Implementation of School-wide PBIS across the United States

Scott A. Spaulding, Robert H. Horner, Seth L. May, & Claudia G. Vincent

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Research Statement and Rationale

This evaluation brief examines the proportion of U.S. schools engaged in School-wide PBIS (SWPBIS) implementation, as of October 1, 2008, as reported to the National Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports. Currently, nearly 8,000 schools are in varying stages of adopting SWPBIS, and this number is expected to increase over the next decade given the additional requirements by federal and state agencies that schools produce social and academic outcomes (Doolittle, Horner, Bradley, Sugai, & Vincent, 2007; Sugai, 2007; IDEA, 2004; NCLB, 2001; Kauffman & Horner, 2007). As SWPBIS is adopted by more schools, districts, and states, it is helpful to examine the pattern of use across and within states.

Data Sources

The two data sources for this research brief are (a) the National Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (TA-Center) and (b) the Common Core of Data provided by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES).

TA-Center Data

The TA Center establishes a PBIS coordinator within every state who serves as a state-level contact point for SWPBIS. This coordinator provides dissemination of SWPBIS implementation and training to school districts within each state. In many cases, these school PBIS efforts are coordinated

through a state leadership team, designated subsequent to (a) completion of the PBIS Blueprint Self-Assessment, (b) development of an action plan, and (c) direct collaboration with a TA-Center partner.

Twice each year, the TA Center gathers information from all state coordinators regarding the number of schools implementing SWPBIS across the U.S. These schools have initiated or completed a SWPBIS training sequence, available through the TA-Center online library (at www.pbis.org). In addition, school personnel have received assistance and support from a TA-Center partner. Other readiness criteria for PBIS schools include active participation from a building-level administrator and "student social-behavior" as one of the top three school improvement goals. However, implementation fidelity of these criteria was not assessed in this report.

It is possible that in some instances, schools may implement SWPBIS even though districts neglect to report this information to state coordinators (e.g., the school is a new adopter of SWPBIS or the school may have received training from an organization not coordinated by the TA Center). Thus, the summary information presented in this research brief should be interpreted with caution as an exact estimate of SWPBIS implementation.

NCES Data

Although the data reported by state-level coordinators provide information on counts of schools implementing SWPBIS, the NCES data provide a broader context of implementation across all U.S. schools. The NCES Common Core of Data includes information describing school, student, and staff characteristics for public elementary and secondary schools in the United States, reported annually by state education officials (Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2005). For comparison with the number of schools implementing SWPBIS, we summarized NCES data from the academic year 2005-2006 for each state. These data were segmented into the following grade-level categories, and included both regular education and alternate/ juvenile justice schools: pre-kindergarten, K-6, 6-9, 9-12, and K-8/12.

Data Presentation

Table 1 presents a descriptive summary of the number of schools implementing SWPBIS, as reported by all states (and the District of Columbia) as of October 1, 2008. The number of schools implementing PBIS is divided into five, grade-level categories for each state: preschool/early childhood, elementary, middle/junior high, high school, and alternative/center school.
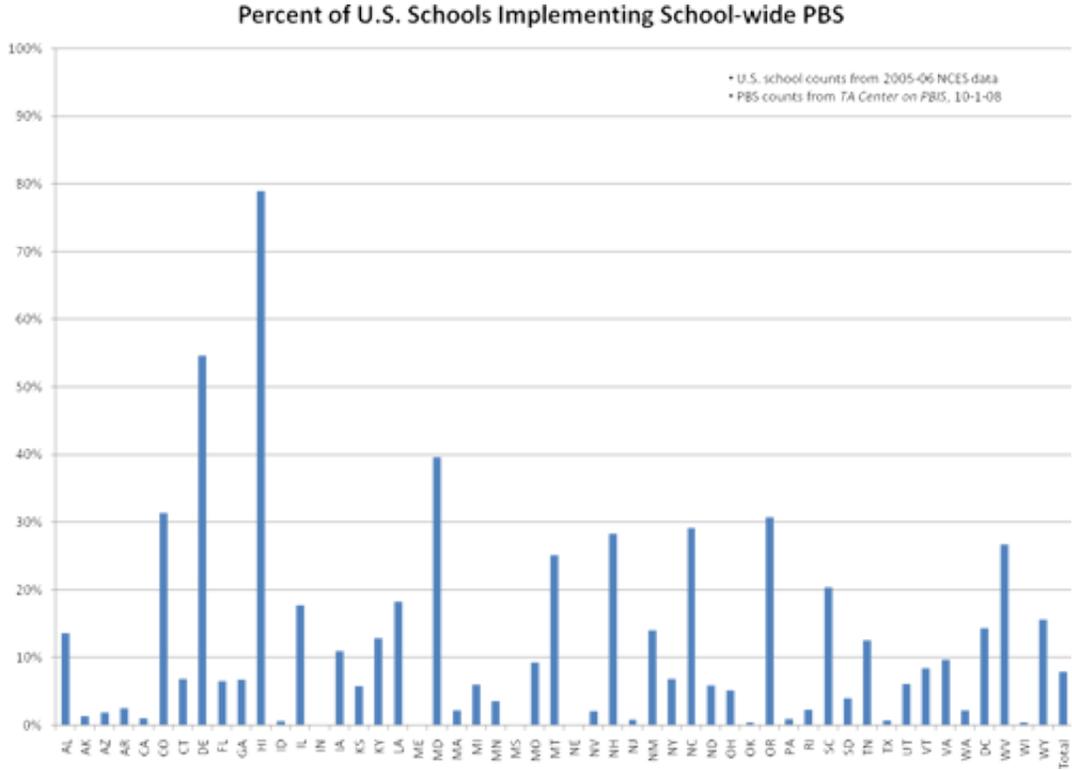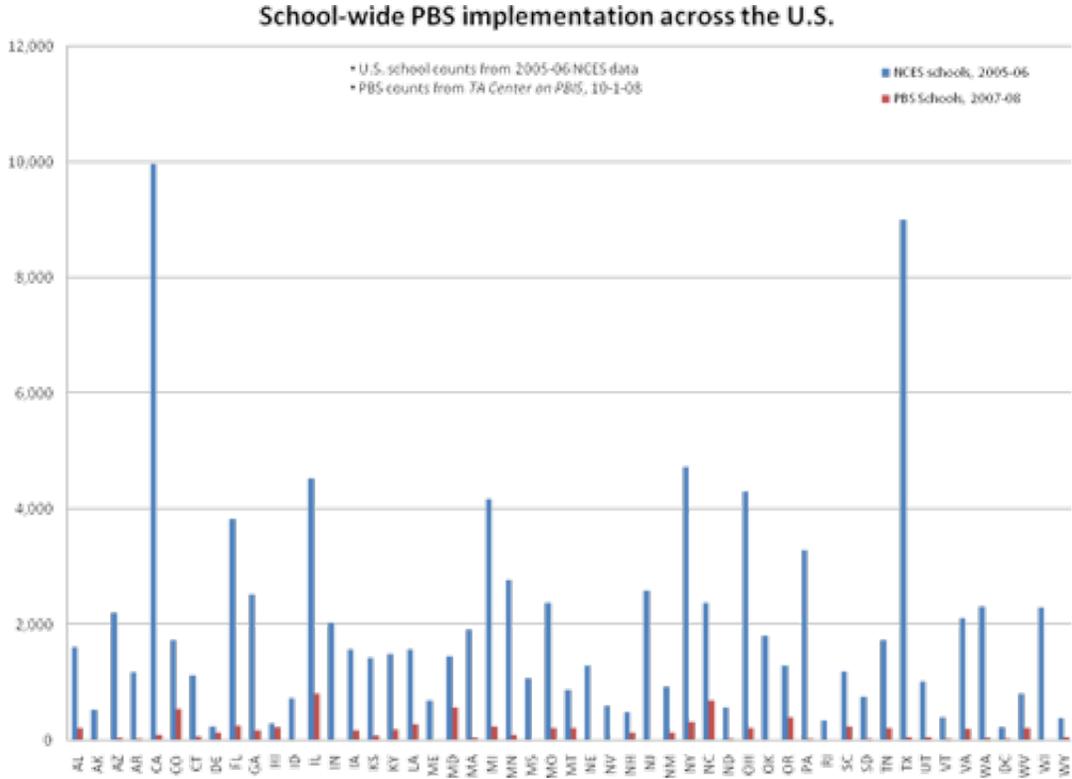
State	State Team?	Pre	Elem	Mid/Jr.	High	Alt/Ctr.	Total
AL	Yes		115	44	60		219
AK			5	2			7
AZ	Yes		29	6	5		40
AR		1	18	4	6		29
CA			78	16	3		97
CO	Yes	7	376	110	50		543
CT	Yes	1	43	18	12	2	76
DE		1	69	25	17	18	130
FL	Yes	3	112	71	28	36	250
GA	Yes		111	58	1	1	171
HI			154	37	34		225
ID			4				4
IL	Yes	17	545	164	42	36	804
IN							0
IA	Yes		98	49	23	1	171
KS		1	51	11	10	9	82
KY		3	104	52	29	3	191
LA	Yes		173	66	36	10	285
ME							0
MD	Yes		322	157	64	31	574
MA			30	8		3	41
MI	Yes		223	18	2	5	248
MN	Yes	2	49	21	22	4	98
MS							0
MO	Yes	31	127	34	12	16	220
MT	Yes	9	139	38	30	2	218
NE							0
NV	Yes		7	5			12
NH	Yes	48	59	16	8	8	139
NJ			16	3		1	20
NM	Yes		57	43	30		130
NY	Yes	2	167	90	26	37	322
NC	Yes	2	426	175	59	29	691
ND	Yes		22	4	7		33

State		Preschool	Elementary	Middle	High		Total
ND	Yes		22	4	7		33
OH	Yes	2	145	37	34	3	221
OK	Yes		5	1	1		7
OR	Yes		298	66	32	2	398
PA	Yes		25	6			31
RI			8				8
SC	Yes		151	56	28	8	243
SD	Yes		13	9	8		30
TN			130	32	36	19	217
TX		1	40	14	6		61
UT	Yes		45	16		1	62
VT			27	2	4		33
VA	Yes		121	58	16	9	204
WA	Yes		45	2	1	2	50
DC	Yes		22	4	1	6	33
WV			120	60	35	0	215
WI				10			10
WY	Yes		38	12	10		60
Totals	31	132	4,954	1,730	828	302	7,953

Overall, 7,953 schools are engaged in adoption of SWPBIS. In total, 47 states (including DC), report some level of implementation. Across all grade levels, the number of schools implementing SWPBIS ranged from 0 (Indiana, Maine, Mississippi, and Nebraska) to 804 (Illinois). The total number of schools within a grade-level ranged from 132 (preschools) to 4,954 (elementary schools). Based on this report, 31 states have a state leadership team in place to coordinate PBIS efforts.

In Figure 1, the number of schools implementing SWPBIS is compared with all U.S. public schools within each state. Notably, there is discrepancy between the number of SWPBIS implementation schools (n = 7,953) and the total number of U.S. schools (n = 100,627) across all states. However, this difference varies within states, too. For example, regardless of the total number of schools, some states show significant separation between these two counts (e.g., Arizona, California, New York, Texas, Washington), whereas other states show much less of a difference between number of SWPBIS schools and number of total schools (e.g., Colorado, Delaware, Hawaii, Maryland, North Carolina). These differences are further illustrated by Figure 2, which shows

the proportion of schools within each state that are engaging in SWPBIS implementation. In Figure 2, higher bars indicate higher percentage of implementation within a given state. The total number of schools implementing SWPBIS across all states represents 8% of all U.S. schools.

School-wide PBS implementation across the U.S.

- U.S. school counts from 2005-06 NCES data
- PBS counts from *TA Center on PBIS*, 10-1-08

■ NCES schools, 2005-06
■ PBS Schools, 2007-08

Percent of U.S. Schools Implementing School-wide PBS

- U.S. school counts from 2005-06 NCES data
- PBS counts from *TA Center on PBIS*, 10-1-08

Summary of Findings

This evaluation brief presented data illustrating the number of U.S. schools implementing SWPBIS, including the proportion of schools within each state. Overall, implementation of SWPBIS is occurring on a broad scale, and some states are further along in their state-wide implementation efforts than others. Nearly every state is implementing SWPBIS, and this effort is supported by state leadership teams across 31 states. As SWPBIS continues to scale-up, evaluation of implementation efforts should continue to include numbers of schools engaged in process. In addition, these evaluations should consider (a) number and proportion of school districts, (b) level and fidelity of implementation, (c) impact on student outcomes, and (d) sustainability of SWPBIS efforts.

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