



Assessing Middle School Teacher Perceptions of Implementation of Schoolwide Positive Behavior Supports

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Introduction

Purpose

Many schools assert they have School-Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS) in place. However, SWPBS cannot succeed unless stakeholders have a clear vision for what this approach entails and how it works. Our study explored middle school teacher understanding of SWPBS.

Research questions guiding our study:

- How do teachers in a school that implements SWPBS define this approach to creating a school environment that supports learning and engaging in appropriate school behaviors?
- How effectively do teachers perceive SWPBS has been in their school?
- What areas of confusion or misunderstanding of SWPBS exist among teachers in a school where the approach is implemented?

Methods

School: One suburban middle school in Pennsylvania.

Survey

- Online survey comprised of 35 questions.
- Questions used to determine teachers' experience, training in SWPBS, understanding of SWPBS, and how they would react in several scenarios related to student behavior.
- Most questions were multiple choice, however the opportunity to comment was provided for several questions.

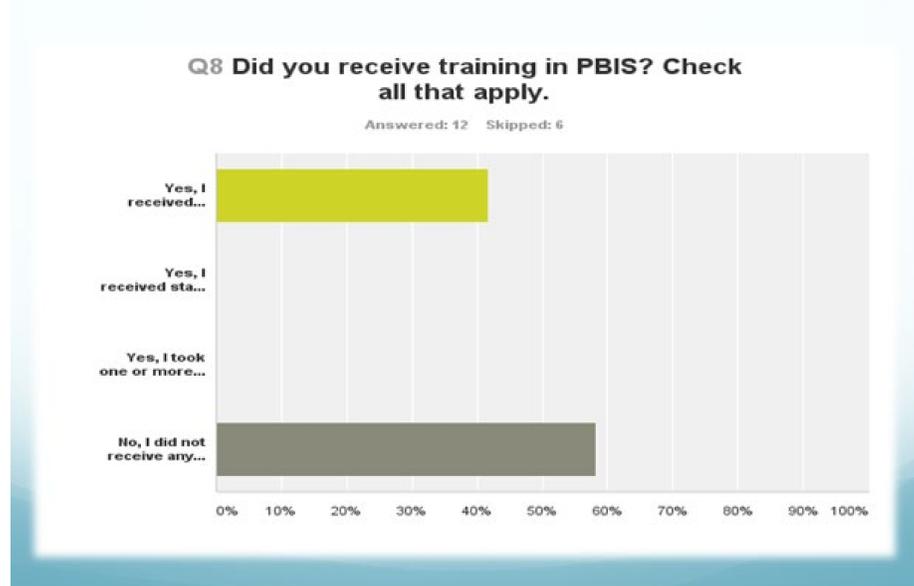
Participants

- 67% prepared through traditional 4-year teacher preparation program; only
- 17% had alternative certification
- 16% were certified through post-baccalaureate or Master's preparation program)
- Majority of teachers who responded had been teaching over 10 years, with many teachers having extensive teaching experience (several teachers with 20+ years)

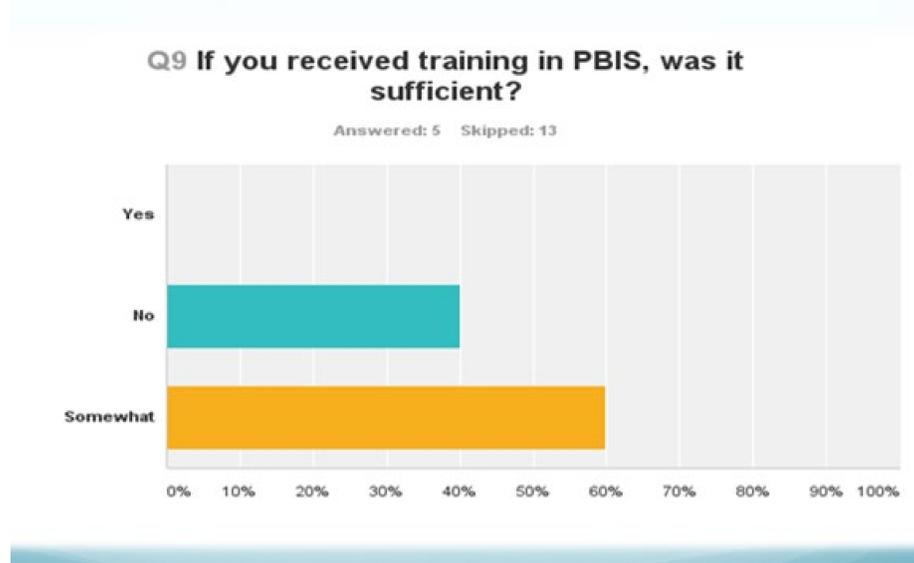
Results

Key Problems Identified by the Study

Inconsistent Responses about Training



Training Not Considered Sufficient

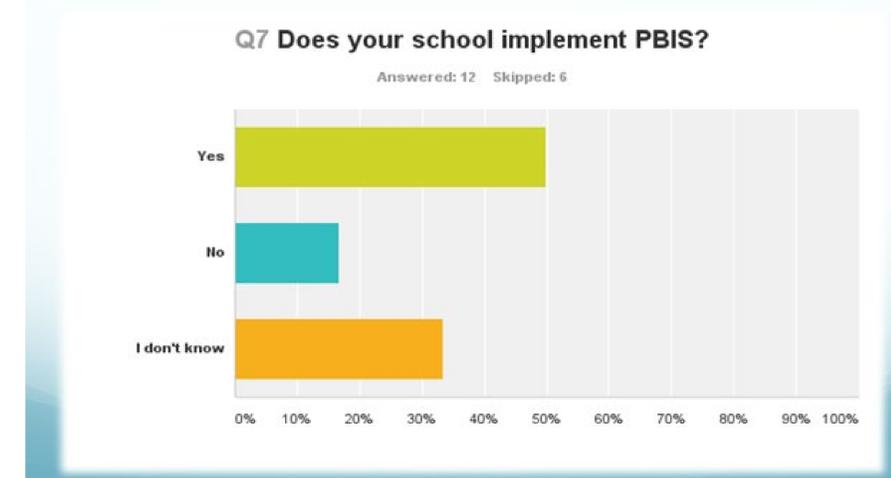


Training:

- Most teachers did not feel they received adequate training.
- Due to the fact that most responding teachers had many years of experience, there may be a likelihood that experience rather than SWPBS training influenced classroom decision making regarding behavior.

Confusion about Implementation of SWPBIS

Respondents all taught in the same school.



Understanding of SWPBS:

- Although the school claims to implement SWPBS, many teachers were unsure how to define this approach and even disagreed in some cases about whether or not it was implemented.
- Teachers seemed to perceive SWPBS as more responses to behaviors as opposed to teaching appropriate behaviors and clear expectations. The perception was far more reactive than proactive.

Future Directions

- Recruit additional middle schools to participate in the survey, and generate common themes across schools
- Share findings with school and district administrators to discuss potential areas to target for improvement.
- Utilize survey findings to guide the development of a school-specific approach for professional development targeting identified areas of need