3J - Strengthening Educator Learning in Rural Settings Through Regional Communities of Practice

Presenters:
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• **Topic:** District, State Schoolwide & Classroom PBIS
• **Keywords:** Rural, Implementation, Tier 1
Learning Objectives

Participants will:

1. understand the strengths and barriers associated with PBIS rural implementation
2. learn strategies to increase access to educator professional development
3. recognize how building an educator community of practice can support educator efficacy, reduce burnout, and enhance retention
4. be introduced to resources available through the Center on PBIS that support implementation of PBIS in rural settings
Who’s Here?
The Rural Reality

- 28% Schools in rural locales
- 19% Students in rural schools
- 20% PBIS implementing schools

Center on PBIS, 2022; NCES, 2023
The Rural Reality

https://www.census.gov/newsroom/blogs/random-samplings/2016/12/life_off_the_highway.html
The close-knit nature of small rural schools improves consistency in communication among school staff.

Strong sense of social identity and common purpose.

Long-term relationships can be established which leads to more visible signs of educator efficacy and impact.

Majority of rural counties have high rates of child poverty with continuous increase.

Experience teacher attrition and difficulty in filling teaching positions at higher rates than non-rural schools.

Limited available resources due to funding, geographical barriers, and access.

Farmer et al., 2021; Ingersoll & Tran, 2023; Rude & Miller, 2018; Weiss et al., 2023)
Increasingly hard to recruit and retain educators

Challenge of meeting student needs increases

Provisionally or emergency-licensed practitioners in classrooms

Students receive less effective and consistent instruction

Educators less likely to be well prepared for circumstances and diverse student needs

Rural Schools Need Professional Development Opportunities

Weiss et al., 2023)
Meeting professional development needs of educators in rural communities may be challenging due to factors, such as:

- access to specific expertise
- access to facilities
- travel restrictions
- limited personnel and financial resources to supply substitutes

Farmer et al., 2021; Ingersoll & Tran, 2023; Rude & Miller, 2018; Weiss et al., 2023)
What is a Community of Practice?

Communities of practice (CoP) are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly.

Benefits of Communities of Practice

- Promotes teacher-leadership
- Reduces feelings of isolation
- Increases collaboration and reflection
- Supports differentiated learning opportunities
- Improves access to high-quality resources
- Offers mutual support

These are factors known to support teacher retention in rural areas!

(Boada, 2022; Ghamrawi, 2022; Ingersoll & Tran, 2023)
Professional Development
PD Challenges in Rural Schools

- Limited personnel
- Lack of financial resources
- Travel difficulties
- Need for expert coaches for sustained support
- Substitute teacher shortages

Weiss et al., 2023
# Elements of Effective Professional Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Core Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Content-Focused  | • Context-specific and job embedded  
                    • Aligned with school and district priorities  
                    • Appropriate content based on what teachers teach |
| Active Learning   | • Must address how teachers learn in addition to what teachers learn  
                    • Opportunity to choose learning opportunities based on interest and needs  
                    • Opportunities to try, analyze, and reflect on use of new practices |

Darling-Hammond et. al, 2017
### Elements of Effective Professional Development

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| Collaboration                  | ● Space for teachers to share ideas  
● Opportunities to develop community that can lead to a positive change in culture  
● Collaboration can be 1 to 1, grade/team level, school, or district-wide  
● Can be supported by technology |
| Use of Models and Modeling     | ● Video or written cases of teaching  
● Demonstration lessons  
● Peer observations  
● Sample plans, materials, work samples |
## Elements of Effective Professional Development

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| Provides Coaching and Expert Support         | ● Sharing of expert guidance and feedback about content and evidence-based practices  
                                            | ● Target teacher’s specific, individual needs                                 |
|                                              | ● Provided in various formats: 1-1, group, virtual, peer                      |
| Offers Feedback and Reflection               | ● Time allocated for thinking about practice and soliciting feedback           |
|                                              | ● Guided reflection, specific feedback                                        |
| Sustained Duration                           | ● Adequate time provided for training                                          |
|                                              | ● Happens over time                                                          |
**Conditions for Effective Professional Development**

- Identify PD needs based on a shared vision of excellent teaching
- Choose effective approaches
- Implement with fidelity
- Assess outcomes

**School Level**

- Stable school environments
- Time allocated to planning and teaching using newly acquired skills
- Adequate resources provided by school

**Systems Level**

Darling-Hammond et. al, 2017
# Statewide CoP in Maine

## MAINE PBIS TIER 1 COHORT TRAINING MODEL

*Ongoing external coaching and technical assistance support at district and school level*

### Year 1
*(3 school visits*)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUMMER</th>
<th>FALL</th>
<th>WINTER</th>
<th>SPRING</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District Training</td>
<td>Coach Meeting</td>
<td>Team Training Day 1</td>
<td>Team Training Day 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Training</td>
<td>ME PBIS State Conference</td>
<td>Coach Meeting</td>
<td>Team Training Day 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Training</td>
<td>Team Training Day 4</td>
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### Year 2
*(2 school visits*)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUMMER</th>
<th>FALL</th>
<th>WINTER</th>
<th>SPRING</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District Training</td>
<td>Coach Meeting</td>
<td>Team Training Day 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>District Training</td>
<td>ME PBIS State Conference</td>
<td>Coach Meeting</td>
<td>Team Training Day 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Training</td>
<td>Team Training Day 9</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Year 3
*(2 school visits*)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUMMER</th>
<th>FALL</th>
<th>SPRING</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District Training</td>
<td>ME PBIS State Conference</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coach Meeting</td>
<td>Team Training Day 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Training</td>
<td>Coach Meeting</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Team Training Day 9</td>
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*May be adjusted based on needs*
Tier 1 Training Cohort-Fast Facts

Who? Districts and schools interested in implementing a PBIS framework

When? New cohorts begin each August, sessions held throughout the year

What? Receive training and coaching support to get ready, get started and get better

Why? Create school environments where all staff, students and families can access and achieve positive outcomes
## Effective Features of PD

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Examples of Alignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content-Focused</td>
<td>● PBIS Implementation Blueprint driven model</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Embedded evidence-based resources (training, CoP, newsletter)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Active Learning</td>
<td>● District/Coach/Team Cohort training-2 way communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Debriefing opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Professional development opportunities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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## Effective Features of PD

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Examples of Alignment</th>
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<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>● Cohort Model: 1(16), 2(16), 3(21) - In-person training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Annual Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● CoP-coach/teacher/SWIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of Models and Modeling</td>
<td>● Exemplars embedded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Debriefs during training/CoP/Newsletter</td>
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<td></td>
<td>● Acknowledgements</td>
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<td></td>
<td>● Gallery Walks</td>
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Effective Features of PD

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<tr>
<td>Provides Coaching and Expert Support</td>
<td>• District/school external coaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Monthly CoP</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Quarterly Newsletter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Offers Feedback and Reflection</td>
<td>• Embedded team time with trainer feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustained Duration</td>
<td>• Cohort provides gradual release of support and builds internal capacity along three year continuum</td>
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PBIS PROMPT
A Quarterly Newsletter of Maine PBIS

Fall 2023

Maine PBIS has shown significant growth in state level implementation fidelity over the past few years!

2020 = 46%
2021 = 61%
2022 = 77%
2023 = 81%
The TFI and School Climate Surveys (students, families and personnel) are completed biannually throughout the training sequence to determine if the training cohort is meeting the goal of supporting districts and schools with reaching fidelity and having meaningful outcomes.

Meeting fidelity threshold of 70%:
- 25% end of Year 1
- 50% end of Year 2
- 80% end of Year 3

School Climate Surveys indicated improvement in 75% of schools
93-99% of participants report increased understanding and use of data to support decision-making.
"I think one of the primary strengths has been all the interactions different members of the cohort are exposed to. Seeing what other schools are doing has been highly motivating. I also think the team trainings have been fantastic for imparting information."

"I really appreciate being able to see/hear what other schools and districts are doing and how they are solving problems. It's always a very positive experience."

"I would like to see more interactions between schools, so people can hear more about what other schools are doing or the different schools can help one another."

"Gaining knowledge and hearing how it has worked for other schools has given us the drive to dig in and try it, to be brave."
University/ District CoP in Pennsylvania

Teacher Prep to Practice Grant

Project: Developing Culturally Relevant Aspiring Teachers
Summer Institute: Fast Facts

Who? 40 in-service teachers, 2 pre-service teachers, 2 facilitators, research team

When? June and August ‘23, 2, 3-day sessions. Follow-up sessions in Fall ‘23

What? Training in positive behavior supports, trauma-informed practices, culturally sustaining pedagogy, and effective coaching strategies

Why? Develop a cohort of trained mentors to sustain support for university-based pre-service teachers and district-based early career teachers
## Effective features of PD

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content-Focused</td>
<td>• Positive Behavior Supports, Trauma-Informed Practices, Culturally-Relevant Sustaining Practices, Mentoring Strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active Learning</td>
<td>• Video analysis activities: after learning about specific practice, teachers had an opportunity to analyze classroom instruction videos</td>
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# Effective features of PD

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<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>• Time and dedicated to collaborative activities and sharing of ideas among teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of Models and Modeling</td>
<td>• Facilitator modeling of practices</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Video modeling of practices</td>
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Effective features of PD

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provides Coaching and Expert Support</td>
<td>Facilitators provide follow-up coaching and support individually and in small groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offers Feedback and Reflection</td>
<td>“Participant Guide” reflections questions and action planning completed throughout training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustained Duration</td>
<td>Three day training with two follow-up sessions to review and monitor action plans</td>
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Positive Behavior Supports: Considering your own Practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Practice(s)</th>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Action Plan</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Monitor Progress</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reinforcing positive behaviors using regular verbal feedback</td>
<td>Increase ratio of positive to negative behavior responses, helping to create a classroom environment with clearer expectations and regular reminders of behavior, treating it as importantly as any academic skill</td>
<td>Make an intentional point to praise positive behavior, rather than treating it as a “baseline” expectation. Start by offering at least 5 verbal responses per class (focusing on attendance sheet), and gradually increasing to 10-15</td>
<td>First semester of 2023-2024 school year</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Proximity &amp; Open Traffic Flow</td>
<td>Increase traffic flow in classroom to make every seat “the front” and increase OTR</td>
<td>Modify seating arrangement to create walkways, giving each student a “front row” seat, rather than focusing on group arrangements</td>
<td>Summer months, implement in fall</td>
<td></td>
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Mentoring and Supporting Novice Teachers in Positive Behavior Supports.

- Explicitly model evidence-based practices? (consider: what PBIS practices will you model? How will you be explicit?) You may include an example.
  - Model all expectations (have students explain model if they join mid year)
  - Explain to novice teacher why we do this
  - Help build relationships with students

- Conduct high quality observations that inform feedback and goal setting? (consider: what PBIS practices will you observe? How can you use your observations to determine appropriate feedback and set goals?) You may include an example.
  - Take notes during each lesson
  - Allow the student teacher time to discuss how they believe went well, and what they would do different
  - Make a plan for the next lesson together

- Provide specific positive and constructive feedback to promote growth in targeted areas? (consider: how will you determine appropriate target areas? How will you frame feedback to support growth?) You may include an example.
  - First I would ask the student teacher how they would like their feedback
  - Ask the student teacher what they believe went well / areas of growth would they like to work on specific lessons
  - Discuss one or two goals and celebrate these achievements, before moving on to new goals.

- Scaffold support through self-monitoring and reflection so that novice teachers can generalize skills? (consider: how will you use the gradual release model to support independence?) You may include an example.
  - Novice teachers should be given the opportunity to be part of the classroom community right at the beginning of their placement. Making a plan on when they will start taking over is also extremely important, so they are prepared, but also keeping in mind that this schedule may change and support will be removed only when comfortable.
Attendees volunteered to participate in a mixed-methods research study to understand outcomes of the summer institute.
I think people don't think that we have diversity in rural districts. But we are diverse. Our populations are growing just like they're growing across the country. And because we're rural, we sometimes don't have experiences with students from a variety of backgrounds, and we may not know how to address those cultural differences. We're just not equipped. We do have professional development days. But it's like hundreds of teachers in one room. You sit and you listen. And, to be honest, I'm zoning out, or I'm doodling, or my brain is somewhere else planning something else. But this was very engaging, and the aspect that I really enjoyed was that it wasn't just my school, my colleagues. It was people from all over that had different perspectives. We did have time to actually sit and talk and realize that everybody's facing these things, and then we could bounce ideas off each other and that was like very relevant and important.

I think that professional development needs to happen more about that this content. And then it needs to be recurring throughout the school year. I think right now as it is, it's resting on each individual teacher, on whether or not they want to start to be more aware and integrate those things and be culturally responsive which makes it in, not not equal across the board.

The time flew by as we collaborated with our own colleagues and those from other districts. There was a strong sense of community and a shared desire to grow and challenge our existing beliefs. The fact that this summer institute takes place immediately after the end of my school year, when I have felt max burnout, but STILL inspired me and motivated me to learn and reflect speaks volumes about the efficacy of this program.
Northeast PBIS Network Virtual CoPs

Classroom PBIS
High School
SWIS Facilitators
Inpatient Settings

nepbis.org
Resources

Resources

Resources

Effective Teacher Professional Development

Linda Darling-Hammond, Maria E. Hyler, and Madelyn Gardner, with assistance from Danny Espinoza


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