CENTER ON
PBIS Positive Behavioral
Interventions & Supports

PBIS IMPLEMENTATION BLUEPRINT

Version 4 | July 2023

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Implementation Blueprint

Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports

U. S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs and Office of Elementary and Secondary Education

Version 4.0 | July 2023

www.pbis.org

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PREFACE

Background

What is the Center on PBIS?

In 1998, OSEP funded the first national Technical Assistance and Dissemination (TA/D) Center on PBIS to explore ways to embed key behavioral practices into a schoolwide framework. The goals of the Center were to (a) directly address the social, emotional, and behavioral (SEB) needs of students with challenging behaviors, through instruction and environmental supports; (b) provide a structure to deliver a continuum of evidence-based practices that benefit all students; and (c) support data-driven decision making (Center on PBIS, 2015). To accomplish these goals, the Center on PBIS adopted the three-tiered prevention logic of the public health community.

How has the TA/D Center on PBIS evolved?

In response to increasing research in the field of PBIS, funding priorities, and lessons learned over the past decades, the Center on PBIS has expanded its applications to continue to assist state education agencies (SEA) and local education agencies (LEA) with implementation of PBIS. The Center on PBIS has addressed the need to sustain and scale the PBIS framework by building capacity throughout the implementation cascade (i.e., providing connection and support across a variety of organizational levels). Specifically, the Center on PBIS provided TA to state educational agencies (SEAs) to enhance their support of local educational agencies (LEAs), including those considered high need. With SEA and LEA support, the Center demonstrated that schools could build a full

continuum (Tiers 1, 2, and 3) to (a) improve outcomes for students with or at risk for disabilities and racially/ethnically marginalized students, (b) enhance school climate and school safety, and (c) improve conditions for learning to promote the well-being of all students.

What are the Core Values of the Center on PBIS? (i.e., *What do we care about?*)

The Center on PBIS is grounded in the values of comprehensive prevention, based on human-centered science, implemented through collaborative partnerships, and centered in equity, to improve SEB and academic outcomes. Each of these values is described below.

- **Prevention** includes holistic approaches, organized within a tiered prevention framework (PBIS), to proactively support each and every student, family, and educator through safe, positive, and inclusive instruction and support.

- **Science** includes empirical research, informed, and supported by local data and practice, that honors identities, improves outcomes, and enhances experiences of students, families, and educators, who also inform and improve science.

- **Partnerships** describes active collaborations with national, state, and local (students, families, and educators) partners to co-create affirming, culturally sustaining, and productive learning environments.

- **Equity** refers to actions that elevate historically marginalized voices, honor individual, family, and community identities, and reflect equitable learning opportunities through meaningful participation of each student, family, and educator in the systems we promote.

- **Improved outcomes** - experienced by students, families, and educators - are the ultimate reason for and test of PBIS implementation.

What are the Actions of the Center on PBIS? (i.e., *What do we do?*)

The Center on PBIS achieves its aims through:

- Delivering a continuum of **technical assistance** (TA) to SEAs and LEAs, including federal grantees, to **build local capacity** to implement, sustain, and scale up PBIS.

- Engaging **multiple and diverse perspectives and lived experiences** in TA, implementation, and evaluation.

- Creating **freely available resources** (i.e., assessments, briefs, guides, and tools) to assist educators in implementing and sustaining PBIS across an extended array of contexts.

- Providing **model demonstrations** of implementation of a tiered PBIS framework and improved outcomes (e.g., social, emotional, behavioral, and academic growth).

- Extending the lessons learned from PBIS implementation to the broader agenda of **educational improvement** and improved quality of life for students, families, and educators.

Introduction

What is the Purpose of the PBIS Implementation Blueprint?

The PBIS Implementation Blueprint provides guidance to state, district, and school level implementers on how to use the evidence-based PBIS framework to support positive school climate and improve student outcomes using a team-based approach through a problem-solving process which focuses on data-based decision making, identifying evidence-based practices, and building systemic staff supports to ensure implementation integrity. This Blueprint (a) describes the rationale, essential elements, and key functions of the leadership team and (b) shares resources to assist in building a sustainable PBIS framework that is both culturally and contextually relevant across contexts (i.e., organizational levels [state, district, agency, school], locales [urban, suburban, rural], geographic regions or territories, and communities) and delivered with a high level of implementation fidelity (i.e., implemented as intended) to achieve desired outcomes of partners.[1]

The PBIS Implementation Blueprint aligns with the PBIS Evaluation Blueprint and the PBIS Professional Development Blueprint.

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1. Partner is the broad term used throughout this blueprint when referring to many groups (i.e., interested/related/affected parties, consumers, or stakeholders) such as the students, families, educators and staff in the respective organization or communities. However, it is recommended that leadership teams be specific and identify the actual group(s) they intend to engage or impact.

Who are the Intended Users of this Blueprint?

The PBIS Implementation Blueprint provides guidance for implementers interested in (a) exploring and getting ready to implement PBIS, (b) getting started with PBIS, and/or (c) getting better at enhancing, sustaining, and/or scaling (expanding) their efforts in educational settings. Implementers include school, district, and state-level educators[2] and administrators, staff developers, educational policy and decision makers, higher education personnel preparation programs, consultants, program evaluators, and researchers.

How Do I Use this Blueprint?

The PBIS Implementation Blueprint emphasizes efficient and effective implementation that describes **key elements and features** of PBIS and serves as a **pathway to resources** across levels or contexts (e.g., state, district, agency, school) and topics (e.g., equity, students with disabilities, family, rural, mental health and well-being). PBIS is a systems-change process guided by goal setting, action planning, progress monitoring, and maintaining flexibility with implementation through collaborative partnerships. This dynamic continual improvement process requires data-based problem solving, and as a result, leadership teams should continually match activities based on

need within and across years. Therefore, implementers should use this blueprint as a coaching tool throughout their implementation journey (i.e., getting ready, getting started, and getting better) to assist in establishing and sustaining effective PBIS implementation across contexts rather than a "cookbook" of practices and systems.

The PBIS Implementation Blueprint is organized into four sections. **Section 1** describes the background of the Center on PBIS, the importance of behavioral health, and how the essential elements of the PBIS framework align with MTSS, problem solving, and implementation science which inform readiness for change. **Section 2** is organized by the key leadership team functions and using implementation logic, describes the activities required to implement a systems approach to PBIS across implementation phase (i.e., getting ready, getting started, getting better) and context (e.g., state, district, school) with related resources. The final sections of this blueprint contain references (**Section 3**) and a glossary of terms (**Section 4**). Supplemental material to assist with deeper understanding has been hyperlinked in this blueprint to the Center on PBIS website and will continue to be added across time, based on need.

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2. Educator is the broad term used throughout this blueprint. It includes all individuals within an organization (i.e., school or agency) who support students (e.g., teachers, educational aides, administrators, administrative assistants, and support personnel such as counselors, school psychologists, social workers, and community mental health providers).

SECTION 1: OVERVIEW

Importance of Behavioral Health

Schools are places where children can learn and thrive in social, emotional, behavioral, and academic domains. Yet schools continue to be faced with accountability to implement high-leverage (i.e., high-quality) instructional practices (i.e., HLPs), accelerate learning while meeting a range of diverse learning needs, prioritize school safety, address the impact of trauma and increasing mental health needs, including the social, emotional, and behavioral (SEB) needs, while simultaneously experiencing vast personnel shortages. Establishing an evidence-based multi-tiered behavioral framework allows schools to systematically support students' social (how we interact), emotional (how we feel), behavioral (how we act; Chafouleus, 2020), and mental health needs to create an environment conducive to learning for all.

How Do Social, Emotional, and Behavioral (SEB) Supports Impact Learning?

Studies have shown a strong association between academic and behavior success (e.g., Algozzine et al., 2012; McIntosh et al., 2008; Wang & Algozzine, 2011). In fact, there are compelling reasons for considering the interaction of academics and behavior:

- PBIS establishes conditions that create a favorable learning environment: positive, predictable, consistent with student SEB competencies while

> **"Children are the world's most valuable resource and its best hope for the future."**
>
> (John F. Kennedy, 1963)

reducing disruption to instruction due to discipline issues (Horner et al., 2009).

- By improving social behavior using PBIS, schools are more efficient and effective with teachers teaching and students learning (Algozzine & Algozzine, 2007).

- For students exhibiting unwanted or unexpected behaviors, reducing discipline problems should increase exposure to classroom instruction and facilitate academic skill acquisition (Luiselli et al., 2005; Walker & Shinn, 2002).

- Pairing effective academic interventions with effective behavior support improves outcomes in both areas (Gage et al., 2015).

Conversely, without effective behavior support, research has shown that students experience negative outcomes:

- Increased exclusionary discipline (e.g., office referrals, suspension, expulsion).

- Lost instructional time and decreased achievement for excluded students and their peers.

- Worse outcomes for students from marginalized groups, especially Black students, students with disabilities, and LGBTQIA+ students,[3] who are at highest risk of experiencing exclusionary discipline.

Resources

- ES MTSS-B Trial: Key Takeaways for District and State Leaders

- Why Prioritize Behavioral Supports?

- Effective Instruction as a Protective Factor

- Classroom Integrated Academics and Behavior Brief

What is Function-Based Support?

Supporting student behavior is critical in reducing harmful exclusionary discipline practices and promoting full access to instruction for every student. In fact, the science of human behavior has taught us that students have learned all the behaviors we see in school - those that are contextually appropriate and those that are not. Researchers have demonstrated for many years that function-based support is an effective way to identify and support students' SEB needs (e.g., Horner, 1994; Lewis et al., 2019; Lloyd et al., 2019; O'Neill et al., 2015; Sugai et al., 2000; Walker et al., 2018). When applied to an individual, a function-based approach has the following features:

- Foundations in behavioral theory, applied behavior analysis, and positive behavioral support.

- Attention to environmental context and cultural variation in what behaviors are deemed acceptable and desirable.

- Prioritizing prevention (i.e., setting students up for success).

- Emphasis on the "purpose" or function of behavior (i.e., understanding "why" students engage in certain behaviors).

- A focus on teaching SEB skills that meet the same purpose (i.e., functionally relevant skills).

- Attention to implementers (adult behaviors) and a redesign of teaching and learning environments.

This same preventive and positive approach is also applicable to all students in an organization. When thinking about a schoolwide or agency-wide function-based approach, leadership teams:

- Work for and with all students because every child entering school benefits from mental health and behavior support.

- Give priority to evidence-based practices and systems with demonstrated effectiveness, efficiency, and relevance.

- Integrate SEB, academic support, and interventions for all students.

- Emphasize prevention in establishing and maintaining safe and supportive school climates.

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3. LGBTQIA+ is the acronym used throughout this blueprint to describe students who identify their sexual orientation or gender identity as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, asexual, intersex, nonbinary, or in other ways.

- Create systems that reflect the strengths, values, and needs of students, their families, and the communities in which they live.

- Understand student needs from a strengths-based and functional perspective - behavior is a form of communication and understanding the "why" behind the behavior is critical to develop relevant supports for students. Adopt a similar strengths-based, functional, and supportive approach to supporting staff professional development and wellness.

- Expand the use of effective practices and systems to district, county, regional, and state levels.

- Increase collaboration among multiple community support systems (i.e., education, juvenile justice, community mental health, child welfare, family, medical).

- Build a school environment where team building and problem-solving skills are expected, taught, and reinforced.

How these goals are accomplished may vary across organizational systems and their contexts. At the schoolwide/agency-wide level, teams of educators focus on collaboratively defining, teaching, and encouraging positive and culturally relevant (a) schoolwide expectations or norms (e.g., respect for

community, self, environment) within routines or procedures (e.g., predictable behaviors in particular settings) and (b) SEB skills (e.g., asking for help, coping during stressful events, problem solving). For students who need additional support to be successful, re-teaching these practices is critical for skill acquisition and fluency. Further, expanding into targeted or individualized support ensures that each student benefits from the SEB supports and interventions. By adopting a PBIS framework, these practices are utilized through a system-level organizational approach and meet the needs of all.

Resources

- Function-Based Support: An Overview

- Tier 3 Brief Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) Guide

- Tier 3 Comprehensive Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) Guide

- Tier 3 School-level Systems Guide

- Tier 3 Student-level Systems Guide

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

What is PBIS?

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is an evidence-based, multi-tiered, problem-solving, and team-based framework educators use to build a continuum of supports to promote all students' SEB and mental health, including those with disabilities and who display high rates of unwanted or unexpected behavior (Sugai et al., 2000). PBIS is founded in the principles and practices of behavioral psychology (Cooper et al., 2020; Skinner, 1953), prevention (Biglan, 1995, 2015), and implementation science (Fixsen et al., 2005). When implemented with fidelity, PBIS has the potential to improve SEB outcomes for all students, including students with disabilities and those at-risk; promotes academic success; and enhances school climate, including teacher health and well-being. See the next section for supporting evidence.

PBIS is not a curriculum, a packaged program, or a model learned during a one-day professional development training. It is a commitment to supporting all student behavior effectively and efficiently through a team-based approach that prioritizes prevention and responds to needs using data-based problem solving. At the school level, educators create a safe, equitable, consistent, and predictable culture of support by investing in a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) framework to organize effective practices and build

capacity. PBIS creates learning environments where everyone thrives. At the systems level, leaders develop effective policy, invest in systems change, prioritize evidence-based practice, and monitor implementation and outcomes that promote equitable outcomes for all.

> ### Resources
> - Why Prioritize Behavior Support?
> - What is PBIS?

What is the Evidence Base for PBIS?

For decades, extensive research has demonstrated the impact of implementing PBIS with fidelity (i.e., as designed or intended based on empirical research) on key student, staff, and school outcomes, such as improvements in SEB and academic outcomes. These positive effects have ranged from larger systems (e.g., schoolwide teaching of expectations, whole school positive reinforcement, district teaming practices) to classrooms (e.g., providing explicit instruction in classroom routines and expectations) to the individual student level (e.g., function-based support, continuous progress monitoring, social skills instruction) across various settings (e.g., K-12 schools, juvenile justice, alternative education settings, rural, suburban, urban)

and with diverse groups of students (e.g., students with and without disabilities, students with different racial/ethnic identities, and LGBTQIA+ students). Figure 1 provides a snapshot of the range of outcomes students, teachers and schools realize when PBIS is implemented with fidelity.

Resources

- Is Schoolwide Positive Behavior Support an Evidence-based Practice?

- Why Implement PBIS?

What is the Legal Background for PBIS?

The term "positive behavioral interventions and supports" (PBIS) was first used in the 1997 reauthorization of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), with PBIS directly included in IDEA sections 601(c)(5)(F), 611(e)(2)(C)(iii), 614(d)(3)(B)(i), 662(b)(2)(A)(v), and 665. The 2004 reauthorization of IDEA and the corresponding 2006 regulations retained language on PBIS, and the 2015 Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA; PL 114-95) also referenced PBIS on multiple occasions. Local Education Agencies (LEAs) may also use Title 1 funding under part B of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act

Improved Student Outcomes

- Academic Achievement
- Prosocial Behavior
- Attendance
- Emotional Regulation
- Reduced Bullying and Harrasment
- Reduced Alcohol and Other Drug Use
- Improved Outcomes for Students With Disabilities

Reduced Exclusionary Discipline

- Office Discipline Referrals
- Suspensions
- Restraint and Seclusion
- Racial Inequities

Evidence for each outcome available at www.pbis.org/resource/is-school-wide-positive-behavior-support-an-evidence-based-practice

Improved Teacher Outcomes

- Teacher Efficacy and Well-Being
- Teacher-Student Relationships
- Student Engagement and Instructional Time
- School Culture and Organizational Health
- Climate and Safety

Figure 1. Examples of outcomes for schools implementing PBIS with fidelity.

(ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) "[t]o assist LEAs in providing positive behavioral interventions and supports and mental health services for children with disabilities" (Authorization, 2023).

The U.S. Department of Education has provided further clarification that:

1. PBIS does not "mean any specific program or curriculum" (Applications, 2013, p. 40459) but is a "framework or approach for assisting school personnel in adopting and organizing evidence-based behavioral interventions and supports into an integrated continuum that enhances academic and social behavior outcomes for all students" (U.S. Department of Education, 2018, p. 35257).

2. PBIS is a system approach centered on a "multi-tiered behavioral framework to improve the integration and implementation of behavioral practices, data-driven decision-making systems, professional development opportunities, school leadership, supportive SEA and LEA policies, and evidence-based instructional strategies" (U.S. Department of Education, 2013, p. 40459).

3. Using a PBIS framework leads to better behavioral and academic outcomes (U.S. Department of Education, 2013, 2015). This includes "improving school climate, preventing problem behavior, increasing learning time, promoting positive social skills, and delivering effective behavioral interventions and supports" (U.S. Department of Education, 2013, p. 40459-40460).

Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)

What is an MTSS?

A Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) is a prevention-focused framework, guided by a team using data to drive decisions, that organizes evidence-based practices and systems to improve outcomes for all students using a continuous improvement process. McIntosh and Goodman (2016) define MTSS as an "...integration of a number of multiple-tiered systems into one coherent, strategically combined system meant to address multiple domains or content areas in education..." (p. 5). Emerging as a framework from the work conducted in public health emphasizing three tiers of prevention (Caplan, 1964), MTSS relies on a continuum of evidence-based practices matched to student and family strengths, values, and needs.

By establishing a preventive and proactive approach across a continuum, leadership teams can effectively and efficiently adjust supports and interventions to respond to student need. Specifically, as the magnitude of a problem increases, so does the need for:

- resources to address the problem

- enhancements to teaching and learning environments

- collecting and using data for decision making

- teaming and coordination

- actively engaging students and families in co-creation and decision making

Ideally led by a leadership team, an infrastructure (i.e., system) is established that aligns the academic, behavioral, social, and emotional supports (i.e., practices or interventions) to improve education for all students through a multi-tiered blended continuum of support typically operationalized as three tiers: Tier 1 (primary prevention), Tier 2 (secondary prevention), and Tier 3 (tertiary prevention).

What are the Shared Features of PBIS with MTSS Approaches?

PBIS is one of the first systematically developed MTSS frameworks. The PBIS logic shares several key features with other MTSS approaches, including response-to-intervention (RtI), in which leadership teams prioritize prevention and engage in a proactive continuous improvement process to support students' SEB, academic, and mental health and well-being outcomes. *Figure 2* highlights eight key features of an MTSS approach. Definitions of these features can be found in Section 4: Glossary of Terms.
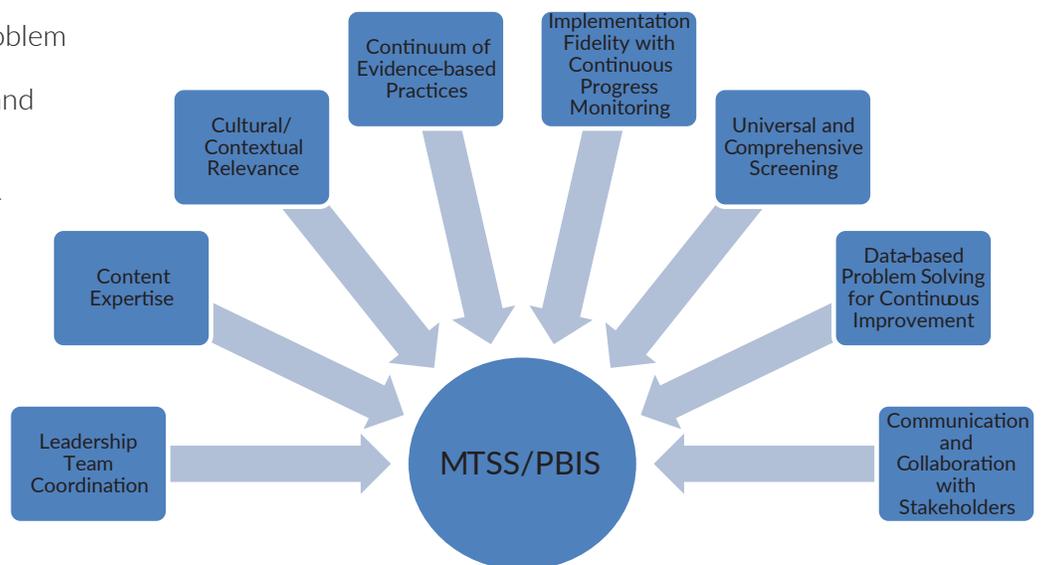
Figure 2. Key features of an MTSS/PBIS approach.

How is PBIS a Multi-Tiered Prevention Framework?

PBIS emphasizes a comprehensive schoolwide system of evidence-based and culturally responsive practices that are adapted and aligned to support students' SEB needs to promote academic success. The PBIS framework organizes support across multiple tiers of intensity that are layered and vary based on the level of student need. The three tiers of prevention are described below with a visual representation of the continuum of differentiated supports (see Figure 3).

1. **Tier 1: Primary Prevention.** All members of an organization receive universal supports to increase SEB outcomes to enhance academic success. Core Tier 1 supports provide the foundation upon which all other tiers are built to optimize outcomes and prevent challenges across all settings in an organization.

2. **Tier 2: Secondary Prevention.** Some members of an organization who have not been successful with Tier 1 support alone and are at an elevated risk for problems receive supplemental support to prevent more challenging behaviors. Targeted Tier 2 support is often delivered to groups identified with similar needs and benefit from specific skill instruction with more opportunities for practice and feedback.

3. **Tier 3: Tertiary Prevention.** Few members of an organization at high risk or experiencing significant challenges receive individualized support to reduce severity. Intensive Tier 3 interventions are matched to the specific individual needs and expand support provided at Tier 1 and Tier 2.
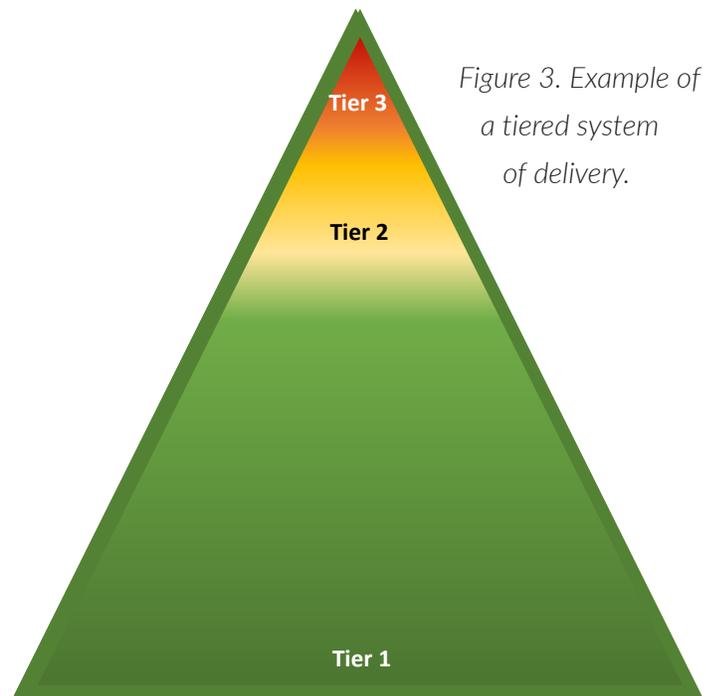
Figure 3. Example of a tiered system of delivery.

There are two important clarifications related to tiers of support:

1. Tiers refer to levels of support individuals receive, not to individuals themselves. The tiers also guide what educators put in place across school environments to promote student success. In other words, students may receive Tier 2 supports which include staff implementing a small group social skill group or a self-management strategy; they are not "Tier 2 students."

2. ALL students in the school are included in the first tier of universal support. This means that students with or at-risk for disabilities continuously access Tier 1 supports, and additional Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports are layered onto Tier 1 depending on their individual needs. For example, a student with a disability may receive individualized behavioral

skills instruction (Tier 3), and benefit from a social skills group (Tier 2), along with more opportunities for practice during SEB instruction in a general education classroom implementing PBIS practices (Tier 1).

How are Student Needs Addressed in the Tiered Approach?

This multi-tiered continuum of support ensures everyone experiences success by building strong universal (Tier 1) supports, using data to identify needs, and matching targeted (Tier 2) and individualized (Tier 3) student supports that are aligned with Tier 1. PBIS is proactive by getting help to students early to prevent needs from intensifying, unlike the past "wait and respond" (or "wait to fail") approaches. Therefore, the multi-tiered PBIS framework is proactive, NOT reactive. Through regular data review, leadership teams identify students who (a) are successful with their current level of support, (b) need additional layers of support to be successful, or (c) have met targeted or individualized goals and are ready to have current supports faded, as well as student groups that are most and least likely to benefit from Tier 1 supports (Simonsen & George, 2022).

Tier 1 is designed to include supports for all students, across all settings, and give all staff the skills and supports to implement with fidelity, but some students will benefit from additional support "layered on top" of the Tier 1 support to be successful. For example, as data identify students not responding to Tier 1 interventions (e.g., adherence to expectations in the cafeteria), the intensity of behavioral supports should

increase in a supplemental, yet not supplanted way (e.g., increase teaching, practice, and feedback of the core Tier 1 expectations to be successful in the cafeteria). Through this layered approach, students receiving Tier 2 support continue to receive Tier 1 support, and students receiving Tier 3 support also receive Tier 1 and potentially Tier 2 support (Goodman & George, 2020). Thus, intensity of support is paired with intensity of need within the continuum (i.e., Tier 3 supports provide the most intensive and individualized SEB and/or academic supports due to the severity of needs).

How are Students with Disabilities Meaningfully Included in PBIS?

PBIS includes all students in tiered interventions, including students with disabilities. First, like all students, students with disabilities benefit from robust and differentiated Tier 1 that is accessible to and supportive of all. These universal supports create supportive and inclusive environments that benefit students with disabilities. Second, like all students, students with disabilities may have targeted and intensive needs supported in Tiers 2 and 3. Finally, throughout this continuum of support, students with disabilities receive specially designed instruction to meet their unique needs. Connecting the specially designed instruction to the continuum of supports can maximize both access to and benefit from education. To ensure schools effectively include students with disabilities across the tiers of support, we recommend the following resources.

Some Possible Inclusive Practices for Students with Disabilities that Teams may Consider Across Tiers

1. **Tier 1: Universal, Primary Prevention**

- Address accessibility throughout Tier 1 supports.

- Incorporate varying modes of delivery, such as using visual supports.

- Adopt and apply schoolwide expectations during specialized instruction.

- Use the schoolwide acknowledgement system for reinforcing expected behaviors and align with any individualized recognition system.

- Within classrooms, adopt the following "top ten" interventions in the classroom: (a) design and adapt the physical environment to meet the needs of all students, (b) develop and explicitly teach predictable classroom routines, (c) post, define, and teach 3-5 positive classroom expectations (d) promote active engagement with high rates of opportunities to respond (e) provide prompts, pre-corrections and other reminders, (f) engage in active supervision, (g) deliver behavior specific praise, (h) provide behavior specific effort corrections, (i) ensure students experience a favorable ratio of positive (praise) to negative (corrections), and (j) collect and use fidelity and outcome data to differentiate practices.

2. **Tier 2: Targeted, Secondary Prevention**

- Supplement (i.e., provide in addition to) Tier 1 supports for students with disabilities with targeted interventions that are aligned with Tier 1 and meet students' identified areas of need.

- Have students participate in small group instruction that is offered to other students without disabilities (e.g., social skills or peer mentoring) in addition to their specialized instruction.

- Consider connecting students to Check-in Check-out (CICO; ensure the Tier 2 support does not reduce or replace services outlined in the student's IEP).

3. **Tier 3: Intensive and Individualized, Tertiary Prevention**

- Design a Behavior Support Plan (BSP; also known as a Behavior Intervention Plan, or BIP) with interventions driven by a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) and when possible, consider aligning supports with schoolwide expectations/ norms and recognition (e.g., if the replacement behavior for hitting is asking for a break, connecting it to the school norm of "safety" might increase opportunities for classroom-based reinforcement that tie to Tier 1 expectations, promote generalizability of this skill across settings, and enhance the possibility of reaching the desired behavior, such as getting work completed).

- Apply a person-centered or wraparound process to design and coordinate comprehensive support.

- Consider two ways to access Tier 3 interventions: (a) as part of typical school practices or (b) as required through the IEP (If the individualized behavior supports are part of the student's IEP, school teams follow procedural safeguards afforded to students with disabilities through IDEA. When a student is suspected to have a disability, teams follow their district policies and procedures to comply with IDEA regulations.).

Resources

- [Students with Disabilities](#)

- [Tier 2](#)

- [Tier 3](#)

- [Supporting Students with Disabilities in the Classroom within a PBIS Framework](#)

- [Providing Access to Schoolwide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities](#)

- [Supporting Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders Through Schoolwide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports](#)

- [Measuring Fidelity of Core Features of Tier 2 Systems and Practices in Schools](#)

What is the Continuous Improvement Process in a Multi-Tiered Framework?

Effective leadership teams use a data-based continuous improvement and problem-solving process [e.g., Plan-Do-Study-Act (Deming, 1993); Team-Initiated Problem Solving or TIPS (Newton et al., 2009)] across the multi-tiered continuum of support to make proactive educational decisions (Lewis & Sugai, 1999). This process may address identified problems or focus on improving PBIS implementation to promote meaningful outcomes. This key feature of MTSS implementation provides a structured process to address student outcomes across content areas, grade levels, and tiers, including barriers to schoolwide implementation. Although several models for data-based continuous improvement exist (e.g., TIPS), Figure

4 consists of a four-step approach and highlights the cyclical nature of the continuous improvement process, regardless of the improvement opportunity or problem being addressed. It is important to note that the questions can address both (a) what is not working, and which individuals and groups are not adequately supported by intervention(s), and (b) what is working, and which individuals and groups are benefiting from intervention(s)? The latter takes a strengths-based approach that not only exemplifies the effective supports and interventions to sustain, but also highlights the gaps between those benefiting and not benefiting that indicate the need to adapt supports.

Figure 4. Example of a continuous improvement process.

Using data to guide evidence-based practice and build systems to support the selected practices is integral for continuous improvement and sustainability. The

PBIS framework is designed to establish systemwide support for all, and data can help to ensure this occurs by identifying, supporting, and evaluating the SEB goals within a school (individual, classroom, and schoolwide levels) and across many or all schools (within a district and/or state). PBIS complements school improvement plans by employing teams to collect, analyze, and use the information for planning and implementation purposes. Through careful data analysis to understand why some groups are benefiting more from the supports and intervention(s) than others, teams can establish plans to intensify and/or accelerate supports and interventions so that a true, comprehensive system of support is meeting the needs and improving the outcomes of all students. The next section describes how the essential elements of the PBIS framework are integrated and aligned within a continuous improvement multi-tiered system of support.

Resources

- Data-based Decision Making

- Drilling Down District Data: Analyzing Reach and Fidelity of PBIS Implementation

- How School Teams Use Data to Make Effective Decisions: Team-Initiated Problem Solving (TIPS)

- Using a PBIS Framework: Working Smarter, Not Harder in Rural Schools

- Data Guide for Enhancing Your PBIS Framework to Address Student Mental Health
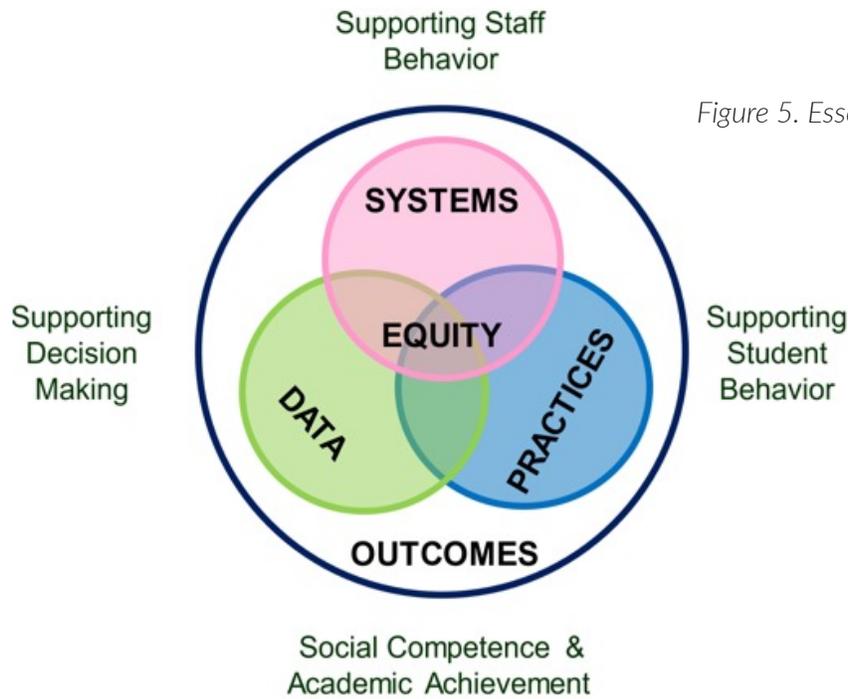
Figure 5. Essential elements of PBIS

Essential Elements of PBIS

Grounded in the behavioral, prevention, and implementation sciences, the multi-tiered PBIS framework emphasizes the integration of (a) using data to identify needed supports and measuring implementation outcomes, (b) using evidence-based practices, and (c) implementing a systems approach designed to support fidelity, all of which have equity at the core of the work. The PBIS framework centers on equity and integrates all the data, systems, and practices affecting student outcomes every day. These essential elements operationally define the PBIS framework.

What are the Essential Elements of PBIS?

To effectively implement PBIS, five essential elements collectively provide organizations (e.g., districts and schools) with the opportunity to efficiently organize

> "Investing in the core elements for expansion or scale up of any practice on a magnitude of social importance increases the likelihood of sustaining across time."
>
> (Fixsen, Blase, & VanDyke, 2019)

resources and sustain the adoption of evidence-based practices that are essential to both the implementation and continuous improvement processes (see Figure 5). This interactive and interconnected improvement process focuses on organizational refinement; thus, absence of one of these elements may reduce the likelihood of improving outcomes. To best understand

the PBIS essential elements, leadership teams may consider the following questions when building a PBIS framework.

HOW CAN WE IMPROVE THE EXPERIENCES AND OUTCOMES OF EACH EDUCATOR AND STUDENT?

Equity is "when educational policies, practices, interactions, and resources are representative of, constructed by, and responsive to all people such that each individual has access to, can meaningfully participate, and makes progress in high-quality learning experiences that empowers them towards self-determination and reduces disparities in outcomes regardless of individual characteristics and cultural identities" (Great Lakes Equity Center, 2012, p. 2).

For PBIS, equity includes a consideration of culture or context within and across all the essential elements because of the influence and added value of the local environments (e.g., neighborhood, city), personal characteristics (e.g., ability, ethnicity, gender identity, nationality, race, sexual orientation), learning histories (e.g., family, social routines, customs, experiences), and language (e.g., dialect, vocabulary) that directly impact the implementation process and outcomes. Leadership teams adapt practices and systems to fit the needs of the local setting (e.g., the same practices may look slightly different across schools and communities such as rural versus urban) to ensure success for all, including students with disabilities. The multi-tiered PBIS framework is intended for all students, families, and educators and designed to differentiate supports for students and monitored to ensure equitable outcomes are observed. In PBIS, schools may strive for

equity in school discipline, as well as the reduction of risk for exclusionary discipline (e.g., office referrals and suspensions) based on individual characteristics like race/ethnicity, special education status, gender identity, and/or sexual orientation (i.e., LGBTQIA+).

WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO OUR COMMUNITIES?

Outcomes measure the impact of implementing PBIS with fidelity (i.e., as designed or intended) and reflect the values of the local context (e.g., improved prosocial behavior, reduced disciplinary incidents, increased instructional time, reduced disproportionality). Outcomes are often documented as observable and measurable goal statements that allow leadership teams to articulate and measure what they aim to achieve through PBIS implementation. Leadership teams, families, students, and educators establish goals and work collaboratively to co-create and co-implement plans in their respective settings. In PBIS, outcomes include academic and behavior targets or indicators (i.e., high expectations) that are specified, endorsed, emphasized, and monitored because of their social and educational importance to local communities.

WHAT INFORMATION IS NEEDED FOR OUR ORGANIZATION TO MAKE EFFECTIVE DECISIONS ABOUT OUR PBIS IMPLEMENTATION AND OUTCOMES?

Data are the information used to describe, choose, and evaluate goals or outcomes within a proactive problem-solving process for continuous improvement. Data assist in selection, progress monitoring, and evaluation of outcomes, practices, and systems across all three
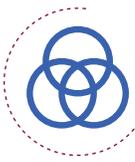
tiers. In PBIS, the types of data collected are guided by the questions teams want to answer and often include (but are not limited to) implementation fidelity, student outcomes, and needs (e.g., universal screening).

WHAT CAN WE DO TO SUSTAIN OUR IMPLEMENTATION OVER THE LONG HAUL?

Systems are the operational supports established to enable the accurate and durable implementation of the PBIS practices, efficient use of data, and achievement of desired outcomes. Importantly, systems that are tailored to the values, strengths, and needs of the local students, families, and communities are more likely to be effective than those that are implemented in a generic format. In PBIS, the system is the infrastructure to support the adults in successfully implementing the evidence-based practices in the respective setting (i.e., statewide, districtwide, schoolwide, classroomwide).

Investing in a systems approach

Investing in a systems approach is beneficial for several reasons because systems help to:

1. Support implementation fidelity that is accurate and consistent.

2. Sustain the implementation of effective practices.

3. Scale up PBIS practices so that all students will access and benefit from implementation.

A system can be described as the procedures, policies, priorities, process for allocation of materials, and competency development through ongoing professional development and technical assistance

to support the fidelity and sustainability of PBIS implementation. Essential system features are connected across the educational cascade from the classroom to the state level. These features are interdependent and influence a leadership team's effectiveness, efficiency, and equitable impact.

HOW WILL WE SUPPORT OUR STUDENTS' SEB AND ACADEMIC GROWTH?

Practices are the evidence-based supports and interventions selected to address the desired outcomes and delivered by "typical intervention agents" (e.g., implementers or educators who do the work). In PBIS, these are the strategies used to support and improve student behavior.

Multi-Level Practices

Practices may be supported at multiple levels of implementation. For example, a district may have a set of districtwide expectations, and each school adopts consistent language to support students transitioning among schools in the district.

Tables 1–3 provide a snapshot of the big ideas of PBIS elements across a multi-tiered continuum of support (Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 3). To ensure the consideration of culture or context, equity has been embedded within and across all the other essential elements (i.e., data, systems, practices, outcomes) in each table.

What do **ALL** *need?*
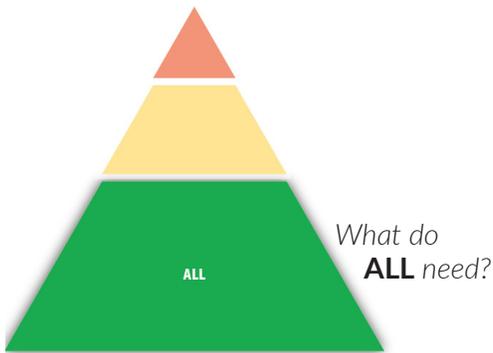
Evidence of Outcomes at Tier 1

- Our organization is "healthy" for all students, families, personnel, and community members as indicated by our data.

- All students, including each group of our students, meaningfully benefit from our practices.

- All staff, including each group of our staff, meaningfully benefit from our systems.

Table 1. Snapshot of PBIS Elements Across Tier 1

Data	Systems	Practices

• Access to a variety of data to identify current (a) problem(s); and (b) accomplishments (improvements/ successes) in:
  • attendance, academics, perceptions of school climate, consumer satisfaction of affected parties (e.g., family, students, educators), office discipline referrals, suspensions, expulsions, use of seclusion/restraint, nurse visits, student and educator wellbeing, teacher retention, efficacy, team participation, employment, mental health prevalence
• Use of data collected through universal screening for behavior and well-being to assess overall system and population (e.g., student, classrooms), including examination of subgroups.
• Collection and analysis of fidelity data on:
  • schoolwide, classroom, Tier 2 interventions, individual student interventions at Tier 3
	• Illustrations or posters with "rules" or guide points followed by concrete examples and non-examples.
	• Diverse leadership team representative of partners with active administrator, family, and community participation.
	• Efficient routine, schedule, and structure for team operating procedures.
	• Commitment or vision statement for establishing a positive social culture.
	• Procedures for: (a) on-going data-based monitoring, evaluation, and dissemination; (b) selection, training and coaching of new personnel; and (c) evaluation of personnel related to PBIS implementation.
		• Co-designed positive Tier 1 behavior expectations are defined, taught, practiced, and reinforced schoolwide, including classroom routines consistent with schoolwide expectations.
		• Continuum of procedures for: (a) encouraging expected behavior; and (b) discouraging unexpected or unwanted behavior.
		• Procedures for connecting and encouraging school-family partnerships.
		• Illustrations of low intensity supports threaded throughout the tiers (e.g., Behavior Support Plan, pre-correction).
		• Documentation of relation (a) between social validity (i.e., acceptability) and implementation fidelity; and (b) how screening data predicts student outcomes.
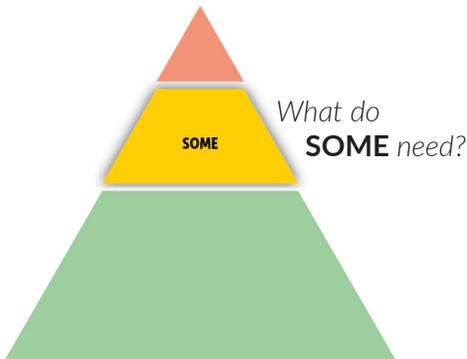
Evidence of Outcomes at Tier 2

All outcomes for Tier 1 above plus:

- Our organization provides our students with equitable access to Tier 2 supports through systemic identification using multiple data sources.

- All students, including each group of our students, meaningfully benefit from Tier 2 Interventions based on intervention progress monitoring data (i.e., % of students making progress in interventions as a whole and individual progress monitoring data used to fade supports or intensify supports based on decision rules).

- All staff, including each group of our staff, meaningfully benefit from Tier 2 systems based on intervention progress monitoring data.

What do **SOME** *need?*

Table 2. Snapshot of PBIS Elements Across Tier 2

Data	Systems	Practices
• All Tier 1 data. • Collection and use of universal screening data for monitoring Tier 1 and for identifying at risk students through applied decision rules. • Systems for more frequent progress monitoring and fidelity tracking of Tier 2 interventions. • Assessment of fidelity of Tier 2 system implementation.	• All Tier 1 systems. • A coordinator of intervention(s) facilitates and monitors access and student progress with team support. • Formal process for screening and identifying students in need of more than Tier 1 support. • Behavioral expertise with formalized process for selection and match to evidence-based practices (EBPs). • Decision rules defined for monitoring intervention(s) and student performance. • Access to training and technical assistance on Tier 2 practices and supports.	• All Tier 1 practices. • Instruction and practice with Tier 1 expectations and other prerequisite social emotional behavioral (SEB) skills. • Adult supervision and connection to school. • Opportunities for positive reinforcement within supplemental instruction. • Antecedent manipulations (e.g., pre-correction). • Precision to minimize rewards for unexpected or unwanted behavior with replacement skill instruction. • Access to Tier 2 practices and interventions include academic supports.

What do **FEW** *need?*

FEW
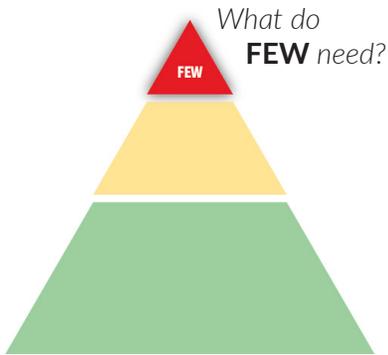
Evidence of Outcomes at Tier 3

All outcomes for Tier 1 and Tier 2 above plus:

- All students identified as needing intensified, individualized supports meaningfully benefit from Tier 3 supports and interventions outlined in their Behavior Support Plan (BSP) based on the function of behavior and progress monitoring data toward goal attainment (i.e., individual progress monitoring data used to fade supports or intensify supports based on decision rules).

- All staff, including each group of our staff, meaningfully benefit from Tier 3 systems based on intervention progress monitoring data.

Table 3. Snapshot of PBIS Elements Across Tier 3

Data	Systems	Practices
• All Tier 1 and 2 data. • Regular review of individual student data. • Use of data to (a) identify strengths and needs, (b) understand context, (c) guide selection of EBPs. • Use of individualized assessments, including observations, behavior rating scales, academic testing, functional behavior assessments. • Assessment of fidelity of Tier 3 system and individualized interventions used.	• All Tier 1 and 2 systems. • Multi-disciplinary team with coordinator facilitate and monitor access and use of student supports. • Formalized process for identifying student needs, level of support, and training/coaching of staff to support intensive student needs. • Behavior analytic support expertise on team. • Specifically designed student support team(s) with active family and student engagement. • Formal data collection plans established and reviewed regularly on (a) implementation fidelity and (b) impact on student outcomes, individualized BSPs are modified accordingly. • Coordination with wraparound supports.	• All Tier 1 and 2 practices. • Continuum of individualized function-based supports include brief or comprehensive functional behavior assessment to guide intervention. • Individualized plan of support includes strategies for (a) prevention, (b) teaching, (c) positive reinforcement of replacement skills, (d) minimizing natural rewards for unexpected or unwanted behavior, and (e) safety planning. • Wraparound supports and culturally responsive person-centered planning actively involves family and community supports and resources.

SECTION 2: IMPLEMENTATION

Leadership Team Functions Build Local Capacity

Effective implementation is critical to ensure the PBIS framework supports all students, families, and educators. The PBIS framework utilizes implementation logic to build capacity at the local level for sustained (i.e., long-term) and scaled (i.e., expanded) implementation across contexts (e.g., state, district, school). The next subsections (a) emphasize the importance of building local capacity at each level of implementation and (b) highlight the central role and functions of leadership teams.

Why and How does PBIS Build Local Implementation Capacity?

Establishing aligned and coordinated systems and developing local expertise in supporting students' SEB needs enables leadership teams across contexts (e.g., classroom, school, district, state) or locales (e.g., rural, urban) to build their own capacity, which is critical for overall sustainability. A systems approach to PBIS considers multiple points of support across a variety of organizational levels. Effective organizations maximize impact by staying connected and providing support throughout the implementation cascade as depicted in Figure 6.

Each implementation level is a separate, yet interconnected, organizational unit guided by a leadership team with related functions that support each other through bi-directional communication.

Each part of the cascade potentially impacts and interacts with the others. For example, states may coordinate training, technical assistance, and program evaluation to support all districts within the state, whereas districts may do the same to support all schools within the district. Further, at each level, leadership teams engage broader members of their community (e.g., providers of community-based mental health, public health, juvenile justice, other community agencies and resources) to inform implementation in educational settings and potentially extend implementation community-wide. At a school level, a leadership team engages all their educators, staff, students, and families for systemwide implementation.

Teams at each level of the cascade also use data and through established communication loops, share lessons learned, resources provided and adjust supports accordingly for impact and sustainability. For example, educators modify their classroom practices based on student performance, and districts modify their professional development and resources based on school outcomes related to implementation fidelity. By differentiating support through a multi-tiered approach (i.e., all, some, and few), leadership teams can (a) effectively support all students, educators, and families within their respective level of the implementation cascade; and (b) leverage support and information provided by other levels of the cascade.

State ⟷ District ⟷ School ⟷ Classroom ⟷ Student

Figure 6. Implementation cascade from district support to student benefit.

Description of Common Organizational Levels

State

Multiple school districts and local educational agencies (LEAs) organized under a common geographical (i.e., state, territory), political, and/or fiscal structure (e.g., state education agency or SEA, ESC, RESA). To implement statewide PBIS, a leadership team, with effective coordination, offers support to all districts within the respective state.

District

A group of schools defined by a common geographic, political, and/or fiscal structure (e.g., local education agency or LEA, charter management organization, diocese, intermediate units such as ISD, BOCES, including ESC and RESA depending on the fiscal structure). To implement districtwide PBIS, a district leadership team, with effective coordination, supports implementation in all schools within the respective school district.

School

A single school organization characterized typically by a group of educators supported by a single administrative team, principal, or director to serve students/youth and families that attend the school. To implement schoolwide PBIS, a school leadership team establishes the foundation for effective implementation and plans "whole school" support across all school settings (e.g., hallways, cafeteria, gymnasium, restrooms, playground), classrooms, students, adults (educators and staff), and families within the respective school. Like schoolwide, other settings (e.g., early childhood centers, residential programs, juvenile justice facilities, hospital settings) may describe their approaches as program wide (e.g., early childhood settings), organization wide (e.g., hospital), or facility wide (e.g., juvenile justice, other residential settings).

Classroom

Individual classroom organized typically by an educator and support staff who collaborate with their students to establish the expectations, routines, structures, and practices for presenting the curriculum, designing instruction, and managing the social climate of the classroom environment to ensure it is safe, predictable, positive, and equitable.
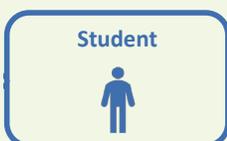
Student

Individual students supported by the other layers of the implementation cascade. Individual student supports may include universal supports in Tier 1, targeted supports in Tier 2, or individualized behavior intervention planning based on function-based behavior assessments, including implementation for students unresponsive to schoolwide interventions and need intensive support within the respective classroom in Tier 3.

What are the Functions of PBIS Leadership Teams?

The PBIS work is anchored in a leadership team that leads the assessment and action planning processes. Regardless of level of context (state, district, school), the purpose of this team is to actively coordinate all activities that comprise both the executive (e.g., building the infrastructure or capacity to support the work) and implementation (e.g., doing the work of planned activities) functions by working as a cohesive, integrated, and representative collection of individuals who lead the systems change and implementation process. Figure 7 displays the leadership team functions of systems implementation applicable to all contexts and illustrates their relation to each other. Importantly, these individual features are referred to as "functions," because how they look in organizations will vary based on the organization's size, available resources, existing expertise, and phase of implementation.
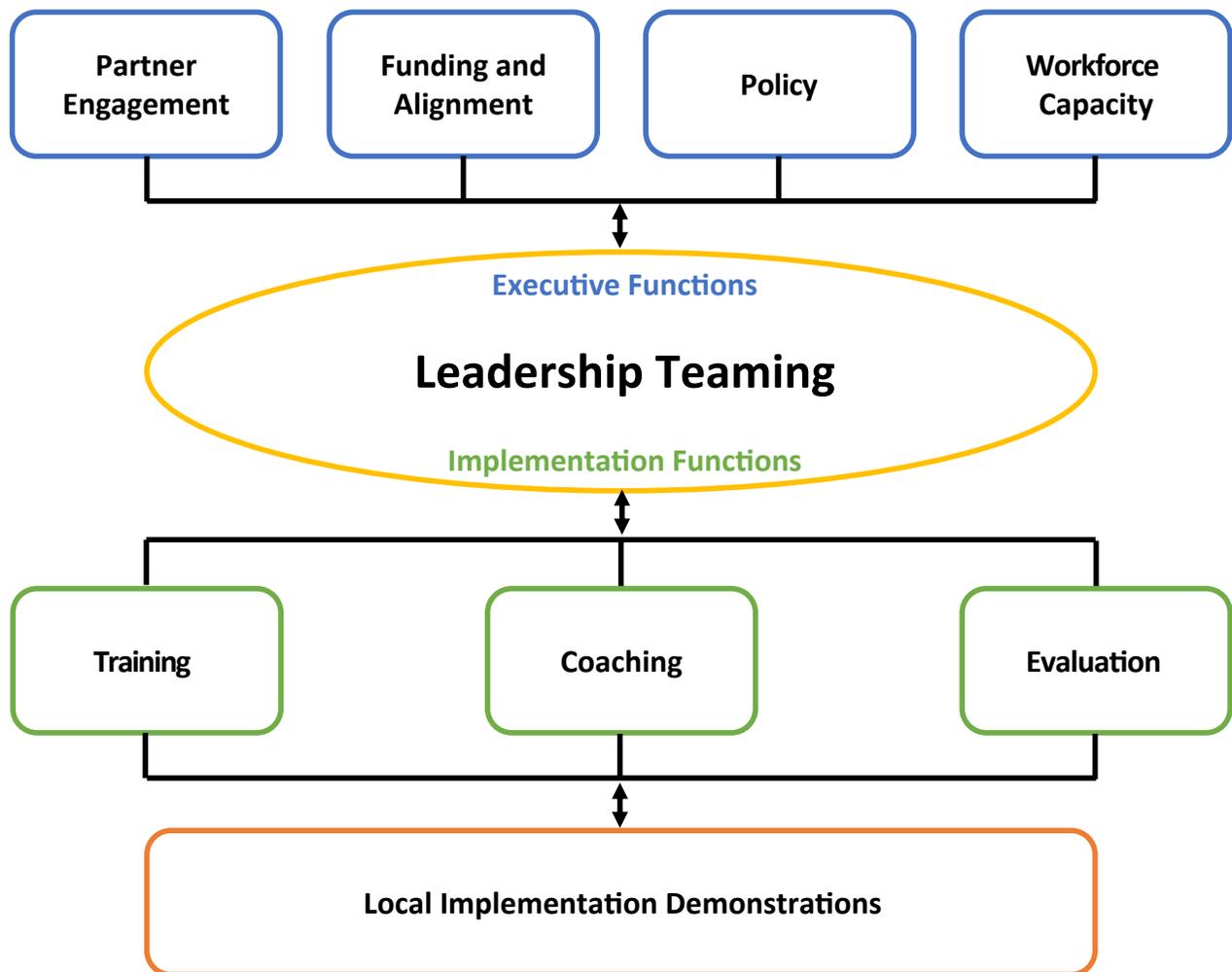

Figure 7. Leadership team functions of systems implementation across contexts.

Key executive functions include:

1. Engaging partners by collecting, summarizing, and disseminating information and resources

2. Securing funding and establishing alignment between initiatives

3. Promoting supportive policies with a preventive discipline vision

4. Developing the expertise across the specific workforce

Key implementation functions include:

1. Professional development and training of personnel

2. Coaching or providing technical assistance to implementers

3. Monitoring and evaluating impact (i.e., implementation fidelity) relative to the achievement of specified or desired outcomes

4. Establishing sustainable and scalable model demonstrations

Consideration of functions is important when planning and engaging any systemic implementation activities--such as resource mapping, practice alignment, program evaluation, and establishing local capacity--to prevent duplication and enhance effectiveness.

A Summary of the Continuous Improvement Process in which Leadership Teams Engage

1. *Who are we?*
Establish a visible, effective, efficient, and functional leadership team comprised of diverse representation across partners sharing a common mission.

2. *What is happening?*
Review existing information/data and describe and prioritize the issue(s) according to what is working, who is benefiting, and what is needed for all to succeed.

3. *Why is this happening?*
Analyze measurable outcomes that are directly related to the issue(s) according to what is working, who is benefiting, and what is needed for all to succeed.

4. *What are we going to do about it?*
Select evidence-based practices to achieve the specified outcomes and provide support for accurate adoption and sustained implementation of practices to address the issues.

5. *Is our plan working?*
Monitor and modify implementation of practices based on analysis of progress data toward desired outcomes (i.e., have we addressed the issues?)

6. *Who needs to know?*
Communicate findings (i.e., what is working/not working/needed) to partners for awareness, commitment, and sustainability.

Leadership Teaming

Leadership Teaming

Regardless of context (e.g., state, district, school, agency), leadership teams engage in typical activities when planning for systemic improvement using the PBIS framework, often revisit and refine activities throughout their implementation journey, and may vary in team formation (e.g., a large district may have both an executive and an implementation team). Initial activities include the following steps: (1) build and enhance a representative leadership team, (2) prioritize coordination, (3) develop or revisit team norms, and (4) develop and use a data-driven action plan.

BUILD AND CONTINUE TO ENHANCE A REPRESENTATIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM

PBIS is a team-guided approach. The leadership team steers the PBIS implementation, monitors its effectiveness, and provides continuity across contexts. This team could be built from scratch, but it may be most efficient to repurpose an existing team (e.g., district or school improvement team, school climate team). At a minimum, representation across diverse partners of the specific context (e.g., state, district, school, agency) is needed. Teams might include individuals whose roles, responsibilities, and activities are closely related to or directly involved in (a) supporting students' SEB, mental health, academic, and other related needs; (b) promoting positive school climate and supporting wellness; (c) providing

professional development and/or technical assistance; (d) evaluating outcomes; and (e) communicating and disseminating information. Teams should include principal, teacher, and support staff representation and are most effective when they have knowledge of the content and context (e.g., students, family, school, community). For example, teams benefit when members have skills related to the capacity to coach implementers, knowledge of academic and behavior patterns, and understand how the given context operates across populations, grade levels, and existing programs. Teams should regularly review and adjust their membership to ensure that representation includes (a) voices of individualized historically marginalized (e.g., students and families from diverse racial, ethnic, language, and ability identities, including LGBTQIA+) and (b) relevant areas of expertise for the current context.

It is important to note that some teams wait until implementation is underway before adding student, family, and community representation. Including these voices (and procedures to ensure meaningful participation) from the start will make the systems more effective, efficient, equitable, and sustainable in the long run.

Leadership Team Roles

Although, specific team members may differ by context, leadership teams generally include the following roles:

- **Team Leader/PBIS Coordinator:** starts and reviews the purpose of the meeting, facilitates meeting guided by a data-based action plan, serves as the team's primary point of contact.

- **Timekeeper:** monitors and communicates the amount of time available by providing updates and "warnings" (e.g., "10 minutes left") during meeting.

- **Data Specialist:** has access to data, reviews ahead of the meeting, makes relevant reports available, and shares understanding with team.

- **Recorder:** takes meeting notes, transcribes team's responses and actions taken on tangible document for transparency and accountability.

- **Coaching:** externally or internally based (outside or within specific context) implementation facilitators, may become a primary contact.

- **Communications:** serves as the point person for communication between team and partners impacted by PBIS implementation, this may include leading or collaborating with social media efforts.

- **Administrators:** serves in executive leadership positions such as principal, dean of students, superintendent, school board member, program head, and director of other initiatives who can make resource allocation decisions, actively encourage team efforts, and provide planning time, feedback, and support.

- **Content Experts:** individuals with behavioral and other areas of expertise relevant to (a) supporting students' SEB, academic, and mental health needs and (b) implementation in the relevant context; representatives for family and student may also be considered content experts.

- **Community Members:** those who represent interests of the organization's community such as family and student representatives, political leaders (e.g., mayor, city council members), business owners or managers, and local community program directors.

- **Other Members:** members from related initiatives that may assist in alignment of activities such as Human Resources, Curriculum and Instruction (i.e., Teaching and Learning), Safe and Supportive Schools, Special Education, Student Support Services, and social media (if not addressed in Communications).

PRIORITIZE COORDINATION FUNCTIONS ON THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

Individuals designated as PBIS or MTSS Coordinator(s) facilitate the leadership team and serve as the lead contact between an external support entity (e.g., national, state, or district technical assistance) and the internal leadership team coordinator(s) (e.g., state, district, or school/agency-based coordinator/coach). PBIS teams benefit from identifying coordinators who have fluency with the content knowledge (e.g., in the PBIS framework and related practices, organizational change strategies, administrative experience) and adequate dedicated time (i.e., FTE) to manage the day-to-day operations within the specific context.

As discussed earlier, the PBIS framework gives priority to a continuous improvement process (i.e., using data-based problem solving and action planning). Therefore, coordinators (i.e., team leaders) and their leadership teams will benefit from someone who understands and practices an assessment-based action planning approach. George et al. (2018) found that coordinators were critical to successful PBIS implementation and that the coordinator's enthusiasm, knowledge of PBIS, and relationships with school administrators were strongly related to sustained implementation. Therefore, when selecting a coordinator, it is important to consider their characteristics or personal attributes (e.g., passionate, knowledgeable, collaborative).

Considerations in Identifying a Coordinator Across Contexts

State: This person serves as the primary point of contact for the state leadership team and, with sufficient funding for support personnel, organizes the PBIS activities statewide. They serve as the lead facilitator of the state action plan encompassing the leadership team functions (partner engagement, funding and alignment, policy, workforce capacity, training, coaching, and evaluation) and is the primary communicator to the district leadership teams.

District: This person serves as the primary point of contact for the district leadership team with sufficient time (i.e., FTE) to organize the PBIS activities as outlined on the district action plan (e.g., recruitment of schools or agencies, facilitation of district leadership team, organization of training logistics, supporting the development of coaching skills, and overseeing evaluation activities that includes progress monitoring to inform next steps). They serve as the primary communicator to/from the state-level contact and school leadership teams within their district.

School: This person may be referred to as the Team Lead, Coach, or Facilitator and would solely focus on the activities occurring within their school or agency building as identified on the school action plan. They serve as the primary communicator to the district and/or state-level contact, organize school-wide activities, and are key to successful implementation.
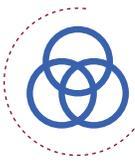
DEVELOP OR REVISIT TEAM NORMS

Leadership teams provide overall guidance related to assessing, problem solving, implementing, managing, communicating, and evaluating a comprehensive PBIS system. Regardless of context, this team may start by establishing (and subsequently revisiting) their shared vision or purpose through discussing some key questions, such as:

- What are some of the reasons for desiring change?

- What are the current challenges and how do we envision things differently?

- Why are we interested in implementing PBIS in our context?

Teams also benefit when they take time to establish and revisit norms, routines, and communication structures that build a positive climate and encourage trust, hope, and partnership. Teams may use a formal process (e.g., Team Initiated Problem Solving; TIPS) or make time for discussion with team members to explore history, repair relationships, and establish positive team expectations toward a common goal.

ACTION PLAN

Effective leadership teams use data gathered from their initial and ongoing evaluation activities to develop, implement, monitor, and revise an action plan. This action plan promotes the capacity for sustainable, culturally and contextually relevant, and high-fidelity implementation of PBIS. The purpose of action planning is to gain and sustain commitment for implementation, organize and arrange for the supports necessary for large-scale implementation (i.e., training,

coaching, evaluation), and monitor implementation progress across sites (George & Kincaid, 2008). By analyzing data, leadership teams can identify current strengths and areas for improvement that assist in developing meaningful short-term (e.g., up to 1 year) and long-term (e.g., 3 to 5 years) goals, with measurable outcomes. Based on the leadership team's vision, resources available, and data, a prevention-based action plan allows them to coordinate sustained implementation with accountability (i.e., timelines with persons responsible).

Having an action plan assists teams in establishing and monitoring the effectiveness of the (a) systems (i.e., infrastructure) that support the implementation of the (b) selected evidence-based practices by using (c) data to measure progress toward desired outcomes. An action plan should also include a timeline for implementation of the PBIS related activities (e.g., coaching, training, partner engagement, evaluation plan) along with persons responsible, measures used to assess progress, and provides organization and accountability for the work.

To effectively engage in the continued renewal process, teams are encouraged to explore opportunities to network with other states, districts/agencies, or schools. The Center has established a list of state/territory coordinators along with Center personnel to help get PBIS started and/or provide technical assistance (e.g., getting trained in PBIS).

Resources

- [Effective Teaming for Improved Results](#) (video)

- [Tier 1 Coordination and Problem Solving Team Meeting Foundations](#)

- [Data-based Decision Making](#)

- [How School Teams Use Data to Make Effective Decisions: Team-Initiated Problem Solving (TIPS)](#)

- [Tiered Decision Guidelines for Social, Behavioral, and Academic Behavior: Guidance for Establishing Data-Based Teams Across the Tiers](#)

- [PBIS Team Implementation Checklist (TIC 3.1)](#)

- [Four Key Actions for State Education Agency Teams to Support Implementation of Multi-Tiered Systems of Support](#)

Executive Functions

Leadership teams define, provide resources for, and engage support for PBIS implementation efforts by engaging partners, exploring

funding and alignment, establishing policy, and expanding the workforce capacity. The next section describes the executive functions of the leadership team(s), regardless of context.

PARTNER ENGAGEMENT

Partners are the individuals who will be affected by or make decisions regarding implementation. For a school, these include all members of the school community - the educators (teachers, staff, bus drivers, non-certified staff), students, families, administrators, and community members (e.g., faith-based organizations, community mental health centers, law enforcement, local business owners). When planning for successful PBIS implementation in an organization, partner engagement is essential to increase the likelihood that PBIS elements are contextually and culturally relevant. Teams promote authentic participation by considering the needs of their partners (e.g., meeting times and locations), sharing the status of implementation, promoting improved outcomes aligned to the shared vision or purpose (i.e., to obtain and retain commitment, seeking their input for improvement, and celebrating any accomplishments), and requesting assistance in problem solving related issues as needed. Equally important is sharing back to partners how teams used the input to change their plans and systems. Active and authentic engagement helps increase awareness of specific needs and impact of current efforts, maintains communication across key partners, and expands continued interest in contextually and culturally relevant PBIS efforts throughout the organization (e.g., school) and community.
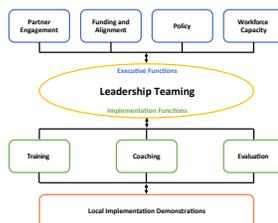
**Guiding Questions for
Identifying Key Partners**

Does the potential partner...

- influence policy for PBIS implementation?

- influence or manage budgets that contribute to PBIS implementation?

- allocate resources to use to implement PBIS?

- provide public and/or visible support through communication that PBIS is a priority?

- collaborate as a partner in supporting PBIS?

- directly or indirectly participate in PBIS?

Resources:

- Parent Letter

- Family

- Center on PBIS Announcements

- Aligning and Integrating Family Engagement in Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS): Concepts and Strategies for Families and Schools in Key Contexts

- Addressing Confidentiality while Supporting the Social-Emotional-Behavioral Needs of Students within Schools

- School Climate Survey Suite

- How are Schools Using the Parent and Personnel School Climate Surveys?

- How School Teams Use Data to Make Effective Decisions: Team-Initiated Problem Solving (TIPS)

- Feedback and Input Surveys (FIS) Manual

- Obtaining Partner Feedback to Improve the Middle to High School Transition

- High School PBIS Implementation: Staff Buy-In
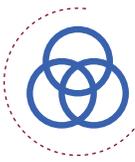
FUNDING AND ALIGNMENT

Funding &
Alignment

Although PBIS is cost effective, some savings are realized over time with decreased ineffective and exclusionary practices such as suspensions and dropout (Swain-Bradway et al., 2017). Stable funding to support the personnel and implementation activities specified in the action plan can be helpful to support initial implementation. For example, funding might be needed to support the time for personnel to coordinate activities, implementers to attend training and planning meetings (e.g., stipends for team members for time that extends beyond their contract or for substitute teachers while team members are meeting or attending training), and expertise to provide ongoing technical assistance for implementation (e.g., coaching). Also, additional funding may be necessary for "start-up" monies to kick-off schoolwide activities, purchase technology to assist with data-based decision making, print materials (e.g., expectations posters), provide incentives for schoolwide recognition systems, adopt curricula that supports the PBIS action plan (e.g., social skills curricula), and support additional administrative tasks (e.g., data entry clerk, additional supervision during dismissal). There are often barriers to PBIS implementation that are intertwined with funding, such as restrictions on use, eligibility, limitations on timelines, and additional paperwork. Further, establishing a durable implementation system often requires three to five years.

When considering funding, teams might catalog current programs and practices (i.e., initiatives), and funding sources that have related requirements. Invite partners with decision making power, interested in the same outcomes, and/or access to funding to engage in PBIS work. To maintain momentum with limited funding, teams might review their goals and identify needs that do not require funding to make it into a reality. For example, consider joining with another initiative that already receives funding or that matches available funds.

When obtaining funding, teams can:

- Consider multiple sources, such as school-based organizations (e.g., parent teacher organizations or PTO), community partners and/or foundations, school fundraisers, school improvement plan monies, and state and/or federal grants when working in collaboration with a district or similar organizational unit.

- Blend support from related initiatives that support climate, SEB, and mental health when allowable (e.g., school safety, Title II, Title IV, special education).

- Secure recurring and sustainable support from general funds or internal sources for sustainability.

Alignment of initiatives is essential for overall efficiency and effectiveness. Accordingly, the PBIS framework can help organize activities to support the achievement of similar goals of other high priority initiatives and streamline an effective evaluation process. To work smarter and not harder, leadership teams should periodically engage in a process of comparing programs, such as resource mapping, to review existing (1) SEB related initiatives or programs, and (2)
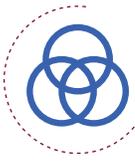
members of teams/committees that are supporting these various initiatives (i.e., have a common mission). An annual review of programs allows leadership teams to determine overall effectiveness, relevance, and the level of implementation fidelity across partners. For example, if there are several committees with a common mission, it may be more efficient to combine the committees, thus reducing the frequency of similar meetings. Further, if a committee does not demonstrate outcomes or there are no clear measures to determine impact, it may be best to eliminate this committee and assign the supports elsewhere (e.g., consider streamlining to one team that addresses discipline, climate, and safety). When considering alignment, the team might ask: Within our existing programs, are there any commonalities/differences of the system features? Are many programs or curricula needed to address similar needs? Are all programs

effective for students? Depending on the response, the team might find it more effective to strengthen support with programs that are working and reduce costs by discontinuing unnecessary, duplicative, or ineffective programs. In other words, multiple programs that address the same function may not be necessary; thus, limiting the number of programs may be more effective and efficient in making an impact.

Aligning Teams and Committees

In an organization, working smarter involves aligning teams and committees that have a common mission by:

- integrating initiatives or programs that have similar goals, activities, and outcomes.

- demonstrating a link for important and desired system level goals, priorities, and needs.

- providing clear evidence of the effectiveness, efficiency, and relevance of activities and their outcomes.

- advocating for the importance of prevention and positive behavior support across initiatives.

Resources

- Leveraging Short Term Funding to Build Long Term Capacity

- Guidance for States on ESSA State Plans: Aligning the School Climate Indicator and SW-PBIS

- Every Student Succeeds Act: Why School Climate Should Be One of Your Indicators

- Technical Guide for Alignment of Initiatives, Programs and Practices in School Districts

- Integrating Social and Emotional Learning into your Schoolwide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports Framework

- ISF Initiative Inventory

- Integrating Trauma-Informed Practices within Your Schoolwide PBIS Framework

- Embedding Mental Health into SWPBIS ISF Practice Guide

- The Interconnected Systems Framework 201: When School Mental Health is Integrated within a Multi-tiered System of Support

- Fact Sheet ISF 301: Installing an Integrated Approach
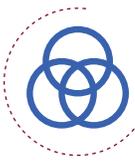
POLICY

To become an effective organization, [Policy]
[quality leadership teams](#) might create a
policy for prevention that incorporates common vision,
language, and experiences (Gilbert, 1978; Horner,
2003). Policies developed with participation from the
relevant partners increase the likelihood of system-
wide change to occur and time must be allowed for
communication on what is important across partners
to build trust and a sense of shared commitment -
make a point to include families and perspectives from
historically underserved communities. Policies can
also reflect alignment with existing guidelines, such as
district and school improvement plans.

This policy can reflect the shared commitment to the
improvement of social behavior of all students that
support related leadership functions: (a) establishing
a supportive system for partners coordinated by a
leadership team with secured funding and aligned
initiatives, (b) cultivating workforce capacity to support
the priority, (c) providing training and coaching to
build skills aligned with the priority, and (d) engaging in
overall evaluation for continual improvement.

When creating a policy statement based on prevention,
teams might consider the following:

- Address the need and rationale for the policy (e.g.,
  Why is this important?)

- Emphasize positive and preventive approaches
  (e.g., implementation of PBIS practices)

- Define the purpose (e.g., to support student SEB
  growth) and describe the benefits (e.g., improve
  SEB and academic skills and enhance well-being)

Outcome of an Effective Systems Approach

The outcome of an effective systems approach
is an organization with a common:

- Vision with a mission, purpose, or goal
  that is embraced by partners and serves as
  the basis for decision making and
  action planning

- Language that establishes a means
  of describing its vision, actions, and
  operations so that communications are
  informative, efficient, effective, and
  relevant to
  all partners

- Experiences defined by a set of actions,
  routines, procedures, or operations that
  are universally practiced and experienced
  by partners and includes a data feedback
  system to link activities to outcomes for
  continuous improvement

- Consider unintended consequences (e.g., Would
  this policy result in disproportionate impact for
  students from marginalized groups?)

- Highlight measurable outcome and fidelity
  objectives (e.g., reductions in discipline incidents
  and increases in skills-based training)

- Promote evidence-based practices and activities
  that achieve these objectives (e.g., professional
  development to build skills using matched
  evidence-based curriculum)

- Include a process for ongoing evaluation (e.g.,
  documentation and regular assessment of the
  effectiveness of efforts)

- Remain positively stated (e.g., describe a clear
  vision or specific expectation for success)

- Align with existing policies of organizations or funders (e.g., a Code of Ethics, Conduct or Professional Standards to reinforce common language, resource allocation, and promote positive interactions between partners), when appropriate.

Resources

- MTSS Implementation Components: Ensuring Common Language and Understanding

- Building a Culture of Staff Wellness Through Multi-Tiered System of Supports

- Key Elements of Policies to Address Discipline Disproportionality: A Guide for District and School Teams

- PBIS in Theory & Policy: Development & Implementation of Disciplinary Policies & Procedures (video)

WORKFORCE CAPACITY

Workforce Capacity

Leadership teams can address the workforce capacity of the organization by first assessing the need and building the skills of personnel to support the work, then organizing the infrastructure to support effective PBIS implementation. As described in Leadership Teaming, prioritize coordination to increase the working capacity of the system by establishing and supporting FTE (i.e., allocation of personnel) to facilitate activities (i.e., systemic procedures). This might include providing access to the implementation functions of training (i.e., professional development), coaching (i.e., technical assistance), and evaluation (i.e., data analysis for continual improvement).

Understanding Specific Needs

When working to build capacity, it is important to understand the specific needs of the organization as it relates to how PBIS is implemented and thus, supported across contexts. This includes having a broad understanding of who is involved in the implementation of PBIS and how to better support them. For example:

- Does the team acknowledge the role of different members of the workforce, such as paraprofessionals or custodial staff?

- Are educators given enough time to meet the needs of the school or the number of students (e.g., time to engage in behavior support planning)?

- Are educators provided with opportunities for orientation, on-going access to professional development, coaching, or opportunities to learn and share with others (e.g., professional learning committees, mentorships)?

- Do state certification, licensure, and/or endorsement requirements communicate a clear priority for pre-service and in-service training in evidence-based practices within a PBIS framework?

Several strategies may help leadership teams to sustain capacity to support PBIS implementation over time. First, it is critical to employ personnel with knowledge and skills in implementing PBIS (Blase et al., 2013) or who have expertise in key content areas (e.g., grief, trauma, systems, implementation science, collaborating with partners). For example, hiring school personnel with experience working in schools

may reduce costs for professional development and increase consensus of existing staff (i.e., commitment; Bambara et al., 2009; George et al., 2018). This might also help to provide skill sets that enhance practice implementation in advanced tiers (Bambara et al., 2009). Further, teams can provide adequate time for implementation activities with PBIS implementation responsibilities explicitly built into job descriptions (Kittelman et al., 2020; Pinkelman et al., 2015). This prevents the perception that activities are "in addition to" regular job duties and promotes priority of the work (e.g., (Barrett et al., 2008; Bastable et al., 2020; George & Kincaid, 2008). Also, leadership teams might consider developing and using annual performance evaluations to assess knowledge and skills of personnel for implementation and inform future professional development activities.

Resources

- District and State PBIS

- Coaching

- Supporting Schools During and After Crisis: A Guide to Supporting States, Districts, Schools, Educators, and Students through a Multi-Tiered Systems of Support Framework

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Implementation Functions

The second set of leadership team functions (in the lower section of Figure 7) includes implementation support for training,

coaching, and evaluation of the selected practices, systems, and tools regardless of context (Bastable et al., 2020; George et al., 2018; George & Kincaid, 2008; Newton et al., 2011). These implementation functions require coordination capacity defined as the system's ability to establish an operational organization and rhythm that enables effective and efficient utilization of materials, time, and personnel guided by an action plan. Building capacity in these areas extends support beyond the individual school and expands the systems infrastructure to meet the needs of several schools. Organizing the infrastructure of multiple schools (e.g., cluster, complex, district, county, state) promotes efficiency of resource use, implementation efforts, and organizational management. An expanded systems infrastructure also helps to coordinate efforts across contexts to provide a supportive, efficient, and bi-directional cascade of implementation. This section describes the implementation functions of the leadership team that directly impact capacity building for PBIS in an organization.
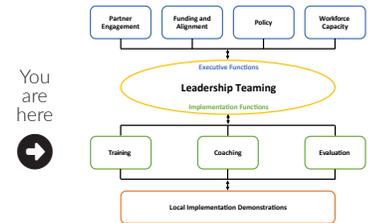
> ### Effective Leadership Teams Build Capacity in:
>
> - **Training:** the system's ability to (a) self-assess for specific programmatic and staff development needs and objectives (i.e., uses data to determine professional development needs), (b) develop a training action plan, (c) invest in increasing local training capacity (e.g., build the skills of local personnel to provide professional development), and (d) implement effective and efficient training activities aligned with the organization's mission and goals.
>
> - **Coaching:** the system's ability to organize personnel and resources for facilitating, assisting, maintaining, and adapting efforts (e.g., district aligns resources to adequately support implementation at the school level) for support for initial and on-going implementation (e.g., sustainability, expanding into advanced tiers).
>
> - **Evaluation:** the system's ability to establish (a) measurable outcomes, (b) methods (e.g., timelines, measures used, types of data collected, etc.) for evaluating progress toward these measurable outcomes, and (c) action plans that are modified or adapted based on these evaluations.

TRAINING

Research has shown that one-time training efforts, sometimes dubbed as "train and hope" efforts (Stokes & Baer, 1977), do not lead to sustainable change. Rather, educators benefit from a systematic approach to professional development intended to build new skills of the adults (and eventually students too) that includes initial and

ongoing training for acquisition, maintenance over time, and generalization in different settings.

Training should be based on the context-specific needs, phase of implementation (getting ready, getting started, and getting better), and what the system supports (e.g., resources, policies) to enable accurate, continued, expanded, and modified use of practices to increase efficiency and maximize outcomes. Teams might start with the strategic plan and then use local data to adjust the training plan to meet the valued outcomes of the context. Some of these outcomes might become non-negotiable, whereas others (e.g., delivery modes, training content) might be adapted to meet the needs of the context. Regardless, there should be established training content aligned with this blueprint to ensure that the PBIS elements (e.g., data, systems, practice) are implemented with fidelity.

Considering the resources available (e.g., state project that delivers training in PBIS), the leadership team benefits from maintaining a mindset of building local capacity. This can be viewed as committing to getting the leadership team trained to successfully implement and support PBIS across their whole school. When thinking beyond the individual school level, building level training capacity can be viewed as getting additional personnel trained to become future trainers to decrease reliance on outside training expertise (e.g., establish trainers within the district to lead professional development across many schools). Although trainings vary across content and size (e.g., an individual school vs. many schools), the content should align with participant needs, and trainers should be fluent in the PBIS framework. One way to do this and

sustain efforts is to provide job-embedded, ongoing, and supportive training. Protocol may vary by state or district based on the resources available and the priorities of the fiscal agent.

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**Characteristics of PBIS Trainers
(i.e., Deliverers of PBIS Training)**

- Demonstrated fluency with key concepts, features, practices, and systems of PBIS.

- Actively participated in a full training sequence with a school leadership team, which was led by a competent and experienced PBIS trainer.

- Provided successful training workshops to adult learners.

- Experienced with implementation of PBIS practices and systems (e.g., served in a coaching role or leadership team member at a school) and can share examples.

</div>

Typically, PBIS training is not a one-time event, and leadership teams should be prepared for a number of PBIS trainings beyond the initial Tier 1 training due to personnel attrition and continued expansion of implementation into Tiers 2 and 3. For example, a school with low fidelity of implementation and high staff turnover may need to be re-trained on Tier 1 PBIS or depending on their scores, may need only refresher training to get back on track. In planning and coordinating activities, it is ideal when leadership teams meet to engage in resource mapping and data-based action planning that result in the development

of a professional development calendar (Chaparro et al., 2012) using implementation (e.g., baseline or annual implementation fidelity scores for schools) and student outcome (e.g., discipline) data to identify specific training needs and tailor trainings to those needs. School team training should be guided by school readiness and rely on the foundations of implementation science. Leadership teams should consider grouping team training based on current and desired level of implementation rather than solely by their level of education (e.g., all elementary schools together). It is important to offer differentiated training based on need rather than level or convenience.

Remember, installing a PBIS framework across any context establishes a foundation of SEB support at Tier 1 and expands the continuum of support (Tiers 2 and 3) to address the needs of ALL students. Therefore, a variety of trainings may need to be offered. School team training in PBIS typically starts with Tier 1 systems, and when fidelity of implementation is achieved, expands to additional training such as advanced tiers, classroom practices, roles of personnel, and data-based decision making to enhance PBIS implementation across the whole school.

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Resource
- Training and Professional Development Blueprint for PBIS

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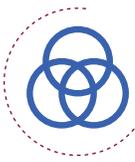
COACHING

Coaching is a function (i.e., not a role or position) to support the personnel with using newly learned skills after initial professional development has occurred (Bastable et al., 2020; Freeman et al., 2017). Through the organization of ongoing support, training, and provision of resources, coaching involves facilitation, technical assistance, maintenance, and adaptation of training efforts in the relevant setting (e.g., classroom, school building, district). In other words, coaching builds local capacity (i.e., organization is less reliant on outside expertise) and is intended to preserve or enhance the fidelity of implementation across the continuum of support (i.e., tiers) so that implementers are likely to achieve the desired outcomes. Coaching not only supports individual educators, but also supports changes in teaching and learning across systems (e.g., district, state).

Coaching guides implementation and supports teams in problem solving to make PBIS fit the community, context, and culture so that all students benefit. Individuals serving in coaching capacities may be personnel with dedicated time to facilitate leadership team implementation and attend related organizational events (e.g., weekly school leadership team meetings), but still require ongoing professional development to advance skills to effectively coach PBIS implementation, such as attending monthly district coaching meetings and annual state coaching training (George et al., 2018). Therefore, leadership teams should consider individuals based on their expertise, willingness, and function (i.e., what they can do and what is required of them to do), rather than their title

> Coaching

Types of Coaching Structures to Support PBIS Implementation

- **Individuals:** teaching individual personnel the application of specific skills to support use and ensure acceptable implementation through regular feedback.

- **Teams (Groups):** helping a community of practice develop collaboration and facilitation skills, establish team operating procedures, understand group dynamics, and solidify data-driven decision-making processes for continual improvement.

- **Systems:** building organizational capacity to implement PBIS by creating high quality, consistent, sustainable support systems (e.g., policies, resources) so personnel can implement PBIS practices well (i.e., with high fidelity).

(George & Kincaid, 2008) while developing an internal support structure to increase the coaching capacities of individuals.

A commitment to coaching entails dedicated funding (i.e., FTE) to support the schools and personnel with a variety of activities to enhance implementation efforts (Bastable et al., 2020; Freeman et al., 2017; George & Kincaid, 2008) and may be provided by supports external (i.e., outside) or internal (i.e., within or on-site) to the organization. For example, state projects are considered external support to districts, and support school districts to build their internal capacity to provide coaching support to schools. Further, coaching is more effective when teams identify clear coaching roles or what they can and

PBIS Coaching Responsibilities

Regardless of position or title at an organization, the following responsibilities are characteristic of PBIS coaching:

- Build relationships and establish trust using interpersonal communication skills.

- Facilitate and support leadership to implement and sustain PBIS.

- Facilitate effective team-based collaboration and problem-solving process.

- Support data-driven decision making using multiple sources and types of data.

- Disseminate evidence-based content knowledge (e.g., best practices in behavior instruction, understanding behavior principles, classroom practices)

- Train and support (i.e., provide technical assistance) use of PBIS implementation with fidelity.

- Evaluate impact of coaching activities on implementation goals and desired staff and student performance outcomes.

Finally, coaching activities vary depending on each team's implementation phase (Fixsen et al., 2005; McIntosh et al., 2018). For example, a school leadership team in year one of Tier 1 implementation may need support in facilitating meetings (i.e., defining roles, preparing, and reviewing student discipline data, making data-based decisions) compared to a team in year two of Tier 2 implementation which may need support refining data decision rules for students receiving targeted interventions. Interestingly, research has shown that the coaching activities of running data reports for the school leadership team and modeling PBIS implementation are positively and significantly related to Tier 1 fidelity (Bastable et al., 2020).

Key Practices in Building Capacity

Regardless of context, key practices in building capacity include:

- developing a **network** that builds and sustains PBIS to support implementation of PBIS with an ongoing direct link between training experiences and actual use of the PBIS systems and practices.

- offering **support** to (a) emerging leadership teams at least monthly as these new teams need on-going and more frequent support and (b) established leadership teams at least quarterly to stay connected and prevent implementation drift.

- facilitating **review** of data and action plan enhancement.

cannot do within the context (i.e., what the teams expect). This might include flexibility with the provision of technical assistance based on need, how to build local capacity (e.g., training-of-trainers or cross training coaches across initiatives), or on the amount of time available to provide coaching. Evaluation of coaching impact, completion of tasks, and monitoring the fidelity of coaching supports provided ensures a system of continual improvement and builds the system's workforce capacity.

Resources

- Training and Professional Development Blueprint for PBIS

- Coaching For Competence and Impact - Brief 1: Defining Coaching

- Coaching For Competence and Impact: Coaching Inventory Discussion Tool

- District Level Coaching

- Coaches Self-Assessment

EVALUATION

Evaluation

The third implementation function of leadership teams includes the use of evaluation systems to assess whether the PBIS practices are implemented with fidelity and achieving the desired outcomes. Like the professional development plan (discussed earlier in the section on Training), leadership teams benefit from establishing a formal evaluation plan that outlines when evaluation activities occur (e.g., established timelines across the school year), the types of data that will be collected (e.g., fidelity measures such as the Tiered Fidelity Inventory or TFI, school walkthroughs, submission of outcome data), building fluency in the use of the selected measures (e.g., office discipline referrals, TFI) and systems (e.g., PBISApps, SWIS), and how the data will be shared with partners. As discussed in the earlier section on Funding and Alignment, assessment measures must be considered with the other practices occurring to ensure that partners (e.g., teachers) have the time and space to conduct the assessments in a timely manner that can be used for data review.

Providing ongoing performance feedback on the fidelity and impact of implementation activities promotes opportunities for partner involvement (e.g., retraining, modification, or continuation of a selected practice), allows leadership teams to modify activities quickly in response to the data, and sustains commitment (e.g., opportunities to celebrate and acknowledge outcomes and accomplishments). For this to occur, leadership teams must use and promote highly efficient evaluation systems for data entry and reporting for decision making (George et al., 2018; McIntosh et al., 2018). See the PBIS Evaluation Blueprint for suggested format, structure,

Evaluation Plan Considerations

When creating an evaluation plan, a leadership team might consider:

- using a team to lead the assessment and evaluation process.

- developing general and specific evaluation questions that reflect measurable outcomes.

- identifying a range of data sources that answer evaluation questions.

- reviewing existing data and, if needed, collecting additional data to determine what is in place and what might need to be changed or improved.

- developing an action plan that specifies practices that have been shown to be effective in achieving the desired outcomes.

- implementing practices and monitoring progress toward achieving outcomes.
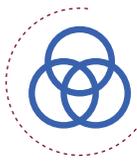
and materials to support a wide range of evaluation plans and guidance on the evaluation process, tools, and outcomes that direct both initial adoption and sustained use of PBIS.

Interesting Facts!

- Having strong district data infrastructures (e.g., for collecting discipline, behavior, and fidelity data) was perceived to be major factor for strong district PBIS implementation among high-performing school districts (George et al., 2018).

- School leadership teams that regularly used data to improve implementation and student outcomes were more likely to sustain Tier 1 PBIS implementation with high fidelity for several years (McIntosh et al., 2018).

The Center on PBIS offers leadership teams free, valid, and reliable fidelity assessments across several different contexts to guide evaluation efforts, including example state and district level evaluation reports. Table 4 displays some of the tools available that are designed to serve as a guide for (a) initial needs assessment of the extent to which practices, systems, and data features are in place or in need of improvement; (b) action planning to guide resource allocation; (c) progress monitoring during the process of PBIS implementation; and (d) annual evaluation of the fidelity and/or capacity of the organization to implement, expand, and sustain PBIS.

Table 4. Available Tools to Support Data-Based Decision Making

State Leadership Teams and similar organizational units
• PBIS State Systems Fidelity Inventory (SSFI) - assists with (a) initial assessments of the extent to which there is the capacity to implement PBIS; (b) action planning to guide resource allocation; and (c) periodic assessments of the capacity to sustain PBIS implementation and expansion.
District Leadership Teams and similar organizational units
• PBIS District Systems Fidelity Inventory (DSFI) - guides exploration or those actively implementing a multi-tiered social-emotional behavioral system of support and practices through assessment, development, and execution of an action plan.
School Leadership Teams
• PBIS Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) - divided into three sections (Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3) that can be used separately or in combination to assess the extent core features are in place.
• Tier 1 Benchmarks of Quality (BoQ) – assesses only Tier 1 implementation fidelity with supporting materials to address team member discrepancies to reach consensus in scoring across items.
• Self-Assessment Survey (SAS) – examines the status and improvement needs of Tier 1 (schoolwide and classroom), Tier 2, and Tier 3 behavior supports across school staff for initial and annual assessment.
Alternative Setting Leadership Teams
• Facility-Wide Tiered Fidelity Inventory – monitors fidelity of PBIS implementation across Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 in alternative settings, particularly juvenile justice, and other residential programs.
Early Childhood Leadership Teams
• Early Childhood Program-Wide PBS Benchmarks of Quality (EC-BoQ) – specific for program-wide settings.
• Pyramid Model Early Intervention (Part C) Benchmarks of Quality – evaluates progress toward implementing the Pyramid Model program-wide.
Data Entry and Analysis System (for the above tools)
• PBIS Assessment – provides free access to evidence-based surveys to measure the fidelity of implementation, understand its impact.

Teams might also consider the types of outcome data that are in alignment with the policy (purpose and vision) of the team. This might range from overall improved outcomes in behavior or academics or be more specific based on the needs of that context. For example, school teams might review disaggregated data to identify populations of students who are not benefiting from the Tier 1 practices. Other sources of useful data may include information from partner perception and satisfaction that may expand to inform the leadership team of student, parent, and community needs. Finally, teams might consider focusing on collecting data that is integral to their policy, will be used as part of the problem-solving process, and that will be the most efficient and effective in helping to guide decision making.

Resources

- Center on PBIS Assessments

- Evaluation Briefs

- Data-based Decision Making

- PBISApps

- Measuring Fidelity of Core Features of Tier 2 Systems and Practices in Schools

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Evaluation Activities

When using the continuous improvement and problem-solving process during meetings, leadership teams plan for ongoing professional development (i.e., training) and coaching to support staff and refine resource allocation and policies by engaging in the following evaluation activities:

- Review existing information and data.

- Analyze, describe, and prioritize issues within the context.

- Specify measurable outcomes that are related directly to local context and are in alignment with the team's policy.

- Select evidence-based practices to achieve specified outcomes.

- Provide support for accurate sustained adoption and implementation of practices.

- Monitor practice implementation and progress toward outcomes.

- Modify practice implementation based on analysis of progress monitoring data.

Local Implementation Demonstrations

A final outcome for PBIS implementation is the establishment and use of local implementation demonstrations. These model demonstrations showcase a small number of exemplary organizations and illustrate that PBIS is possible within the local fiscal, political and social climate of the state, district, or type of school. Sites are recognized by the leadership team as being exemplars of PBIS implementation with fidelity and typically have annual data indicating sustained high levels of fidelity of implementation and visible activities, data (e.g., success in improving student outcomes), and products to serve as local examples of process and outcomes (George & Kincaid, 2008). For example, model schools can help increase visibility and political support at a district and state level, including serving as a visual way to experience PBIS implementation through on-site observations to increase interest and improve local commitment.
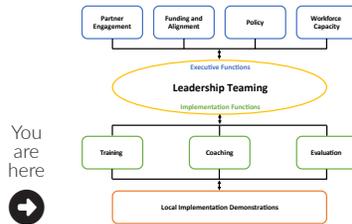
In the early stages, leadership teams often focus on piloting implementation efforts with a small number of demonstration schools to help build political and financial support for PBIS. Findings from pilot schools can be shared with executive leaders (i.e., those with funding authority, such as a Superintendent) to increase momentum for expansion (e.g., school types, grade levels, tiers) in the organization. Determining the communication strategies for disseminating information about these exemplars to partners across the organization is important. The achievements of exemplar sites can strengthen and promote continued expansion and become a training resource for other teams, especially those that are struggling or seeking new ideas (McIntosh et al., 2016; Sugai & Horner, 2006). Key factors supporting initial implementation sites can be evaluated to determine time, LEA and school resources, amount of professional development, and amount of technical assistance needed to reach fidelity to guide planning for additional LEAs or schools.

Interesting Finding!

Research has shown that when more schools in districts are implementing PBIS, they are more likely to continue implementing PBIS with high fidelity - the proportion of schools in the district implementing PBIS is a significant predictor of sustained implementation of PBIS in schools over time (McIntosh et al., 2018).

Resources

- [Building Momentum for PBIS Implementation in High Need Districts](#)

- [Do Wisconsin Schools Implementing an Integrated Academic and Behavior Support Framework Improve Equity in Academic and School Discipline Outcomes?](#)

- [Is Tier 1 PBIS Feasible and Effective in Rural, High Poverty Secondary Schools? Initial Examination of a Model Demonstration](#)

- [PBIS Academy Model Demo Brief: Impact of Statewide Support Model on High-Needs Schools](#)

- [Promoting Positive Discipline Approaches and Reducing Restraint and Seclusion: The American School for the Deaf's Model of Success](#)

- [Use of I-SWIS by Elementary Schools to Monitor Tier 3 Behavior Supports](#)
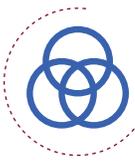
Using Implementation Logic

> "…implementation is a process, not an event. Implementation will not happen all at once, or proceed smoothly, at least at first."
>
> (Fixsen et al., 2005)

Implementation of any practice or system is dynamic and ever-changing, takes time to reach sustainability, and is influenced by organizational, political, procedural, and legal factors (Fixsen et al., 2005). Therefore, in keeping sustainability a priority, principles of adult learning, data-based decision making, and implementation logic have been purposefully incorporated into the PBIS framework. To that end, this section introduces implementation science and describes phases of implementation.

Why is it Important to Understand Implementation Science?

A basic understanding of implementation science can assist a leadership team in successfully navigating through various implementation phases. Teams may identify the very best practices that science can offer to help students and educators succeed, but impact may falter if these practices are not matched to the unique needs of students, the contextual variations of implementation sites, and the supports provided to educators. Implementation science helps to ensure that change efforts become systemic.

What are the Simplified Implementation Phases?

Implementation of PBIS at any level (i.e., state, district, school, classroom) is responsive, adaptive, and continuously evolves. Organizational change research has identified a multi-stage process that outlines a sequence of activities needed to sustain implementation of any new initiative or process (Fixsen et al., 2005). The National Implementation Research Network (NIRN) has identified four stages of implementation: exploration, installation, initial implementation, full implementation (NIRN, 2015). Through the years of implementation, the Center on PBIS has used the NIRN framework to help guide its implementation efforts. For purposes of this Blueprint, these implementation stages have been simplified into three phases: Getting Ready, Getting Started, and Getting Better (adapted from Fixsen et al., 2005).

As depicted in Figure 8, implementation is dynamic and continuous - one phase does not simply end as another begins. Activities often overlap, and it is common to revisit previous phases when situations change. For example, when school administrators and teachers turn over, leadership teams may need to return to Getting Ready activities to refresh their Tier 1 implementation efforts. Also, when schools implement Tier 1 PBIS with fidelity, they often begin exploring the next steps in the continuum, such as installing Tier 2 support.

Implementation Phases, Simplified

Getting Ready

Planning for PBIS implementation

Describes the steps of obtaining commitment to PBIS implementation and setting up conditions for implementation to take place (e.g., planning, training, securing resources).

Getting Started

Trying out the PBIS practices with students and staff

Involves educators providing PBIS practices with their students while teams support the educators to implement these practices more effectively and consistently.

Getting Better

Improving the process and impact for sustaining and scaling PBIS

Involves efforts to improve the effectiveness, efficiency, equity, and sustainability of PBIS implementation. In this phase, teams review systems data (e.g., SSFI, DSFI) and fidelity data (e.g., TFI) to improve in systems to improve and sustain the work.

Figure 8. Simplified implementation phases.

For more information on this three-phase implementation cycle, see the PBIS Implementation Phases brief. Depending on the scope, sequence, and resources available in your area, there may be a variety of implementation paths through getting ready, started, and better. Below are some considerations for leadership teams as they progress through the phases of implementation specific to (a) planning for PBIS (getting ready), (b) engaging in PBIS implementation (getting started), and (c) sustaining and expanding (getting better) in implementing the PBIS framework.

GETTING READY

In the Getting Ready phase, teams focus on preparing for successful PBIS implementation by developing support infrastructure, such as planning and conducting professional learning in PBIS practices (e.g., training and professional development). Like the actions described in Leadership Teaming, activities associated with this phase include the steps of obtaining commitment to PBIS, setting up conditions for implementation to take place (e.g., planning, training, securing resources), and selecting data systems for gathering and summarizing to inform implementation efforts. In other words, Getting Ready includes developing systems to effectively support educators to implement the PBIS framework correctly and consistently with the "right people", at the "right time" and in the "right amounts." Teams are ready to move on to Getting Started when educators have the necessary information on the rationale and priority for PBIS, the training to implement, and the infrastructure (e.g., data, tools, materials) to sufficiently get started.

GETTING STARTED

Once adequate planning and installation has taken place, initial implementation of the PBIS framework can begin. This phase involves trying out the PBIS practices with students and staff. As PBIS gets started in schools, educators work to provide students with access to effective PBIS practices that are matched to student needs. This phase is often an awkward process, as educators apply new skills while addressing previous habits that may not be aligned with PBIS. To better support educators with implementing the PBIS practices, it is important to provide coaching to guide skill development, which includes providing feedback to the implementers. See Coaching for more information. The leadership teams review both implementation and outcome data to determine what is working and what might need to be adjusted to help educators with the implementation process. Throughout this phase, the leadership team addresses barriers and challenges that are uncovered during initial implementation. For more information, see the PBIS Steps for Getting Started brief.

Most leadership teams get started by establishing (i.e., installing) Tier 1 systems and implementing Tier 1 practices. Staff are supported and implementation challenges are addressed before moving onto the implementation of Tiers 2 and 3. Typically, it takes 2 to 3 years for adequate PBIS Tier 1 implementation following initial PBIS training; yet could be more rapid with an existing local network such as a state PBIS project (Nese et al., 2019). When schools wait to launch Tiers 2 and 3 until Tier 1 is implemented adequately, they are more likely to implement Tier 2

and 3 well (i.e., with fidelity or as intended; Kittleman et al., 2021). Each step of this phase involves planning, training, implementation, coaching, and reviewing data for problem solving. It is important to emphasize that the outcomes associated with PBIS are realized when these strategies are implemented schoolwide, with specific attention to classroom practices. Teams may be ready to move on to Getting Better when educators have implemented all three tiers of support with intensity matched to student need. However, since implementation is continuously evolving, teams may be ready to move on to Getting Better at Tier 1; yet move to Getting Started at Tier 2.

GETTING BETTER

During the Getting Better phase, educators engage in a continuous improvement process to (a) enhance implementation to improve outcomes, (b) invest in systems to promote sustainability, and (c) build local capacity to support scaling across other schools or districts. This phase involves efforts to improve the impact and efficiency of PBIS implementation. In this phase, teams review fidelity (e.g., TFI, SSFI, DSFI), outcome, and perception data and use these data to guide continuous improvement.

Enhance Implementation. As implementation takes place over time, the needs of students and educators may change due to the effectiveness of the framework (e.g., increasing emphasis on Tier 1 supports to reduce reliance on Tier 2 and 3 supports). Effective PBIS frameworks use data to continuously improve on meaningful outcomes, with attention to effective adaptation to the local context (e.g., increasing

cultural responsiveness and co-creation of systems with students and families). Work during this phase involves the examination of impact and revisiting the partners needed by helping to select the "right people" for PBIS leadership, coordination, and implementation.

Promote Sustainability. After the Getting Started phase, there is often a problem associated with project mentality (Adelman & Taylor, 2007), meaning that staff think they are finished because PBIS was implemented for a few years, and it is now time to move on to something else. For implementation to get better, we need to ensure that the work continues by promoting sustainability, such as ongoing staff commitment, continuing allocation of time and money, consistency in support, and integration with other initiatives (Pinkelman et al., 2015).

Support Scaling. The Getting Better phase can also focus on scaling up implementation of PBIS with the scope of expansion depending on the level of the system (state, region, district). After successful implementation and documented outcomes with the model demonstration sites, teams determine how the model can be replicated in other settings, with different participants. For more information, see the PBIS Steps for Getting Better brief.
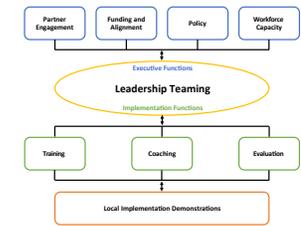
How do Leadership Team Functions vary by Implementation Phases?

Table 5 provides a brief snapshot of how the leadership team functions - critical to building local capacity - may be implemented across phases (getting ready, getting started, and getting better) to promote, enhance, sustain, and scale implementation across contexts.

Table 5. Snapshot of Leadership Team Functions Across Implementation Phases

Across state, district and school levels, the goal is to improve capacity to establish, scale up, and sustain the multi-tiered PBIS framework. Leadership teams engage in comprehensive assessment and action planning guided by a common vision. These teams oversee the work by monitoring implementation fidelity and outcomes to support educators in implementing key practices for overall student and adult benefit. Table 3 presents considerations for leadership teams in planning, monitoring, and supporting PBIS implementation across contexts (state, district, school). For details at each level, see school Tiered Fidelity Inventory, District Systems Fidelity Inventory, or State Systems Fidelity Inventory.

Function	Getting Ready	Getting Started	Getting Better
Leadership Teaming	• Form representative leadership team • Establish team norms • Develop action plan	• Adjust team norms to support implementation • Use data to guide action planning	• Revisit team membership regularly • Enhance authentic participation of diverse voices
Partner Engagement	• Identify and engage relevant partner groups to inform decisions • Establish communication structures	• Ensure all groups are included in decisions about selecting, implementing, and evaluating practices, systems, and data	• Enhance authentic bi-directional participation and communication with diverse partner groups
Funding & Alignment	• Explore current resources and available funding related to SEB • Identify similar programs & initiatives	• Secure funding to support initial implementation (e.g., 3-5 year grant) and work to align with current & new initiatives	• Secure and align long-term funding to promote coordinated and sustained implementation
Policy	• Develop and revise policies to be consistent with positive, proactive, and equitable implementation of PBIS	• Continue to revise policies to be consistent with positive, proactive, and equitable implementation of PBIS	• Review and enhance policy, based on data, to meet the needs of the current context
Workforce Capacity	• Assess needs of current personnel • Collect, review, and revise job descriptions and postings to reflect PBIS	• Adjust support based on personnel needs • Continue to revise and update job descriptions and evaluations to reflect PBIS	• Enhance job descriptions and evaluations based on local needs • Partner with pre-service programs
Training	• Engage in initial PBIS training with support from external technical assistance providers	• Engage in ongoing PBIS training and plan onboarding for new hires • Develop local training expertise	• Expand and differentiate training opportunities based on local data • Enhance expertise of local trainers
Coaching	• Identify and support internal coaches or coordinators to develop expertise in facilitating PBIS efforts	• Internal and external coaches provide ongoing support to all educators in universal (Tier 1) coaching approach	• Expand and differentiate coaching to meet the needs of all educators • Enhance expertise of local coaches
Evaluation	• Identify evaluation questions, existing data sources, and additional data needed to inform evaluation	• Collect and share data to (a) monitor fidelity, outcomes, and acceptability, then (b) adjust implementation as needed	• Continue to adjust data sources to uncover strengths and needs • Expand audiences for sharing data
Local Implementation Demonstrations	• Consider selection criteria for demonstration sites • Identify local demonstrations	• Celebrate local demonstrations as exemplars for other sites and identify additional demonstrations	• Communicate and expand process for identifying and celebrating a range of local demonstrations

Conclusion

PBIS is a systems-change process guided by goal setting, action planning, progress monitoring, and maintaining flexibility with implementation through collaborative partnerships. This dynamic continuous improvement process requires data-based problem solving, and as a result, leadership teams may pivot activities based on need within and across years. Therefore, implementers are reminded to use the PBIS Implementation Blueprint as a coaching tool throughout their implementation journey (i.e., getting ready, getting started, and getting better) to assist in establishing and sustaining effective PBIS implementation within contexts (state, district, school, or agency) and across a variety of topics (e.g., equity, students with disabilities and/or identified as LGBTQI+, family, rural, mental health, and well-being). Supplemental material to assist with deeper understanding has been hyperlinked to products on the Center on PBIS website and will continue to be added across time.

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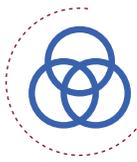
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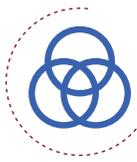
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SECTION 4: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

In general, there have been many terms (and acronyms) used in connection with the multi-tiered PBIS prevention framework. A summary of terms is described below.

Term	Description
Behavioral Expertise	Knowledge and skills in application of behavioral science to systems. It includes an understanding of principles of human behavior, organizational behavior change, effective instructional practices, mental health support, and relationship-based learning.
Coaching	Job-embedded professional learning provided to support implementation of new skills and practices. Frequently involves modeling, observing, and/or providing performance feedback.
Communication and Collaboration with Partners	A process that includes sharing information and resources across a variety of formats (e.g., social media, newsletters etc.), obtaining input and incorporating feedback, and working together with the individuals who will be affected by or make decisions regarding implementation within an organization.
Common Experience	A set of actions, routines, procedures, or operations that are practiced and experienced by all members of the organization and include data feedback systems or loops to assess the quality of implementation and link activities to outcomes.
Common Language	The terminology, phrases, and concepts that describe the organization's vision, actions, and operations so that communications are understood, informative, efficient, effective, and relevant to members of the organization.
Common Vision/Values	A mission, purpose, or goal that is embraced by majority of members of the organization, reflects shared needs, and serves as the basis for decision-making and action planning.
Content Expertise	Local personnel have high levels of content knowledge, fluency, and experience to support the culturally relevant and high-fidelity implementation of evidence-based practices and systems.
Context	Context refers to the physical, instructional, social, situational, or other circumstances that are present when (a) students use SEB or academic skills and/or (b) contextually (in)appropriate behaviors occur. Context may also refer to the organizational settings such as state, district, school/agency, or classroom.

Term	Description
Contextually (In)Appropriate Behavior	Recognizes that (a) all behavior occurs in a context (see above) and (b) behavior is appropriate or inappropriate based on context. For example, "talking without raising a hand" (behavior) may be contextually inappropriate during teacher lecture (when hand raising is expected), but contextually appropriate during small group discussion (when active participation is expected). Contextually appropriate behaviors are consistent with situational expectations, learning, and safety; and contextually inappropriate behaviors are inconsistent with situational expectations, learning, and safety.
Continuous Improvement Process	An ongoing process of examining implementation by using data to address problems through incremental improvements and to maintain effective systems and practices
Continuous Progress Monitoring	Performance is reviewed on a frequent and regular schedule to identify the adequacy of growth trends, student responsiveness, fidelity of support implementation, and adaptations and modifications in supports.
Continuum of Evidence-Based Practices	An integrated and sequenced organization of practices is developed such that a (a) core curriculum is provided for all students, (b) modification of this core is arranged for students whose performance identified as nonresponsive, and (c) specialized and intensive curriculum is developed for students whose performance is deemed nonresponsive to the modified core. Elements of this continuum must have empirical evidence to support efficacy (intervention is linked to outcome), effectiveness (intervention outcomes are achievable and replicable in applied settings), relevance and socially valid (intervention can be implemented by natural implementers and with high fidelity), and durability (intervention implementation is sustainable and student outcomes are maintained). Intensity of implementation is matched to the intensity of behavioral challenge.
Cultural and Contextual Adaptation	Implementing features of PBIS based on behavioral principles and with attention to tailoring for the specific context, such as age and developmental level, community resources, disability status, grade levels, and race/ethnicity.
Cultural and Contextual Relevance	Implementation of evidence-based practices, systems, and associated data-based decision making are adapted to the context of the local culture such that characteristics and cultural learning histories of partners, implementers, and consumers are embedded in a comprehensive and authentic manner. The influences of individual or group perspective, bias, and/or beliefs (learning history) on actions and decision-making are highlighted.

Term	Description
Data	Information that is used to select, monitor, and evaluate outcomes, practices, and systems.
Data-based Problem Solving	Relates to a system of continuous improvement that uses a series of steps that rely on the use of data to identify areas of concern, suggest improvements, and reflect on whether the improvements led to the desired outcome; or if not, re-engage in the process until the desired outcomes are achieved. Collected data should reflect school, district, and state goals and linked to the initiative or program requirements.
Districtwide	Refers to extending support to a group of schools or agencies defined by a common geographic, political, and/or fiscal structure (e.g., local education agency or LEA, charter management organization, diocese, intermediate units such as ISD, BOCES, including ESC and RESA depending on the fiscal structure). A districtwide approach is referred to as implementation guided by a district leadership team, with effective coordination and support provided in all schools within the respective school district or organization (e.g., agency).
Evaluation	Refers to the regular and systematic self-assessment of strengths and needs, and the continuous self-improvement action planning process.
Evidence-Based Practices (EBPs)	Interventions, strategies, and techniques supported by empirical evidence of their effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, and durability. See the What Works Clearinghouse to assist in selecting EBPs.
Executive Functions	Leadership team builds the infrastructure or capacity to support the work in an organization. Key functions include (a) engaging partners by collecting, summarizing, and disseminating information and resources, (b) securing funding and establishing alignment between initiatives, (c) promoting supportive and preventative policies, and (d) building capacity of the workforce expertise.
Executive Leadership	Provides the funding, visibility, and political support needed to allow school teams to travel through the full sequence of implementation phases.
Fidelity of Implementation	Describes the extent to which evidence-based practices are implemented as intended across time, setting, and personnel.
Initiatives	Refers to an act or strategy intended to address or improve a situation (e.g., using a new approach to something). This may also be referred to as a program or practice that has been given priority within an organization.

Term	Description
Implementation Functions	Leadership team builds the infrastructure or capacity to do the work of planned activities. Key functions include (a) professional development and training of personnel, (b) coaching or providing technical assistance to implementers, (c) monitoring and evaluating impact (i.e., implementation fidelity) relative to the achievement of specified or desired outcomes, and (d) establishing sustainable and scalable model demonstrations.
Leadership Team	Local team comprised of representation from leadership, partners, implementers, consumers, and content experts that is responsible for ensuring high implementation fidelity, management of resources, and data-based decision-making.
Leadership Team Coordination	Refers to the process of how the leadership team carries out its functions (i.e., executive and implementation) through a set of related activities often led by an implementation team coordinator or lead facilitator, such as setting up an action plan, using agendas to lead meetings, organizing training and coaching supports, etc.
Model Demonstrations	Schools that are implementing evidence based PBIS practices with fidelity and are designated as learning/observation sites for other schools.
Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)	The practice of providing high-quality instruction and interventions matched to student need, monitoring progress frequently to make decisions about changes in instruction or goals and applying child response data to important educational decisions (Batsche et al., 2005). An integrated MTSS is the integration of several MTSSs into one coherent strategically combined system meant to address multiple domains in content areas in education (McIntosh and Goodman, 2016).
Outcomes	Academic and behavior targets or indicators that are specified, endorsed, emphasized, and monitored because of their social and education significance.
Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)	An evidence-based multi-tiered framework for implementing evidence-based practices to support improved social, emotional, behavioral (SEB), and academic outcomes for all student groups through systems and data-based decision making.
Practices	Interventions and strategies that are evidence-based in achieving indicated outcomes.

Term	Description
Prevention	Refers to organizing learning and teaching environments to prevent the (a) development of new problem behaviors, (b) worsening of existing problem behaviors, and (c) triggering of problem behavior. Prevention is characterized by an emphasis on directly teaching, actively monitoring, and positively reinforcing prosocial or adapted behaviors.
Professional Learning	A systematic process of support for all staff that can include face-to-face training, observation, coaching, resource banks of materials, communication plans, or virtual supports to help educators establish and sustain evidence-based practices.
Progress Monitoring	Using data effectively and efficiently to evaluate improvement towards a goal on a set basis, such as weekly or monthly); and can be used for students, teachers, teams, etc. across any content area.
Resource Alignment	Thoughtful allocation of budgets and other resources to achieve desired education outcomes for students (California Department of Education, n.d.).
Resource Mapping	A system-building process historically utilized by communities, organizations, schools, and service centers to align resources, strategies, and outcomes available (Crane & Mooney, 2005).
Response to Intervention	RtI (1997) initially developed and used in special education to refer to a framework for improving identification and delivery of educational supports for students with significant learning disabilities, and later became a framework for supporting academic needs of all students.
Quality Leadership	Personnel, policies, structures, and processes that are organized and distributed to achieve and sustain the organization's vision, language, and experience.
Schoolwide	Refers to extending support to all students and adults in all settings in a school or organization (e.g., agency). A schoolwide approach is also referred to as providing a full continuum of support (Tiers 1, 2, 3).
Social-Emotional-Behavioral (SEB) Initiatives and Programs	Interventions, systems, or practices implemented to improve social, emotional, and/or behavioral (SEB) competencies. Examples include PBIS, mental health, and social emotional learning programs.
Partners	Any individuals who will be affected by or make decisions regarding implementation within an organization. These vary by context (state, district, school) but typically include (but not limited to) students, families, educators, administrators, community groups, and agencies.

Term	Description
Systems	Support infrastructure that is needed to enable the accurate and durable implementation of practices, efficient use of data, and achievement of outcomes.
Teaming	Refers to working as a cohesive, integrated, and representative collection of individuals who lead the systems change and implementation process.
Team Implementation and Coordination	Implementation of evidence-based practices and systems are guided, coordinated, and administered by a local team comprised of representation from leadership, partners, implementers, consumers, and content experts. This team is responsible for ensuring high implementation fidelity, management of resources, and data-based decision making.
Technical Assistance	Process of providing support to an organization with an identified problem or need.
Tier 1 (universal or primary)	Preventing the development of new cases (incidence) of unwanted behaviors by establishing a core foundation of high-quality learning environments for all students and staff and across all settings (i.e., schoolwide, classroom, and non-classroom).
Tier 2 (targeted or secondary)	Reducing the number of existing cases (prevalence) of unwanted behaviors that are presenting high risk behaviors and/or not responsive to primary intervention practices by providing more focused, intensive, and frequent small group- oriented responses in situations where unwanted behavior is likely.
Tier 3 (intensive or tertiary)	Reducing the intensity and/or complexity of existing cases (severity) of unwanted behavior that are resistant to and/or unlikely to be addressed by primary and secondary prevention efforts by providing the most individualized responses to situations where unwanted behavior is likely.
Training	Provision of instruction in new concepts and skills for implementing systems and practices. Training is less likely to lead to durable change in behavior without coaching.
Transitions	Moving from one school to another school within a district.
Universal and Comprehensive Screening	Performance and progress of all students are reviewed on a regular schedule (e.g., quarterly, annually) and in a systematic manner to assess comprehensively or completely the (a) current level of progress, (b) adequacy of progress, (c) fidelity of support implementation, (d) effectiveness of support, and (e) need or change in supports.

Term	Description
Whole School	Refers to addressing the behavior support needs of all members (e.g., students, staff, family members, classified staff) and all settings of a school community.
Workforce Capacity	Internal experience and expertise to collaborate, implement and sustain evidence-based practices, and improve outcomes for all student groups.