Kicking Off School-wide PBIS in the Fall

The purpose of the document is to provide a quick reference for School Leadership Teams (SLTs) as they prepare for the initial kick-off of Schoolwide PBIS at the start of the school year after an extended school closure.

Components of School-wide PBIS

The following components should be completed prior to the kick-off in order to support strong implementation.

School-wide Behavior Expectations and Behavior Matrix

Three to five behavioral expectations that apply to all students in all settings that are then further defined in a behavior matrix for each school setting.

Ideal Development

The school-wide expectations should be representative of staff, student, and family voices. This is done by gathering input and feedback from these groups while developing and refining the school-wide behavioral expectations.

The behavior matrix should also include input and feedback from staff, students, and families to support buy-in.

Acceptable Variation Due to Long-Term School Closure

If it is not possible to get representative voices from staff, students, and families given the current circumstances, we recommend you get as much input as possible via surveys and then create a draft of the school-wide behavior expectations that will be the foundation of the SWPBIS implementation for the 2020-2021 school year. The SLT will need to understand that they will have to gather additional input and feedback throughout the 2020-2021 school year and may need to make adjustments before the expectations and behavior matrix are finalized for the following school year. This means the team may not want to have permanent products of banners and posters printed or purchased, and instead start the year off with temporary products or signs and posters.

Lesson Plans

For each location identified on the behavior matrix, a lesson plan for teaching behavior expectations is developed.

Ideal Development

All staff have an opportunity to provide input, feedback, and/or develop lesson plans for teaching behavior expectations. This supports staff buy-in and shared ownership over the work. Staff who spend time in particular settings should have some input into the development of the lesson plan for that setting (e.g., playground supervisors should have input on the lesson plan for teaching behavior expectations on the playground).

Acceptable Variation Due to Long-Term School Closure

Lesson plans may need to be developed by the members of the School Leadership Team (SLT) or a workgroup. If the school goes this route, consider how to use email or other technology to allow a time period where staff can review and provide input or feedback to the lesson plans. The SLT should also consider allocating additional time before school starts to review the lesson plans as well as the rationale for teaching behavior expectations with the full staff.

Acknowledgement System

An acknowledgement system includes three types of acknowledgements: immediate, intermittent, and long-term.

Ideal Development

Staff should be involved in the development of the acknowledgement system as all staff will be responsible for using it to provide feedback to students. Student input and feedback is valuable to development of the acknowledgment system. Adults think they may know what is reinforcing to students, but sometimes students can surprise us with what they select to be a part of the acknowledgement system. Families can also meaningfully help to shape a school's acknowledgement system. There are a variety of ways to go about gathering input and feedback, including focus groups and surveys.

Acceptable Variation Due to Long-Term School Closure

If it is not possible to get staff, student and/or family input into the acknowledgement system, the SLT may be charged with creating the immediate acknowledgement (e.g., tickets) and ideas to start the year off for intermittent acknowledgements to get the school year started. Once school is back in session, student and staff input will be gathered to further refine the intermittent and long-term acknowledgments.

Continuum of Responses

A continuum of responses includes a definition of problem behaviors categorized as major or minor, as well as the major category broken down into staff or office managed. The continuum should also provide possible responses for staff to employ when behavior errors occur.

Ideal Development

Staff should be involved in defining behaviors and determining what behaviors fall into the categories of 1) staff managed minor, 2) staff managed major, and 3) office managed major. Once problem behaviors are defined, the SLT begins to develop a continuum of responses to

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behaviors with feedback and input from the staff. Once this is finalized, the continuum of responses is communicated out to families and students.

Acceptable Variation Due to Long-Term School Closure

If staff is not available to provide feedback and input, the SLT can develop the problem behavior definitions along with the continuum of responses. The examples and resources from the content can be used to support that work. Once school is back in session, the SLT can gain feedback and input from the staff on modifications to the problem behavior definitions and continuum of responses.

Kick-Off Assembly

The kick-off assembly is typically held in the fall within the first days of school and is done annually. The assembly has a celebratory feeling and includes an introduction to the school-wide expectations and explanation of the acknowledgement system. This is also a lead-in to the teaching of school-wide expectations that happen in the first week or two of school.

Ideal Development

Typically, an SLT will plan the assembly while seeking out possible additional staff to help with the presentation. The assembly might include a skit, a song, or the appearance of the school mascot.

Acceptable Variation Due to Long-Term School Closure

Planning for the kick-off assembly should continue as normal with the SLT while seeking out additional staff for support as needed. If school closure occurs at the beginning of the school year, plan to have the kick-off assembly as soon as students return to school in-person.