



POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS (PBIS): FEEDBACK AND THOUGHTS REGARDING OUR FIRST YEAR

We are in our first year of implementation of our Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program. The main purpose of PBIS is to create common social and behavioral expectations within a learning community and establish common language to describe these expectations. Staff members share these social and behavioral expectations with our students at the beginning of the school year and reteach them when reminders are needed.

To determine the impact of our PBIS program, our four elementary schools asked parents and guardians to share their feedback on our PBIS program at our parent teacher conferences in February. We are pleased to report that 275 families from our four elementary schools completed the survey and shared their thoughts on our PBIS program.

Parents / guardians were asked seven questions regarding PBIS and ranked their response to each of these questions. Their responses could range from 5 (strongly agree) all the way down to 1 (strongly disagree). Each one of the questions on this survey is listed below with the district-wide survey average right next to it:

I am familiar with the PBIS program at my child's school	4.4
The staff at my child's school uses positive strategies on a regular basis to increase student positive behavior	4.3
My child feels safe at school	4.4
I know what the behavior expectations are for my child at school	4.5
I regularly receive information on my child's behavior at school	4.3
I am satisfied with the behavior expectations for my child at school	4.4
I understand the link between positive behavior support in elementary school and my child's ability to be ready to learn academics	4.5

The overall average rating for all questions district-wide is a **4.4**. Our PBIS leadership team recently met and reviewed these results. Needless to say, we are very pleased that parents have looked so favorably on the PBIS program in Fort Atkinson schools. Our building principals have frequently reported that parents like knowing what color their child ended the day on. A number of our families have liked the clip chart so much that they are using a modified version in their home. Our goal

for each student continues to be that they end their day on green, which shows that they are ready to learn.

PBIS is an initiative that has made a difference in the classroom and throughout the building. Teachers are spending less time managing behavior and discipline and more time on academics. Our building principals have also reported that they have less behavioral incidents and office referrals. Instead of focusing their time on behavioral challenges, building principals are spending more time on being instructional leaders, supporting our teachers and support staff with our academic agenda. Several of our parents have commented on how their children are thankful for being “caught” doing the right thing and have appreciated the recognitions that their children have received.

It should be noted that from time to time, our students still have behavioral and social challenges that require an office referral and parent/guardian contact. Our PBIS program has put an emphasis on how we track, document, and analyze these challenges and office referrals. Prior to the implementation of PBIS, each one of our elementary schools had their own office referral and documentation system within their school. Our PBIS leadership team created a common elementary office referral form. This form is completed by a staff member and then entered into a data management system known as School Wide Information Systems (SWIS). The SWIS program lets the building principal and teachers know when the behaviors are occurring (hour of the day), where they are occurring (location within the building or on the program), and the type of behaviors that are occurring most frequently.

Each building has a PBIS leadership team that reviews this data to determine what behaviors we need to focus on and reteach. The data also shows us when and where they are occurring so we can focus the re-teaching of our expectations on those portions of the day.

There has been significant time and effort put into the PBIS initiative by our building principals, teachers, and support staff. We are grateful that parents and staff have embraced this initiative, and we feel that it has had a significant positive impact on our instructional focus. As we continue to move forward with our PBIS initiative, we encourage you to share any thoughts or ideas on how to improve the program with your building principal. We have received some great ideas from parents and guardians to date, and we are looking forward to continuing to better our services for our students in the future. Our sincere thanks for letting us work with your children.

Sincerely,

Dr. James Fitzpatrick