



Ohio  
PBIS  
Network

# PBIS Frequently Asked Questions

## Question Answer

### What is PBIS?

Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS), also referred to [Effective 8/1/2013] Standards for the implementation of positive behavior intervention supports and the use of restraint and seclusion.

(B) Implementation of positive behavior intervention and supports. Each school district shall implement positive behavior intervention and supports on a system-wide basis.

### Where did PBIS come from?

1. Prevent chronic behavioral challenges.
2. Provide early intervention for children and youth displaying minor but repeated patterns of problem behavior.
3. Provide pro-active supports to children and youth at-risk and those with emotional disturbances to allow them to successfully remain in the general education environments with the appropriate supports.

### How is it designed to work? Is PBIS a program?

4. Provide instruction, practice and reinforcement for students regarding expected behaviors in the various school settings. **NO** – PBIS is a **framework, a prevention oriented process** that supports the needs of a school, the culture of the school by assisting school personnel in adopting and organizing evidence-based behavioral interventions into an integrated continuum that enhances academic and social behavior outcomes for all students. PBIS emphasizes the establishment of **organizational supports or systems** that give school personnel capacity to use effective interventions accurately and successfully at the school, district, and state levels.

### What are PBIS “systems?”

as School-wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS), which incorporates empirically validated practices into a framework designed to support all students and all staff within schools. **PBIS language** comes directly from 1997 reauthorization of the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)*. PBIS is based on the principles of applied behavior analysis and the prevention approach and values of positive behavior support.

These supports include:

- a. Team-based leadership
- b. Data-based decision-making
- c. Continuous monitoring of student behavior
- d. Regular universal screening
- e. Effective on-going professional development.

**Ohio Administrative Code - OAC 3301-35-15**

**Essential features of the PBIS process?**

The second level of the continuum focuses on at-risk students who need more than universal supports for behavioral success. Interventions are provided for this targeted group of students. Finally, the third level of support is individualized and intensive. For the successful implementation and sustainability of this multi-tiered system of behavioral supports, administrative support and leadership is essential.

**What does PBIS have to do with school discipline and classroom management?**

Effective classroom management and preventive school discipline are essential for supporting teaching and learning.

**How long will it take to implement PBIS?**

PBIS goes further by emphasizing that classroom management and preventive school discipline must be integrated and working together with effective academic instruction in a positive and safe school climate to maximize success for all students.

**How will this affect me?**

Since PBIS is a process, not a program, the length of time it takes to get started varies by school. Schools typically take between 3 months to 1 year to fully implement all the critical components of PBIS. The process is ongoing and constantly adapted to meet the changing needs of the school and to address current concerns. Many schools begin noticing improvements right away. However, it may take a few years for the school's philosophy regarding the handling of inappropriate behavior to change.

**How does a school get training in PBIS?**

PBIS framework provides a continuum of behavior supports within the school environment. The three-tiered prevention logic model requires that all students receive supports at the universal or primary tier. Building "universal" behavioral supports is the core of the process and defined as those supports that apply to all students, all staff, and all settings.

Universals are defined as a clearly defined set of positively stated rules with accompanying set of explicit positively stated behavior exemplars of each rule. Students and staff are taught these behavioral exemplars.

Faculty and staff must decide if PBIS is a good fit for their school. Once the school obtains an 80% approval rate from faculty and staff (must include administration), the core team begins work on the critical components of PBIS. Faculty, staff and students provide input/feedback on all components and to contribute to the overall school-wide PBS plan. All members of the school are participants in positive behavior support and adhere to the school-wide expectations.

In Ohio the 16 State Support Teams have trained staff who can train the PBIS framework and provide an external facilitator who can work with the district's internal facilitator for the additional training and supports needed to get this system functional in the school. The external facilitator also will work with the district facilitator to establish the system, structures and supports

necessary for sustainability. Please visit the Ohio Department of Education home page <http://education.ohio.gov/> and type in the search box PBIS. Once you are on the PBIS page please download and fill out the Ohio

### **Do we have to eliminate other initiatives if we begin with School-wide PBIS?**

### **What does the OSEP Center on PBIS do?**

[www.pbis.org](http://www.pbis.org)

Schoolwide Positive Behavior Interventions and Support District Agreement for Beginning PBIS Teams. This agreement must be filled out and submitted to the SST in your region.

Most frequently the answer to this question is no. Effective practices currently in place in the school can become part of the School-wide system.

School-wide PBIS will allow for consistency of these practices. Here is an example of when a practice would need to change: A school district was on the list for highest out of school suspensions (OSS) in their state. One of the PBIS team members was asked to gather the data to determine what behavior(s) should be targeted for change. When the team sat down with their coach, they determined that over 70% of the OSSs were given for skipping school. Using the logic of School-wide

PBIS, the team would determine the function behind skipping school. Since the function of skipping school would be to escape school, it no longer made sense to assign two more days of OSS for every day of skipping. This practice would need to change and the team would determine what would work best for their particular learning community.

The primary functions of the Center on PBIS are to study, organize, and disseminate empirically-supported behavioral practices and interventions within the prevention-oriented framework of PBIS systems. The Center mainly works with schools, districts and state leadership teams to improve the social culture and behavioral climate of the classroom and the school.

The Technical Assistance Center is sponsored by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) emphasizes that School-wide PBIS is not a special education initiative. School-wide PBIS is based on the research based application of over 7,000 schools currently implementing successful changes in their school

environment. School-wide PBIS evolved from valid research in the field of special education. This research indicated that results should be based on data with specific outcomes.

### **Popular Myths regarding PBIS**

The positive refers to a change in focus from reactive (focusing on what students do wrong) to proactive (teaching and recognizing what students

**“The positive in PBIS means we give out rewards.”**

do right). It refers to an overall change in the school climate to a learning environment where students and teachers feel appreciated, safe and respected. Rewards are used to assist staff in focusing on the positive and to assist students in making better choices.

**“We will no longer punish students for inappropriate behavior.”**

**“PBIS uses bribes to get students to behave.”**

**What should be done when a student’s behavior poses an immediate threat to themselves or others?**

**When are families involved in positive behavior support, at the intense level of need?**

PBIS does not ignore inappropriate behavior.

Consequences are more than “punishment” and serve to either increase or decrease inappropriate behavior. PBIS views appropriate consequences as those that are effective in changing the student’s inappropriate behavior. Schools develop a plan for inappropriate behavior that matches consequences to the severity of the inappropriate behavior in order to maintain consistency across the school and district. Using a reward system is not bribing a student to behave appropriately. A bribe occurs when something is offered to a person before the behavior to get them to behave in a specific way. PBIS acknowledges and rewards students for following school-wide expectations and rules after the behavior occur. Thus, rewards are earned, **NOT** offered as payoff in exchange for good behavior.

When severe episodes of problem behavior occur, it is necessary to provide a rapid response to insure the safety of all involved and produce a rapid de-escalation of the behavior. Safe crisis management procedures are therefore necessary and should be planned thoroughly in advanced. Historically, family involvement has been seen as a key feature when developing tertiary (individual) positive behavior support plans for students with comprehensive needs. As the practice of Positive Behavior Interventions and Support has evolved from an individually-based approach to a more school-wide emphasis, family involvement within all aspects of Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Prevention has expanded. Family members participate in planning teams, learn how to teach their children the importance of school-wide expectations at home and in the community, and volunteer to participate in related school activities including school celebrations, public relations, and the search for donations and free resources in the community.

Revised 11/2/2013