

Middle School Students Suggestions for How Teachers Can Show Respect

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Session Agenda

- Background and context for the survey
- Description of the analysis methods & results
- Share NJPBSIS's favorite strategies for getting students involved in PBIS activities

Research Team

- Sharon Lohrmann, Ph.D
- Sunne-Ryse Smith, Psy.D
- Scott McMahon, M.S.W

The PBSIS Initiative:

- Is a partnership with and funded by the NJ Office of Special Education Programs
- The **primary focus** is on building capacity to support students with disabilities in general education programs

PBSIS Website Directions

- www.njpbs.org
- Select the *Resources* tab
 - Page opens to the *School-wide planning* resources tab
 - Select the *Individual Student Planning* tab at the top
- **You are able to save all documents to your computers or flash drive**

**Motivation for
This
Beginning
Line of
Research**

What Factors Lead to Positive Outcomes for Students?

- The big questions we all ask ourselves:
 - How can schools organize themselves to promote positive academic and social outcomes?
 - What can staff do individually to promote positive academic and social outcomes?

What Do You Think?

- According to a substantial body of research, these are consistent predictors of academic achievement and positive social behaviors:
 - Positive teacher-student relationships
 - Supportive teacher behaviors (e.g., showing care and regard)
 - Positive peer relationships

Just a Couple Examples of the Impact of Positive Teacher Relationships

- Students are more likely to be resilient to risk factors when they perceive having supportive teachers (e.g., Loukas & Robinson, 2004)
- Students are less likely to be truant, develop depressive systems, or engage in antisocial behaviors (e.g., Roeser & Eccles, 1998)
- Children who experience conflicts with teachers in kindergarten are more likely to have negative behavior outcomes by eighth grade (Hamre & Pianta, 2001)

The Interpretation of Research on Supportive Teacher Behaviors:

- The relationships we have with students and the environments that we create are more influential than any other competing factors in helping students to have successful outcomes

Examples of Socially Supportive School Environments

- Encourage positive relationships between students and adults
- Encourage positive interactions between students
- Display caring
- Create forums for students to be heard
- Provide lots of social praise
- Have clear expectations and routines
- Provide help, support, and intervention quickly

But Unfortunately,

- Students' perception of positive teacher relationships decrease as the student gets older (e.g., Lynch & Cicchetti, 1997)
- Translation...
 - Students perceive having less of one of the most important factors that contribute to successful school outcomes

Motivation for This Beginning Line of Research

- As a researcher AND as a practitioner I have deep interest in understanding the experience of positive behavior support from the perspective of students and staff
 - I want to understand the first hand point of view of what students need, what students want, and how PBIS is impacting their life.

Motivation for This Beginning Line of Research

- Few empirically documented descriptions of first hand accounts or point of view with issues related to implementation of school-wide positive behavior support
- Qualitative studies on school climate:

Research Motivation

- **Current Study:** What can we LEARN about creating socially supportive environments by listening to what students have to say?
- **In the Future:** how we take what we're learning and connect it to the SWPBS process

Study Research Question

- To understand from the students' point of view what explicit teacher behaviors students nominate as important to showing students respect

Research Methods

Background on the Student Survey

- About 5 years ago, NJPBSIS began having schools implement a comprehensive self-assessment of climate & behavior priorities prior to implementing PBIS
- The self-assessment includes:
 - Surveys of parents, staff, and students
 - Walkthrough of the building using a guided scoring guide

Background on the Student Survey

- The Universal Team summarizes the data collected from surveys into top priorities
- Summaries of the assessment are presented to the school community (e.g., presentations, posting on cable stations, newsletters, etc.)
- The Universal Team goes on to use the data to support universal intervention decision making

Background on the Student Survey

- The survey was developed by:
 - Reviewing the literature on school climate & SWPBS
 - Piloting the survey with an initial group of 10 schools
 - “Tweaking” and adjusting based on response patterns

Background on the Student Survey

- To date, the staff, parent, and student surveys have been implemented with:
 - 24 - Elementary schools (starting at 3rd gr)
 - 21 - Middle Schools
 - 5 - K-8 school
 - 7 - High Schools
- However, we have not conducted a psychometric analysis of the survey

The Student Survey – A Closer Look

- 10 questions rated on a three point likert scale that ask about school climate related topics
- Rate on a three point likert scale the extent to which behaviors and building locations are problematic
- 1 open ended question: “What are three things your teachers can do to show you respect?”

Survey Items	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree
My school is a positive and welcoming place			
I feel safe at school	<p>This part of the survey was not used in the current study</p>		
I feel safe on my way to school and on my way home			
Teachers help me when I am having trouble			
I can go to staff and teachers at my school if I need help			
I think all teachers expect the same behavior from all students			
Sometimes it's hard to follow the school rules because of pressure from peers			
Students at this school are all treated fairly			
My teachers encourage students to do their best			
Teachers care about student opinions			

What student behaviors do you think are the biggest problem at the school?	Very Big Problem	Sort of a Problem	Not Really a Problem
Gossiping			
Bullying or teasing one another			
Fighting			
Vandalism (e.g., writing on the walls)			
Disrespectful behavior or language toward students	<p>This part of the survey was not used in the current study</p>		
Cutting class or detention			
Disrespectful behavior or language toward adults			
Bringing banned items (cell phones, CD players) to school			
Late to class or school			
Disruption			
What locations do you think are the biggest problem in the school?	Very Big Problem	Sort of a Problem	Not Really a Problem
Hallways/stairwells			
Bathrooms Boys Girls (Circle)			
Cafeteria			
Classrooms			
Gym/Locker Room			
School Grounds/Bus Dismissal Area			

The Student Survey – Procedures

- School staff administered the survey
- All students present on the day of survey had an opportunity to participate
- Students completed the survey online
- Students needing translation received ESL support – Spanish version of the survey is available.

Research Data

- **ONLY the data from the open ended question:** “What are three things your teachers can do to show you respect?” are being presented today and submitted for publication

Data Source Limitations

- At the time the surveys were administered information about individual respondents was not available – so only profiles of the schools are presented
- However, schools had an average of a 96% response rate, so the profiles are a pretty good indication of the respondent profile

School & Participant Description N= 3,692 Respondents

Characteristics	School 1 (n=802)	School 2 (n=718)	School 3 (n=688)	School 4 (n=749)	School 5 (n=742)	Mean (n=738)
Attendance and Discipline						
Attendance Rate	97.5%	95.5%	95%	94.3%	94.9%	96%
Mobility Rate	2.8%	6.5%	35.2%	15.8%	14.10%	14%
Suspension Rate	10%	16%	10%	4%	15%	11%
						(State M=5%)
Percentage of Students Who Qualify for Free & Reduced Lunch	9.7%	37.4%	61.1%	49.9%	33.8%	38%
Ethnicity						
Asian	499	27	13	86	105	146
African - American	96	218	279	62	108	153
Caucasian	158	274	132	271	233	214
Hispanic	20	197	227	330	237	202
Other	29	2	29	0	59	24
Gender						
Males	402	388	337	370	375	374
Females	400	330	352	379	367	365
Benchmarks of Quality Score (pre-implementation of universal interventions)	25%	15%	18%	49%	11%	24%

Methods Overview

- Multi-phase consensual agreement coding process (Hill, Thompson, & Nutt-Williams, 1997; Lohrmann et al., 2008)
- Comments were reviewed to ensure each comment contained a discrete idea
 - Total of 9,599 individual comments
 - On average each school contributed 20% of the data set (r=17%-24%)

Consensual Agreement Coding Process

- Open coding of all comments by a primary coder (Strauss & Corbin, 1990)
- A second coder conducted an audit
- Disagreements were tagged and discussed until consensus agreed
- An initial definition list was developed
- Ongoing the process was repeated and the codes and definition list adjusted through the consensus process

Sample from a Coded Data Set

Schl	Code	Student Comment
2	listen to our problems	they can listen to the students when they have problems
2	listen to our problems	listen to a student problem.
2	listen to our problems	letting students come to teachers for problems,instead of teachers trying to get in to the situation.
2	listen to our problems	listen to the student's problems
2	listen to our problems	Listen to the student's questions or problems.
2	listen to our problems	listen to my problems
2	listen to our problems	if a student has to talk to someone or to the nurse because it can be serious sometimes and the might have a really bad problem and need to talk to someone really bad like from a bully, family and peer presure.

Data Analysis Phase 1

- Purpose: organize data into meaningful domains and categories
- Through team discussion, data were organized into overarching domains and categories
- A data trail was maintained so all data could be traced back to the original source

Data Analysis Phase 2

- Purpose: questioning and challenging
 1. the meaningfulness of the domains;
 2. the organization of emerging sub-themes (categories) within domain areas; and
 3. the association of domains and categories with one another

Data Analysis Phase 2 Three Steps:

1. A quantitative summary of totals and percentages of the domains, emerging categories, and codes in table and graph form
2. Individual reflection by team members
3. Team discussions promote reflection, questioning, and consensus using the constant comparative method (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992) and the quantitative summary

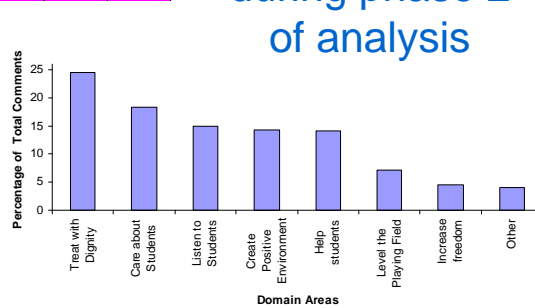
Code	Total	School 1	School 2	School 3	School 4	School 5
Total for	9599	2254	1888	1637	1940	1947

DOMAIN AREA: STUDENTS WANT TO BE TREATED WITH DIGNITY

Code	Total	School 1	School 2	School 3	School 4	School 5
Total for Domain Area	2361	412	446	475	543	485
Percentage of Total Data Set for School		18.27	23.62	29.01	27.98	24.91
Percentage of Total Data Set Across Schools	24.59	4.29	4.64	4.96	5.69	5.02

Be nice						
Be Respectful	218	24	43			
Be Nice and Examples	546	94	83			
Category total	764	118	126			
Category % of the school's entire data set	32.35	5.23	6.67			
Category % of total data set Across All Data	7.9	1.21	1.31			
Category % of total data set Within the Doman Area Data	32.35	28.64	28.25	32.42	33.66	31.82

Sample data summary and graph used during phase 2 of analysis



Results

Big Ideas About the Findings

- There was a great deal of emotional ‘tone’ in the comments
- Students took the task seriously
 - Other: 423 comments we couldn’t code
 - Very little “junk” – **23 comments total**

Big Ideas About the Findings

- Themes are highly reflective of research findings in school climate research that look at predictors of outcomes
- The big idea is that **overwhelmingly, students nominate behaviors of social support** as the most important things a teacher can do to show respect

Students Expressed Their Ideas in Three Types of Comments

- The largest bulk of comments simply labeled something they wanted the teacher to do
 - *“Stop yelling at us”*
- Some gave an example of what they meant
 - *“Teacher should talk to the student if we do something wrong instead of screaming at them like most of the teachers do”*

Students Expressed Their Ideas in Three Types of Comments

- A few comments in each domain provided a rationale for why it was important – these comments tended to be the most insightful look into what students were trying to say:
 - *“Generally, teachers have a habit of yelling despite the fact that all students can perfectly hear him or her. Yelling increases a student's frustration and discourages him or her to work to the best of his ability.”*

Findings Organizer

Students want teachers to:	Categories	% of the Data Set
Treat them with dignity by:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Being nice •Respecting student's privacy & maturity •Not being mean 	24%
Care about them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Personally investing in students' well being •Providing acknowledgement & praise 	18%
Listen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Listening •Appreciating what students have to say 	15%
Help solve their problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Being helpful •Being responsive to the need for help •Being in tune with students' need for help 	14%
Make environments positive by:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Creating a positive learning atmosphere •Lightening students' workload 	14%
Level the playing field by:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Treating everyone the same •Not picking favorites •Paying attention to each student •Not judging students 	7%

Students Want to be Treated with Dignity (24%)

- *“One important thing a teacher can do to show respect to students is by treating us very nicely.”*
- **Be nice**
 - Be Nice, friendly, kind
 - Tone of voice, word choice, & context of interaction
 - Warm greetings & polite interactions

Students Want to be Treated with Dignity

- *“Teachers can have more respect for us by not treating us like we are four years old.”*
- *“A teacher can trust a student to do the right thing when not supervised.”*
- **Respect students’ maturity and privacy**
 - Respect students privacy and personal space
 - Regard students as mature
 - Treat students as you want to be treated
 - Trust students and be honest with them

Students Want to be Treated with Dignity

- *“Teachers can show students respect by not being unnecessarily mean or showing their anger on us.”*
- *“Stop YELLING. It makes some children feel small. And they feel bad and upset.”*

Students Want to be Treated with Dignity

- **Don't be mean**
 - Don't ridicule, embarrass, pick on, be sarcastic, make fun of students
 - Don't Yell or get mad at students
 - Don't put students on the spot
 - Don't punish the whole class, for something one or a few students did
 - Make sure there's a really good reason when you remove a student from class
 - Don't blame or accuse, listen to the student's side or get more facts

Students Want to be Cared About (18%)

- Personally invest in students well being
 - Be Understanding
 - Care about students
 - Listen to and be interested in students' problems
- The tone of the comments really reflected the need for being nurtured & personal connections

Students Want to be Cared About - Examples

- *“Respectful teachers have personal connections with students”*
- *“Respectful teachers stand up for us”*
- *“I wish teachers would really listen to our problems because some teachers act like they do not care”*
- *“One thing a teacher can do to show us respect is to understand our situation and to know what we go through in everyday life”*

Students Want to be Cared About

- 8% of the entire data set reflected the idea of acknowledgement & social praise:
 - *“Acknowledge their participation in class. If the student shares something inspiring the teacher should definitely appreciate the insight. Most students feel more self-confident when an adult appreciates their thoughts.”*

Listen to what students have to say (15%)

- **Listen**

- Listen to what students have to say
- Use good listening behavior (e.g., make eye contact, focus, don't interrupt) when a student is talking

- *“Teachers should give students a chance to explain things such as why they didn't do homework because if they shut them down they won't open up if they need help and it will weaken the relationship which will lead to a bad learning experience.”*

Listen to what students have to say (15%)

- **Appreciate what students have to say**

- Care about students' opinions, answers, comments
- Give students a chance to express their opinion
- Be open-minded to students' suggestions or point of view
- Take actions on students' opinions
- Answers students' questions

Listen to what students have to say (15%)

- *“They could ask us more about rules and things that could make the school a better environment.”*
- *“Use one of my ideas to help class be more fun.”*
- *“Allow all students to have voice in the classroom.”*

Students Want Help Solving Their Problems (14%)

- **Be helpful; Responsive to the need for help; be in tune with student’s need for help**
 - Be helpful with school, home, and social issues
 - Be responsive when students ask for help
 - Reach out and offer help when you see a student having trouble
 - Attend to signs that students are having difficulty

Students Want Help Solving Their Problems

- *“Guide them through the worst times”*
- *“Teachers should help a child who is not fitting in.”*
- *“Ask kids if they need help and not say come to me if you need help because sometimes kids will not come to you because of their friends and peer pressure of other kids.”*

Make the Learning Environment Positive (14%)

- **Create a positive learning atmosphere**
 - Be a good teacher
 - Be positive (fun friendly)
 - Make students feel welcomed
 - Call on all the students (not just a couple)
 - Vary instructional methods
 - Make learning fun
 - Don't pressure students
 - Teachers should follow the rules just like students
 - Pay attention to misbehavior (especially in the halls)
 - Explain things clearly so everyone understands
 - Check for understanding
 - Let us know how we are doing
 - Give us a chance to improve our grades

Make the Learning Environment Positive (14%)

- *“Teachers can be respectful by coming to school with a good attitude.”*
- *“One thing that a teacher could do to show a student respect is welcoming them.”*
- *“Teachers should work hard to make sure that no child is having a difficult time during class. This is important because people may feel uncomfortable with participating in class.”*

Make the Learning Environment Positive (14%)

- *“Make students feel accepted and not left out, especially in group activities.”*
- *“Teachers can help the students learn easily what they need to learn by keeping everyone one on track by making sure they aren’t bored. Kids do not pay attention when they are bored and when things get fun the kids learn more easily and can do better in school.”*

Make the Learning Environment Positive

- Reduce the workload: The main themes in this category revolved around:
 - Give less homework*
 - Coordinate work across teachers
 - Give enough time for us to do our work
 - Make work easier

Make the Learning Environment Positive

- *“Homework is a nuisance because it adds stress to the daily life of a student. Most students are not known for doing well under pressure.”*
- *“They can give us less homework so we have more time to study and improve on other things instead of learning something new every day and forgetting them and in my opinion that is how teachers can show us respect.”*
- *“All of the teachers should get together and talk about what they were planning to teach in class that day, what homework they were going to assign, and what tests they were going to give so that students don't have to study for 5 different tests all in one night.”*

Level the playing field (7%)

- Overarching idea is that teachers should treat students equitably
- Concern over preferential & differential treatment:
 - Treat everyone the same
 - Don't pick favorites
 - Pay attention to each student
 - Don't judge students on past mistakes, how they look or what you've heard

Level the playing field

- *“Teachers shouldn't favor students because it makes other kids feel left out.”*
- *“Teachers shouldn't ostracize a student because of past misdeeds.”*
- *“The teacher should treat all students fairly. Just because a student is the same culture as the teacher the teacher can't treat them better than someone that is not the same culture.”*

Switching Gears: From Research to Practical Application

Schools Incorporate Comments into Their Discussions with Staff

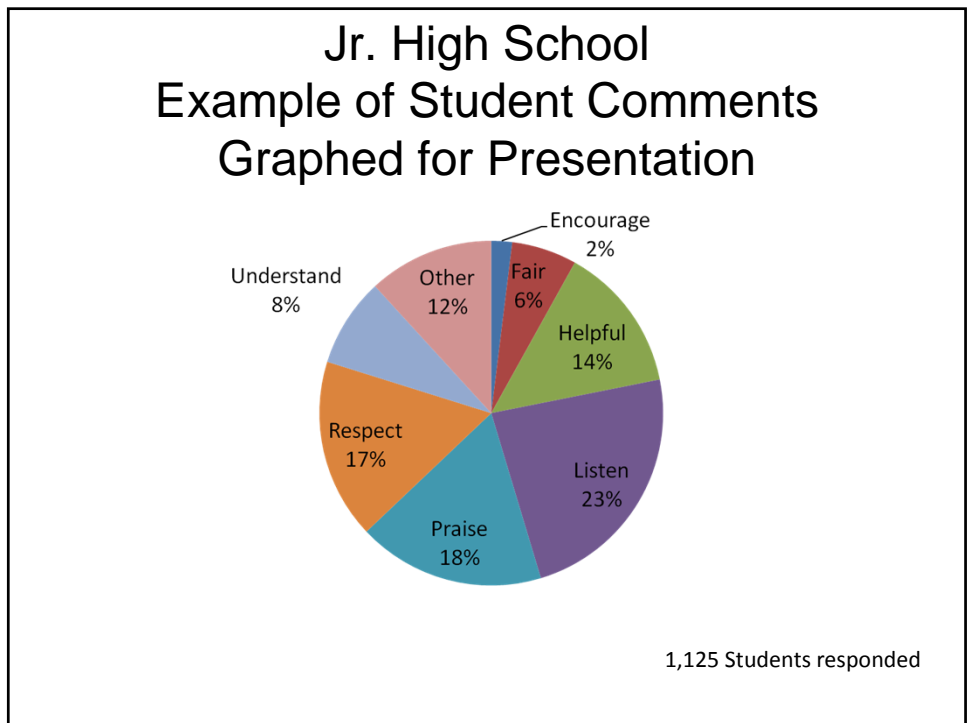
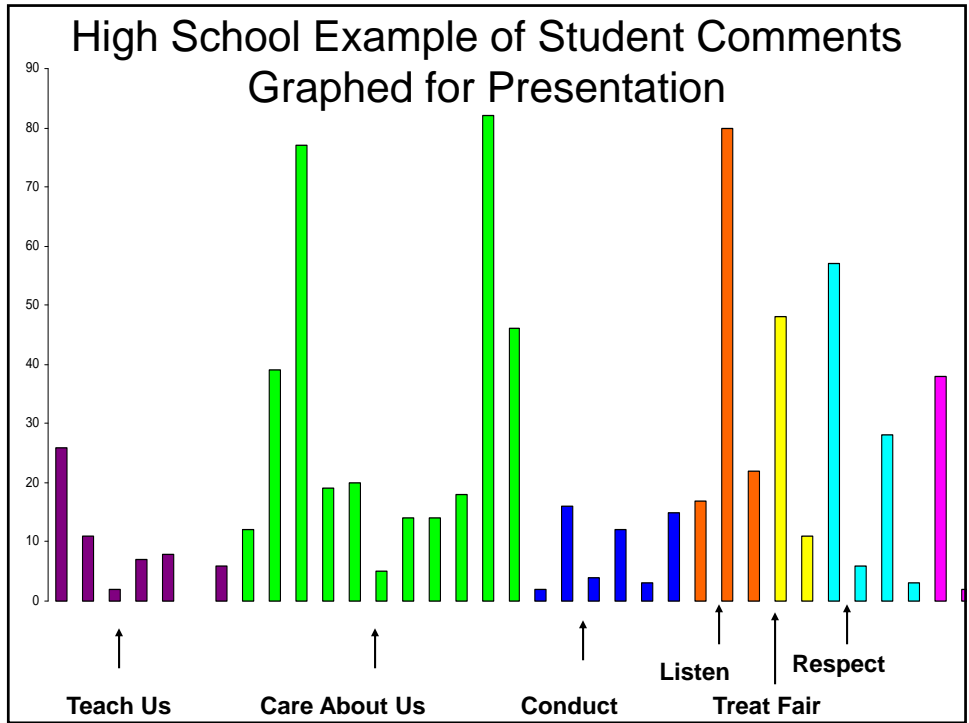
- Remember the survey is part of a school's self assessment
- After schools conduct the surveys – they summarize the results & present to the school community:
 - Presentations at staff meetings
 - Assemblies with students
 - Postings on cable stations
 - Summaries in newsletters

Schools Incorporate Comments into Their Discussions with Staff

- The self assessment is an opportunity to engage the school community in the planning process and clearly identify planning issues that are top priority
 - The survey-summary strategy is a great opportunity to build buy-in among staff
 - The student comments in particular are an opportunity to talk with staff about the student point of view

Potential Power of Student Comments

- School teams are using student comments:
 - To facilitate focus group discussions with students
 - As a rationale for why a practice should be adopted
 - To reinforce positive things that staff are doing
 - As a conversation starter for planning discussion



Get Students
Involved:

Our Favorite
Examples of
Activities to Get
Students More
Involved PBIS

Liaisons, Ambassadors, Peer Leaders & Clubs

- PBSIS clubs
- Student led instructional activities & advisory groups
- Peer Leaders provide input
- Focus groups for planning
- PBSIS ambassadors who welcome & escort visitors during instructional & special events

Material Production


- Student directed videos
- Student directed instruction scripts & role plays
- Logo contests
- Costume contests
- Graphics & prop design (built into curriculum as part of course credit)

Graphic Arts Incorporated Logo Design and Client Presentation into Course



Our #1 Favorite!

- Reverse day
 - Students are given a ticket that they can give to any adult in the building

New Jersey
Positive Behavior
Support in Schools 
New directions in school success

Thank you to: _____

While I was a student in _____ grade at Churchill Jr. High School
you helped me by _____

A Couple of New Ideas We're About to Try

- Asking “what is it like to receive a --- ticket?”
 - Journaling ‘do now’
 - School-wide journal submissions
 - Follow up survey with students
 - Focus groups