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Implementing Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) with Fidelity

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Capstone Project: A School Improvement Plan

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Abstract

A school improvement's plan is meant to improve an area of need in a school. This particular plan shows the need of implementing positive behavioral interventions and supports with fidelity. Behavior in schools continues to challenge educators and implementing PBIS is one way to counter those challenges. Research shows staff buy-in, having a shared vision, and administration support will increase sustainability. In addition, providing consistent professional development on behavior will increase staff members knowledge of having common language and the terminology of PBIS. Consistent trainings will also ensure the fidelity of the program is met having accurate data recorded.

Keywords: positive behavioral interventions and supports

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Implementing Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) with fidelity

Schools today are seeing more and more challenging behavior from students. In a survey completed by teachers, 71% stated behavior is worsening (Kurtz & Gewertz, 2022).

To help with these negative behaviors, many schools are implementing Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) schoolwide. This program consists of school-wide, multi-tiered levels of support for students depending on their needs — Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3. This "framework consists of effective intervention practices aimed at establishing and improving the social culture, educational environment, and individual behavior of all students in a school" (Fallon & McCarthy, 2014, p.1). PBIS is beneficial to schools when implemented with fidelity because it addresses all students' needs proactively and positively. The PBIS program provides levels of support to students.

The purpose of this school improvement plan is to show how to implement Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports with fidelity in an elementary school. The researcher will look at the positive effects of the program, and how implementing PBIS the way its creators intended will improve the school culture. Findings from this study will inform school administration and staff of the benefits of PBIS and why it is beneficial to implement the program effectively. In addition, learning the barriers that inhibit this program from being used effectively will identify areas of improvement for school administration and staff. Other findings show having a strong home-school connection is beneficial to students' success in school (Garbacz et al., 2018).

Resources for this school improvement plan were found using DeWitt Library at Northwestern College. Additionally, Gale, an online research-based search engine from Iowa's Area Education Agencies, was used. The studies included in this school improvement plan were

published in peer-reviewed journals within the last ten years. Studies for this plan regarding the

positive effects of PBIS, family involvement, student behavior, sustainability, and fidelity were

reviewed. Based on the significance of this study, twenty peer-reviewed articles were reviewed.

PBIS is a proactive and positive multi-tiered level of support for school-wide student

behavior. The findings from this study show that effectively implementing PBIS with fidelity

will improve the school atmosphere, but many things need to happen before schools see positive

effects. Also, sustaining PBIS is difficult for most school districts. Many issues affect the

sustainability of this program, including a lack of resources, administration support, and

professional development (Pinkelman et al., 2015). Having staff and administration buy-in is

crucial to running this program with fidelity. When administration and staff analyze student data,

they can provide students with the appropriate level of support for their success.

The literature review starts by exploring why PBIS has not been sustainable over periods

of time in other districts. To have a successful program, looking at sustainability issues first will

inform the reader on key components of PBIS. Next steps include how to implement with fidelity

by looking at student data and family involvement. The literature review will conclude by stating

the positive effects of this program and how it will improve the school culture with behavior,

engagement, and learning.

Review of the Literature

Sustainability of PBIS

Sustainability of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports in school districts depends on many factors. Numerous barriers inhibit districts from being able to sustain PBIS for long periods. According to research, implementing evidence-based practices successfully starts but then fails to continue long-term (Pinkelman et al., 2015). Over 25,000 schools in the United States use PBIS (McIntosh et al., 2018). Students receive the appropriate level of support from this multi-tiered evidence-based program. Without the sustainability of PBIS in schools, many students cannot get the level of support they need to succeed. Cofey & Horner state, "results from a logistic regression analysis demonstrate that together the sustainability features of administrative support combined with communication and data-based decision making create the best-fitting model of sustainability for SWPBIS" (Cofey & Horner, 2012, p.407). Schools of various sizes have yet to determine the sustainability of PBIS programs. Larger districts with more schools using PBIS can sustain the program longer because more resources are available to them (McIntosh et al., 2018). Smaller schools have a greater chance of having longer sustainability (Cofey & Horner, 2012). Also, schools that have used PBIS for over five years have a greater chance of success in this program (Cofey & Horner, 2012).

A survey of 117 schools found that eight crucial sustainability components must be present to successfully implement PBIS school-wide (Cofey & Horner 2012). Many school districts cannot sustain their PBIS program because they are not learning about the crucial components needed to make it successful. School districts benefit from understanding what it takes to have sustainability.

PBIS needs full administrative support to be sustainable over long periods (Cofey & Horner, 2012). Offering professional development to staff members who are new to the school will ensure the success of the program. Effective professional development is one crucial aspect of a sustainable program (McIntosh et al., 2018). In addition, the administration needs to completely buy-in on everything that Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports stands for. PBIS refers to an "evidence-based practice that has the potential to close the achievement gap" (Betters-Bubon et al., 2016, p.264). Nese et al. explain that taking away district support "had a cascading effect on procedures, perceptions, and student outcomes" (Nese et al., 2016, p.262).

Staff buy-in also affects the sustainability of PBIS. Having all staff on the same page will determine if PBIS will last in the school. According to Cofey & Horner, staff buy-in refers to "verbal statements supporting change and the overt nonverbal behaviors necessary for change to occur (Cofey & Horner, 2012). There are mixed expectations for students when staff members are not all on board.

Lastly, making decisions based on data will help sustain PBIS. "All tiers heavily emphasize frequent and accurate data collection and analysis to inform systems and individual-level decisions" (Gage et al., 2018, p.51). Analyzing the PBIS data as a committee and using the data to make informed decisions will help keep long-term goals in place. PBIS committees benefit from sharing data with the whole school to improve the implementation of PBIS (McIntosh et al., 2018). Continuously reviewing data will allow staff to review and look at what areas need to change as a whole school. In addition, PBIS committees can filter the data to see if the data shows system errors or if there is something that the teacher needs to reteach.

Fidelity

Fidelity refers to the implementation of a program in the way the creators intended it. Researchers state it takes "3-5 years for a school to achieve adequate implementation of a systems-level intervention" (McIntosh et al., 2016, p.992). The School-wide Evaluation Tool (SET) measures the implementation of PBIS. "The SET comprises seven subscales and an overall score which measure adherence to core features of the schoolwide components of PBIS" (Pas et al., 2019, p.7). Tier 1 coordinators will measure the SET score (Eiraldi et al., 2019). The School-wide Evaluation Tool is a popular tool that "produces data that are reliable and valid" (Fallon & McCarthy, 2014, p.2). "A variety of tools are available at no cost through the Office of Special Education Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports" (Solomon et al., 2015, p.176). The external coordinator will assess each school annually or biannually (Solomon et al., 2015). The external coordinator and administrator will choose when it is time to be evaluated. The external assessor's job is to test the fidelity of PBIS by interviewing teachers. This person will ask teachers what students' expectations are and explain how PBIS works in their classroom. Schools reaching 80% have a high level of implementation fidelity (Pas et al., 2019).

Another fidelity measure schools implementing PBIS use is called Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI). TFI is a way to look at the different tiers of PBIS (Pas et al., 2019). Each school's PBIS committee will score themselves on a 0-2 scale. A zero means nothing is in place in their school, and two means it is entirely in place. PBIS committees can review the scores to reevaluate the implementation of their program. Then the committees can move forward with improving any area that needs improvement. Nese et al. explain it is essential to reach a high-fidelity rating early in the implementation process of PBIS (Nese et al., 2016). The fidelity tools can be formative or summative (Solomon et al., 2015).

Participating schools can use a free website called pbisapps.org to record student data (McIntosh et al., 2016). The website "allows users to enter and access scores from the fidelity tools" (p.995), to make decisions based on drilling down data, and holds schools accountable by keeping track of the fidelity data in one place (McIntosh et al., 2016). The data tracking website allows teachers to see where students misbehave most. In addition, teachers can see what day of the week or time of the year has the most wrongdoings. Eighty percent of students find that Tier 1 intervention is effective for them (Seeshing Yeung et al., 2016). However, 10-15% of students may need more than Tier 1 support. Students will need the support of Tier 2 or Tier 3 (Seeshing Yeung et al., 2016). PBIS committees are in charge of figuring out what level of support students need and implementing different interventions for each tier that the student is on.

Schools that receive training during their first year of implementation are "considered to be actively implementing SWPBIS" (Nese et al., 2016, p.264). Schools that no longer follow the state guidelines for PBIS are "considered to have abandoned SWPBIS" (Nese et al., 2016, p.264). Participating schools of PBIS must submit fidelity scores using SET, staff self-assessment, and BOQ (benchmarks of quality) (Nese et al., 2016). According to one study of 915 schools participating in PBIS, only 7% of schools remained by the fifth year of implementation (Nese et al., 2016). McIntosh et al. state, "fidelity growth are faster in the second year of implementation than the first" (McIntosh et al., 2016, p.993). The second year has a higher fidelity growth because schools can use what they learned in the previous year to improve. As schools continue to use PBIS, their scores should increase if they implement the program with fidelity.

Research shows classroom implementation as one popular area needing improvement in several schools (Fallon & McCarthy, 2014). Schools implementing PBIS for five years have

shown improvement in classroom implementation (Fallon & McCarthy, 2014). Teachers following their own classroom management contribute to poor PBIS fidelity in classroom implementation. When each teacher does their own thing, student expectations are not the same throughout the building, resulting in student confusion about what expectations to follow. Staff buy-in is key to achieving high implementation fidelity in all areas of the school. SWPBIS is proven effective when implemented with fidelity school-wide (James et al., 2019).

Challenges to reaching high implementation fidelity include lack of communication, staff training, turnover of staff, misconceptions of PBIS, and staff buy-in (Fallon & McCarthy, 2014). High staff turnover rate contributes to lower fidelity. New hires do not receive adequate professional development. Some staff members are hesitant or have pushed back on adopting new school improvement practices (Nese et al., 2016). When staff does not agree with a new way of thinking, pushback can occur. The older generation of teachers can be hesitant to have a growth mindset. To succeed, teachers need to have a growth mindset with the ever-changing times. All these fidelity challenges affect the sustainability of the PBIS program.

Recently, the substitute shortage has impacted allowing staff members to receive professional development. This lack of substitutes can cause training to be canceled or cause staff members not to attend. Not receiving the same professional development keeps teachers from being on the same page about implementing a program. Lack of school funding may contribute to staff members not receiving professional development. Each school only receives so much allocated funding to be used for professional development. Once allocated funds are gone, teachers can no longer attend training for that year. Keeping staff members up to date on the professional development of PBIS or any school program is essential to having a successful school that supports academics and behavior.

Family Engagement

Family engagement relates to how families assist their children in school (Garbacz, 2019). The support of families in schools is beneficial to both staff and students. Research shows that "family-school collaboration has shown to increase positive educational and social outcomes for students" (Messina et al., 2015, p.277). The availability of the family will determine the level of engagement. "Student success is inextricably linked to multiple contextual influences, most notably schools and homes. "The relationships developed at home and at school and interaction between home and school influence child development and learning" (Garbacz et al., 2018, p.448).

Developing partnerships between home and school provides students with academic and behavioral success (Garbacz et al., 2018). Open communication between parents and teachers creates an essential partnership. Providing newsletters, surveys, and phone calls are examples of ways teachers can keep parents involved in their child's education. In addition, parents can join PBIS committees to give input from the parent's perspective. Establishing guidelines for parents to follow will make it a positive experience for parents and teachers (Garbacz, 2019).

Creating a vision of partnership with family engagement starts with staff morale (Garbacz, 2019, p.196). A crucial first step in creating a comprehensive family engagement plan is understanding the thoughts and attitudes of staff members (Garbacz, 2019). Each staff member needs to be on the same page for the vision to be successful. The next step involves addressing the barriers to family engagement, which includes "improving communication, making families feel welcomed, addressing time conflicts between school activities and family obligations, and providing a structure for extending family involvement" (Garbacz et al., 2018, p.449). A study using 204 PBIS members found that the lack of available resources was another barrier that most

districts faced when trying to build a positive partnership with families (Garbacz et al., 2018). Providing schools with the necessary resources is critical to supporting students' individual needs. These resources are "materials to help teach parents/families to support PBIS and positive reinforcement" (Garbacz et al., 2018, p.452).

A successful partnership stems from having families participate in school functions. Research explains another hurdle is the family's willingness to participate (Garbacz et al., 2018). Some schools have poor parent involvement. Without parent involvement, having a school and family partnership is challenging.

As part of PBIS's Tier 1, systems are in place that acknowledge the incorporation of family engagement (Garbacz et al., 2018). Each district has its way of incorporating how it will include families on PBIS committees. What works for one school will not always work for another school. A diverse PBIS team consisting of committee members, families, and students will ensure that all students' needs are supported. Including all individuals who support students will make the program successful (Hieneman & Fefer, 2017). Offering multilingual support with family engagement will ensure diversity. Holding school events such as family nights or orientations will ensure parents feel connected with their child's education. In addition, offering translator support when needed is crucial. It is vital to find cheerful and willing families to volunteer their time.

Positive Effects on Student Behavior

PBIS has many different effects on student success. According to Ryoo et al., "many states have adopted PBIS to improve student outcomes and school climate, and to serve better students who are at risk for academic failure and dropout/expulsion" (Ryoo et al., 2018, p.629). Additional benefits of PBIS include healthier schools and better staff relationships (James et al.,

2019). Baule explains that using PBIS in schools is a way for teachers to treat students equitably

(Baule, 2020). One study found that schools using PBIS only suspended about 4% of their

student body, which is rated lower than the national average (Baule, 2020). Studies have found

that "all students, and specifically students with or at-risk of emotional and behavioral concerns,

benefit from learning environments that are consistent, predictable, positive, and safe" (Nese et

al., 2016, p.268). A meta-analysis found that students from low socioeconomic backgrounds and

those with high-risk behaviors see the highest benefits from PBIS (Seeshing Yeung et al., 2016).

Teachers find that using PBIS improves language skills and academics (Cunningham et al.,

2020). Students could use what they learned from PBIS to avoid negative ramifications (Gage &

Stevens, 2018).

Improving student behavior by focusing on positive expectations is the main focus of

PBIS. Continuously going over expectations throughout the year refreshes the expectations in

students' minds. Many schools go over expectations as a whole student body in all areas of the

school. Students practice the right and wrong ways to behave in areas such as the cafeteria,

restroom, hallway, bus, and classrooms. The expectations are reinforced three times a year or as

needed. Teachers can look at the office referral data to see what areas of the school need to be

retaught or reviewed. PBIS decreases classroom behavioral problems, leading to fewer chances

of students not learning (Ryoo et al., 2018, p.630). Fewer negative behaviors will then boost

student engagement and students being on-task. One way to decrease negative behaviors is by

giving students specific feedback on what they are doing correctly. Complimenting students for

good behavior is a way to improve the culture of the school as well. Focusing on positive instead

of negative behaviors allows teachers to be proactive instead of reactive. In addition, offering

extrinsic rewards to the whole student body will motivate students to meet expectations.

There is conflicting research on whether PBIS improves student achievement. According to a study, "659 instructional hours per year" are saved when implementing school-wide PBIS (Ryoo et al., 2018, p.630). Teachers can focus more on academics instead of stopping learning because of student misbehaviors. Students can maintain higher levels of engagement when they are not distracted by poor behaviors. A study conducted in Minnesota saw no significant changes in student achievement over several years (Ryoo et al., 2018, p.640). Research shows New Hampshire improved student academics in mathematics (Ryoo et al., 2018).

Student dynamics play a part in the success of PBIS by looking at ethnicity, socioeconomic status, student-free and reduced lunch rate, and parent involvement. The administration notifies parents once office referrals take place. Keeping track of the different office referrals is a great documentation tool that aids in improving student behavior. The misbehaviors improve by keeping track of where and when the behavior happened. All these parts play a positive role in improving student behavior.

School Profile

Van Allen Elementary is consistently improving student performance. According to the Department of Education's overall performance rating, Van Allen scores a rating of 53.68, which is considered acceptable (Iowa.gov, 2018). Both literacy and mathematics scores fall under the state average. These scores are made up from the state testing called Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress (ISASP). Students in grades third through eleventh must take this assessment.

Van Allen is one of seven elementary schools that make up Mount Pleasant Community School District in Mount Pleasant, Iowa. According to the 2020 census, the population of Mount Pleasant is 8,572 (World Population Review, 2022). Mount Pleasant has a majority white

population with 82.86% (World Population Review, 2022). Mount Pleasant Community School District believes that "learning does not start or end with school but is a lifelong process shared with the home and the community. We are committed to working together for the betterment of our students and our community" (Mount Pleasant Community School District, 2019).

Van Allen Elementary school has a student body of approximately 320 students ranging from preschool to fifth grade. This school has two sections for each grade level, kindergarten through fifth. Student demographics break down as 72% Caucasian, 14% Hispanic, 4% African American, and 2% Asian (Public School Review, 2022). The teacher-student ratio is 14:1 (Public School Review, 2022). The school also has a free and reduced lunch rate of 72%. As part of the Mount Pleasant Community School District, Van Allen uses technology to improve student learning. The whole school district is one-to-one with iPads or student laptops. Each student uses technology to enhance their education, no matter the grade.

As one of the biggest elementaries in Mount Pleasant, Van Allen Elementary holds many fundraisers and school functions for families. Attending school functions is one way for parents to support their children's education. Van Allen has top-notch parents who will volunteer for many activities throughout the school year. The Scholastic Bookfair is one fundraiser that happens two times a year. This fundraiser raises money by giving a percentage of the money earned back to the school library to spend. It is also a way for parents to buy books for their children at a low cost. Another popular function that Van Allen puts on is called Kids Christmas. The community donates items for students to cheaply purchase for their families for Christmas. Teachers volunteer their time to help wrap the gifts for the students to surprise their families with. It takes parent participation to set up and run this popular event.

Parents at Van Allen ensure all students receive the necessary supplies to succeed at school. Van Allen offers milk for kindergarten through second grade, but some families cannot afford it. Many families will donate milk money so students do not go without. Parents also donate extra school supplies at the beginning of the school year.

The Mount Pleasant Community School District believes in helping students succeed by giving them proper support. "The mission of the Mount Pleasant Community School District is to empower students to achieve without limits" (Mount Pleasant Community School District, 2019). The vision of "Mount Pleasant Community School District will create an environment dedicated to empowering all students to achieve individual excellence" (Mount Pleasant Community School District, 2019). Van Allen prides itself on making staff and students feel appreciated. Van Allen "celebrates success and uses every opportunity as a teachable moment...every achievement is worth acknowledging" (Sands, n.d.).

Van Allen Elementary's learning goal is for students to show growth towards the mastery of the Common Core State Standards. The Mount Pleasant Community School District has adopted standards-based grading. Educators hope their students show growth on the report card. Teachers communicate learning goals through parent-teacher conferences, phone calls, and letters home.

Van Allen uses a variety of different curriculum that is consistent with the rest of the school district. The literacy curriculum is Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA). Students in preschool through fifth grade use this program with fidelity. The program bases itself on the science of reading. CKLA "combines a multi-sensory approach to phonics with rich texts carefully sequenced to build content knowledge" (Amplify Education Inc., 2022).

The math curriculum used by Mount Pleasant elementary schools is called iReady. Students in kindergarten through fifth grade use this program. iReady helps "engage students of all levels and backgrounds, motivate students to persist in skill-building, provide scaffolded support, and create personal learning pathways" (Curriculum Associates, 2022.).

The social-emotional learning curriculum used is Sanford Harmony and is used in grades kindergarten through fifth grade. This program uses stories, games, and videos to help students work on social-emotional skills. Some topics covered include communication, diversity, empathy, critical thinking, problem-solving, and peer relationships.

Mount Pleasant Community school district prides itself on providing professional development opportunities for its staff. There are eight teaching standards that educators need to follow. One of them is to "engage in professional growth" (Iowa Department of Education, 2018). Each month, educators have one to two full professional development days to continue working on the big rocks of the district. These rocks consist of social-emotional learning, standards-based grading, and gradual release of responsibility. In addition, educators work in PLC teams multiple times a month to promote consistency throughout the school district. Throughout the school year, staff participates in countless book studies to help understand and learn new material. These book studies are one way for staff members to continue to be lifelong learners. Educators from this school district also complete personalized learning plans. Educators choose something they want to work on during the year and work with a group of individuals to achieve their learning plan. Personalized learning plans help teachers continue growing and learning in an area that interests them.

Mount Pleasant Community School District uses FastBridge as its literacy assessment tool, which is state-mandated. This assessment is given three times a year to students in

kindergarten through fifth grade (Mt Pleasant Community School District, n.d.). Teachers

individually assess students. FastBridge is also used to assess students' social-emotional well-

being using the Social, Academic, and Emotional Behavior Risk Screener (SAEBRS). The

classroom teacher will complete this assessment three times a year, and supports are put in place

depending on how students score. The highest score that students can receive is 57. As part of

the iReady math curriculum, the program provides a diagnostic assessment that teachers use to

assess their students. This assessment, evaluated three times a year, shows students' prerequisites

to reach grade-level material. It also compiles students into instructional groupings to better

support their needs. Lastly, the diagnostic shows where the students fall for grade level

distribution. After each reporting period, teachers send home report cards and letters explaining

where students fall compared to the state norms.

Needs Assessment

According to research, for PBIS to be successful full administrative support needs to

happen (Cofey & Horner, 2012). Van Allen Elementary would benefit the most from receiving

more effective professional development from administration on behavior to ensure the fidelity

and sustainability of the program. Staff members cannot implement PBIS consistently because of

a lack of professional development in behavior compared to academics. Van Allen continuously

has new teachers and paraprofessionals each year. Providing the same professional development

to all staff members is vital to implementing PBIS effectively and an important part of a

sustainable program (McIntosh et al., 2018).

Research shows that for PBIS to be sustainable, staff buy-in needs to occur; this is

another reason professional development needs to be improved. According to a yearly survey

sent to staff members, staff has mixed feelings about the purpose and use of PBIS. Each staff

member implements PBIS how they see fit, whether it aligns with the district's vision or not. The

district's vision statement says "The primary purpose of education in the Mount Pleasant

Community Schools is to help each student to develop the knowledge, skills, interests and the

attitudes necessary to become a responsible contributing citizen" (Mount Pleasant Community

School District, 2019). Supporting students to achieve success starts with providing consistent

training throughout the district. Consistency is something that is lacking in this school district.

Staff members need the necessary information to stay up to date with PBIS. The

information they require for professional development includes the purpose of PBIS, knowing

the difference between tiers, and how to drill down and input the data correctly. Understanding

why PBIS is beneficial is a good way to start getting staff members on board. Figuring out the

responsible parties for each PBIS tier will ensure everything gets done as it should. Lastly,

learning to input the data correctly will ensure that all staff members consistently show the most

valid data. Learning how to drill down the data specifically will help the district see where the

areas of highest need are.

Data & Analysis

Van Allen Elementary has a student body of approximately 320 students from preschool

to fifth grade. As a district, Mount Pleasant offers many opportunities for professional growth.

However, the number of professional development in-services on behavior is severely lacking

compared to academic in-services. Each year many new staff members are hired. Holding

consistent trainings on behavior is crucial to running PBIS with fidelity. The trainings ensure that

each staff member uses PBIS the way the creators intended. Also, constant trainings will

reinforce the correct way to input the behavior data into SWISSuite, the data tracking program.

The Center on PBIS (2022) states, "Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is an evidence-based three-tiered framework to improve and integrate all of the data, systems, and practices affecting student outcomes every day" (Center on PBIS, 2022). Being an educator entails having access to all forms of data to support individual learning. Data tracking is one way to see students and staff members' strengths and weaknesses, with the hope that keeping track of and analyzing data will show growth in both students and staff members. Understanding a school system's strengths and weaknesses helps improve the school climate, student engagement, classroom management, etc.

Using SWISSuite, teachers can use many different forms of data to check the progress of implementing PBIS. Looking at office discipline referrals by location is a critical form of data to help identify where the biggest problem in behavior exists. The data show the highest area of misconduct at Van Allen Elementary is on the playground, with a total of 65 office discipline referrals (SWISSuite, 2022). The second highest area of misconduct is in the classroom, with 40 office discipline referrals (SWISSuite, 2022). The rest of the locations at Van Allen Elementary have a minimal number of office discipline referrals for the school year.

The data show a weakness in misbehavior on the playground during recess (SWISSuite, 2022). At Van Allen, there are three recesses during the school day. Different grade levels are present at the second and third recesses, but the first recess is divided by grade level. Van Allen has a large student body. High playground misbehaviors show that there are not enough adults to keep students engaged.

The classroom has the second-highest number of office discipline referrals (SWISSuite, 2022). This reflects a system issue, and teachers must reteach their classroom expectations. Also,

some teachers might not be following PBIS guidelines. Staff buy-in is key to a successful program.

Location referral data lists all the areas in the school that have had office discipline referrals throughout the school year. One weakness of not having consistent trainings with all staff members is having locations in the school double-listed as both gym and cafeteria. At Van Allen, students eat lunch in the gym. The problem lies with staff members not accurately inputting data in the correct misbehavior location. Some staff members will record the office discipline referral in the gym, and some will record in the cafeteria for the same problem. Also, the gym teacher might input data for the gym class instead of the classroom. Not having consistency skews the data for educators to analyze later.

Bathroom and off-campus are two areas that have a low number of office discipline referrals (SWISSuite, 2022). The data indicates that teachers follow through with teaching bathroom and outside-of-school expectations. Proactively teaching expectations compared to reactively teaching expectations is essential to having a well-run program.

Other assessments that would be necessary include formatting surveys for staff members to fill out based on what they feel are strengths and weaknesses of PBIS. The school could also assess ways staff members are proactively teaching student expectations. Students could even fill out surveys to show their knowledge of what PBIS stands for and share if there are any changes that they would like made. Using the state assessment data from SAEBRs, which teachers fill out three times a year, Tier 1 and Tier 2 use the information to make Social Academic Instructional intervention groups (SAIG). "A SAIG is designed to teach students appropriate behaviors that will lead to success" (Milwaukee Public Schools, 2022). Different Tier 2 or Tier 3 groups are available based on what is working or not working to support the student.

Action Plan

Creating steps to ensure that PBIS is followed with fidelity is essential in all elementary schools. These steps will allow administration and staff members to follow through to have a sustainable PBIS program. PBIS has many research-based strategies for staff members to use to support students individually, in small groups, and whole groups. For students to succeed, staff members must keep up to date with ongoing trainings. In addition, new staff members need professional development to keep them on track with the rest of the staff. Research shows that having a shared vision increases the sustainability of the PBIS program (Cofey & Horner, 2012).

Developing a common language and understanding the terminology is the first step in solving the problem of staff not following PBIS with fidelity. The universal system is to "educate all staff on how to implement and participate in the process" of PBIS (Seeshing Yeung et al., 2016, p.147). Developing a common language will ensure staff members provide students with the correct feedback when needed. The core of Tier 1 includes "defining and teaching behavioral expectations, providing multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate appropriate skills and receive feedback/encouragement, and responding to problem behavior in a constructive and instructive manner" (Seeshing Yeung et al., 2016, p.147). The highest need at Van Allen Elementary includes providing consistent professional development on behavior so that all staff members are on the same page. Constant trainings will ensure more staff buy into the PBIS system. Once staff members use the same language and terminology, students will have and know the exact expectations throughout the building.

Another step for staff members to follow in the action plan is completing the PBIS Self-Assessment Survey (SAS). This survey helps to "guide the implementation of SWPBIS across multiple school systems, i.e., schoolwide, non-classroom, and individual student intensive

support" (McIntosh et al., p.310). The self-assessment survey will show if plans are in place. The

survey can be used as a pre-and post-assessment of what each staff member feels is happening in

the building. Using the Self-Assessment Survey will also show administration and PBIS

committees if staff members understand the terminology of PBIS. The different PBIS

committees will then use the data from this survey to see what areas need improvement.

Included below is the Self-Assessment Survey that staff members will fill out, as well as

the Self-Assessment Survey Summary of the data. After reviewing the survey, decisions on what

kind of professional development is needed to increase the fidelity of PBIS can be established.

Research shows that the "monitoring of implementation data allows for the innovation to be

improved and refined over time" (Cofey & Horner, 2012, p.409).

The next step in the action plan is using the SWIS Drill-Down worksheet (also available

below). Using this worksheet will help staff members consistently report data accurately. One of

the areas of need at Van Allen Elementary is drilling down the data correctly. Staff members

struggle with inputting office discipline referrals correctly because of the lack of understanding

of the common language and terminology. The table has steps that will guide the reporting staff

member to fill out exactly what happened, where the incident occurred, when it happened, and

why it happened. The SWIS Drill-Down worksheet shows what kind of action is needed based

on the behavior that took place. This worksheet is a great record-keeping tool for tracking data

from staff members. It also includes a solution development section that staff members will fill

out to write down which staff member is responsible, and the data used.

Implementation of School Improvement Plan

Effectively implementing the action plan to improve the fidelity of PBIS is crucial to the success of the program. A timeline must be created and followed to keep the action plan on track. The author will hold a professional development session at the beginning of the school year at Van Allen Elementary, followed by a professional development refresher at the beginning of the second semester. During these sessions, staff members will review common language and terminology to ensure everyone is on the same page for the coming semester and new hires will start on the same page as the rest of the staff.

The author will use resources from the Center on PBIS to explain the purpose of the Self-Assessment Survey and how staff members will use it. This survey will judge staff members' knowledge of PBIS and gather their thoughts on PBIS implementation at Van Allen Elementary. Staff members will complete the survey at the beginning and end of the year as a pre- and post-assessment. Staff members will also be using the SWIS Drill-Down worksheet. The author will use sample data to explain how to accurately look at data on SWISSuite. Staff members can then practice drilling down the data together before completing a worksheet on a student.

The author will create a PowerPoint presentation explaining the different components of PBIS, such as common language and terminology, in addition to demonstrating entering office discipline referrals into SWISSuite, the online data tracking website. The presentation will also provide staff members with examples of data to compare from previous years. During the presentation, a behavior matrix of expected behaviors will be shown. In addition, a chart of major and minor office discipline referral behaviors will be shown so that everyone is consistent.

An additional resource to be shared is Cofey & Horner's guide to the implementation of start-up and ongoing activities. These activities provide administration and PBIS committees with ways to evaluate the implementation and fidelity of the program. Using these activities as a

guide will ensure a successful and sustainable PBIS program.

Table 1.

Implementation Start-Up Activities (Cofey & Horner, 2012, p.411)		
Establish commitment	Establish and maintain team	Conduct self-assessment
Establish schoolwide expectations	Establish information system	Build capacity for function-based support
Implementation Ongoing Activities (Cofey & Horner, 2012, p.412)		
SWPBIS has met at least monthly	SWPBIS has given statue report to faculty at least monthly	Activities for SWPBIS action plan implemented
Accuracy of implementation of SWPBIS action plan assessed	Effectiveness of SWPBIS action plan implementation assessed	SWPBIS data analyzed

The author of this project is responsible for presenting the PowerPoint to staff members

of Van Allen Elementary, as well as providing copies of the Self-Assessment Survey and SWIS

Drill-Down worksheet. The author will also put staff members in groups that will practice

drilling down the data together. The PBIS external coordinator will ensure that all staff members

have the appropriate access to SWISSuite. Staff members on the different tier committees will

have full access to SWISSuite to look at data, while those who are not on committees will only

have access to input an office discipline referral. Van Allen staff members are responsible for

filling out the Self-Assessment Survey and have until the first day of school to complete it. The

author of this project will then be responsible for collecting the Self-Assessment Surveys from

staff members and filling out the Self-Assessment Survey Summary with members of PBIS

committees. Results will be shared with staff at the next weekly faculty meeting.

The success of this implementation plan will be monitored by sending out a Google form

every eight weeks soliciting feedback from staff members. The form will provide answers on

how PBIS is being implemented and if staff members agree with its use. It will ask if staff

members are following and reinforcing expectations, are using the correct common language,

and understand the terminology of PBIS. The form will also show what areas staff members feel

need more training or improvements.

Many barriers and challenges could impede the success of this implementation plan. One

of those is staff members struggling to get on board with the new changes. Research shows

having a shared vision and staff buy-in are vital to the sustainability of the PBIS program (Cofey

& Horner, 2012). Another challenge could be staff members not completing the Self-Assessment

Survey. This survey is crucial to understanding staff members' viewpoints on implementing

PBIS at Van Allen Elementary. An additional challenge would include staff members not

completing the Google form every eight weeks. Again, the information from this resource is vital

to gauging staff buy-in and having a shared vision at Van Allen Elementary.

Conclusion

In conclusion, implementing Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) with

fidelity requires many factors to be in place to achieve success schoolwide, such as

sustainability, fidelity, family engagement, and positive effects on student behavior.

Many barriers inhibit schools from sustaining PBIS over long periods of time. These

barriers include not having full administration support, not having staff buy-in, or lacking a

shared vision (Cofey & Horner, 2012). Using data to make informed decisions will keep the long-term goals in place, including sustaining PBIS.

The fidelity of any program consists of following a program the way the creators intended. Having systems in place such as the School-wide Evaluation Tool (SET) and Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) will ensure that PBIS is run with fidelity. Both tools will help staff members make informed decisions using data.

Engaging families in PBIS implementation adds another layer of support for both students and families to meet needs. Research shows that "family-school collaboration has shown to increase positive educational and social outcomes for students" (Messina et al., 2015, p.277). A full partnership with families and the school allows families to feel heard by communicating, offering multilingual support, and ensuring resources are available.

PBIS effects behavioral, social, and academic areas of student success. Using PBIS, teachers can focus on proactively teaching expectations rather than reactively teaching them. Research shows that teachers dealing with fewer behavior problems increases students' chances of learning (Ryoo et al., 2018).

Schools today are seeing more and more challenging behavior from students. In a survey completed by teachers, 71% stated behavior is worsening (Kurtz & Gewertz, 2022). PBIS is beneficial to schools when implemented with fidelity because it addresses all students' needs proactively and positively. The PBIS program provides varied levels of support to students.

The findings from this school improvement plan show that schools using PBIS can use their data to make informed decisions to support individual, small group, or whole group learning. This study will inform school administration and staff of the benefits of PBIS and why it is beneficial to implement the program effectively. PBIS implementation strategies are

available through the free data tracking website, SWISSuite. Using the findings from this school

improvement plan, the author of this project will provide professional development to all staff

members at Van Allen Elementary to create a shared vision and buy-in to PBIS. Going forward,

using school data to track the fidelity of PBIS will ensure the success and sustainability of the

program.

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Appendix A

Referrals by Location
All, Aug 1, 2021 - Jul 10, 2022
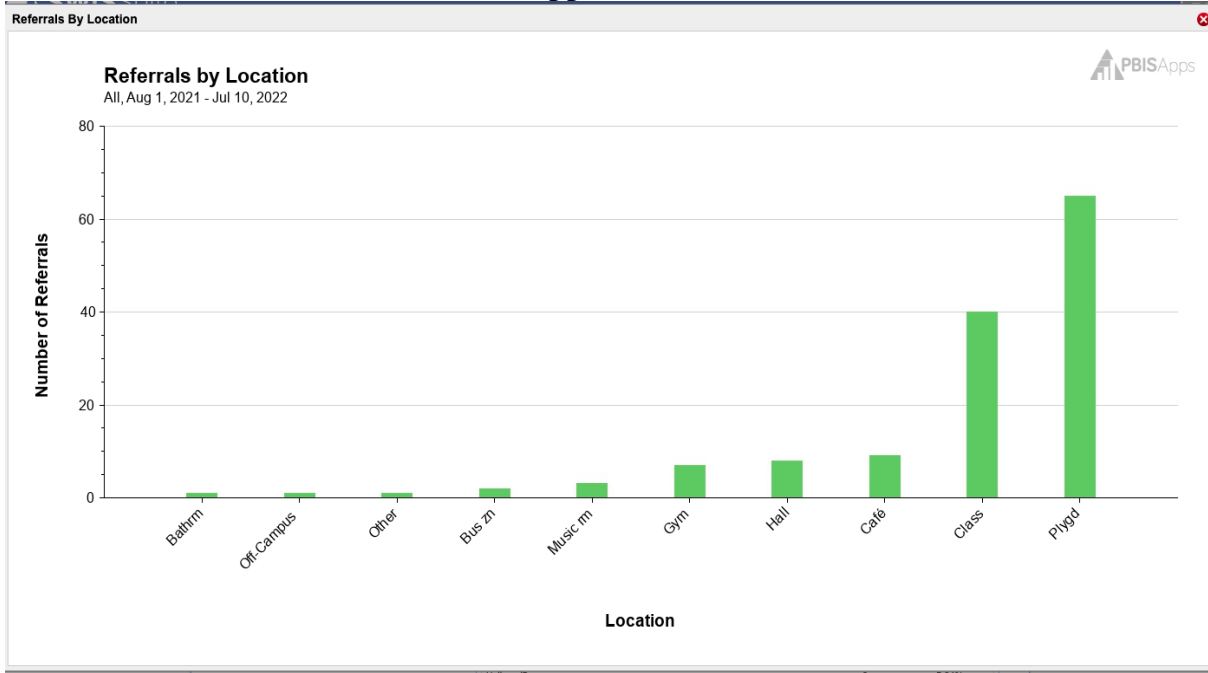
Appendix B

NONCLASSROOM SETTING SYSTEMS

Current Status			Feature	Priority for Improvement		
In Place	Partial in Place	Not in Place	**Non-classroom settings** are defined as particular times or places where supervision is emphasized (e.g., hallways, cafeteria, playground, bus).	High	Med	Low
			1. School-wide expected student behaviors apply to non-classroom settings.			
			2. School-wide expected student behaviors are taught in non-classroom settings.			
			3. Supervisors actively supervise (move, scan, & interact) students in non-classroom settings.			
			4. Rewards exist for meeting expected student behaviors in non-classroom settings.			
			5. Physical/architectural features are modified to limit (a) unsupervised settings, (b) unclear traffic patterns, and (c) inappropriate access to & exit from school grounds.			
			6. Scheduling of student movement ensures appropriate numbers of students in non-classroom spaces.			
			7. Staff receives regular opportunities for developing and improving active supervision skills.			
			8. Status of student behavior and management practices are evaluated quarterly from data.			
			9. All staff are involved directly or indirectly in management of non-classroom settings.			

Name of School _____   Date _____

Appendix C

CLASSROOM SYSTEMS

Current Status			Feature	Priority for Improvement		
In Place	Partial in Place	Not in Place	**Classroom settings** are defined as instructional settings in which teacher(s) supervise & teach groups of students.	High	Med	Low
			1. Expected student behavior & routines in classrooms are stated positively & defined clearly.			
			2. Problem behaviors are defined clearly.			
			3. Expected student behavior & routines in classrooms are taught directly.			
			4. Expected student behaviors are acknowledged regularly (positively reinforced) (>4 positives to 1 negative).			
			5. Problem behaviors receive consistent consequences.			
			6. Procedures for expected & problem behaviors are consistent with school-wide procedures.			
			7. Classroom-based options exist to allow classroom instruction to continue when problem behavior occurs.			
			8. Instruction & curriculum materials are matched to student ability (math, reading, language).			
			9. Students experience high rates of academic success ($\geq$ 75% correct).			
			10. Teachers have regular opportunities for access to assistance & recommendations (observation, instruction, & coaching).			
			11. Transitions between instructional & non-instructional activities are efficient & orderly.			

Name of School _____   Date _____

Appendix D

INDIVIDUAL STUDENT SYSTEMS

Current Status			Feature	Priority for Improvement		
In Place	Partial in Place	Not in Place	**Individual student systems** are defined as specific supports for students who engage in chronic problem behaviors (1%-7% of enrollment)	High	Med	Low
			1. Assessments are conducted regularly to identify students with chronic problem behaviors.			
			2. A simple process exists for teachers to request assistance.			
			3. A behavior support team responds promptly (within 2 working days) to students who present chronic problem behaviors.			
			4. Behavioral support team includes an individual skilled at conducting functional behavioral assessment.			
			5. Local resources are used to conduct functional assessment-based behavior support planning (~10 hrs/week/student).			
			6. Significant family &/or community members are involved when appropriate & possible.			
			7. School includes formal opportunities for families to receive training on behavioral support/positive parenting strategies.			
			8. Behavior is monitored & feedback provided regularly to the behavior support team & relevant staff.			

Name of School _____   Date _____

Appendix E

SCHOOL-WIDE SYSTEMS

Current Status			Feature	Priority for Improvement		
In Place	Partial in Place	Not in Place	**School-wide** is defined as involving all students, all staff, & all settings.	High	Med	Low
			1. A small number (e.g. 3-5) of positively & clearly stated student expectations or rules are defined.			
			2. Expected student behaviors are taught directly.			
			3. Expected student behaviors are rewarded regularly.			
			4. Problem behaviors (failure to meet expected student behaviors) are defined clearly.			
			5. Consequences for problem behaviors are defined clearly.			
			6. Distinctions between office v. classroom managed problem behaviors are clear.			
			7. Options exist to allow classroom instruction to continue when problem behavior occurs.			
			8. Procedures are in place to address emergency/dangerous situations.			
			9. A team exists for behavior support planning & problem solving.			
			10. School administrator is an active participant on the behavior support team.			
			11. Data on problem behavior patterns are collected and summarized within an on-going system.			
			12. Patterns of student problem behavior are reported to teams and faculty for active decision-making on a regular basis (e.g. monthly).			
			13. School has formal strategies for informing families about expected student behaviors at school.			
			14. Booster training activities for students are developed, modified, & conducted based on school data.			
			15. School-wide behavior support team has a budget for (a) teaching students, (b) on-going rewards, and (c) annual staff planning.			
			16. All staff are involved directly and/or indirectly			

Appendix F

SAS Summary

School: _____   Date: _____

Use the SAS Tally page and the SAS Summary Graph to develop an accurate summary & determine initial focus area priorities

For each system area, follow the steps as outlined below	Overall Perception			
	School-wide	**Non-classroom**	**Classroom**	**Individual Student**
1. Use *SAS Summary Graph* to rate overall perspective of PBIS implementation & circle High, Med. or Low	High Med Low	High Med Low	High Med Low	High Med Low
2. Using *SAS Tally Pages*, list three major strengths	a. b. c.	a. b. c.	a. b. c.	a. b. c.
3. Using the SAS Tally pages, list three major areas in need of development. 4. For each system, circle one priority area for focusing development activities	a b. c.	a. b c	a. b. c.	Targeted group or Individual interventions a. b. c.
5. Circle or define activities for this/next year's focus to support area selected for development	a. Organize a team b. Define/teach school rules c. Define consequence systems for appropriate & inappropriate behavior d. Define a measurement system linked to school improvement goal e. Establish communication cycles with other school teams f. Develop implementation plan	a. Define/teach routines b. Supervisor booster training & feedback sessions c. Data management d. Maintain team & communication cycle with other school teams e. Develop implementation plan	a. Define/teach routines/ link with school wide rules b. Classroom staff boosters & feedback sessions for creating effective strategies/materials c. Data management d. Maintain team & communication cycle with other school teams e. Develop implementation plan	a. Process for referral & support plan design, implementation & monitoring b. Plan to develop & use FBA to support skills c. Data management d. Maintain team & communication cycle with other school teams e. Develop implementation plan
6. Specify system(s) to: sustain (S) & develop (D).				
7. Use the PBIS Annual Action Planning form for determining management, design & implementation activities in the selected focus areas.				

(Center on PBIS, 2022)

Appendix G

SWIS Drill-Down Worksheet

	Red flag item is identified by analyzing Core Reports *(most common)*, Additional Reports, Student Dashboard, or SWIS Dashboard *(less common/less preferred)*. **Reminder**: Add filters one at a time and use each filter once.	
Red flag item:	☐ Where? ☐ What? ☐ When? ☐ Who?	Date Range:
Drill-Down Filter(s):	☐ Where? ☐ What? ☐ When? ☐ Who?	# of Referrals = # of Students = # of Staff =
Drill-Down Filter(s):	☐ Where? ☐ What? ☐ When? ☐ Who?	# of Referrals = # of Students = # of Staff =
Drill-Down Filter(s):	☐ Where? ☐ What? ☐ When? ☐ Who? ☐ Why?	# of Referrals = # of Students = # of Staff =
Drill-Down Filter:	☐ Where? ☐ What? ☐ When? ☐ Who? ☐ Why?	# of Referrals = # of Students = # of Staff =
Referral Summary:	Number of students involved: _____ Number of referrals included: _____	Is the problem best addressed through systems or with individual students: ☐ Systems ☐ Students
Precise Problem Statement:		
Goal:		

Solution Development					
Solution Components	**What are the action steps?**	**Who is Responsible?**	**By When?**	**How will fidelity be measured?**	**Notes/Updates**
Prevention					
Teaching					
Recognition					
Extinction					
Corrective Consequence					
	What data will we look at?	**Who is responsible for gathering the data?**	**When/How often will data be gathered?**	**Where will data be shared?**	**Who will see the data?**
Data Collection					

(Center on PBIS, 2022)

Appendix H

Problem Behavior

Definition of behaviors	Minor Behavior • Addressed by staff member who witnessed behavior • Classroom Teacher will contact home. • Record in SWIS	Major Behavior • Immediate Office Referral • Office contact home • Record in SWIS • 4th minor ODR=major ODR
Disruption of learning environment: Student requires redirection that interrupts instruction: • Making noise • Yelling out • Disruption during instruction • Constant talking/ interruptions • Throwing small objects • Unnecessary tattling	Behavior exceeds classroom management plan in the range of 3+ times per day for same behavior (at teacher discretion)	Behavior that continues into a pattern and resists previous intervention across all school settings/staff -or- • Actions which cause school-wide disruption

Appendix I

	Practice Responsibility	**R**espect and Safety	**I**ntegrity	**D**o Your Best	**E**mpathy
What It Means!	*Being responsible means you do the things you are expected to do.*	*Respect is thinking and acting in a way that shows others you care about their feelings and their well-being. Keeping yourself and others free from harm or danger.*	*Doing the right thing, even when no one is looking.*	*The ability and self control that pushes you to work through challenges.*	*Ability to understand how someone else is feeling. Put yourself in someone else's shoes.*
LUNCHROOM	-Get necessary items on tray - Clean up your area -Raise hand to leave seat	-Keep your food on your tray - Use good manners - Use appropriate language	-Keeps hands, feet, and all other objects (FOOD) to yourself -Eat only your own food	-Face forward in line -Eat first, talk later -Speak to friends in an appropriate voice volume	-Use quiet voices levels 1-2 - Take care of your belongings (lunch cards, lunch boxes)
CLASSROOM	-Obey classroom expectations -Have necessary items -Be on time	-Follow directions from teacher and staff -Take care of school and personal property -Listen to speaker - Use appropriate language	-Complete and return papers and homework on time -Do your own work -Pack up all the materials you need to take home.	-Try your hardest -Ask questions -Check your work -Keep track of your school materials.	-Wait patiently for your turn -Use kind words and actions -Recognize and respect others' feelings
HALLWAY	-Share the hallway space	-Use quiet voices levels 1-2 -Walking feet -Recognize and respect others' learning	-Keeps hands, feet, and all other objects to yourself -Go directly to where you need to be	-Carry items appropriately -Face forward and walk single file	-Recognize and respect others' displayed work