

NEW BEDFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS PBIS



ANNUAL REPORT | 2020



Our New Bedford community believes in developing compassionate, civic-minded individuals by fostering strong positive relationships between students, staff, family, and community; developing a safe, supportive, respectful school climate, and providing engaging, high-quality teaching and learning for all students and staff.



The STAR Store at Carney Academy is Tier 1 support so all students can access it, but it also benefits students diagnosed with autism who require more supports. The school store will be sustained and maintained by students and staff who are part of the Autism Program at Carney to work on social, emotional and communication goals and academic skills. STAR stands for Showing kindness, Taking responsibility, Acting safely and Respecting everyone.



INTRODUCTION

This report is designed to provide an individualized and detailed snapshot of New Bedford District's progress in implementing School-Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (SW-PBIS). This snapshot uses multi-year results from assessment tools and student behavioral referral data.

This report is to be intended for the district's use in action planning. Where available, we have provided links to helpful resources for the district, school teams, and families.

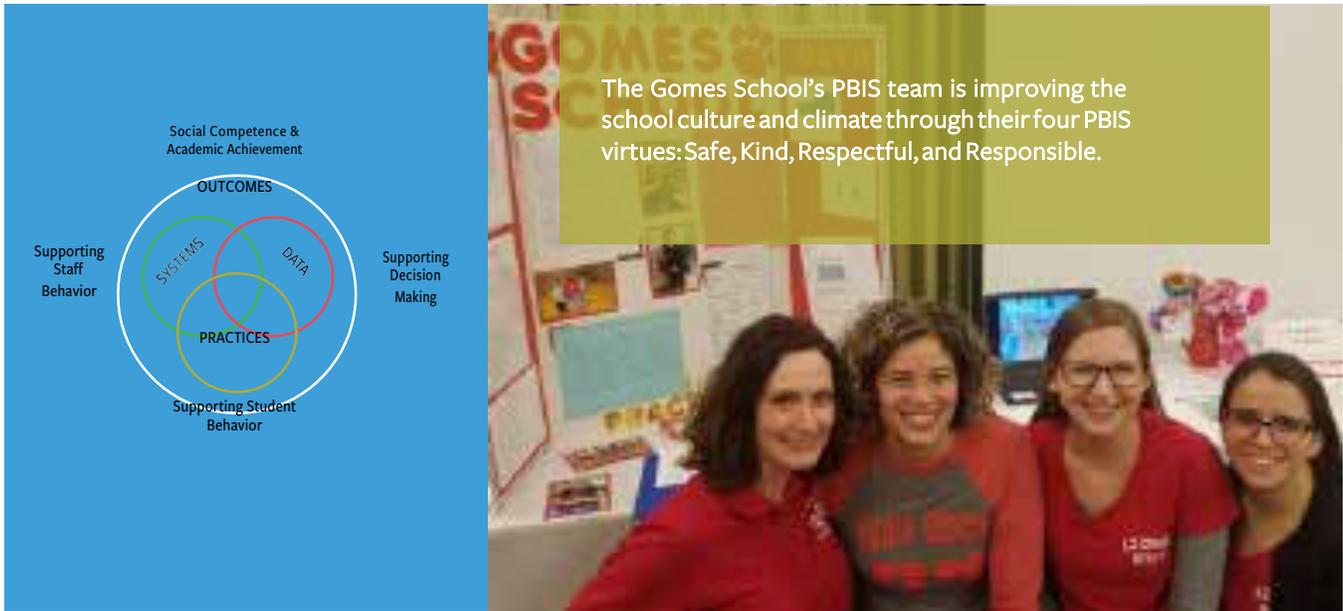
This is New Bedford's first PBIS Annual Report that provides information about the context, input, fidelity, and impact of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) in New Bedford's schools. Also included is a status report on New Bedford's efforts to sustain PBIS implementation, as well as a plan for sustainability into the future.

Twenty-one out of 25 New Bedford schools participated in the PBIS Academy, which was offered through a partnership between the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Center for Behavioral Education and Research at the University of Connecticut to provide training, coaching, and technical assistance to the New Bedford district and schools in implementing PBIS. May Institute provided trainers as part of this initiative to the New Bedford public schools.

WHAT IS PBIS?

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is an **evidence-based three-tiered framework** for improving and integrating all of the data, systems, and practices affecting student outcomes every day. It is a way to support everyone to create the kinds of schools where **all students** are successful.

PBIS is not a curriculum or something the faculty learns during a one-day professional development training. It is a commitment to addressing student behavior through systems change. When PBIS is implemented well, students achieve improved social and academic outcomes, schools experience reduced exclusionary discipline practices, and school faculty feels more effective.



SYSTEMS

The way schools operate is their foundational systems. In PBIS, these systems support the accurate, durable implementation of practices and the effective use of data to achieve better outcomes.

DATA

Schools generate multiple pieces of data about students every day. Within the PBIS framework, schools use data to select, monitor, and evaluate outcomes, practices, and systems across all three tiers.

PRACTICES

The key to improving outcomes is the strategies to support students at every level. In PBIS, these interventions and strategies are backed by research to target the outcomes schools want to see.

OUTCOMES

The outcomes from PBIS are what schools achieve through the data, systems, and practices they put in place. Families, students, and school personnel set goals and work together to see them through. Through the implementation of PBIS, outcomes might be improved student behavior or fewer office discipline referrals.

Improved Student Outcomes
academic performance
(Horner et al., 2009)
social-emotional competence
(Bradshaw, Woodford, & Leaf, 2012)
social & academic outcomes for SWD
(Lewis, 2017; Fabin, Horner, Vincent, & Tamm-Bradway, 2012)
reduced bullying behaviors
(Knox & Horner, 2009; Woodford, Bradshaw, & Leaf, 2012)
decreased rates of student-reported drug/alcohol abuse
(Bastable, Kitterman, McIntosh, & Houston, 2015; Bradshaw et al., 2012)

Reduced Exclusionary Discipline
office discipline referrals
(Bradshaw, Mitchell, & Leaf, 2010; Bradshaw et al., 2012; Horner et al., 2009)
suspensions
(Bradshaw, Mitchell, & Leaf, 2010)
restraint and seclusion
(Raynolds et al., 2016; Sammons, Brison, & Young, 2015)

Improved Teacher Outcomes
perception of teacher efficacy
(Kahn & McIntosh, 2012; Ross, Horner, & Horner, 2012)
school organizational health and school climate
(Bradshaw, Kelli, Bravens, Williams, & Leaf, 2008; Bradshaw, Kelli, Thornton, & Leaf, 2009)
perception of school safety
(Horner et al., 2009)

SCHOOL- WIDE POSITIVE BEHAVIOR AL INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS



Improved social-emotional competence
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3483890/>

Improved social and academic outcomes for students with disabilities
<https://www.pbis.org/resource/if-discipline-referral-rates-for-the-school-as-a-whole-are-reduced-will-rates-for-students-with-disabilities-also-be-reduced>

Reduced bullying behaviors
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2791686/>
<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/fullarticle/1107694>

Decreased rates of student-reported drug/alcohol abuse
<https://www.pbis.org/resource/do-high-schools-implementing-swpbis-have-lower-rates-of-illegal-drug-and-alcohol-use>

Reduced office discipline referrals and suspensions
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5048248/>

Reduced restraints
<https://ps.psychiatryonline.org/doi/10.1176/appi.ps.201500039>

Perception of teacher efficacy
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1098300711413820>

THREE TIERS OF SUPPORT

PBIS is a multi-tiered framework — three tiers, to be exact. Each tier aligns with the type of support students need. These three tiers are:

TIER 1: UNIVERSAL PREVENTION (ALL)

Tier 1 systems, data, and practices impact everyone across all settings. They establish the foundation for delivering regular, proactive support and preventing unwanted behaviors. Tier 1 emphasizes prosocial skills and expectations by teaching and acknowledging appropriate student behavior.

TIER 1 FOUNDATIONAL SYSTEMS INCLUDE:

- ① An established leadership team
- ① Regular meetings
- ① A commitment statement for establishing a positive school-wide social culture
- ① Ongoing use of data for decision making
- ① Professional development plans
- ① Personnel evaluation plan

TIER 1 PRACTICES INCLUDE:

- ① Schoolwide positive expectations and behaviors are taught
- ① Established classroom expectations aligned with school-wide expectations
- ① A continuum of procedures for encouraging expected behavior
- ① A continuum of procedures for discouraging problem behavior
- ① Procedures for encouraging school-family partnership

TIER 2: TARGETED PREVENTION (SOME)

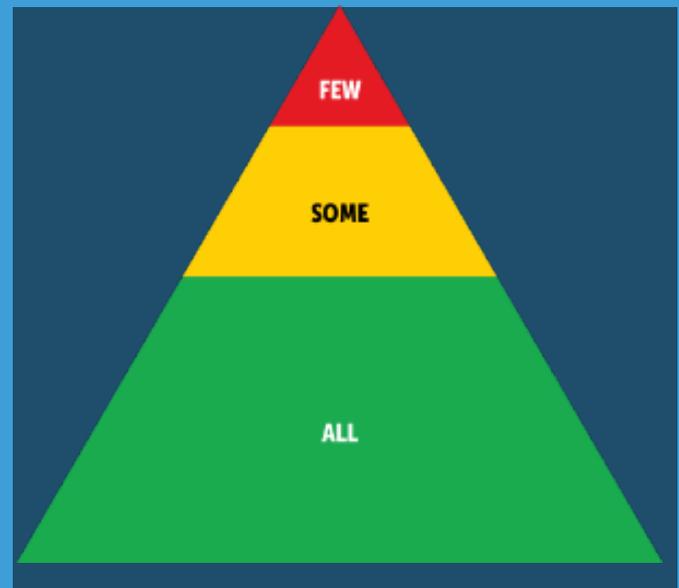
Tier 2 systems, data, and practices provide targeted support for students (10–15%) who are not successful with Tier 1 supports alone. The focus is on supporting students who are at risk for developing more severe problem behavior before those behaviors start. Tier 2 supports often involve group interventions. The support at this level is more focused than Tier 1 and less intensive than Tier 3.

TIER 2 FOUNDATIONAL SYSTEMS INCLUDE:

- An intervention team with a coordinator
- Behavioral expertise
- Fidelity and outcome data are collected
- A screening process to identify students needing Tier 2 support
- Access to training and technical assistance

TIER 2 PRACTICES INCLUDE:

- ③ Increased instruction and practice with self-regulation and social skills
- ③ Increased adult supervision
- ③ Increased opportunities for positive reinforcement
- ③ Increased pre-corrections
- ③ Increased focus on the possible function of problem behaviors
- ③ Increased access to academic supports



TIER 3: INTENSIVE, INDIVIDUALIZED PREVENTION (FEW)

Tier 3 systems, data, and practices provide individualized support for students (1-5%) who have not responded sufficiently to layered Tier 1 and Tier 2 supports. At this tier, these students receive more intensive, individualized support to improve their behavioral and academic outcomes. Tier 3 strategies work for students with developmental disabilities, autism, emotional and behavioral disorders, and students with no diagnostic label at all.

TIER 3 FOUNDATIONAL SYSTEMS INCLUDE:

- A multi-disciplinary team
- Behavior support expertise
- Formal fidelity and outcome data are collected

TIER 3 PR ACTICES INCLUDE:

- Function-based assessments
- Wraparound supports
- Cultural and contextual fit

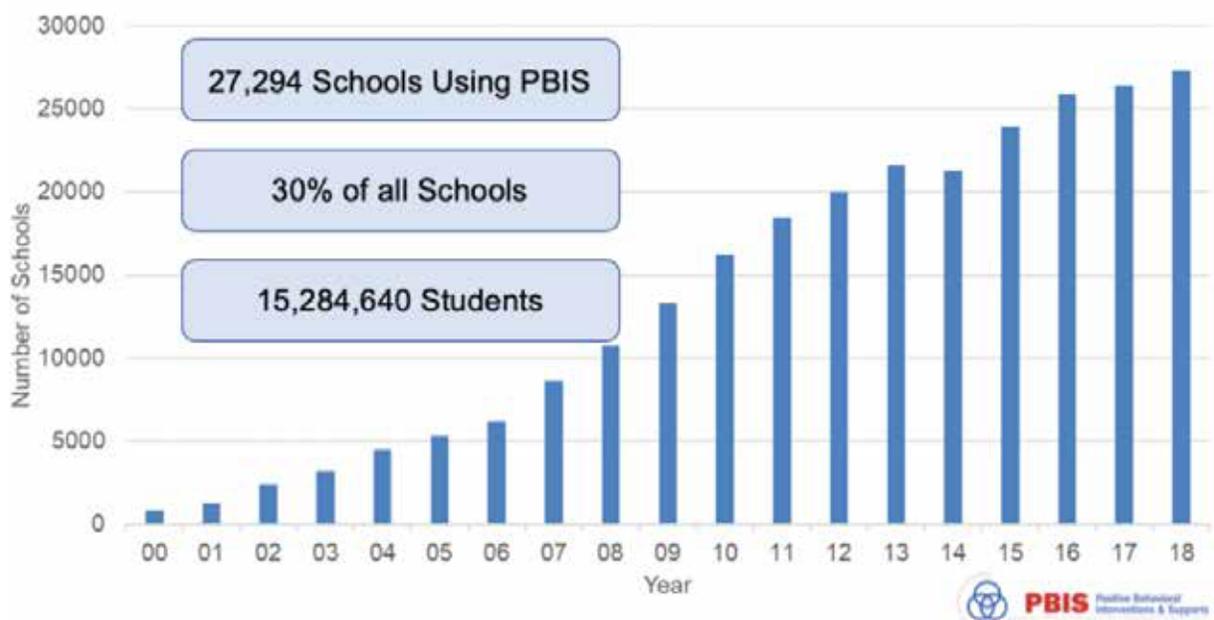
CONTEXT

Our New Bedford community believes in developing compassionate, civic-minded individuals by fostering strong positive relationships between students, staff, family, and community; developing a safe, supportive, respectful school climate, and providing engaging, high-quality teaching and learning for all students and staff.

Currently, New Bedford has trained PBIS in 21 schools through the DESE PBIS Academy trainings and consultation. This implementation represents 84% of New Bedford’s schools and is well above the national average of 30% of all schools (see Figure 1).

Schools begin the process of implementing PBIS by implementing universal, schoolwide, practices that are developed to support all students. Once these practices are in place with fidelity, schools move on to create targeted and intensive systems and interventions to support students with more significant needs.

Figure 1. PBIS Schools in the US (August 2019)



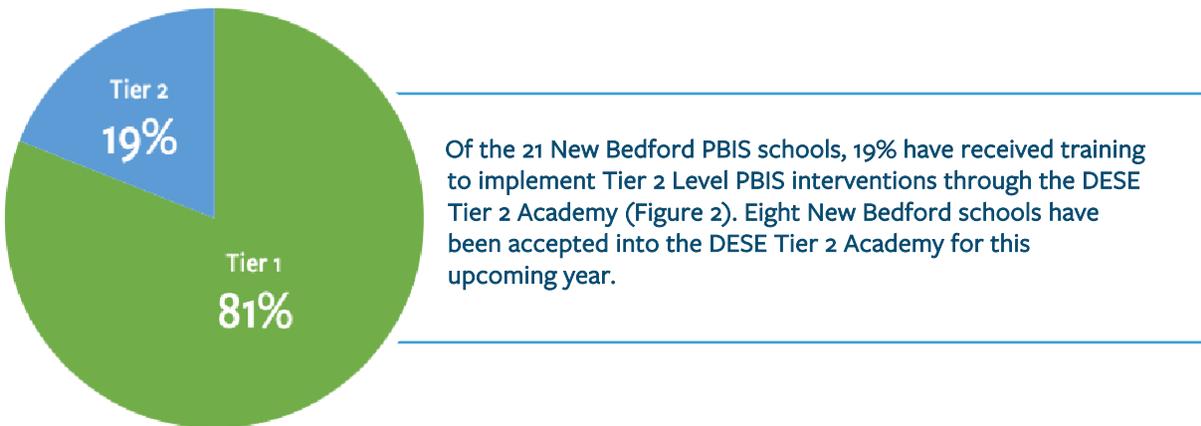
INPUT

PBIS ACADEMY

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has partnered with the Center for Behavioral Education and Research at the University of Connecticut to develop a “PBIS Academy.” The purpose of this Academy is to provide training, coaching, and technical assistance to schools and districts (such as the New Bedford district) towards the goal of implementing Positive Behavioral Intervention & Supports (PBIS). The May Institute provided trainers to implement this initiative in New Bedford.

The theory of action supporting PBIS focuses on shortening the line between the selection and implementation of empirically supported practices and the improvement of educationally and socially essential outcomes for all youth. The resources, activities, and objectives of this theory of action center on: (a) developing school and district capacity to implement PBIS practices and systems with high quality and level of fidelity; (b) using data to monitor and guide implementation; and (c) improving meaningful outcomes for all.

Figure 2. New Bedford PBIS Schools by Trained Tier



TEAM TRAININGS

New Bedford School leadership teams participated in training events over the past three years with the goal of planning, building, and implementing schoolwide PBIS. This support was front-loaded, with the highest intensity in Year 1, and subsequently faded across the years to focus on promoting sustainability and building internal capacity. Training content across the three years included the following: getting started with schoolwide PBIS, classroom management, family engagement, equity, integration, and alignment of initiatives, de-escalation, and crisis resolution strategies, and the functions of the behavior.

COACHES TRAININGS

To build local capacity within each school, coaches were identified from each PBIS leadership team. These coaches attend trainings specific to them, with content balanced between (a) reviewing the importance of the roles and functions of a coach and (b) previewing the content of the team meetings. From the beginning, their training focused on topics such as: building internal capacity within their schools; providing support to teams; promoting implementation fidelity; and facilitating links between school and district goals.

DISTRICT COORDINATOR MEETINGS

As district support is critical to the development and sustainability of local implementation, the PBIS Academy provided formal meetings for district coordinators to facilitate regular sharing of information and ongoing communication around enhancing district capacity. Bi-monthly virtual meetings included presentations by experienced and exemplar district coordinators, training updates, problem-solving, and collaboration.

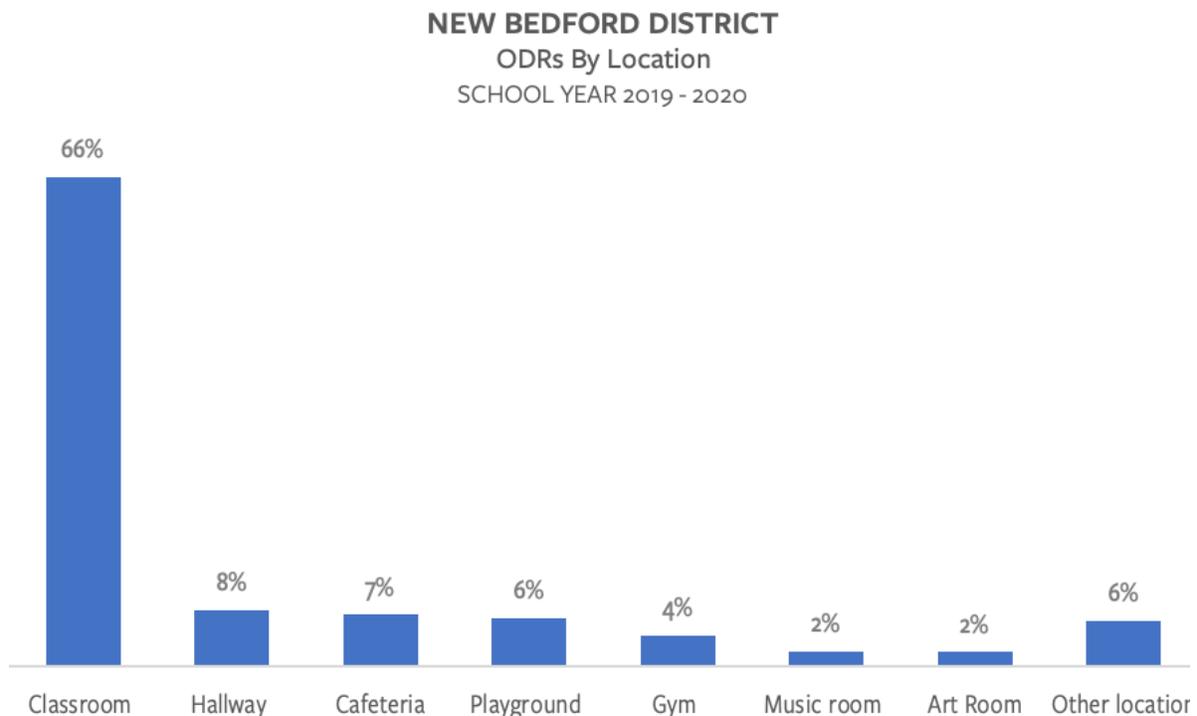
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

As part of the PBIS Academy, each participating school was offered one day of on-site technical assistance (TA). TA visits focus on taking the PBIS content from trainings, adjusting or customizing to specific school needs and priorities, and supporting teams' self-assessment of implementation fidelity and action planning. For example, for schools getting started, some visits focused on gaining staff buy-in and input, developing lesson plans for teaching social skills, or planning communication with families and community stakeholders.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR SUPPORT

One of the most substantial needs of the New Bedford PBIS schools was to improve instructional practices to increase student on-task behavior and to reduce exclusionary discipline practices in its classrooms. For example, over the past year, when school was in session in the buildings, for those PBIS schools that use SWIS, approximately 60% percent of the office discipline referrals (ODRs) have come out of the classrooms (see Figure 3). SWIS is a web-based information system to collect, summarize, and use student behavior data for decision-making.

Figure 3. ODRs by Location



Jariel Verge, Director of Wraparound Services, reached out to the May Institute to provide classroom behavior support training to the New Bedford staff to improve on-task behavior and decrease exclusionary discipline. Using dedicated funds from the PBIS Academy, basic and advanced classroom behavior support trainings were offered. These trainings were about three hours each and provided online. Ninety-two percent of elementary-school New Bedford PBIS leadership teams attended the Basic PBIS Teams Classroom Behavior Support trainings. Twenty-nine percent of elementary-school New Bedford PBIS leadership teams participated at the Advanced PBIS Teams Classroom Behavior Support trainings. Thirty-five percent of New Bedford elementary schools implementing PBIS enabled their instructional staff to attend the Basic Instructional Staff Classroom Behavior Support trainings.

PARAPROFESSIONAL PBIS TRAINING

Another training need was to build the behavior support capacities of New Bedford’s paraprofessional staff since they often support students with the most challenging behavior. Fifty-nine percent of New Bedford elementary schools implementing PBIS had their paraprofessionals attend, “Effectively Using Positive Behavior Practices to Support My Students.” This five-part five-hour series was designed for staff and faculty who work within PBIS schools or those considering PBIS in the future. The series focuses on empirically-based strategies designed to improve student engagement, on-task behavior, and reduce problem behavior. Various activities were used to help participants understand problem behavior and how to prevent and respond to its occurrence.

181 INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF PARTICIPANTS | SATISFIED WITH QUALITY OF TRAINING.

97.06%
Strongly Agree/Agree

“This training gave me new ideas on how to help my class in the areas that I was having a hard time in.”

NEW BEDFORD PBIS TEAM MEMBER

“As an administrator, I am planning on using the PBIS resources that were provided to the group to assist teachers in a non-evaluative way on how to improve their classroom management.”

NEW BEDFORD PBIS TEAM MEMBER

144 PARAPROFESSIONAL PARTICIPANTS | SATISFIED WITH QUALITY OF TRAINING.

99.6%
Strongly Agree/Agree

“I really enjoyed this training series. I found the presenters to be very engaging. The content of the training was very clear. The presenters took care to make sure the participants were engaged in the training.”

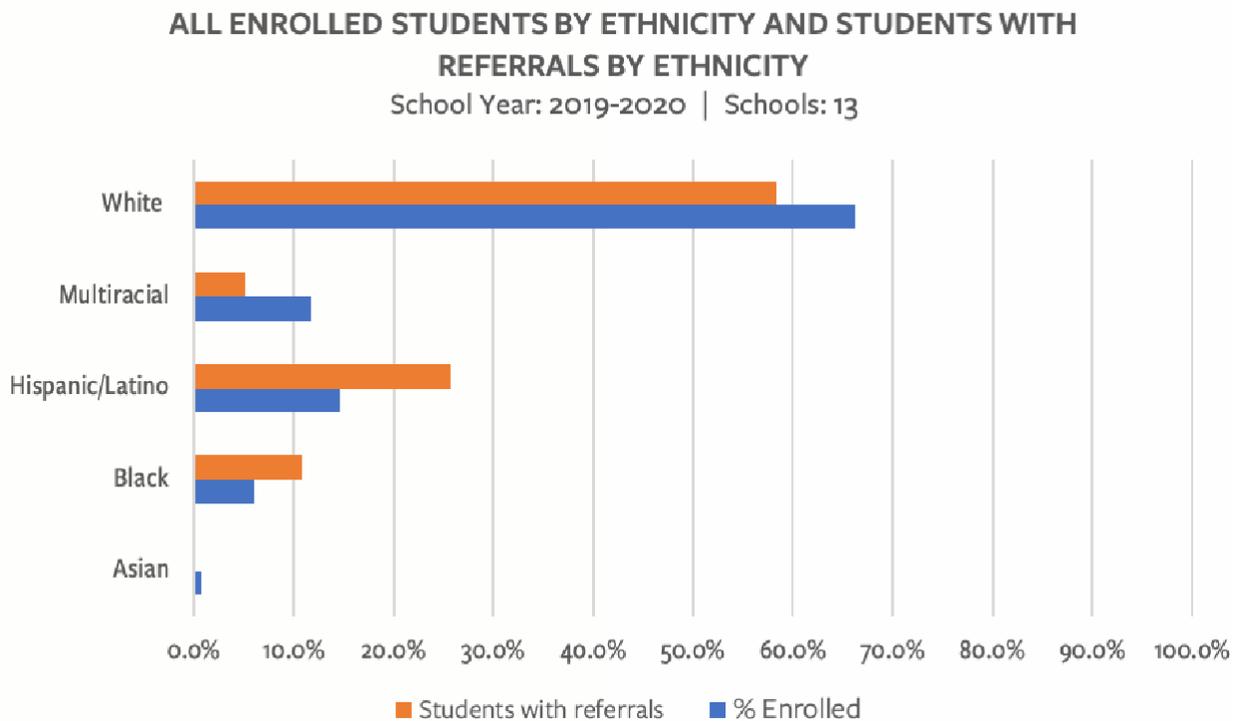
NEW BEDFORD PARAPROFESSIONAL

“As a Paraprofessional getting all this knowledge on how and when to approach a behavior was and will be of great use in our future.”

NEW BEDFORD PARAPROFESSIONAL

ODRS BY ETHNICITY

Figure 4. Students with ODRs by Enrolled Students by Ethnicity

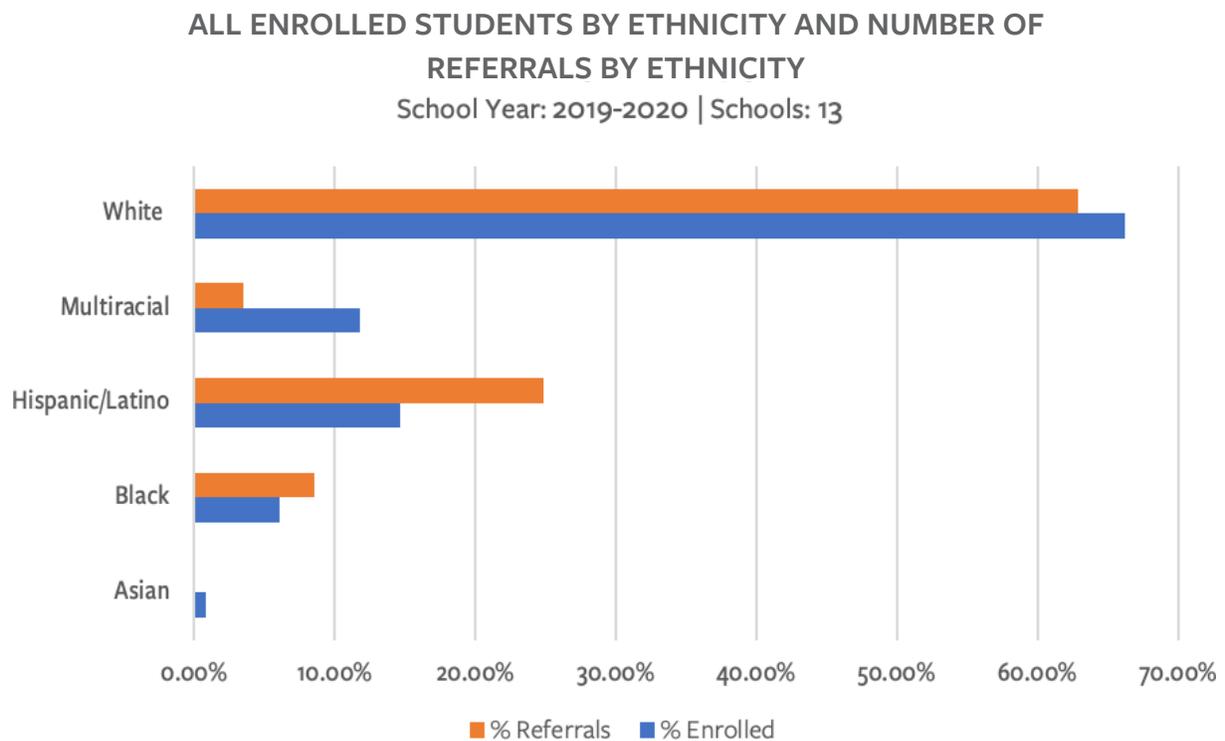


A review of discipline practices (ODRs) in thirteen elementary schools who use SWIS revealed disproportionate discipline practices. These thirteen schools had a total enrollment of 3,248 students during the school year 2019-2020. The student enrollment by ethnicity across the schools was White (66.2%), Hispanic/Latino (14.7%), Multiracial (11.8%), Black (6.1%), and Asian (.8%). Two hundred and seventy-six students received an ODR during this period. The students by ethnicity who received an ODR during this period were represented as follows: White (58.3%), Hispanic/Latino (25.7%), Multiracial (5.1%), Black (10.9%), and Asian (0%) (See figure 4). The relative risk ratio is the ratio of the probability of an ODR in one ethnic group to the probability of an ODR to the entire group. The higher the risk ratio, the more probable of an ODR with one ethnic group as compared to the entire group. The relative risk ratio for Blacks as compared to the entire

population is 1.78, and Hispanic/Latino as compared to the whole population is 1.74. It is approximately twice as likely that a student who is Black or Hispanic/Latino will receive an ODR as it is for the entire population.

Further assessment found that the number of ODRs that students receive is also disproportionate by ethnicity. Hispanic/Latino students who represent 14.7% of the student population received almost a quarter (24.9%) of the ODRs. Black students who represent 6.1% of the student population received 8.6% of the ODRs (see Figure 5). On a school by school basis, this information should be disaggregated and shared with the faculty to work to improve these outcomes.

Figure 5. ODRs by Enrolled Students by Ethnicity



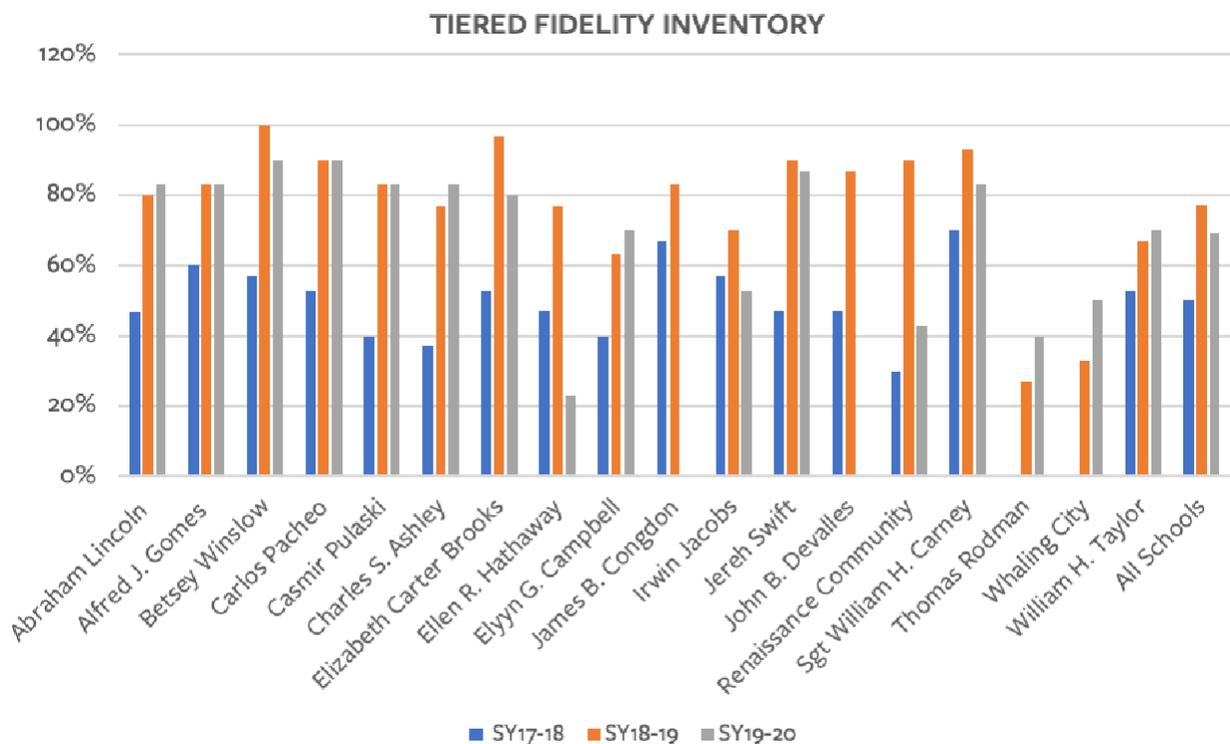
FIDELITY

PBIS Academy schools are highly encouraged to assess the fidelity to which they are implementing PBIS yearly (at least) using the Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI). The TFI allows schools to efficiently evaluate implementation fidelity at one, two, or all three tiers of PBIS implementation. This year, of eligible schools, 15 schools (76%) completed Tier I of the TFI (see Figure 6). Of this number, 75% (3) of schools who have been trained at the Tier 2 level also completed the Tier II section of the TFI. The implementing New Bedford schools appear to be seeing the value of assessing fidelity, using the results to identify priorities for improvement, and action planning.

For those schools who complete the TFI annually, they may be considered for recognition by the PBIS Academy and DESE as either a “School of Merit” or a “School of Distinction.” PBIS schools are awarded Merit acknowledgments if they achieve a score of 70% or higher on the TFI and provide several supporting PBIS documents. To be recognized as a School of Distinction, a school needs to meet all the requirements of a School of Merit. Also, the school needs to show 20% or more reduction in ODRs or a similar student-level outcome measure (e.g., attendance, school climate). This year, six New Bedford schools achieved Merit status or higher. This achievement means New Bedford has 40% of the Schools of Merit in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. This year, one New Bedford school achieved a School of Distinction. This school is the only school in the Commonwealth to achieve this distinction (see Figure 6).

Of the New Bedford elementary schools that completed the TFI this year, 67% are implementing with fidelity. On average, Schools of Merit and Distinction schools have higher TFI scores when compared to all other PBIS schools that report fidelity data. These schools have an average TFI score of 80%, while all other schools have an average TFI score of 60%.

Figure 6. NB PBIS Schools by TFI Scores



SCHOOL OF DISTINCTION

Betsey Winslow

SCHOOLS OF MERIT *

Jireh Swift

Alfred J. Gomes

Abraham Lincoln

Charles Ashley

E.C. Brook

Schools of Merit demonstrated a 10% reduction year in ODRs per hundred students per day.

**This year, the TFI scores were depressed due to the inability to complete the walkthrough due to the COVID-19 pandemic. If schools were in session, the TFI scores would be likely higher.*

IMPACT

One indicator used to assess student outcomes is Office Discipline Referrals (ODRs). For this report, we analyzed only “major” ODRs, which most schools define as behaviors that require the student to leave the classroom. Fewer major ODRs means that students have greater access to academic instruction because they are not leaving the class for disciplinary purposes. Comparing ODR rates across schools is challenging due to differences in how each school defines, records, and reports ODRs. However, the New Bedford Schools of Merit and Distinction, who also use the SWIS system, showed reductions year over year (August–February)* with fewer students receiving ODRs. Schools of Merit demonstrated a 10% reduction year in ODRs per hundred students per day (see Figure 7). The School of Distinction showed a 49% reduction year in ODRs per hundred students per day (see Figure 8).

* Due to the impact of the COVID-19 in March 2019, the months of March through June were not included in this comparison.

At Winslow School, a student team called “PBIS Ambassadors of Kindness” work hard to spread kindness in their school and in their community. Recently one of the members, Cameron wanted to start a collection for the homeless people in New Bedford. Through the generous donations of Winslow families, students were able to make 42 care packages for the homeless.



Figure 7. PBIS Schools of Merit – ODRs Per Day/Per Hundred Students

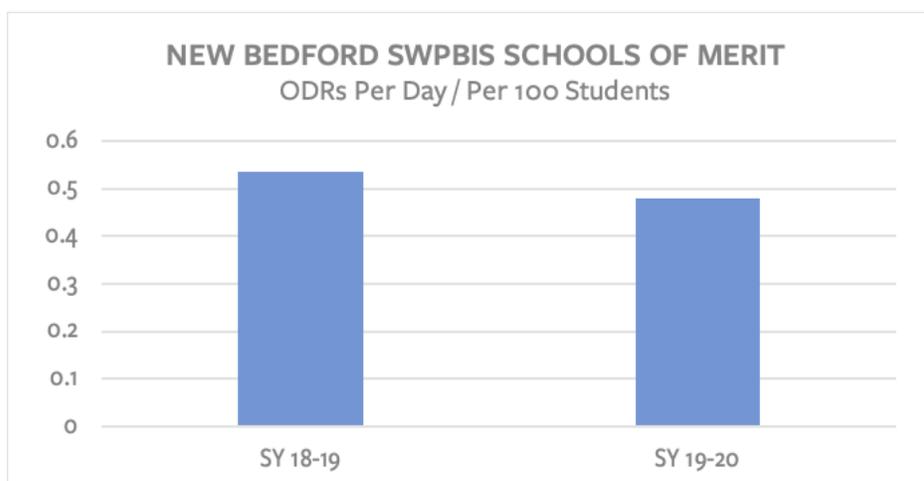
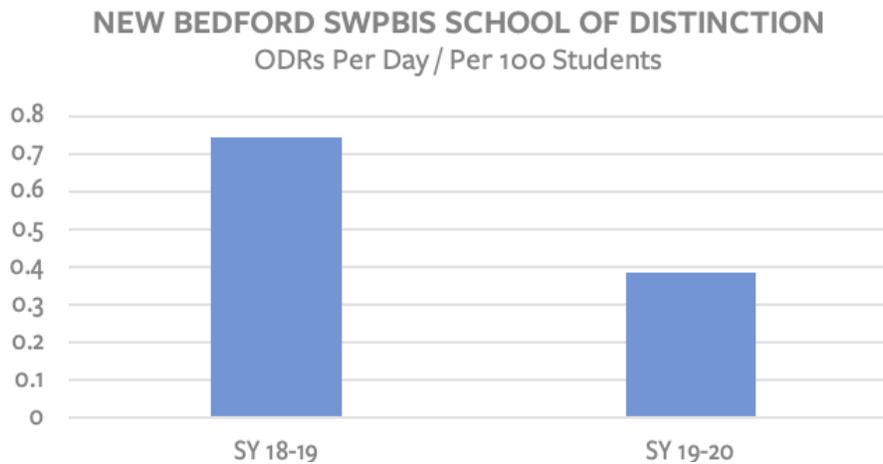


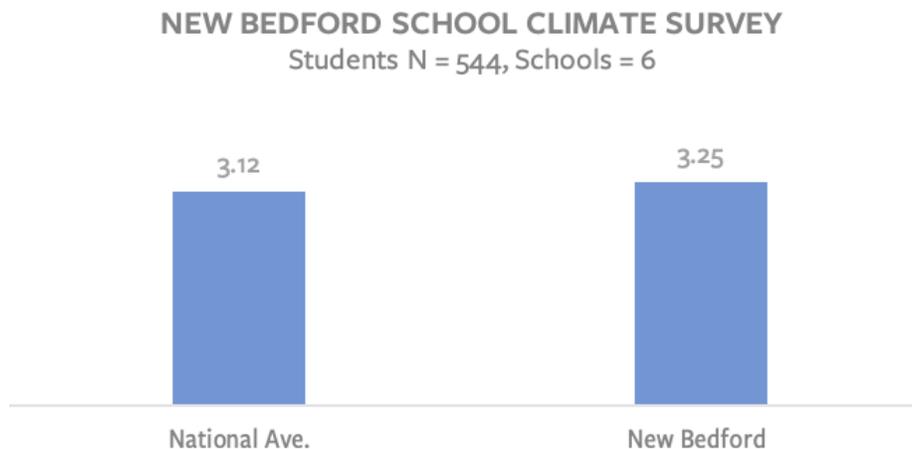
Figure 8. PBIS School of Distinction – ODRs Per Day/Per Hundred Students



SCHOOL CLIMATE SURVEY

The New Bedford school district scored slightly above the national norm on the School Climate Survey (La Salle, McIntosh, & Eliason, 2018), which measures shared norms, beliefs, attitudes, experiences, and behaviors that students experience. Six schools administered this survey, and 544 elementary students completed the survey (see Figure 9). School climate has been associated improved self-esteem and self-concept, decreased absenteeism, enhanced risk prevention, reduced behavioral problems and disciplinary actions and increased school completion (Bear et al., 2011; Lasalle, 2020; Linstrom Johnson et al., 2016)

Figure 9. School Climate Survey

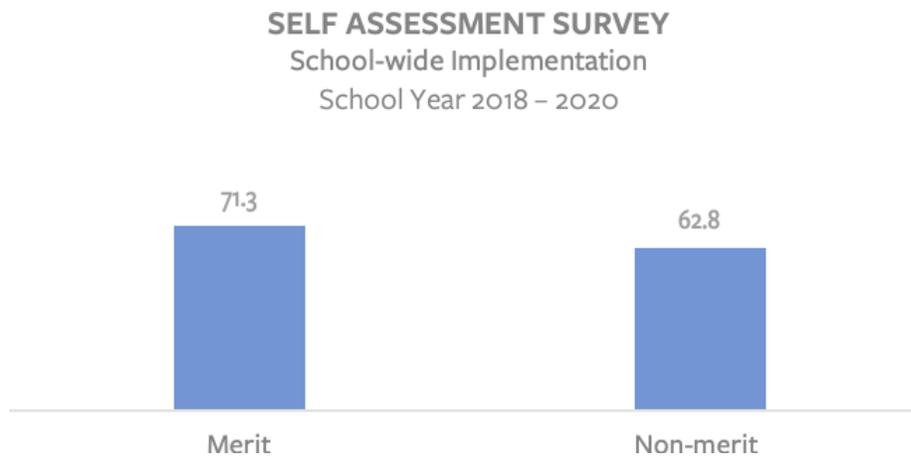


SELF-ASSESSMENT SURVEY

The PBIS Self-Assessment Survey (SAS) (Sugai et al., 2009) is used by school staff for an initial and annual assessment of effective behavior support systems in their school. The survey examines the status and needs for improvement of four behavior support systems: (a) schoolwide discipline systems; (b) non-classroom management systems (e.g., cafeteria, hallway, playground); (c) classroom management systems; and (d) systems for individual students engaging in chronic problem behaviors. Each question in the survey relates to one of the four systems. The survey was completed by staff in seven schools involved in the PBIS initiative. Three of the schools were Schools of Merit, and four of the schools had non-distinction status.

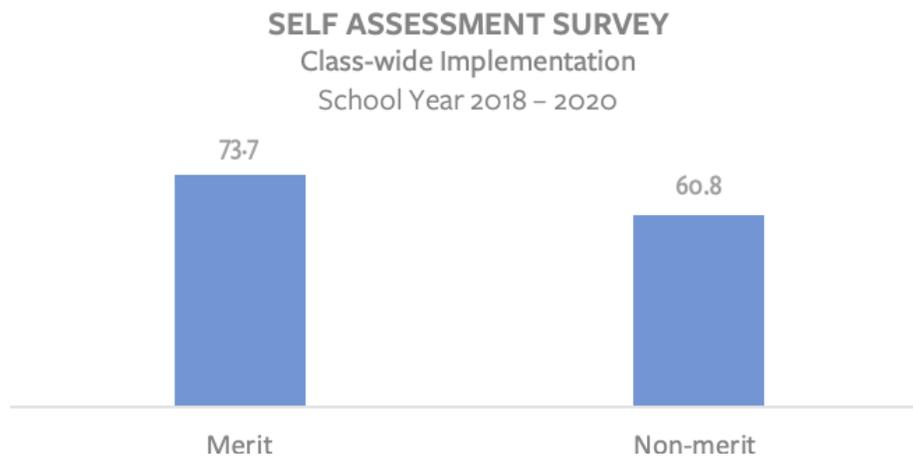
In the School-wide Implementation subscale, the Schools of Merit scored almost 10 percent higher than non-merit schools. This score differential means the staff in the Schools of Merit are reporting more components of SW-PBIS being in place in the non-merit schools (see Figure 10).

Figure 10. Self-Assessment Survey School-wide Implementation



In the Class-wide Implementation subscale, the Schools of Merit scored almost 13 percent higher than non-merit schools. This score differential means the staff that more components of class-wide PBIS are in place in merit schools than in non-merit schools (see Figure 11).

Figure 11. Self-Assessment Survey Class-wide Implementation



SUSTAINABILITY

Over the past three years, 86% (18) of the New Bedford PBIS schools have continued to sustain implementation actively. This high retention rate can be attributed to two factors. The first and most important is the dedication and commitment of New Bedford district and school-based administrators, and PBIS teams to building positive, preventative, and inclusionary services **for all students** through data-based decision making. The second significant factor is the ongoing efforts of the PBIS Academy supports through ongoing training events targeted to school PBIS leadership teams, PBIS coaches, and district administrators. These supports included PBIS Academy trainers (predominantly May Institute staff) who provided up to eight hours of on-site technical assistance per school to support PBIS implementation.

Almost all the New Bedford PBIS schools have exited the Academy as of June 30th, 2020. This is a critical time for these exiting schools concerning the sustainability of PBIS. Often common barriers to sustainability include changes in: (a) context (e.g., contextual fit, new challenges, competing initiatives); (b) capacity (loss of funding, loss of key personnel); and (c) changes in consequences (reduced effectiveness due to poor fidelity, outcomes not longer deemed as essential). To sustain their Tier 1 efforts, the teams and school communities will need to put focused effort and resources into: (a) promoting PBIS as a priority; (b) ensuring the effectiveness of PBIS; (c) continuing to increase the efficiency of PBIS; and (d) using data to regenerate their PBIS work continually.

Beginning July 1, 2020, the May Institute, a national partner with the National Technical Assistance Center for PBIS and a provider of PBIS technical assistance to 60 districts and 220 schools across the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, will continue to provide technical assistance. This technical assistance will be provided through a contract with the New Bedford district to support the district's Tier 1 efforts while they continue to build towards the implementation of Tier 2 and Tier 3 in an equitable way for all students. This support will include professional development and technical assistance to district personnel, PBIS leadership teams, coaches, and school staff to improve the fidelity of implementation across all three tiers to increase the social skills, behavior, and academic performance of the New Bedford public schools' students.



NEW BEDFORD PUBLIC SCHOOL MISSION

We are committed to developing lifelong learners of strong character and confidence who, in their unique aspirations, can navigate life with excellence, integrity, and community pride on their voyage through graduation to successful futures.

RESOURCES

TITLE	LOCATION/ AREA / TOPIC	ADDRESS
Creating a PBIS Behavior Teaching Matrix for Remote Instruction	Remote Instruction	https://www.pbis.org/resource/creating-a-pbis-behavior-teaching-matrix-for-remote-instruction
Getting Back to School After Disruptions	School Wide / Mental Health / Trauma / Climate	https://www.pbis.org/resource/getting-back-to-school- after-disruptions-resources-for-making-your-school- year-safer-more-predictable-and-more-positive
Supporting and Responding to Behavior: Evidence- Based Classroom Strategies for Teachers	Classroom	https://www.pbis.org/resource/supporting-and-responding- to-behavior-evidence-based-classroom-strategies-for- teachers
Classroom Problem Solving	Classroom	https://www.pbis.org/resource/classroom-problem-solving
Evidence based Classroom Management: Moving from Research to Practice	Classroom	https://www.pbis.org/resource/evidence-based-classroom-management-moving-from-research-to-practice
Responding to the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Outbreak through PBIS	School Wide / Mental Health / Trauma / Climate	https://www.pbis.org/resource/responding-to-the-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak-through-pbis
Positive Solutions for Families: Eight Practical Tips for Parents of Young Children with Challenging Behavior	Families	https://www.pbis.org/resource/positive-solutions-for- families-eight-practical-tips-for-parents-of-young- children-with-challenging-behavior
Supporting Families with PBIS at Home	Families	https://www.pbis.org/resource/supporting-families-with- pbis-at-home

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