Engaging Special Educators and Students With Disabilities in PBIS

Brooke Shuster, Abbie Jenkins, Rebecca Shafer, Melissa Hine, Marilynn Porritt, Blair Lloyd, and Erik Carter
Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN
Core Principles of RTI^2-B

Shared missions, beliefs, and values across stakeholders
Belief that pro-social behavior and social emotional competencies can be taught to all students
Universal supports for teaching pro-social behavior for ALL students
Core Principles of RTI^2-B

Ownership and effective communication across all stakeholders
Core Principles of RTI²-B

Evidence-based interventions and supports
Teams problem solve using data-based decision making
Integration of academic, behavioral, and social-emotional initiatives

Core Principles of RTI²-B
Core Principles of RTI²-B

- Shared missions, beliefs, and values across stakeholders
- Belief that pro-social behavior and social emotional competencies can be taught to all students
- Universal supports for teaching pro-social behavior for ALL students
- Ownership and effective communication across all stakeholders
Including Students with Disabilities in PBIS

- Students with disabilities comprise 12.9% of all public school enrollment (U.S. Department of Education, 2015)

- 6,400,000 students receive some or all of their instruction from more than 390,000 special educators (U.S. Department of Education, 2015)

- More than 21,000 schools are implementing PBIS (Horner, 2013)
Perspectives on PBIS

• Success and sustainability of PBIS depends on having the strong support and participation of stakeholders

• Prior studies have explored perspectives of
  
  • Psychologists (Sullivan, Long, & Kucera, 2011)
  
  • Behavior Professionals (Filter, Tincani, & Fung, 2009)
  
  • General Educators (Debnam, Pas, & Bradshaw, 2011)
  
  • Administrators (Lane et al., 2015)
“You don’t need to speak with that student, he’s in special education.”
Including Students with Disabilities in PBIS

- Nearly one third (31%) of respondents believed students with severe disabilities can only partially participate in school-wide PBIS (Landers et al. 2012).

- Students with disabilities were not discussed in initial training sessions on PBIS (Landers et al., 2012).

- No strategies for including students with disabilities in school-wide PBIS were provided during training (Landers et al., 2012).
Research Questions

1. To what extent are special educators involved in school-level PBIS teams and implementing this framework in their classrooms?

2. To what extent are students with disabilities participating in aspects of PBIS within their school?

3. How do special educators view the actual and anticipated benefits of involving their students with disabilities in various aspects of PBIS?

4. What areas and avenues do special educators prioritize for professional development?
How Did We Answer Those Questions?

We developed a survey investigating our research questions.

An email was sent to school administrators and special education teachers in the state with a link to the online survey.

Special Education teachers were invited to complete the survey using REDCap, an online database.
491 Schools

124 Districts

1 State

262 Elementary Schools

41 High Schools

188 Middle Schools

849 Educators
849 Educators

Level of Education

- 290 Teachers have Bachelor's Degree
- 475 Teachers have Masters Degrees
- 84 Educators have Doctoral or Specialist Degree

Certification

- 461 Low-Incidence Disabilities
- 461 High-Incidence Disabilities

Years of Experience

- Average of 14 years of teaching experience

Number of Students on Caseload

- 24 students on their caseload
Where are participants located?
Implementing PBIS:

- 43.7% of schools are implementing PBIS.

Not Implementing:

- 34.3% of schools are not implementing PBIS.

Not Sure:

- 22.0% of schools are not sure about implementing PBIS.

School-wide Implementation of Positive Behavior Intervention & Supports
74.8% reported a PBIS leadership team

23.8% of special education teachers were on the leadership team.

42.0% of educators reported that their school received coaching or supports.

53.7% of implementing schools said they received training before implementation.
Educators in implementing schools answered questions about actual and perceived benefits and barriers.

Educators unsure or in schools not implementing answered questions about potential benefits and barriers.
Special Educators’ Rating of Their School’s Implementation of PBIS

To what extent does your school do these things?

- School-wide behavioral expectations: 71% Fully, 20% Mostly, 0% Partially
- School-wide expectations posted: 52% Fully, 22% Mostly, 26% Partially
- Acknowledgement system: 43% Fully, 26% Mostly, 26% Partially
- Consistent responses to problem behavior: 40% Fully, 39% Mostly, 21% Partially
- Expectations are taught: 42% Fully, 30% Mostly, 28% Partially
- Faculty and staff model expectations: 55% Fully, 35% Mostly, 10% Partially
- Identify students using screening: 21% Fully, 20% Mostly, 0% Partially
- Monitor behavior using ODRs: 41% Fully, 37% Mostly, 22% Partially
- Monitor using attendance: 35% Fully, 33% Mostly, 0% Partially
Special Educator Participation in the PBIS Framework

To what extent do you....

- Reference school-wide expectations: 53.26% (Fully) 33.99% (Mostly)
- Participate in the acknowledgement system: 57.06% (Fully) 25.99% (Mostly)
- Participate in school-wide celebrations: 55.65% (Fully) 25.51% (Mostly)
- Reference school-wide consequences: 55.84% (Fully) 31.05% (Mostly)
- Teach school-wide expectations: 69.41% (Fully) 22.1% (Mostly)
- Model school-wide expectations: 76.95% (Fully) 19.88% (Mostly)
- Utilize school-wide data to make decisions: 45.17% (Fully) 24.43% (Mostly)
- Asked for input during PBIS development: 30.55% (Fully) 15.56% (Mostly)
- Included in training about PBIS: 30.2% (Fully) 22.22% (Mostly)
Special Educator Participation in the PBIS Framework

To what extent would you….

- Reference school-wide expectations: 57% Very Likely, 39% Likely
- Participate in the acknowledgement system: 53% Very Likely, 39% Likely
- Participate in school-wide celebrations: 60% Very Likely, 33% Likely
- Reference school-wide consequences: 64% Very Likely, 32% Likely
- Teach school-wide expectations: 62% Very Likely, 32% Likely
- Model school-wide expectations: 73% Very Likely, 25% Likely
- Utilize school-wide data to make decisions: 52% Very Likely, 39% Likely
- Asked for input during PBIS development: 37% Very Likely, 39% Likely
- Included in training about PBIS: 39% Very Likely, 43% Likely

Very Likely: [Very Likely bar] Likely: [Likely bar]
Perceived Benefits of Student Participation in PBIS

To what extent do your students...

- PBIS: 50% Fully, 34% Mostly
- School-wide expectations: 61% Fully, 28% Mostly
- PBIS celebrations/acknowledgements: 63% Fully, 25% Mostly
- Receive similar consequences for problem behavior: 47% Fully, 35% Mostly
- Participate in lessons on school-wide expectations: 64% Fully, 24% Mostly
- Review school-wide data: 55% Fully, 25% Mostly
- Participate in PBIS: 64% Fully, 25% Mostly
- Receive the same rewards as other students: 58% Fully, 31% Mostly
- Included in the PBIS framework: 55% Fully, 30% Mostly
- Is time allocated for PD: 31% Fully, 28% Mostly
- Is planning time allocated for PBIS: 29% Fully, 26% Mostly
Perceived Benefits of Student Participation in PBIS

To what extent would your students….

- PBIS: 37% Very Likely, 57% Likely
- School-wide expectations: 48% Very Likely, 46% Likely
- PBIS celebrations/acknowledgements: 42% Very Likely, 49% Likely
- Receive similar consequences for problem behavior: 40% Very Likely, 47% Likely
- Participate in lessons on school-wide expectations: 49% Very Likely, 43% Likely
- Review school-wide data: 41% Very Likely, 48% Likely
- Participate in PBIS: 53% Very Likely, 41% Likely
- Receive the same rewards as other students: 43% Very Likely, 57% Likely
- Included in the PBIS framework: 49% Very Likely, 47% Likely
- Is time allocated for PD: 48% Very Likely, 41% Likely
- Is planning time allocated for PBIS: 46% Very Likely, 53% Likely
Special Educators’ Rating of Barriers to Participation in PBIS

**Potential barriers to student participation…**

- Difficulty understanding school-wide expectations: 7% Fully Agree, 14% Mostly Agree
- No accommodations would be made: 10% Fully Agree, 13% Mostly Agree
- Have their own reinforcement systems: 8% Fully Agree, 11% Mostly Agree
- Reviewing behavior data does not give me useful information: 10% Fully Agree, 9% Mostly Agree
- School-wide reinforcement systems are not meaningful to my students: 8% Fully Agree, 10% Mostly Agree
- Tier I strategies would be redundant: 9% Fully Agree, 10% Mostly Agree
- General education staff do not include my students: 8% Fully Agree, 11% Mostly Agree
- Rewards offered are not meaningful to my students: 8% Fully Agree, 9% Mostly Agree
- Student schedules conflict with school-wide events: 4% Fully Agree, 5% Mostly Agree
Special Educators’ Rating of Barriers to Participation in PBIS

**Potential barriers to student participation…**

- Difficulty understanding school-wide expectations: 4% Fully Agree, 12% Mostly Agree
- No accommodations would be made: 8% Fully Agree, 15% Mostly Agree
- Have their own reinforcement systems: 5% Fully Agree, 13% Mostly Agree
- Reviewing behavior data does not give me useful information: 8% Fully Agree, 10% Mostly Agree
- School-wide reinforcement systems are not meaningful to my students: 4% Fully Agree, 9% Mostly Agree
- Tier I strategies would be redundant: 6% Fully Agree, 8% Mostly Agree
- General education staff do not include my students: 8% Fully Agree, 12% Mostly Agree
- Rewards offered are not meaningful to my students: 6% Fully Agree, 7% Mostly Agree
- Student schedules conflict with school-wide events: 5% Fully Agree, 10% Mostly Agree
Likelihood of Accessing Various Avenues of Professional Development on PBIS

Professional development avenues...

- In-district workshops: 54% (40% very likely, 13% likely)
- PBIS-focused websites: 56% (24% very likely, 22% likely)
- Teacher collaboratives/networks: 60% (21% very likely, 19% likely)
- Free online course: 44% (26% very likely, 18% likely)
- Webinars: 51% (19% very likely, 22% likely)
- One-to-one coaching: 48% (18% very likely, 30% likely)
- Downloadable research and practice briefs: 51% (17% very likely, 34% likely)
- Committee or task force involvement: 48% (13% very likely, 35% likely)
- Articles from professional journals: 45% (14% very likely, 31% likely)
- Books and published curricula: 45% (13% very likely, 32% likely)
- State conferences focused on PBIS: 39% (14% very likely, 25% likely)
- Summer institutes (multi-day): 41% (14% very likely, 27% likely)
- Out-of-district workshops: 32% (13% very likely, 19% likely)
Increasing behavior-specific praise to students
Increasing opportunities-to-respond for students
Incorporating choice & preferred activities into instruction
Behavior intervention plans
Inclusive supports
Utilizing data to identify students who need additional supports
Functional behavior assessments
Developing a school-wide plan for responding to problem behavior
Behavior contracts
Developing and teaching school-wide expectations
Developing and implementing PBIS framework at our schools
Check-in/Check-out

Professional Development Topics

Educational practices and supports…

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Limitations

• The survey was not conducted using any direct measures of fidelity of PBIS implementation.

• Survey respondents may have been influenced by social desirability factors.

• Survey sample comes from a single state that (at the time) lacked a unified effort to implement PBIS statewide.

• There was not a sample of general education teachers to compare our sample of special education teachers.
Include special education teachers in planning the school’s PBIS framework. Ensure that school-wide means staff-wide when planning the school’s PBIS Framework. It is important for technical assistance providers to align professional development opportunities to preferences indicated by school staff.
Include special education teachers in planning the school’s PBIS framework.

Recommend that special education teacher’s are part of the Tier I RTI²-B School Team.

Support and train schools implementing RTI²-B to utilize the TFI 2.0 which recommends team members with “applied behavioral expertise, and knowledge of student academic and behavioral patterns.”

Provide examples of successful school teams that include special education teachers on the Tier I school team.
Ensure that **school-wide means staff-wide** when planning the school’s PBIS Framework.
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Have each school implementing RTI²-B send out a social validity survey annually during implementation to all school staff.

Provide structured ways for schools planning to implement RTI²-B to obtain faculty feedback during framework development.

Provide resources (e.g., practice briefs, practitioner testimonies, school success stories) for schools on how to obtain school staff feedback and provide training for all school staff.
It is important for technical assistance providers to align professional development opportunities to preferences indicated by school staff.
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Creating video guides and online modules about different components of RTI²-B.
Questions?

Brooke Shuster, M.Ed., BCBA  
Training Director  
Tennessee Behavior Supports Project  
brooke.shuster@vanderbilt.edu

Abbie Jenkins  
Project Director  
abbie.jenkins@vanderbilt.edu

Rebecca Shafer, M.Ed., BCBA  
Educational Consultant  
rebecca.shafer@vanderbilt.edu

Melissa Hine, M.Ed., NCC  
Educational Consultant  
melissa.hine@vanderbilt.edu

Marilynn Porritt, M.S., NCSP  
Educational Consultant  
marilynn.porritt@vanderbilt.edu