President’s Message

Steve Goodman

We hope that you had an opportunity to attend the 2017 International Conference on Positive Behavior Support in Denver. There were 1704 attendees at the conference, our largest group of participants ever! Individuals came from 15 different countries, including: Australia, Canada, Finland, Germany, Hong Kong, Iceland, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Scotland, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Turkey, and the USA, including Guam. Currently there are 1455 members of APBS from at least 27 countries.

During the two days prior to the conference, the APBS Board of Directors met and planned the association’s 2017–2018 activities. At this pre-conference meeting, we welcomed newly elected members to the Board of Directors for their 2017–2020 terms. The new members include Don Kincaid, Barry McCurdy, Tim Moore, Sara McDaniel, Shanna Hirsch, and Melisa Ruiz. Board Members also voted on the APBS Executive Committee. The Executive Committee for 2017–2018 includes: Steve Goodman (President), Rose Iovannone (Vice President), Bob Putnam (Treasurer), and Jessica Swain-Bradway (Secretary). There were also a few changes made to our APBS committee structure. The Dissemination Committee was renamed the Public Awareness and Dissemination Committee. This committee is co-chaired by Kent McIntosh and Barry McCurdy. The Training and Education Committee is chaired by Susan Barrett, Don Kincaid, and Shanna Hirsch. The Network Development Committee is chaired by Marla Dewhirst, Satish Moorthy, and Scott Ross.

We are fortunate to have had the wonderful contributions to APBS by five individuals whose terms on the APBS Board were completed this past year—Brandi Simonsen, Joe Lucyshyn, Victoria McMullen, Gene McConnachie, and Kim Breen. Outgoing board members were presented with plaques in recognition of their service. Each of these outgoing members has been instrumental in furthering the mission of APBS. Brandi has served as Vice President for the past two years. Brandi also served as a chair of the Training and Education Committee. Joe has co-chaired the Dissemination Committee and has served as a lead in the Evidence-based Workgroup during his tenure on the Board. Joe was also instrumental in advancing the International Workgroup focusing on developing networks in Asia. Victoria served as co-chair of the Dissemination Committee during her time as an elected member of the Board. Both Gene and Kim, in tandem with Victoria, served as strong advocates for families throughout their respective time frame on the Board. Both Gene and Kim, in tandem with Victoria, served as strong advocates for families throughout their respective time frame on the Board and provided leadership to the Family Workgroup. Additionally, Gene was a co-lead on the Ad-hoc Work Group for nominations to the APBS Board of Directors. As mentioned in the previous President’s Message, Heather George recently concluded her final year as President of APBS. We are grateful to Heather for her exemplary leadership over the past three years.

We have a highly competent and dedicated team of individuals who serve on the
Board. We look forward to an exciting and productive year for APBS. Thank you again for your passion, commitment, and vision for Positive Behavior Support and the continued growth of our organization.

Supportive Practices for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students in PBIS Schools: Part 1

Ruthie L. Payno-Simmons*

Schoolwide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS) have been proven to effectively reduce unwanted behaviors in classroom and non-classroom settings, office discipline referrals, and to increase important academic and social outcomes. While tremendous gains have been made in PBIS schools, disproportionality and exclusionary practices adversely affecting Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students (CLDS), especially African American and Latino students, continues to exist across the country (Skiba et al., 2011). Consequently, experts are reframing SWPBIS to consider issues of racial disproportionality, equity, and bias.

Research suggests that the prevailing assumptions driving these discriminatory practices are due to deficit thinking and a cultural mismatch between students, their schools, teachers, and support staff (Riddle, 2014). This mismatch is further exacerbated by a systematic and implicit racial bias that is pervasive in the use of exclusionary discipline (Riddle, 2014; Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2002). Implicit racial biases are unconscious, automatic conceptions we have based on stereotypes about a specific race (Smolkowski, Girvan, McIntosh, Nese, & Horner, 2016). Implicit racial bias and deficit thinking can impact the development of a school culture in ways that unintentionally favor White students and place CLDS at disadvantage. This article serves as the first of a two-part series that focuses on building an awareness of this phenomenon. They don’t realize that CLDS occupy and navigate different spaces that are constantly changing and often misunderstand or misinterpret certain responses as oppositional behavior. Cultural mismatch affects language learning, delivery of curriculum, school culture, and student behavior. It unintentionally creates experiences that disenfranchise CLDS and contributes to increased discipline issues and race-based opportunity gaps in schools (Riddle, 2014).

What is Cultural Mismatch and how does it Impact CLDS in Schools?

Cultural mismatch exists in schools because the dominant culture typically influences all functions of school and often excludes the voices of historically marginalized children and their experiences (Fruchter, 2007; Noguera, 2003). CLDS navigate multiple contexts between home and school. These contexts include cultural norms, social codes, and values that are often in conflict with one another (Lareau, 1987; Noguera, 2003). During these interactions, students negotiate numerous social and cultural identities, which can affect their behaviors and experiences at school. Part of the challenge is a lack of understanding that teachers and schools have regarding this phenomenon. They don’t realize that CLDS occupy and navigate different spaces that are constantly changing and often misunderstand or misinterpret certain responses as oppositional behavior. Cultural mismatch affects language learning, delivery of curriculum, school culture, and student behavior. It unintentionally creates experiences that disenfranchise CLDS and contributes to increased discipline issues and race-based opportunity gaps in schools (Riddle, 2014).

Strategies to Address Issues of Racial Equity and Disproportionality?

Below are some foundational strategies to support adults learning about issues of equity and disproportionality in schools. The first strategy involves reading and discussing literature on these issues occurring at the local and national level. This strategy helps faculty and staff understand and move past the idea that poverty is the only reason for the academic and behavioral struggles of CLDS. The following reports can be used by individuals and leadership teams to encourage discussion around equity and disproportionality.

- 2013–2014 Civil Rights Data Collection A First Look (June, 2016): provides key data highlights on equity and opportunity gaps in our nation’s public schools
- U.S. Department of Education Guidance to Schools on Ensuring Equity and Providing Behavioral Supports to Students with Disabilities

A second strategy involves increasing our awareness and knowledge in the area of implicit racial bias and cultural mismatch. This can involve the following individual and team-based activities:

(continued on next page)
(Supportive Practices, continued from page 2)

- Going online and taking the Race Implicit Association Test (IAT) at: https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/. Learning about implicit racial bias and our socio-historical context can aid individuals and leadership teams in understanding whether or not they have implicit racial biases.
- Learning how to discuss implicit racial bias is essential for addressing equity and disproportionality in schools. One resource that is increasingly being used is Singleton and Linton’s (2006) book titled Courageous Conversations About Race. In some schools, this book has been used to engage the entire faculty in honest conversations about race-based academic disparities and ways to address equity. In addition, the article White Fragility, by Robin DiAngelo (2011) is another valuable resource that explains why racism is a challenging topic for people to discuss.

A third critical strategy involves explicitly naming the role of race in schools and using disaggregated discipline data to identify and address disproportionality. The Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports provides the following resources for individuals and leadership teams to download from the PBIS.org website and use to problem-solve and action plan around their discipline gaps.

- Recommendations for Addressing Discipline Disproportionality in Education (McIntosh, Barnes, Eliason, & Morris, 2014)
- Using Discipline Data within SWPBIS to Identify and Address Disproportionality: A Guide for School Teams (McIntosh, Girvan, Horner, Smolkowski, & Sugai, 2014)

Conclusion

This article briefly discussed issues associated with disproportionality and foundational strategies individuals and leadership teams can use to deepen their knowledge about inequities impacting the discipline of CLDS. In part 2 of this article, I will focus on strategies for working directly with CLDS in PBIS schools and provide examples of practices that are helpful and harmful to CLDS, specifically Black and Latino students.

References


*Formerly Ruth Riddle

— Featured Network —

California PBIS Coalition

Michael Lombardo

The California PBIS Coalition (CPC) was established in March 2011 as a network for California State Education Leaders, county offices, and school districts and schools
implementing multi-tiered frameworks through Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS). Leaders from throughout the state have come together as a learning community to better coordinate PBIS strategies across the state. This group formed with the intention to create opportunities for implementers to have a professional learning community where they can access information that supports desired academic, behavior, and social-emotional outcomes for all California students, families and communities. The CPC is dedicated to providing a standard of practice for PBIS through the work of technical assistance centers across the state and the use of a statewide PBIS recognition systems. Our mission statement reads:

*California PBIS Coalition promotes a safe and positive social culture in all California school communities by:*

  • Sharing effective academic and behavior practices
  • Providing opportunities for networking
  • Supporting deeper learning of PBIS implementation
  • Using fidelity and outcome data to inform our practice

The CPC was not tied to state resources or grant funding, but rather formed with the intention of a learning community and bringing together what each core team member could offer as support. The CPC was given an opportunity to work together with the National Technical Assistance Center on PBIS (see pbis.org) and the U.S. Federal Department of Education under the School Climate Transformation Grant. This provided a small amount of funding for the CPC to enhance the development of PBIS and support California’s fifteen school climate transformation sites. Using the PBIS Blueprints as a guide, the CPC formed Regional Technical Assistance Centers committed to supporting the implementation of PBIS in California with the goal of having eleven centers throughout the state.

CPC technical support is given by organizations from the southernmost region of the state from Orange County, Los Angeles, San Bernardino, High Desert, Mountains through the Central Valley, Coastal Areas and up to the San Francisco Bay, and Northern California regions. The Regional Technical Assistance Centers focus on the critical features of team training, coaching, and District Implementation Teams by developing the internal capacity of organizations to support sustainable implementation using evidence-based PBIS practices and the use of PBIS Applications to monitor fidelity of implementation and use of behavior data for decision making. Through the coordination of the CPC, California has seen continual growth in implementation, student outcomes, and integration of services.

Data from the California Department of Education shows that nearly half of California Schools have lowered suspensions and in 2015-16 school year discipline referrals for Middle and Elementary Schools were lower than the National Average. Among the accomplishments of the CPC, PBIS is recognized by the State Attorney General’s Office and the California Public Counsel for supporting positive climate for California’s children.

Since 2011 the CPC has developed a comprehensive support system extending beyond training in PBIS. Each year the CPC host technical assistance webinars, holds PBIS Learning Community Meetings, provides technical assistance, runs the CA PBIS webpage, and holds the California PBIS Conference. Information on CPC events can be found at [www.pbisca.org](http://www.pbisca.org).