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Examining the Implementation of School-Wide Positive Discipline Intervention and Its Impact on Teacher Beliefs, Values and Practices

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EXAMINING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SCHOOL-WIDE POSITIVE

DISCIPLINE INTERVENTION AND ITS IMPACT ON TEACHER BELIEFS,

VALUES AND PRACTICES

by

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ABSTRACT

The frequent occurrence of negative student behaviors such as bulling, verbal abuse, and disrespect remain a key concern for teacher. Teachers report instances of simple disrespect, noncompliance, poor peer interactions, cursing, making fun of one another, grabbing, pushing and being of-task as common occurrences in their classrooms.

Teachers are expected and required to manage student behavior through the implementation of a well designed classroom management plan. Student disruptions through negative behavior require constant alteration of their management plan, reducing instructional time, and leaving teachers with high levels of personal frustration and stress.

School districts around the country have begun to look for different strategies to address challenging behaviors by students that disrupt the daily routines in their schools. School-wide Positive Behavior Support is a strategy that is currently being implemented in more than 2900 schools in 34 states. This approach has gained popularity in schools for several reasons including its effectiveness in reducing school-wide discipline problems, the public's increased concerns regarding school violence, and the requirement of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act for the use of positive behavioral supports to address challenging behaviors.

Since PBS is a form of value-based systemic change, teachers who participate are required to reexamine and possibly change their beliefs, philosophies and values about disciplinary practices.

The purpose of this study was to examine the implementation of school-wide positive discipline intervention and its impact on teacher beliefs, values and practices that resulted in a changed school climate at a Middle School in Northeast Georgia.

As a quantitative method, a survey instrument was used to assess the changes in teacher beliefs, values and practices toward discipline. The survey was administered by the researcher during a regular weekly scheduled faculty meeting. Descriptive statistics reported the mean and standard deviation

INDEX WORDS: School-wide Change, Positive Behavior Support, School-wide Positive Behavior Support, Primary Prevention Level, Value-based System change, Positive Behavior Intervention, Noncompliance, Middle School, Northeast Georgia, Beliefs, Values, Practices

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to my deceased sister Barbara Jean Collins. Even though you are gone you have inspired me to transcend and to be the best that I can be. Thanks for your spiritual guidance here on earth in the absence of your physical being. I truly hope that I have made you proud and I love you dearly. I would also like to dedicate this work to my Mother Hermean Collins, my wife Sharon, and my daughters Nyisha and Nicole. Your positive support along with many sacrifices made the difference in my completion of this major project. It is my hope that this accomplishment will help set the bar for professional achievement within our family for today as well as future generations.

ACKNOLEDGMENTS

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

General Introduction

The rate of school-wide discipline problems as it relates to violence and student

victimization has decreased over the last decade (DeVoe, Peter, Miller, Noonan, Snyder,

& Baum, 2005), yet instances of problem behaviors in schools remain an area of key

concern for teachers (Sprague & Walker, 2000). Schools report that problem behaviors,

such as student bullying, verbal abuse, general classroom disorder, and disrespect,

frequently occur (DeVoe et al., 2005). Some researchers report as many as one in 20

students have one or more significant behavior problems in school, including not paying

attention in class, not following rules or controlling their behaviors, and not effectively

communicating with teachers and/or peers (Hennessy & Hennessy, 2000). As a result,

these problem behaviors contribute to disruptive school environments that can lead to an

increase in emotional stress for students and ultimately, have a negative impact on

student achievement (Payne, Gottfredson, & Gottfredson, 2003).

According to DeVoe et al. (2005), addressing these problem behaviors "may

interfere with a teacher's ability to teach" class effectively. For example, teachers report

instances of simple disrespect, noncompliance, poor peer interactions, cursing, making

fun of one another, grabbing, pushing and being off-task as common occurrences in their

classrooms (DeVoe, Peter, Kaufman, Miller, Noonan, Snyder, et al., 2004; McCurdy,

Mannella, & Eldridge, 2003). To further compound their concerns, many teachers feel

that they are unable to prevent these problem behaviors from disrupting their classroom

routines (Baker, 2005). Accordingly, teachers report that losing instructional time as they address student behaviors is a significant concern (Sprague & Walker, 2000).

Another classroom management issue facing teachers is the recent trend to include students with emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD) and other challenging behaviors (e.g., Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder [ADHA]) in general education settings (Cheney & Barringer, 1995; McLeskey, Henry, & Hodges, 1999; Sawka, McCurdy, & Mannella, 2002). Including these students can create even more challenging behaviors for teachers. For example, although students with EBD make up only one to five percent of the student population, they typically account for more than half of the school's discipline referrals (Sugai, Sprague, Horner, & Walker, 2000; Taylor-Greene, Brown, Nelson, Longton, Gassman, Cohen, et al., 1997). Thus, in addition to addressing everyday problem behaviors from students without disabilities, teachers must also be concerned with addressing challenging behaviors from students with EBD and other related disabilities.

This increasing need to address daily occurrences of challenging behaviors has had a profound impact on teachers' professional lives. Many teachers report dealing with challenging behaviors as the most stressful and difficult part of their job (Mitchell & Arnold, 2004). Teachers are also three times more likely than students to be victims of violence in schools resulting from many of these challenging behaviors (Kondrasuk, Greene, Wagoner, Edwards & Nayak-Rhodes, 2005). Consequently, many teachers cite the stress of dealing with challenging behaviors as one of the most common reasons for leaving the teaching profession (Ingersoll, 2001; Liu &U Meyer, 2005).
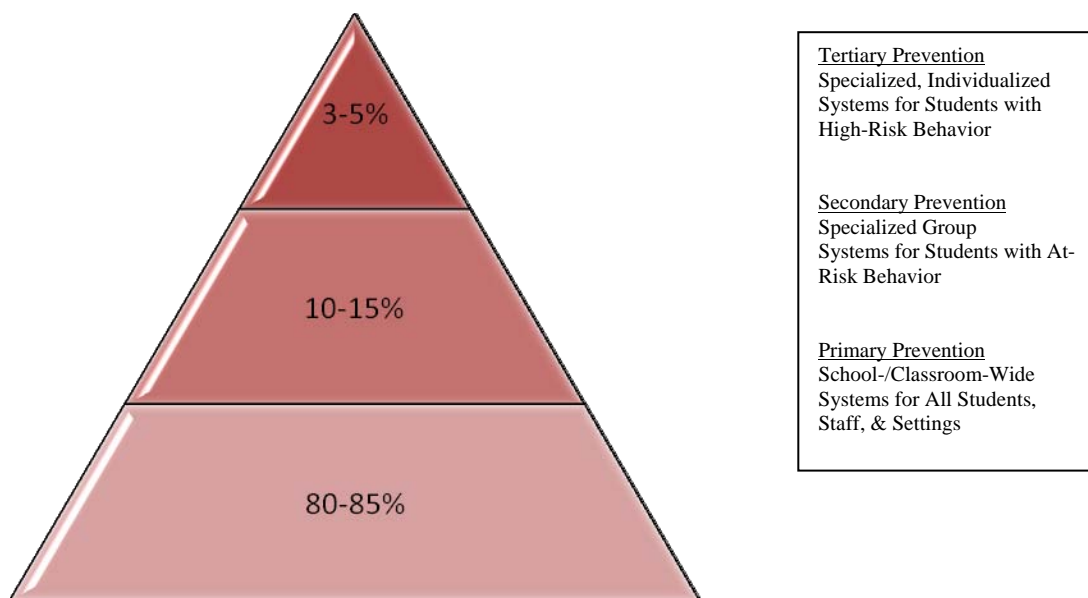
Figure 1.1: *Continuum of School-Wide Positive Behavior Support*

What Are School-wide Positive Behavior Supports?

Many schools districts around the country have begun to look for different strategies to address challenging behaviors that disrupt the daily routines in their schools. School-wide positive behavior supports (PBS) is one such strategy that is being implemented in more than 2900 schools in 34 states (Horner, Sugai, & Vincent, 2005). School-wide PBS is a system strategy that takes a proactive approach to addressing challenging or undesirable behaviors that occur in schools (Carr, Dunlap, Horner, Koegel, Turnbull, Sailor, et al., 2002). This approach has been gaining popularity in many schools for several reasons: (1) the growing evidence of its effectiveness in reducing overall school-wide discipline problems (Lewis, Hudson, Richter, & Johnson, 2004); (2) the public's increased concerns regarding school violence (NPR/Kaiser/Kennedy School Poll, 1999); (3) and the Individuals with Disabilities

Education Improvement Act's (IDEIA) reference to the use of positive behavioral supports to address challenging behaviors (IDEIA, 2004).

School-wide PBS is formulated to address the behaviors of all students in school and improve the overall educational environment. Problem behaviors such as student misconduct are addressed on three levels (See figure 1). At each level of school-wide PBS, interventions become more intensive and individualized (Lewis, 2001; Lohrmann-O'Rourke et al., 2000; Scoot & Eber, 2003; Sugai & Horner, 2002b; Warren, Edmonson, Griggs, Lassen, McCart, Turnbull, et al., 2003).

At the primary level, the goal is to examine the needs of the entire school and develop proactive interventions to prevent many problem behaviors. Behavioral supports for all students are applied to the entire school and the needs of all students are addressed and supported by the entire school staff. Initially, faculty and staff meet to discuss where and when most problem behaviors are occurring and school-wide data are reviewed and discussed. School-wide procedures for addressing problem behaviors are established, and then students are systematically taught rules and routines. If implemented effectively, this level will support the behavioral needs of 80 to 85 percent of the school population (Scott, 2001; Scott & Eber, 2003; Sugai & Horner, 2002b).

At the secondary level, the focus of school-wide PBS is on addressing the needs of students who are not responsive to primary interventions and continue to display inappropriate behaviors. At this level of school-wide PBS, teachers identify individual students or groups of students that need further support. Teachers then engage in a problem-solving discussion to develop more specific interventions that are tailored to the needs of these individual students or small groups of students. This level of intervention

usually is required to effectively support the needs to 10 to 15 percent of the school population (Scott & Eber, 2003).

When secondary level interventions fail, a team is assembled to address the specific needs of students with chronic behavior problems at the tertiary level. This team is specialized to the student's particular needs and may include staff members who have direct knowledge of the student, sometimes including parents, community members, and other professionals (e.g., behavioral specialists, psychologists). At this level, the team employs more advanced strategies, such as functional behavior assessments (FBA) and individualized behavior interventions plans (BIP) that focus on providing wrap-around services for the student and involve support from the community and/or specific psychological supports. This level usually is required to address the needs of 3 to 5 percent of the school population (Scott & Eber, 2003).

The Positive Referral Club as a Primary Level of Intervention

The Positive Referral Club was developed by this researcher and is one such example of Positive Behavior Support (PBS). It emerged from a desire to reduce the amount of office referrals for negative student behavior, and involves a system-wide comprehensive reward system which recognizes students in the areas of positive behavior, good citizenship, and outstanding academic performance. This school-wide system approach provides the opportunity for all staff members to refer a student to the administrative team for positive system-wide intervention.

Collaborated strategies in this project are preventive intervention methods that directly address the concern for establishing and maintaining a safe, productive and nurturing climate. Administrative support, team based problem solving, anger

management techniques, data-based decision making and frequently rewarding and recognizing students for good behavior are all positive methods stressing prevention as a deterrent for negative student behavior.

According to Scott, (2001) at the primary level, the goal is to examine the needs of the entire school and develop proactive interventions to prevent many problem behaviors. Behavioral supports for all students are applied to the entire school and the needs of all students are addressed and supported by the entire school staff. Initially, faculty and staff meet to discuss where and when most problem behaviors are occurring and school-wide data are reviewed and discussed. School-wide procedures for addressing problem behaviors are established, and then students are systematically taught rules and routines. If implemented effectively, this level will support the behavioral needs of 80 to 85 percent of the school population.

A student is accepted as a member of the Positive Referral Club after a staff member submits a written positive referral to an administrator in the areas of positive behavior, good citizenship, or outstanding academic performance. If a student receives a negative office referral at any time during active membership, two additional positive referrals must be received during that quarter in order for students to remain in the PRC. Suspension of active membership will occur if two negative office referrals are received during a school year. Active membership expires at the end of each school year.

Once an administrator receives a positive referral, the referring student is requested for a visit to the office within two days from the initial referral. During the visit, the referring student is congratulated for their accomplishment and then given a membership package including a welcome letter, membership ID card, T-shirt,

membership contract, calendar of events/activities, and several coupons and gift certificates redeemable at local business establishments in the metro area. An administrative team member will also conduct a conference call to the parents of all newly appointed members.

An induction program is held quarterly (during the school day) for all new members in which all stake holders are invited, including parents, staff members, community partner, and the news media. Achievement certificates are presented to each new member along with high expectations for positive behavior, good citizenship and outstanding academic achievement.

If a student is referred to an administrator for negative behavior and is not a member of the PRC, the referring student is summoned to the office by an administrator for an interview and possible consequences for their negative behavior. Consequences for negative behavior include an administrative warning, after school detention, in-school suspension (ISS), out of school suspension (OSS), alternative school, and expulsion, depending on the nature of the infraction. After a decision is made, the parents of the referring student are then called by the administrator to inform them of the code violation and consequences. The parents may then accept the consequences or enter into the appeal process which is a provision of the code of conduct.

The student code of conduct is submitted to every student during their enrollment and is reviewed by the teachers at the beginning of the school year and each quarter (every nine weeks). In addition, the administrative team (principal, assistant principals, and counselors) conduct an assembly program for all students (6-8) in order to discuss the student code of conduct and possible consequences for negative behavior. During the

assembly programs, students are allowed to ask questions and make suggestions for improvement. All students and their parents are given a copy of the document including a signature page which is returned to the school in order to verify receipt.

During the interview with the referring student, the administrator offers options and choices that could replace negative behavior in the future and strongly advise the student to practice the type of positive behaviors that will help gain membership into the PRC. If the referring student is a member of the PRC, membership is automatically placed on probation status. All teachers of the referring student are urged to be on the lookout for future positive behaviors that would justify a membership referral into the PRC.

General Guidelines for Referrals

The goal of the PRC is to include as many students as possible from the primary level of intervention which encompasses about 85 percent of the student population. Unlike the secondary and tertiary levels, these students are not receiving the benefits of individual or system-wide behavior intervention and support. Preventive intervention strategies and early identification techniques provided by the PRC could reduce the number of office referrals for negative student behavior in the primary level of intervention. General guidelines for submitting positive referrals are established by the Positive Referral Intervention and Support Team (PRIST) who meets every two weeks to analyze data and make recommendations for improvement. The three criteria areas for referring a student for membership into the PRC are behaviors related to creative and positive decision making, exhibiting good character, and consistent improvement of academic performance and productivity.

Table 1.1: *Hopeful Middle School Discipline Referrals*

Year	Number of Discipline Referrals
2004-2005	697
2005-2006	763
2006-2007	653
2007-2008 (As of Nov.'07)	252

The results from the school-wide discipline summary report of Hopeful Middle

School indicated that there were 697 discipline referrals for negative student behavior in

the 2004-2005 school year. For the 2005-2006 school year there were 763 referrals, and

653 referrals for the 2006-2007 school year. As of November, 2007 there are 252

referrals reported for the 2007-2008 school year. The largest decrease in discipline

referrals occurred between the 2005-2006 and the 2006-2007 school year, (n=110).

Finally, as of November 7, 2007 only 252 referrals have been reported which is nearly

half of the school year.

Creative and Positive Decision Making

Students are referred for membership into the PRC for creative and positive

decision making when they demonstrate their ability to control their anger and emotions

during negative challenges presented by others with in the learning community. An

example would be walking away from an argument without physical contact or

complying with a teacher's directives even though conflict or disagreement exit. This

category may also include students who chose to be attentive and non-disruptive during

instructional class time.

Exhibiting Good Character

Students are referred for membership into the PRC for exhibiting good character when they demonstrate their ability to show kindness and respect to others with in the learning community. An example would be giving assistance as needed to a fellow student or staff member during an emergency or non emergency situation (assistance in carrying a heavy load or equipment, helping or assisting in preventing an accident). This category may also include providing moral support an encouragement to others during a time of crisis as well as acts of kindness and good manners on a regular basis.

Consistent Improvement of Academic Performance and Productivity

Students are referred for membership into the PRC for consistent improvement of academic performance and productivity when they demonstrate their ability to maintain and exceed the expected level of academic performance according to their achievement goals set at the beginning of the school year. Students may also be referred for academic performance if the teachers notice an increase in the frequency of home-work assignments turned in on time and correct, increased effort with productivity and staying on task, and at least an increase of one letter grade for each subject area (from C to B or B to A).

It is also the desire of the PRC, through its comprehensive referral system, to address the needs of students with low self-esteem and self-image. Staff members are urged to make every attempt to promptly refer students who fall into this category in order to provide them with the membership and support services of the PRC. Students who are placed in the secondary and tertiary level of intervention can be referred by a teacher even though, they a not the focus group for the PRC.

Positive Support Strategies

Within the first two weeks of active membership, each new member is scheduled for an interview with the Positive Referral Intervention and Support Team (PRIST) for the purpose of obtaining input regarding the student's needs or concerns as it relates their behavior, academic progress, and perception of whether or not the school has a safe, productive, and nurturing climate. Every effort is made during this fifteen minute session to encourage honesty and freedom of expression. PRIST make up includes (1) assistant principal, (1) counselor, (4) sixth grade teachers, (4) seventh grade teachers, (4) eight grade teachers, (1) special education coordinator and the in-school suspension teacher. All data collected is analyzed by the team and then presented at the next weekly faculty meeting where the findings are open for further input and discussion. The team then reviews and analyzes the monthly report for negative and positive discipline referrals and compares it with the perceptual data obtained during the induction interview of the new members. The findings from the comparison reports are then generalized by consensus and used for team based problem solving strategies and decision making.

The Positive Referral Intervention and Support Team also schedule a monthly Anger Management/Conflict Resolution session (during school hours) at the beginning of each quarter. Every student member is required to attend at least two sessions during the school year unless given special permission from the Positive Referral Intervention Team.

In addition to the initial membership package and quarterly reward/recognition components, active students members will be provided (1) skating parties, (1) bowling parties, (4) ice cream parties, (1) field trips, an annual barbeque, and the opportunity to

participate in a variety of team-building/academic projects. Rewards and incentives will be funded by partners/sponsors from within and outside of the learning community.

Statement of the Problem

The frequent occurrence of negative student behaviors such as bulling, verbal abuse, and disrespect remain a key concern for teacher. Teachers report instances of simple disrespect, noncompliance, poor peer interactions, cursing, making fun of one another, grabbing, pushing and being of-task as common occurrences in their classrooms.

Teachers are expected and required to manage student behavior through the implementation of a well designed classroom management plan. Student disruptions through negative behavior requires constant alteration their management plan, reducing instructional time, and leaving teachers with high levels of personal frustration and stress.

School districts around the country have begun to look for different strategies to address challenging behaviors by students that disrupt the daily routines in their schools. School-wide Positive Behavior Support is a strategy that is currently being implemented in more than 2900 schools in 34 states. This approach has gained popularity in schools for several reasons including its effectiveness in reducing school-wide discipline problems, the public's increased concerns regarding school violence, and the requirement of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act for the use of positive behavioral supports to address challenging behaviors.

Since PBS is a form of value-based systemic change, teachers who participate are required to reexamine and possibly change their beliefs, philosophies and values about disciplinary practices.

The purpose of this study was to examine the implementation of school-wide positive discipline intervention and its impact on teacher beliefs, values and practices that resulted in a changed school climate at a Middle School in Northeast Georgia.

Research Questions

Overarching Question

To what extent does the process of school-wide program change impact School Climate?

Sub Questions

1. To what extent have teachers changed their beliefs, practices or values about discipline as a result of a change in procedures with more positive focus?

2. What classroom practices changed as a result of the change toward more positive discipline intervention?

Significance of the Study

Fullan (1993, 2001, 2003, 2005) contends that implementing system-wide change that improves the school environment is an extraordinarily difficult task. One key variable that determines whether change will be successfully implemented and sustained is the support of teachers within the school (Fullan, 2001; Sarason, 1982; 1990). According to Fullan (2001), "an understanding of what reality is from the point of view of the people within the role is an essential starting point for construction a practical theory of the meaning and results of the change attempts" (p. 137). Few studies have been conducted that address these issues (Kern & Manz, 2004). Moreover, researchers have not conducted in-depth examinations of how school-wide PBS components impact the professional lives of teachers and their students. Thus, this study is significant

because it seeks to provide a better understanding of how school-wide program change impacts the school climate.

Autobiographical Roots of the Study

The researcher is an assistant principal at a middle school in Northeast Georgia. The Positive Referral Club emerged from my desire to reduce the amount of discipline referrals for negative student behavior through a comprehensive reward system which recognizes students for positive behavior, good citizenship, and academic achievement. In addition the program provides school-wide positive behavior support through a team-based approach.

During pre-planning of this school year, the researcher and his principal collectively agreed that the need for a more effective school discipline program prevailed. This determination was based on the number of discipline referrals over the past two years that were submitted to administrators by teachers for negative student behavior. In addition, a significant number of stakeholders in the community perceived the schools' ability to maintain a safe an orderly environment as unacceptable. The researcher immediately conducted a needs assessment involving all stakeholders, including the teachers, administrators, students, and parents. The data collected from the needs assessment indicated a strong desire for reducing negative student behavior and was consistent among all stakeholders.

School administrators are responsible for providing and maintaining safety and security for the students, teachers, and visiting parent. They often complain about the enormous amount of time required in the process and procedures for handling discipline referrals. In a recent conversation, an administrator explained that as much as 80% of his

daily schedule is often spent on processing discipline referrals. Also discussed was how the increasing number of discipline referrals has produced high levels of personal frustration and professional effectiveness for many of our teachers. A decrease in negative discipline referrals will allow for more productivity and better time management of administrative responsibilities. In addition, it will also permit the possibility for greater academic achievement by students.

Teachers are expected and required to manage student behavior through the implementation of a well designed classroom management plan. Student disruptions through negative behavior requires constant alteration their management plan, reducing instructional time, and leaving teachers with high levels of personal frustration and stress.. As student behavior improves, teachers are able to provide more instructional time which positively impacts high student achievement and self image.

 Parents are constantly impacted by the lack of supervision of suspended students during a normal work day because they are ultimately liable for the actions of their minor children when absent from school. The increased liability on parents occurring during a student suspension creates enormous hardships. Parents are often required to personally return their children to school after an out of school suspension which requires leave time from their jobs. This can be a problem for working parents who have limited or no leave time accumulated. Consequences caused by high discipline referrals can negatively impact parents' self-image and lead to a poor perception of the school environment.

Students are negatively affected by the consequences of discipline referrals as in-school or out-of-school suspensions require students to be absent from the regular active learning environment. As a result many students miss lessons, assignments and

instructional information needed for academic success. Through recent conversation, a significant amount of students felt that teachers were unfair and inconsistent with office referrals and reporting procedures. In addition students felt that teachers were insensitive about their feeling and had low tolerance in allowing for self expressions. As a result of low self image, negative reactions and behaviors increased. Therefore as teachers and administrators provide special interest and support to their students along with high expectations for student achievement and positive behavior, there would be less discipline referrals and higher academic success.

<div align="center">Procedures</div>

Design

The research design for the study is quantitative in nature. An ex post descriptive research design was used in this study in an effort to document possible changes in teacher beliefs, practices, and values about discipline and transition from reactive discipline toward positive discipline at Hopeful Middle School (pseudonym), located in Faith County (pseudonym), Northeast Georgia. "Quantitative data are said to be objective, which indicates that the behaviors are classified or quantified" (Gliner, Morgan, 2000). The statistical analysis of the school climate survey response reflects attitudes, perceptions, and feelings. The investigation of this study was approved by the principal with the understanding that pseudonyms would be used in reference to the name of the school, county as well as the name of individuals at the school.

Population

Participants in this study include the total faculty at Hopeful Middle School.   .
The survey was completed by 42 teachers of which 30 were females and 12 were males.
The years of teaching experience ranged from zero to 28 years.

Data Collection

Data from the school climate survey was collected as part of the implementation
process of school-wide positive discipline intervention. An information letter was
developed for the faculty to inform them about the study and the extent of their
participation. The survey was administered by the researcher during a regular weekly
scheduled faculty meeting.

Data Analysis

The faculty survey consisted of 24 items that measures changes in teacher beliefs,
practices, or values about discipline as well as transition from reactive discipline toward
proactive discipline. The items on the survey were rated by faculty members using a 5-
point Likert-type scale that ranges from 1 for not true to 5 for very true.

A section on demographic information also was included on the faculty survey.
Data was analyzed using frequency distribution and measures of central tendency and
dispersion to include the Mean and Standard Deviation.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RESEARCH AND RELATED LITERATURE

The major presumption of this research is that the literature regarding school-wide

positive behavior supports (PBS) has focused primarily on outcomes (e.g., discipline

referrals and suspension rates), and has largely ignored the perceptions of the teachers

who are expected to implement this change. Relying solely on outcomes and not

considering issues among teachers, such as their perceptions of school-wide procedures,

the impact these changes have on the overall school environment, and/or the personal

cost to implement change, can lead to a poorly supported school-wide initiative that has

little impact and is not sustained. The areas of background literature that will be reviewed

to provide a context for this study are: (1) a review of school-wide PBS; (2) a discussion

of how school-wide PBS is a form of systems change; (3) a review of the current research

on the impact of school-wide PBS.

School-wide Positive Behavior Support

Carr et al. (2002) state that school-wide PBS is a whole-school strategy aimed at

establishing preventative measures for addressing challenging or undesirable behaviors

that occur in schools. Similarly, Sugai et al. (2000) define PBS as "general term that

refers to the application of positive behavioral interventions and systems to achieve

socially important behavior change" (p. 133).

School-wide PBS is based on the assumption that behavior problems occur in

schools as a result of deficiencies within the school environment (Nelson & Sugai, 1999).

To address these deficiencies, teachers implement strategies on three levels. At the

primary level, teachers examine the whole school environment, proactively plan school-

wide procedures to address specific issues, and use effective instructional strategies to teach students these procedures. At the secondary level, teachers implement more specific strategies to address the behaviors of students' or groups who are not responsive to primary-level supports. Finally, at the tertiary level, teachers focus on developing interventions that address the needs of specific students who have chronic, severe behavior problems and who need the most support (Scott & Eber, 2003). Thus, the ultimate goal of school-wide PBS is to create "host environments" that support the needs of all students and prevent many problems from occurring (Sugai & Horner, 1994, 1999; Zins & Ponti, 1990). This study is concerned with the primary intervention level of school-wide PBS; therefore, the following discussion will focus on the implementation of and issues association with the level of PBS.

Steps in Implementing the Primary Level of School-wide PBS

When establishing school-wide positive behavior support (PBS) at the primary level, schools follow a series of steps to establish a system that promotes pro-social behaviors from students (Nelson, Martella, & Marchand-Martella, 2002; Nelson & Sugai, 1999; Scott, 2001). These steps include (1) identifying areas in the school for change to better support the needs of students, (2) developing interventions and procedures based on these needs/behaviors, (3) implementing school-wide plans to address these needs/behaviors, and (4) using data to make decisions regarding the effectiveness of the school-wide interventions. Then, at the end of these steps, teachers make a judgment regarding whether the established school-wide interventions were successful or if there is a need to develop further interventions to
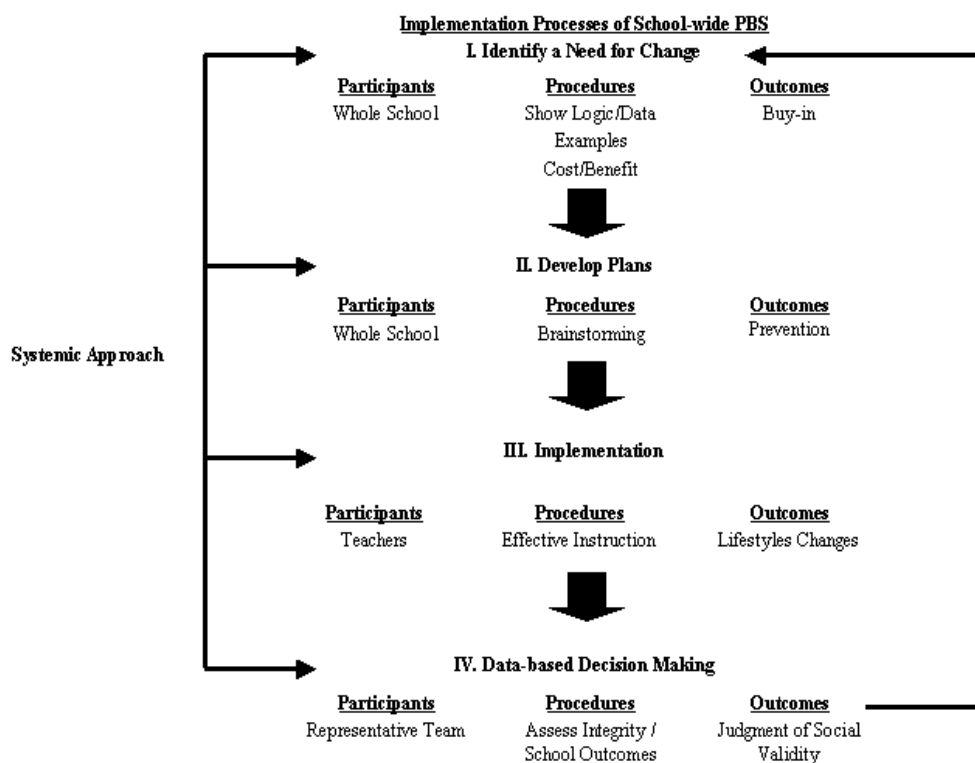
Figure 2.1: *School-wide PBS Primary Implementation Steps*

Identify a Need for Change

For change to be widely accepted, teachers must have a shared dissatisfaction with the current working environment and perceive a need for something better. According to Garmston and Wellman (1999), "Without shared dissatisfaction, all the vision and strategies in the world do not promote the desired change" (p. 248). That is, if the majority of teachers in a school are satisfied with their current situation and they perceive it as effectively addressing the needs of their students, there wil;l not likely be widespread support to implement change (Kanaya, Light, & Culp, 2005; Lane, Mahdavi, & Borthwick-Duffy, 2003). School-wide PBS is initiated when teachers examine their

school environment, and identify areas where current structures and arrangements are not meeting the behavioral needs of all students (Nelson & Sugai, 1999).

As part of this initial needs assessment, data is gathered from multiple sources such as archival school data (e.g., discipline referrals, other disciplinary actions such as timeouts and detentions, attendance records) (Sugai et al., 2000), the perspectives of stakeholders (e.g., teachers, parents, students, support staff), and direct observations of the environment (Sugai & Horner 2002a). Using this data, teachers examine what kind of discipline problems are occurring (e.g., noise in the hallway) (e.g., Kartub, Taylor-Greene, March & Horner, 2000); how often and where they are occurring (e.g., on the playground) (e.g., Lewis et al. 2002); and how these behaviors are addressed (e.g., referral to the office or suspended from school) (e.g., Scott, 2001). The outcome of this initial step os an agreement among teachers that there are environmental deficiencies that need to be addressed and thus a commitment to work together to address these identified needs and improve the overall school environment (Netzel & Eber, 2003; Sugai & Horner, 2002b).

Planning Process of a School-wide PBS

After identifying the needs in the school, teachers begin developing plans to address these needs. Developing plans "entails all activity related to creating an innovation' (Hall & Hord, 2001, p. 6). During the planning process of school-wide PBS, teachers meet to discuss school-wide data, identify problem areas, and "brainstorm" potential solutions (Nelson & Sugai, 1999; Scott, 2001). For example, after examining school-wide data, staff members might concluded that more than half of the school's discipline referrals are occurring during the lunch period. Staff members then discuss

factors in the setting that are possible causes of these behaviors and develop plans to address them.

The plans that teachers develop subsequently become the school-wide PBS components in their school. That is, school-wide rules and routines are developed that all teachers agree to teach and enforce (Metzler et al., 2001; Scott 2001). Teachers also brainstorm and establish a reward system that they feel will motivate students to engage in the desired behaviors (Lohrmann-O'Rourke et al., 2000). They agree on school-wide discipline procedures, or methods of addressing inappropriate behaviors to discourage undesirable behaviors. In addition, there is agreement regarding which behaviors that teachers should be primarily responsible for addressing and which behaviors warrant an administrative response (Lewis & Sugai, 1999). Finally, a method of data collection (usually monitoring of office referrals) is determined to evaluate the effectiveness of the school-wide PBS components. The outcome of this step is to establish preventative measures that will curtail potential problems, and reduce the need for punitive consequences (Sugai & Horner, 2002b).

<div align="center">Implementation of a School-wide PBS</div>

Development and implementation have been characterized as "two sides of the same coin" (Hall & Hord, 2001, p. 6). Development entails the creation of plans, whereas, "implementation consists of the process of putting into practice an idea, program, or set of activities and structures new to the people attempting or expected to change" (Fullan, 2001, p. 69). The implementation step of school-wide PBS involves putting into action the school-wide components that teachers have developed and agreed upon during the planning stage (Taylor-Greene et al., 1997). This process occurs in two

stages: (1) using effective instructional strategies to teach students school-wide components, and (2) using effective practices to sustain those components.

In the first stage of implementation, students are taught school-wide rules (e.g., "Respect" rules) (e.g., Metzler et al., 2001) and routines (e.g., walking on one side of the hallway) (e.g., Netzel & Eber, 2003; Taylor-Greene et al., 1997). Behavioral expectations, much like academic skills, must be taught to students (Horner & Sugai, 1999; Lewis and Sugai, 1999). It is not sufficient to post school-wide rules and routines and expect all students to understand and follow them. Instead, effectively teaching students school-wide procedures involves the use of effective instruction, or the process of (1) telling students what is expected of them, (2) using multiple examples to show what those procedures involves the use of effective instruction, or the process should look like, (3) providing opportunities to practices those procedures, and (4) providing immediate corrective feedback. According to Cushing, Horner, and Flannery (1999), teaching students appropriate or expected behaviors contributes to a culture of social competence, and as result, "students who are more socially component are less likely to engage in disruptive behaviors" (Nelson et al., 2002, p. 147).

In the second stage of implementation, after students have been taught school-wide expectations, teachers establish procedures for increasing desirable behaviors and decreasing undesirable behaviors (Lewis & Sugai, 1999). Increasing desired behaviors involves providing students with incentives to engage in pro-social behaviors. These incentives can be non-tangle (e.g., praise, non-verbal prompts) or tangible (e.g., tickets, tokens) (e.g., Metzler et al., 2001). Regardless of which incentive or combination of incentives is used, the purpose of these incentives is to provide social acknowledgement

to students who are engaging in the desirable behaviors. This explicit acknowledgement informs students that they are acting in concordance with school-wide expectations and encourages them to continue engaging in those behaviors (Netzel & Eber, 2003; Taylor-Greene et al., 1997).

Decreasing undesirable behavior, on the other hand, involves establishing clear definitions of rule-violating behaviors and defining consequences for those behaviors.

> The goal is to develop a policy that (a) is implemented consistently school-wide, (b) clearly differentiates what behaviors should be managed in the classroom and what behaviors should be sent to the office, and (c) provides a proactive strategy to identify and address the needs of students who have chronic problem behavior. (Lewis & Sugai, 1999, p. 7)

Consistently enforcing both procedures provides students with clear definitions of which behaviors are appropriate and which are not (Lewis & Sugai, 1999). The outcome of this process is to establish interventions aimed at preventing problems behaviors and promoting more positive interaction between teachers and students (Taylor-Greene et al., 1997).

<center>Data-Based Decision-Making as a Component of School-wide PBS</center>

Data-based decision-making is a fundamental component of school-wide PBS (Irvin et al., 2004; Scott, 2001; Taylor-Greene et al., 1997). It encompasses every step of implementation and monitoring. When identifying a need for change, teachers examine school-wide data to highlight the needs of the school. In developing plans for interventions, teachers use sate to determine what and where interventions are needed. Finally, when teachers evaluate the effectiveness of interventions, data is used to

determine if interventions are having a positive impact on the school environment, which is usually measured by office discipline referrals (ODRs). The outcome of using school-wide data is to provide a basis for judging the social validity of the school-wide interventions, as these data help to answer the questions, "Are these interventions working in our school?" and "Is there anything else that can be done in the school to present other problems?" (Sugai & Horner, 2002b).

<center>School-wide PBS as a System Change Strategy</center>

Several researchers have labeled school-wide PBS as "systems change" because it involves a whole-school strategy to promote positive change in the environment, (e.g., Carr et al., 2002; Nelson, Martella, & Marchand-Martella, 2002; Nelson & Sugai, 1999; Sugai et al., 2000). For example, Nelson and Sugai (1999) argue that, "Scholl-wide PBS programs seek to produce systemic change at the building, classroom, and student levels by providing school staff a framework with which to develop site-specific solutions to the unique needs of their school and community" (p. 31).

While describing school-wide PBS as a systems change approach may be accurate, researchers in this area have not defined how school-wide PBS fits this definition. For example, Sugai and Horner (2002a) write that,

> The PBS approach emphasizes a balanced integration of four systems-level considerations. First, regardless of whether the focus is the school, the classroom, or an individual student, educators must begin any PBS effort by specifying what measurable academic and/or behavioral outcomes are of concern. Second, data systems must be in place so school teams have the capacity to collect meaningful information about the status of and improvement in PBS efforts. Third, the best

evidence-based practices must be adopted to maximize achievement of targeted

student outcomes. Finally, systems supports must be in place to support the

accurate, efficient, and sustainable use of evidence-based practices and data

management systems (p. 134).

While this description is useful in identifying different components of school-wide PBS,

the authors do not explain how PBS is a form of systemic change. Thus, they fail to

address the complexity of implementing PBS in a school setting. To more fully

understand the systemic nature of school-wide PBS, the next sections provide a

description of s systemic approach to changing schools. This is followed by a review of

how school-wide PBS is a form of systemic change.

<p align="center">What is a Systemic Approach to School Change?</p>

Systemic change in schools is an ambiguous term that can take on different

meanings depending on how it is introduced within a school (Fullan, 2001). For example,

school change can come in the form of mandates from hierarchical bureaucracies in

efforts to meet acceptable standards (e.g., No Child Left Behind) (e.g., Simpson, LaCava,

& Graner, 2004); it can be a result of the majority of teachers being dissatisfied with their

current working conditions (e.g., multiple issues of inappropriate behaviors within a

school) (e.g., Fullan, 2001), or it can begin because schools simply decide to adopt a new

approach to student learning (e.g., adoption of a new curriculum) (e.g., Fullan, 2001). In

essence, systemic change in schools can come in different forms, be pursued by different

people, and be introduced through a variety of avenues.

But the primary purpose of systemic change in schools is to alter current practice

to better support the needs of students in the school environment (Fullan, 1993; 2003;

Hall & Hord, 2001; McLeskey & Waldron; 2000). According to Sashkin and Egermeier (1993) systemic change,

> Involves changes in roles, rules, and relationships between and among students and teachers, teachers and administrators, and administrators at various levels from the school building to the district office to the state level, all with the aim of improving student outcomes. (p.14)

This type of change cannot be achieved through incremental changes that address small areas in a school, such as adding new curriculum or hiring new school, such as adding new curriculum or hiring new school personnel (Cuban, 2001). Instead, effective systemic change entails focusing change efforts on the entire school context (Fullan, 2005). It is only through addressing the school as a whole unit that effective change will occur and be sustained. Moreover, when addressing the context of a school (Fullan, 1993; 2005) and that teacher participation is a key variable to success is also essential (Garmston & Wellman, 1999).

<div align="center">Addressing the Context of a School to Create Change</div>

The focus of school change has not always been on addressing the overall school context. Over the past 40 years, school change has focused on different areas and aspects of the school environment. For example, Elmore (1990) characterizes school reform as coming in two "waves". The first wave began in the 1970s and ended in the late 1980s. It emphasized more challenging academic content and placed higher standards on teachers and students. The second wave started in the late 1980s. It emphasized a holistic approach to school change that focused on "fundamental changes in expectations for

student learning, in the practice of teaching, and in the organization and management of public schools" (p.1).

Sashkin and Egermeier (1993) have identified four change strategies used in schools in the past four decades. The first strategy they labeled "fix the parts: transferring innovations," or the process of implementing new innovations in a school in place of old ones. This strategy was based on the idea that replacing ineffective innovations with more effective ones, such as new curriculum or instructional practices, would result in better outcomes for students. They labeled the second strategy "fix the people: training and developing professionals," or the idea that improved education outcomes could be achieved through better prepared teachers, and the solution rested in providing professional training to develop more effective instructional practices or idea. The third strategy they called "fix the school: developing organizations' capacities to solve their problems." Here the idea was to develop the local school capacity to solve local problems. This was generally achieved by creating school-improvement teams to examine current practices and provide solutions to improve those practices. In their view, this last strategy has been the one used by most schools to purse change.

However, after reviewing these approaches, Sashkin anf Egermeier (1993) concluded that none of the previous approaches resulted in any real, lasting change in schools. Instead, they argued that a fourth approach, "fix the system: systemic reform," had the most potential for producing effective school change. They argued,

> This forth approach goes beyond new techniques and innovations, bettering
>
> teaching and more effective administration in schools, and more effective
>
> problem solving at the school building level. Systemic reform incorporates the

other three strategies in a new and broader context…And, in doing so, this new systemic redesign strategy incorporates all three of the fundamental perspectives we defined, with a special focus on cultural change. (p.13)

Instead of addressing the incremental components of schools (Cuban, 2001), Sashkin and Egermeier (1993) argue for more comprehensive approach to change. From their perspective, creating effective school change encompasses addressing the entire school culture. This idea of "fixing the system" has also been argued by others in the area of school change (Fullan, 2001, 2003, 2005; Hall & Hord, 2001). Fullan (2003) contends that effective school change is the process of "changing the context" (p. xiv) to promote more effective practices and improve student outcomes.

Researchers have defined the context of a school to include several elements. For example, Fullan (2005) refers to school context as the structures and cultures of the school, or all the interactions that make it function in a particular manner. McLeskey and Waldron (2000) define the culture of the school as the way people do things within that school. Duffy (1996) defines it as a "social system" comprised of a "web of individual attitudes and beliefs, role definitions, skills sets, relationship among and between people, the potential for motivations and job satisfaction, and the organizational culture" (p. 48). In essence, school context has been defined as the culture, the structures, and all the interactions that go into making a school function in a particular manner.

Coker-Kolo (2002) argues that a systemic approach to change the context of a school "incorporates the idea of separate parts working independently and in interaction to achieve specified objectives" (p.37). That is, a systemic approach recognizes that there are multiple interactions within a defined system, and that these interactions impact one

another and, ultimately, the entire system (Sarason, 1990). To effectively create change, the interactions of the system must be addresses. Sarason (1996) called these system-wide interactions "existing regularities," or the established practices and routines of a system. For example, one "existing regularity" in a school is how teachers interact with each other, the administration, the students, and the environment. For change to be effective, a systemic approach involves changing the structures, interactions, and culture, or the context of the entire system around the individuals within the system (Fullan, 2001, 2003, 2005).

In the past, systemic change has not addressed the context of the school but has focused on adding programs and services to the current context (Sashkin & Egermeier, 1993). When change entails adding-on a program to the existing curriculum (McLeskey & Waldron, 2000) or improving current practice to make them more efficient (Fullan, 2001), the focus is on restructuring through the use of technical solutions (Fullan, 2005). Althoug, restricting through adding-on programs or changing the practices of a small group within a school creates minor changes throughout the school, it does little to change the context or culture of the school (McLeskey & Waldrom, 2000). Moreover, add-on or technical changes do not challenge teachers to make any real change or question their current practice (Fullan, 2005). Goodman (1995) calls this "change without difference," as current practices are not drastically altered, beliefs and values remain unquestioned, and personal traditions avoid scrutiny. Therefore, such change focuses on making the status quo more efficient and does not significantly change the context or culture of the school.

Instead, Fullan (2001, 2005) contends that changing the context of a school is more than restructuring or reorganizing current practices; it targets reculturing the system, or encourages teachers and administrators to question and change how they approach their jobs (Fullan, 1993, 2001, 2003, 2005). Reculturing means that people work to put new ideas into practice; they look at the current context from a different perspective, thus forming new beliefs, rationales, or practices. Reculturing the context of a school means questioning the status quo and changing the way teachers interact with each other, their students, the administration, and the environment, which in turn, produces new habits, beliers, and skills. Goodman (1995) calls this second-order change because it goes beyond reorganizing current habits. This type of change calls into question the foundations of the status quo or the fundamental structures of the entire school. Real systemic change, according to Fullan (2001), recultures or changes the status quo of a school causing new ideas and role structures to emerge.

Importance of Teachers in School-wide Change

Sustainable, effective change begins with achieving individual change (Hall & Hord, 2001). As Hord, Rutherford, Huling-Austin, and Hall (1987) state,

Change affects people, and their role in the process is of the utmost importance. Therefore, individuals must be the focus of attention in implementing a new program. Only when each (or almost each) individual in the school has absorbed the improved practice can we say that the school has changes. (p.6)

Hence, for the system to change, the individual within the system must first change.

In schools, teachers are the primary individuals who are required to change, thus are the determinants of whether change will be successful (Sarason, 1982; Fullan, 2001).

This is one of the most basic presumptions of school change (Schlechty, 1997). As Sarason (1982) argues, the principal is the "gatekeeper" to change, whereas the classroom teacher decides whether the change is successful past the gate. That is, while the principal plays the primary role determining

whether a change initiative will be introduced into a school, teachers are responsible for implementing the change, and therefore, determine how successful it will be.

However, spurring "change where it counts the most – in the daily interactions of teachers and students – is the hardest to achieve and the most important" (Tyack and Cuban, 1995, p. 10). Goodman (1995) argues that this is because second-order change associated with systemic reform requires individuals to change their practices and/or how they interact with others. In schools, this type of change involves altering the interactions, or the habits, roles, and beliefs of teachers. For many teachers, however, it is difficult to make these changes (Fullan, 2001). Three significant factors impact a teacher's willingness to participate in the change process: (1) tolerance of change (Fullan, 1993, 2001; Hall & Hord, 2001), (2) perceptions regarding the personal cost of change (Garmston & Wellman, 1999) and (2) patience for multiple change initiatives (Fullan, 2001).

The first factor that determines the success of change is a teacher's tolerance for change. Systemic change is a process that requires constant attention and a commitment to a search for solutions and answers. Teachers have to understand that change has a "dynamic complexity" full of "adaptive challenges" where each step cannot be scripted or predetermined and possible challenges encountered along the way will require

unknown solutions (Fullan, 1993; 2005). Being able to adapt to these unknown challenges and tolerate uncertainty is a determent for successful change (Cuban, 1998).

A second factor that determines the success of change in schools is a teacher's subjective understanding of the meaning of change (Fullan, 2001). As part of this, teachers ask themselves, "How much effort is this going to take? How will it benefit me?" This type of subjective reasoning is an assessment of the personal cost of change (Fullan, 2001). Garmston and Wellman (1999) cited three mitigating factors that influence a teacher's assessment of the personal cost of change, including (1) dissatisfaction with the status quo; (2) desirability of the proposed change; and (3) the practicality of the change.

According to Garmston and Wellman (1999), a teacher's level of dissatisfaction with his/her current situation must be coupled with the belief that is he/she changed, the situation will improve. Teachers ask themselves, "Is this new practice better than what I'm doing now?" In order to change, teachers, must perceive the new situation as one that is more beneficial than the present one, and that the new change can be accomplished and is practical.

Clarity and practicality is also an essential determinate for teachers (Fullan, 2001, Garmston & Wellman, 1999). For change to be clear and practical, teachers must know what the proposed change is, what it will entail, and if it is useful to them. This answers the questions, "What do I have to do? Can I use it?" Unclear change that is oversimplified or that does not make sense causes teachers to be fearful of change and frustrated with the process. All of these factors taken together must be greater than the "cost of the change" (Garmston & Wellman, 1999).

Finally, a teacher's willingness to participate in change is influenced by their patience for implementing numerous change initiatives in his/her school or district. External agents, such as district or state administrations, federal initiatives, and external organizations, introduce many school change initiatives, and over the years, schools have been inundated with change that is largely disconnected and short-lived (Fullan, 2001). As Hall and Hord (2001) state,

> The abundant possibilities and continuing cycles/waves of change in the types and levels of advocated changes have been confusing and frustrating for school practitioners. Committed to providing the best possible education to their students, they read and attend conferences and training institutes to learn about SBM [site-based management], TQM [total quality management], and a host of other new offerings. But they find it difficult to determine what to bring to the school that will fit its needs and that will be compatible with change already underway in addition those mandated by a higher authority. They also realize, since the historical record is so clear, that within a year or two, a new direction will be announced. (p.25)

As a result, these multiple changes/reforms create an atmosphere of skepticism about the earnestness of the new change initiative. Teachers find themselves asking, "How much effort will this new thing take and how long will it last?" These negative experiences with change can reinforce a teacher' subjective notions that change is not worthwhile (Stiegelbauer, 1994).

Systemic Change Approach to School-wide PBS

School-wide PBS is a systemic approach to change that applies problem-solving

strategies and effective practices to the broader contest of the school (e.g., Sashkin &

Egermeier, 1993) with the goal of making the overall environment more supportive of all

students (Safran & Oswald, 2003). Each step of implementation involves the entire

school and focuses on contextual deficiencies that fail to meet the needs of all students

(Nelson & Sugai, 1999) (See Figure 2-1).

More specifically, school-wide PBS address the disciplinary practices or "existing

disciplinary regularities" of the school by examining the school environment and

establishing school-wide practices aimed at preventing problem behaviors (Lewis &

Sugai, 1999). For example, schools set school-wide rules and routines to prevent problem

behaviors from occurring, and then establish rewards to promote pro-social behaviors

from students. School-wide PBS thus changes the context of how student behaviors are

addressed, as it requires the use of a more proactive approach to discipline with an

emphasis on prevention, rather than a traditional, reactive approach to discipline that

emphasized punishment (Netzel & Eber, 2003). As Carr et al. (2002) state, the focus of

school-wide PBS is "on fixing problem context, not problem behaviors" (p. 8)

The primary goal of school-wide PBS is to change the context of school discipline

and create a supportive "host environment" that will support and maintain effective

practices (Sugai & Horner, 1994, 1999; Zins & Ponti, 1990). Effective practices, or

"evidence-based practices" are "strategies, processes, and curricula for which information

exists to support adoption and sustained use" (Center on Positive Behavioral

Interventions and Supports, 2004, p. 26). Moreover, school-wide effective practices

should meet other criteria: (1) effectiveness, or "Will the procedures result in the desired outcomes?," (2) efficiency, or "How much effort will it take to implement the procedures?," and (3) relevance, or "Is the procedure practical to everyday use?" (Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, 2004). According to Sugai and Horner (2002a) school-wide practices are,

> Characterized by a careful consideration of instructional practices, structures, and processes for (a) maximizing academic outcomes; (b) selecting and teaching school-wide and classroom-wide expectations, rules and routines; and (c) practicing and encouraging the use of academic skills and behavioral expectations across multiple relevant settings and contexts. (p. 132)

In sum, school-wide PBS is more than an "add-on" program or procedures meant only to address the behavioral needs of a few students with the worst behavior problems. Instead, school-wide PBS establishes effective school-wide practices that are aimed at identifying existing school-wide disciplinary practices or regularities that are ineffective, and altering these practices to make them more proactive and supportive of pro-social behaviors.

Importance of Teachers in School-wide PBS

Changing the context of the school to be more proactive and supportive of effective practices is dependent on the participation of teachers in the school (Martella, Nelson, & Marchand-Martella, 1999) and their willingness to change (Hall & Hord, 2001). According to Nelson and Sugai (1999),

> Regardless of how well the school-wide PBS program has been designed, its effectiveness will be related directly to the accuracy and fluency with which the

people are able to implement the program. In other words, effective personnel will

ensure an effective school-wide PBS program. (p. 33)

Several researchers (Scott, 2001; Netzel & Eber, 2003; Scott & Eber, 2003; Sugai & Horner, 2002a; Warren et al., 2003) have identified possible issues that could negatively impact a teacher's willingness to implement and participate in school-wide PBS.

First, participating in school-wide PBS requires agreement from teachers to commit to a form of second-order change (Goodman, 1995), as it requires teachers to examine and possibly change their beliefs, philosophies, and values about discipline in schools (Carr et al., 2002; Scott & Eber, 2003; Sugai & Horner, 2002a). This change would require teachers to adopt and implement disciplinary strategies that might not be currently in their repertoire, and maybe required to change from a traditional, reactive approach to discipline to a proactive approach (Scott, 2001; Scott & Caron, in press; Netzel & Eber, 2003; Scott & Eber, 2003; Sugai & Horner, 2002a; Warren et al., 2003). These types of change could be difficult for many teachers (Pajares, 1992).

Second, teachers can be negatively influenced by the time it takes to implement school-wide PBS. Creating change that is sustainable does not happen overnight, or realistically, within one school year (Fullan, 2001). Implementing school-wide PBS can also be lengthy and arduous. According to Taylor-Green and Kartub (2000), there must be buy-in from teachers, training to implement the program, and an on-going effort to collect data to ensure the success of school-wide PBS. In addition, teachers must commit to teaching students school-wide procedures, enforcing them consistently, and implementing new discipline procedures. Furthermore, if an intervention is not effective,

it must be reevaluated and altered to promote more pro-social behaviors. Researchers suggest that finding time to attend trainings, gather/analyze data, and coordinate services could be difficult for teachers (Sugai & Horner, 2001; Warren et al., 2003) and result in poor or limited implementation of the components of PBS.

<center>Review of the Research Regarding School-wide PBS</center>

Most of the research examining the effects of school-wide PBS in schools has focused on its impact in reducing overall problem behaviors as measured by office discipline referrals (ODRs) and/or suspension rates before and after implementation (Colvin & Kameenui, 1993; Irvin, Tobin, Sprague, Sugai, & Vincent, 2004; Kartub, Taylor-Greene, March, & Horner, 2000; Lewis, Colvin, Sugai, 2000; Lewis, Powers, Kelk, & Newcomer, 2002; Lewis, Sugai, & Colvin, 1988; McCurdy, Mannella, & Eldridge, 2003; Metzler et al., 2001; Nakasato, 2000; Netzel & Eber, 2003; Scott, 2001; Scott & Barrett, 2004; Sprague et al., 2001; Sugai, Sprague, Horner, & Walker, 2000; Taylor-Greene & Kartub, 2000; Taylor-Greene et al., 1997; Turnbull et al., 2002). For example, Taylor-Green and Kartub (2000) described the impact of school-wide PBS in a middle school of approximately 500 students in Oregon. They reported that a result of implementing school-wide PBS, there was a 47 percent decrease in ODRs after the first year and a 68 percent decrease over a five-year period.

Sprague et al. (2001) compared the impact of school-wide PBS in nine elementary (six treatment and three comparison groups) and six middle schools (three treatment and three comparison groups). They found that in the elementary schools, ODRS decreased an average of 51 percent in the treatment groups, as compare to 7.5 percent in the comparison groups. In the middle schools, ODRs decreased in treatment schools by an

average of 36 percent, as compare to an increase in comparsion schools of 82 percent. However, researchers warned that the results of the study should be interpreted with caution because "true" baseline data was not available.

Other researchers have investigated different ways school-wide PBS has impacted different aspect of the school environment. For example, Scott (2001) investigated the impact of school-wide PBS on hours spent in the office as a result of an ODR, and total days students were suspended. Scott (2001) found that students spent 61 percent less time in the office as a result of the decrease in ODRs and absences from school due to suspensions reduced by 65 percent decrease. Thus, students were in class more often and exposed to increased instructional time.

Similarly, Scott and Barrett (2004) used average time spent on ODRs to examine how school-wide PBS impacted instructional time lost as a result of ODRs, and administrative time spent on ODRs. They found that as referrals decreased, administrative spent less time addressing ODRs and were free to engage in other administrative tasks. In addition, students spent more time in the classroom, resulting in more instructional time.

Researchers who have conducted reviews regarding the impact of school-wide PBS on ODRs have concluded that PBS "offer[s] promising results" (Safran & Oswald, 2003, p. 365) or it is a "very promising approach for creating safer schools with a positive social climate" (Kern & Manz, 2004, p. 56). Others have referred to school-wide PBS as a "research-proven strategy" for reducing overall behavior problems in schools (Lewis et al., 2004, p. 253). These conclusions have provided administrators and teachers with practical justification for the use of school-wide PBS as whole school intervention.

However, Kern and Manz (2004) state, "in spite of convincing objective support, programs are destined for failure – particularly by way of rejection – if one or another dimension of the program is not acceptable to consumers. Thus arose the notion of the social validity" (p. 54).

Researchers have begun to examine aspects of the social validity of school-wide PBS (See Table 2-1). More specifically, there have been several studies that have used surveys to examine the perceptions of teachers regarding school-wide PBS. For example, McCurdy et al. (2003) conducted "brief satisfaction questionnaires designed to assess the degree of staff interest in the school-wide PBS model" (p. 162) and found that school staff members were satisfied with the impact it had on students, as well as the program overall. Nelson et al. (2002) used three questions pertaining to school-wide PBS to survey teachers. They concluded that teachers perceived the techniques and strategies as easy to use and, overall, were supportive of the program. Finally, Nelson (1996) uses four questions to survey teachers and reported that teachers believed that school-wide PBS would be helpful in other schools.

Metzler et al. (2001) use a more extensive survey to examine teachers' perceptions of school-wide PBS. They examined variables such as school safety, student behavior, positive reinforcement, and teaching. They found that the majority of teachers in their study perceived that (1) their school was a safer place after implementing school-wide PBS; (2) student behavior had improved; (3) recognizing students for expected behaviors had a positive impact on their behavior; and (4) that 'teachable moments," or using instances of inappropriate student behavior as spontaneous lessons, was a useful

problem-solving tool to correct student behaviors. Overall, they reported that teachers

perceived a positive change in the school environment.

Table 2.1: *Survey Questions for School-Wide PBS Studies*

Study	Survey Questions
Nelson (1996)	The project has enhanced my ability to teach students who exhibit disruptive behavior
	I found the techniques and strategies easy to use
	The project addressed the educational needs of all students, including those who exhibit disruptive behavior
	I would recommend the project to others
Taylor-Greene et al. (1999)	Focused on most important skills
	Well organized
	Had a positive effect on students
	Made it easier to orient students
	Should be done next year
Metzler et al. (2001)	The school is a safer, more orderly place to teach and learn than last year
	Student behavior, on the whole, has improved this year
	The following strategies have had a positive impact on student behaviors: Students are recognized for positive behavior
	Teachers and staff have led more activities / lessons that teach pro-social behavior
	Disciplinary consequences are more appropriate and consistently applied
	Spent time on EBS lesson or activity
	Intervened in conflict by promoting use of skills taught in lessons
	Commented on/reinforced student use of skills taught in lessons
	Integrated lesson principals into other course content
	Used pre-corrective reinforcement (reminders) to encourage desired behaviors
	Led class in "teachable moment" by applying targeted skills to help solve a problem
	Gave out Tiger or Good News Referrals to students for using targeted skills
Neslon et al. (2002)	Techniques and strategies were easy to use
	The project addressed the educational needs of all students
	They would recommend the project to other teachers
	I am satisfied with the program overall
McCurdy et al. (2003)	The program was well organized
	The program has had a positive effect on the students
	The program has had a positive effect on the staff
	The parents of my students are aware of the program
	This program should continue next year

Taking a different approach, Taylor-Greene et al. (1997) surveyed teachers regarding their satisfaction with the training they received to implement school-wide PBS, and if they perceived that participating in the training had a positive impact on students. The questionnaire consisted of five items and teachers responded using a measure ranging from agree (1) to disagree (6). Taylor-Greene et al. found that the majority of the staff was very satisfied with the organization and content of the training and felt that the school-wide PBS had a positive impact on students and made school-wide discipline easier.

This type of survey research has led some to conclude that school-wide PBS is a "practical strategy that results in observable student improvement" (Kern & Manz, 2004, p. 55) and is supported by the majority of teachers (McCurdy et al., 2003; Metzler et al, 2001; Nelson, 1996; Nelson et al., 2002; Taylor-Green et al., 1997). However, all of the studies that examined teacher perceptions of school-wide PBS used brief Likert-scale type surveys to measure "general" perceptions that pertained questions regarding outcomes (See Table 2-1) (Kern & Manz, 2004).

While this research has begun to examine different outcomes of school-wide PBS (e.g., impact on ODRs, time spent on ODRs, teacher perceptions of school-wide PBS) (e.g., McCurdy et al., 2003; Metzler et al., 2001; Taylor-Green et al., 1997; Scott & Barrett, 2004), some researchers argue that further, in-depth analyses of this school-wide intervention is needed to fully understand its impact on the environment and its participants (Carr et al., 2002; Kern & Manz, 2004; Safran & Oswald, 2003). As Carr et al. (2002) suggest,

Since PBS is community bases, the relevant stakeholder constituency is diverse

and includes not only practitioners but also administrators, policymakers,

families, friends, individuals with disabilities, and teachers. Therefore, focus

groups and other sources of multi-perspective, narrative-discursive data needed to

assess and identify the full array of stakeholder priorities, the structural and

organizational barriers to success, feasibility of proposed solutions, and effective

packaging of change strategies. This systemic approach to assessment moves the

field beyond a sole consideration of discrete behaviors to a consideration of what

interested parties have to say about their vision and values, incentives for problem

solving, resource allocation, and infrastructure of available supports. (p.12)

According to Kern & Manz (2004) "neglecting the opinions of those who either directly

or indirectly experience the consequences of a given intervention program," Such as

school-wide PBS, will result in "deleterious outcomes" (p. 54). Therefore, examining the

social validity or consumers' opinions regarding this intervention is crucial (Baer &

Schwartz, 1991).

To date, there have been three studies that have used qualitative methods to

examine in-depth teachers' perception of school-wide PBS. As a part of their comparison

study of nine elementary and six middle schools, Sprague et al. (2001) used focus group

interviews with teachers, administrators, and parents to examine the impact of school-

wide PBS on the school environment. They centered the discussion on two basic

questions:

1. What are the perceptions of school personnel regarding the process and content of school discipline, social skills teaching, reinforcement systems, and obstacles to improvement?

2. Do intervention schools report differences in consistency of intervention and satisfaction with the operation of their school, compared to the non-intervention schools? (p. 506)

Sprague and colleagues found that in comparison non-PBS schools, teachers "reported a lack of comprehensive approaches to school-wide discipline" (p. 507), and, teachers tended to use more reactionary discipline procedures. Moreover, teachers in non-PBS comparison schools reported a need for more training support with behavior management. In contrast, in the treatment schools, teachers reported that their school used consistent school-wide discipline procedures to address problem behaviors. Although, teachers in treatment schools reported that maintaining school-wide PBS was more work, they indicted a positive impact on their school.

In a pilot study, Landers and Scott (2006) interviewed teachers in two elementary schools in Florida regarding their perceptions of how school-wide PBS impacted their overall school environment. They found that teachers perceived that school-wide PBS created a more consistent school environment where instances of behavior problems were easier to address. In addition, they found that teachers perceived that the school-wide PBS process facilitated more communication among staff members regarding problem behaviors.

Finally, Houchins et al. (2005) examined the impacts of school-wide PBS in a more restrictive setting. They conducted focus groups with teachers, clinical staff, and

administrators in a juvenile training school for girls in Iowa. Although some contextual variables differed from public schools, they found that some teachers had difficulty making a philosophical shift regarding discipline to be more proactive. They also found that some teachers had difficulty findings time to attend trainings.

Summary

As research begins to address the different impacts that school-wide PBS has on the overall school environment, studies that examine, in-depth the perceptions of teachers will be of particular importance (Carr et al., 2002). More specifically, studies examining the impact of school-wide PBS have provided evidence for its use as a strategy to reduce overall office discipline referrals (ODRs) (Lewis et al., 2004), and studies examining teachers perceptions using survey methods have shown that this strategy is generally acceptable to teachers (McCurdy et al., 2003; Metzler et al., 2001; Nelson,. 1996; Nelson et al., 2002; Taylor-Greene et al., 1997). However, there still exists the need to understand how teachers, the primary implementers of change in a school, use this strategy in their schools and classrooms and how it fits into their everyday practice.

The purpose of this study was to examine the implementation of school-wide positive discipline intervention and its impact on teacher beliefs, values and practices that resulted in a changed school climate at a Middle School in Northeast Georgia.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

School leaders are faced with the challenge of improving student behavior and school discipline. Over the past few years, these concerns have grown and recently Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) has been developed as a broad range of systemic and individualized strategies for achieving important social and learning results while preventing problem behavior. The need to examine teacher attitude, beliefs, values and implementation barriers of similar programs in local schools is critical.

As schools implement systemic change such as a school-wide PBS, having the support of teachers is essential (Fullan, 2001; Sarason, 1982). If teachers are going to support and implement change in schools, they must perceive the change as relevant or useful to their everyday practice (Kanaya, Light, & Culp, 2005; lane, Mahdavi, & Borthwick-Duffy, 2003). The less useful a teacher regards a practice, the less likely he/she will be to use to practice. Teachers also must perceive that the impacts of the proposed change are worth the effort and personal costs of making the change (Abrami, Poulsen, & Chambers, 2004; Fullan, 2001; Garmston & Wellman, 1999). The more benefits teachers perceive in making the change, the more likely they will be to implement and support the proposed change. When perceptions of teachers and/or potential issues concerning systemic change in schools are ignored, it is unlikely there will be long-term positive impacts on the school environment (Fullan, 1993, 2001). As Lawrence (2005) argues, "major changes are seldom effective unless all parties involved in teaching and learning … support the proposed change" (p. 351).

Schools cannot afford to keep adding new initiatives whenever a new problem occurs, or implementing existing efforts with low fidelity/accuracy. This study examined how the implementation of the positive discipline intervention impacted teacher beliefs, practices, and values about change. Each of these areas were investigated at a middle school in Northeast Georgia where the program was implemented. This chapter presents research questions, research design, procedures for data collection, and data analysis.

Research Questions

Overarching Question

To what extent does the process of school-wide program change impact School Climate?

Sub Questions

1. To what extent have teachers changed their beliefs, practices or values about discipline as a result of a change in procedures with more positive focus?

2. What classroom practices changed as a result of the change toward more positive discipline intervention?

Research Design

A positive school atmosphere fosters academic achievement as well as favorable student and staff attitudes. Where a climate of professionalism prevails, dedication to high ideals and quality instruction occur. A productive school climate provides the basis for parents, teachers, students, and administrators to work cooperatively and effectively.

The research design for this study is quantitative in nature. An ex post descriptive research design was used in this study in an effort to document the changes that occurred in teacher belief, practices, and values toward discipline at a middle school in Northeast

Georgia. "Quantitative data are said to be objective, which indicates that the behaviors are classified or quantified" (Gliner, Morgan, 2000).

<center>Instrumentation</center>

A survey was developed by the researcher in order to retrieve the data (see Appendix A). Surveys are tailored to the specific needs and situation of a school and allows for continuous adaptation. Participants were asked to rate their beliefs, values, and practices on a school climate survey using a 5-point Likert-type scale that ranges from 1 for not true to 5 for very true (24 items). Additionally, participants provided demographic information such as amount of years at school, gender, teaching areas, and total years of experience.

The School Climate Survey was designed by the researcher and validated by the Positive Intervention and Support Team (PIST). PIST make up includes (1) assistant principal/the researcher (1) counselor, (4) sixth grade teachers, (4) seventh grade teachers, (4) eight grade teachers, (1) special education coordinator and the in-school suspension teacher. After group input and a general review of all survey items, a decision was made by consensus on the final draft for the survey. Finally, the School Climate Survey showed high internal consistency reliability (coefficient alpha = .84).

The statistical analysis of the school climate survey responses reflected beliefs, values, and teaching practices. The investigation of this study was approved by the principal with the understanding that pseudonyms would be used in reference to any names of individuals at the school to include the name of the school.

Data Collection

After IRB approval (see Appendix B), data from the school climate survey was collected as part of the implementation process of school-wide positive discipline intervention. An information letter was developed for the faculty to inform them about the study and the extent of their participation. The survey was administered by the researcher during a regular weekly scheduled faculty meeting.

Additionally, results from the school-wide discipline summary report (see Table 1.1) of Hopeful Middle School were provided and indicated that there were 697 discipline referrals for negative student behavior in the 2004-2005 school year. For the 2005-2006 school year there were 763 referrals, and 653 referrals for the 2006-2007 school year. As of November, 2007 there are 252 referrals reported for the 2007-2008 school year. The largest decrease in discipline referrals occurred between the 2005-2006 and the 2006-2007 school year, (n=110). Finally, as of November 7, 2007 only 252 referrals have been reported which is nearly half of the school year.

Participant Selection

Participants in this study include the total faculty at Hopeful Middle School. The survey was completed by 42 teachers of which 30 were females and 12 were males. The years of teaching experience ranged from zero to 28 years.

Data Analysis

The faculty survey consisted of 24 items that measures changes in teacher beliefs, practices, and values about discipline. The items on the survey were rated by faculty members using a 5-point Likert-type scale that ranged from 1 for not true to 5 for very true.

A section on demographic information also was included on the faculty survey. Data was analyzed using frequency distribution and measures of central tendency and dispersion to include the Mean, and Standard Deviation.

Limitations

This study was limited to one middle school in Northeast Georgia that participated in positive discipline intervention during the 2006-2007 school years. The implementation of the program was in its early stage of the change process. Therefore, findings may not be generalizable and may not indicate long term change.

Role of the Researcher

The researcher is currently employed as an assistant principal at the target school, a middle school in Northeast Georgia. The researchers' role in the described study included: obtaining permission from the Principal to conduct the study at the target school, soliciting the participants' (teachers) agreement to complete the surveys, scheduling and assigning the location for completing surveys, administering surveys, and analyzing and presenting the data in Chapter 4 of the dissertation.

Table 3.1: *Item Analysis Matrix*

Research Question	Category	Instrument Item That Addresses Research	Literature Review
To what extent have teachers changed their beliefs, practices or values about discipline as a result of a change in procedures with more positive focus?	Beliefs	1-6, 15-17	Metzler (2001); Taylor-Greene (1999);
To what extent have teachers changed their beliefs, practices or values about discipline as a result of a change in procedures with more positive focus?	Values	7-9, 11-12, 19, 24	Honer (2002); Metzler, 2001); Nelson (2002); McCurdy (2003);
What classroom practices changed as a result of the change toward more positive discipline intervention?	Practices	10, 13-14, 18, 22-23	Taylor-Greene (1999); Metlzer (2001); McCurdy (2003)

CHAPTER 4

REPORT OF DATA AND DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

The intent of this study was to examine possible changes in teacher beliefs, values and practices toward the impact of a Positive Behavior Intervention program at a middle school in Northeast Georgia. Participants in this study include the total faculty at Hopeful Middle School. The survey was completed by 42 teachers of which 30 were females and 12 were males. The years of teaching experience ranged from zero to 28 years.

Participants rated their beliefs, values, and practices on a school climate survey using a 5-point Likert-type scale that ranges from 1 for not true to 5 for very true (24 items). Additionally, participants provided demographic information such as amount of years at school, gender, teaching areas, and total years of experience.

Research Questions

The intent of this study was to examine possible changes in teacher beliefs, values and practices toward the impact of a Positive Behavior Intervention program at a middle school in Northeast Georgia.

1. To what extent have teachers changed their beliefs, practices or values about discipline as a result of a change in procedures with more positive focus?

2. What classroom practices changed as a result of the change toward more positive discipline intervention?

Data Analysis

Descriptive Statistics

The results of the data analyses that were used to describe the participants and address the research questions are presented in this chapter. The research questions were answered using descriptive statistics. As part of the Positive Behavior Intervention and Support program, the researcher distributed a School Climate Survey to the teaching staff (n=42) at the school. The distribution and return of the surveys of the respondents are presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: *Distribution and Return of Surveys by Respondents*

Respondent Group	Distributed	Returned	Response Rate
Teachers	42	42	100%

One hundred percent of the staff (n=42) who received surveys, completed and returned them for a response rate of 100%. Each of the respondents completed a short demographics section located at the bottom of each survey in order to provide a sample description. The responses to the item regarding the staff members' primary role in the school were summarized using frequency distributions, with presentation in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: *Frequency Distribution Primary Role/Subject Taught by Teacher*

Role/subjects taught by teacher	Number	Percent
Language Arts	9	21.4
Science	9	21.4
Math	9	21.4
Social Studies	9	21.4
Connection (ex: P.E., Art, Band, Etc)	6	14.4
Total	42	100

The results indicated that there were nine Language Arts teachers (n=9, 21.4%), nine Science teachers (n=9, 21.4%), nine Math teachers (n=9, 21.4%), and nine Social Studies Teachers (n=9, 21.4%). The smallest group of staff (n=6, 14.4%) indicated that they were connection teachers (P.E, Art, Band, Etc.).

The gender of the teacher was obtained on the survey. The responses to this question were summarized using frequency distributions. Table 4.3 present results of these analyses.

Table 4.3: *Frequency Distribution - Gender of Teacher*

Gender of Staff	Number	Percent
Female	30	71.4
Male	12	28.6
Total	42	100

The majority of the staff (n=30, 71.4%) reported their gender as female. Twelve (28.6%) of the staff were males. The staff members were asked to indicate their teaching experience in term of years. Table 4.4 presents results of this analysis.

Table 4.4: *Descriptive Statistics - Professional Experiences*

Professional Experience (years)	Number	Percent
0-5	11	26.2
6-10	17	40.4
11-15	6	14.4
16 or more	8	19
Total	42	100

The results indicated that 11 teachers (26.2%) had 0-5 years of teaching experience, seventeen (40.4%) 6-10 years, Six (14.4%) 11-15 years and eight (19%) 16 or more years of teaching experience.

Sub-Question 1: How have teachers changed their beliefs, practices or values about discipline as a result of a change in procedures with more positive focus?

Table 4.5: *Descriptive Statistics- Beliefs*

	Mean	Standard Deviation
q1. The school is safer, more orderly place to teach and learn than last year.	2.33	1.108
q2. I have noticed more students walking on the right side of the hallways.	3.30	1.159
q3. More students are walking instead of running in the hallways.	3.28	1.012
q4. The fire drills are much more orderly as compared to last school year.	3.10	1.209
q5. I have noticed less broken glass on school grounds.	4.00	1.269
q6. No food fights have occurred in the cafeteria this year.	4.28	.877
q15. More students are staying on task and completing assignments.	3.50	1.240
q16. The number on students attending afterschool tutoring has increased	2.73	1.526
Q17.More students are offering their assistance when extra help is needed.	3.08	.969

Questions 1 thru 6 and 15 thru 17 rated the teacher's beliefs regarding the impact of the positive discipline intervention program at Hopeful Middle School. Results indicated a rating of mostly true (M=4.28, SD=.877) in response to rather or not teachers believe that food fights in the cafeteria (question 6) have been reduced. Question 5 received a rating of mostly true (M=4.00, SD=1.27) in response to the visibility of less broken glass on school grounds. Question 15 received a rating of somewhat true (M= 3.50, SD=1.16) in response to observing more students staying on task and completing assignments. Question 2 received a rating of somewhat true (M=3.30, SD=1.16) in response to a noticeable increase in the amount of students walking on the right side of the hallways. Question 3 received a rating of somewhat true (M=3.28, SD=1.01) in response to a noticeable reduction of students running in the hallways. Question 4 received a rating of somewhat true (M=3.10, SD=1.21) in response to improvement of student behavior during fire drills. Question 17 received a rating of somewhat true (M=3.08, SD=.97) in response to observing an increase in students displaying good character by offering assistance to others when help is needed. Question 16 received a rating of slightly true (M=2.73, SD=1.52) in response to rather there has been an increase in the population of students attending after school tutoring. Question 1 (lowest rated item in the belief category) received a rating of slightly true (M=2.33, SD=1.10) in response to rather the teachers believe that the school was a safer, more orderly place to teach and learn than last year.

Table 4.6: *Descriptive Statistics - Values*

	Mean	Standard Deviation
q7. Students should be well informed by their teacher regarding expected behavior.	4.90	.300
q8. Students need praise and encouragement on a regular basis.	4.71	.559
q9. Positive learning environments attract student interest.	4.59	.741
q11. Students need nurturing in order to grow and develop.	4.59	.631
q12. Teacher mentors can make a positive impact on student success	4.46	.674
q19. My sensitivity for the individual needs of my students have increased.	4.00	.733
q24. More students seem to trust and confide in me.	3.71	.995

Questions 7 thru 9, 11 thru 12, 19 and 24 rated the teacher's values as it relates to the positive intervention program. Results indicated a rating of mostly true (M=4.90, SD=.300) in response to the importance of each teacher stressing to their students the expected behavior (question 7). Question 8 received a rating on mostly true (M=4.71, SD=.559) in response to the necessity of teachers to give praise and encouragement to the students on a regular basis. Question 9 received a rating of mostly true (M=4.59, SD=.741) in response to importance of maintaining a positive learning environment in order to attract student interest. Question 11 received a rating of mostly true (M=4.59, SD=.631) in response to the need of nurturing for the growth and development of the students. Question 12 received a rating of mostly true (M=4.46, SD=.674) in response to the impact of mentoring on student success. Question 19 received a rating of mostly true (M=4.00, SD= .733) in response to the need for sensitivity in dealing with the individual needs of the students. Question 24 received a rating of somewhat true (M=3.71,

SD=.995) in response to rather or not there was an increase in the amount of student trust

and confidence in individual teachers.

Sub-Question 2: What classroom practices changed as a result of the change toward

more positive discipline intervention?

Table 4.7: *Descriptive Statistics - Practices*

	Mean	Standard Deviation
q10. I spend less time correcting negative students behavior and more time encouraging positive student behavior.	3.02	1.313
q13. I am promoting more student focus lessons.	4.32	.789
q14. I am finding more positive ways to correct negative behavior.	3.83	.863
q18. The number of teacher mentors has increased.	3.00	1.073
q22. I am more proactive in managing student behavior.	4.07	.838
q23. I have created more positive relationships among students.	3.98	.880

Questions 10, 13, 14, 18, 22, and 23 rated the degree of change in teacher

practices toward more positive discipline intervention. Question 13 received a rating of

mostly true (M=4.32, SD= .789) in response to promoting more student focus lessons.

Question 22 received a rating of mostly true (M=4.07 SD= .838) in response to providing

proactive classroom management. Question 23 received a rating of somewhat true

(M=3.98 SD= .880) in response to creating more positive relationship among students.

Question 14 received a rating of somewhat true (M=3.83 SD= .863) in response to finding more positive ways to correct negative behavior.

Question 10 received a rating of somewhat true (M=3.02 SD= 1.31) in response to spending less time correcting negative student behavior and more time encouraging positive student behavior. Question 18 received a rating of somewhat true (M=3.00 SD= 1.07) in response to an increase in the number of teacher mentors.

<div align="center">Summary</div>

The data collected and analyzed in this study determined how a positive discipline intervention program impacted school-wide change and school climate. More specifically, this study determined how teachers changed their beliefs, values or practices about discipline as a result of a change in procedures with more positive focus. Demographics were used to describe the participants. Descriptive statistics identified the frequencies and percentages for the survey return rate, teacher roles/subjects, gender, and professional experiences.

Teacher beliefs, values and practices were rated using the Mean and Standard Deviation for each response totally 24 questions. Overall, teacher values received the highest rating with a Mean of 4.40. Teacher practices received the next highest rating with a Mean of 3.70. Teacher beliefs receive the lowest rating with a Mean of 3.29.

In conclusion, the major finding revealed a positive change in teacher beliefs, values, and practices as a result of the positive intervention program which means that positive behavior intervention tend to have a positive impact on teacher beliefs, values and practices.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The intent of this study was to examine possible changes in teacher beliefs, values and practices toward the impact of a Positive Behavior Intervention program at a middle school in Northeast Georgia. To implement school-wide a Positive Behavior System, teachers must shift from a traditional reactionary method of discipline that is usually based on punishment and focus on a proactive approach that is based on prevention (Scott & Caron, in press; Scott & Eber, 2003; Sugai & Horner, 2002a). When teachers are expected to change personal philosophies or practices, levels of uncertainty and fear about change are heightened and resistance is inevitable (Fullan, 2001). This fundamental shift in practice can be difficult to achieve.

However, when implementing systemic change such as a school-wide PBS, having the support of teachers is essential (Fullan, 2001; Sarason, 1982). If teachers are going to support and implement change in schools, they must perceive the change as relevant or useful to their everyday practice (Kanaya, Light, & Culp, 2005; lane, Mahdavi, & Borthwick-Duffy, 2003). The less useful a teacher regards a practice, the less likely he/she will be to use to practice. Teachers also must perceive that the impacts of the proposed change are worth the effort and personal costs of making the change (Abrami, Poulsen, & Chambers, 2004; Fullan, 2001; Garmston & Wellman, 1999). The more benefits teachers perceive in making the change, the more likely they will be to implement and support the proposed change. When perceptions of teachers and/or potential issues concerning systemic change in schools are ignored, it is unlikely there

will be long-term positive impacts on the school environment (Fullan, 1993, 2001). As Lawrence (2005) argues, "major changes are seldom effective unless all parties involved in teaching and learning … support the proposed change" (p. 351).

Recently, researchers have begun to identify possible barriers that teachers perceive as personal costs when implementing school-wide PBS. For instance, PBS requires certain resources and supports to be successful, including adequate time for staff development opportunities (Houchins, Jolivette, Wessendorf, McGlynn, & Nelson, 2005; Warren, et al., 2003). Researchers have suggested that some teachers regard school-wide PBS as adding responsibilities that will require more of their time (Warren et al., 2003), do not give priority to attending training, gathering/analyzing data, and coordinating services (Huchins et al., 2005; Sugai & Horner, 2001; Warren et al., 2003). Other researchers have found that some teachers have difficulty changing their discipline philosophies and methods (Houchins et al., 2005; Metzel & Eber, 2003; Warren et al., 2003). This creates problems for groups of teachers as they attempt to reach agreement on how to reward positive behaviors consistently, determine how to address inappropriate behaviors (Scott, 2001), and come to a consensus regarding appropriate rules, procedures, and routines for the different settings of the school (Lewis et al., 2002). This study examined how the implementation of school-wide positive discipline intervention impacted teacher beliefs, values and practices.

<center>Analysis of Research Findings</center>

The major findings of this study may be summarized as follows:

1. Teachers believed that it was *mostly true* that there were less food fights in the cafeteria and less broken glass found on school grounds. In addition, they

believed that it was *somewhat true* that more students were walking on the right side of the hallway, more orderly during fire drills, staying on task, finishing classroom assignments, and more courteous toward each other. However, teachers believe that it was only *slightly true* that more students were attending after school tutoring and the school was a safer, more orderly place to teach and learn. Although teachers acknowledged an improvement in student positive behavior, they felt that there was a moderate need for improvement in school safety.

2. According to results, teachers indicated that it was *mostly true* for students to have a clear understanding of the behavior expectations, receive praise, encouragement and nurturing on a regular basis for adequate growth and development. In addition, teachers should be positive role models, always showing sensitivity for the individual needs of the students. However, teachers indicated that it was *somewhat true* that there was an increase in trust and confidence between teachers and students. Although teachers reported an overall positive change in values, there is a prevailing need for the development of trust and confidence in students toward teachers.

3. Results related to classroom practices indicated that it was *mostly true* that teachers were promoting more student focus lessons and proactive in managing student behavior. However, results indicated *somewhat true* for spending less teaching time correcting negative student behavior and more time encouraging positive student behavior. Results also indicated *somewhat* true for an increase in teacher mentors and creating more positive student-teacher relationships.

Discussion of Research Findings

The results indicated in major finding (1) is consistent with the literature in that teachers showed a positive change in beliefs, values, and disciplinary practices as a result of participating in the positive discipline intervention program.

According to Carr et al. (2002), PBS is a form of value-based systemic change. That is, teachers who participate in school-wide PBS are required to reexamine and possibly change their beliefs, philosophies, and values about disciplinary practices (Netzel & Eber, 2003). For example, to implement school-wide PBS, teachers must shift from a traditional reactionary method of discipline that is usually based on punishment and focus on a proactive approach that is based on prevention (scott & Caron, in press; Scott & Eber, 2003; Sugai & Horner, 2002a). When teachers are expected to change personal philosophies or practices, levels of uncertainty and fear about change are heightened and resistance is inevitable (Fullan, 2001). This fundamental shift in practice can be difficult to achieve.

However, when implementing systemic change such as a school-wide PBS, having the support of teachers is essential (Fullan, 2001; Sarason, 1982). If teachers are going to support and implement change in schools, they must perceive the change as relevant or useful to their everyday practice (Kanaya, Light, & Culp, 2005; lane, Mahdavi, & Borthwick-Duffy, 2003). The less useful a teacher regards a practice, the less likely he/she will be to use to practice. Teachers also must perceive that the impacts of the proposed change are worth the effort and personal costs of making the change (Abrami, Poulsen, & Chambers, 2004; Fullan, 2001; Garmston & Wellman, 1999). The more benefits teachers perceive in making the change, the more likely they will be to

implement and support the proposed change. When perceptions of teachers and/or

potential issues concerning systemic change in schools are ignored, it is unlikely there

will be long-term positive impacts on the school environment (Fullan, 1993, 2001). As

Lawrence (2005) argues, "major changes are seldom effective unless all parties involved

in teaching and learning … support the proposed change" (p. 351).

The results indicated in major finding (2) is consistent with the literature in that

teachers indicated a strong support for students to have a clear understanding of the

behavior expectations, receive praise, encouragement and nurturing on a regular basis for

adequate growth and development.

The implementation step of school-wide PBS involves putting into action the

school-wide components that teachers have developed and agreed upon during the

planning stage (Taylor-Greene et al., 1997). This process occurs in two stages: (1) using

effective instructional strategies to teach students school-wide components, and (2) using

effective practices to sustain those components.

In the first stage of implementation, students are taught school-wide rules (e.g.,

"Respect" rules) (e.g., Metzler et al., 2001) and routines (e.g., walking on one side of the

hallway) (e.g., Netzel & Eber, 2003; Taylor-Greene et al., 1997). Behavioral

expectations, much like academic skills, must be taught to students (Horner & Sugai,

1999; Lewis and Sugai, 1999). It is not sufficient to post school-wide rules and routines

and expect all students to understand and follow them. Instead, effectively teaching

students school-wide procedures involves the use of effective instruction, or the process

of (1) telling students what is expected of them, (2) using multiple examples to show

what those procedures involves the use of effective instruction, or the process should look

like, (3) providing opportunities to practices those procedures, and (4) providing immediate corrective feedback. According to Cushing, Horner, and Flannery (1999), teaching students appropriate or expected behaviors contributes to a culture of social competence, and as result, "students who are more socially component are less likely to engage in disruptive behaviors" (Nelson et al., 2002, p. 147).

In the second stage of implementation, after students have been taught school-wide expectations, teachers establish procedures for increasing desirable behaviors and decreasing undesirable behaviors (Lewis & Sugai, 1999). Increasing desired behaviors involves providing students with incentives to engage in pro-social behaviors. These incentives can be non-tangle (e.g., praise, non-verbal prompts) or tangible (e.g., tickets, tokens) (e.g., Metzler et al., 2001). Regardless of which incentive or combination of incentives is used, the purpose of these incentives is to provide social acknowledgement to students who are engaging in the desirable behaviors. This explicit acknowledgement informs students that they are acting in concordance with school-wide expectations and encourages them to continue engaging in those behaviors (Netzel & Eber, 2003; Taylor-Greene et al., 1997).

The results indicated in major finding (3) are consistent with the literature regarding classroom practices in that teachers were promoting more student focus lessons and proactive classroom management.

More specifically, school-wide PBS address the disciplinary practices or "existing disciplinary regularities" of the school by examining the school environment and establishing school-wide practices aimed at preventing problem behaviors (Lewis & Sugai, 1999). For example, schools set school-wide rules and routines to prevent problem

behaviors from occurring, and then establish rewards to promote pro-social behaviors from students. School-wide PBS thus changes the context of how student behaviors are addressed, as it requires the use of a more proactive approach to discipline with an emphasis on prevention, rather than a traditional, reactive approach to discipline that emphasized punishment (Netzel & Eber, 2003). As Carr et al. (2002) state, the focus of school-wide PBS is "on fixing problem context, not problem behaviors" (p. 8).

Conclusions

The intent of this study was to examine possible changes in teacher beliefs, practices and values toward a positive discipline intervention program at a middle school in Northeast Georgia. Major conclusions from the study included (1) although teachers acknowledged a positive improvement in student behavior, they felt that there was a moderate need for improvement in school safety, (2) even though teachers reported an overall positive change in values, a prevailing need still exist for the development of trust and confidence in students toward teachers. (3) Teacher promotion of student focus lessons and proactive classroom management increased however there is a need for an increase in teacher mentors as well as positive student/teacher relationships.

Implications

Several Implications can be drawn from this study. The implications should be able to help provide teachers a better understanding of how a positive behavior intervention program impacted school-wide change and school climate. Results indicated that teachers acknowledged a positive improvement in positive student behavior yet, felt a moderate need for improvement in school safety. This may be due to their increased level of expectation for positive student behavior within the learning environment.

The results of this study imply that positive behavior interventions produce a positive effect on teacher's beliefs, values and practices which contribute to positive student behavior. Positive student/teacher engagement increases student achievement and productivity. There is a significant need for more teacher mentors as it contributes to student success. Positive student/teacher relationships emerge through positive behavior intervention. Student academic interest level increases with the application of more student focus lessons. The beliefs section scored the lowest of the three areas of investigation. This may be due to the fact that the program is still in its early stages of implementation and more professional development is needed. There is a potential for further study of positive behavior intervention and how it impacts school-wide change and school climate. Other levels of learning (ex. elementary and high schools) should be investigated.

Dissemination

Several groups could benefit from the results of this study. These groups include (a) middle school teachers, (b) elementary school teachers, (c) high school teachers, (d) researchers who have conducted similar studies for the purpose of continued research, and (e) administrators. Study participants were given the opportunity to receive a copy of the research upon request. Those who have requested the results will receive them via e-mail after the completion of the dissertation. A full presentation will be given in the school media center in November 2007. Workshops will be scheduled and conducted by the researcher at neighboring school upon request. A manuscript will be produced by the researcher titled "The Power of Positive Behavior Intervention". Proceeds will be used to promote the concept both domestically and abroad.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, conclusions, and implications of this study, the following recommendations are suggested.

1. Investigate other levels of learning environments (ex. elementary and high schools).

2. Consider studies at institutions in other regions in the State.

3. Redesign survey instrument to include more items and change Likert scale choices. Additionally, make sure there are an equivalent number of items per category being investigated.

4. Consider performing pre- and post-test on the subjects as part of the study. Additionally, determine the score before and after implementation.

5. Extend the study to parents, students and administrators.

Concluding Thoughts

The intent of this study was to examine possible changes in teacher beliefs, practices and values toward the impact of a Positive Behavior Intervention program at a middle school in Northeast Georgia. The findings of this study have indicated that implementing a positive behavior intervention program can be the first step in changing school climate. If this study provides a basic understanding of how teachers, the primary implementers of change in a school, use these strategy in their schools and classrooms and how it fits into their everyday practice, then this study would have served its purpose.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

SCHOOL CLIMATE SURVEY

School Climate Survey
Staff Survey
Fall 2007

As part of the School-wide Change/Climate Study, it is important that we assess changes in teacher beliefs, values and practices toward discipline.
Your answers on this survey will help us in the process. Thank you!

	Not True 1	Slightly True 2	Some-what True 3	Mostly True 4	Very True 5
1. The school is a safer, more orderly place to teach and learn than last year.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I have noticed more students walking on the right side of the hallways.	1	2	3	4	5
3. More students are walking instead of running in the hallways.	1	2	3	4	5
4. The fire drills are much more orderly as compact to last school year.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I have noticed less broken glass on school grounds.	1	2	3	4	5
6. No food fights have occurred in the cafeteria this year.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I feel the chances of being physically abused by a student at this school has decreased.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Students are reporting to their classes much more orderly.	1	2	3	4	5
9. More students are reporting to class on time.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I spend less time correcting negative student behavior during instructional time.	1	2	3	4	5
11. More students are coming to class with needed supplies.	1	2	3	4	5
12. There has been an increase in the number of students who are turning assignments in on time.	1	2	3	4	5
13. More positive student participation during instruction has occurred this year.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I am finding more positive ways to correct negative behavior.	1	2	3	4	5
15. More students are staying on task and completing assignments.	1	2	3	4	5
16. The number of student attending afterschool tutoring class has increased.	1	2	3	4	5

	Not True 1	Slightly True 2	Some what True 3	Mostly True 4	Very True 5
17. More students are offering their assistance when extra help is needed.	1	2	3	4	5
18. The number of teacher mentors have increases.	1	2	3	4	5
19. My sensitivity for the individual needs of my students have increased.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I have witnessed more positive jesters between students. (Ex: please and thank you)	1	2	3	4	5
21. I have witnessed more positive jesters between students and teachers. (ex: please and thank you)	1	2	3	4	5
22. I am more pro-active in managing student behavior	1	2	3	4	5
23. I have created more positive relationships among students.	1	2	3	4	5
24. More students seen to trust and confide in me.	1	2	3	4	5

Please provide a little information about yourself for the purpose of studying the survey results…

Gender
- o Female
- o   Male

How long have you worked at this school? _____ years

What subject(s) are you teaching?
- o Language Arts
- o Science
- o Math
- o Social Studies
- o Connection (ex: P.E., Art, Band, etc)

I have been teaching for
- o 0 -5 years
- o 6 -10 years
- o 11 -15 years
- o 16 – or more

Thank you for Taking Time to Complete This Survey

APPENDIX B

IRB APPROVAL LETTER

| Georgia Southern University |
| Office of Research Services & Sponsored Programs |
| **Institutional Review Board (IRB)** |

Phone: 912-681-5465		Administrative Annex
		P.O. Box 8005
Fax: 912-681-0719	Ovrsight@GeorgiaSouthern.edu	Statesboro, GA 30460

September 12, 2007

Israel Collins Jr.
7379 Waters Edge Drive
Stone Mountain, GA-30087

Dear Israel Collins Jr.

After a review of your proposed research project numbered: **H08039**, and titled **"School-wide Change and Its Impact on School Climate"**, it appears that your research involves activities that do not require approval by the Institutional Review Board according to federal guidelines.

According to the Code of Federal Regulations Title 45 Part 46, your research protocol is determined to be exempt under the following exemption category(s):

Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior that is not exempt under paragraph (b)(2) of this section, if: (I) the human subjects are elected or appointed public officials or candidates for public office; or (II) federal statute(s) require(s) without exception that the confidentiality of the personally identifiable information will be maintained throughout the research and thereafter.

Therefore, as authorized in the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, I am pleased to notify you that your research is exempt from IRB approval. You may proceed with the proposed research.

Sincerely,

N. Scott Pierce
Director of Research Services and Sponsored Programs