



ASSOCIATION FOR POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORT

Newsletter

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Association for
Positive Behavior
Support

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APBS Board Update

I am happy to announce that three of the current APBS Board Members have been reelected this March. They are Cindy Anderson, Fredda Brown, and Rachel Freeman. We look forward to their ongoing leadership. In addition, the Board has one new member to welcome—Lisa Bowman-Perrott. Lisa recently left her position at the University of Kansas to join the Department of Educational Psychology at Texas A&M University. We look forward to having Lisa on the Board. I also would like to thank Tim Lewis, as he steps down, for his hard work over the past three years on the Board.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Zarcone, President APBS

APBS Board Elections: Nominations Requested

Nominations are being solicited from APBS members for four open seats on the Executive Board. Any member in good standing of APBS may nominate another member (or themselves). Terms for seats on the board run for 3 years. The APBS nominations committee will establish a slate of candidates based upon the information provided. Nominations are made by submitting the following items:

1. The Nomination Application for APBS Executive Board of Directors form (located at <http://www.apbs.org>).
2. A letter or email from the person being nominated agreeing to run for the board.
3. A professional vita or personal description of the individual being nominated.
4. A nomination paragraph of no more than 250 words that will appear on the ballot to be submitted to the membership for the final vote.

All nomination materials must be received by **July 5, 2007**. Nominations received after this date will be considered invalid.

Send nominations to Tim Knoster (tknoster@bloomu.edu or fax: 570-389-3980).

Questions? Contact Jacki Anderson (jacki.anderson@csueastbay.edu).

Minnesota Launches SW-PBIS

Kevin J. Filter, Minnesota State University, Mankato
Char Ryan, Minnesota Department of Education

Minnesota is off to an exciting start with school-wide positive behavioral interventions and supports (SW-PBIS). During the 2005–06 school year, the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) selected nine demonstration schools (early childhood to high school) in three school districts for

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training and support in implementing SW-PBIS. Though Minnesota has a strong history of promoting prevention, positive interventions, and effective schools, this is the first statewide effort to implement SW-PBIS. MDE provided a two year commitment to these schools during which a total of six, two-day trainings and planning sessions were coordinated. Additionally, MDE provided follow up, access to the School-Wide Information System (SWIS; May et al., 2000), training and implementation in the School-Wide Evaluation Tool (SET; Horner et al., 2004), support of teams' participation in a national conference, and access to a lending library of print and media resources for team training.

Planning for Sustainability

Minnesota wants to ensure the sustainability of SW-PBIS. The first step in Minnesota's plan was the development of a leadership team, identified as a key factor in sustainability by Sugai and Horner (2006). The state leadership team currently consists of MDE administrators, representatives from Safe and Healthy Schools, a university professor, general and special education school administrators, a district administrator, and representatives from relevant community agencies. The roles of the state leadership team involve: identifying state trainers, coordinating trainings by Dr. George Sugai and local experts, providing trainings for district coaches, coordinating evaluation efforts including training in evaluation tools and summaries of data, and developing a training model for secondary interventions.

Sugai and Horner (2006) also identified funding, visibility, and political support for SW-PBIS efforts as key factors in sustainability. The state leadership team is working towards these goals by (a) having secured at least five years of funding from the MDE, (b) showcasing the state and local school teams at conferences and workshops including APBS, (c) advertising on websites, newsletters, and celebration days open to the public, and (d) sharing our successes with administrators in the MDE including the Commissioner of Education. Ambitious plans have been articulated in a 5-year plan, and we believe the state team and participating schools have made good progress in addressing these considerations during the first two years.

Challenges

Like any new program, the first two years have revealed challenges for the MDE and the state leadership team including geographic and district demographic variables,

balancing multiple initiatives, and determining efficient ways to incorporate schools with some prior implementation of a PBIS approach. Minnesota is a geographically diverse state with half of the population located in the seven county Twin Cities area on the east side of the state. The remaining districts are medium and small towns distributed across the state, some as far as 350 miles from the Twin Cities. The state leadership team chose to select teams that represented geographic diversity but by doing so created challenges that had to be met including getting long distance schools to the training. As a result of the geographic challenge, the state leadership team is exploring regional trainings. Such creative planning early in statewide implementation is essential to accommodate future growth.

Another major challenge for the MDE is building district level capacity to effectively support large urban and suburban districts. The process thus far has allowed currently enrolled districts to add new schools each year. Some metro districts have more than 100 schools. The state leadership team will have to explore specific steps to build the capacity within these schools to ensure that large districts progress and that district size does not limit future enrollment by new schools.

Most demonstration schools are involved in implementing local, state, and national initiatives. This results in demands on teacher and administrator time and school resources, making it necessary to align initiatives when possible. In 2005, the Minnesota Legislature passed a law funding Quality Compensation, or "Q-Comp," which includes expanded career path opportunities, best practice research and teacher-led professional development, student performance-based pay for teachers, and a teacher evaluation system. It is necessary to align parallel outcomes and integrate SW-PBIS components with those of Q-Comp. For example, both initiatives use student outcome data in social and academic areas to evaluate effectiveness. These measures could be the same data sources. Providing information to the local Q-Comp committees to facilitate their understanding of the efforts of SW-PBIS is needed to work more efficiently and effectively. During Year 2, state leadership team members provided Q-Comp "courses" on SW-PBIS.

Another challenge arises in working with schools that have adopted and implemented practices similar to SW-PBIS. Many schools have been focusing on student behavior and have been implementing various behavioral intervention packages. As we move forward, Minnesota will need to integrate and distinguish systemic changes and strategies and articulate similarities. The overarching goal is creating positive and sustainable student

behavioral outcomes using research-based practices. Despite the current challenges and those yet to be identified, Minnesota is geared to work with all of these to promote the best results for students and staff.

Successes

At the end of Year 1, after only nine months of state support, four of the nine demonstration schools received overall SET scores above 80% and above 80% for the feature of “teaching of behavioral expectations.” The 80/80 rule of thumb suggests that these four schools are now implementing SW-PBIS with fidelity. At the end of Year 2, SET evaluations reveal that some schools have achieved 100% implementation. This is a remarkable achievement for these schools. Further, schools that struggled initially with portions of implementation, such as acknowledging appropriate behavior, are demonstrating high scores in those areas of the SET at the end of Year 2. Although some schools have not yet met the 80% criterion level, they are all moving toward full implementation. For example, both high schools in the state initiative chose to proceed slowly toward full implementation by focusing on faculty and staff training in Year 1 and teaching and rewarding student behavior in Year 2.

With the addition of SW-PBIS, several schools have experienced a significant reduction in discipline problems. For example, one middle school experienced a 70% decrease in office discipline referrals over the prior three years and reduced out of school suspensions 44% from the previous year. This school demonstrated fidelity as measured by the SET; thus, it is reasonable to assume that SW-PBIS may have played a role in these improvements. Additionally, anecdotal reports reflect the positive outcomes on students and staff, “I feel like PBIS has brought an energizing element to our staff and students. We are on fire! I cannot believe the capacity we have in our building now for supporting students in a systematic way. The school-wide programs we have put into place, as well as our revisions to the discipline plan and data keeping have given us just what we needed to have a positive school climate and the ability to address needs of students at-risk. Thank-you, thank-you, thank-you, to you and George and those involved in giving us this opportunity!” (MN SW-PBIS participant, personal communication, 2007).

The Future

The state leadership team has accepted 29 new schools for support in 2007–2008 bringing the total number of SW-

PBIS schools in Minnesota to over 50. The first cohort of nine schools has now completed its two years of direct state support and participated in a graduation celebration at the last sponsored training. To promote sustainability, all of the schools from this cohort have now established district-level PBIS teams. Plans are being made regarding the most efficient way to provide on-going support to these districts. At present, the state leadership team is considering arranging its first mini-conference as a way to provide this support while getting information out to schools that have not yet begun to implement SW-PBIS.

Although long-term plans are evolving, the Minnesota PBIS Leadership Team is planning to bring SW-PBIS to scale in Minnesota by creating geographical regions with the capacity to self-sustain and support new schools with the indirect support of the MDE. Even at the recent pace of admitting between 5 and 16 new districts per year, it will likely be several years before these larger plans come to fruition. For now, we are enjoying two years of small-scale success and look forward with cautious optimism to the long-term and large-scale adoption of SW-PBIS in Minnesota.

References

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- May, S., Ard, W. III., Todd, A. W., Horner, R. H., Glasgow, A., Sugai, G., & Sprague, J. R. (2000). *School-wide information system*. Eugene: University of Oregon, Educational and Community Supports.
- Sugai, G., & Horner, R. H. (2006). A promising approach for expanding and sustaining school-wide positive behavior support. *School Psychology Review*, 35(2), 245-259.

What Does Membership in APBS Say About You?

**Randall L. De Pry and
Jennifer Zarcone**

What does joining and maintaining your membership with APBS say about you? First, it suggests that you endorse the organization’s mission statement:

The Association for Positive Behavior Support (APBS) is an international organization dedicated

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to the advancement of positive behavior support. APBS strives to expand application of this approach with children, adolescents, and adults with problem behavior.

As we reflect back on our collective experiences at the 4th Annual International Conference in Boston this past March, we learned how PBS research and practices have advanced over the past year. Presenters shared with us how PBS is being used with great success in schools, homes, community-based organizations, and with a variety of populations that exhibit problem behavior.

Second, your membership in APBS suggests that you're interested in affiliating with persons who share your interest and passion for PBS. As an organization, we hope that networking opportunities at our conferences provide you with new resources and ideas, as well as opportunities to get to know colleagues and peers. As an organization, APBS is exploring additional ways that members can network and show support for this organization. Based on feedback from the conference, increasing opportunities for families, international members, and student members are already being explored by the Board of Directors.

Finally, your membership in APBS suggests that more needs to be done to advance the use of this approach. PBS combines what we've learned from research and practice across a variety of disciplines. As an applied science, new applications of this approach are emerging each year. With that in mind, mark your calendars and plan to attend our 5th Annual International Conference in Chicago on March 27th–29th. We're sure that each participant will walk away with new ideas and resources.

APBS is a relatively young organization and the potential for growth and development of membership oriented resources is limitless. As you think about why you've joined APBS, consider how you can become more involved. What does your membership in APBS say about you? We think it says that you are making a difference each and every day!

Did You Know...

As a member of APBS, you receive free online access to the *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions* as a member benefit.

Please follow the registration process as outlined on Ingenta Connect (<http://www.ingentaconnect.com>). Partway through the registration procedure you will be prompted for your subscriber number. Enter APBS.

Once you've completed the registration, Ingenta will email PRO-ED to confirm and activate your subscription term. If you encounter a problem during the registration process, contact Ingenta's Help desk (help@ingentaconnect.com).

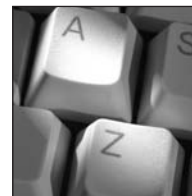
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APBS Newsletter

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- Innovative Applications
- Member Perspectives
- Training Events & Workshops
- Resources and Materials
- Success Stories

If you would like to submit to the newsletter, please contact:

Carie English, (813) 974-1898
or via email (cenglish@fmhi.usf.edu)

Become an APBS member now!
See Web site for details. Contact Randall De Pry
(rdepry@uccs.edu) or Jennifer Zarcone
(Jennifer_Zarcone@urmc.rochester.edu) for more information
about the benefits of becoming a member.