The interventions used are based in current research and target a wide range of factors that influence behavior.			

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Delaware Positive Behavior Support Project
Spring 2004

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EBS Self-Assessment Survey version 1.5, 2002

Educational and Community Supports, University of Oregon

			4. Interventions are designed to both decrease undesirable behaviors and to teach replacement behaviors.			
			5. Interventions focus on the antecedents of problem behavior and emphasize the teaching of replacement behaviors. Antecedents receive at least as much attention as consequences.			
			6. When consequences are used, they are fair, commensurate with the offense, and consistently applied.			
			7. The success of the intervention is systematically monitored using multiple methods.			
			8. Both specific (e.g., reduced fighting frequency) and broad (e.g., promotion to next grade) outcomes are measured in judging success.			
Current Status			Feature	Priority for Improvement		
In Place	Partially in Place	Not in Place	**J: School/Family/Community Collaboration**	High	Medium	Low
			1. Significant family members are routinely involved when planning intensive individual interventions for students with chronic or serious behavior problems.			
			2. Representatives from community agencies and other support services are routinely involved when planning intensive individual interventions for students with chronic or serious behavior problems.			
			3. Regular communication occurs regarding the implementation and evaluation of targeted and intensive interventions among family, school, and community resources. Academic and behavioral supports provided within and outside the school are coordinated.			
			4. Families are supported in exercising final decision-making power about participating in recommended services.			
			5. Sufficient time is provided for face-to-face and phone contacts with families.			
			6. Educators possess the communication skills needed to effectively involve families in problem-solving processes, especially in situations in which the family is considered "difficult" or "uninvolved."			
			7. Inter-agency agreements that help provide comprehensive supports and services are in place.			

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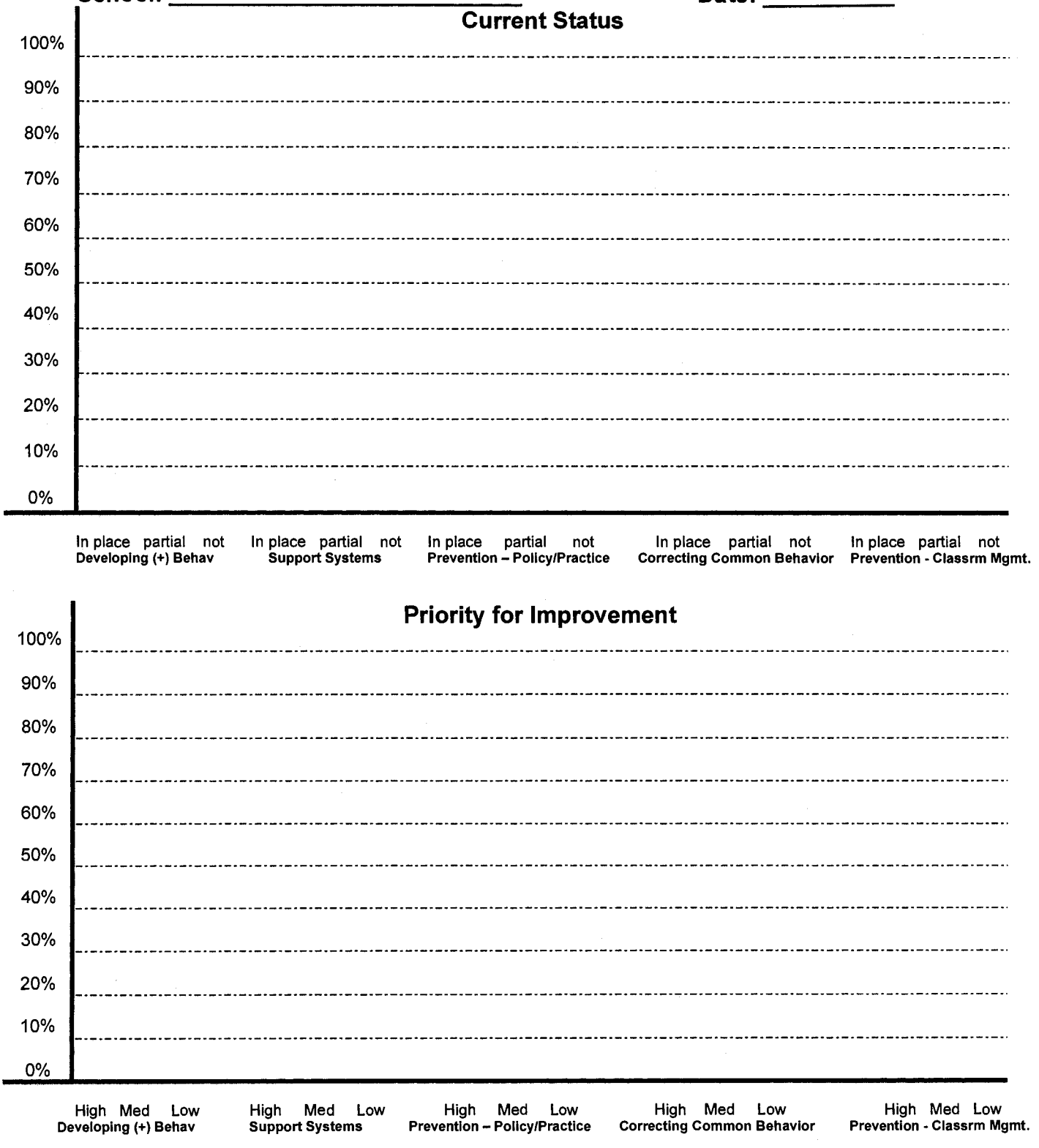
University of Delaware
Delaware Positive Behavior Support Project
Spring 2004

Delaware PBS Implementation Self Assessment Summary Graph
School-wide Intervention Systems

School: _____ **Date:** _____



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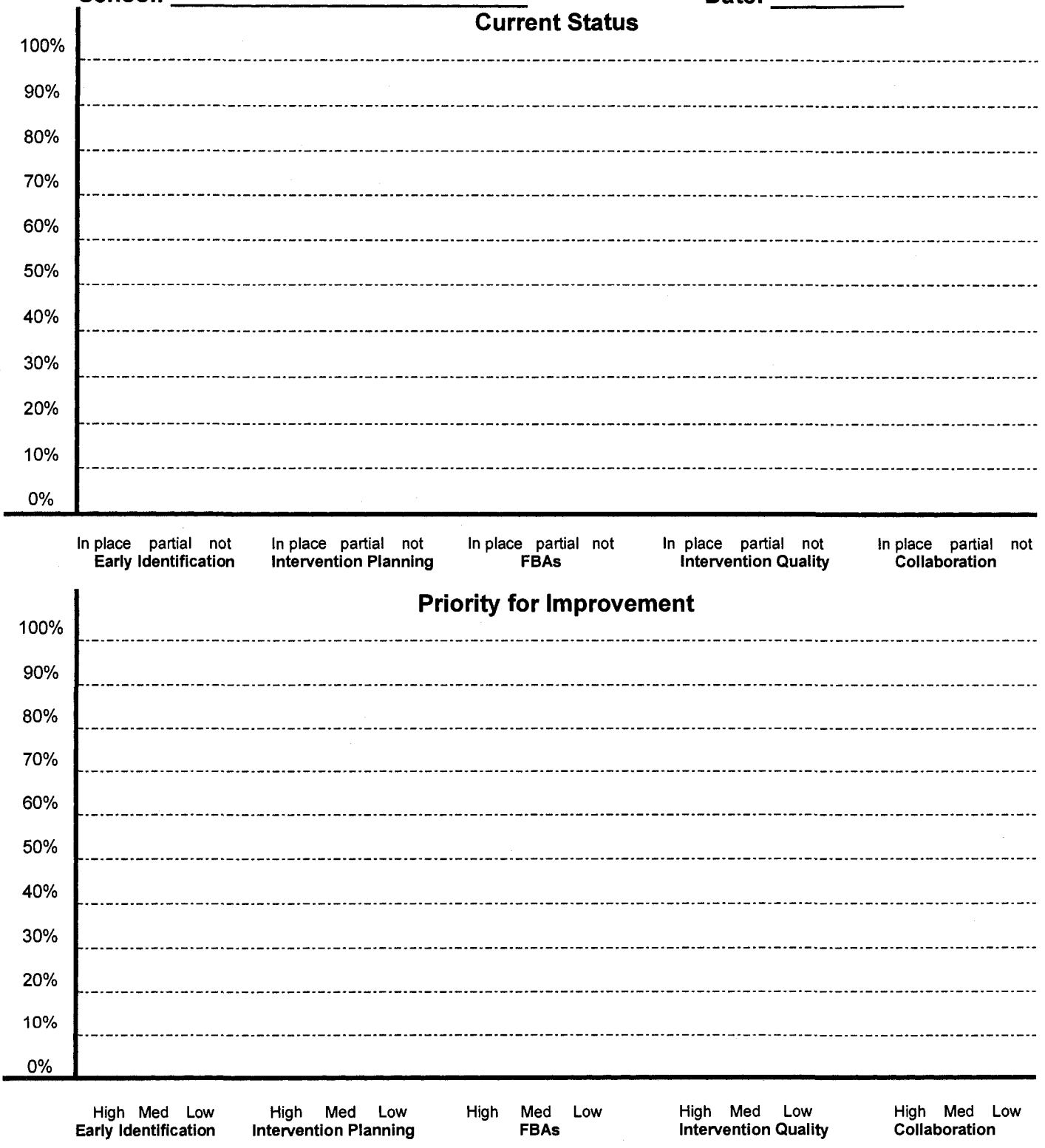
Spring 2004

Delaware PBS Implementation Self Assessment Summary Graph
Targeted and Intensive Intervention Systems

School: _____ **Date:** _____



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Spring 2004

Appendix B

School-wide Positive Behavior Support Programs Implementation Survey

DIRECTIONS: For each item below, please indicate the degree to which school-wide positive behavior support systems are in place in your school.

FEATURE	CURRENT STATUS					
	Not In Place					In Place
1. A small number (i.e., 3-5) of positively & clearly stated expectations or rules are defined and communicated to all students and their families.	0	1	2	3	4	5
2. Expected behaviors are taught directly (i.e., verbal instruction and frequent reinforcement) and indirectly (i.e., modeling, high expectations).	0	1	2	3	4	5
3. Positive behaviors are taught and reinforced at the school-wide level, such as in assemblies, school-wide reward systems, peer-mediation programs, student government or service learning activities.	0	1	2	3	4	5
4. A school-wide behavior support team develops, monitors, and evaluates the school-wide program for preventing and correcting behavior problems.	0	1	2	3	4	5
5. A school administrator is an active participant on the school-wide behavior support team.	0	1	2	3	4	5
6. All staff are directly and/or indirectly involved in school-wide interventions that focus on preventing behavior problems and promoting positive behavior and self-discipline.	0	1	2	3	4	5
7. Staff participate, as needed, in on-going professional development opportunities to address school goals related to developing positive student-teacher-family relationships, promoting positive behavior, and self-discipline, and correcting problem behavior.	0	1	2	3	4	5
8. Families are actively involved in the development and evaluation of the school-wide program for preventing behavior problems.	0	1	2	3	4	5
9. The physical environment, including classrooms, is attractive and conducive to teaching and learning.	0	1	2	3	4	5
10. Supervision and monitoring of students are routinely provided, especially during critical periods (entering and leaving school) and critical places (hallways, stairways, playground).	0	1	2	3	4	5
11. Procedures are in place to address emergency/dangerous situations.	0	1	2	3	4	5
12. All staff are aware of emergency procedures and rehearse them periodically.	0	1	2	3	4	5
13. School-wide policies and procedures for preventing and correcting behavior problems are communicated effectively to all families, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.	0	1	2	3	4	5
14. The school's written disciplinary practices contain specific rules and consequences that are clear, fair, and reasonable.	0	1	2	3	4	5
15. All staff recognize which behavior problems are best handled in the classroom and not in the office, and respond accordingly and consistently.	0	1	2	3	4	5
16. Corrective practices are non-discriminatory and exclusionary practices (suspension and expulsion) are closely monitored across racial and cultural groups.	0	1	2	3	4	5
17. Disciplinary encounters are used as opportunities to help students develop self-discipline, not simply as occasions to punish behavior.	0	1	2	3	4	5
18. All staff recognize, and are responsive to, the limitations and negative effects of punishment.	0	1	2	3	4	5

FEATURE	CURRENT STATUS					
	Not In Place					In Place
19. When used, punishment is combined with more positive methods for teaching replacement behaviors.	0	1	2	3	4	5
20. Instruction and curriculum materials are developmentally appropriate and are matched or adapted to the student's skills and abilities.	0	1	2	3	4	5
21. Students experience high rates of academic success.	0	1	2	3	4	5
22. Teachers routinely use evidence-based teaching methods that enhance student motivation and learning.	0	1	2	3	4	5
23. Teachers demonstrate warmth, respect, and caring toward all students, and a general attitude that all students can succeed both academically and socially.	0	1	2	3	4	5
24. Procedures and routines are directly taught (e.g., transition between activities/classes, use of the bathroom, etc.).	0	1	2	3	4	5
25. Teachers frequently monitor student behavior and respond immediately to signs of misbehavior.	0	1	2	3	4	5
26. Teachers establish and maintain close bi-directional communication with families and use multiple methods to garner their support (e.g., parents are informed frequently of their student's positive accomplishments, family-school conferences are used routinely).	0	1	2	3	4	5
27. Students who require additional support in developing academic or social-emotional competencies are routinely identified.	0	1	2	3	4	5
28. Students are provided interventions and supports through in-school or community resources as needed (e.g., social skills instruction, anger management, tutoring, counseling).	0	1	2	3	4	5
29. Individual student's responses to interventions are routinely evaluated to determine if more intensive assessment and intervention are needed.	0	1	2	3	4	5
30. Data are examined regularly to identify students with chronic or serious problem behaviors.	0	1	2	3	4	5
31. A simple process exists for teachers and families to request assistance regarding student behavior.	0	1	2	3	4	5
32. The behavior support team or designated team member promptly provides problem-solving consultation to teacher or parents, including conducting a functional behavior assessment, when needed or required.	0	1	2	3	4	5
33. Interventions used are based in current research and are designed to both decrease undesirable behaviors and to teach replacement behaviors.	0	1	2	3	4	5
34. Data is routinely collected and analyzed in order to make decisions regarding interventions, needs, and successes.	0	1	2	3	4	5
35. When consequences are used, they are fair, commensurate with the offense, and consistently applied.	0	1	2	3	4	5
36. The success of interventions is systematically monitored using multiple methods.	0	1	2	3	4	5
37. Both specific (e.g. reduced fighting frequency) and broad (e.g., promotion to the next grade) outcomes are measured in judging success.	0	1	2	3	4	5

FEATURE	CURRENT STATUS					
	Not in Place					In Place
8. Families are actively involved in the development and evaluation of the school-wide program for preventing behavior problems.	0	1	2	3	4	5
❑ Keep ❑ Delete FEEDBACK:						
9. The physical environment, including classrooms, is attractive and conducive to teaching and learning.	0	1	2	3	4	5
❑ Keep ❑ Delete FEEDBACK:						
10. Supervision and monitoring of students are routinely provided, especially during critical periods (entering and leaving school) and critical places (hallways, stairways, playground).	0	1	2	3	4	5
❑ Keep ❑ Delete FEEDBACK:						
11. Procedures are in place to address emergency/dangerous situations. All staff are aware of these procedures and rehearse them periodically.	0	1	2	3	4	5
❑ Keep ❑ Delete FEEDBACK:						
12. School-wide policies and procedures for preventing and correcting behavior problems are communicated effectively to all families, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.	0	1	2	3	4	5
❑ Keep ❑ Delete FEEDBACK:						
13. The school's written disciplinary practices contain specific rules and consequences that are clear, fair, and reasonable.	0	1	2	3	4	5
❑ Keep ❑ Delete FEEDBACK:						
14. All staff recognize which behavior problems are best handled in the classroom and not in the office, and respond accordingly and consistently.	0	1	2	3	4	5
❑ Keep ❑ Delete FEEDBACK:						
15. Corrective practices are non-discriminatory and exclusionary practices (suspension and expulsion) are closely monitored across racial and cultural groups.	0	1	2	3	4	5
❑ Keep ❑ Delete FEEDBACK:						
16. Disciplinary encounters are used as opportunities to help students develop self-discipline, not simply as occasions to punish behavior.	0	1	2	3	4	5
❑ Keep ❑ Delete FEEDBACK:						

Appendix C

School-wide Discipline and Positive Behavior Support Programs Implementation Survey* Field Test Version

***Note: This refers to any school-wide positive behavior program. It may include, but is not limited, to Effective School-wide Discipline and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports.**

To be completed by the principal or his/her designee.

Title of Person Completing the Form: _____

School Level (check one):

- ❑ **Standard Elementary School (K-5)**
- ❑ **Primary School**
- ❑ **Upper Elementary School**
- ❑ **Middle School**
- ❑ **Junior High School**

Total # of Students in School: _____
Total # of Special Education Students in School: _____

Are you currently implementing a formal school-wide discipline and/or behavioral support program? ❑ **Yes** ❑ **No**

Approximately how many years have you been engaged in this program?

❑ **< 1 year** ❑ **1-2 years** ❑ **3-5 years** ❑ **> 5 years**

School-wide Positive Behavior Support Systems Implementation Survey

Field Test Version

DIRECTIONS: For each item, please indicate the degree to which school-wide positive behavior support systems are in place in your school. Additionally, as a part of the field test process, please indicate, in the boxes provided, whether each item should be retained or deleted and provide any feedback you feel appropriate with regard to wording, clarity, etc. Your time and input on this instrument is greatly appreciated. Thank you.

FEATURE	CURRENT STATUS					
	Not in Place					In Place
1. A small number (i.e., 3-5) of positively & clearly stated expectations or rules are defined and communicated to all students and their families.	0	1	2	3	4	5
❑ Keep ❑ Delete FEEDBACK:						
2. Expected behaviors are taught directly (i.e., verbal instruction and frequent reinforcement) and indirectly (i.e., modeling, high expectations).	0	1	2	3	4	5
❑ Keep ❑ Delete FEEDBACK:						
3. Positive behaviors are taught and reinforced at the school-wide level, such as in assemblies, school-wide reward systems, peer-mediation programs, student government or service learning activities.	0	1	2	3	4	5
❑ Keep ❑ Delete FEEDBACK:						
4. A school-wide behavior support team develops, monitors, and evaluates the school-wide program for preventing and correcting behavior problems.	0	1	2	3	4	5
❑ Keep ❑ Delete FEEDBACK:						
5. A school administrator is an active participant on the school-wide behavior support team.	0	1	2	3	4	5
❑ Keep ❑ Delete FEEDBACK:						
6. All staff are directly and/or indirectly involved in school-wide interventions that focus on preventing behavior problems and promoting positive behavior and self-discipline.	0	1	2	3	4	5
❑ Keep ❑ Delete FEEDBACK:						
7. Staff participate, as needed, in on-going professional development opportunities to address school goals related to developing positive student-teacher-family relationships, promoting positive behavior, and self-discipline, and correcting problem behavior.	0	1	2	3	4	5
❑ Keep ❑ Delete FEEDBACK:						

FEATURE	CURRENT STATUS					
	Not in Place					In Place
17. All staff recognize, and are responsive to, the limitations and negative effects of punishment. When used, punishment is combined with more positive methods for teaching replacement behaviors.	0	1	2	3	4	5
❑ Keep ❑ Delete FEEDBACK:						
18. Instruction and curriculum materials are developmentally appropriate and are matched or adapted to the student's skills and abilities such that students experience high rates of academic success.	0	1	2	3	4	5
❑ Keep ❑ Delete FEEDBACK:						
19. Teachers routinely use evidence-based teaching methods that enhance student motivation and learning.	0	1	2	3	4	5
❑ Keep ❑ Delete FEEDBACK:						
20. Teachers demonstrate warmth, respect, and caring toward all students, and a general attitude that all students can succeed both academically and socially.	0	1	2	3	4	5
❑ Keep ❑ Delete FEEDBACK:						
21. Procedures and routines are directly taught (e.g., transition between activities/classes, use of the bathroom, etc.).	0	1	2	3	4	5
❑ Keep ❑ Delete FEEDBACK:						
22. Teachers frequently monitor student behavior and respond immediately to signs of misbehavior.	0	1	2	3	4	5
❑ Keep ❑ Delete FEEDBACK:						
23. Teachers establish and maintain close bi-directional communication with families and use multiple methods to garner their support (e.g., parents are informed frequently of their student's positive accomplishments, family-school conferences are used routinely).	0	1	2	3	4	5
❑ Keep ❑ Delete FEEDBACK:						
24. Students who require additional support in developing academic or social-emotional competencies are routinely identified.	0	1	2	3	4	5
❑ Keep ❑ Delete FEEDBACK:						
25. Students are provided interventions and supports through in-school or community resources as needed (e.g., social skills instruction, anger management, tutoring, counseling).	0	1	2	3	4	5
❑ Keep ❑ Delete FEEDBACK:						

FEATURE	CURRENT STATUS					
	Not in Place					In Place
26. Individual student's responses to interventions are routinely evaluated to determine if more intensive assessment and intervention is needed.	0	1	2	3	4	5
❑ Keep ❑ Delete FEEDBACK:						
27. Data are examined regularly to identify students with chronic or serious problem behaviors.	0	1	2	3	4	5
❑ Keep ❑ Delete FEEDBACK:						
28. A simple process exists for teachers and families to request assistance.	0	1	2	3	4	5
❑ Keep ❑ Delete FEEDBACK:						
29. The behavior support team or designated team member promptly provides problem-solving consultation to teacher or parents, including conducting a functional behavior assessment, when needed or required.	0	1	2	3	4	5
❑ Keep ❑ Delete FEEDBACK:						
30. Interventions used are based in current research and are designed to both decrease undesirable behaviors and to teach replacement behaviors.	0	1	2	3	4	5
❑ Keep ❑ Delete FEEDBACK:						
31. When consequences are used, they are fair, commensurate with the offense, and consistently applied.	0	1	2	3	4	5
❑ Keep ❑ Delete FEEDBACK:						
32. The success of interventions is systematically monitored using multiple methods.	0	1	2	3	4	5
❑ Keep ❑ Delete FEEDBACK:						
33. Both specific (e.g. reduced fighting frequency) and broad (e.g., promotion to the next grade) outcomes are measured in judging success.	0	1	2	3	4	5
❑ Keep ❑ Delete FEEDBACK:						

Facilitators and Barriers:

For the following items, please mark, using an X, the level of impact for each factor. Please also list, as appropriate, any factors that may not be listed.

34. To what degree do the following factors facilitate the implementation of school-wide positive behavior supports in your school?

Factor	High Impact	Neutral	Low Impact
State Level Support (e.g., T/TAC)			
District Support			
Administrative Support (Building Level)			
School Level/Team Training (Professional Development)			
Formal Action Planning			
Staff Commitment			
Communication			

*** Please list any other facilitators you can identify that are not included on the above list.**

35. To what degree do the following factors impede or pose barriers to the successful implementation of school-wide positive behavior supports in your school?

Factor	High Impact	Neutral	Low Impact
Faculty and Staff Buy-in			
Inconsistent or Lack of Use of Data			
Inconsistent Implementation			
Rewards System			
Local Zero Tolerance Policy			
Time			
Communication			

***Please list any other barriers you can identify that are not included on the above list.**

Professional Development:

For the following items, please check all that apply.

36. What professional development opportunities related to school-wide positive behavior support systems are provided to personnel in your school?

_____ New Teacher Orientation
_____ Building Level Study Groups (i.e., book study groups. conference attendance, etc.)
_____ State Level Assistance (e.g., ESD Initiative with T/TAC)
_____ Coaching and/or Assistance by Local Coach or Expert
_____ Coaching and/or Assistance by School-based Coach or Expert
_____ Coaching and/or Assistance by Private Consultant (e.g., University, etc.)
_____ Other (please identify) _____
_____
_____

37. If you are currently implementing a school-wide discipline and/or positive behavior support system, what is your perception of this system with regard to disciplinary referrals?

❑ Decrease in referrals ❑ No change in referrals ❑ Increase in referrals

Appendix D

Principal Component Analysis – School-wide Positive Behavior Supports Systems Survey
Pilot Phase

(36 Items, n = 56)

Items	Team-based, Data-driven Decision Making	Instructional Environment and Teacher Behaviors	Prevention through School-wide Practices and Policies	Universal School-wide Supports for Developing Positive Behavior and Self-Discipline	Disciplinary Preparedness and Emergencies
Data are examined regularly to identify students with chronic or serious problem behaviors. (29)	.879				
Individual student responses to interventions are routinely evaluated to determine if more intensive assessment or intervention are needed. (28)	.803				
Interventions used are based in current research and are designed to both decrease undesirable behaviors and to teach replacement behaviors. (32)	.795				
The success of interventions is systematically monitored using multiple methods. (35)	.793				
Staff participate, as needed, in on-going professional development opportunities to address school goals related to developing positive student teacher-family relationships, promoting positive behavior and self-discipline, and correcting problem behavior. (7)	.743				
Families are actively involved in the development and evaluation of the school-wide program for preventing problem behavior. (8)	.704				

(continued)

Items	Team-based, Data-driven Decision Making	Instructional Environment and Teacher Behaviors	Prevention through School-wide Practices and Policies	Universal School-wide Supports for Developing Positive Behavior and Self-Discipline	Disciplinary Preparedness and Emergencies
Data is routinely collected and analyzed in order to make decisions regarding interventions, needs, and successes. (33)	.671				
Both specific (e.g., reduced fighting frequency) and broad (e.g., promotion to the next grade) outcomes are measured in judging success. (36)	.643				
Students are provided interventions and supports through in-school or community resources as needed (e.g., social skills instruction, anger management, tutoring, counseling). (27)	.632				
A school-wide behavior support team develops, monitors, and evaluates the school-wide program for preventing and correcting behavior problems. (4)	.610				
A simple process exists for teachers and families to request assistance regarding student behavior. (30)	.606				
A school administrator is an active participant in the school-wide behavior support team. (5)	.562				

(continued)

Items	Team-based, Data-driven Decision Making	Instructional Environment and Teacher Behaviors	Prevention through School-wide Practices and Policies	Universal School-wide Supports for Developing Positive Behavior and Self-Discipline	Disciplinary Preparedness and Emergencies
The behavior support team or designated team member promptly provides problem solving consultation to teacher or parents, including conducting a functional behavior assessment, when needed or required. (31)	.520				
All staff recognize and are responsive to the limitations and negative effects of punishment. (18)	.484				
Disciplinary encounters are used as opportunities to help students develop self-discipline, not simply as occasions to punish behavior. (17)	.481				
Students experience high rates of academic success. (21)		.833			
Instruction and curriculum materials are developmentally appropriate and are matched or adapted to the student's skills and abilities. (20)		.781			
Teachers routinely use evidence based teaching methods that enhance student motivation and learning. (22)		.755			

(continued)

Items	Team-based, Data-driven Decision Making	Instructional Environment and Teacher Behaviors	Prevention through School-wide Practices and Policies	Universal School-wide Supports for Developing Positive Behavior and Self-Discipline	Disciplinary Preparedness and Emergencies
Teachers demonstrate warmth, respect, and caring toward all students, and a general attitude that all students can succeed both academically and socially. (23)		.738			
The physical environment, including classrooms, is attractive and conducive to teaching and learning. (9)		.570			
When used, punished is combined with more positive methods for teaching replacement behaviors. (19)		.477			
Supervision and monitoring of students are routinely provided, especially during critical periods (entering and leaving school) and in critical places (hallways, stairways, playground). (10)			.756		
Teachers frequently monitor student behavior and respond immediately to signs of misbehavior. (25)			.706		

(continued)

Items	Team-based, Data-driven Decision Making	Instructional Environment and Teacher Behaviors	Prevention through School-wide Practices and Policies	Universal School-wide Supports for Developing Positive Behavior and Self-Discipline	Disciplinary Preparedness and Emergencies
All staff recognize which behavior problems are best handled in the classroom and not in the office, and respond accordingly and consistently. (15)			.700		
Students who require additional support in developing academic or social-emotional competencies are routinely identified. (26)			.611		
When consequences are used, they are fair, commensurate with the offense, and consistently applied. (34)			.525		
School-wide policies and procedures for preventing and correcting behavior problems are communicated effectively to all families, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. (13)			.501		
Procedures and routines are directly taught (e.g., transition between activities/classes, use of the bathroom, etc.). (24)			.469		
Corrective practices are non discriminatory and exclusionary practices (suspension and expulsion) are closely monitored across racial and cultural groups. (16)			.411		

(continued)

Items	Team-based, Data-driven Decision Making	Instructional Environment and Teacher Behaviors	Prevention through School-wide Practices and Policies	Universal School-wide Supports for Developing Positive Behavior and Self-Discipline	Disciplinary Preparedness and Emergencies
Expected behaviors are taught directly (i.e., verbal instruction and frequent reinforcement) and indirectly (i.e., modeling, high expectations). (2)				.779	
Positive behaviors are taught and reinforced at the school-wide level, such as in assemblies, school-wide reward systems, peer-mediation programs, student government or service learning activities. (3)				.733	
A small number (i.e., 3-5) of positively & clearly stated expectations or rules are defined and communicated all students and their families. (1)				.677	
All staff are directly and/or indirectly involved in school-wide interventions that focus on preventing behavior problems and promoting positive behavior and self-discipline. (6)				.620	
Procedures are in place to address emergency/dangerous situations. (11)					.844
All staff are aware of emergency procedures and rehearse them periodically. (12)					.717

(continued)

Items	Team-based, Data-driven Decision Making	Instructional Environment and Teacher Behaviors	Prevention through School-wide Practices and Policies	Universal School-wide Supports for Developing Positive Behavior and Self-Discipline	Disciplinary Preparedness and Emergencies
The school's written disciplinary practices contain specific rules and consequences that are clear, fair, and reasonable. (14)					.562

Appendix E

School-wide Discipline and Positive Behavior Support Programs Implementation Survey*

***Note: This refers to any school-wide positive behavior or discipline program. It may include, but is not specifically limited, to Effective School-wide Discipline and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports.**

To be completed by the principal or his/her designee.

Title of Person Completing the Form: _____

School Level (check one):

- ❑ **Standard Elementary School (K-5)**
- ❑ **Primary School**
- ❑ **Upper Elementary School**
- ❑ **Middle School**
- ❑ **Junior High School**

Total # of Students in School: _____
Total # of Special Education Students in School: _____

Are you currently implementing a formal school-wide discipline and/or behavioral support program? ❑ **Yes** ❑ **No**

Approximately how many years has your school been engaged in this program?

❑ **< 1 year** ❑ **1-2 years** ❑ **3-5 years** ❑ **> 5 years**

School-wide Positive Behavior Support Systems Implementation Survey

DIRECTIONS: For each item, please indicate the degree to which school-wide discipline and/or positive behavior support systems are in place in your school. Your time and input on this instrument is greatly appreciated. Thank you.

FEATURE	CURRENT STATUS					
	Not In Place					In Place
1. A small number (i.e., 3-5) of positively & clearly stated expectations or rules are defined and communicated to all students and their families.	0	1	2	3	4	5
2. Expected behaviors are taught directly (i.e., verbal instruction and frequent reinforcement) and indirectly (i.e., modeling, high expectations).	0	1	2	3	4	5
3. Positive behaviors are taught and reinforced at the school-wide level, such as in assemblies, school-wide reward systems, peer-mediation programs, student government or service learning activities.	0	1	2	3	4	5
4. A school-wide behavior support team develops, monitors, and evaluates the school-wide program for preventing and correcting behavior problems.	0	1	2	3	4	5
5. A school administrator is an active participant on the school-wide behavior support team.	0	1	2	3	4	5
6. All staff are directly and/or indirectly involved in school-wide interventions that focus on preventing behavior problems and promoting positive behavior and self-discipline.	0	1	2	3	4	5
7. Staff participate, as needed, in on-going professional development opportunities to address school goals related to developing positive student-teacher-family relationships, promoting positive behavior, and self-discipline, and correcting problem behavior.	0	1	2	3	4	5
8. Families are actively involved in the development and evaluation of the school-wide program for preventing behavior problems.	0	1	2	3	4	5
9. The physical environment, including classrooms, is attractive and conducive to teaching and learning.	0	1	2	3	4	5
10. Supervision and monitoring of students are routinely provided, especially during critical periods (entering and leaving school) and in critical places (hallways, stairways, playground, cafeteria).	0	1	2	3	4	5
11. Procedures are in place to address emergency/dangerous situations.	0	1	2	3	4	5
12. All staff are aware of emergency procedures and rehearse them periodically.	0	1	2	3	4	5
13. School-wide policies and procedures for preventing and correcting behavior problems are communicated effectively to all families, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.	0	1	2	3	4	5
14. The school's written disciplinary practices contain specific rules and consequences that are clear, fair, and reasonable.	0	1	2	3	4	5
15. All staff recognize which behavior problems are best handled in the classroom and not in the office, and respond accordingly and consistently.	0	1	2	3	4	5
16. Corrective practices are non-discriminatory and exclusionary practices (suspension and expulsion) are closely monitored across racial and cultural groups.	0	1	2	3	4	5
17. Disciplinary encounters are used as opportunities to help students develop self-discipline, not simply as occasions to punish behavior.	0	1	2	3	4	5
18. All staff recognize and are responsive to the limitations and negative effects of punishment.	0	1	2	3	4	5

FEATURE	CURRENT STATUS					
	Not In Place					In Place
19. When used, punishment is combined with more positive methods for teaching replacement behaviors.	0	1	2	3	4	5
20. Instruction and curriculum materials are developmentally appropriate and are matched or adapted to the student's skills and abilities.	0	1	2	3	4	5
21. Students experience high rates of academic success.	0	1	2	3	4	5
22. Teachers routinely use evidence-based teaching methods that enhance student motivation and learning.	0	1	2	3	4	5
23. Teachers demonstrate warmth, respect, and caring toward all students, and a general attitude that all students can succeed both academically and socially.	0	1	2	3	4	5
24. Procedures and routines are directly taught (e.g., transition between activities/classes, use of the bathroom, etc.).	0	1	2	3	4	5
25. Teachers frequently monitor student behavior and respond immediately to signs of misbehavior.	0	1	2	3	4	5
26. Students who require additional support in developing academic or social-emotional competencies are routinely identified.	0	1	2	3	4	5
27. Students are provided interventions and supports through in-school or community resources as needed (e.g., social skills instruction, anger management, tutoring, counseling).	0	1	2	3	4	5
28. Individual student's responses to interventions are routinely evaluated to determine if more intensive assessment and intervention are needed.	0	1	2	3	4	5
29. Data are examined regularly to identify students with chronic or serious problem behaviors.	0	1	2	3	4	5
30. A simple process exists for teachers and families to request assistance regarding student behavior.	0	1	2	3	4	5
31. The behavior support team or designated team member promptly provides problem-solving consultation to teacher or parents, including conducting a functional behavior assessment, when needed or required.	0	1	2	3	4	5
32. Interventions used are based in current research and are designed to both decrease undesirable behaviors and to teach replacement behaviors.	0	1	2	3	4	5
33. Data is routinely collected and analyzed in order to make decisions regarding interventions, needs, and successes.	0	1	2	3	4	5
34. When consequences are used, they are fair, commensurate with the offense, and consistently applied.	0	1	2	3	4	5
35. The success of interventions is systematically monitored using multiple methods.	0	1	2	3	4	5
36. Both specific (e.g. reduced fighting frequency) and broad (e.g., promotion to the next grade) outcomes are measured in judging success.	0	1	2	3	4	5

37. If you are currently implementing a school-wide discipline and/or positive behavior support system, what is your perception of this system with regard to disciplinary referrals?

❑ Decrease in referrals ❑ No change in referrals ❑ Increase in referrals

Facilitators and Barriers:

For the following items, please mark, using an X, the level of impact for each factor.

38. To what degree do the following factors facilitate the implementation of school-wide positive behavior supports in your school?

Factor	High Impact	Neutral	Low Impact
State Level Support (e.g., T/TAC)			
District Support			
Administrative Support (Building Level)			
School Level/Team Training (Professional Development)			
Formal Action Planning			
Staff Commitment			
Communication			
Community/Family Buy-in			

39. To what degree do the following factors impede or pose barriers to the successful implementation of school-wide positive behavior supports in your school?

Factor	High Impact	Neutral	Low Impact
Faculty and Staff Buy-in			
Inconsistent or Lack of Use of Data			
Inconsistent Implementation			
Rewards System			
Local Zero Tolerance Policy			
Time			
Communication			
Community/Family Buy-in			

Professional Development:

For the following items, please check all that apply.

40. What professional development opportunities related to school-wide positive behavior support systems are provided to personnel in your school?

_____ New Teacher Orientation
_____ Building Level Study Groups (i.e., book study groups. conference attendance, etc.)
_____ State Level Assistance (e.g., ESD Initiative with T/TAC)
_____ Coaching and/or Assistance by Local Coach or Expert
_____ Coaching and/or Assistance by School-based Coach or Expert
_____ Coaching and/or Assistance by Private Consultant (e.g., University, etc.)
_____ Other (please identify) _____
_____
_____

Appendix F

Consent Form and Information

Effective School-wide Discipline through Positive Behavior Supports: An Analysis of Current Practice

Dear Participant:

Enclosed please find a survey entitled *School-wide Discipline and Positive Behavior Support Programs Implementation Survey*. This survey has been sent to you as a part of a study being conducted by me, Dawn Padden, in order to fulfill the requirements of my dissertation for The College of William and Mary. The purpose of this consent and information form is to inform you of your rights as a participant. Additionally, its purpose is to inform you that completing and returning the survey to me in the envelope provided indicate your informed consent. I thank you in advance for your participation.

By way of this notification, I understand that I am being asked to complete the enclosed survey and return it to the researcher in the addressed and stamped envelope provided within two weeks from the date it is received. I further understand that my responses will be used to inform the dissertation entitled *Effective School-wide Discipline through Positive Behavior Supports: An Analysis of Current Practice.*

I have been informed via this consent form that my identity will remain confidential, known only to the researcher, and that upon completion of the study, my responses and any associated documentation will be destroyed. I have been further informed, via this form, that upon returning the completed survey, I will be entered into a drawing for a chance to win a $50 gift certificate to Barnes and Noble. Again, I understand that my identity, for this purpose, as well as for the purpose of the study, will be known only to the researcher.

I understand that I am free to withdraw my consent at any time and discontinue my participation in the study by notifying the researcher, Dawn Padden, by either e-mail (dawnpadden@cox.net) or by telephone (757-369-2774). My decision to participate will not affect my relations with the College of William and Mary. If I have any questions that arise in connection with my participation in this study, I should contact Dawn Padden. I understand that I may report any problems or dissatisfaction to Dr. Thomas Ward, chair of the College of William and Mary School of Education Internal Review Committee, at 757-221-2358 or tjward@wm.edu or Dr. Michael Deschenes, chair of the Protection of Human Subjects Committee at the College of William and Mary at 757-221-2778 or mrdesc@wm.edu.

THIS PROJECT WAS FOUND TO COMPLY WITH APPROPRIATE ETHICAL STANDARDS AND WAS EXEMPTED FROM THE NEED FOR FORMAL REVIEW BY THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS COMMITTEE (PHONE: 757-221-3966) ON 2008-02-25 AND EXPIRES ON 2009-02-25.

Appendix G

Principal Component Analysis – School-wide Discipline and Positive Behavior Supports Programs Implementation Survey

Dissertation Phase

(36 items, n = 122)

Item	Team-based Data – driven Decision Making	Instructional Environment and Teacher Behaviors	Prevention through School-wide Practices and Policies	Universal School-wide Supports for Developing Positive Behavior and Self-Discipline	Disciplinary Preparedness and Emergencies
The success of interventions is systematically monitored using multiple methods. (35)	.748				
The behavior support team or designated team member promptly provides problem solving consultation to teacher or parents, including conducting a functional behavior assessment, when needed or required. (31)	.732				
Interventions used are based in current research and are designed to both decrease undesirable behaviors and to teach replacement behaviors. (32)	.726				
A school-wide behavior support team develops, monitors, and evaluates the school-wide program for preventing and correcting behavior problems. (4)	.721				
Data is routinely collected and analyzed in order to make decisions regarding interventions, needs, and successes. (33)	.697				

(continued)

Item	Team-based Data – driven Decision Making	Instructional Environment and Teacher Behaviors	Prevention through School-wide Practices and Policies	Universal School-wide Supports for Developing Positive Behavior and Self-Discipline	Disciplinary Preparedness and Emergencies
A school administrator is an active participant in the school-wide behavior support team. (5)	.691				
Both specific (e.g., reduced fighting frequency) and broad (e.g., promotion to the next grade) outcomes are measured in judging success. (36)	.662				
Families are actively involved in the development and evaluation of the school-wide program for preventing problem behavior. (8)	.621				
Data are examined regularly to identify students with chronic or serious problem behaviors. (29)	.606				
A simple process exists for teachers and families to request assistance regarding student behavior. (30)	.537				
Staff participate, as needed, in on-going professional development opportunities to address school goals related to developing positive student teacher-family relationships, promoting positive behavior and self-discipline, and correcting problem behavior. (7)	.488				

(continued)

Item	Team-based Data – driven Decision Making	Instructional Environment and Teacher Behaviors	Prevention through School-wide Practices and Policies	Universal School-wide Supports for Developing Positive Behavior and Self-Discipline	Disciplinary Preparedness and Emergencies
Teachers demonstrate warmth, respect, and caring toward all students, and a general attitude that all students can succeed both academically and socially. (23)		.769			
Teachers frequently monitor student behavior and respond immediately to signs of misbehavior. (25)		.735			
All staff recognize which behavior problems are best handled in the classroom and not in the office, and respond accordingly and consistently. (15)		.721			
Students experience high rates of academic success. (21)		.718			
All staff recognize and are responsive to the limitations and negative effects of punishment. (18)		.705			
Teachers routinely use evidence based teaching methods that enhance student motivation and learning. (22)		.699			
Procedures and routines are directly taught (e.g., transition between activities/classes, use of the bathroom, etc.). (24)		.631			

(continued)

Item	Team-based Data – driven Decision Making	Instructional Environment and Teacher Behaviors	Prevention through School-wide Practices and Policies	Universal School-wide Supports for Developing Positive Behavior and Self-Discipline	Disciplinary Preparedness and Emergencies
Students who require additional support in developing academic or social-emotional competencies are routinely identified. (26)		.571			
Individual student responses to interventions are routinely evaluated to determine if more intensive assessment or intervention are needed. (28)		.566			
Students are provided interventions and supports through in-school or community resources as needed (e.g., social skills instruction, anger management, tutoring, counseling). (27)		.542			
When used, punished is combined with more positive methods for teaching replacement behaviors. (19)		.542			
Instruction and curriculum materials are developmentally appropriate and are matched or adapted to the student's skills and abilities. (20)		.494			
When consequences are used, they are fair, commensurate with the offense, and consistently applied. (34)		.438			

(continued)

Item	Team-based Data – driven Decision Making	Instructional Environment and Teacher Behaviors	Prevention through School-wide Practices and Policies	Universal School-wide Supports for Developing Positive Behavior and Self-Discipline	Disciplinary Preparedness and Emergencies
Positive behaviors are taught and reinforced at the school-wide level, such as in assemblies, school-wide reward systems, peer-mediation programs, student government or service learning activities. (3)			.669		
Disciplinary encounters are used as opportunities to help students develop self-discipline, not simply as occasions to punish behavior. (17)			.642		
Supervision and monitoring of students are routinely provided, especially during critical periods (entering and leaving school) and in critical places (hallways, stairways, playground). (10)			.628		
The physical environment, including classrooms, is attractive and conducive to teaching and learning. (9)			.493		
All staff are directly and/or indirectly involved in school-wide interventions that focus on preventing behavior problems and promoting positive behavior and self-discipline. (6)			.492		
The school's written disciplinary practices contain specific rules and consequences that are clear, fair, and reasonable. (14)				.691	

(continued)

Item	Team-based Data – driven Decision Making	Instructional Environment and Teacher Behaviors	Prevention through School-wide Practices and Policies	Universal School-wide Supports for Developing Positive Behavior and Self-Discipline	Disciplinary Preparedness and Emergencies
School-wide policies and procedures for preventing and correcting behavior problems are communicated effectively to all families, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. (13)				.621	
A small number (i.e., 3-5) of positively & clearly stated expectations or rules are defined and communicated all students and their families. (1)				.587	
Expected behaviors are taught directly (i.e., verbal instruction and frequent reinforcement) and indirectly (i.e., modeling, high expectations). (2)				.500	
Procedures are in place to address emergency/dangerous situations. (11)					.783
All staff are aware of emergency procedures and rehearse them periodically. (12)					.782
Corrective practices are non discriminatory and exclusionary practices (suspension and expulsion) are closely monitored across racial and cultural groups. (16)					.485

Appendix H

Implementation Status Frequencies and Means by Item

(in order from highest level of implementation to lowest)

Item	*f* (of scores)						M	SD
	0	1	2	3	4	5		
11. Procedures are in place to address emergency/dangerous situations.	1	0	2	1	16	102	4.76	.68
12. All staff are aware of emergency procedures and rehearse them periodically.	1	0	2	1	27	91	4.67	.71
10. Supervision and monitoring of students are routinely provided, especially during critical periods (entering and leaving school) and in critical places (hallways, stairways, and playground).	1	0	0	5	26	90	4.66	.69
16. Corrective practices are nondiscriminatory and exclusionary practices (suspension and expulsion) are closely monitored across racial and cultural groups.	1	0	3	13	30	75	4.43	.88
9. The physical environment, including classrooms, is attractive and conducive to teaching and learning.	2	0	5	12	24	79	4.40	1.01
34. When consequences are used, they are fair, commensurate with the offense, and consistently applied.	1	0	1	14	42	64	4.36	.82
17. Disciplinary encounters are used as opportunities to help students develop self-discipline, not simply as occasions to punish behaviors.	1	0	3	11	42	65	4.36	.85

(continued)

Item	*f* (of scores)						M	SD
	0	1	2	3	4	5		
14. The school's written disciplinary practices contain specific rules and consequences that are clear, fair, and reasonable.	3	2	3	7	38	69	4.31	1.08
2. Expected behaviors are taught directly (i.e., verbal instruction and frequent reinforcement) and indirectly (i.e., modeling, high expectations).	1	3	6	9	33	70	4.30	1.06
25. Teachers frequently monitor student behavior and respond immediately to signs of misbehavior.	1	0	3	7	59	52	4.29	.80
26. Students who require additional support in developing academic or social-emotional competencies are routinely identified.	1	0	3	11	53	54	4.27	.83
20. Instruction and curriculum materials are developmentally appropriate and are matched or adapted to the student's skills and abilities.	1	1	3	17	43	57	4.22	.93
24. Procedures and routines are directly taught (e.g., transition between activities/classes, use of the bathroom, etc).	2	3	1	14	49	53	4.16	1.02
27. Students are provided interventions and supports through in-school or community resources as needed (e.g., social skills instruction, anger management, tutoring, counseling).	1	1	5	18	45	52	4.14	.97
1. A small number (i.e., 3-5) of positively & clearly stated expectations or rules are defined and communicated to all students and their families.	7	3	6	10	21	75	4.13	1.43

(continued)

Item	*f* (of scores)						M	SD
	0	1	2	3	4	5		
23. Teachers demonstrate warmth, respect, and caring toward all students, and a general attitude that all students can succeed both academically and socially.	1	1	5	17	56	43	4.10	.89
21. Students experience high rates of academic success.	2	0	4	19	53	44	4.07	.96
22. Teachers routinely use evidence based teaching methods that enhance student motivation and learning.	1	1	8	22	51	39	3.95	.99
6. All staff are directly and/or indirectly involved in school-wide interventions that focus on preventing behavior problems and promoting positive self-discipline.	4	3	13	12	34	56	3.94	1.32
3. Positive behaviors are taught and reinforced at the school-wide level, such as in assemblies, school-wide reward systems, peer-mediation programs, student government or service learning activities.	6	3	10	16	34	53	3.87	1.38
19. When used, punishment is combined with more positive methods for teaching replacement behaviors.	2	1	7	32	45	35	3.82	1.05
29. Data are examined regularly to identify students with chronic or serious behavior problems.	2	6	9	21	42	42	3.81	1.22
30. A simple process exists for teachers and families to request assistance regarding student behavior.	4	4	5	27	43	39	3.79	1.22
13. School-wide policies and procedures for preventing and correcting behavior problems are communicated effectively to all families, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.	4	5	9	25	36	43	3.75	1.30

(continued)

Item	*f* (of scores)						M	SD
	0	1	2	3	4	5		
28. Individual student responses to interventions are routinely evaluated to determine if more intensive assessment of intervention are needed.	2	6	8	29	39	38	3.73	1.21
32. Interventions used are based in current research and are designed to both decrease undesirable behaviors and to teach replacement behaviors.	4	6	8	30	38	36	3.64	1.29
5. A school administrator is an active participant on the school-wide behavior support team.	23	5	1	10	16	67	3.57	1.98
18. All staff recognize and are responsive to the limitations and negative effects of punishment.	1	5	13	30	52	21	3.56	1.08
15. All staff recognize which behavior problems are best handled in the classroom and not in the office, and respond accordingly and consistently.	2	4	14	33	42	27	3.56	1.15
36. Both specific (e.g., reduced fighting frequency) and broad (e.g., promotion to the next grade) outcomes are measured in judging success.	9	8	9	19	38	39	3.52	1.53
33. Data is routinely collected and analyzed in order to make decisions regarding interventions, needs, and successes.	9	11	6	25	32	39	3.45	1.56
7. Staff participate, as needed, in on-going professional development opportunities to address school goals related to developing positive student-teacher-family relationships, promoting positive behavior and self-discipline, and correcting problem behavior.	7	6	18	25	27	39	3.44	1.48

(continued)

Item	*f* (of scores)						M	SD
	0	1	2	3	4	5		
31. The behavior support team or designated team member promptly provides problem solving consultation to teacher or parents, including conducting a functional behavior assessment, when needed or required.	18	2	9	28	32	33	3.25	1.66
35. The success of interventions is systematically monitored using multiple methods.	7	14	12	28	33	28	3.23	1.49
4. A school-wide behavior support team develops, monitors, and evaluates the school-wide program for preventing and correcting behavior problems.	26	12	11	22	21	30	2.74	1.88
8. Families are actively involved in the development and evaluation of the school-wide program for preventing problem behavior.	34	18	22	30	12	6	1.89	1.53

Appendix I

Facilitators: Frequencies and Percentages

Facilitator	Impact	Frequency	Percentage
State Level Support (e.g., T/TAC)	High	21	17.8
	Neutral	53	44.9
	Low	44	37.3
District Support	High	59	50.0
	Neutral	35	29.7
	Low	24	20.3
Administrative Support (Building Level)	High	111	94.1
	Neutral	5	4.2
	Low	2	1.7
School Level/Team Training (Professional	High	84	61.2
Development)	Neutral	25	21.2
	Low	9	7.6
Formal Action Planning	High	71	60.2
	Neutral	41	34.7
	Low	6	5.1
Staff Commitment	High	103	87.3
	Neutral	12	10.2
	Low	3	2.5
Communication	High	103	87.3
	Neutral	12	10.2
	Low	3	2.5
Community/Faculty Buy-in	High	69	58.5
	Neutral	40	33.9
	Low	9	7.6

Note: n = 118

Appendix J

Barriers: Frequencies and Percentages

Barrier	Impact	Frequency	Percentage
Faculty and Staff Buy-in	High	72	61.5
	Neutral	13	11.1
	Low	32	27.4
Inconsistent or Lack of Use of Data	High	42	25.6
	Neutral	45	38.5
	Low	30	25.6
Inconsistent Implementation	High	65	56.0
	Neutral	24	20.7
	Low	27	23.3
Rewards System	High	37	32.2
	Neutral	37	32.2
	Low	41	35.7
Local Zero Tolerance Policy	High	25	21.7
	Neutral	49	42.6
	Low	41	33.3
Time	High	52	45.2
	Neutral	36	31.3
	Low	27	23.5
Communication	High	62	53.4
	Neutral	25	21.6
	Low	29	25.0
Community/Faculty Buy-in	High	51	44.3
	Neutral	38	33.0
	Low	26	22.6

Note: n = 117